

New York State Annual Performance Report for the
PY 2006 Workforce Information Grant

I. Highlights: Program Year 2006 saw advances in the Labor Market Information program in New York State. They fell in four areas – data, training, career information, and customer satisfaction – and are highlighted below.

Data:

Workforce planners stress the need to have more detailed labor market information for their local areas. This information is needed for a variety of local planning efforts including: analysis of specific local occupational and skill needs and shortages; information to support local economic development strategies; and local labor force dynamics. To address these needs, a number of improvements concerning the availability of local information were put into place.

- Short-term Occupational Projections for 2006-2008 were developed for the first time and published online.
- We transmitted the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) and wage record datasets to the Census Bureau as required for participation in Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program. The Census is currently processing New York State data.
- We devised a new methodology for determining monthly updates of short-term occupational demand lists. It is based on applying Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) staffing patterns to average QCEW employment change by firm over the last 3 years. Regional lists of occupations in which we expected heavy hiring in the coming month were posted on our website each month. Local workforce investment boards (LWIBs) were offered the help of our field staff in determining their own demand lists for WIA purposes.
- Small area nonfarm wage and salary employment estimates continue to be prepared and published monthly via press release and online.
- We updated the occupational staffing patterns data on our website based on updated OES program data. Our field analysts find this data very useful in assisting economic developers and jobseekers.
- We updated the quarterly and annual average QCEW data on our website.
- We updated occupational wage data for local workforce investment areas and made it available to local workforce investment boards.

- Updated statewide and regional OES wage and employment estimates were placed on our website.
- We instituted Excel and comma delimited versions of online data searches at the request of online customers.

Training:

Based on our long experience in presenting labor market information to the public we have learned that data alone rarely helps solve workforce problems. A great deal of training is continuously needed to help planners and workforce professionals understand the implications of our economic data and how to apply it properly to address workforce challenges. With the ongoing turnover of personnel delivering local front-line services and repeated reevaluations of how best to direct declining workforce dollars, a continuous training regimen is needed to encourage information-driven management. Some specific accomplishments in this area are listed below.

- Thirty training sessions on our adult career management tool, JobZone, were provided to over 500 workforce development professionals.
- Six Career Development Facilitator (CDF) sessions were completed, with a total of 150 attendees. Three of the sessions were done with the asynchronous e-learning tool called iLinc. The iLinc system was purchased and supported by the Office of Children and Family Services, the agency that partnered with DOL in delivering CDF sessions.
- Five Real Game training sessions for 80 career development professionals were offered. Four Real Game train-the-trainer sessions were delivered and resulted in 45 new Real Game instructors for New York State. Real Game is a career exploration curriculum based on role playing.
- Field analysts attended 84 local workforce investment board meetings to offer assistance, stay informed of local efforts, and make presentations. Central office staff attended each State Workforce Investment Board (WIB).

Career Information:

Using the power of the Internet we can now reach hundreds of thousands of people -- job seekers, intermediaries and planners -- with quality labor market and career information at home or wherever they have access to the Internet. This ability has revolutionized how we deliver critical real-time information about the job market to those searching for jobs or thinking about new careers. To further these efforts some specific new additions are mentioned below.

- The JobZone System, a free online career management tool for adults, was supported through in-person and webinar training sessions. Customers created some 80,000 accounts by June 2007.
- The STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) portal created for the CareerZone System was supported and enhanced. A database of STEM-related regional internships, summer camps, and other events were added and continuously updated. The STEM portal was suggested by the Business Council of NYS and Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.
- Our Western New York regional analyst developed a tool to assist Employment Service staff reemploy Unemployment Insurance (UI) recipients. The tool was tested in the Western New York region. He looked at the occupations of UI beneficiaries. He then determined the firms likely to have the greatest number of openings (and potential hiring) in those occupations for each month of the year (based on QCEW and OES staffing patterns). The tool provided the list of firms in rank order by employment size. This optimized the job development efforts of Employment Service staff by allowing them to solicit job openings from firms that were most likely to be hiring in occupations matching those of UI beneficiaries.

Customer Satisfaction:

We constantly monitor and assess whether the information we make available is the information people want, need, can understand, and can make use of. We also strive to delivered information in a customer-friendly fashion. We asked satisfaction questions via e-mail and telephone.

- We received 612 responses, with an overall satisfaction rate of 94%.
- Educators (K-12) and training providers reported a satisfaction rate of 100%.
- Forty-two percent of surveyed users were businesses. They had a satisfaction rate of 96%.
- Ninety-seven percent of surveyed users said they were served in a timely manner.
- See section III. B. for detailed customer satisfaction results.

II. The discussion below addresses the six products and services required by ETA guidelines and described in the PY 2006 Statement of Work Deliverables.

- 1.** Continue populating the Workforce Information Database with state and local data

Core data tables, except industry projections, were updated. (The Division of the Budget prepares industry occupational projections in New York State. We have negotiated the release of industry projections in the future.) New OES and staffing patterns data were loaded and made available via the website as the data was produced by the OES unit. We also updated the quarterly and annual average data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. Short-term (two-year) occupational projections for New York State and its 10 regions were loaded into the database and made available for public access on the Internet. The InfoUSA employer database was loaded as updates were received and made the underpinning of the Business Directory tool on our website. Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program data were updated monthly and after benchmarking of the series. State-produced estimates of jobs by industry for non-CES areas were loaded monthly and after benchmarking. Version 2.4 of the database became available. Modifications to the database 2.4 structure are performed on a table-by-table basis as new data becomes available.

- 2.** Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections

Long-term occupational projections were completed for the 10 labor market areas in the state. Industry forecasts were developed using the Projections Workgroup's Long-Term Industry Projection software. Results were reviewed, adjusted and benchmarked to the New York State Division of Budget forecasted growth rate for the state. Occupational Employment Statistics program staffing patterns, developed using the Estimates Delivery System, were loaded in the Micro-Matrix system and adjusted. Occupational projections were developed following Projections Workgroup guidelines. Regional long-term occupational projections were published on our website.

Short-term occupational projections were completed for the state for the first time. Industry forecasts were developed using the Projections Workgroup's Short-Term Industry Projection software. Results were reviewed, adjusted and benchmarked to the New York State Division of Budget forecasted growth rate for the state. Occupational Employment Statistics staffing patterns, developed using the Estimates Delivery System, were loaded in the Micro-Matrix system and adjusted. Occupational projections were developed following Projections Workgroup guidelines. After review and adjustment, the ETA Deliverable Extract

was submitted according to Projections Managing Partnership instructions. Statewide short-term occupational projections were published on our website.

3. Publish an annual economic analysis report for the Governor and the State WIB

For a number of years one of the major emphases of the workforce development system was to encourage local workforce investment boards to plan strategically and, as a result, focus their resources in priority industries (and eventually on priority occupations within those industries). This effort was a struggle despite offering the services of our outstationed labor market analysts during each planning cycle. Therefore, we decided to concentrate our report on the subject of what we termed “significant industries”. We suggested in the preface of the report that an analysis of significant industries could inform workforce development policy and investment decisions.

The Department’s regional labor market analysts listed regionally significant industries on which they suggested the LWIBs concentrate their resources. To arrive at those significant industries they looked at job counts, wages, and job growth (both net and percent) over three years, as well as priority industries that may have been designated by local economic development officials. Industries that ranked highly in these measures were placed on the regional lists of significant industries.

We suggested that the next step was for LWIBs to ascertain from local businesses in those industries which occupations were in short supply or needed skill upgrades. We offered our analysts’ help in determining these occupations.

Finally, we recommended that local boards set aside a significant share of their training dollars, perhaps 25% or 50% (local boards would make that decision), to address the shortage occupations identified by local businesses.

The report was widely circulated in draft form among the workforce and economic development communities. It was used by the department’s representative on the “I Live New York” workgroup, an effort to retain and attract young professionals in New York State. The report was also shared with the Division of Workforce Development and Training which oversees WIA activities in New York State. The regional analyses were shared by local labor market analysts with local workforce boards and their staff in an effort to trigger discussion of targeting workforce investments at industries that would be most worthwhile. The Deputy Commissioner for Workforce Development has considered some aspects of the report as he began deliberations concerning workforce development policy and the reconstitution of the State WIB. The Deputy Commissioner has also initiated discussions with the Empire State Development Corporation (ESD), the state’s economic development agency,

concerning coordinating the prioritization of public investments in both economic development and workforce development in selected industries. In preparation for those discussions, the report was also shared with the research and policy staff at ESD.

Work on the PY 2007 annual economic analysis report has begun. We are committed to publishing and transmitting the PY 2007 report by June 30, 2008. Aside from an overview of labor market conditions statewide and in New York's regions, the report will provide information for policy makers looking at the effects of immigration and the pending retirements among the Baby Boom generation as well as options for more fully including immigrants and low-wage workers into the economic life of the state.

4. Post products, information, and reports on the Internet

1. The Department's website was regularly updated and was enhanced, including the LMI portion, the Career Services portion, and part of the Business Services portion. With the exception of a spike in March 2007 due to two press releases in that month, monthly web traffic averaged approximately 2,000 visitors daily.
2. Regional labor market analysts consulted with LWIBs on occupational demand lists. We continued to provide an online tool for adding and deleting occupations.
3. Division of Research and Statistics (R&S) staff devised a new methodology for determining short-term demand list updates monthly. It is based on applying OES staffing patterns to average QCEW employment change by firm over the last 3 years. Regional lists of occupations in which we expect heavy hiring in the coming month were posted on our website each month.
4. R&S staff prepared monthly estimates of nonfarm jobs by industry for areas not funded by BLS and published them online.
5. R&S staff provided daily job opening lists for labor exchange through our WDSuite tool.
6. Our Central New York analyst hosts and updates the website of the Cayuga-Cortland Workforce Investment Area.
7. R&S staff continued to geocode the QCEW data for the purpose of mapping this information for customers.
8. We published our newsletter, "Employment in New York State", each month.
9. A new round of occupational wage data for local WIA areas was made available in February 2007.
10. InfoUSA's employer database continued to be provided to the public on our NYSDOL website in the form of our Business Directory tool. The latest version of the database was loaded when it was received. InfoUSA was properly cited as the source of the data.
11. R&S staff added a tool called "Where to Find NYS Graduates and Interns" to our website. It is based on post-secondary education completer data

from the National Center for Educational Statistics. It provides users looking to hire graduates or interns with the ability to choose an educational field and get a list of colleges that offer programs in that field. The tool permits users to access the college website.

5. Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards

Our 10 field offices served local One-Stop partners, LWIBs, and their staff extensively.

1. Our Central New York analyst developed and piloted an online LMI orientation to Unemployment Insurance recipients, with a One Stop Operating System (OSOS) registration and WIB-based needs survey.
2. Regional labor market analysts (LMAs) provided LWIBs with commutation data.
3. LMAs consulted on occupational demand lists. We continued to provide an online tool for adding and deleting occupations.
4. We devised a new methodology for determining monthly short-term demand list updates. It is based on applying OES staffing patterns to average QCEW employment change by firm over the last 3 years. Regional lists of occupations in which we expected heavy hiring in the coming month were posted on our website each month.
5. We updated information on labor market conditions by providing labor market information (LMI) and data of all types.
6. R&S staff served on State WIB and LWIB sub-committees. Outstationed LMAs attended 84 LWIB meetings across the state. Central office staff attended each State WIB meeting and selected sub-committee meetings as requested.
7. R&S staff assisted the Workforce and Training Division by analyzing survey results and writing parts of reports, grant applications, strategic plans, and requests for proposals (RFP).
8. R&S staff scored numerous RFP proposals for WIA statewide grant monies at the request of the Division of Workforce Development and Training which serves as staff to the State WIB.
9. R&S staff presented on various LMI topics to LWIBs or sub-committees.
10. Our Central New York office provided job opening lists for labor exchange through our WDSuite tool daily.
11. R&S staff presented workshops at the New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) statewide conferences.
12. R&S staff assisted LWIBs in identifying priority industries.
13. Our Central New York analyst hosts and updates a LWIB's website.

14. Our Finger Lakes analyst mapped data using GIS software on 20 occasions for Finger Lakes WIRED, LWIBs, the Employment Service, and economic development agencies. These maps highlighted the availability of labor, regional wages, employment, and commutation.

Training is an important aspect of our work.

1. In cooperation with our agency's Career Resource Office staff, we continued to provide training sessions on CareerZone, the online youth career exploration and planning system for New York. Training sessions were provided to local workforce development staff, career counselors, school counselors, teachers, and administrators. Thirty in-depth training sessions were presented to over 1,500 professionals. Eight conference booth presentations reached over 6,500 students. Over 100,000 CareerZone brochures were sent out and the CareerZone site was visited by over 150,000 visitors each month. Over 75,000 new CareerZone Portfolios were created by New York State students.
2. The JobZone System, an online career management tool for adults, was supported through training and webinar assistance. Thirty training sessions on JobZone were provided to over 500 workforce development professionals. Customers created some 80,000 accounts by June 2007.
3. Six Career Development Facilitator (CDF) sessions were completed, three of which were done with the asynchronous e-learning tool called iLinc. The iLinc system was purchased and supported by the Office of Children and Family Services, the agency that partnered with DOL in delivering CDF sessions.
4. Five Real Game training sessions for 80 career development professionals were offered. Four Real Game train-the-trainer sessions were delivered and resulted in 45 new Real Game instructors for New York State. Real Game is a career exploration curriculum based on role playing.

We transmitted the required datasets for participation in the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program. The Census Bureau is currently processing New York State data and when the private sector processing is complete, they will send preliminary "private-only" New York State data to us for review. After we review the resulting indicators, the New York State "private-only" data will be available online at <http://lehd.did.census.gov/led/index.html> for several of the LED applications such as Industry Focus, and Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI). Due to some processing problems with the New York State data, the Census

Bureau estimates that the public sector data will take an additional two to three months to process. We will review New York State data including public sector data before the applications are released. We will not participate in the On the Map application until the next version of On the Map.

The Division of R&S held two training sessions for its field analysts. The sessions provided updates on WIA-related activities and priorities, as well as training on BLS programs; research R&S will perform for Wagner-Peyser staff; the use of Census data and American Community survey data; the LEHD program; career information; and a brainstorming session on enhancing our LMI website.

6. Conduct special studies and economic analyses

The Division of Research and Statistics (R&S) staff engaged in a number of special studies or analyses at the request of the State WIB, department administrators and the Division of Workforce Development and Training (WD&T) which acts as staff to the State WIB. They are described below.

At the request of the State WIB, staff of R&S and WD&T provided ongoing technical support and oversight to the Executive Board of the National Work Readiness Credential. Specifically, expertise was provided in the design, development, and evaluation of a national assessment test and credential.

At the request of WD&T, R&S staff provided technical support to a workgroup looking into the effects of hospital and nursing home closings and downsizings on health care workers. The health care system restructuring was recommended by the statewide Berger Commission which was asked by the state legislature to recommend solutions to overcapacity in the system.

R&S worked closely with the Corrections System to provide career information to ex-offenders and those about to be released from incarceration. The goal was reintegration into the labor market. Staff met regularly with representatives from the Division of Correctional Services, the Department of Criminal Justice Services, and the Division of Parole. CareerZone CDs were provided to state correctional facilities and county jails.

R&S staff provided weekly reports to departmental administrators concerning the economic effects of floods in the Central NY, Mohawk Valley, and Southern Tier regions of the state during summer 2006. Our field analysts were crucial in this effort.

R&S staff provided a briefing for departmental administrators on the status of the auto parts manufacturing industry in the Western NY, Finger Lakes, and Central

NY regions. This was especially important as this industry has been under duress from foreign competition and provides many high-paying jobs.

Field analysts briefed the economic forecaster for the Division of the Budget (DoB) via conference call twice during PY 2006. Analysts provided their observations and outlook. The DoB weighed our analysts' opinions against the output of their economic model.

Staff of R&S with background in database applications and surveys assisted the committee that coordinates Construction Career Days across the states. Staff suggested a method to track Career Day attendees after graduation, ask if they had worked in a construction-related job, and devised a database in which to record responses.

At the request of the State WIB, R&S staff prepared business and customer penetration rates by local WIA area. The rates are indicators of the share of businesses and individuals served by the workforce development system. WIA rates allow areas to compare their efforts from year to year.

At the request of the Finger Lakes WIRED project, our local labor market analyst provided extensive data and analysis of the industry clusters in the 9-county WIRED area and its LWIBs.

At the request of WD&T, staff assisted in the design and implementation of the Workforce Intelligence Project – a cooperative effort between WD&T, the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), Cornell University, and the AFL-CIO's Workforce Development Institute (WDI). The project was designed to draw on the resources and contacts of NYSAC, the research capabilities of Cornell University, and the union contacts of WDI to convene local officials with interest in local economic and workforce development issues. Staff collaborated on a project related to advanced manufacturing in the Southern Tier Region and a project related to the auto industry in Western New York.

R&S staff prepared briefings on IT occupations for LWIBs and posted them online. They discussed skill levels, wages, and occupational employment projections.

At the request of department administrators, staff looked at the "Brain Drain" issue; i.e., outmigration vs. immigration of young adults.

At the request of WD&T, R&S staff participated in a workgroup that considered issues related to wage insurance.

At the request of the Office of Temporary Disability Assistance, R&S staff prepared briefing material on occupations for staff of social service districts.

Our Finger Lakes analyst mapped data using GIS software on 20 occasions for Finger Lakes WIRED, LWIBs, the Employment Service, and economic development agencies. They highlighted the availability of labor, regional wages, employment, and commutation.

III. Consultation and customer satisfaction assessment

A. Description of methods

Step 1: Maintain the Customer Requests Database. We maintain a database of all customers contacting the LMI system, both in the Central Office and in our 10 field offices. Requests for information, consultation, or data by phone, letter, personal visit, or e-mail are recorded in this database. From the database we choose a sample of customers to be queried concerning their satisfaction with our products and services.

Step 2: Collect satisfaction/improvement data through our new search engine. Analyzing searches completed using the website's search engine enables us to judge what LMI customers want. Our departmental web unit was not able to develop reports on searches.

Step 3: Assess customer satisfaction among businesses. We conduct a survey of a sample of businesses taken from the Customer Requests Database (see Step 1 above). We determine what can be done to improve services or publications after evaluating responses.

Step 4: Assess customer satisfaction among individuals. We survey a sample of individuals (jobseekers, unemployed persons, students, etc.) from the Customer Requests Database (see Step 1 above). We determine appropriate adjustments and implement as necessary.

Step 5: Assess customer satisfaction of the Workforce Development System partners. We use evaluation forms after training sessions in which we participate. We determine improvements that are needed and implement as necessary. Due to our constant interaction with our partners, their satisfaction or dissatisfaction is apparent. If we miss the mark we make every effort to accommodate their needs.

B. Customer satisfaction results

We asked satisfaction questions via e-mail and phone. We received 612 responses, with an overall satisfaction rate of 94%.

1. Satisfaction rates by type of customer or organization.

Businesses	96%
Economic Developers	95%
Educators: K-12	100%
Educators: Post secondary	92%
Government	94%
LWIBs/One-Stop Centers	89%
Media	96%
Students	57%
Training Providers	100%

2. Satisfaction rates by type of data

Jobs by Industry (CES or QCEW)	96%
Wages by Occupation	95%
Occupational Projections/Employment	94%
Career Information/Career Zone	95%
Wages by Industry (QCEW)	93%
Unemployment Rates (LAUS)	98%
Census/Population	96%
Occupational Skills	94%
Technical Assistance	100%
Business Expansions/Contractions	93%
Cost of Living	93%
Income/Poverty	97%
Applicants/Job Openings	100%
Worker Protection	88%
Wage Reporting	90%
Training	85%
UI Claims/Beneficiaries	94%
Workforce Investment Act	100%
Affirmative Action	86%
Commutation	100%
Legislative Review	100%
RFP's: writing or reviewing	100%
Welfare to Work	100%
Other	82%

3. Satisfaction rates by intended use of LMI

We asked customers how they used the LMI they requested and whether it was useful. The uses and percentage who indicated it was useful appears below.

Intended Use	% of Respondents	% Useful
Career Counseling/Planning	19%	94%
Economic Development	16%	97%
Job Recruitment/Staffing	9%	97%
Program Planning/Development	18%	93%
Research	43%	96%
Wage Comparison	15%	98%
Other	17%	85%

4. Response time

We asked customers if they were served in a timely fashion; 97% responded that they were.

5. Suggestions for improvement

Suggestions/complaints tend to fall into several categories:

- about data needs or availability
- about the website; its organization and ease of use
- other

Comments about data needs almost always relate to the customer wanting more types of data, more detailed data (either by industry, demographic groups or geography), or wanting the data sooner. Unfortunately, addressing many of these issues is impossible given resource limitations and confidentiality rules. For example, certain QCEW data is confidential; CES program production worker hours and earnings data for sub-state areas are no longer collected; and Spanish publications require more resources.

Sometimes website users had difficulty finding and using the information. They greatly appreciate that local outstationed analysts or central office staff were available to assist them. Often an explanation of the organization of the website, the types of data and their uses, or the program terminology provided clarification.

Comments related to the website have been addressed as time and staff resources permit. Users are now familiar with the new design and some suggest we improve the search function to decrease the layers needed to get to the data. The department is planning to re-design our website. We may be able to address some of these issues at that time.

Evaluations of LMI training sessions and workshops were consistently positive. R&S presenters were asked back in many instances.

As always we had requests to release confidential QCEW data. We also had requests to simply put more data on the website. Without funds to collect, process, and publish more data it is hard to do this.

IV. Expenditures

This year's spending which is comprised of PY06 expenditures (including some minor remaining Resources on Order) as of December 31, 2007 = \$1,979,328 (\$994,933 carried back to PY05 and \$984,395 of PY06).

V. Summary

Overall, PY 2006 was a successful year. While nearly all of our goals were attained, there is room for improvement in PY 2007.

Our efforts will now move toward supplying more complete LMI to more customers in less time and training customers to use LMI on their own while maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction. Our field analysts will continue to play a key role in explaining the data and its uses to our many and varied customers.