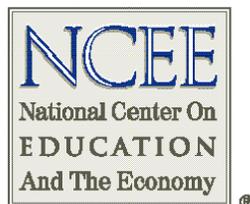


**Workforce Development in the State of Washington:
An Overview, 2005**

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I. Introduction

The State of Washington's vision for its workforce development system is detailed in its Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Two-Year Plan, which was developed by the Employment Security Department (ESD) and the State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board), in consultation with business, labor, and workforce development stakeholders. As a part of this vision, Washington's workforce system is one that strives to offer residents access to academic and occupational skills education throughout his or her lifetime; to help find work or training when unemployed; and to provide access to the skilled workforce employers need. Further, the Plan notes that by "anticipating and planning for economic and demographic changes, the workforce development system enhances the prosperity of the State." (Source: *Washington State Workforce Investment Act Two-Year Plan, May 2005.*)

The State of Washington has an extensive and user-friendly web site for its workforce related services that targets both businesses and job seekers. Services and information are available through a variety of web pages and numerous links connecting related issues and services. Washington State's official website for information and services is entitled "Access Washington" and has extensive lists of state government services and links for information. A prominent link for "Working and Employment" is listed at the top of the home page and connects to training, job services and unemployment information. (Source: <http://access.wa.gov/>).

The final chapter of the recent State report, *High Skills, High Wages 2004: Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development*, lists four critical challenges for the State to:

- Close the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need.
- Enable workers to make smooth transitions so that they may benefit fully from the new, changing economy, and develop a coherent strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training.
- Assist disadvantaged youth, people with disabilities, new labor market entrants, recent immigrants, and low-wage workers in moving up the job ladder during their lifetimes by developing a wage progression strategy for low-income workers.
- Integrate services provided by separately funded workforce development programs to provide the best possible service to customers.

(Source: <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/pubs.html>)

II. Strategic Opportunities for the Next Two Years

Throughout the WIA Two-Year Plan, references are made to the report, *High Skills, High Wages 2004* released last year, particularly with regard to the Washington State Workforce Board (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, p. 11). The High Skills report listed a comprehensive plan with 4 goals, as well as objectives and numerous strategies, and the names of the lead entities responsible for implementation. The following list encompasses a number of the *strategies* included in the plan, and provides a focus for partners when they consider new or expanded initiatives:

- **Expanding skill panels** for enhancing Washington's economic vitality. Industry skill panels harness the expertise of their members (employers, educators, and labor); identify skill gaps in key economic clusters; and address those needs. (See Part IV on Workforce Skill Needs.)
- Increasing training linked to **retention support** for low-income individuals to promote career advancement and wage progression. Supports such as childcare, transportation, counseling, and remediation assistance are often necessary to ensure individuals feel able to start a program and have the support to complete it. (See Part VI on WorkSource Centers.)
- Increasing training and **retraining for incumbent workers** to keep pace with technological advances and to prevent worker dislocations. Many employers already provide customized training for their employees investing about *two percent* of payroll on employee training, though few support basic skills training. While state funds support some customized training, the WIA Two-Year Plan notes that Washington "lags far behind" other states in publicly supported customized training. (See Part VI on WorkSource Centers.)
- **Increasing basic skills and ESL instruction** that is integrated with occupational skills training which is more likely to lead to wage gains for participants than programs that do not include an occupational component. (See Part VIII on Education.)
- **Increasing postsecondary education** and training capacity to close the gap between the need of employers for skilled workers and the supply of Washington residents prepared to meet that need. Even during a recession, 45 percent of employers who reported hiring workers in 2003 said they had difficulty finding qualified applicants. (See Part VIII on Education.)
- **Reducing dropouts and integrating career guidance** into school curricula are necessary to ensure teenagers are prepared for success after high school. About *one-third* of Washington students drop out of high school. While schools are raising their expectations of students, they need to demonstrate the relevance of education through comprehensive career guidance, career exploration, including strong CTE and work-based learning. (See Part X on Youth Services.)

To take advantage of these strategic opportunities, workforce development programs must function as a system, linking partners and resources, and increasing efficiency. Even though lead entities are identified in *High Skills, High Wages 2004*, mutual support among multiple agencies is needed to continue progress. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 11 and 31, www.wtb.wa.gov/.) To develop this *system*, State implementation plans for WIA and Wagner-Peyser are

listed in the WIA Two-Year Plan as follows:

1. Provide **seamless service delivery** coordination and job placement assistance through comprehensive One-Stop Career Centers (named WorkSource Centers in Washington State).
2. Provide **demand-driven employment and training** services governed by business-led Workforce Investment Boards, called Workforce Development Councils (WDCs), in Washington State.
3. Offer flexibility to **tailor service delivery** that meets the needs of our state and local economies and labor markets.
4. Provide **high quality information** to customers to help them make informed career choices and to select high quality training programs.
5. Provide the Governor, State Legislature, local elected officials, U.S. Department of Labor, and the public with fiscal and **performance management and program accountability**.
6. Provide WIA eligible **youth**, including youth most in need, **opportunities** to succeed in secondary and postsecondary education and opportunities to qualify for high demand jobs.

(Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 31.)

III. Labor Market Information

Washington state's economy has continued to steadily diversify over the past two decades, resulting in a healthy climate for business investment, as well as creating markets for a wide array of products and services. The expansion of the state's manufacturing base and growth in the high-tech and service sector has greatly reduced Washington's sensitivity to cyclical changes in manufacturing demand. No single industry dominates the economy; therefore, fluctuations in specific sectors have less dramatic effects on the cumulative state economy. Employment has declined in traditional industries like agriculture, lumber and forest products, and mining, while sharp increases have occurred in high technology, biotechnology, service industry, electronic instruments, machinery, and wholesale and retail trade.

Unemployment Rates

	May'05	Apr'05	May'04
Washington	5.7%	5.5%	6.2%
United States	5.1%	5.2%	5.6%

Wages for Washington workers are becoming increasingly competitive. Employment opportunities in the state attract out-of-state workers, which tend to hold down wage increases while assuring a plentiful labor supply. Washington's minimum wage is \$7.35 for 2005. Workers' Comp Rates rank among the lowest in the nation. (Source: *The Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development and the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Washington State Labor.*) (See also an **ATTACHMENT A article on workers' compensation.**)

Washington State's Economic Base

Washington is a growing state with significant in-migration projected over the next couple of decades. According to the *2004 Long-Term Economic and Labor Force Forecast for Washington* (June 2004), "net migration will continue to play a major role in the State population growth." A majority of in-migration to Washington is associated with employment opportunities, or the expansion of Washington's economy, and expansion or contraction of neighboring states' economies. Net migration is forecast by OFM to average roughly 45,500 persons per year over the next 25 years."

The industries expected to exhibit strong job growth are employment services, wireless telecommunications carriers, computer system design, and computer and electronic product manufacturing. Similarly, the occupation groups projected to grow fastest in Washington, include: building and grounds cleaning, personal care, computer and mathematical, and education/training/library. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 27-28.)

The Labor Market and Economic Analysis October 2004 Job Vacancy Survey listed registered nurses, computer engineers and programmers, accounts and business operations specialists as the skilled occupations most in demand. Computer engineers, medical scientists, veterinarians and veterinary technicians, survey researchers, technical writers, architects, and multi-media artists also rank in the top ten in terms of projected growth (from 2002-12). Finally, registered nurses, customer service representatives, bookkeepers, and elementary school teachers top the list of jobs most critical to the State in terms of jobs with a minimum annual income of \$30,000 per year. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 27.)

Washington's economic base is diverse, but the WIA Plan lists four major **exporting industries** in which the state has a significantly higher concentration than the national average.

- In 2003 (latest annual average available), *transportation equipment manufacturing* employed over 76,000 workers in the state, accounting for roughly 29 percent of total manufacturing jobs. Most of those workers (64,700) were engaged in aircraft and parts production. Firms in the private sector ship and boat building industry employed another 6,000.
- The state had over 51,500 jobs involved in crop production in 2003. The *crop production industry* is composed of Washington's vast array of fruit, vegetable, wheat, and hay farms.
- Washington's *publishing industries* employment was just over 49,000 in 2003. Publishing industries include firms that design and produce application and/or system software.
- *Logging and timber product manufacturing* have long been mainstays of Washington's economic base. In 2003, the two industries combined to employ 23,643 workers in the State, and paid out over \$900 million in wages. After trending lower since the early 1990s, logging employment is projected to stabilize through 2012 and timber product employment is expected to grow slightly. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 26.)

Technology Growth

According to the *Washington Index of Innovation and Technology*, a 2005 statistical report published annually by the *Washington Technology Center*, technology industry growth is regaining momentum or rebounding after a recession earlier this decade. Specifically, software saw the highest increase in employment and national dominance since 1998.

The **biotech** industry generates an estimated \$1.8 billion in revenues and nearly \$500 million in exports. Further, biotechnology and medical technology companies in Washington State are projected to directly employ more than 23,000 people with indirect employment exceeding 69,000 by 2005. (*Also see ATTACHMENT B on a federal grant award to develop new curriculum and training models for biotechnology workers.*) (Source: Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development website on Washington Industries, specifically the Washington Technology Center link and Biotechnology link at www.choosewashington.com.)

Supply of Prepared Workers

Recent research finds job openings outstrip supply for nearly all occupational programs offered in the community and technical college system. The report notes that the supply and demand gap for the better paying jobs is particularly acute. Incidentally, this higher supply of job openings exists in spite of Washington State's high minimum wage of \$7.35 per hour, which is significantly higher than the required Federal minimum wage.

The State's community college and training program availability is nowhere near as extensive as that of its neighboring state (Oregon) or that of other growing states, such as North Carolina. The supply of postsecondary workforce training that is between one and four years in length consists of community and technical college, private career school, and apprenticeship programs. During the 2001-02 school year, the colleges prepared 17,500 new workers, apprenticeship programs 1,700 workers, and private schools 4,400 workers. This is a total of 23,600 newly prepared workers available to fill job openings requiring more than one, but less than, four years of postsecondary training.

The State's WIA Two-Year Plan projects a gap of 6,100 workers between the most recent supply and expected demand in 2010. Since many students leave school early or attend remedial classes, it takes 3.17 full-time equivalent (FTE) students to produce one newly prepared worker.

(Source: www.choosewashington.com/state_data/Higher_Education.asp and the WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 34)

Industry Clusters and Economic Growth

Former Governor Gary Locke formed the Governor's Joint Economic Vitality Cabinet (JEVC) to provide a forum for aligning economic vitality objectives among a variety of agencies. The Cabinet consists of fifteen agency directors that have a role in economic development, including the Director of the Department of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED), who serves as the chair, the Employment Security Department (ESD), the State Board for

Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the State Workforce Board.

The JEVIC is working to develop best practice models for state agency partnering and state/local participation in support of industry clusters to form where the labor and economic market has already shown that Washington has a competitive edge. Cluster development allows Washington's diverse regions to leverage their assets to create greater prosperity. By targeting workforce development resources to key sectors of local economies, the public sector can make a measurable difference, as opposed to spreading scarce resources so thinly that their effect is virtually unnoticeable. (Source: *Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004, and the WIA Two-Year Plan, P.14, and WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 33.*)

State agencies are using the concept of clusters as an organizing principle for employing their scarce resources where they are most likely to be effective, and help drive public and private resources to attract, develop, and retain jobs and businesses. JEVIC has identified the following clusters: clean energy, marine services, wood products, value-added agriculture/food processing, biotech/bio-information, semiconductors, healthcare, construction, aerospace, tourism, metal fabrication, telecommunications, and software/internet-based businesses. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan, P.14*)

The State agencies coordinated four Requests for Proposals (RFPs), reflecting four stages of a demand-driven workforce development system, as follows:

- 1) **Creating an Industry Skill Panel**, including business leaders in a key economic sector to identify critical skill needs and identify solutions.
- 2) Developing industry **skill standards** for key occupations in their sector.
- 3) Developing **new training** programs that prepare workers to meet the standards.
- 4) **Providing the training.**

Each of the four RFPs above includes elements to enhance coordination and to take advantage of the "synergistic effect" of the funds working together. The common required criteria for proposals include a:

- Regional focus for a specified geographic region of the state.
- Economic analysis to tie the importance of the economic sector to future opportunities in the region.
- Industry-driven evidence that the projects would meet the needs of a key area industry and involve local industry leaders.
- Partnership of key stakeholders such as employers, labor, training providers, WDCs, economic development councils, and other appropriate stakeholders.

In all, since 2002, over **\$17 million** in a state general funds and WIA Funds have been used to focus on these economic **clusters**. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan P.34.*) (Also, see **ATTACHMENT C for a Washington State map of the**

*locations of industry skill panels as well as a sample of one, the **Technology Skills Panel.**)*

IV. Workforce Skill Needs

In terms of the education and skills needed for the available and projected jobs, several of the occupations (teachers and computer software engineers) require a bachelor's degree or higher, while an associate's degree is necessary to work as a registered nurse. The remaining jobs call for varying degrees of on-the-job training. According to ONET Resource Center, skills that are important to these critical jobs include:

Active Listening
Coordination
Critical Thinking
Instructing
Judgment and Decision Making
Learning Strategies
Mathematics
Reading Comprehension
Service Orientation
Social Perceptiveness
Speaking
Writing

(Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 28.)

Industry Skill Panels

The High Skills, High Wages 2004 report lists two strategies for supporting target industries and occupations that are vital to the state's economy. This first is creating or enhancing industry skill panels, "especially in high demand *economic clusters* such as health care and information technology," (described in Section III above) while the second is to "provide retraining in high-demand fields."

The State uses a portion of the WIA Title I-B statewide activities funds to support industry skill panels in partnership with business, labor and education leaders considered key to the economic success of a region. The panels assess current and future skill needs of the industry's workforce, and implement strategies to meet these needs. Three types of industry skill panels are emerging in Washington State:

1. Crisis Driven: agriculture and food processing, health care and aerospace.
2. Industries in Transition: information technology, marine services, construction, electronics, manufacturing and energy.
3. Emerging Industries: computer game software development and biotechnology.

Since 2001, through the use of WIA funds, Washington State has invested in 33 industry skill panels in the following industries: Construction, Information

Technology, Health Care, Energy Technology, Electronics, Manufacturing, Marine Services, Food Processing and Agriculture, Biotechnology and Computer Game Software. (See ATTACHMENT C for a Washington State map of the locations of industry skill panels as well as a sample of one, the Technology Skills Panel.) Today, over 300 business partners are actively engaged in this effort. As of June 2004, the skill panels have:

- Leveraged over \$40 million in additional funding.
- Developed skill standards in the energy and electronics industries.
- Expanded apprenticeship opportunities in health care and construction industries.
- Developed articulation agreements enabling students to transfer information technology credits from high schools to community colleges.
- Coordinated industry support as colleges expand their licensed practical nurse and registered nurse programs.
- Developed customized training programs for entry-level workers and limited English-speaking populations working in the food-processing sector, as well as created 26 customized courses offering certification and opportunities for specific career advancement – 785 incumbent workers received training in 32 companies.
- Developed short-term job specific retraining or skills upgrades to 2,913 incumbent workers in healthcare, retail, manufacturing, information technology, food processing, construction, and education.

(Source: Testimony of Ellen O'Brien Saunders, March 4, 2004, and the WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 39.)

V. Washington State Workforce Board

The Washington State Legislature established the State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) in 1991. The Board's purpose is to provide planning, coordination, evaluation, monitoring, and policy analysis for the State training system, and advise the governor and legislature concerning these issues, in cooperation with the workforce system and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). The Workforce Board assists the Governor by performing the functions listed in WIA, which include:

- Developing and maintaining a state strategic comprehensive plan using a collaborative process.
- Developing and implementing a performance management system for workforce development partnership with the operating agencies and local workforce development councils (WDCs).
- Developing linkages in order to assure coordination and non-duplication among the WorkSource programs.
- Reviewing local area Unified Plans and recommending local plan approval to the Governor. (Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 20.)

Board Membership

Unlike many other states, Washington has done a commendable job in keeping its State Workforce Board small and manageable. Washington has only **11** appointees on its Board. In accordance with its state statute, the Workforce Board consists of nine voting members appointed by the Governor with the

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consent of the Senate as follows: three representatives of business; three representatives of labor; and three State agencies listed below. The Chair of the Board is a nonvoting member selected by the Governor to serve at his pleasure. The Chair appoints one nonvoting member to the Board to represent racial and ethnic minorities, women, and people with disabilities.

As the State's grant recipient for key workforce programs, the Commissioner of *Employment Security Department* (ESD) operates the following programs and activities:

- WIA Title I-B Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker Grants.
- Wagner-Peyser.
- Veterans' Workforce Programs.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance.
- Training Benefits Program.
- Unemployment Compensation.
- Claimant Placement Program.

The Executive Director of *State Board for Community and Technical Colleges* (SBCTC) is another State Workforce Board member and operates the following WorkSource programs:

- WIA Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs including ESL programs.
- Postsecondary vocational education programs funded through state and federal funds (Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act).
- The State funded Worker Retraining Program.
- The State funded Job Skills Program.

The *Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction* (OSPI) is the state administrative entity for the following WorkSource program and the Superintendent serves as a State Workforce Board member, and operates the following programs:

- Secondary vocational education programs through state and federal funds (Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act).

Similarly, the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) serves only as a participating official to inform the Board's work. DSHS is the state grant administrative entity for the following WorkSource programs:

- Senior Community Service Employment Program under the Older Americans Act.
 - Vocational rehabilitation programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act.
 - WorkFirst (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program or TANF).
- (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 15.)

Three workgroups were established by the State Workforce Board to address the Governor's three challenges for the state's workforce development system and to advise the Board on the goals, objectives, and strategies for the 2000-05 State plan. Workgroup members included state and local workforce development leaders as well as private sector membership. All mandatory WorkSource (One-Stop) partner agencies were represented on at least one of the workgroups to

participate and offer input into the implementation of the WIA Plan in order that the States' goals are achieved.

In addition, the state was assisted by the **WorkSource Executive Policy Council** (EPC), which oversaw the development of Washington State's WorkSource (One-Stop) system. The EPC offered operational guidance to the WorkSource system on: (1) barrier removal at the state level; (2) customer oriented WorkSource implementation; and (3) other WorkSource operational issues such as the development of the WorkSource Tracking and Accountability System called Services, Knowledge, and Information Exchange System (SKIES). (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 19.*)

Interagency Committee

In another distinction from other states, the Washington Workforce Board is also a "convener of an interagency committee" to plan, prepare and carry out its work. The use of this Interagency Committee (IC) also is what enables the state to keep its Board small and yet still ensure that all workforce related agencies are represented, engaged and working together. The IC is a working group of staff representatives to Board members. It provides preparation for the Workforce Board member discussions and identifies new opportunities for coordinated leadership.

VI. WorkSource Centers (One-Stop Career Centers)

The ultimate goal of the State's one-stop career centers, the WorkSource Centers, is to provide the highest level of quality of services within available resources. Washington State has been a leader in the identification of local one-stop infrastructure costs and has developed models and strategies to support integration. The Employment Security Department (ESD) initiated Resource Sharing Agreements (RSA) since it was the leaseholder for the majority of centers in the state.

Universal access to the WorkSource Centers is assured through the three-tiered approach of self-service, facilitated self-service, and staff assisted service. Customers may access services and information from a computer, a WorkSource Center or affiliate site, or an informational orientation. Customers requiring additional help may be provided assistance via a one-on-one interview, scheduled for a specific service, or referred to another service provider. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF) employment services are accessible in WorkSource locations. (TANF is called WorkFirst in Washington State.) Significantly, the WorkFirst Program is located in 24 of the WorkSource sites and integrated into the service delivery model. (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P.48.*)

WorkSource Partners

The federally mandated One-Stop partners include the following programs:

- WIA Title I-B Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker (including early intervention and Rapid Response) Grants and Programs

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- Wagner-Peyser Programs
- Welfare-to-Work Programs
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA
- Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program
- State Unemployment Insurance Programs
- WIA Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs including English-as-a-Second Language
- Secondary and postsecondary vocational education program funded under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act
- Senior Community Service Employment Program funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act
- Vocational Rehabilitation programs authorized under parts A and B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

In addition, the State ensure provision of the following activities:

- Worker Profiling
- Claimant Placement Program
- Postsecondary Vocational-Technical Programs
- Worker Retraining Program
- WorkFirst employment services
- State Labor Market Information and associated technological tools
- English-as-a-Second Language Programs.

Other programs that are encouraged but *not* required to be part of the One-Stop System include:

- Literacy Programs
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Local School to Work connections
- AmeriCorps/Washington State Services Corps
- Tech Prep Consortium
- Private Vocational Schools
- Other programs identified by WorkSource Regional Partnerships.

WorkSource Centers Services

The *minimum* service delivery requirements for comprehensive WorkSource Centers include:

1. The availability of *core services*, as follows:
 - Services Orientation
 - Initial Assessment
 - Job Search Assistance
 - Job Readiness Workshops
 - Placement Activities
 - Labor Market Information
2. The availability of *intensive services*, as follows:
 - Employment Assessment Tools

- Case Management
 - Pre-employment guidance in the development of communication skills, personal maintenance and professional conduct
- (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 67.)

Business Services and Marketing WorkSource Centers

A recent expanded effort to increase the customer base of WorkSource or one-stop service delivery has included a statewide marketing campaign to enhance awareness and usage of WorkSource business services in 2004. The six-month campaign directed at 15,000 businesses incorporated extensive employer research, business representative training, direct mail marketing, public relations strategies, and business led management into one integrated campaign. It has generated more than 1,300 leads for local business representatives. The campaign positively impacted brand awareness, business perceptions of WorkSource and use of the system.

The number of employers that had contact with WorkSource in the past 6-months rose from 22 to 31 percent. Further, direct contact with a WorkSource business representative rose from 7 to 20 percent. The campaign attracted a total of 2,231 responses from 1,614 unique companies — representing 11 percent of companies contacted. (Source: *Washington State Workforce Investment Act Annual Report*, P. 22, September 2004)

The state's goal is to provide a single point of contact for the employer. Increasing the integration of Business Outreach staff with Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange staff in the WorkSource Centers will reduce duplication of effort and through the partnering of all WIA programs to continue a system of public employment labor exchange within the WorkSource system.

Business service teams are at each WorkSource Center to assess business needs and provide workforce solutions to business. The business teams use an integrated approach that includes business service representatives from ESD, WDC, and key WorkSource partners. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 108.)

Incumbent Worker Training

The State also uses 10 percent of WIA statewide activities funds for incumbent worker training grants. Funding has been provided to the local Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) with matching funds from participating businesses. Last year's incumbent worker initiative was based on regional industry clusters, especially high-demand clusters including manufacturing, healthcare, marine, and boat-building and cutting edge high-tech computer forensics training. The third statewide effort now in progress targets apprenticeship.

The WIA grants will provide each area the opportunity to enhance their connections to Skill Panels and community college-based Centers for Excellence, as well as meeting real-time demand of business and industry. (For more on

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Centers for Excellence, see Part VIII on Education below. Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 76.)

Since 2001, state agencies, WDCs, and educational institutions have partnered with business and industry associations and individual companies to identify short-term and long-term workforce development requirements, skill standards, and emerging occupational needs that will support a thriving business climate. As noted above, these partnerships have provided customized short-term job specific retraining or skills upgrades to 2,913 incumbent workers from the healthcare, retail, manufacturing, information technology, food processing, construction, and education industries. These incumbent workers have received increases in wages; completed licensing requirements and skill certifications; attained industry-accepted occupational skill standards; retained employment; and the employers reported satisfaction with the results the incumbent worker training has accomplished for their employees and themselves. (Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P.40.)

The following are two examples the State uses of business driven partnerships with state agencies and community colleges:

Pierce County: Construction

The Pierce County Construction Partnership (PCCP) conducted a construction industry labor market survey and developed a five-year strategic plan. PCCP coordinated marketing campaign, developed construction career pathways, a successful apprenticeship fair, and implemented magnet and summer school programs.

Yakima County: Agriculture / Food Processing

The Northwest Food Processors Association and the Washington Growers League worked with employers, the Workforce Development Council, and training providers, to create the Eastern Washington Agriculture and Food Processing Partnership. As a result worker skills were upgraded in two of Washington's largest and most labor-intensive industries - food processing and farming. (Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 76.)

Targeted Industries Partnership

Using WIA Title I-B statewide activities funds, the Employment Security Department awarded nine Targeted Industries Partnership (TIP) contracts totaling \$1.5 million. The TIP projects provide customized training for *incumbent workers* in demand occupations in critical industry clusters throughout Washington State. These projects are training approximately 748 incumbent workers in the technology, healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, food processing, and construction industries. Matching funds from employers participating in the projects range from 50 percent to as much as 150 percent of the WIA investments. An evaluation will be done to determine how many received an increase in their salaries. (Source: Washington State Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act, P. 24, September 2004.)

Job Skills Program

Although most businesses contract directly with local community and technical colleges to provide training, some qualify for state assistance. The Washington State Legislature created the State's Job Skills Program (JSP), in 1983, to provide customized employee training. State funds are combined with employer matching funds to support: new employee training for a new plant or company expansion; current employee retraining when retraining is required to prevent the dislocation of those employees; current employee upgrading to enhance productivity; and customized training programs for several companies within an industry.

The Jobs Skills Program prioritizes areas with new and growing industries, industries where there is a shortage of skilled labor, economically disadvantaged areas with high unemployment rates, and areas affected by economic dislocation. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 75.)

Workforce Explorer

Workforce Explorer is the State's on-line labor market information tool and website. Training is offered to the WorkSource staff, local elected officials, WDC staff, and board members within the workforce development system. Information is available on occupations in demand and decline, training, wages, required skills, industry statistics, access to assessment tools, occupational matching/ comparison, training information, and more. Customers can find up-to-date labor market information for the state and the country, as well as for over 800 occupations.

VII. Consumer Information and Performance Measures

Washington State is a leader in developing an extensive and impressive consumer report system to inform the public about occupational training programs as well as their performance results. The Workforce Board has also been a pioneer in the development of common measures of performance across workforce training programs. Washington's core measures of performance are used to report the results for most workforce development programs, including secondary and post-secondary vocational education, adult basic education, private career schools, and apprenticeship. (See *Performance Measures* section on the next page.)

Employment Training Provider Consumer Information

The Employment Training Provider (ETP) consumer information system was under development before the enactment of WIA and took years of interagency collaboration to create. Community and technical colleges, private career schools, and four-year colleges and universities participate in the consumer report system. The system is made up of two websites: *Job Training Results* (www.jobtrainingresults.org) and the *Eligible Training Provider List* (www.wtb.wa.gov/etp). (NOTE: See **ATTACHMENT D** for a sample of a the *Employment Training Provider (ETP) system for a vocational program.*)

The Employment Training Provider (ETP) lists 3,000 training programs and is available on-line at: www.wtb.wa.gov/etp, and is also linked to the national site at: www.careeronestop.org. (In the true spirit of customer friendliness, the State includes additional links to Oregon and Idaho, its neighboring states' ETP sites.) The web site is designed to allow customers and WorkSource Center staff search the list by geographic regions, by training provider, and by training program. The detailed performance information or "results" are available in charts or in a narrative report.

The second part of the consumer report system, the Job Training Results website (www.jobtrainingresults.org), provides a wealth of performance results and program information about hundreds of training programs in one, user-friendly website. If a customer finds a program of interest on the ETP List, he or she can link directly to www.jobtrainingresults.org to find out about its results, such as employment and earnings as well as information about the students who participated (e.g., prior education levels, race/ethnicity, gender and age). Detailed program information is also included, such as tuition rates, length of program, and school contact information.

An important feature of the Washington State consumer report system is that the performance information for *all workforce related programs* is calculated in the same way by the state. Therefore, when consumers look up, for example, the earnings results for different programs, \$25,000 at program X means the same as \$25,000 at program Y. The consistent information should be available to potential students so they can make informed decisions. (Source: *Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004.*)

To be included on the State ETP list, a training program must meet performance floors and targets for completion rate, employment rate, and earnings level. Significantly, procedures used to determine these rates are calculated in the same manner for all training programs. Approximately 40 percent of the training programs on the ETP list are private vocational schools and colleges and universities, and 60 percent are public institutions, schools, and colleges. The training programs identified on this statewide list qualify to receive individual training accounts (ITA or training vouchers) through WIA Title I-B. All 34 public community and technical colleges and the majority of public universities are participating in the ETP process.

Performance Indicators

Washington State has developed common performance indicators across the state and federal workforce programs have made it possible to reach agreement on ETP performance criteria and on the review process to meet performance requirements. On March 31, 2005, the State Workforce Board adopted sixth year ETP performance levels and procedures that will be used to identify occupational skills training programs qualifying for WIA Title I-B training vouchers in Program Year 2005. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan, P.77.*)

The Workforce Board also prepares an annual report on *WorkSource Performance Indicators*, combining the results of the Wagner-Peyser and WIA I-B programs to

measure the percentage of employers and job seekers using the WorkSource Centers, customer perceptions of the seamlessness of service provision across partners, WorkSource staff perceptions of service integration, number of students who are WorkSource participants, and the pooled results for WorkSource customers on federal and state core indicators. (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 115.*)

Performance Targets

Washington's performance targets (called "negotiated performance levels" by WIA) are the 10th highest in the country. The State Board has also developed a set of 13 state developed common core indicators of performance since WIA implementation began. These state-developed common core measures include (1) employment in quarter three after exit; (2) median annualized earnings in quarter three after exit; (3) percent of exiting customers receiving credentials during participation and up through quarter three after exit, and; (4) participant satisfaction measured using state-designed satisfaction questions. These four core measures of performance are calculated separately for WIA adults, WIA dislocated workers, and WIA youth (making a total of 12 state measures). The thirteenth measure is an employer satisfaction measure compiled from a biennial survey of state employers, based on responses of employers who have hired Worksource training participants. (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P.115, and the Washington State Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act P. 29, September 2004*)

Summary of Performance Results

Washington's high levels of performance under WIA continued in Program Year 2003, despite the impacts of funding cuts. Washington performed at an average of 106 percent of targets for 17 federal performance measures, 102 percent of targets for thirteen state measures, and 105 percent of the 30 measures overall. Washington exceeded its average federal targets in all program areas; averaging 105 percent of targets for Adult programs; 101 percent of targets for Dislocated Worker programs; 111 percent of targets for Youth programs; and 100 percent of targets for customer satisfaction. (*Source: Washington State Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act, P. 29 and 30, September 2004*)

During the fourth year of WIA (July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004), Washington's performance continued at high levels. From July 2003 through June 2004, over 280,981 jobseekers received labor exchange services through WorkSource. Approximately 58 percent of these jobseekers found employment.

Go2WorkSource.com is used for self-service access to labor exchange services by jobseekers and employers. Over 350,000 job seekers and 8,000 employers use Go2WorkSource.com each month. The average number of job searches conducted each month is almost a million. Though funding for services for Dislocated Workers shrank by \$19.4 million (41 percent), the number of dislocated workers served dropped by only 8 percent. *Overall, funding for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services dropped by 23 percent, but the number of participants served dropped by only 3 percent.* (*Source: Washington State Annual*

Report on the Workforce Investment Act, P.30, September 2004.)

Performance Incentive Grant

Washington State received an incentive grant of \$3 million from the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor for exceeding Program Year 2001 performance targets for WIA Title I-B, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act. The Workforce Development Councils, in coordination with K-12 and community and technical colleges, are using the funds to support healthcare education and training projects. Plans currently include training for over 1,000 youth, adults, and incumbent workers, as well as strengthening systems that will provide future training in healthcare professions. *(Source: Washington State Annual Report on the Workforce Investment Act, P. 29 and 30, September 2004)*

Quarterly Management Review

The State produces Quarterly Management Review (QMR) documents for WIA performance measurements. This report provides the 12 WDCs with their planned versus actual performance data for WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker, In-School and Out-of-School Youth programs and TAA programs on the following performance measures:

- Number of participants served
- New enrollments
- Number of exits
- Number employed at exit
- Placement rate
- Average wage at exit
- Wage recovery rate
- Number of ITA's
- Participants receiving training & OJT's
- Exits with credentials
- Skill attainment goals.

(Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P.62.)

VIII. Education

Washington ranks 12th in the nation for the number of residents who have completed at least 4 years of college. It ranks 7th in the nation for number of residents who have completed 12 or more years of schooling. Currently, 61 percent of Washington's high school graduates continue directly to an institution of higher education. Most of these students matriculate into a state community college, technical college, or university; however, about 34 percent of graduates go directly to work after high school and need employable skills.

Two-Year Community and Technical Colleges

There are **34 community and technical colleges** in the State of Washington with 260,488 enrolled students in 2002-03. Washington has recognized the importance of community colleges in economic and workforce development and has been a leader in integrating the workforce related services. The State has found that career and technical education boosts student employment and earnings and

generates tax revenues that “far exceed the costs” of the program. Further, career and technical education completers continue on to higher education at the same rate as other high school graduates. Finally, the State colleges have calculated that more career and technical education is needed to meet student and employer needs. (*Breaking Through: Helping Low Income Adults Enter and Succeed in College and Careers, November 2004.*)

Washington’s community and technical colleges provide four primary forms of continuing education:

1. *Academic Transfer* - Earning credits that can be applied to a bachelor’s degree program upon transfer to four-year institutions. 119,918 students attend community and technical colleges with the intention of transferring to 4-year institutions.
2. *Workforce Training and Education*- Preparing for jobs or upgrading job skills. 193,458 students are enrolled in workforce programs. Nearly half of all state-supported students (45 percent) enrolled in community and technical colleges in 2002-03 were upgrading, retraining, or preparing for a new job.
3. *Basic Skills* - Courses that focus on English as a second language, adult basic education, and courses leading to a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate. 77,752 students are enrolled in basic skills programs.
4. *Home, Family Life, and Other* - These students enroll for parent education, retirement planning or other purposes. This category also includes students who did not specify a goal upon enrollment. 119,138 students are enrolled in this diverse program area.

A list of all community and technical colleges is found under the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board's Directory of Washington Colleges & Universities or the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges Directory. (Source: www.choosewashington.com and the WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 34.)

Technical Degree Capacity Issues

A recent statewide study (April 2005) by Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) and the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) estimated that *only 10 percent* of the 7,000 graduates with an Associates in Applied Science and other technical degrees transfer to baccalaureate programs. These Boards also determined a need to triple this transfer rate to 30 percent to better meet student and industry needs. One of reasons for this interest in expanding options for technical workers is that employers surveyed noted difficulty in recruiting qualified applicants who possess both a baccalaureate degree and job-specific skills.

Expanding options for graduates with technical associate degrees will serve Washington workers seeking career advancement while simultaneously meeting industry needs for managers with strong technical skills and specialists with advanced-level technical skills. (Source: *Baccalaureate Enrollment Growth Needed to Meet Educational Needs of Technical Associate Degree Graduates, April 2005.*)

Workforce Training at Community and Technical Colleges

According to the State Board for Community & Technical Colleges (SBCTC), the mission of workforce education and training (number two in the list above) is to provide workforce education, training, and retraining programs at community and technical colleges that will help students learn the full range of basic, pre-college, technical, and academic skills they need to get high-wage jobs and adapt to future career requirements in Washington's changing economy.

Washington's community and technical colleges offer a variety of workforce training programs, which include:

- Preparatory technical education to provide skills training for entry-level employment in a variety of technical occupations (discussed in the next section on *Job Preparatory Training* below).
- Upgrading of skills and retraining to improve or supplement workers' skills in order to remain competitively employed or to advance their careers.
- Supplemental instruction in the classroom as a required component of apprenticeship programs.

In addition to state funds, Perkins III provides important supplemental funding for postsecondary workforce training targeted to improving the quality and outcomes of the programs. (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 36.*)

Job Preparatory Training at Community and Technical Colleges

Each of the 34 community and technical colleges in Washington State offers job preparatory training or preparatory technical education that provides skills training for entry-level employment in a variety of technical occupations. (The definition of "job preparatory training" does not include transfer students to four-year college, worker retraining, students who enroll to raise their basic skills, or working adults who take a few courses to improve their skill for their current jobs.) (*Also see ATTACHMENT B on a federal grant award to develop new curriculum and training models for biotechnology workers.*)

The Workforce Board tracked information on almost 16,700 job preparatory students, 51 percent of whom received degrees or certificates, up from 45 percent in 2000. Of these, 78 percent had reported employment in the Northwest during the third quarter after leaving the program. Their median wage was \$13.17 per hour, with annualized earnings of \$24,180. These results are 16 percent higher than for those who left in 1997-98 and 25 percent higher than 1995-96.

State evaluations have shown that job preparatory training has strong positive short-term net impacts on employment, wages (an additional \$2.59/hr), hours worked (40.4/hrs per quarter), and earnings (mean quarterly increase of \$1,470). Projected participant benefits to age 65 outweigh public costs by a ratio of over \$16 in participant benefits per public dollar invested in college training. Finally, the public benefits as well through increased taxes. (*Source: Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004.*)

The colleges have a good record of directing growth to meet economic demand. To close the skills gap, however, the state must fund more enrollment growth at

community and technical colleges as well as develop new programs. Enhancing program accessibility through the greater use of infrastructure that is already in place for distance learning, and creating new distance learning opportunities are being pursued.

- The demand for new workers in Washington State who have between one and four years of postsecondary education or training is expected to reach 28,600 in 2007 and 29,700 in 2010. Over the past two years, the state's community and technical colleges (and the private colleges) have increased enrollment by 7,032 students in the three mission areas of vocational training, academic transfer education, and adult basic skills education.
- The current student supply coming out of community and technical colleges, private career schools, or apprenticeship programs, however, will only meet 82.5 percent of that demand in 2007 and 79.5 percent in 2010. To close the gap completely by 2010, the State will need more than 22,400 additional FTEs to meet this demand.
- Students completing job preparatory training at a community or technical college can expect to earn about \$6,100 more per year than similar individuals who did not receive training.

Workforce Training and Centers of Excellence

Workforce training and education for the 21st century is one of the major goals of community and technical colleges. In the last two years, *eleven* "Centers of Excellence" were created with state funds from State Board of Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). These Centers are located in community and technical colleges and targeted to industries to help solve skill-related problems, ensure a continuing flow of new entrants, and provide a source of upgrading incumbent workforce. The Centers are intended as "one-stop shops" for the firms that comprise a cluster (discussed above), so that educators and trainers are able to more efficiently stay abreast of changes in technology and employment and develop resources for employers.

One example of a "Center of Excellence" is the **Center for Information Technology Excellence (CITE)** at Bellevue Community College. This Center is affiliated and co-located with the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies (NWCET). CITE is an information resource and solution provider for model information technology education programs, best practices, up-to-date research, information dissemination, instructor development, and sharing of industry trends impacting employment, education, and business growth across Washington State.

(Source: www.sbctc.ctc.edu/workforce/CtrsofExcellence.asp)

Private Career Schools

There are over 325 private career schools and colleges in Washington State. The Workforce Board licenses approximately 250 of these schools. (Either the Higher Education Coordinating Board or the State's Department of Licensing regulates the remainder.) Most students who completed programs at schools licensed by the Board said their skills and earnings improved substantially (between 60 and 70 percent depending upon the course of study undertaken) and 80 percent

overall said they were satisfied with the training they received. Eighty-seven percent of career school students were employed six to nine months after leaving their programs and were earning a median wage of \$11.24/hr, a 20 percent increase over the median wage reported two years earlier. (Source: Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004.)

IX. State Re-employment Services

This year, Washington State is implementing an innovative project, the Re-employment Eligibility Assessment. It is a partnership between WIA Title I and Title III staff and the Unemployment Insurance program developed through a U.S. Department of Labor grant. A computer automated program, the Claimant Progress Tool, is being upgraded to identify unemployment insurance claimants who have received benefits in the previous week and are required to seek work. It allows the WorkSource Center to select claimants individually or in total by geographical area and characteristics such as:

1. Industry and Occupation
2. Older Workers (55 plus years old)
3. Desired Occupation (work the claimant is seeking)
4. Occupation representing the majority of the claimants base year earnings

The Claimant Progress Tool will also allow the case managers and employment specialists to view a single screen of the services the claimant has already received by the WorkSource Center. It provides links to the State Labor Market Information and the universal access Go2WorkSource.com system. This Tool will also allow the WorkSource Center to generate a plan for the claimant with the labor market information, assist in the job matching process, and recommend referrals to additional workforce services. (Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 108.)

Training Benefits Program for Dislocated Workers

In 2000, the Washington State Legislature created the Training Benefits Program to provide up to 73 *additional weeks* of unemployment benefits for dislocated workers who enroll in retraining. This financial assistance is key to enabling many workers to stay in retraining long enough to complete a certificate or degree in a high demand technical program. Since July 2002, \$40 million dollars in additional *benefits* are available per biennium.

Research has found that retraining can have a substantial positive impact on worker earnings; however, the impact depends on the type of training. Training for high-wage fields increases worker earnings by an average of \$3,200 per year while training for low-wage fields typically has a negative impact on earnings. That is, if training is in low-wage fields, dislocated workers are better off seeking immediate employment, where skills and experience can be gained on the job. (Source: WIA Two-Year, P.36.)

The community and technical colleges and private career schools provide training in basic skills and literacy, CTE, and related or supplemental instruction for apprentices. Those who qualify may receive financial assistance that can help

with tuition, as well as offset the costs of childcare and transportation. (*Source: WIA Two-Year, P.36.*)

The Worker Retraining program has grown from 7,161 students in 1993-94 to 13,836 in 2001-02. In the fall of 2002, enrollments were up 59 percent from the previous fall, such that the retraining programs at community and technical colleges were at capacity and the WorkSource Centers (One Stops) had difficulties enrolling dislocated workers. To address this capacity problem, the state took advantage of WIA's flexibility to contract for additional training slots.

Worker Retraining students represent about one-sixth of the colleges' total workforce education efforts. The growth of the Worker Retraining program has been a major factor why workforce education at the community and technical colleges has grown over the past decade. The increased demand for the Worker Retraining program is due not only to the current economic recession. The long-run trend is for more dislocations to occur due to ever more rapidly changing technology and increasing international competition. Responding to these economic changes means that higher education must have the capacity to retrain dislocated workers who need new skills. (*Source: Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004.*)

Small Business Development Centers

Washington State offers support for small businesses through the Washington Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) to expand markets and retain businesses at risk. The SBDC is a cooperative effort of Washington State University, Western Washington University, community colleges, economic development organizations, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The Washington SBDC's offer small business training for a nominal fee at about a dozen sites, mostly in 20 community colleges. In fiscal year 2004, these training centers held an impressive 350 workshops with 4,559 attendees. Workshop topics such as management, business plan writing, accounting and marketing were some of the most popular.

SBDC counselors have certified broad-based skills and significant experience as business owners or managers. They provide one-on-one, confidential assistance at no charge for management and technical business affairs. (*Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 38, and the SBDC web site: www.wsdbc.org/aboutWSBDC.htm.*)

Significantly, Washington State has been designated one of the sites for the Workforce Innovation Networks (WINs) project hosted by the Center for Workforce Preparation of the U.S. Chambers of Commerce, Jobs for the Future, and the Center for Workforce Success of the National Association of Manufacturers. This project is directed to engage employers more deeply with the workforce development system, and is anticipated to strengthen the system's responsiveness to employer needs. (*Source: Ellen O'Brien Saunders, U.S. Senate Hearing Testimony, March 4, 2004.*)

Statewide Technology System – SKIES

One of the major charges of the one-stop partners was to collaborate on the adaptation of an imported software system to develop and implement a statewide case management tool. ESD developed this State Knowledge and Information Exchange System (SKIES) a statewide technology system for use by all WorkSource Centers and affiliate sites in the state. All system users are able to access customer records with the exception of those containing medical treatment information or those who choose to opt out of the system. This system supports common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery and performance management. The SKIES system data is necessary to measure the performance of One-Stop partners, including common measures. (Source: WIA Two-Year Plan, P. 41.)

Apprenticeship Programs

The Governor issued Executive Order 00-01 to promote apprenticeship utilization in public works projects. State agencies under the authority of the Governor require participation of Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council (WSATC) registered apprentices in all public works. The state also requires that WDCs enter into MOUs with Job Corp providers. This enhances program access and further integrates potential Job Corps opportunities within the One-Stop system.

The WSATC works with ESD to expand access to apprenticeship programs within each service delivery area through the WorkSource One-Stop system. This includes providing a convenient means for individuals to apply for apprenticeship programs.

Go2WorkSource.com

As a part of its workforce offerings, the State also created a Go2WorkSource.com web site to provide employers and job seekers with self-service access to a broad range of labor exchange services. Job seekers can search for jobs; post resumes; apply on-line for jobs; and access career and labor market information. Employers can post job listings, search for job candidate resumes, and access business assistance resources and labor market information. The web site is visited an impressive 400,000 times each month, with about 16,000 to 17,000 jobs listed at any one time, averaging about 500 new employers on the site monthly.

The Go2WorkSource.com job finding links on the web-site include:

- Links to classified ads to on-line newspapers in Washington State and Portland, Oregon
- Classified ad from Neighborhood Classifieds
- National Job Boards
- Specialty Job Boards
- Research of Employer Job Boards
- Government Jobs

There is also a Career Link that includes:

- Wage and Occupational Information

Washington Workforce Development

- Career and Job Search Links
- Employment and Training Programs
- Job Search Tutorials
- Local Resources

(Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 71.)

WorkSource Disability Network

The WorkSource Disability Network (WDN) is a broad-based partnership working to make Washington State's WorkSource Centers into a resource that is valued in the disability community; and where employers are assisted in recognizing and benefiting from the skills and abilities of people who have disabilities.

The WorkSource Disability Network (WDN) will support Disability Program Navigator positions in each of the WDA of the State that do not have their own grant resources that could be used for that purpose. The Network will also provide a coordinated statewide program of technical assistance, support, training, and networking activities, to all of the Disability Program Navigators, and WorkSource affiliated staff that have similar duties to those of the Disability Program Navigators, regardless of their job.

The State monitors accessibility issues through use of its *Secret Shopper Continuous Accessibility Assessment*. This provides the WDN and Disability Program Navigators with practical assessments of the level of accessibility and quality of services provided. The WDN will recruit 150 job seekers with disabilities to be secret shoppers. All of the secret shoppers used in this program will be people with disabilities who are actively pursuing employment, and who could benefit in that effort from the kinds of services provided through our WorkSource Centers and Affiliates. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 86.)

Job Hunter Workshop Series

The Job Hunter Workshop Series was developed as part of the State's Claimant Placement Program to improve services to UI claimants and establish group level services for all job seekers in Washington's WorkSource Centers. Job Hunter is composed of a set of seven intensive job search workshop modules to engage adult learners in interactive discussions and hands on activities to prepare for moving through the labor market. The Series encourages job seekers to view hiring from the employer's perspective and teaches them how to demonstrate skills and abilities in relation to business needs. The result expected is a job match suitable to the applicant and the employer.

Washington State offers a number of other programs or training to local WorkSource Centers, including:

Mystery Shopper Program to measure the level of service offered by ESD and its partners in WorkSource Centers. There are appraisals of in-person, phone, and facility visits, which are compiled and distributed for quality improvement

efforts within ESD (as discussed above in the WorkSource Disability Network (WDN) section).

Customer Service Training – ESD staff members are required to attend customer service training and partners and contract personnel are eligible to attend. This professional development training is intended to create a friendly, customer service experience at any point of service.

Training for Business Outreach Incubator Project offers training to both Employment Security staff and partners in providing business services. It assists staff in designing and implementing a targeted sector strategy for engaging local businesses as well as connecting staff to local industry Skill Panels (discussed above).

(Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 70.)

X. State Workforce Services for Youth

Workforce partners, including the Workforce Board, the Economic Security Department, and the Office of the Superintendent for Public Instruction are coordinating efforts to address the social and economic consequences for young people who do not earn a high school diploma. Among this population are youth who have special needs and would have significant barriers to employment. These efforts are the direct result of a resolution adopted by the Workforce Board directing staff to “work with partner agencies to utilize WIA 10 percent funds to implement a dropout prevention and retrieval initiative.”

The goal of this initiative was to leverage \$1.34 million in WIA 10 percent statewide activities funds with Basic Education Act (BEA) funds. WIA funds are directed to areas with high concentrations of eligible youth. BEA funds support educationally related services to all youth, and WIA funds support social services to WIA eligible youth. Leveraging BEA and WIA funds made it possible to create programs that coordinate a range of direct services to keep, retrieve, and retain youth in school.

These leveraged funds support 12 demonstration projects in each of the workforce development areas of the State. The demonstration projects will develop and/or expand dropout prevention and intervention services such as prevention, retrieval, and recovery strategies. The 12 projects anticipate serving 1,267 students.

This youth initiative supports developing local community-school partnerships that plan and implement dropout prevention and retrieval initiatives for at-risk youth, including after school hours and summer programs. Funds reserved for statewide activities will be directed to areas of high concentrations of eligible youth again for 2005. Governor Gregoire has identified youth as one of three priorities for the use of set aside funds. (Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 104.)

Local Youth Services

Services to youth include basic skills remediation; helping youth stay in or return to school; employment; internships; help with attaining a high school diploma or GED; postsecondary vocational training; and apprenticeships and enrollment in community and four-year colleges. Further, the local WDCs with area WorkSource partners coordinate services offered by school districts, community and technical colleges, local School-to-Work and Tech Prep initiatives, and for youth in foster care.

Service integration grants were made to each WDC and its Youth Council to conduct area wide surveys of community youth service providers, whether or not these service providers received funding under the WIA. The resulting resource maps became the basis for convening youth service agencies in each area to develop a continuum of service needs based on the area's resources and youth population characteristics.

(Source: *WIA Two-Year Plan*, P. 103.)

XI. Conclusion

The State of Washington is progressive in developing workforce programs and in integrating multiple funding streams to leverage more resources for worker training. Washington has recognized the importance of community colleges in economic and workforce development and has been a leader in integrating workforce related services. (Source: *Breaking Through, Jobs For the Future*, November 2004.)

Additional highlights of workforce development activities in the State of Washington include:

- A small and manageable *State Workforce Board*. Washington State has only 11 appointees on its board in comparison to other states, where there are often over 30 members. In addition to the Board, there are supporting committees established to help carryout its work.
- The development of *Employment Training Provider* (ETP) system; an impressive consumer report information system for the public on occupational training programs and their performance results. Community and technical colleges, private career schools, and four-year colleges and universities participate in this consumer report system, which lists 3,000 training programs.
- Related to the ETP system, the State has been a pioneer in the development of *common measures of performance* across workforce training programs; using a set of 13 state developed common core indicators of performance.
- Washington uses the concept of *industry clusters* as an organizing principle for targeting scarce workforce resources where they are most likely to be effective and make the most difference for a given industry cluster in a given

region.

- The State uses a portion of the WIA Title I-B statewide activities funds to support *industry skill panels* in partnership with business, labor and education leaders considered key to the economic success of a region. Thus far, the State has invested in 33 skill panels and developed customized short-term job specific retraining or skills upgrades for 2,913 incumbent workers.
- Since 2000, the State provided up to 73 additional weeks of unemployment benefits for dislocated workers who enroll in retraining through its *Training Benefits Program*. This financial assistance is key to enabling as many as 13,000 workers per year to stay in retraining long enough to complete a certificate or degree in a high demand technical program.

XII. REFERENCES:

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- Washington Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development website on Washington Industries, specifically the Washington Technology Center link and Biotechnology link at www.choosewashington.com.
- Workforce Training Centers of Excellence website: www.sbctc.ctc.edu/workforce/CtrsofExcellence.asp

ATTACHMENT A

Labor and Industries News
December 29, 2004

Washington's workers' comp rates rank in lowest one-third in U.S.

TUMWATER — A new rate-comparison study shows that workers' compensation rates in Washington remain among the lowest in the nation.

The 2004 "Workers' Compensation Premium Rate Ranking" study by the Oregon Department of Consumer & Business Services shows Washington at 35th. That means 33 states and the District of Columbia had higher workers' compensation rates in 2004 than Washington and only 16 states had lower rates.

If you remove the portion of the premium paid by workers in Washington, the state ranks 44th in terms of net cost to employers. Washington is the only state in the nation in which employees pay a portion of the premiums.

"Our rates remain in the bottom third in terms of cost compared with other states, and our benefits remain among the best in the nation," said Paul Trause, director of the Washington Department of Labor and Industries (L&I), which runs the state's workers' compensation system. "I believe we continue to be a good buy for employers and good insurance for employees."

Trause noted that the Oregon study, conducted every two years since 1986, is often cited in the insurance industry as an authoritative gauge of workers' compensation rates nationwide.

Washington's average State Fund premium ranking of 35th in 2004 compares with 45th two years earlier — before premium increases in 2003 and 2004. The new Oregon study does not include a 3.7 percent rate increase announced by L&I for 2005. Trause noted that he expects the limited premium increase in 2005 to compare well with other states and, in fact, to enhance Washington's overall ranking.

Trause said Washington's rates remain in the bottom one-third because of low administrative costs and because investment income is used to defray approximately one-third of the benefit costs.

Even with the workers' share of the premium included, Washington's ranking is better than Idaho's at 34th, Montana's at 8th and Alaska's at 2nd, and close to Oregon's at 42nd. (Source: www.lni.wa.gov/news/2004/pr041229a.asp)

Five Colleges Get \$5 Million for Biotech

By Natalie C. Holmes

Community College Times

July 6, 2004

Five community colleges will share in a \$5 million grant to develop new curriculum and training models for biotechnology workers, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced in June. The award is part of a \$17 million "High Growth Job Training Initiative" the Bush administration launched to identify models and help seed training efforts in key industries, such as health care, automotive and biotechnology.

"It's going to be a very exciting project with five centers of excellence that will be able to complement each other," said Ric Matthews, dean for mathematics and sciences at Miracosta College (California), one of the partner institutions in the latest round of grants.

Earlier last month, DOL announced a grant of \$2.4 million to Pittsburgh Life Sciences Greenhouse, which is collaborating with the Community College of Allegheny County and other partners in a similar local effort.

Forsyth Community College (North Carolina) will administer the latest grant and along with four other institutions, including Miracosta, establish a National Center for the Biotechnology Workforce. Forsyth received a \$754,000 demonstration grant from DOL in 2003 to begin offering an associate of applied science degree in biotechnology targeted to dislocated workers. One hundred students currently are enrolled in the program, according to FCC spokeswoman Annette Ogletree-McDougal, and several are expected to graduate this summer.

"Each of the community colleges participating in this grant has demonstrated expertise in a specific biotechnology skill area," said Emily Stover DeRocco, assistant secretary of labor for employment and training. "The partnership between these institutions is designed to produce a national model for developing a skilled workforce in response to identified biotech industry needs."

Forsyth will focus on biotech research and development in the Southeast; Miracosta will highlight bioprocessing in the Southwest; New Hampshire Technical College will concentrate on biomanufacturing in the Northeast; Indian Hills Community College (Iowa) will emphasize agriculture and food processing in the Midwest; and **Bellevue Community College (Washington)** will provide training in bioinformatics in the Northwest.

"We're very excited to be a part of this network," said Jill Rossiter, assistant to the president for industrial relations at IHCC. "We see this as a real good way to attack a common problem to get our workforce the skills they need ... and become more competitive.

“These five community colleges were selected because we were already doing some of this with some success and because of our locations in various regions of the country,” Rossiter said. The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) sponsored regional forums on the biotechnology workforce at various locations in 2003 and 2004, she explained. “The purpose of those forums was to find out what already was going on around the country and to get discussions started on how to jumpstart workforce development in the field of biotechnology,” she said. “What they were looking for were ways to build partnerships.”

For the past two years, IHCC has operated a Bioprocess Training Center and offers an associate of science degree in bioprocessing technology. Sixty-five students have graduated from the program and gone to work, Rossiter said, most in the state of Iowa, where they typically earn \$32,000 to \$40,000 their first year on the job. In addition, Iowa BioDevelopment, a training group that is part of IHCC’s business and industry resource center trains incumbent workers in the field at locations statewide.

Currently IHCC is wrapping up a final report from a training needs assessment of biotechnology companies to be used in helping craft programs at all of the state’s 15 community colleges, but already it’s clear IHCC’s programs fulfill a critical need, she said.

“The companies that we were dealing with were having great success in hiring people with bachelor’s and higher degrees, such as microbiologists and chemists,” she said. “Where they were really needing help was with people at the technical level. Basically what they were doing was training on the job because there were no programs ... They needed people who didn’t have a four-year degree that could help manage the plant and run the plant,” she said.

Among the companies for which IHCC trains workers are Cargill, which manufactures ethanol and glucosamine and Ajinomoto-Heartland, which makes monosodium glutamate.

Meanwhile, Miracosta’s 14-year-old biotechnology program that once focused exclusively on research and development has expanded to encompass bioprocessing, reflecting advances in the field. In San Diego County, more than 400 biotechnology companies of “six to 6,000 people” perform functions from R&D to clinical trials to mass production, Matthews said.

“The knowledge of biotechnology is like computers was in the 1970s,” added Rossiter. “Nobody’s quite sure yet what the possibilities are.”

IHCC staff will be on hand at the Workforce Innovations conference in July in San Antonio, Texas, demonstrating a virtual reality fermentation system used at its training center. The American Association of Community Colleges is a partner with DOL in supporting that conference.

For more information on the High Growth Job Training Initiative and grants to community colleges, visit www.doleta.gov.

Washington Workforce Development

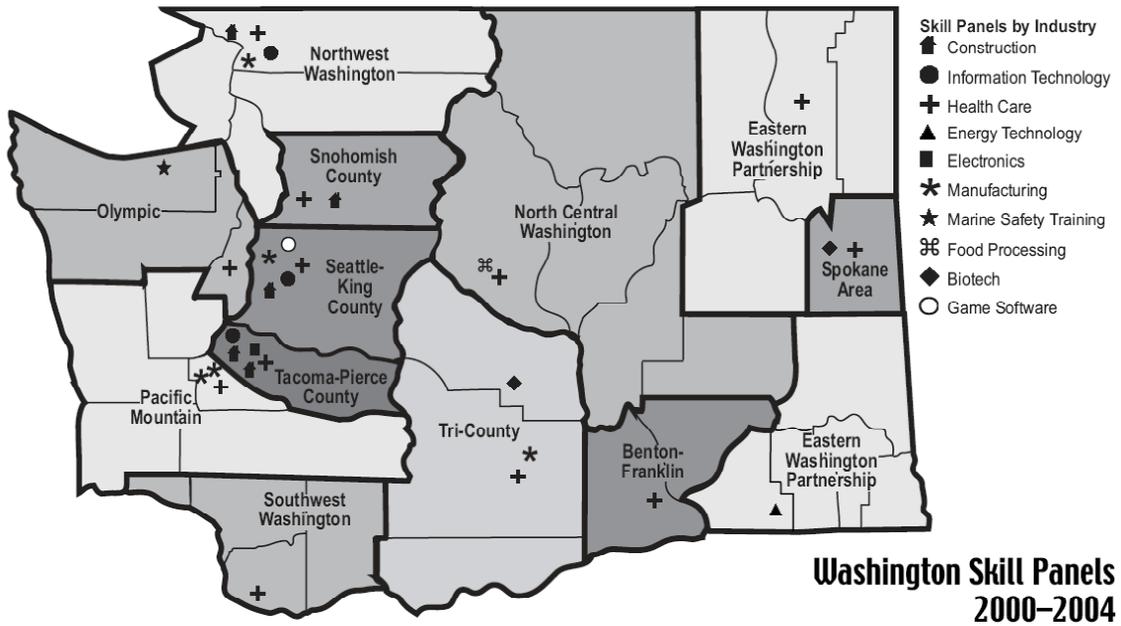
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*Competitiveness and Opportunity:
Public/Private Industry Partnerships That Work*

Published by the Washington State Workforce Training and Coordinating Board



Information Technology

Pierce County Careers Connection

In 2003, there were 10.3 million information technology (IT) jobs in the nation. Although software companies hire many IT workers, nine out of ten are employed by banks, insurance companies, manufacturing firms, or other non-IT businesses. With its large government, trade, and manufacturing sectors, Pierce County's economy includes a healthy number of IT producers and workers.

Despite the recent downturn in IT employment, employers continue to complain that they cannot find candidates with the necessary skills and experience.

Pierce County Careers Connection created a panel of 10 industry leaders to provide guidance and expertise to Pierce County high school, college, and university IT programs as they increase their capacity to provide high-quality workforce and education training programs.

Results

- Census and labor market analysis of Pierce County's IT industry.
- Eleven articulation agreements enabling students to transfer IT credits from high school to community colleges and four-year universities successfully.
- IT career guide given to 34,000 Pierce County students.
- Recruitment guide to attract people of color, young women, and nontraditional youth into IT careers.
- Cross-training to over 25 teachers in high-demand IT career clusters.

- InternMatch, a free online internship system (<www.InternMatch.org>).
- Feasibility report for IT apprenticeship program in Pierce County.

Next Steps

Seamless pathway from high school IT course work to college course work to employment.

- Increased IT work-based learning opportunities in Pierce County.
- An IT apprenticeship program in Pierce County.

Want to Know More?

For more information, contact Lisa Pletcher at the Pierce County Careers Connection, 253-984-6002, <lpletcher@pc3connect.org>, or visit their Web site at <www.pc3connect.org>.

Workforce Training and Education
Coordinating Board 2004
<http://www.wtb.wa.gov>

“Access Washington” Job Training Results
From Washington State Employment Training Provider (ETP) Information System

SAMPLE PROGRAM (Note: The format below is slightly altered from the on-line version.)

ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services -- Computer Training Program
Data For Academic Years: 2001-2002, 2002-2003

Where To Learn More About the Program

This report includes information about ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services and its Computer Training program(s). While such information can be helpful, certain limitations should be taken into consideration. In addition, it is a good idea to contact the program directly at:

ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services
303 West B Street
Yakima, WA 98902-2652
Or visit its website at: <http://...>
Contact Person: David Grover (509) 454-7989

Employment

Students Who Completed The Program

- Total Number With Reported Employment
26
- Percent With Reported Employment
63%
- Going to School (Continuing Education)
0%
- Reported Employment or Continuing Education
63%
- Of Those Employed, Percent Working Full-time (30 Hrs/wk or More):
75%
- Typical (Median) Hours Worked per Week:
33

Hourly Wage for Students Who Completed The Program :

- Typical (Median) Hourly Wage:
\$7.75/hour
- Range: Low \$6.49/hour
- High \$8.76/hour

Gross Earnings for Students Who Completed The Program:

- Typical (Median) Monthly Earnings:

Washington Workforce Development

\$1,362.88

- Typical (Median) Annual Earnings: \$16,354.56
- Typical (Median) Monthly Earnings of Full-time Workers: \$1,400.25

NOTE: Employment, wage and earnings data does not include self-employment.

Enrollment

Information about persons who were enrolled in the Computer Training program(s) at ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 academic years is presented in two ways:

- Total Number of Students Who Left the Program — any individual who was enrolled in the program(s) during that time period and is no longer enrolled. There were 55 students.
- Total Number of Students Completing the Program — any individual who was enrolled in the program and has completed it. There were 41 completers.
- Taken together, the resulting completion rate was 75%.

Student Characteristics:

Gender

Of all 41 students who exited the Computer Training program(s) at ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services, during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 academic years:

- 16% were male and
- 84% were female.

Race

Of all 41 students who exited the Computer Training program(s) at ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services, during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 academic years, were

- 6% were Asian/Pacific Islander,
- 0% were African American/Black,
- 15% were Hispanic, and
- 76% were White.

Age

Of all 41 students who exited the Computer Training program at ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services, during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 academic years:

- 7% were age 20 to 29,
- 15% were age 30 to 39,
- 41% were age 40 to 49, and
- 37% were age 50 or older.

Prior Education

Of all 41 students who exited the Computer Training program(s) at ACT NOW Personnel and Training Services during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 academic years:

- 0% had no high school diploma or GED,
- 100% had a high school diploma/GED but no college experience,

Washington Workforce Development

- 0% had some college experience, but hadn't earned a degree,
- 0% had already completed a certificate or AA degree, and
- 0% entered having already earned a BA or higher level degree.

(Source: <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/jtr/> or <http://www.wtb.wa.gov/jtr/ListOfPages.asp?SchoolCode=OTH001&CIPCode=110101>)