

APPENDIX A:

**SCOPE OF WORK DELINEATED IN THE NOTICE
INVITING PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNITY AUDIT
DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM GRANTS**

Notice inviting proposals for Selected Demonstration Projects for Community Audits (SGA/DFA 00-110)

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Employment and Training Administration

AGENCY: Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor

ACTION: Notice inviting proposals for Selected Demonstration Projects for Community Audits.

THIS NOTICE CONTAINS ALL OF THE NECESSARY INFORMATION AND FORMS NEEDED TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Labor (Department of DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), announces a demonstration program to support promising practices in strategic planning and "strategic research" related to "community audits." Community audits allow local stakeholders to bring together economic and labor market trend information which will support strategic planning and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program implementation in their area, including customer service through the One-Stop Center system. Grantees will receive intensive technical assistance and participate in a rigorous evaluation. In addition, they will participate in and help structure national DOL activities meant to identify and disseminate lessons learned.

This solicitation describes the application submission requirements, the process that entities must use to apply for funds covered by this solicitation, how grantees are to be selected and the technical assistance that will be provided following selection of grantees. It is anticipated that \$2.3 million will be available for funding projects covered by this solicitation. There will be two types of projects funded under the solicitation-locally-led projects and state-led multi-area projects. The maximum grant award will not exceed \$50,000 for a single Local Workforce Investment Board (Local Board) or \$100,000 for a regional consortium under the locally-led projects (approximately 15 grants), and will not exceed \$150,000 for the State-led multi-area projects (approximately 10 grants awarded), for a period of 24 months from the date of execution.

Applicants should also look at the background materials on community audits, including "Conducting a Community Audit," which are available at the website www.doleta.gov.

DATE: The closing date for receipt of application is Friday, November 17, 2000. Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) at the address below. No exceptions to the mailing and hand-delivery conditions set forth in this notice will be granted. Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will not be honored. Telefacsimile (FAX) applications will not be honored.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be mailed to: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Division of Federal Assistance,

Attention: Denise Roach, Reference: SGA/DFA-110, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room S4203, Washington, DC 20210.

Hand Delivered Proposals. If proposals are hand delivered, they must be received at the designated address by 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time on Friday, November 17, 2000. All overnight mail will be considered to be hand delivered and must be received at the designated place by the specified closing date and time. Telegraphed, e-mailed and/or fax proposals will not be honored. Failure to adhere to the above instructions will be a basis for determination of non-responsive.

Late Proposals. A proposal received at the designated office after the exact time specified for receipt will not be considered unless it is received before the award is made and it was sent by U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail not later than the fifth day (5th) calendar day before the closing date specified for receipt of applications (e.g. an offer submitted in response to a solicitation requiring receipt of applications by the 20th of the month must be mailed by the 15th):

Was sent by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail Next Day Service, Post Office to Addressee, not later than 5 p.m. at the place of mailing two working days prior to the deadline date specified for receipt of proposals in this SGA. The term "working days" excludes weekends and U.S. Federal holidays.

The only acceptable evidence to establish the date of mailing of an application received after the deadline date for the receipt of proposals sent by the U.S. Postal Service registered or certified mail is the U.S. postmark on the envelope or wrapper affixed by the U.S. Postal Service and on the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service. The term "post marked" means a printed, stamped, or otherwise placed impression (exclusive of a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable without further action as having been supplied or affixed on the date of mailing by employees of the U.S. Postal Service.

Withdrawal of Applications. Applications may be withdrawn by written notice or telegram (including mailgram) received at any time before an award is made. Applications may be withdrawn in person by the applicant or by an authorized representative thereof, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions should be faxed to Denise Roach, Grants Management Specialist, Division of Federal Assistance at (202) 219-8739 (This is not a toll free-number). All inquiries should include the SGA/DFA-110 and a contact name, fax and phone number. This solicitation will also be published on the Internet, on the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Home Page at <http://www.doleta.gov>. Award notifications will also be published on the ETA Home Page.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This solicitation consists of 6 parts. Part I describes the authority, background, purpose and goals of the demonstration program and identifies demonstration policy. Part II describes the application process and provides guidelines for use in applying for demonstration grants. Part III includes the statement of work for the demonstration projects. Part IV describes the selection process including the criteria used to select grantees and the process of application and award. Part V describes the monitoring, reporting and evaluation activities that will be required of grantees. Part VI describes the assurances required of grantees. The Appendix includes application forms and a glossary.

Part I. Background

A. Authority

Section 171 (d) of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 authorizes demonstration projects related to the employment and training needs of dislocated workers.

B. Background

A rapidly changing national and global economy has created significant restructuring of existing industries, growth of new economic sectors, and reorganization of work and work processes. This has led to dramatic changes in local economies. Local firms that once employed generations of families have disappeared, reduced employment, or radically changed skills demands. New firms have sprung up--seemingly overnight--offering job opportunities that the local education and training providers have not previously targeted. Career and job performance requirements have been redefined.

In many places, these changes have had the dual effect of leading to substantial numbers of worker layoffs and to reported shortages of workers skilled in certain demand occupations. Additionally, changing demographic patterns and new immigrants create both opportunities and challenges for linking jobs with job seekers.

The speed of transformation in local economies creates critical information gaps, making it more difficult for individuals to know what good job and career opportunities are available, for employers to find employees with the right sets of skills, and for service providers to plan and create appropriate workforce development interventions. Timely information on the supply and demand sides of the labor market and business trends is more critical than ever.

The WIA charges Local Boards with wide-ranging responsibility for workforce development within their communities and continues the emphasis on rapid response with an even greater emphasis on proactive interventions to anticipate and prevent the most harmful impacts of large layoffs. WIA also encourages Local Boards to think and act in terms of labor market areas and, as such, promotes regional cooperation among Local Boards.

To successfully meet these new challenges, Local Boards across the country are looking for ways to get the information they need to understand their labor markets and communities and to make informed, long-term strategic decisions.

They also are reaching out to involve and/or develop partnerships with a broader group of stakeholders within their communities. In many regions, business, labor, and community leaders are the ones taking the lead in strategic research and planning initiatives for workforce development. Frequently, the problems and their solutions reach across Local Board boundaries, making regional cooperation and regional partnerships critical.

DOL has launched a series of initiatives to address these challenges of the "new economy". In 1998, Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman initiated a major Dislocated Worker Initiative to improve rapid response assistance and adjustment services for workers, businesses and communities. The Community Audit Project is one component of this broader initiative. Community audits are envisioned as a means by which key stakeholders in local workforce and economic development can better understand business and labor force trends, and develop more informed plans to respond to worker and business needs.

Other related new DOL initiatives are aimed directly at addressing the growing problem of skills shortages in local labor markets. One of these--the H-1B Technical Skill Training Grant Program--was created by the American Competitiveness and Workforce Improvement Act of 1998, signed by the President in October of 1998. That program is designed to help American workers--both employed and unemployed--acquire the requisite training in high skill, high demand occupations in areas such as information technology and health. In the first two rounds of competition for these grants, a total of \$41.6 million has been awarded to local communities for skills training.

In addition, in June 1998, \$7.5 million in Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Title III dislocated worker funds was awarded to train workers in skills related to the information technology industry. In June 1999, DOL awarded over \$9.57 million to train dislocated workers in advanced manufacturing skills, and \$11.2 million to upgrade the skills of workers employed in low-skill jobs or who have obsolete job skills (incumbent workers). In March 2000, twenty-three organizations received a total of \$15.1 million to build regional skills consortia to address the skills shortage problem in their area. Also in June 2000, DOL awarded \$11.2 million for a skill shortages, partnership training/system building demonstration program.

Finally, there is a joint venture of the U.S. Department of Labor and the fifty States called ALMIS (America's Labor Market Information System). Its mission is to support the emerging One-Stop Career Center system with useful labor market and occupational information. It also provides information directly to workers and employers, facilitating their access to jobs, labor, training, and career services information.

C. Purpose

The purpose of this demonstration is to support promising practices in strategic planning and "strategic research" that engage local stakeholders in taking a broad look at the needs of their community (or communities) and the character and direction of their regional economy. In the context of this SGA, we are identifying these practices as "community audits".

Community audits bring together information on economic and labor market trends to support both strategic planning and WIA program operations. They vary in scope and purpose, depending on their precise goals. However, all depend on a common base of information about the regional labor market--both its demand and its supply sides--and about the kinds of workforce development and other critical resources available (such as housing, child care, transportation, supportive services, and so on). A "community audit" is fundamentally a strategic planning effort that involves all the relevant stakeholders. Through community audits, leadership can assess what new skills may be in demand in growth sectors of the local economy and where a decline in demand for certain skills may signal future layoffs.

Baseline data on the demand side of the labor market include a quantitative analysis of the structure and composition of the economy, an analysis of wages and skills associated with different jobs and industries, and a qualitative investigation of industry trends and of industry and firm employment and recruitment systems. Baseline data on the supply side of the labor market include a quantitative analysis of labor force structure and trends, identification of workers with barriers to success in the labor market, and a geographic mapping of workers in relationship to jobs. Finally, a basic mapping of the employment and

training "resource base" identifies funding sources and providers for labor exchange, training, and support services.

Beyond this kind of "baseline" audit, local areas can use more focused and targeted techniques to answer particular questions and design specific strategies. The specific information needs will vary by community, depending upon the workforce development strategies being pursued, which may include the following (see attached Glossary for definition of the terms):

- Employing/re-employing a target population;
- Sectoral strategies;
- Layoff aversion strategies;
- Employer-focused training;
- "High Road" strategies;
- Community career ladders; and/or
- Development of skill standards.

DOL launched the Community Audit Project last winter to investigate promising practices in "strategic analysis" and to develop technical assistance tools Workforce Investment Boards and communities can employ to improve the quality and use of information at their disposal. This SGA is a component of the Community Audit Project seeking to further develop and expand the promising practices now being undertaken.

The specific goals for the community audit demonstration are:

1. To support States and local areas in their efforts to implement and use community audits as part of their overall strategic planning initiatives.
2. To increase the capacity of States and local areas to implement effective strategic planning efforts, utilizing the community audit as a tool.
3. To support projects that link Local Board efforts to those of other key stakeholders in a community.
4. To encourage regional partnerships within labor market areas or industry sectors.
5. To build a "peer learning network" to identify and share best practices.
6. To develop technical assistance materials and tools that states and local areas can use.

D. Demonstration Policy

1. Grant Awards

DOL anticipates awarding a total of \$2.3 million in approximately 25 grants in two categories (local and State), with individual grant amounts varying depending on the type of grant awarded.

2. Types of Projects

Two types of project will be funded under this SGA: projects that are initiated and led by local stakeholders and State-led multi-area projects. Either kind of project can involve a regional partnership, including an interstate partnership.

a. Locally-led projects

Community audits are focused on specific communities and/or regions. As such, local stakeholders initiate most of these efforts.

However, these projects can have a variety of specific purposes, ranging from long-range broad-based strategic planning efforts to much more targeted initiatives. In addition, as suggested earlier, local applicants can take the form of a collaboration that crosses Local Board boundaries.

Eligible applicants: Eligible applicants for locally led projects include Local Boards or other consortia of local public and private stakeholders (including such groups as community-based organizations, unions, employers). All proposals must have the concurrence of the Local Board(s) for the areas involved in the proposed project.

Maximum amounts available: A maximum of \$50,000 per grant for single Local Board areas and a maximum of \$100,000 for regional consortia will be awarded, with a total of approximately \$1,300,000 for this activity.

b. State-led multi-area projects

States can play an important role in supporting the efforts of local areas and helping to build local capacity. One form this can take is by building a "learning network" among local areas that are actively engaged in community audit projects. States can also make use of economies of scale to develop information, tools, and other forms of technical assistance local areas can use.

Eligible applicants: Eligible applicants are State Workforce Investment Boards, State workforce development agencies, or other consortia of State public and private stakeholders in partnership with Local Boards or other consortia of local stakeholders in three or more local areas. All proposals must have the concurrence of the Local Boards and State Workforce Investment Boards in the areas involved in the proposed project.

Maximum amounts available: A maximum of \$150,000 per grant will be awarded, with a total of approximately \$1,000,000 for this activity.

3. Collaboration and Cost Sharing

Applicants must demonstrate collaboration among relevant stakeholders (such as employers, community organizations, labor unions, economic development organizations, and faith-based organizations). All applicants must also receive the concurrence of the relevant Local Board(s) and demonstrate a link between the proposed project and the strategic planning efforts of the Local Board(s). State level applicants must show evidence of consultation with Local Boards or local consortia.

In addition, the applicants must show that they have reviewed the applicable Local or State Workforce Investment Plan(s) and have ascertained that the proposed project does not duplicate any other efforts.

Applicants must also demonstrate local commitment to the project. One concrete demonstration of that commitment is some form of cost sharing, that is other resources, either in-kind or funds, which are contributed to the project. However, this requirement is

not intended to favor larger communities or those with more resources. DOL will take those factors into consideration in evaluating the strength of commitment.

4. Outside Technical Assistance

Once grants are awarded, DOL will arrange for a small team of experts with a range of expertise and experience. This expert team will be available to provide technical assistance to grantees. In addition, it will develop tools and products for use by grantees. Each grantee will be allotted 5 days of free technical assistance from this team. Additional hours can be purchased by grantees on a fee-for-service basis at a cost not to exceed DOL's consultant cost ceiling (\$469 per day). In addition, grantees may utilize grant funds to contract with technical assistance providers of their choice.

5. Peer Learning Network

Once grants are awarded, grantees must participate in and make active contributions to a peer learning network of States and local areas funded through this solicitation. There will be at least two grantee meetings to facilitate the development of this peer network. Total costs for these activities of approximately \$4,000 should be anticipated in the proposal budget.

6. Period of Performance

The period of performance will be 24 months from the date of execution of the grant documents by the Government.

7. Option to Extend

DOL may elect to exercise its option to extend any or all of these grants for up to one additional year of operation, based on the availability of funds, successful project operation, and the needs of the Department.

Part II. Application Process and Guidelines

Proposal Submission: Applicants must submit four (4) copies of their proposal, with original signatures. The introductory paragraph of the application must state the type of grant for which the proposal is directed (1) Locally-led projects or (2) State-led multi-area projects. The proposal must consist of two (2) distinct parts, Part I and Part II. Part I of the proposal shall contain the Standard Form (SF) 424, "Application for Federal Assistance" (Appendix A) and Budget Form (Appendix B). The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number is 17.246.

Applicants shall indicate on the SF 424 the organization's IRS status, if applicable. According to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, section 18, an organization described in section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which engages in lobbying activities shall not be eligible for the receipt of federal funds constituting an award, grant or loan. The individual signing the SF 424 of behalf of the applicant must represent the responsible financial and administrative entity for a grant should that application result in an award. The budget (Appendix B) shall include on separate pages a detailed breakout of each proposed budget line item found of the Budget Information Sheet, including detailed administrative costs. An explanation of how the budget costs were derived must be included. Part II must

contain a technical proposal that demonstrates the applicant's capabilities in accordance with the Statement of Work contained in this document. The grant application is limited to 25 one-sided, double-spaced pages with 12 point font size on 8.5 x 11 inch paper with 1-inch margins which must include the following: I. Executive Summary - (1 page) II. Application narrative technical proposal. III. Time line implementation plan and the appendix. The 25 page limitation includes all attachments.

Part III. Statement of Work

A. Project Design

This section should detail the design of the proposed community audit project, including its purpose, geographic scope, the nature of the collaboration that will initiate it, its staffing structure, governance structure, level of community involvement, research and other methods, and time frame. The information below applies to both local and state applicants unless otherwise specified.

Purpose: Describe the specific purpose or purposes of the project.

Geographic scope: Describe the geographic scope of the project.

The scope could be as narrow as a specific community within a local workforce investment area or as broad as a multi-local workforce investment area or group of regions that corresponds to a labor market or set of labor markets. State applications must include three or more Local Boards and justify the selection of Local Boards in terms of the coherence of a labor market region or a design meant to test the community audit process in different types of labor markets.

Economic scope: Describe what information is known now about the economy of the proposed region(s) (see Glossary) including critical industries, significant industrial clusters, and the general state of the economy. Also, provide information on the kinds of gaps in information on the regional economy that need to be pursued. (WIA local and State plans should be consulted, and information or gaps referenced, as appropriate.)

Collaboration: Describe in detail the character of the collaboration between the applicant and the other stakeholders involved in the community audit project. Include reference to consortium partners and other stakeholders, as appropriate. That description must include at least information addressing the following questions: Who is involved in the collaboration? What is the nature of their involvement? How was the collaboration initiated? Does it exist for the purpose of this project or for a broader purpose? What is its expected life span? Include a description of both the governing structure and staffing structure of the collaboration. State applications should describe the role of the State and/or State-level partners in relationship to local collaborations.

Coordination with other efforts: Describe other efforts within the community that have similar and/or complementary purposes and how this project will coordinate with those efforts. State applicants should describe State-level or regional efforts that may be coordinated with this project.

Community involvement: Describe who in the community will be involved in the project. That description should include information addressing the following questions: Does the project propose to engage members of the community beyond those involved in the initiating collaboration? If so, explain the purpose of this involvement; what members of the community will be targeted and why; and how their involvement will be elicited and sustained. Given that there are many barriers to successful engagement of stakeholders, describe methods the project will employ to overcome these barriers to participation. In

particular, detail how the project will involve the employer community in a way that is both serious and sustained. State applications will need to describe the role of the State in supporting the community process.

Cost sharing: Describe what other resources will be contributed to the community audit project and by whom. These resources may include funds as well as in-kind contributions. Additionally, the description should include information on whether resources have been identified to continue these efforts past the completion of this particular project and/or if the partners will use this process to help identify such resources.

Strategic planning: Describe the planning process envisioned by the project. That description should at least address the following questions: How will the planning process be facilitated? How will the project ensure that the information gathered through the community audit is effectively utilized? Will the community audit be used to influence the existing or future WIA plans? Will it be used to influence other formal decision-making activities? How will the project ensure that this is not a one-shot effort?

Strategic research methods: Given the specific goals of the project, describe the methods the applicant will employ to gather the range and kinds of information needed to make the necessary strategic decisions.

Previous experience: Describe any previous experience the applicant(s) may have gathering and utilizing labor market information, surveying customers including the business community, conducting community audits, or other similar methods. If the applicant(s) has experience, describe how funding from this project will advance previous efforts. If the applicant(s) does not have previous experience, describe the role it is hoped this project will play and how the community (or communities) intends to build on it in the future. In addition to this information, state applications will need to describe the state's previous role in supporting local areas in the gathering and use of labor market information, developing relationships with employers, and/or providing support for regional initiatives.

External technical assistance: Describe what kinds of external technical assistance would be most helpful to your proposed project. What components of this technical assistance do you expect to procure locally?

B. Planned Outcomes

Describe the planned outcomes of the community audit demonstration project. The project must provide DOL with a final report on its outcomes. These outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

1. Community/regional audits: We expect that one specific product of each of the projects will be the community audit itself. In some cases, this may be a detailed report or set of reports.
2. Local/regional strategic plans: Similarly, many projects may develop or revise specific local or regional strategic plans based on the work of the community audit.
3. On-going local/regional/State collaborations: One key purpose of the project is to forge tighter links and better cooperation among key stakeholders. These may take the form of on-going local or regional collaborations.
4. Impact on operations: Community audits may have an impact on specific operational activities such as State or local rapid response, business retention efforts, consumer reports, labor market information systems, and/or incumbent worker training.
5. Increased expertise in strategic planning/strategic research: Capacity- building is another goal of this demonstration. Projects should consider how to measure the

- gains in expertise in strategic planning and strategic research resulting from the project. This element is particularly important to address in the state applications
6. Technical assistance tools and materials: Projects may develop specific tools and materials that can support local areas in implementing community audits (for example, focus groups, surveys, data collection methods).

APPENDIX B:
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

***Community Audit.** A mechanism used by a community or region that collects "real-time data" from regional employers regarding actual and projected short term and longer term labor surpluses and needs, to enable the regional workforce development system (the entire community) to plan effectively for expected events-- both positive and negative--in order to improve the functioning of the market and minimize the overall negative impact on the community.

***Consortium.** A group of entities (agencies or organizations) representing key policy makers within a Region (as identified in the application, consistent with the definition herein) which has a common interest in developing strategies and processes for strategic planning and WIA program implementation within the Region. Applications submitted by consortia must either include the Local Board in the consortium or have the Local Board's concurrence.

***Chief Elected Officials.** Those elected officials whose responsibilities are defined in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA).

***Community career ladders.** Community career ladder strategies attempt to identify cross-firm or cross-industry skill progressions and then link firms to facilitate the movement of workers from lower level jobs to higher ones.

***Employer-focused training.** Employer-focused training strategies (of either new hires or incumbent workers) view the firm as at least a co-equal customer (with the worker) and therefore tailor training to the needs of the firm.

***Employing/re-employing a target population.** Although WIA promises universal service, frequently WIBs also have reason to target specific sub-populations and devise strategies appropriate to their special needs. These could be dislocated hardware engineers from defense-dependent high technology firms, welfare recipients, or the working poor.

***H-1B Visa Skill Shortages.** Those skill shortages identified by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for which employers are permitted to apply to bring into the U.S. foreign workers to meet demands when the supply of workers with such skills in the local labor market are insufficient. A list of the occupations certified by the Department of Labor under the H-1B program for non-immigrant visas may be found at 64 Federal Register 44549-44550 (August 16, 1999).

***"High Road" strategies.** "High road" strategies are conscious efforts by local areas to target firms, occupations, and industries that will contribute most to the economic health of the region and offer workers decent wages and working conditions.

***Incumbent Worker.** An individual who is currently employed at small or medium-sized businesses (see definition) whose job skills do not meet the current or future needs of the company if it is to remain competitive by keeping workers employed, averting layoffs, and upgrading workers' skills. As a result, the company has identified such workers as being at risk of being laid off in the future (5-year projection).

***Independent Evaluation.** A process and outcome evaluation conducted by a contractor hired by DOL. The evaluation will be designed to identify the lessons learned and the variety of effective models developed in order to maximize the value of systems tested and inform the workforce investment system.

***Layoff aversion strategies.** Historically, the employment and training system has placed more emphasis on responding to layoffs and closings than preventing them. However, increasingly states and local areas are placing layoff prevention high on their list of priorities. There are many kinds of layoff aversion strategies including: developing an effective early warning network; rapid response; sectoral strategies aimed at improving the competitiveness of an industry; retention strategies aimed at firms (including customized and incumbent worker training, business visitation programs, manufacturing modernization programs, etc.).

***Local Workforce Investment Areas.** Those geographic areas designated by the Governor of each State under section 116 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

***Local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).** Boards established under section 117 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

***Rapid Response.** The initial information sharing activity (for employees and employers) to facilitate access to all public programs to assist individuals find new employment. Rapid Response activities are authorized and funded under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The responsibility for rapid response rests with each State's Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) which generally establishes a rapid response team.

***Region.** An area which exhibits a commonality of economic interest. Thus, a region may comprise several labor market areas, one large labor market, one labor market area joined together with several adjacent rural districts, special purpose districts, or a few contiguous local boards. If the region involves multiple economic or political jurisdictions, it is essential that they be contiguous to one another. A region may be either intrastate or interstate.

***Regional Planning.** A process described in WIA section 116(c).

***Sectoral strategies.** Sectoral strategies entail targeting a set of employers that share a set of common characteristics, such as a common market, common product, or basic resource needs (such as labor force, infrastructure, or technology). The idea of a sectoral intervention is to work with groups of firms to a) address a public policy concern and, at the same time, b) solve one or more common problems that the firms share. For example, a local area might target the health care sector to a) employ hard-to-place former welfare recipients and, at the same time, b) solve a labor shortage problem for the industry.

***Skills Shortage.** Those specific vocational skills that employers have identified as lacking in sufficient numbers to meet their needs. A labor shortage occurs when the demand for workers possessing a particular skill is greater than the supply of workers who are qualified, available and willing to perform those skills. Problematic skills shortages occur when there is an imbalance between worker supply and demands for a significant amount of time for which the labor market does not, or is unable, adjust in a timely manner.

***Skill standards.** Skills standards can be used to create clearer career paths, as well as to provide firms with a more useful way of assessing applicants. The standards developed permit agreements among firms to recognize a credential or training program as meeting their hiring or promotional standards for workers in a particular occupation.

***Small and Medium-sized Business.** A business with 500 or fewer full-time employees.

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, *Notice Inviting Proposals for Selected Demonstration Projects for Community Audits*, p. 1, 2000.

APPENDIX C:
CADP GRANTEE CONTACT DIRECTORY

COMMUNITY AUDIT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM CONTACT DIRECTORY

[Note: Listed Alphabetically by State]

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APPENDIX D:

**CROSS-SITE MATRIX OF
CADP SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

Cross-Site Matrix of CADP Site Characteristics

State	Grantee	Type of Area Studied	Geo-graphic Range of Study	Specific Analytical Methods					Target Industries					Primary Research Methods			
				Sector & Cluster Analysis	Occupational & Skills Analysis	Career Ladder Mapping	Asset Mapping	Identification of Skills Shortages	Healthcare	Advanced Manufacturing	Technology	Hospitality	Other Industry(ies)	Surveys	Focus Groups	Stakeholder Meetings	Stakeholder Interviews
AL	Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs	Urban/Rural/Suburban	State	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		
CA	County of Santa Cruz Workforce Investment Board	Suburban/Rural	Multi-County		•		•	•							•	•	•
CO	Colorado Dept. of Labor and Employment, Colorado Workforce Development Council	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Statewide	•	•	•			•		•				•		
CO	Pikes Peak Workforce Center	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County		•			•									
CT	The Workplace, Inc.	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•							•		•
IA	Central Iowa Employment & Training Consortium	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County		•			•							•	•	
ID	Lewis-Clark State College	Rural	Multi-County	•	•			•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•
IL	The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County	Suburban	County	•	•			•	•	•				•		•	•
IN	Center of Workforce Innovations	Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•	•
KY	KentuckianaWorks	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•		•	•					
LA	City of New Orleans, Office of Workforce Development	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•		•	•		•	•		•
MA	Cape & Islands Workforce Investment Board	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County		•			•	•		•						
MA	Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Development Programs, Inc.	Rural	County				•	•						•			
MA	Regional Employment Board of Hampden County	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•		•		
MD	Governor's Workforce Investment Board	Suburban/Rural	Multi-County	•	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
MO	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•	•	•	•						•		
MT	Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc.	Rural	Multi-County		•										•		
NH	New Hampshire Workforce Opportunity Council	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•	•	•			•						•
NJ	New Jersey Department of Labor	Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•				•		•	•		
NJ	Passaic County Workforce Development Center	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•						•	•	
NY	Cornell University, Department of City & Regional Planning	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•		•			•			•	•	•	
OK	Tulsa Area Workforce Investment Board	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		
PA	Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board	Suburban/Rural	County	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•			
PA	Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board	Suburban	County		•		•	•						•		•	
PA	Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board	Urban/Rural/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
TX	Concho Valley Workforce Development Board	Rural	Multi-County	•	•		•	•						•		•	•
TX	Partnership of Southeast Texas	Rural	Multi-County		•	•		•							•		•
TX	Texas Engineering Extension Service	Suburban	Multi-County		•			•						•			
VA	Richmond Area Workforce Investment Board	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•			•	•	•	•			•	•		
VT	Human Resources Investment Council	Urban/Rural/Suburban	State	•				•							•		
WA	Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council	Urban/Suburban	County	•	•	•			•					•		•	•
WA	Tri-County Workforce Council	Rural	Multi-County		•			•								•	
WA	Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board	Urban/Suburban	Multi-County	•	•	•		•			•			•		•	
WI	Workforce Connections, Inc.	Suburban/Rural	Multi-County		•			•						•			

State	Grantee	Community Audit Partners						Results						Dissemination Strategies						
		Workforce Development Agencies	Economic Development Agencies	Employers/Employer Associations	Unions	Social Service Agencies/CBOs	Educational Institutions/Training Providers	Other Partners	Created Strategic Plans for Workforce Development in the Region	Developed Workforce Strategies Aimed at Needs of Population Subgroup(s)	Developed Sectoral Strategies	Created Layoff Avoidance Strategies	Provided Customers with Information Needed to Make Decisions	Developed Tools for Providers to Ensure Responsiveness to Labor Market	Partnered with Economic Development	Established Performance Measures	Final Community Audit Report(s)	Via Web Site	Presentations at Conferences	Meetings with Stakeholders
AL	Alabama Dept. of Economic and Community Affairs	•			•				•		•					•				
CA	County of Santa Cruz Workforce Investment Board	•										•				•				•
CO	Colorado Dept. of Labor and Employment, Colorado Workforce Development Council	•				•	•		•	•	•			•		•	•			•
CO	Pikes Peak Workforce Center	•	•	•			•	•	•				•	•	•		•			•
CT	The Workplace, Inc.	•				•			•	•			•	•			•		•	•
IA	Central Iowa Employment & Training Consortium	•	•			•	•			•			•	•			•	•		•
ID	Lewis-Clark State College	•	•		•			•		•	•			•	•	•				•
IL	The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•		•	•	•
IN	Center of Workforce Innovations	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•
KY	KentuckianaWorks	•	•					•						•	•	•		•	•	•
LA	City of New Orleans, Office of Workforce Development	•	•			•	•		•		•			•	•	•		•	•	•
MA	Cape & Islands Workforce Investment Board	•					•		•							•				
MA	Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Development Programs, Inc.	•				•			•	•	•			•	•			•	•	•
MA	Regional Employment Board of Hampden County	•	•	•	•	•					•			•	•	•		•	•	•
MD	Governor's Workforce Investment Board	•	•	•		•			•		•			•		•		•		•
MO	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council	•	•	•			•		•		•	•		•	•			•	•	•
MT	Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc.	•	•	•		•	•		•	•				•	•			•		•
NH	New Hampshire Workforce Opportunity Council	•	•	•			•		•	•	•			•	•	•		•		•
NJ	New Jersey Department of Labor	•					•		•	•	•			•	•			•		•
NJ	Passaic County Workforce Development Center	•	•	•			•		•	•	•	•					•			
NY	Cornell University, Department of City & Regional Planning			•					•		•			•	•	•		•		•
OK	Tulsa Area Workforce Investment Board	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•		•
PA	Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board	•	•	•			•		•		•			•	•	•		•	•	•
PA	Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board	•				•		•		•				•				•	•	•
PA	Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board	•	•	•			•	•	•		•			•	•	•		•	•	•
TX	Concho Valley Workforce Development Board	•	•	•		•	•	•	•		•			•	•	•		•	•	•
TX	Partnership of Southeast Texas	•		•							•			•	•			•		
TX	Texas Engineering Extension Service	•					•	•	•					•				•	•	•
VA	Richmond Area Workforce Investment Board		•			•	•		•	•	•			•	•			•	•	•
VT	Human Resources Investment Council	•		•	•		•		•					•				•		•
WA	Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council		•	•	•		•		•	•	•			•	•	•		•	•	•
WA	Tri-County Workforce Council	•	•			•			•	•				•	•	•		•	•	•
WA	Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•			•	•			•	•	•
WI	Workforce Connections, Inc.	•	•			•			•					•		•				

APPENDIX E:

**SITE SUMMARIES FOR 18 CADP PROJECTS VISITED
DURING THE EVALUATION EFFORT**

Note: Projects are organized in this appendix as follows (by type of project and then alphabetically by state):

State	Page	CADP Project Sponsor	Locally-Led Projects	Locally-led Regional Projects	State-Led Multi-Area Projects
IL	E-3	The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County	•		
OK	E-7	Tulsa Area Workforce Investment Board, Inc.	•		
PA	E-12	Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board	•		
PA	E-17	Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board	•		
TX	E-23	Concho Valley Workforce Development Board	•		
TX	E-28	Texas Engineering Extension Service	•		
WA	E-32	Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council	•		
IA	E-38	Central Iowa Employment & Training Consortium		•	
IN	E-42	Center of Workforce Innovations		•	
KY	E-47	KentuckianaWorks		•	
LA	E-50	City of New Orleans, Office of Workforce Development		•	
MA	E-55	Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.		•	
MT	E-59	Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc.		•	
PA	E-63	Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board		•	
AL	E-70	Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs			•
CO	E-74	Colorado Workforce Development Council			•
MD	E-79	Governor's Workforce Investment Board			•
MO	E-85	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council			•

LOCALLY-LED PROJECTS

Community Audit Demonstration Program Northern Cook County Site Summary

Grantee	The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County
Contact	Fredia Walker-Martin
Grant Amount	\$49,500
Matching Funds	\$50,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-8/31/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Audit
Geographic Area	Northern Cook County

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County, the local workforce investment board of the north and northwest suburbs of Chicago, conducted a locally-led community audit to research and analyze data at the sub-county level. The goals of the audit are the following:

- To build a strong and credible foundation for a regional workforce plan that complements regional economic development strategies;
- To identify key workforce development issues to be faced during the next five years; to provide useful labor market and economic information to key stakeholders;
- To identify priorities for the region's One-Stop career center and other education, training and human service providers; and
- To build external strategic planning capacity of the Workforce Board.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *State of the Workforce Report.* This report encapsulates the northern Cook County workforce for 2002 and analyzes sub-county, county, and state level data as it relates to the area. Also see the 2003 supplements for updated information.
- *State of the Youth Report.* This 2003 report analyzes secondary data on youth in the area to assist the Workforce Board and the community in its strategic planning.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County's vision is to connect workforce development and economic development to make the area amenable to businesses and families alike. To accomplish this vision, the Board actively pursued the community audit grant to base its strategic planning efforts in the community on data specific to northern Cook County. The Board had not looked at sub-county level workforce and economic data in a comprehensive manner up to this point.

The Board formed a steering committee of various partners to actively guide and provide feedback to the community audit. Members of the steering committee included: business and industry representatives; local elected officials; local Chambers of Commerce and industry associations; economic development organization; regional planning entities; education and training providers; labor unions; and community-based organizations. Moreover, three community taskforces of community college representatives, economic developers, and elected officials were the groups that came together to look at the data analysis presented by the research contractor.

BACKGROUND

During the course of the community audit grant, the economy in the area experienced a downturn but health care and retail were still providing employment. Northern Cook County a diverse labor market that imports low-wage workers and exports high-wage workers to other areas. It was important to break down the barriers to serving the community when they only had limited data. The Board members and staff also wanted to know how the information could be used, by what partners, and what format would be the most effective. The Board then could use the community audit to “jump start” a community action plan.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The Board organized a committee to review and provide feedback on the audit research and product development activities. The Board hired a contractor, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, to obtain and analyze the secondary data collected (sub-county, county, and state level) and work with the Board staff to conduct hospital survey and employer interviews.

Secondary Data Collection and Use. The audit research activities consisted of the compilation of secondary research and gathering and analyzing primary data through employer interviews and a hospital survey. The contractor worked with the Workforce Board in order to identify the type of information to be gathered to determine the quality of each industry sector. The Board also contracted with Northern Illinois University and worked with local stakeholders to conduct research on the local labor market (secondary data). The data was used to paint a

Leveraging Resources and Engaging Partners Brings Continued Life to Community Audit.

- The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County sought funds from the state to supplement the community audit grant from USDOL.
- An active Board supported the community audit and reached out to other partners to truly engage the community.
- The Board did not restrict its efforts to its borders realizing that they are invisible to the area’s workforce and therefore did not limit the partners involved.
- A regional community audit effort grew from the work of the Board and it became an expert and a hub of the regional activities. More industry-specific research is being conducted. The information generated flows directly back into the Board’s own community audit allowing its initial work to continue.

has

a

clearer picture of the state of the local workforce in order to form the basis for strategic planning and implementation of key workforce strategies. The contractor also gathered information for the research mapping part of the audit.

Data was obtained from the following sources: Dunn & Bradstreet's iMarket employer database, Illinois Department of Employment Security, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, O*Net, AGS Demographics, and School Report Cards from Illinois State Board of Education. Information was drawn from reports from several sources including: Illinois Economic Development Board, Chicago Metropolis 2020, University of Illinois-Chicago, Chicago's health care council, other Workforce Boards in and around Chicago, AFL-CIO, Great Cities Institute, and Women Employed.

Primary Research. The Workforce Board also pursued gathering in-depth primary research from a survey of hospitals and employer interviews. The contractor conducted the survey with 14 hospitals in the area and sent it via email. Topics included: vacancy information, career path awareness of current employees, and what systemic changes the hospital feels are important.

Employer interviews were also conducted to learn more about employers' skill needs and their major suppliers. The contractor, with the assistance of One-Stop employer services staff in three-person teams, conducted the interviews. This joint effort trained the staff in research techniques and built sustainability into the project. Twenty interviews were held with employers in the health care and manufacturing sectors.

Community Audit Reports. The products generated by the community audit include the *2002 State of the Workforce Report*, 2003 supplements to the report, and the *2003 State of the Youth Report*. The *2002 State of the Workforce Report* is a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the region's labor market and workforce development challenges. The Board saw this document as a means to start a regional conversation on workforce development and cultivate its own strategic planning efforts. The report also plans for additional primary research steps to fill in some of the gaps in information not currently available. Supplemental information in 2003 shares the progress made from the 2002 report and updates charts and other data for the area's workforce system.

The *2003 State of the Youth Report* offered workforce development planners an opportunity to look at data specific to the area's youth and what workforce development issues they face. It served as a tool for the Board to strategically plan efforts to meet its goal of having a comprehensive workforce development system to equip the area's youth with the tools they need to succeed.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The stakeholders felt that the reports accurately reflected the workforce development issues that northern Cook County faces. They said that they are now able to use the information in the reports as hard facts in promoting their organizations to businesses and to pursue grant opportunities. The reports also provide needed information on industry clusters to better serve

their customers. Interviewees also reported that the community audit had helped to strengthening partnerships among organizations involved in the effort.

While several workforce development issues were identified, the Board is addressing career awareness and preparedness for youth first. The Board is working with community colleges and school districts, both locally and regionally, to support programs and services for youth. A virtual One-Stop Career Center is currently being piloted for high school students locally so that they can make informed decisions on post-secondary education, vocational training, and career paths.

The Board itself has used the community audit to update its strategic planning process and to provide staff with development opportunities. Other activities the community audit spurred are benchmarking and continuous improvement for the Board. Now that they are able to gather the labor market information, the Board members and staff feel that they can set specific goals that can be tracked and measured.

A regional community audit, led by the Board, occurred simultaneously with the local audit, which produced a Regional State of the Workforce Report. With additional funds provided by the state, the community audit evolved from a locally-led and focused audit to a regional multi-purpose audit with sector research in air transportation and warehousing, computer services, educational services, health services, electronics manufacturing, and insurance carriers. The regional audit's focus on industry sectors, combined with the local reports, is helping to inform the Board's strategic planning efforts.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Tulsa Area Site Summary

Grantee	Tulsa Area Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (TAWIB)
Contact	Steve Gilbert
Grant Amount	\$50,000
Matching Funds	\$201,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus on Manufacturing, Information Technology, and Health Care
Geographic Area	Tulsa Metropolitan Statistical Area including City of Tulsa and Counties of Tulsa, Creek, Rogers, Osage, Wagoner, and Pawnee (later expanded to include counties of Washington, Muskogee, Okmulgee, and Mayes)

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Tulsa Area Workforce Investment Board (TAWIB) undertook the community audit project to assist the ten-county area accomplish the following goals:

- To produce strategic plans for workforce development in the Tulsa MSA;
- To formulate a strategy for addressing the needs of particular population and employer groups to help solve existing labor-shortages;
- To develop pro-active layoff aversion strategies;
- To provide TAWIB customers with high-quality, current information with which to make employment and training decisions;
- To insure that training providers are responsive to the needs of the labor market; and
- To ensure that the document and information collected is updated to reflect changing customer needs.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

To accomplish the variety of tasks outlined in the community audit grant application, TAWIB needed the support of a substantial number of partnering and advisory organizations. Key to the success of this effort was the participation of business organizations and leaders as well as traditional partners in

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *Regional Labor Market Supply & Demand Study*
- An inventory of the region's workforce and economic assets and services
- Industry sector audits in manufacturing, information technology/telecommunications and health care

Website: A workforce information portal at www.workforcetulsa.com in English and Spanish

Other (some joint funding):

- Process mapping - One-Stop system performance improvement strategy
- Baldrige self-assessment and chartering
- Rapid Response strategies for potential layoff situations

education, workforce, and social service agencies. The Tulsa Metropolitan Area Chamber of Commerce was one of the key partners as the TAWIB worked with an economist at the Chamber to develop much of the data collection and analysis. Other partners in the effort included Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, One-Stop Career Centers, Oklahoma State University and local community colleges, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, City of Tulsa Division of Workforce Development, AFL-CIO, Oklahoma Department of Career & Technical Education, professional associations, and business groups.

BACKGROUND

At the time of application, the TAWIB was in its formative stage. Funding was in short supply, which limited the ability of the WIB to undertake any significant projects. In applying for the community audit grant, the WIB felt that it would be able to utilize the money for needed planning as well as identifying and creating one or more signature products. The hope was that these products would be of benefit to local and regional governments, economic development agencies, workforce development groups, and education and training professionals in their planning and participation in a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to regional development.

The TAWIB developed an external joint taskforce to lead the community audit including the Board, Chamber of Commerce, and other partners. At a minimum, the taskforce met monthly and some other taskforce subgroups met more frequently. The taskforce continues to meet and to conduct activities recommended through the audit. The sustainability and visibility of the project have been important to the TAWIB because it enhanced their capacity to develop policies and procedures to better serve the local workforce and employer community.

Those organizations that provided some of the matching funding to the community audit such as the Chamber, the local community college system, and Boeing were very involved. The Chamber committed a staff person to manage the project and housed an intern (Ph.D. candidate) to conduct a telephone survey of employers for the audit. These partners were also important in conducting the sectoral focus groups. Participating in this effort were the Manufacturers Alliance and the Oklahoma State University Center for Excellence for Information Technology and Telecommunications. In addition, the AFL-CIO, the Oklahoma Economic Security Commission, and the Oklahoma Department of Labor and Employment helped by providing relevant LMI data.

At the same time that the Board worked on its strategic planning, it also wanted to initiate steps to improve services in the One-Stop system. Utilizing some CA resources and with corporate support, the following activities were undertaken: (1) process mapping of the One-Stop system; and (2) Malcolm Baldrige assessment of the One-Stop system.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Ten-County Regional Statistical Profile. Most of the goals for this community audit revolved around having useful, comprehensive statistical information about the regional area. To accomplish this, the community audit supported developing a *ten-county regional statistical profile* that could be used as base line data in developing strategic plans to address workforce issues. Primary and secondary data sources were used in the development of the profile.

The TAWIB hired a contractor to conduct the primary data research and analysis. Employers and households in the ten-county area were surveyed. The surveys were administered initially by mail and the Internet and then, to increase the response rates, by phone for the employers and at the local Wal-Mart for the households. A local volunteer citizen group conducted the surveys at the Wal-Mart. Over 3,500 employers that have 10 or more employees and 10,000 households were sent the respective surveys. The employer survey had a 7 percent response rate and the household survey had a 2 percent response rate. Employer survey topics included: ratings and opinions on supply, demand, training, salary cost, human resources practices, use of temporary employees/agencies, recruiting methods, union relationships, non-English speaking issues, and relocation of talent. Household survey topics included: hidden labor reserves, underemployment, and “employers of choice.”

The focus groups were intended to fill in data that the surveys and inventory did not capture. The contractor recruited directors of vocational-technical centers, K-12 superintendents, higher education representatives, publicly funded workforce partners, information technology employers, manufacturing employers, other major employers, and economic development entities to participate in the groups. The focus group moderators used the same questions on workforce development for most of the focus groups with some additional specific questions related to the group’s area of interest. The contractor also conducted one-on-one interviews with corporate representatives to add more depth to the information gathered.

Lesson Learned. A community audit can feed into a much larger community initiative. The TAWIB’s community audit became a part of a larger community effort called Vision 2020. TAWIB provided its labor market study to the mayor who was pursuing Vision 2020, an initiative to revitalize and bring economic growth to Tulsa. The labor market study offered solid data to the mayor’s office on the state of the workforce and potential economic growth in the Tulsa region to feed into Vision 2020. TAWIB gained much credibility in Tulsa as a resource and expert on workforce development and will continue to forge partnerships throughout the community.

Education and Training Assets and Services. The TAWIB then conducted an inventory of over 200 of the region’s workforce , education and training assets and services (training resource base), including employer utilization of these assets and quality ratings. From this information and additional secondary data sources, the community audit project was able to generate a number of products, including: the *Regional Labor Market Study* (Final Report), *Regional Labor Market Supply & Demand Study* (details of the region’s workforce and economic assets and services), industry sector studies for manufacturing, information technology/telecommunications and health care, a work force website with information available in English and Spanish, process

maps, and Rapid Response strategies. These products are intended to help job seekers, employers, educational institutions, economic development organizations, and the TAWIB.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The TAWIB reported that the community audit contributed significantly to:

- The development of the TAWIB's Strategic Plan.
- Improvement in the operations of the One-Stop making it more user friendly.
- The understanding by participating entities of primary and secondary data collection methodology and the use of templates.
- Assisting the workforce in identifying social services and other work related resources.
- An understanding of the employment needs of important industries and the development of dialogs among these industries and the workforce system about addressing those needs.

The TAWIB members and staff feel that the regional ten-county community audit brought participating entities together to solve common problems thus establishing a framework for future collaborative efforts. One finding of the final report pointed out that local assets in education and training are not effectively marketed. This has resulted in TAWIB plans to improve both the quality of information offered to potential students and the accessibility of such information. Web-based search tools have been developed to help potential students find education and training opportunities. These tools will include search engines to find degree-based programs and cooperative agreements between educational institutions and training providers.

The various audit reports have also been of assistance to the economic development community. Some of the findings are helping to define Tulsa's competitive advantages, which will be useful when marketing the area to potential businesses and investors. Economic development has conducted a major effort to define who and what the Tulsa area is as a result of the recommendations of the audit.

The TAWIB provided the study to the mayor of Tulsa, who used the information to help craft Vision 2020. Vision 2020 is a local effort to revitalize downtown Tulsa and bring new business to the city. The Vision required support; therefore, it was presented to the voting public and approved.

The WIB will be reinventing its workforce investment efforts. It is developing a timeline and work plan to continue the gathering and updating of data. There will also be GIS applications of the data collected.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

Lancaster County WIB Community Audit Project

Grantee	Lancaster County (PA) Workforce Investment Board
Contact	Scott J. Sheely
Grant Amount	\$50,000
Matching Funds	\$30,800
Period of Performance	4/1/01-3/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral (Industry Cluster Analysis): Health Care, Construction, Biotechnology, Food Processing, Metals and Metal Fabricating
Geographic Area	Lancaster County

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Community Audit Demonstration Project mounted by the Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) was aimed at statistically confirming industry clusters in which the region held a competitive advantage and were likely in the future to produce “gold collar jobs” (i.e., high-paying and high-demand jobs). The principal goals of this project were the following:

- Validate the importance of five industry clusters previously chosen during the Board’s strategic planning process;
- Scan the economy for other clusters that may have been missed or are just emerging;
- Develop a better understanding of the clusters that are selected, particularly with regard to regional planning;
- Identify the significant groupings within each industry cluster;
- Develop a skills map that defines levels of skills throughout the cluster; and
- Relate the skills map to career ladders and the education and training required to move up the ladders.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Report:

- *Lancaster County Workforce Investment Area: Scan of Employment* – This report provides a series of detailed charts analyzing employment levels and change over a 5-year period at the 3- and 4-digit SIC code level.

Power Point Presentations:

- The WIB has developed a series of briefing packages to be used in meetings with local stakeholders to discuss study findings and develop local workforce development and economic development strategies.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

Initially, staff at the Lancaster County WIB worked closely with experts at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota to develop an understanding of how to utilize statistical methods for study of industry clusters. The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis at the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry was instrumental in providing employment and payroll data used by the Lancaster WIB in the

industry cluster analysis. The WIB utilized student interns at nearby colleges (Franklin and Marshall College and Millersville University) to assist with data analysis. The Team Pennsylvania Business Calling Program conducted in-person interviews with local businesses to supplement and explain results of the aggregate data analysis. The local economic development agency – the Economic Development Company of Lancaster County – provided input throughout the study and was a major user of the products of the study. Finally, throughout the effort, the Lancaster County WIB relied upon input from a steering committee consisting of faculty from two local colleges; community planners from the Lancaster Alliance, the Lancaster Partnership, and the United Way; economic development specialists; representatives from the Labor Market Information (LMI) component of the state’s Department of Labor and Industry; and several business representatives.

BACKGROUND

Lancaster County, located in the southeast part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, is one of the fastest growing areas in the Commonwealth. The county, with a population in excess of 460,000, has a diverse industry mix and one of the highest concentrations of manufacturing jobs in the state. It is also one of the top 20 agricultural-producing counties in the United States. Historically, the county often leads the state in having the lowest unemployment rate and at times has suffered from labor shortages in skilled and unskilled occupations. Prior to conducting the community audit (as part of its strategic planning process), the Lancaster County WIB had adopted an “industry clusters” model for conceptualizing its role in the economic development process and for supporting its overall mission of providing effective services for area workers and employers. In addition, the WIB was guided by a strong interest in growing high skill/high wage jobs for its workforce – and making sure that the workforce was prepared for such emerging jobs.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

With funding provided through the Community Audit Demonstration Program, the Lancaster County WIB was able to obtain employment and payroll data and apply a statistical approach to analyzing industry clusters – developed by the University of Minnesota’s Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs – to address the following critical questions:

- Which industries are growing and which are declining?
- What is the importance of an industry to the local economy relative to its importance to the national economy?
- How competitive are regional industries when compared to their national counterparts?
- Which of the local industries with a competitive advantage could grow “gold collar” jobs (i.e., high skill, high paying, and high demand jobs)?

Cluster Analysis of Existing Employment and Payroll Data. The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry provided employment and payroll data for 1995 (the base year for the analysis) and 2000 (the most recent

year for which data were available). The WIB used the formulae published (“Understanding Your Industry”) by the Humphrey Center for Public Policy (at the University of Minnesota) to create its own tool in Microsoft Excel to be used in the analyses of the data. This tool produced a variety of statistical measures useful in identifying industry clusters of importance to the region and occupations that predominate within clusters. For example, the software provided analyses of the following types of statistical measures allowing for identification of important and growing industry sectors: percentage growth or decline of employment at the 2-, 3-, and 4-digit Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes; the percentage share of total local employment accounted for by industry sector; “locational quotient” (a measure of an industry’s concentration in an area relative to the rest of the nation); and “shift-share” analysis (which calculates what part of local job growth that can be attributed to growth in the national economy, growth in the sector nationally, and growth from local competitive advantage as compared to growth nationally). To further refine the analyses and link them to development of high-demand/high-paying jobs, the WIB also analyzed payroll per employee.

The initial analysis confirmed five priority industry clusters that had significant local competitive advantages and robust career ladders: health care, construction, communications, food processing, and metals and metal fabricating. In the course of further analysis, the WIB split biotechnology from health care and added automotive as a priority industry cluster. In each of the sectors, the analysis examined overall employment and earnings trends and identified “key drivers” within the industry. For example, in the biotechnology sector, the analysis suggested that Lancaster County had a competitive advantage in key segments such as drug manufacturing and production of medical instruments and supplies. Ongoing research and analysis led to the profiling of 14 additional clusters: automotive; business services; chemicals, rubber, and plastics; education; financial services; government; hospitality; personal services; retail; textiles; tobacco; transportation; utilities; and wholesale trade.

Business Visitations. To follow up on the aggregate data analysis (the primary focus of the community audit), the Lancaster County WIB contracted with the Team Pennsylvania Business Calling Program to conduct interviews with local businesses in each targeted cluster in an attempt to more clearly identify the nature of the cluster, the character of the workforce, demand for workers, and training requirements. By devoting a small amount of community audit grant funds to the Business Calling Program, the Lancaster County WIB was able to add several questions to the in-person survey instrument normally used by the Calling Program interviewers. Calling Program interviewers visited and conducted surveys with over 100 businesses (generally with chief executive officers or plant managers) across the selected sectors.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The results of the data analysis activities conducted under this community audit were compiled into a final report, entitled *Lancaster County Workforce Investment Area: Scan of Employment*. The agency has also produced a series of PowerPoint presentations which have been used in meetings with over 100 local stakeholders including the county supervisors, Chamber of Commerce, and local economic development officials. The study has been particularly instrumental in focusing local decision-makers (including workforce development, economic

development, and education officials) on the critical industry clusters most likely to power local growth and produce high-wage/high-skill jobs in the coming years. Lancaster County WIB officials noted that the community audit has provided local decision-makers with “hard data that goes beyond anecdotal information” and cited the following impacts of the study:

- The study provided critical data for determining high growth industry clusters to inform the development of workforce development and economic development strategies.
- The project refined the data collection and analysis capabilities of the local WIB. WIB officials found that the industry cluster analysis had given the workforce development community control of information that is of substantial interest to the economic development system, education, business and industry, and local government.
- The study helped to intensify collaboration among key partners involved in the effort, particularly among workforce development, economic development, representatives of key industries, and local education authorities.

A highlight of the project came at a county commissioner-sponsored event in June 2002 for industry, economic development, education, and other state and local stakeholders. There it was announced that the priority industry clusters identified in the community audit report would be priority clusters for the next five to ten years. In

addition, as a result of the findings of the community audit, the Lancaster County WIB initiated sector employment interventions in two priority industry clusters: health care and construction. The health care intervention, for example, was a regional project conducted with two other local boards covering 10 counties in south central Pennsylvania that included: a major media campaign; the mobilization of the One-Stop Career Centers in the region to service the effort; the development and implementation of new educational programming to increase accessibility to entry-level jobs; and a major effort to advance incumbent workers in eight hospitals in the region.

As a follow-up to the community audit, the Lancaster County WIB received a \$15,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to conduct qualitative research focusing on knowledge and skill gaps in four technology-based career ladders: industry maintenance, maintenance of information technology systems, industrial controls, and lab technician. In addition, since the completion of the community audit cluster analyses, the Lancaster County WIB has contracted with 12 other workforce development boards across the state – representing about 35 counties – to produce the same types of industry cluster analyses that had been undertaken in Lancaster County.

Lessons Learned. WIB officials had the following suggestions for involving local stakeholders in cluster analysis:

- Engage actors from five main system players to analyze data: business and industry, economic development, education, state/local government, and workforce development.
- Share the analysis broadly and listen to responses.
- Develop a shared vision and talk about it with all of the involved parties.
- Push for bringing this vision into the planning that drives changes in the respective service delivery systems and look for opportunities to develop.

As a result of the community audit, the Lancaster County WIB has gained the in-house knowledge of both how to apply the cluster analysis methodology and how to obtain the necessary data through the state's workforce development agency. This will enable it to easily and cost-effectively replicate the analysis regularly (as often as annually) in the future. The WIB plans to continue to monitor cluster trends on an annual basis and to provide technical assistance to other WIBs around the state on how to conduct this type of analysis.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

Montgomery County Site Summary

Grantee	Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board
Contact	Janet Dicenzo
Grant Amount	\$50,000
Matching Funds	\$90,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board sponsored a community audit that was primarily focused on preparing a directory of available employment and social services within the county and making this directory available to residents via the county’s website. Among the keys goals of this effort were the following:

- To make the public, their neighborhoods and communities aware of easily accessible employment and social services and begin sharing this knowledge throughout the community so that anyone seeking employment and/or social services will become aware of how to get the necessary support;
- To unify and coordinate the employment and human services resources of Montgomery County and link these resources to those of the surrounding employment region;
- To engage members of the social services community in an atmosphere of sharing and collaboration that would result in a more expeditious delivery of services to those who need the services;
- To make all of the employment support resources easily accessible to job seekers, students, families, employees, employers, educators and support organization staff; and
- To establish a Clearinghouse of Employment Social Services to ensure that resource information remains current and those needing that information may obtain it easily, on-line, through telephone inquiry or through in-person visits.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *Final Report of the Montgomery County Community Resource Audit Process* – This report summarizes community audit activities, key findings, and lessons learned.
- *Final Report to Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board of the Results from the Community Resource Profile Survey* – This report provides tabulations and analysis of the survey of social service providers.

Website:

- *MontcoWorks (www.montcoworks.org)* – This website provides an easy-to-use directory of social service providers serving Montgomery county residents.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The original partners in this community audit project were the Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board, the Montgomery County Commissioners, Montgomery County Community College, and several other county agencies. A team of subcontractors that included the Resource Company and Economic Development Consulting worked on the design of the survey, conduct of the focus group discussions, and website design. With assistance from the Montgomery County's Information Services Department, the website developed under this project was linked with the County's homepage, as well as the homepages of several related county agencies.

BACKGROUND

Montgomery County is the third largest county in Pennsylvania, with a population of about 750,000 individuals. The county's workforce is served by over 1,000 social service agencies and programs. As a result of a strategic planning process that preceded the community audit grant award, the staff at the Montgomery County WIB discovered that there was no single repository of information concerning the location and availability of social services agencies in the county. In addition, the existing service delivery system was fragmented and characterized by a lack of communication among agencies. WIB administrators and staff felt that a comprehensive, county-wide, web-based directory of available service providers would be of great assistance to workers and other individuals in identifying social service providers where needed help could be accessed. Such a directory of employment and social service providers was also viewed as a valuable tool for coordination of services and facilitating referrals between social service agencies. The development of a comprehensive directory of service providers in the county was also viewed as a resource that would be of considerable help to employers looking to support workers in upgrading skills and meeting other social service needs (such as securing transportation, childcare, and affordable housing). Therefore, the WIB – with support of other agencies in the county, such as the economic development agency -- sought a community audit grant to begin the process of creating a single database of service providers and from there to develop a website to house the directory.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The process for conducting this project involved three main grant activities: (1) surveying the social service agencies serving Montgomery County, (2) conducting focus groups with social service agencies, and (3) developing the directory and a website to facilitate access to the directory.

Mail Survey of Social Service Providers. The first step in the process of developing the social services directory involved surveying social service providers in the county. Economic Development Consulting, a private research firm, was hired to develop the survey instrument. This contractor developed the instrument based on a careful examination of past survey instruments used by the Department of Economic and Workforce Development, as well as a review of survey instruments used for development of social service directories that had been

used by a variety of other organizations working throughout the United States. Topics covered in the survey included: (1) basic contact information for the agency; (2) top eight areas of activities or services offered by the agency; (3) basic characteristics of the organization (e.g., staff size, sources of funding); (4) numbers and types of clients served; (5) client services offered for special populations; (6) key partnerships with other organizations; and (7) challenges faced by the agency. Several weeks prior to sending the survey, a memo was sent to all department heads in relevant Montgomery County agencies, asking them to review and comment upon the survey draft.

A second subcontracted firm – the Resources Company – compiled names and addresses of relevant economic development-related and social service agencies from among dozens of uncoordinated local, state, and national data sources. Using this database of social service providers, the survey was sent to a total of 1,290 organizations, including private, not-for-profit, social service organizations operating in the County or serving residents of the County. Surveys were sent either by e-mail or regular mail. In addition, the survey was posted on the Montgomery County website and could be filled out on-line. Follow-up phone calls were also made to ensure the largest possible number of initial replies. Slightly over 35 percent of the surveys sent to valid addresses were completed and researchers reported that more surveys continued to come in even after the community audit project was completed. The WIB found that the response rate was slightly higher (about 4 percent higher) for surveys sent to organizations via e-mail versus those sent via regular mail. The responses of agencies returning surveys were entered into a database both for development of the directory and so that results could be analyzed across agencies. For example, the survey database was used to analyze the types of services available through social service agencies and the key challenges faced by organizations.

Survey Designed to Be Non-Burdensome for Respondents. The survey format was designed so that it would be easy for social service agencies to complete and return:

- *Easy to Access:* Respondents had the choice of completing the survey on paper and mailing or faxing it back, or completing it online through the <http://www.montcopa.org/hssurvey> website.
- *Easy to Complete:* The length of the survey was limited to 3 pages, with easy to answer questions; nearly all of the questions were closed-ended.
- *Easy to Participate:* The agency used “floating” deadlines, so that organizations could respond to the survey and/or update existing data on their organization throughout the project (and even after the community audit project had ended).

Focus Groups with Social Service Agencies. The purpose of the focus groups was to provide additional substance, “texture” and feedback, to the survey. It was hoped a better understanding of the real opportunities and challenges that were facing local agencies in providing support to the workforce development and human services infrastructure within the county would be obtained through a series of focus groups. Each of the focus groups followed a similar format and agenda. Sessions began with welcoming comments and an overview and explanation of the purpose of the focus group. From this point, participants were asked to share information about their organization and its purpose, and to highlight some of the strengths or outstanding qualities of their organization. By sharing what they were most proud of about their organization and their work, each focus group started on a very positive footing and set the stage for productive

discussion. Once the “positives” were shared, the discussion turned to challenges faced and how these challenges could be overcome. By ending the focus group on challenges with a view to solutions, the discussion stayed productive and ultimately, positive. In addition, with the MontcoWorks test website in its formative stages, information and a preview of the website were presented at the focus group. Feedback was then solicited on how useful this website tool could be to participants and what other information they would like to see included in such a website. A total of fifty-seven (57) people took part in four focus groups in three different sections of the county. Very diverse sectors of the social services and economic development community participated in these focus groups, including agencies serving school-aged girls, children in foster care, runaway teens, addicted teens, individuals with disabilities, single and low-income mothers, homeless families, and many others.

Development of MontcoWorks Website. The outcomes of the survey effort were compiled into a hardcopy directory of social service providers and also uploaded to the MontcoWorks website (at www.montcoworks.org). The MontcoWorks website – developed as part of the project – is a one-stop web-based resource tool intended to support workforce development and human services in Montgomery County. The website enables the user to search for particular types of services by topics such as Community and Housing, Education, Health, Human Services, Legal, and Transportation Services. The website also allows users to search for services and organizations in a particular geographic area of the county. Further, the website makes available other types of information of interest to workers, employers, and social service agencies, including: (1) articles on workforce development and human services issues; (2) a calendar of conferences/events in and around the county; (3) direct links to newsletters of organizations serving Montgomery County; (4) Internet links to national and state organizations serving the workforce; and (5) Internet links to national clearinghouses.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the key accomplishments of the community audit was opening channels of communication between the WIB, the Department of Economic and Workforce Development, and area human services agencies. WIB staff were asked to become members of boards and asked to make presentations at other board meetings. Most importantly, the collaboration between the human services community and the workforce development community was expected to continue well after the conclusion of the community audit grant, especially through the Human Services Initiative.

The MontcoWorks website will continue to be maintained with funding provided by the Montgomery County WIB. Agencies that had not yet submitted survey information can at anytime complete the survey online for inclusion in the website. In addition, agencies with an existing listing in the directory may submit updated information about their agency and service offerings, as well as post information about upcoming activities and newsletters. Agencies with current listings will be encouraged to update their listing at least twice a year. With regular updating of the website by social service agencies, the WIB anticipates being able to carry out future analyses of the workforce and human services delivery system in the county. Such analyses will be helpful in both characterizing available services and identifying service gaps.

Among the lessons highlighted by the local WIB were the following:

- Continued communication is useful and necessary: There was a widespread feeling among participants in each of the four focus groups that bringing organizations of diverse backgrounds together for a discussion focusing on strengths, challenges, and solutions was an outstanding idea. Often, both the “customers” and the providers are not clear what other services are available in the community. This leads to duplication, confusion, or simply unmet needs. Organizations can and should use the community audit process as a platform to learn from each other and do things differently.
- Collaboration is a double-edged sword, which, if used honestly, responsibly and in moderation, can enhance the effectiveness of many organizations’ work: The issue of “collaboration” was widely discussed in all the groups and also responded to in the survey instrument. Its effectiveness is somewhat controversial. On the one hand, organizations learn from each other, avoid duplication, and may be able to share some resources, benefiting all in the long run. On the other hand, they fear giving away too much information on funding sources, giving up precious staff time to meetings involving collaborative efforts, and needing to offer funds to stay in the collaborative and keep it operational.
- Organizations with longevity in the community recognize the need for change in order to serve a changing constituency base: Many of the organizations participating in the meetings had been around for many decades. There was a general acknowledgement that the needs and realities of the county and its population twenty or more years ago are very different from those of today. Issues of diversity (ethnic, racial, language, skills, and economic levels) are critical for successful organizations to address.
- Human resource (staffing) issues represent the greatest assets as well as the greatest weaknesses of human service organizations in the county. There is great pride in the work carried out by organizations in the county. At the same time, executives and boards of organizations are keenly aware that because of non-competitive wages, intense work demands and other issues, they face high turnover in their workforce.
- Potential clients need better education on services available in the community. Biases against certain organizations perceived to serve only the “poorest of the poor” or the most desperate segments of the community, combined with organizations’ inadequate publicity of their services, prevent more potential beneficiaries from tapping into the good services available in their communities.
- Issues of transportation, affordable housing, and access to child care remain fundamental concerns: Despite a virtual proliferation of social service organizations, these three

Lesson Learned. Success of Website Dependent on Ongoing Updating of Data in System. While feedback on the website concept and its test version were overwhelmingly positive, it was clear to all that the website will serve as a useful tool only if it is regularly maintained and updated. Changes in staff, executive directors, addresses, and emails are frequent enough that updating will be required. Further, the nature of the site, with the opportunity to complete the survey and the news and events sections, calls for regular monitoring and updating.

issues remain primary obstacles in allowing the poor to go to work, take advantage of evening educational programs, and live near locations where they can work.

- The community audit process will be effective as long as it can be maintained: While feedback on the website concept and its test version was overwhelmingly positive, it was clear to all that the website will serve as a useful tool only if it is regularly maintained and updated. Changes in staff, executive directors, addresses, and emails are frequent enough that updating will be required.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Concho Valley Site Summary

Grantee	Concho Valley Workforce Development Board
Contact	Mary Kay Kuss
Grant Amount	\$49,827
Matching Funds	\$19,092 and also received a \$49,000 grant from the State of Texas to expand geographical area
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Counties of Kimble, Schleicher, Sutton, Crockett, Reagan, and Irion (State grant used to finance audit activities for the Counties of Mason, Menard, and McCulloch)

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOAL

The Concho Valley Workforce Development Board (CVWDB) conducted a locally-led community audit to implement the following goal: to support the development of strategic workforce plans which would address the needs of both employers and the regional labor force through the collection of employment and social needs data.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

CVWDB, the local workforce investment board, initially began the community audit project with six counties and expanded it to nine counties with the assistance of state funding. Because of the number of counties involved, the number of partnering agencies was fairly extensive. The following is representative of the general types of organizations involved: Concho Valley Workforce Development Board One-Stop operators; Texas Department of Human Services; community development organizations; Chambers of Commerce; local elected officials (especially county judges); and the Concho Valley Council of Governments.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plans* for six rural counties

BACKGROUND

CVWDB staff reviewed the DOL/ETA publication “Conducting a Community Audit” and thought an audit might be a good way to identify employers’ and employee needs in the Concho Valley area. The agency applied for two grants, one from the Texas Workforce Commission and

one from DOL. Both grants were awarded which permitted CVWDB to conduct surveys in nine counties, six under the DOL grant and three under the state grant.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

CVWDB conducted several activities under the community audit grant, including: gathering of primary information on economic and labor market trends through direct contact with employers and workers; developing strategies to respond to business and worker needs; establishing linkages between employers and educational institutions to ensure responsiveness to labor market needs; and developing resource directories. The CVWDB contracted with a research consultant to coordinate and implement these activities.

Primary Data. Mail surveys were initially used under the state grant to gather information from workers and employees. The responses were disappointing so the project team modified its primary research efforts and decided to conduct in-person and telephone interviews with workers and employers. CVWDB hired an independent contractor to conduct the primary research efforts. In the first county, the research contractor met with the Kimble County judges to inform them about the community audit. She requested letters of introduction from the judges to possible partners as well as employers. Meetings were held with the potential partner organizations to inform them of the project and ask for various forms of support such as names of employers and pertinent local economic and labor force information. Using the information and contacts gathered from these meetings, the contractor contacted employers in person to complete the employer survey and requested interviews with their workers. Once the first county's research was completed, the process became easier and it was repeated in the other five counties covered under this grant.

Lesson Learned – Partnerships pave the way for good survey response rates. The CVWDB approached county judges to gain entrance to numerous employers for its primary research activities. The judges provided letters of introduction for the CVWDB to use with potential partners, such as economic development and employer associations, as well as employers. The letters were of great help in introducing the study to partners and employers and were a significant factor in facilitating cooperation and a high response rate in the survey of employers.

Employers were asked about occupational skills needed by their workers, educational requirements, wages/salaries paid, and training opportunities provided by the employer. The interviews lasted about 15 minutes. Information was also gathered from workers through a similar interview process. Questions asked of the employees included a description of their occupations, skills needed to perform the work, what skills they had when hired, what was needed to make them feel valued as employees, what steps the company could take to keep its employees, and what training was needed to advance in the company. Employers and their employees from the following industries were targeted for interviews: construction, plumbing/heating/air conditioning, electrical work, meat products manufacturing, fabricated structural metals, telecommunications, miscellaneous personal services, health care, education, individual/family services, and day care services. CVWDB staff and the contractor utilized InfoUSA to receive a listing of every business in every county. Attempts were made to contact

every business in every county. The contractor was able to identify businesses that were no longer in operation or had changed ownership or business name.

CVWDB also changed research tactics from focus groups to community meetings to obtain buy-in and involvement from each county. The community organizations that attended the meetings brought a lot to the table in resources such as in-kind and cash donations. The attendance at each meeting was different for every community. The variety of attendees included representatives from the Council of Governments, Board staff and members, city councils, economic development corporations, Chambers of Commerce, school superintendents, mayors, and interested individuals. These community organization meetings were hosted by the applicable county judge. A total of eight meetings were held with up to 10 attendees at each meeting. To attract participants, CVWDB advertised the initial focus group of community partners through public service announcements in newspapers and radio.

Analysis of Secondary Data. CVWDB and One-Stop staff also gathered labor market information and analyzed it for each county. This information was provided to the contractor for planning and implementing the interviews with workers and employers and to develop the county plans. Information regarding the workforce characteristics and economic conditions in the state and region were obtained from available state and national databases. Once data were gathered, it was analyzed and presented in the *Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan* (one per country) along with demographic information and service delivery strategies for workforce development in each county. This document addressed the gaps between the kinds of workers in demand and the available workforce, as well as documented social and employment services available and needed by workers.

Compilation of a Resource Directory. To compile the resource directory for each county, a simple form was developed and distributed to known social service organizations. Each resource directory catalogued available resources within the community, such as social service agencies, child care, education, health, and so forth. The results were compiled into a hard copy resource directory and Internet resident file. In addition to Internet access, CVWDB made the hardcopy version of the directory available through various local stakeholders and organizations, such as county judges, economic development corporations, Chambers of Commerce, educational institutions, and libraries. The directories were printed through donations by partner organizations in each county.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Historically, the rural counties have felt that their interests are secondary to those of the more populous cities and counties. Because the *Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plans* and the resource directories were compiled utilizing surveys taken within each county and were issued by county rather than by region, there is more of a feeling of partnership with neighboring counties than ever before.

According to the project manager and several of those interviewed during the site visit, community audit products were used as primary backup documentation to support the following successful grant applications:

- **Steady Steps Day Care, Mason, Texas** – \$32,000 in funding from the San Angelo Health Foundation.
- **Concho Valley Workforce Development Board** - Local Coordination Grant of \$78,344 to support a Rural Employer Services Representative position.
- **Junction Independent School District**- Grant funding from the Peterson Foundation to support a youth program during the summer months; grant writers utilized the *Kimble County Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan* to document demographic characteristics, identify potential partnerships, and specific a service delivery plan to identify and increase opportunities for youth.
- **Kimble County Hospital** - Grant funding of \$72,248 from the San Angelo Health Foundation to purchase hospital beds for critical access hospital; grant writers utilized demographic characteristics profile from *Kimble County Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan*.
- **The Library Club of Menard, Inc.** - Grant funding of \$80,000 for construction of a new public library; grant writers utilized demographic characteristics profile from *Menard County Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan*.

Community audit products were also used as primary back-up documentation for an honorary award: Pedernales Electric Cooperative received the Texas Workforce Network - Future Workforce Award of Excellence out of 15 nominees based on their partnership with CVWDB in conducting the community audit and mapping of community resources.

Information from the resource directory is now to be the basis for the United Way of the Concho Valley's Information and Referral Services Network. Continued maintenance of the data in the directory will become the responsibility of the United Way. Future plans are to link this information to the www.helpintexas.com website.

Among the lessons learned as a result of the CVWDB community audit were the following:

- In order to gain access to employers, the project had to get endorsements from recognized local officials (county judges). Response rates from surveys may be inadequate to develop statistically valid conclusions; thus, in-person contact may be necessary. In this case, the change resulted in the project having to spend considerably more time than anticipated in the development of the Individual Community Strategic and Service Delivery Plan. Each Strategic and Service Delivery Plan took between 3 and 4 months to complete.
- In rural communities, it may be necessary to enlist the aid of respected local citizens to obtain cooperation from employers and workers alike. The Concho Valley project asked the county judges to prepare endorsement letters which could be shown to employers. This resulted in substantial cooperation by local employers.
- A simple survey instrument is more likely to result in cooperation by the employers and employees.

- The in-person interview of employers and employees enabled the Concho Valley representative to establish personal relationships which may be useful for future projects
- The focus on employer needs and desires through the survey question process has produced a very positive response.
- Hard copies of the Plans and Resource Directories should be printed in limited numbers so they can be placed in libraries, provided to those organizations who were active participants, and given to Chambers of Commerce and other economic development groups.
- Substantial use of public service announcements (PSA) and the local press can be beneficial as it adds to the legitimacy of the project. PSAs and press releases should be used to introduce the project and the primary staff working on the project as well as to announce the completion of and access to the products.
- Because of the rural nature of the service area, many of the participating organizations and employers report that they really didn't need this information because "we already know all that" but they acknowledge that when applying for grants and other economic development assistance, being able to cite the plan and draw information from the plan has been very helpful. The information that they need is in one place.
- To encourage utilization of the audit products, links should be established on related websites. The Concho Valley materials are currently or will be linked with the San Angelo Chamber of Commerce website at www.sanangelo-tx.com and www.helpintexas.com

CVWDB feels that the most important impacts are the development of partnerships throughout the huge service delivery area, the identification of skill and service gaps and plans to address those needs, and the creation of documents that can be used to support economic development efforts. CVWDB members and staff recognize that the community audit is an ongoing process and that they have fundamental information that can be a foundation for future additional research. Although the CVWDB has limited funding, its vision, further developed through the community audit, will be continued in the future. The CVWDB also works with the Rural Workforce Network that serves West Texas so they can share service delivery strategies and best practices.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Brazos Valley Site Summary

Grantee	The Technology and Economic Development Division of the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX)
Contact	Deborah Webb
Grant Amount	\$49,757
Matching Funds	\$0
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Counties of Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, and Washington

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Technology and Economic Development Division of the Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), a unit of Texas A&M University, led a multi-county community audit project to conduct a specialized business survey to determine issues involved in hiring low-income, Welfare-to-Work, hard-to-place job seekers who may be qualified as TANF or WIA customers.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

In partnership with the Brazos Valley Workforce Development Board (BVWDB), TEEX developed and implemented a telephone survey and the *Brazos Valley Community Audit Survey Report* for use by the BVWDB in its strategic planning. From the project's inception, TEEX planned to contract with the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) of Texas A&M University to conduct the survey implementation and data analysis. TEEX and BVWDB worked directly with PPRI to

develop the survey instrument and review the findings of the survey. Other partnerships were formed with Blinn Community College, the Brazos Valley Council of Governments, and the Local Independent School Districts as informational and planning resources.

**COMMUNITY AUDIT
PRODUCT**
Report:

- *Brazos Valley Community Audit Survey Report (2002)*. The report summarizes the survey findings and provides the survey instrument.

BACKGROUND

The six rural counties studied as part of this initiative suffered from high (and deteriorating) unemployment rates in the period leading up to the start of the community audit project. At the time of the audit, the main industries in the area were manufacturing, construction, retail, health care, and agriculture. TEEX wanted to look at labor market needs in the rural counties of Brazos

Valley to assist local workforce development programs in program and service planning. In order to better serve former TANF recipients and other low-wage workers in the six rural counties of Brazos Valley, the Board felt it needed to understand more about the employers in the region and their hiring practices. For example, in an area with a small population, employers know the people they are hiring and do not base hiring decisions on an application and/or interview alone. It was also important to understand the perspectives of workers within the region – for example, in Brazos Valley, most residents do not want to commute long distances to work.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

TEEX held initial meetings with administrators at BVWDB, Blinn Community College, and PPRI. The discussions focused on the possibility of modifying the primary data collection process from a business survey to focus groups. The Blinn representative shared data from other surveys in the six counties and provided information on businesses in the area. To avoid duplicating other local efforts, TEEX inquired about other regional surveys to understand previous efforts by other organizations and agencies. Washington County was the only one that had conducted surveys in 1999 on wages and benefits and its workforce. The group finally decided that a survey, rather than focus groups, would be the most effective way of gathering the information desired to benefit workforce development in these counties.

Survey Design and Implementation.

TEEX and PPRI designed the draft survey instrument and presented it to the staff of BVWDB. A survey developed for the Rural Expansion Project conducted by PPRI for the Texas Workforce Commission was the basis of this survey. It was expanded by adding questions tailored to the Brazos Valley counties. The team jointly approved the survey instrument and PPRI had the “go ahead” to conduct the survey.

A BVWDB staff person conducted the research to identify employers with 10 or more employees in the six counties and provided the list to PPRI. PPRI used this list to contact 342 employers and, in the end, surveyed 240, a response rate of 70 percent. A computer-assisted telephone laboratory at PPRI was used to conduct the survey and contact employers in a systematic method. The survey questions included employers’ familiarity with and use of the BVWDB and its workforce development services, hiring practices, and general characteristics of the employers’ businesses.

TEEX Used Computer-Assisted Phone Surveys to Provide Valid Data Results.

A computer-assisted telephone laboratory helps phone survey researchers gather data in a systematic and effective manner. While this laboratory can be expensive, the advantages are:

- The computer tracks all calls to potential survey participants and indicates when it is a good time to reach a person.
- The survey form is on the computer, which prompts the caller on when and how to ask the survey questions.
- The answers that a survey participant provides are entered into the computer and housed in a central database.
- Once the survey effort is completed, the researcher is able to access the database of results, verify the data’s validity, and analyze the information in a report.

Preparation of a Final Report. Based on the findings from the survey, TEEX and PPRI developed the final report and presented it to the BVWDB. It found that employers in the rural counties were not using Brazos Valley workforce services because they felt that they did not need these services. While the survey did not go into detail about why the employers felt this way, some of the other data collected indicated that most were unaware of the workforce services that could help their companies. The employers who responded also seemed reluctant to use workforce services (even if they thought those services might be important) if the workforce offices were not in a location that was convenient to their business. Some of the specific findings from the employer responses include:

- Of the 240 survey respondents, only 32 (13 percent) said that they had used workforce services in the past year;
- The most utilized service was the Employment Service function of posting job openings (30 employers);
- Employer ratings for “helpfulness of workforce staff”, “ease of completing the process” and “efficiency of the process” showed that most employers were pleased with the service delivery of these items;
- Employer ratings for “quality of applicants” showed that employers were not always pleased with the service delivery of this item;
- Employers identified “finding applicants for jobs,” “posting job openings,” “screening for criminal history,” and “screening for drugs” as the most important services that workforce services could provide;
- Over half of the employers said that they would not use these services if the workforce office was not convenient to their business location;
- The most common method of attracting entry-level employees was “word of mouth”;
- Having a high school diploma was the most important minimum education requirement for all job categories;
- Employers felt that people-related items (such as employee relations, morale, training, etc.) were more important in ensuring the success of their company than non-people related items (such as technology and venture capital);

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The community audit provided valuable insights for BVWDB. The survey showed that previous efforts to engage employers had not resulted in significant use of the local workforce development system, although those employers who used the services were very satisfied. As a result of the survey, area employers became more aware of the existence of BVWDB and its services. The survey also opened the door for Workforce Center representatives to contact over 100 employers around the region and inform them about workforce development services available through the Center. Employers became more knowledgeable about services available through the agency based (in part) on the questions included in the survey.

With the survey data, BVWDB was able to document the various business services employers needed and expected, as well as the type of job seeker employers' desired. This information was expected to help in the future design and delivery of services throughout the region. BVWDB also hired a business services specialist to address the need for a concentrated outreach effort to businesses in the six rural counties that were the focus of the community audit.

Finally, though the survey was very helpful, BVWDB administrators indicated that to move forward with actions to address specific employer concerns and issues identified through the survey, that agency would likely need additional funding, as well as a well-coordinated and concerted effort on the part of human service agencies and employers in the region.

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Lessons Learned – Conducting Employer Surveys. TEEX and the BVWDB learned several key lessons in completing the survey of employers, including:

- Having the right people at the table when developing a survey is imperative -- TEEX involved all the local government, workforce development, and academic players on a committee to develop the survey.
- Checking to see if other surveys or focus groups have been implemented in the area and with the same audience is necessary to ensure that the research is not duplicative.
- The survey assisted BVWDB in promoting itself by making employers aware of its programs and services.
- A systematic approach to reaching employers to conduct the survey improves response rate and facilitates survey administration -- TEEX used a computer-assisted telephone laboratory at the university to track calls and input answers into a database.
- Had additional funding been available, TEEX researchers felt that conduct of several employer focus groups would have complemented the survey effort, providing additional depth and qualitative perspectives of employers.

Community Audit Demonstration Program Seattle-King County Site Summary

Grantee	Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council (WDC)
Contact	Cas Cogswell
Grant Amount	\$50,000
Matching Funds	\$61,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus on Manufacturing
Geographic Area	City of Seattle and King County

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

In keeping with the vision of its local unified plan, the Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council (WDC) applied for the Community Audit Demonstration Grant to:

- Strengthen WDC's strategic framework for its workforce development system by assessing both demand and supply sides of the labor market and the community's needs and resources;
- Guide development of strategies to better serve WDC's targeted populations in helping them get and keep living-wage jobs;
- Provide job seekers, workers, and employers with information to guide their individual decisions; and
- Give policymakers, service providers, and other stakeholders the tools and information to make long-term strategic decisions.

The WDC narrowed the focus of its audit at the beginning of the project to look at the manufacturing sector rather than the workforce at-large.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCT

Report:

- *Manufacturing Still Matters (September 2002).*

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council served as the administrator and operator of the community audit grant. Once the scope of work was focused on manufacturing, the project came together quickly and the partners were eager to participate. These partners included the Consortium for Manufacturing Excellence and the Shoreline Community College Manufacturing Industrial Council to assist with survey dissemination and the convening of a manufacturing panel.

BACKGROUND

The Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council decided to focus on a manufacturing sector audit to get a snapshot of the industry areas that were growing or declining, what skills were needed, and what training systems were currently in place. The shift in scope of the community audit resulted in a product that better served the needs of the WDC's principal customers, both employers and workers.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The sectoral analysis of manufacturing focused on small- to medium-sized firms. The WDC competitively bid out two parts of the research activities – the employer survey and the manufacturing panel. The Northwest Policy Center of the University of Washington was selected to develop a baseline audit and conduct the survey and the Kent Chamber of Commerce to convene the manufacturing panel for focus groups and interviews. WDC staff also provided research assistance to the project.

Baseline Audit. Much of the data for the baseline audit was obtained from the Washington Department of Employment Security's available labor market data on the manufacturing sector. The survey was conducted to gauge manufacturing employers' perspectives on the Community and Technical College System, the major training provider in the area. The policy center surveyed small- to medium-sized manufacturers via telephone and used a list of 50 firms from the Kent Chamber of Commerce's and the Manufacturing Industrial Council's memberships. Thirty manufacturers were reached, a 60-percent return rate, and were asked to comment on the system's training programs and their use of them. Of 21 respondents, 13 reported having had contact or experience with community and technical colleges in the area. Eight reported using them to find or recruit new employees or hiring those who had participated in or graduated from their vocational programs. Employers that used community or technical colleges rated the importance of services that colleges provided. Highest in importance was fundamental skills training, followed by instructors' technical competence, price of training, responsiveness and flexibility, and manufacturing basic skills training. Other survey responses indicated that skills and training needs vary by employer size; there is a need for English as a Second Language instruction; it is not easy for employers to

Focusing on One Industry Sector Allows for In-Depth Research. The Seattle-King County WDC narrowed its focus to the manufacturing sector to ensure that they could conduct an effective community audit and not spread their funding and time too thin. The WDC staff learned:

- Meaningful partnerships can be built with employers in a particular industry sector as they feel that their issues are heard and addressed.
- Developing baseline data to use in strategic planning creates a solid starting point for workforce development efforts within the sector.
- Working with partners that understand the industry sector and know the key players gives community audit efforts credibility with employers and encourages them to provide valuable information.
- Sharing results of the community audit with employers in the sector shows them the value of their participation and encourages them to participate again.

access or interact with the workforce development system; and community and technical colleges need to stay in touch with the labor market and current technology in manufacturing.

Manufacturers' Panel. The Kent Chamber of Commerce, with the assistance of the Northwest Policy Center, convened an industry panel to obtain manufacturers' input on sector needs and to review the products developed. The Chamber held monthly panel with 10 to 12 human resource directors from major firms in the area at the WDC office. As a first step, the Chamber and the Northwest Policy Center introduced the panel to the available labor market data focused on the Seattle area's manufacturing sector. Sharing this knowledge about the current and historical aspects of the sector helped gain the employers' trust. In turn, the manufacturing representatives began to provide anecdotal information on their staffing needs and how the workforce development system could better meet those needs. The work on this panel led to interviews with other manufacturers to gauge their workforce development needs. For this grant activity, the WDC leveraged its resources as some of this work on the panel was funded through a Sectoral Initiative grant through DOL/ETA.

Audit Products and Key Findings. The main products of this community audit are a final report entitled *Manufacturing Still Matters*, a manufacturing summit, and the Work Keys Assessment Centers in area WorkSource Centers (One-Stops). The report examines the range of manufacturing sectors in Seattle-King County and their relative significance to the regional economy, the utilization of various occupational groups within manufacturing, and the outlook for selected manufacturing occupations. It also explores the challenges and opportunities confronting manufacturers such as skill gaps and training needs and strategies and approaches for addressing these challenges and opportunities.

Several of the key findings from the report include:

- Manufacturing employment is projected to decline by an average of 1.7 percent a year from 2000-2005, primarily due to declines in the transportation equipment sector. Overall, manufacturing employment is projected to expand by an average of 1 percent a year from 2005-2010. Sectors with above average growth rates include industrial machinery and equipment, electronic and electrical equipment, instruments, and petroleum and plastics.
- Almost all of the manufacturing occupations pay a living wage. They require varying amounts of education and training, from little to long term education and training.
- Key manufacturing occupations, based on employment, projected job openings, and wages, include: engineers and engineering technicians; computer related such as computer systems analysts, network administrators, and computer support specialists; sales representatives; purchasing agents; clerks such as general office clerks, shipping, receiving and traffic clerks, and production, planning and expediting clerks; maintenance and repair workers; assemblers such as team assemblers and electrical and electronic equipment assemblers; inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers, and weighers; machine operators; machinists; welders; and truck drivers.
- The challenges that face the manufacturing sector are skills gaps in available workers to open positions, fulfilling training needs of manufacturing employers, and making the workforce development system easier to access.

- Strategies for improving services to manufacturing employers and workers include: creating a regional training consortium for manufacturing; developing a single point of contact for manufacturers; developing skill assessment centers; expanding the capacity of vocational ESL programs at convenient times and locations; creating a manufacturing “boot camp” for basic skills training; advocating for increased incentives for community and technical colleges to better respond to industry training needs; developing internship programs with community and technical colleges; increasing the capacity and effectiveness of high school vocational technical education and training; and advocating for increased public incentives for workforce training.

The Work Keys Assessment Centers are spin-offs of the community audit project. These centers assess job seekers and incumbent workers, profile skills and job requirements, and provide job matching for the manufacturing sector. End users of the community audit are area manufacturers, the Community and Technical College System (for planning curricula), job seekers, incumbent workers, and the WDC itself.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The WDC reported that the community audit has helped to focus its efforts on the needs of the manufacturing community and to understand the differences within the sector. The WDC was able to look at and help develop viable resources for manufacturing. Solid relationships with employers have been developed and the WDC will have even closer ties in the future. The WDC held an employer summit for 200 manufacturing representatives and presented the report to them. Manufacturing employers are now more aware of WDC and how its services can help them and their workforce.

WDC and the local WorkSource Center have used the report to develop its Work Keys Assessment Centers. The Community and Technical College System reviewed the report and used its analysis to structure programs and develop curricula. The WDC intends to revisit the questions about the manufacturing sector and its viability in the Seattle-King County area and to reexamine its needs. In addition, the WDC has a template for sector analysis and may apply it to industries such as health care. The WDC conducts an annual labor market analysis, which is expected to keep the community audit data fresh.

Lessons Learned – Linking Community Audits with Other Grants, such as Sectoral Grants.

WDC had simultaneous grants to conduct a community audit and a sectoral study. By coordinating research activities across the two grants, WDC was able to avoid duplication of research activities and expand what it was possible to produce from each grant compared to what would have been possible had the grants operated independently of one another.

The WDC felt that they learned important lessons in conducting its sectoral analysis. They included:

- Having a regional labor market analyst on the project was valuable in gathering the research, getting employers to listen, and developing a comprehensive report. An in-

house research effort would have missed data or not provided an adequate analysis. WDC is now building staff capacity to conduct such research and analysis.

- Presenting relevant data at the first meetings of the manufacturers' panel helped to bring employers into the community audit process early. The WDC felt that they had time to gain the trust of the employers with good labor market information and then brought in representatives from "the system" such as community colleges and case managers. Also, a local Chamber of Commerce convened the panel meetings, which lent credibility to the WDC's efforts.
- The community audit served as seed money for broader progress and reform for workforce development in the Seattle area. The WDC felt that the community audit will help guide them and the manufacturing community in influencing state and local legislative policy.
- Employers expressed a desire for a single point-of-contact for workforce development and other support services they or their workers may need. Employers observed that they resisted using government services when they expected they would have to call numerous agencies or people to get an answer to a question.

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**LOCALLY-LED PROJECTS
REGIONAL PROJECTS**

Community Audit Demonstration Program Central Iowa Site Summary

Grantee	Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium
Contact	John Bargman
Grant Amount	\$99,967
Matching Funds	\$46,400
Period of Performance	5/1/01-8/31/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Counties of Madison, Marion, Polk, Warren, Boone, Story, Dallas, Jasper, Carroll, Audubon, and Guthrie

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

Project Search – a community audit project conducted by the Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium (CIETC) – focused on high school dropouts as a potential untapped source for industries facing worker shortages. CIETC’s community audit had the following goals:

- To obtain input directly from high school dropouts to determine why they dropped out;
- To assess service needs and skill deficiencies of high school dropouts;
- To obtain input directly from employers about job openings (by occupation), entry requirements, whether employers are willing to hire high school dropouts and dislocated workers, and occupations where employers are experiencing difficulties in hiring; and
- Develop an effective strategy for reconnecting dropouts to the labor force.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCT Report:

- *The Cost of Dropping Out of School.* This report examines the reasons dropouts gave for leaving school and the needs and skill deficiencies of high school dropouts. It also identifies strategies for reconnecting dropouts to the labor force and employers.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Central Iowa Employment and Training Consortium partnered on Project Search with the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) – which conducted some of the research activities and also hired a research subcontractor – as well as the Region 11 Workforce Investment Board, Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Comprehensive Human Services, the Greater Des Moines Partnership, Boone Chamber of Commerce, Ames Chamber of Commerce, and the Heartland Area Education Agency.

BACKGROUND

In the period prior to award of the community audit grant, there was much interest among elected officials, employers, and other community leaders in the region about how to effectively measure high school dropout rates and implement strategies to reduce dropout rates. Recent changes in methods for calculating dropout rates statewide had revealed that areas of Central Iowa suffered from dropout rates exceeding 25 percent. The Central Iowa area also had under-performed on its WIA youth performance measures for the most recent year. Thus, the local workforce investment board was particularly interested in developing and implementing new strategies that would both reduce high school dropout rates and improve the region's performance on its youth measures.

An added impetus to this project was that the local economy had been growing in the 1990s and some employers (in sectors such as health care and information technology) were complaining about difficulties in finding qualified workers (i.e., labor shortages). CIETC and other local stakeholders were intrigued by the potential for meeting employer workforce needs by better connecting high school dropouts to the labor market and jobs that employers were experiencing difficulty in filling. CIETC and other stakeholders were also very interested in what the educational and workforce development systems needed to do to better prepare high school dropouts so that they would get hired, retain jobs, and meet the needs of area employers.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The community audit sought to better understand why students drop out of high school, what could be done to keep students from dropping out, potential strategies for better preparing high school dropouts for employment, and views of business leaders about high school dropouts and dislocated workers and their willingness to hire this population. The study relied upon a combination of analysis of existing data and collection of new data through: (1) a telephone survey of high school dropouts, (2) focus groups with high school dropouts and dislocated workers, and (3) a mailed survey to businesses.

Telephone Survey of High School Dropouts. The main challenge to conducting this project was identifying high school dropouts and gaining their cooperation to participate in the study. High school dropouts are typically a highly mobile population so they are difficult to find and are also reluctant to respond to surveys. The project team partnered with the 56 area school districts to obtain lists of high school dropouts. In dealing with the school districts, researchers had to first inform them about the study, then earn their trust to overcome widespread privacy/confidentiality concerns. Researchers were able to engage local high schools in the study by carefully laying out the purposes of the research, developing a close, working relationship with high school administrators, and reassuring high school officials that confidentiality of students involved in the study would be a critical concern of researchers and fully safeguarded. In addition, once the cooperation of area schools was secured, the research staff was persistent in its efforts to track down and engage former students.

In first conducting the telephone survey of high school dropouts, researchers worked from a list of approximately 1,250 dropouts provided by area high schools. Telephone interviews were successfully completed with a total of 171 dropouts (a 13 percent response rate). The survey asked participants about their high school experiences, reasons for dropping out, current employment status, and general demographics. Nearly half of those surveyed (44 percent) indicated that school activities had not helped them feel they belonged in school and more than half of the respondents said they had needed more individual assistance at school to keep up with their studies and stay in school. Over half of those interviewed indicated that they were currently working in jobs earning \$7.99 or less per hour.

Focus Groups with High School Dropouts and Dislocated Workers. To better interpret and expand on the analyses of the telephone survey, researchers conducted three focus groups -- two groups were held with high school dropouts and a third group was conducted with dislocated workers. The focus group discussions with both high school dropouts and dislocated workers were aimed at identifying: (1) career and employment aspirations; (2) types of skills upgrading or training needed; (3) obstacles to securing and keeping jobs; (4) types of assistance required or needed to achieve employment goals; and (5) preferences for learning (i.e., setting, location, and time of day for attending GED preparation and/or training classes). Additional topics covered with high school dropouts included high school experiences, reasons for dropping out of school, and current employment status.

Mail Survey of Employers. Another key component of this community audit was a mail survey of employers -- which was aimed at better understanding demand for high school dropouts (and other workers) within the local labor market. The survey effort, headed by an area community college (DMACC), was conducted with a random sample of the memberships of the Greater Des Moines Partnership, the Ames Chamber of Commerce, and the Boone Chamber of Commerce. The three business organizations and DMACC mailed a total of 1,315 surveys to the randomly selected businesses. A total of 219 businesses returned completed surveys (a 16 percent response rate). The survey asked businesses to indicate numbers of current job openings, entry requirements, hiring practices with regard to high school dropouts, and suggestions with regard to preparing high school dropouts for employment. Of the businesses that responded, slightly less than half (43 percent) said that they would hire an individual without a high school diploma or GED. Those businesses that said they would not hire high school dropouts cited basic skill deficits as an important factor in their unwillingness to hire.

Lessons Learned – Using Experts and Focusing Community Audits. CIETC officials involved in this study noted the importance of having a clear study focus that is agreed to by partnering agencies. It is important to get partnering agencies on board early (prior to submitting the grant proposal) and solicit their input on project objectives and data collection strategies to be used. CIETC officials noted that a grant of about \$100,000 does not go all that far, especially when primary research data are collected through surveys and focus groups. WIB officials stressed the importance of bringing on experts to design and conduct data collection activities, especially where large-scale surveys are being conducted. Design of survey instruments (particularly how questions are asked), sampling strategies, taking the necessary steps to ensure high response rates, and analyzing survey results require specialized knowledge and experience.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The results of the data collection and analysis activities conducted under this community audit were compiled into a final report, entitled *The Cost of Dropping Out of School*. The report offered 11 recommendations for the community to help reduce dropout rates and help dropouts to prepare for and be competitive within the labor market. The main audience for this report was the workforce development community, community colleges and other training providers, area school districts, businesses, and economic development agencies.

CIETC and DMACC received positive feedback on the final report from its team partners and area employers. CIETC has used this report to inform its five-year strategic plan. DMACC (the community college serving the locality) has used the report for both planning purposes and to design curricula that can be used to recruit high school dropouts into community college courses.

The community audit provided a focus around which CIETC could partner with the community college, area high school districts, and other interested organizations. The project has demonstrated to CIETC and other stakeholders that for a relatively small investment of resources that it is possible to generate a research project that is highly focused and makes a difference in planning and targeting resources.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Northwest Indiana Site Summary

Grantee	The Center of Workforce Innovations (CWI)
Contact	Linda Woloshansky
Grant Amount	\$100,000
Matching Funds	\$300,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Steel Industry (as well as a general focus)
Geographic Area	Two Workforce Service Areas of Northwest Indiana (Lake County) and Center of Workforce Innovations (Jasper, LaPorte, Newton, Porter, Pulaski, and Starke Counties)

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

Two workforce investment boards serving a seven-county area collaborated on this community audit project, which was intended to accomplish the following goals:

- Develop a common understanding of the supply, demand, occupational trends, and systems capacity in Northwest Indiana as a prerequisite to joint strategic planning;
- Identify the specific skill requirements of a critical regional industry in anticipation of projected labor shortages, and use this knowledge to build a future workforce;
- Create a single regional strategic plan developed by workforce investment boards with the involvement and support from the communities they serve; and
- Position the workforce investment boards as leaders in community issue identification and resolution.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *Northwest Indiana Fully Integrated Steel Industry Workforce Report*
- *Report on Northwest Indiana Learners*
- *State of the Workforce Report*
- *Community Workforce Compact Goals & Objectives*
- *Center of Workforce Innovations and the Lake County Integrated Services Delivery Board Community Action Plan*

Other: *Career Information/Ladder Template for Registered Nurses and Surgical Technicians*

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Center of Workforce Innovations (CWI) -- a non-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation that acts on behalf of the local WIB which serves a six-county area in Northwest Indiana -- was the grantee and lead organization in this effort. CWI hired a full-time project director to oversee the project. CWI partnered closely with the nearby Lake County WIB in determining project objectives, research methodologies, and community audit products. Other important partners in this effort

included the Northwest Economic Forum, the United Steel Workers, and Institute for Career Development. CWI's partners were particularly helpful in facilitating access during the community audit study to local economic development agencies, the steel-producing companies and their workers, and training providers. CWI subcontracted with the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to gather and analyze existing data. Thomas P. Miller and Associates designed and implemented the survey of businesses and collected data on education and training providers.

BACKGROUND

Just prior to the community audit project, the steel industry in the region had gone through a series of radical changes, including buy-outs, mergers, and bankruptcy. Historically, the steel industry had employed substantial numbers of highly-paid workers. The restructuring of the steel industry had led to large numbers of dislocations in recent years and also adversely affected other businesses in the region. In initiating the community audit, CWI wanted to better understand recent developments in the steel industry, especially how these developments might affect supply and demand conditions within the industry and training requirements. Even with the dramatic downturn in the steel industry within the region, there were still worries that the existing steel manufacturers could potentially be hampered by skills shortages as a result of the aging of the existing workforce and the advent of new technology (which called for higher skill levels within the workforce).

The rationale for joining the two WIBs was based on the fact that the two agencies served counties that bordered one another and were both afflicted by the conditions within the volatile steel industry. In addition, both agencies needed up-to-date information and analyses to plan responses to dislocations and better prepare workers to meet workforce requirements of area employers. The community audit was a mechanism that could be used to gather information on economic and labor market trends to help with development of a comprehensive and integrated strategic workforce development plan for the Northwest Indiana area. Additional important features of the project were: (1) the development of a local capacity to conduct future audits; (2) planning and implementing stakeholder involvement in the strategic planning process; and (3) considerable cost-sharing by both WIBs.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Although the CWI had conducted some past analyses of wage rates by industry and occupation, this was the area's first true community audit. In conducting this study, CWI and the Lake County WIB were aiming to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the regional economy and workforce and training requirements, which would help with future development of well-targeted strategic plans for the two agencies. This community audit combined analyses of existing data on the regional economy and workforce with telephone surveys and focus group discussions. The main activities conducted under this community audit are highlighted below.

Analysis of Existing Data Sources. A wide variety of existing data sources were used by CWI and its subcontractor the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to produce useful analyses of the

workforce and training requirements in the region. For example, in creating the workforce report that focused on the steel industry, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce analyzed data provided by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on employment trends, projections, earnings, hours worked, and unionization within the steel industry.

Telephone Survey of Training Providers. A telephone survey instrument was developed for use in conversations with training providers. The objective was to identify the pipeline of workers for the various labor market areas across all seven counties and to assess the availability of training programs in the region. A list of all public institutions, vocational-technical schools, regional campuses, and proprietary schools was developed and ultimately, six post-secondary educational institutions, one union, and 52 secondary education programs and/or districts were surveyed on selected enrollment and graduation rates. This information along with state data and reports was compiled in a document entitled *Report on Northwest Indiana Learners*.

Focus Groups. Focus groups with business also were conducted in order to identify employment needs and advise the two WIBs on how they might be of more support to business and economic development. Fifteen groups were held with 10-15 in each. Employers were invited to the focus groups by local Chambers of Commerce and economic development organizations. CWI staff facilitated the groups and the contractor received the results to analyze and include in the *Northwest Indiana Workforce Profile*.

Report Preparation. In addition to the *Report on Northwest Indiana Learners* and the *Northwest Indiana Workforce Profile*, CWI developed several other documents including the *Steel Industry Workforce Report*, *The Center of Workforce Innovations and the Lake County Integrated Services Delivery Board Community Action Plan* and the accompanying *Community Workforce Compact*, a summation of the strategic plan for public consumption. As a result of these community audit activities, four industry cluster reports have been or will be produced. The cluster areas are: advanced manufacturing, health care, logistics/distribution/ warehousing, and engineering and other professional services. These products will be available online and are intended for use by economic development agencies; the Northwest Indiana Forum; local elected officials; the local WIBs; educational institutions and training providers; employers (especially in the steel industry); the banking community, and unions.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The strategic plan produced with analyses from the community audit has had the greatest impact so far within the region. This product is being used by the two WIBs to structure workforce development services to meet the needs of area employers. As part of this plan, action items were created to address workforce development issues. Some other direct and indirect effects of the community audit activities and products include the following:

- The findings and analyses from the community audit were used to develop an application for an Economic Development Strategy Grant.
- One local Chamber of Commerce took the findings from the community audit and better articulated its role in the region's workforce and economic development process.

- Four communities within the region formed an economic development alliance.
- The neighboring WIBs involved have developed a better working relationship, recognizing that some of the problems they face are regional in nature and effective responses require collaboration among local agencies.
- Information on hiring, training requirements, demand occupations, and career ladders has helped in responding to plant downsizings/dislocations and working with dislocated workers.
- The study helped to launch “goal” teams with the objective of turning recommendations into actions. Such teams were formed to follow through in areas such as career ladders, the implementation of “Careerweb” (the planned website), and getting schools engaged in changing curricula to better meet needs of employers.
- The “goal team process” provided a forum for representatives from many different organizations to join together around a common set of goals and “where everyone checked their titles at the door.”
- The community audit helped to provide a rationale for developing an educational plan for middle schools in the region. It also helped to encourage industry collaboration with post-secondary schools.
- *The Northwest Indiana Fully Integrated Steel Industry Workforce Report* provided substantial current and very useful background information and analyses that were used during bargaining sessions between companies and the union. The focus of the community audit on the steel industry and the various in-depth analyses developed on trends within the steel industry and workforce challenges helped to bring steel-producing companies together on issues of common interest (including education and training issues).
- Finally, the Youth Council is developing a strategic plan based on one of the reports -- the *Report on Northwest Indiana Learners* -- produced as part of the community audit project.

Lesson Learned: A major challenge in conducting this community audit was that shortly after the grant award, the steel industry – a key focus of the community audit – experienced bankruptcies, the closing of some plants, and significant layoffs. This both lessened the expected involvement of the steel industry in the project and created increased demands on the WIB board members and staff, as they needed to respond to the increased layoffs. CWI brought on a project manager to oversee the main research tasks involved in the project. In addition, CWI was able to maintain interest in the study and to be sufficiently flexible in its approach to the community audit to successfully complete the project.

One of the lessons that was learned by CWI in conducting this community audit was that it was important to have a full-time project director to undertake a project of this complexity. Even though contractors were used to compile and analyze data, the dissemination of material and management of the compact team process required considerable time and oversight.

Although the study was only recently completed, there is already an ongoing effort to update the data and analyses that were generated as part of this project. The CWI is already updating the information that was collected for the *Report on Northwest Indiana Learners* and is planning to issue a second edition of the publication.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program KentuckianaWorks Site Summary

Grantee	Louisville/Jefferson County Workforce Investment Board (a.k.a. KentuckianaWorks)
Contact	Regina Phillips
Grant Amount	\$100,000
Matching Funds	\$6,000 (est.)
Period of Performance	5/1/01-6/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Louisville Economic Area that covers 24 counties across north central Kentucky and southern Indiana and includes three WIBs

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The principal goal of this community audit project was to provide the Louisville Economic Area with easily accessible information regarding occupations in demand and the skill requirements for those occupations by:

- Establishing a method for regularly reporting on the area’s high-skilled occupations;
- Articulating the skill requirements of these occupations; and
- Analyzing the pipeline of workers for select key occupations.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Website: Occupational Outlook Website
<http://www.kentuckianaworks.org/Outlook>

Brochure: A seven-page document summarizing some of the information from the website. The objective of the brochure is to entice readers to the website although some have found the brochure very useful as a stand-alone document for economic development purposes.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The KentuckianaWorks used a large team of community partners in the workforce development system to create the plan for the community audit. Then, a smaller group of partners from the three

partnering WIBs, the Chamber of Commerce, the Jefferson County School-to-Career program, One-Stop providers, and a representative from Mayor’s Office of Louisville met almost every other month to guide the process. The project contracted with the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville to compile the data and develop the necessary models. Both universities worked on analyzing the pipeline of potential workers for select occupations.

BACKGROUND

Prior to the community audit, KentuckianaWorks had already invested resources into conducting labor market supply and demand research. WIB board members and staff felt that the community audit resources could best be used to update and expand on the research that they had already started. Because hardcopy reports often have a short “shelf-life,” they also determined that research produced under the community audit should be made available in a format that could be easily updated in the future and which would be widely available -- thus, they settled on an Internet resident data base.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Analyzing Existing Aggregate Data on Labor Market Supply and Demand. An central focus of this community audit was on identifying existing local, regional, state, and national occupational data (including labor market supply, demand, skill requirements, and wages) which could be compiled into a format suitable for use in an interactive mode on the Internet and then creating a website to house this information. No new (primary) data was collected as part of this project. The researchers built a database that listed jobs in 260 industries located in the 24-county region. According to the website, “the estimates reported here are a blend of data, models, and judgment. Very detailed data on employment levels in 260 local industries were used to characterize the Louisville economy relative to the national economy..... The characteristics of occupations, including official definitions, skills and experience required, and relationships between occupations were taken from the national O*NET system (<http://online.onetcenter.org/>). Wage rates for each occupation were taken primarily from BLS published estimates for the Louisville metropolitan area, supplemented by some state and federal-level data. Fringe benefits were estimated using data from national compensation surveys.” A more comprehensive discussion of the methodology used can be found at <http://www.kentuckianaworks.org/outlook/methodology.asp>.

Delphi Group Convened to Validate Data/Findings. Once the data was collected and compiled, a Delphi panel – a group of local experts – was convened to validate the information collected. The group included representatives from business, Chambers of Commerce, and education and economic development organizations.

Website Development and Content. The researchers then worked with NetTango, a web developer, on the creation of a user-friendly, interactive website that showed the occupational outlook for the region. The site included occupational forecasts for the region and information on available jobs, including leading industries for employment, official job descriptions, average wage rates and fringe benefits, skills and education required, and links to associated occupations. Trends and analyses were provided for 2000 and projected for 2010. The information available on the website was for the 24-counties as whole (that make up the regional labor market), as well as for each of the counties within the region.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The Census data analyses and information contained on the website have been used in the development of strategic plans for the region. The Occupational Outlook has been used by the education and training community to assist in curriculum development and student advising. KentuckianaWorks has received many inquiries about the Occupational Outlook website. As a result, it decided to publish a brochure with extracts from the site and information on how to use the site. More than 30,000 copies of the brochure have been printed and the demand for the brochure has been strong.

Continued demand for the promotional brochure has resulted in the need to identify funds to pay for printing. At the conclusion of the community audit project KentuckianaWorks began to explore the possibility of adding links to educational resources to the Occupational Outlook. The links would be expected to include full details on courses, time and location of courses, and cost of training.

Lesson Learned. KentuckianaWorks officials observed that it is important to take the necessary time to carefully craft the Request for Proposal (RFP) so that the eventual contractor(s) produce timely and useful deliverables. For example, it is important to clearly delineate in the scope of work for the project the key research questions, types of data that should be collected and analyzed, interim and final deliverable products, methods for dissemination, and the schedule for project completion.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

New Orleans Site Summary

Grantee	City of New Orleans
Contact	Tammie Washington
Grant Amount	\$100,000
Matching Funds	\$256,710
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany and the River Parishes of St. Charles, St. James, and St. John (covered by four WIBs)

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The principal goal of this community audit was to assist with the transformation of the region’s workforce into a competitive asset for the region’s economic growth and sustainability. Among the original objectives of this project were the following:

- To develop baseline data on the demand and supply sides of the labor market;
- Identify workforce development strategies to transform hard-to-serve and low-skill workers into an asset for attracting new businesses and filling labor shortages;
- Develop data sets that support the sectoral strategies of the regional labor market plan; and
- Participate in the national “Peer Learning Network.”

These objectives were intended to afford opportunities to local WIBs, local governments, and regional working groups to develop workforce investment policies and programs based on a regional analytical framework.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The City of New Orleans’ Office of Workforce Development took the lead for the fiscal and grant management under the project. The Regional Workforce Partnership -- made of four local WIBs – took the lead on guiding and overseeing work on the project. The Louisiana Department of Labor provided secondary data for analysis. The New Orleans Jobs Initiative (NOJI) headed

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Report:

- *Making Connections: A Regional Workforce Partnership Community Audit.* A report that summarizes demand and supply side analyses and provides key study recommendations.

Other:

- Focus group notes
- PowerPoint presentations on labor supply and employer demand findings.

up the supply-side research, while MetroVision (which is the New Orleans' Chamber of Commerce) was responsible for analyzing labor market demand conditions. The Regional Planning Commission helped with the asset mapping on the supply side. Finally, four local universities provided students to assist with the supply side research.

BACKGROUND

The Regional Workforce Partnership was formed in response to needs expressed by local government and workforce investment boards. The purpose of the Partnership was to expand the capacity of the local partners and the regional working group to engage in long-term strategic planning efforts to address the needs of a broader labor market. These entities found themselves ill-equipped to develop, sustain, and improve workforce development initiatives that aligned with and enhanced the regional labor market exchange system. The community audit grant provided needed resources for the Regional Workforce Partnership to support research necessary for the development of a plan that addressed the needs of key industries/business in the region that traditionally employ substantial numbers of workers and/or are considered to be "high growth" sectors. In addition, the grant provided funding to focus on the education and training needs of a variety of hard-to-serve populations that could (if appropriately trained) serve as an additional source of labor to support economic development in the region. There was particular concern within the region about relatively high dropout rates among high school students and what might be done to prepare these individuals to meet employment needs of area employers.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

To determine employer and employee needs, the project leaders decided to conduct focus group meetings with targeted industries and the hard-to-serve. The results from these sessions were coupled with secondary data analyses compiled from existing local, regional, state, and national sources to produce a plan and to develop policies regarding support services and programs which offer appropriate skill training to bridge the workforce supply and demand gaps. The research also included data on job growth and wages for similar industries in other major metropolitan areas. Research activities broke down into two main categories: (1) demand-side and (2) supply-side research.

Demand-Side Research:

Focus Groups: Three series of focus groups were held for the Community Audit Project, involving over 140 business leaders, human resource professionals and career service/recruiters from throughout the region. Industries represented in the focus groups include arts and entertainment, construction and support services, environmental technology and information technology, financial services and banking, food and consumer products, life sciences and healthcare, maritime and transportation, oil and gas/petrochemical, and precision manufacturing. The first group convened over 100 participants representative of area business, industry and policymakers. Discussions addressed cross-industry workforce issues such as employment trends, training provision, occupational shortages, in-demand skill sets, and recruitment

strategies. The second series of focus groups were held with eight sets of 2-5 representatives from the industry clusters noted above. These focus groups further explored the issues discussed by the first group. The third focus group session was held with 25 representatives of various organizations working with workforce recruitment including private agencies, One-Stops, university/community and technical college career services, and the Louisiana Department of Labor. This group explored recruitment trends, disconnects, and strategies geared to maximize and the retain entry-mid-high level workforce within our geographic region.

Analysis of Job Growth and Wages by Sector: Historical data reported through the Covered Employment and Wages Program, or ES-202, were used as the primary source of data in developing industry employment projections. All establishments are assigned a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code and parish code in Louisiana, so that the employment for each of the firms is recorded in the correct industry set and in the accurate physical location. The industrial employment projections were then translated into occupational employment projections by using data collected in the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. Both of these data sets are imported into the MicroMatrix System, a software program used to produce occupational projections. Additional data sets that supplement the survey data include national replacement rates (a rate used to estimate the number of workers either retiring or terminating employment in an occupation) and change factors (factors that account for the change in the occupational mix of an industry), estimates of the volume of self-employed individuals and state-specific federal employment numbers. Finally, the top in-demand occupations were determined from the occupational projections taking into account total occupational demand and growth. The Louisiana Department of Labor and the Occupational Forecasting Conference reviewed these projections.

Supply-Side Research:

Population Estimates of Hard-to-Serve: Because the project was interested in analyzing the potential pool of hard-to-serve individuals and determining strategies for better preparing this group for employment, there was a need to estimate the numbers of individuals not included in the traditional unemployment statistics. NOJI developed a profile of the region based on Census data and used it to compare with other high poverty areas (using available government data) to develop the estimates. Researchers were able to further refine the estimates by looking at assessment data from One-Stops.

Hard-to-Serve Focus Groups: NOJI also held six focus groups with a variety of hard-to-serve individuals including welfare recipients, GED students, job seekers, and the homeless. There were 5-6 participants in each group and the sessions took place in each of the four WIB areas. Topics discussed included reasons for not working, career aspirations, barriers to employment, skills desires vs. needs, and career advancement.

Synthesizing Supply and Demand Side Analyses:

The supply-and demand-side analyses were compiled in a Community Audit report entitled “Making Connections: A Regional Workforce Partnership Community Audit.” This substantial document includes the following chapters and appendices:

- Demand Side
- Supply Side
- Final Recommendations
- Career Guide: Skills Needed and Career Pathways for In-Demand Jobs in the Region
- Socio-Economic Profile by Parish, Race and Employment by Parish for Laborers in the Region

There are plans to make the report available on the Internet. Further distribution of the report will be through the Regional Workforce Partnership. In addition, the partners have developed two excellent power point presentations that highlight the major findings of the study.

EARLY RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The community audit was instrumental in identifying and developing strategies to improve southeastern Louisiana’s workforce development system. Key strategies that emerged from the study included the following:

- Build and strengthen the communication channels between area industry cluster groups and education/workforce resource providers.
- Develop specific occupational skill tracks for career pathways for the future workforce as well as current workforce that are underemployed/unemployed. Career pathways must be based on industry cluster demand that can be easily utilized by employees and employers.
- Improve basic skills and work readiness skills for the future workforce as well as underemployed/unemployed workers.
- Promote awareness of skilled trade careers for new entrants to the workforce, as well as for the underemployed/unemployed. An emphasis should be placed on actively facilitating successful completion of education, skill development, and entry into the workforce for high school and college dropouts.
- Expand connections between career services/employee recruitment professionals and industry to streamline and otherwise improve employee placement systems as well as to promote the establishment of standard career pathways recognized by business and industry.

As a result of this study, the Regional Workforce Partnership has observed a significant increase in collaboration from partner organizations (including the four WIBs and economic development agencies), as well as interest from stakeholders in the

Lesson Learned – Factor in Possibility of Delays in Obtaining Data to the Timeline for Delivery of Community Audit Projects. One challenge that arose during this community audit was delays in receiving Census data. NOJI relied extensively on Census data for its analyses and could not complete its work until all data had been obtained (which delayed completion of their section of the report until the spring of 2003). A lesson learned is that when depending upon data that are not yet available, it is helpful to factor in some additional time into the schedule of project deliverables to accommodate potential delays in securing needed data.

results of the community audit. Training activities have been initiated as a result of the community audit work. Just having the employers in one place to discuss issues related to developing a skilled workforce energized them into taking positive steps.

Community audit findings contributed substantially to the recently issued report entitled, *State of the Workforce for New Orleans*, which highlights the Mayor's five-point plan to boost the New Orleans workforce and the JOB 1's *2003 - 2005 Work Plan: Strategies to Meet the Demands of the New Economy* available over the Internet at <http://new-orleans.la.us/home/departmentsAndAgencies/workforce/index2.php>.

In addition, MetroVision has individual reports on the targeted industry sectors posted on its website. Working groups have been formed to work on issues related to these sectors.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Cross-Border Community Audit Project (CAP)

Grantee	Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.
Contact	Brad Sperry
Grant Amount	\$100,000
Matching Funds	\$77,834
Period of Performance	5/1/01-8/31/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	South Central Massachusetts Counties of Franklin, Hampden, and Hampshire and Metro Hartford in North Central Connecticut

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

Overall, this project sought to provide local WIBs, economic development and planning agencies, chief elected officials, and other stakeholders with vital information about the local population, economy, and workforce that would facilitate economic development efforts in an area referred to as the “Knowledge Corridor” (an area extending northward from the Greater Hartford along Interstate 91 through Central Massachusetts). The key goals of this community audit project were to:

- Identify the industries and business clusters in the natural labor market region that have a competitive advantage and/or are critical to maintain the area economy;
- Conduct a closer analysis of the labor supply within the region, i.e., workforce demographics, current skills and educational levels, barriers to upward mobility for certain groups, skills gaps;
- Provide detailed and dynamic information about jobs and skill requirements within the most competitive and/or critical industries (defined as those which import capital, have good wages and career ladders, have a heavy concentration of employment in the region, are actively responding to changes in technology, skills improvement, upgrading, etc.);
- Help One-Stop Career Center customers and professionals understand the career paths in

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS:

Reports:

- *Demographic Characteristics of the Population of Cities and Towns in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden Counties in Massachusetts and Greater Hartford Connecticut*
- *Population, Labor Force, and Wage and Salary Employment Developments in the CAP Region, Connecticut and Massachusetts: The Context for Present and Future Labor Shortage Problems*
- *Economic and Labor Market Characteristics of Hampden County, 1900-2000*
- *Income and Poverty Developments in Connecticut and Massachusetts in the CAP Service Area*
- *Missing Men and the Labor Supply Decline in the CAP Region*
- *Degree and Certificate Offerings at CAP Region Institutions, Listed by Area of Study, 1990-2000*
- *Male vs. Female Participation in the Labor Force*
- *Summary Findings and Recommendations for the CAP*
- *Results of the Roundtable Discussion on Labor Market Trends with Area Manufacturers*
- *Disconnected Young Adults in Hampden County*

- the competitive and/or critical industrial and business clusters; and
- Provide demand-side data to training providers to facilitate the development and design of training programs that respond to skill shortages and occupational demand.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Cross-Border Community Audit Project (CAP) brought together three Local Workforce Investment Boards serving a four-county area in western Massachusetts and the Greater Hartford, Connecticut area in a research effort to develop a comprehensive and up-to-date understanding of regional labor market demand and supply side conditions. The Regional Employment Board (REB) of Hampden County (the grantee) teamed with two other local WIBs on this community audit – the REB of Franklin/Hampshire (MA) Counties and the Capitol Region Workforce Development Board (serving the nearby Greater Hartford area). A host of other local stakeholders provided input to this research effort and were also among the intended end-users of the analyses and products developed, including: regional economic development organizations (Connecticut’s Metro Hartford Growth Council and the Economic Development Council of Western Massachusetts), the Hartford-Springfield Economic Partnership, the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the AFL-CIO, and the local One-Stop Career Centers.

BACKGROUND

The three partnering WIBs sought to become primary sources for regional labor market information for the four-county area that would inform decision-making by key local stakeholders, as well as employers and workers. In addition, this project was aimed at creating relevant and timely informational products that would facilitate the marketing of the “Knowledge Corridor” to prospective employers considering locating new facilities within the region.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Analyses of Existing Labor Market Information. The REB of Hampden County issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit bids and selected Northeastern University’s Center for Labor Market Studies (CLMS) to conduct the principal data collection, analysis, and reporting tasks involved in this project. Much of the research conducted by CLMS centered on analyses of existing Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and other secondary data sources to provide an in-depth and up-to-date statistical profile of the four-county area. The analysis effort resulted in detailed tables summarizing population, economic and labor market, and labor force characteristics for the four-county region as a whole, as well as provided breakouts of data for individual counties and (where possible) at the city, town, and neighborhood levels. One of the critical goals of the project was to provide (for the first time) readily-accessible data and analyses for the four-county area to support efforts to market the region as a whole.

Focus Groups with Employers in the Advanced Manufacturing Sector. To supplement analyses of existing data, CLMS conducted three focus groups with employers in the advanced

manufacturing sector. REB chose this industry sector to study as it provides high wages and is a traded cluster, meaning its products are exported. Focus groups, which were conducted in the service areas covered by each of the three WIBs, involved up to 12 employers (in each session). During the focus group sessions, employers were asked about the numbers and types of workers they sought, the educational/training requirements for available positions, and ways in which the workforce development system could most effectively meet their labor force needs. These focus groups were substituted for a job vacancy survey, which was abandoned because of a deteriorating local economy and fears that such a large-scale survey would be costly and suffer from a low response rate among employers.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The CAP helped the partnering WIBs to create products that are being used by local economic development agencies, chief elected officials, and other area stakeholders to market the “Knowledge Corridor” to employers interested in locating new facilities in the region. Interested stakeholders can easily download electronic copies of the user-friendly reports from REB’s website. The REB also distributed hard copies of the reports to One-Stop Career Centers, local economic development and planning agencies, chief elected officials, and other interested agencies and individuals within the community.

The partnering WIBs have used CAP products to help in updating their strategic plans and to facilitate the preparation of grant applications for new sources of funding for the locality. The CAP helped to raise the level of understanding and knowledge among WIB staff and partnering agencies of regional/local demographic and labor market trends. The project also helped to provide and reinforce views among local decision-makers and employers that the local WIBs can serve as critical information resources in the region – particularly with regard to the local workforce characteristics, labor market conditions, and training/other services for enhancing worker skills and productivity.

Lessons Learned – Managing a Community Audit.

- Because WIB staff may lack the time and/or research expertise required, consider contracting out to local universities, colleges, and other experts for data collection, analysis, and report writing tasks involved in a community audit.
- The selection of a research contractor is critically important. It is vital for the WIB to carefully set forth the scope of work, including clearly stipulating major research tasks and deliverables. Throughout the project, WIB and partnering organizations should carefully review and comment on research products.
- Conducting focus groups can be an excellent method for involving employers in community audits and gaining their perspectives on key labor force issues. Focus groups also may provide an opportunity to give a sectoral focus to a community audit (e.g., a focus on the local manufacturing or health care sector) and help explain or supplement findings from analyses of existing data sources.

The CAP also helped in the process of continuing to build relationships among the local WIBs, economic development and planning agencies, and other key stakeholders in the region. These partnerships continued to flourish even though the community audit grant concluded in August 2003. For example, the partnering WIBs and economic development agencies continued to meet

on other workforce development issues (such as enhancing youth training) and were planning to pursue grant opportunities collaboratively in the future (including a H-1B training grant which would cover the same geographic area as the community audit grant). Other stakeholders in the region have used the CAP reports to support their own research and planning activities, as well as to help in the preparation of applications for grants. For example, local education authorities recently used data and analyses from CAP reports to help with the preparation of community needs assessments for adult education and family literacy services.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Montana Site Summary

Grantee	Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc.
Contact	Linda Coleman
Grant Amount	\$100,000
Matching Funds	\$33,120
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus
Geographic Area	Glacier and Deer Lodge Counties

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Montana Job Training Partnership, Inc. (MJTP) conducted a state-led, multi-county community audit project with the following goals:

- To develop strategic plans for community revitalization in each local area;
- To explore ways to expand local economies using labor market information and analysis of research on rural communities;
- To identify “high road” strategies individualized to the particular communities;
- To develop and implement local strategic plans centered around local workforce system and economic development efforts;
- To record and publish the community audit process, knowledge gained, lessons learned, and strategies and methods developed; and
- To use the information gathered to make policy recommendations on strategic issues to the two WIBs.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS Reports:

- *Population and Labor Market Trends and Economic Development Opportunities for Deer Lodge County, Montana (February 2002)*
- *Population and Labor Market Trends and Economic Development Opportunities for Glacier County, Montana (February 2002)*
- *Glacier County Summary of Survey Results*

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

MJTP, the state’s workforce investment board, developed and implemented a community audit project with two Montana counties, Deer Lodge and Glacier. Both counties had Community Management Teams (CMTs), organized under Montana’s One-Stop Career Center system, which served as the key local partners in the community audit project. The CMTs, local entities that represent the major economic development, community college, workforce development, and human service agencies in the area, developed strategic plans for workforce development and economic development entities to improve local economic conditions. The CMTs coordinated local efforts to gather primary data. MJTP contracted with the University of Montana (UMT) to provide secondary data to the CMTs and analyze the primary data collected.

BACKGROUND

MJTP, the state's Workforce Investment Board, applied for and was awarded a CADP grant as a part of its "High Road to Progress through Community Audits" initiative. MJTP wanted to develop strategic plans for Glacier and Deer Lodge Counties that would help to create a better paying jobs and provide workers with the skills to fill those positions. MJTP also saw the community audit as a way to link with economic development in Montana that would result in effective workforce development strategies.

Prior to the implementation of WIA, MJTP had only minimal involvement with economic development and wanted to create effective linkages in Montana. The WIB had begun to develop a working relationship with economic development when the community audit provided funding for a specific joint activity with the Deer Lodge and Glacier CMTs. MJTP wanted to produce several methodologies for integration of economic development into the Montana workforce development system through the strategic plans developed as a result of the community audit.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

To begin its community audit, MJTP convened planning meetings with the CMTs from Deer Lodge and Glacier Counties and then had them invite community members who should be involved in the planning and implementation of the project. Once these initial meetings started, the group became larger and had broader representation with the communities' support. UMT supplied the secondary data analysis and instruction on conducting primary research. The CMTs conducted a household survey and provided UMT with the raw data. UMT then produced a report of survey results for both counties. UMT also was responsible for writing the final report on the community audit using the baseline data, survey results, and the strategic plans.

Secondary Research. MJTP contracted with the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research to complete its baseline audit reports for each county to help them in developing and administering their survey instruments and completing their strategic plans. Secondary data that was collected and analyzed included federal sources such as U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, O*Net, and ALMIS as well as state and university-based labor market data. The reports included demographic information of the labor market, income and employment trends, and rural economic development opportunities for each community. UMT then held presentations on the sustainable community checklist, developed by the University of Washington and the basis for the CMTs to develop their survey instruments. Armed with this data, the CMTs were expected to reach out to their communities and gather primary data through surveys and develop a strategic plan for workforce development.

Survey Implementation. The CMTs developed subcommittees to administer household surveys and present the data for strategic planning. These subcommittees met monthly, if not more, during the height of the survey implementation.

The survey conducted in each of the counties sampled the local households by mail, telephone, and in-person. The purpose of the survey was to look at the elements on the sustainable checklist that applied to both communities. Examples of questions on the checklist include the community's availability of training and the availability of living wage jobs. The Glacier CMT surveyed 1,800 households with a response of 400 households and the Deer Lodge CMT received 90 responses from an undetermined sample as it was distributed through the local newspaper. The Glacier CMT was able to reach a larger population as it had access to a list from a local public service company to disseminate the survey. The Deer Lodge CMT placed the survey in the local newspaper but received such a small response that it conducted in-person surveys at the area Wal-Mart. Moreover, Deer Lodge had several other community-wide surveys in recent years that the CMT felt negatively affected the response rate.

Montana Identified Strategies for Conducting a Community Audit in Rural Areas. Rural communities face certain challenges in conducting a community audit as funding for such a project is rarely available and labor market information has not been historically used in strategic planning for workforce development. MJTP learned several lessons to help rural areas:

- Plan adequately for time and budget for travel to rural sites.
- Provide a labor market expert for upfront secondary data.
- Instruct local partners on how to conduct primary research to obtain valid data.
- Encourage each rural community to elect a “champion” to head the project to provide leadership and outreach for the project.
- Encourage local partners to develop partnerships with employers, Chambers of Commerce, economic development, and other community organizations to garner support for the audit and learn of other local efforts.
- Keep the community at-large informed of the project's process and its results to maintain support and awareness.
- Understand that even limited labor market information is helpful when none has been available before.
- Make templates for community audit projects available to other rural areas for them to replicate.

The Glacier CMT discovered that the survey was too long and complicated for residents. The CMT received negative feedback for the difficulty and time it took to complete the survey. Members of Glacier's CMT stated that they will make the survey shorter and easier to complete the next time they distribute a household survey.

Data Analysis and Strategic Planning. Once the CMTs completed the survey, they sent the compiled data to UMT to be analyzed. UMT provided the CMT with a summary of the survey results to develop strategic plans for their respective communities. The CMT then drafted strategic workforce development plans and submitted them to MJTP for approval. The plans detailed strategies to improve worker skills through available training and to work with economic development to increase job availability in the counties. MJTP then approved the strategic plans for the communities and included the strategic plans in the final community audit report.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Through the community audit, MJTP felt that it had fostered new working relationships with key stakeholders within both of the communities included in the project – especially strengthening links with stakeholders in the economic development arena. As a result of the project, the MJTP felt that CMTs came to understand that they could be instrumental in making changes in their communities and strengthen linkages with community-based and economic development organizations. Other partners such as employers and training providers were informed of the progress and outcomes of the community audit, but were not actively involved in its tasks. As a whole, local elected officials were not involved in the community audit.

Other outcomes of the Montana community audit include empowering local communities to inform their strategies for workforce development, bringing non-traditional partners to the table on projects, and engaging employers and training providers through strategic planning to meet the needs of the community. For example, employers have become interested in adult computer literacy as a way to train workers in the community.

MJTP also learned that each community conducting an audit needs to have a “champion” to rally support among the partners and the community to effectively collect data and create a strategic plan. As both areas were distant from Helena where the MJTP is located, it was important to have a local leader providing direction and motivation to successfully implement the survey. With the considerable travel distance from each other (and the state capital), a quick response to the CMT’s needs was not always feasible.

MJTP plans to replicate the community audit in other Montana communities. In the future, it intends to provide counties with guidance on data collection and strategic planning in conducting their own community audits.

The CMTs found that household surveys are easier to implement with support from a larger business or organization in the community. This support may include supplying a current and comprehensive mailing list, providing mailing supplies and postage, promoting the survey through a local newspaper or radio, and garnering support from other community organizations and businesses. Other survey lessons include the value of using a database to tally results help analyze the results, reporting results to the community, and making the survey appropriate for the audience in length and complexity.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

Three Rivers WIB Community Audit Project

Grantee	Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board
Grant Amount	\$99,000
Matching Funds	\$88,103
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	General Focus and Sectoral Focus: Health Care, Biotechnology, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Tourism and Hospitality, and Business and Financial Services
Geographic Area	Southwestern Pennsylvanian Counties of Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Greene, Indiana, Fayette, Westmoreland and Washington

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The overall goal of the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board's (TRWIB) community audit was to make Southwestern Pennsylvania's economy stronger and more resilient by enabling the workforce to respond quickly to changes in the region's key industries. Among the main goals of this community audit project were the following:

- Develop methods for monitoring workforce supply and demand information at the regional level;
- Create individual reports that outline broad economic and workforce trends for the region's growing industry clusters;
- Conduct "replication training" for TRWIB staff and staff of partner organizations intended to instruct in updating the labor market information collected and analyzed by the research contractor;
- Develop a methodology for estimating workforce demand in a specific geographic area (the "Cranberry Area," a growing suburban job center in the region);
- Develop a comprehensive, up-to-date, Internet-based database of training provider offerings; and
- Identify a set of "bell weather

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports:

- *A Regional Audit of Workforce Supply and Demand: Southwestern Pennsylvania Region* – This report summarizes main findings from the community audit, particularly relating to labor market supply and demand and industry clusters.
- *Cluster Performance Report: Monitoring "Bell Weather" Industries* – This report identifies potential indicators of regional economic change.
- *Cranberry Area Workforce and Job Access Study (Draft)* – This report examines special mismatches between labor supply and demand in a suburban Pittsburgh area.
- *A Vision for Talent Pittsburgh* – This report presents a vision for the development of a website that helps workers to easily search for training providers and their training programs.
- *Southwestern Pennsylvania Industry Cluster Snapshot* – Researchers prepared five separate "snapshot" reports on labor market conditions in the following industry clusters: Health Care, Manufacturing, Information Technology, Hospitality and Tourism, and Financial Services.

indicators" for tracking changes in the region's industry clusters that impact on the region's workforce.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The grantee – The Three Rivers WIB – teamed with and received input from three other WIBs serving the region on this community audit project: Westmoreland/Fayette Workforce Investment Board, Tri-County Workforce Investment Board, and the Southwest Corner Workforce Investment Board. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis provided data to support analyses of labor market supply and demand. Other key partners included the Steel Valley Authority, Workforce Connections, and the Pittsburgh Technology Council.

BACKGROUND

The Three Rivers WIB serves the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, a region that suffered through massive dislocations during the 1980s and early 1990s, including the loss of over 150,000 steel and manufacturing jobs. While the Pittsburgh region had largely recovered from the massive job dislocations by the latter part of the 1990s, the region still lagged behind and was unable to sustain the full economic recovery consistent with comparable cities in the United States. The new jobs created in Southwestern Pennsylvania were rapidly transforming the area's economy from an industrial economy to a knowledge- and service-based economy. With these changes, the WIB and local employers were finding a growing gap between the skills workers had and those needed by emerging and expanding businesses. Several initiatives underway prior to the community audit suggested the emergence of several clusters that offered promise for the region's economic future, including: health care and biotechnology, manufacturing, information technology, tourism and hospitality, and business and financial services. The community audit was intended to build upon prior research efforts by consolidating and analyzing information on the workforce development needs of industries in growing clusters and develop a better understanding of the labor supply and skills of workers in the region (i.e., the region's labor supply).

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The Three Rivers WIB initiated four main lines of data collection and analysis under this project, all of which were aimed at developing a better understanding of labor market supply and demand, particularly within emerging industrial sectors in the region.

Analysis of Existing Aggregate Data on Labor Market Supply and Demand. The largest portion of funding under the community audit was subcontracted to the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce to conduct a regional audit of workforce supply and demand using existing data sources. The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis provided much of the data used for this analysis effort, particularly ES-

202 data series. Using existing data, researchers first examined the alignment between labor supply and demand in the region. This analysis revealed that there was generally strong alignment in most occupational categories, but suggested there was a shortage of service workers in the region and identified three possible ways in which to address the shortage – recruiting from outside the region, hiring non-traditional workers, or hiring and training non-qualified workers.

Next, to better understand recent labor market trends, researchers analyzed standard two-digit industrial classifications that compared the share of employment for each industry to the same industry change for the state and the nation. This analysis was critical in identifying industry sectors experiencing rapid employment change (both increase and decline) between 1995 and 2000. As part of this analysis, researchers also identified the top 25 occupations in terms of local labor market demand, including profiling 2001 employment levels, average annual wages, and education and training requirements for each field.

Using available data, the researchers next examined total employment and annual wages in five industry clusters of significant importance to the local economy: financial services, health care, hospitality and tourism, information technology, and manufacturing. These analyses were further refined by examining “high performing” sub-sectors within each of the five clusters to identify specific areas of rapid employment growth. For example, researchers found that while the information technology sector had experienced employment growth, a more focused set of information technology sub-industries had grown at exponential rates. This analysis resulted in the production of a set of industry cluster-specific reports for each of the five clusters. Each of these five reports included detailed information and analyses of labor market trends, staffing patterns, critical knowledge and skill requirements, current employer needs, and career mobility within the specific industry cluster.

The final part of the community audit study examined knowledge and skill requirements of the regional economy overall and by key industry clusters. This portion of the study found, for example, that top skill requirements of the regional economy included active learning, active listening, critical thinking, information gathering, monitoring, problem identification, reading comprehension, speaking, and writing. The study also examined the knowledge and skill sets for the “new economy,” which it divided into the following: (1) employability skills (communication, organization, team contribution, professionalism, critical thinking, customer relations, and continuous learning); (2) cross-sector skill areas (project management, task management, and problem-solving/troubleshooting); and (3) core curriculum (analytical skills and problem solving, business organization and environment, coordination and communication, project and process flow, core computer and hardware skills, and core field of study skills).

Researchers presented the key findings and implications from all of these analyses in a final report – *A Regional Audit of the Workforce Supply and Demand: Southwestern Pennsylvania Region* -- which was widely disseminated to local decision-makers and is available via the Internet.

Estimating Regional Workforce Demand for a Specific Geographic Area. The second component of this community audit was focused on developing methods for analyzing labor

market supply and demand on the sub-regional level. To this end, a portion of the community audit grant was used to subsidize TRWIB staff time to work with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis to develop a methodology for estimating workforce demand in a specific geographic area, the "Cranberry Area," a growing suburban job center in the region. Researchers analyzed and geographically represented data about workforce supply available through the 2000 Census for the Cranberry area. This included analysis of available secondary data to identify the job opportunities that existed in the Cranberry area; the workforce characteristics of residents in the Cranberry area and surrounding three counties; and transportation, childcare, and affordable housing that are in place to support workers in the Cranberry area. This secondary data was supplemented with information from a telephone survey with over 100 employers (using funds from another grant), which examined: (1) whether Cranberry area employers were having difficulty attracting and retaining workers; (2) what kinds of workers employers were having trouble attracting and retaining; (3) whether employers perceived a lack of transportation, childcare, or affordable housing as playing a role in their inability to attract and retain workers; (4) the geographic areas from which employers were currently recruiting employees; (5) characteristics of their employees, including education levels and commuting patterns; and (6) employers' perceptions of the need for initiatives aimed at increasing the transportation, childcare and housing opportunities available to their employees.

Develop Internet-based Site on Training Offerings. A small portion of community audit funding was used to contract with Information Renaissance ("Info Ren") to develop a strategic vision for a project sponsored by TRWIB referred to as "Talent Pittsburgh." Talent Pittsburgh was aimed at developing a comprehensive, up-to-date, Internet-based directory of training provider offerings to help individuals sort through vast quantities of information and make an informed consumer choice. Info Ren provided guidance on organizing information around a customer base, on coordinating training providers and other suppliers of information, and on improving the website's technological infrastructure to meet the WIB's goals.

Develop "Bell Weather Indicators" to Track Changing Workforce Development Needs. A small portion of community audit funds was also used to contract with the Steel Valley Authority (SVA) to identify a set of "bell weather indicators" for tracking future changes in the region's industry clusters that impact on the region's workforce. SVA conducted a literature review of local industry cluster studies and suggested a framework for organizing analyses of local industry clusters and for identifying a set of "bell weather indicators" to provide early warning of potential changes in labor market conditions. This study was aimed at determining the indicators that are most important for signaling changes in labor market conditions and developing an Internet-based monitoring system to notify local decision-makers of changing conditions and the need to respond.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

One of the most important outcomes of the community audit was that TRWIB staff (and others involved in the study) expanded their awareness and understanding of the various types of publicly-available data on labor market conditions. For example, as a result of the community

audit, administrators and staff from the WIB and partnering agencies learned about the specific data elements in existing databases such as the ES-202 data -- including the timeliness of available data and various methods (e.g., shift-share analysis) that could be employed to analyze changes in labor market conditions over time by geographic area (i.e., at the sub-county area) and by industry sector. The study also helped to strengthen TRWIB's relationship with the state's labor market information (LMI) agency so that in the future the agency will be able to easily obtain data needed to analyze labor market conditions.

Agency staff recommended care in selection of industry clusters and how each cluster is defined. Researchers emphasized the importance of not defining industry clusters too broadly and examining changes in labor market conditions within clusters every two to three years. For example, the manufacturing cluster used in this study (versus the other four clusters) was found to be overly broad. Researchers were able generate more useful analyses of employment growth (and decline) by examining specific sub-areas within the manufacturing sector.

TRWIB administrators found that one of the advantages of conducting industry cluster analysis was that the results are of substantial interest to many local stakeholders (in addition to the WIB) – especially economic development agencies, local Chambers of Commerce, employers, and training institutions. WIB administrators noted that the products of the community audit, along with the in-house knowledge that had been built over the course of the project, had helped to foster among local stakeholders the view of the WIB as a source of useful and timely information on growing industry sectors and workforce development in the region.

Lessons Learned on Replication of Community Audit. One unique aspect of this initiative was that while the grantee contracted out the research under the community audit to a private research firm (the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce), it also had this contractor provide training to WIB staff on the databases and research methods employed in the study once the analyses were completed. This training – referred to as “replication training” -- was intended to transfer knowledge to WIB staff so that in the future the WIB could replicate the methods to update the community audit or conduct analyses of labor supply and demand in specific industry sectors.

WIB staff stressed the importance of developing “bell weather indicators” and “real-time” data that can guide the future decisions of workers, employers, trainers, and economic development and workforce development agencies. To the extent possible, real-time data and analyses similar to what is currently available to guide investor decision-making in financial markets are needed to guide decisions of workers and firms. For example, up-to-date information on labor supply and demand conditions, average wages, and entry requirements are needed to guide workers in making effective decisions about education and occupational training.

Finally, TRWIB was able to stretch the resources of the community audit by aggressively pursuing matching funds and by devoting a portion of its grant to supplement planning and strategic studies being conducted by other local agencies, such as the Steel Valley Authority. The small amount of grant funds expended to support other analytic studies had a payoff in terms of broadening involvement of the WIB in other local strategic planning efforts.

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**STATE-LED
MULTI-AREA PROJECTS**

Community Audit Demonstration Program Alabama Statewide Site Summary

Grantee	Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
Contact	Ray Clenney
Grant Amount	\$150,000
Matching Funds	\$150,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus on Information Technology, Automotive Manufacturing Technology, Machining Technology, Shipbuilding, Health Care, and Aviation/Aerospace Technology
Geographic Area	All 67 Counties in the State of Alabama

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

This state-led project – the Alabama Community Audit Demonstration (ACAD) – had four major goals:

- Engage a broad group of stakeholders to address the challenge of the “New Economy;”
- Meet the specific information needs of workforce development agencies, employers, and workers in the state by collection and analysis of available labor market information (LMI);
- Develop technical assistance materials to be disseminated by the state workforce development agency over the Internet; and
- Establish and strengthen regional partnerships, especially with the economic development agency.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCT Report:

- *2002 Alabama Community Audit.* This report details audit findings by targeted sector, as well as provides asset resource mapping by county.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The Alabama Community Audit Demonstration (ACAD) was a state-led project administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) and operated by the Alabama AFL-CIO Labor Institute for Training (LIFT). ADECA and the AFL-CIO LIFT partnered with a range of state and local agencies on this effort, including: the Alabama Department of Industrial Relations’ Employment Service, Alabama Development Office (industrial recruiting), Department of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Post-Secondary Education, three WIBs, the state WIB, and One-Stop Career Centers. Each ADECA partner provided information resources and support to the project and were also end-users of the main products of the community audit.

BACKGROUND

The geographic area of the community audit was the entire state of Alabama, which is served by three Workforce Investment Boards (including a balance of state WIB that serves a total of 65 of Alabama's 67 counties). The Alabama AFL-CIO LIFT approached the ADECA suggesting that the agency apply for U.S. Department of Labor funds to support a project that would take a broad look at Alabama's labor market needs and strategically plan the direction of the state's economy. With the support of the Governor and the AFL-CIO LIFT as the grant operator, ADECA applied and was awarded the community audit grant.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The project had four major research components: (1) collection and analysis of secondary labor market information on six economic sectors; (2) conduct of an employer survey; (3) conduct of employer focus groups; and (4) asset mapping. The AFL-CIO LIFT subcontracted with a private research firm – Gorman and Associates – to conduct the employer survey and focus groups, as well as to analyze data and prepare the final community audit report. This same firm was also responsible for working with the state's One-Stop providers to assist with asset mapping, which was aimed at assessing service needs and types of service providers available in localities across the state.

Analysis of Existing Labor Market Information. The Alabama Department of Industrial Relations staff provided employment data, unemployment data, industrial data, occupational data, and wage data. These data were used primarily to analyze labor market trends and conditions in the state. Analyses were particularly focused on the six industry sectors that were critical to the state's economy and future employment growth: information technology, automotive manufacturing technology, machining technology, shipbuilding, health care, and aviation/aerospace technology.

Employer Survey. The subcontractor developed the employer survey and administered it to employers in the six industry sectors across the state. The Alabama Employer Survey was a one-page survey that asked employers to list anticipated numbers of job openings by occupational category, the wages offered, and types of occupations that would likely be difficult to fill in the coming year. Employers were also asked if they would like to receive information about how workforce development services might be of help to their businesses and to indicate whether they would be willing to participate in further research conducted by ADECA. The survey, which yielded an overall response rate of approximately 20 percent of firms sampled, had a significantly higher response rate in several industrial sectors and among larger employers. Overall, the 450 employers that returned surveys projected a need for over 10,000 new employees in the upcoming year – to fill jobs in over 100 different occupational categories, at an average hourly rate of approximately \$15.25 per hour.

Focus Groups with Employers. The focus groups conducted as part of the community audit were intended to supplement and provide explanation for some of the key findings and results of the large-scale employer survey. The focus group discussion guide featured mostly open-ended

questions, which were aimed at gaining a range of employers' views on their employment requirements, current and expected shortages of workers by occupational categories, training needs and other service needs, and ways in which local workforce development agencies could better meet the needs of both businesses and workers. A total of 10 focus groups were conducted in four localities across the state, with 2-8 employers attending each focus group. The state invited up to 30 employers to attend each session, but experienced difficulty in getting employers to come in-person to the focus groups.

Asset Mapping. The asset mapping component of the project was intended to identify available education, training, and support services by locality, as well as where gaps in services might be evident. One-Stop Career Centers played a central role in both supplying researchers with information on available service providers and resources within their local communities. The information collected through One-Stop Career Centers was supplemented by information available from other reliable data sources.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The intended users of the community audit products were Workforce Investment Boards throughout the state, training providers, partnering organizations, and Chambers of Commerce. It was too early to gauge the full impacts of this project because the main products of the community audit were just being disseminated to interested parties at the time the project came to a close. However, workforce development staff involved in the project and the principal partners were very optimistic that the research products would have a significant impact within the state on planning of workforce development and training activities. ADECA administrators expected that the final report would help to guide training efforts because it provided detailed analyses of employer occupational needs and training requirements based on a large-scale and up-to-date survey of about 450 employers. The ADECA also indicated that one of the most important outcomes of the community audit had been increased collaboration among state and local agencies and organizations in implementing workforce development strategies to address the labor market needs of the state.

The Audit Identified Several Effective Strategies for Improving Employer Response to Surveys. Often it is difficult for workforce development agencies to get employers to return completed surveys. In conducting this community audit, the team utilized and identified a number of strategies that can help to boost survey response rates among busy employers:

- Keep response time short (generally 5-10 minutes).
- Make certain the survey is easy to complete; rely mostly on close-ended questions.
- Pre-test the survey instrument to make sure businesses can answer questions they are asked – revise accordingly.
- Send out the survey with a supporting letter from a credible source (e.g., a letter with the Governor's signature accompanied each survey).
- Make certain the survey gets to the right person.
- Make it easy for employers to return surveys; offer several alternatives for return of surveys (e.g., e-mail, fax, mail, through website, and/or in-person)
- Use follow-up calls to boost response rates and offer to conduct survey over the telephone.
- Working through or in collaboration with employer associations may help to boost response rate, especially for sectoral-based projects.

At the time the community audit effort was winding down, the AFL-CIO LIFT approached the Governor concerning the possibility of providing follow-on funding for a second community audit that would extend and supplement the DOL-sponsored effort. The Governor provided the AFL-CIO with general revenue funds of \$150,000 (to be matched by the AFL-CIO and other sources) to undertake a community audit that would focus on four metropolitan areas within the state and provide recommendations relating to demand and supply conditions for specific types of workers and training requirements of employers.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program Colorado Statewide Site Summary

Grantee	Colorado Workforce Development Council
Contact	Booker Graves
Grant Amount	\$150,000
Matching Funds	\$22,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-8/31/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus on Health Care and Information Technology
Geographic Area	Metropolitan Denver Region and the Northwest and Rural Resort Region

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) sought assistance through the Community Audit Demonstration Grant to conduct a state-led, multi-area community audit to discover and promote strategies that could benefit lower-wage workers, the employers who hire them, and their communities. The primary purpose of this community audit study was to:

- Discover and promote strategies to benefit low-wage/low-skill workers, the employers who hire them, and their communities;
- Determine what it will take to equip less-skilled workers to contribute to and benefit from the state’s vibrant economy; and
- Share best practices with a peer-learning network that will be developed as part of the effort on a statewide basis.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCT Report:

- *Moving UP! – A Community Audit Study.* This report synthesizes findings from the three major research components of this project.

An overarching goal was to make the whole process of career advancement transparent by eliminating misperceptions about occupations, skills development, and career progression.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The core partners in this effort were CWDC, the Colorado Community College System (CCCS), Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, and Colorado Department of Health and Human Services. The CWDC contracted with the Colorado Community College System to coordinate the principal research, analysis, and report writing activities. CCCS then subcontracted with the (1) Colorado Department of Labor and Employment to conduct analysis of industry clusters within the state and (2) a consultant to conduct focus groups and write a report on effective strategies for low-wage and low-skill workers to overcome barriers to career advancement.

BACKGROUND

CWDC had found that even in Colorado's previously vibrant economy, that its low-skill, low-wage workers generally had not benefited from Colorado's booming economy. The agency determined that these workers were hindered in advancement in part because there was little local labor market or job trend data available to help these workers advance in their careers. Further, agency officials felt that there were industry sectors within the state that were growing and offered potential paths for career advancement and increased earnings for low-skill, low-wage workers. Thus, the CWDC's community audit project was aimed at identifying those economic sectors that were growing and determining why some low-skill workers were successful in career advancement, while other remained stuck in dead-end jobs.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The main research activities were aimed at providing a core set of tools to guide the workforce development system, communities, employers, and the education and training system to help low-wage workers be successful in career advancement. Research activities were structured to provide a map of relevant clusters and examples of career ladders and analyses necessary to formulate policies and practices to support low-wage, low-skill workers, the employers who hire them, and the communities where they live. The research was divided into three main phases: (1) a literature review and development of an annotated bibliography, (2) qualitative research to examine low-wage career progression and factors that facilitate and inhibit career advancement, and (3) an industry cluster analysis to identify promising groups of interrelated industries that drive wealth creation within the state.

Literature Review. To help shape the project, researchers began the process with a literature review. Research staff collected and reviewed a variety of reports and studies regarding effective strategies for supporting low-wage workers in their career progression. This research was summarized into an annotated bibliography, which was included as an appendix to the final community audit report. Having this unified body of available literature helped to shape the remaining research tasks, including helping to refine the questions that were to be explored. This literature review helped researchers to gain a baseline understanding of the characteristics and trends of the working poor, how low-skilled workers fared in labor markets, and the economic effects of education and employment. This review also provided background materials for other stakeholders in the Colorado workforce development system.

Focus Groups and Other Qualitative Research to Examine Low-Wage Career Progression.

With the results of the literature review providing a solid foundation of knowledge about low-wage workers and career advancement, researchers next conducted qualitative research and analysis of low-wage workers' career progression. This qualitative research was aimed at addressing three principal questions:

- How do low-skill, low-wage employees access the education and training necessary to advance in their careers?
- What factors facilitate successful career advancement?

- What barriers must be overcome in order to move up career ladders?

Researchers focused this qualitative research on two sectors – the Information Technology (IT) and health care sectors – that had held relatively strong positions in the Colorado economy and offered identifiable career paths.

With continued strong demand for skilled workers, researchers were able to move forward with focus groups in the health care sector. Four focus groups were held with 16 low-skill and low-wage health care workers at the Community College of Denver and three area hospitals: the Denver Health, St. Anthony’s Central Hospital, and St. Joseph’s Hospital. Workers invited to attend these sessions had started out in the lowest wage and skill ranks at their respective worksites, but had successfully transitioned into new positions by taking advantage of education or training opportunities through their employers or local community colleges. In addition, researchers also interviewed in a separate session supervisors or training department heads from these same worksites. Focus group discussions were designed to address four key research questions:

- (1) What were the most significant external (i.e., personal, family, financial) and internal (i.e., workplace) factors that workers perceived as barriers to the successful career advancement of low skill/low wage workers?
- (2) What were the most significant external and internal factors credited by former low-wage workers (who had achieved career advancement) with helping them to have overcome those barriers?
- (3) What types of employer- or publicly-funded education, training, or support services were perceived by workers as being critical in encouraging and sustaining successful career advancement?
- (4) Was there a disconnect between employers’ beliefs about what factors and inputs were most important to support low-wage/low-skill workers advance in their careers and the factors/inputs described by the successful workers?

Due to significant layoffs experienced by workers throughout the IT industry, researchers relied primarily upon existing available data and studies to analyze the IT industry and career paths, including training necessary to advance. Data available through the National Workforce Center for Emerging Technologies and the Colorado Institute of Technology was particularly helpful. Information was compiled about various careers within the IT sector, including: job titles, national and state average wages, entry requirements, and potential for career progression.

Industry Clusters Analysis. Finally, a portion of the community audit was devoted to identifying and analyzing industry clusters for the state and within two sub-regions (the Denver Metro and the Northwest/Rural Resort regions). Researchers defined an industry cluster as a “group of interrelated industries that drive wealth creation within a region.” They found that such industry clusters may represent an entire industry chain, including shared suppliers and end products, support services, and specialized infrastructure. The analysis, which was based in large part on ES-202 data series (collected by the U.S. Department of Labor), provided detailed analyses regarding occupations, wages, staffing patterns, and relative percentages of employment for the top industry clusters that were identified.

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Several interesting lessons emerged from this study that helped to shape policy and procedural recommendations. Researchers found barriers to career advancement among low-wage, low skill workers generally fell into four categories:

- Logistical barriers, which included childcare, scheduling, and transportation;
- Attitudinal barriers, reflecting low self-esteem and a perceived lack of support systems;
- Fiscal barriers related primarily to an individual's lack of resources to pursue additional education or training supporting career advancement, or at the organizational level, inadequate budgets to support additional training systems for workers; and
- Skill deficits, typically reflecting poor English language skills, or in some cases, basic reading/writing/math skills.

These same obstacles were found to be equally useful in the analysis of factors that helped workers overcome perceived obstacles and in structuring recommended interventions that may encourage and sustain successful career advancement. With regard to effectively using career ladders and industry clusters to help low-wage workers with career advancement, researchers identified three main lessons:

- Information is the key – In many examples cited by focus group participants, the simple knowledge that training programs existed or that there were public funds available to support workers' tuition reimbursement made all the difference in the success of workers' career advancement.
- Public-private partnerships must support the strategies – Career advancement strategies are not necessarily expensive; solid partnerships between industries and public workforce development and social services systems can maximize the results via sharing information and strategizing to meet employees' varied needs.
- Career ladders are only effective if the strategies are: (1) rooted in demand-side strategies (i.e., there must be significant demand for the occupations); (2) provide a variety of opportunities for pursuing the necessary education and training to advance, including on-site and lifelong learning opportunities; and (3) clearly integrate the academic and career skills that lead to advancement.

Lesson Learned – Career Ladders Must Be Clearly Delineated for Low-wage Workers. Researchers emphasized the need for career ladder paths to be readily apparent to workers. Without specific delineation of career paths, they argued that most low-wage workers do not see the relationship between their job and higher-skill jobs in that industry. For example, hospital housekeeping staff is unlikely to see the logical progression from their job to a CNA (and beyond) without the career ladder being clearly defined. Further, low-wage/low-skill workers need to understand that in addition to tenure-based advancement along flat paths, skill-based promotions are available.

Finally, to be effective, researchers found that career ladder information should include: career clusters by industry sector, job titles and some work descriptions within career clusters; national

and Colorado average wages for identified job titles; skills and knowledge required for competency in each job; and potential career progression within the clusters.

The results of the industry cluster analysis provided workforce development stakeholders with tools and information to effectively counsel clients, many of who are unemployed and/or underemployed low-skill, low-wage workers. By understanding industry cluster dynamics and occupations across key clusters in terms of their similarities and skill requirements, workforce center staff and others are better able to advise clients on career path choices that provide good pay and career opportunities. Agency officials also found that industry cluster analysis has the potential to enable economic developers and employers to understand the relative importance of various industries and workplace staffing patterns to a specific region of the state, and compare and contrast industries and employment across regions to help make expansion and relocation decisions.

Overall, one of the most important early effects of this project has been to get workforce development officials at the state and local levels to focus on and better understand the various needs of low-wage, low-skill workers and to increase awareness of the problems these workers face in advancing within the workplace. In addition, the project has focused attention on high growth industry sectors within the state's economy and identified effective strategies for moving workers into occupations with career advancement potential.

As a result of the success of this initiative, the state Workforce Development Council budgeted additional WIA funds (about \$10,000 for each of the nine WIBs within the state) to allow local areas to initiate their own local community audits. They encouraged local areas to mount audits that would, in particular, focus on low-wage workers in their locality. Finally, the community college system (CCCS) has pursued several grant opportunities (based on findings and recommendations of the final community audit report) aimed at promoting career ladders for low-skill, low-wage workers in high-growth industry clusters. CCCS also implemented "common course" numbering to make the selection of classes clearer and easier for students, advisors, and counselors.

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

Chesapeake Workforce Alliance Community Audit Project

Grantee	Governor's Workforce Investment Board
Contact	Pat Cassidy
Grant Amount	\$149, 994
Matching Funds	\$5,000
Period of Performance	5/1/01-4/30/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus: Construction, Health Care, Technology, and Tourism; each participating WIB could select a fifth additional sector, which included Environmental and Agricultural Services, or Business and Finance
Geographic Area	4-WIB area (Susquehanna, Upper Shore, Lower Shore, and Southern Maryland WIBs), which is composed of 13 Southeastern Maryland counties – Cecil, Harford, Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

The overall goal of the community audit mounted by the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the Chesapeake Workforce Alliance (a partnership of four the Maryland's 12 local WIBs) was to gather and analyze background information about critical industry sectors across a 13-county area and devise workforce development strategies to meet the needs of workers and employers. The specific goals of this project were the following:

- Develop stronger board relationships and connections to business;
- Survey businesses and identify critical occupational and skills needs;
- Conduct a skill analysis of selected occupations;
- Develop community career ladders within the skill clusters identified for each workforce area; and
- Build momentum for Skills Alliances to ensure that businesses are able to grow and prosper and that employees are able to maximize their full career potential.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS: Reports:

- *Community Audit Report* – This report presents overall findings from the survey, business visitation, focus groups, and other analyses.
- *Charting New Directions: Governor's Health Care Workforce Summit* – This report summarizes the results of the Health Care Summit and presents an action plan in the health care area to respond to shortages.
- *State/Local Strategic Plans* -- Results of the community audit have been incorporated into state and local strategic plans.

State and local WIB officials emphasized “relationship building and getting to know local businesses, as well as building state and local WIB relationships” as critical by-products of the community audit.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The grantee – the Governor’s Workforce Investment Board -- teamed with four local WIBs that were participating in the Chesapeake Workforce Alliance: Susquehanna, Upper Shore, Lower Shore, and Southern Maryland WIBs. The WIBs helped with the design of the community audit; reviewed and commented on the survey instruments and other research tools; identified businesses for visitations and inclusion in focus groups; participated in both focus groups and visitations; participated in the health care summit; and reviewed the final products. The WIBs were actively engaged throughout the project.

Much of the research work was contracted to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (to conduct a large-scale mail survey of business in selected industry sectors across the 13-county area) and the University of Baltimore/Jacob Frances Institute (to conduct focus groups with businesses, business visitations, analysis of existing data sources, and prepare the community audit final report). Local Chambers of Commerce and about a dozen business associations (including associations representing the construction industry, IT, health care employers) helped to identify businesses for focus groups and visitations, as well as reviewed and distributed products of the community audit.

BACKGROUND

The state WIB and the four participating local WIBs were particularly interested in collecting in-depth information about what were considered to be critical industrial sectors in the state and the 13-county area that was the focus of this community audit. The state and local workforce agencies were particularly interested in obtaining direct input from employers in the targeted sectors to better understand numbers and types of workers likely to be needed and skill requirements. Employers in several of the sectors – particularly the health care industry – had reported shortages of skilled workers to fill available positions. They worried that unless significant attention was focused on workforce development their future staffing requirement would be unmet.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

The Chesapeake Workforce Alliance community audit study had a strong sectoral focus, examining labor market supply and demand conditions in the following four sectors across the 13-county area: (1) *Technology* (including information technology and manufacturing); *Tourism* (including retail trade, hospitality, amusements, food service, etc.); *Health Care* (including nursing, pharmacists, lab technicians, etc.); and *Construction* (including special trades such as plumbers, electricians, telecommunications installation, etc.). Additionally, each of the four WIBs was given the opportunity to

explore a fifth skill sector of their choice. The optional industrial sectors chosen were: *Environmental and Agricultural Services* (including nurseries, agriculture, etc.), chosen by the Upper Shore and Lower Shore WIBs; and *Business and Finance* (including banks, securities, real estate, insurance, etc.), chosen by Susquehanna. A brief summary of major data collection activities follows.

Large-scale Employer Mail Survey. The state WIB contracted with the state's Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) to conduct a mail survey of all businesses (with 10 or more workers) in the targeted industrial sectors, across a 13-county area of Maryland. DLLR was also responsible for tabulating and reporting on the survey results. DLLR sent surveys to a total of 2,500 businesses and received about 850 responses (a 34 percent response rate). The main problem encountered was building the response rate – researchers had to call and email those firms that did not initially respond to remind them to return the survey. The survey, which took about 10 minutes to complete, covered the following topics: occupations where the firm has experienced chronic job vacancies for 60 and 90 days; major skill sets where the firm most experiences chronic job vacancies; skill sets needed or expected to be needed over the next five years; training needed to fill anticipated openings; and willingness to partner with the WIB and other employers. The survey was designed to obtain representative results at the state and WIB levels, as well as to enable researchers to analyze survey results by sector (at the state level).

Business Visitations. This research task – subcontracted to the Jacob Frances Institute (JFI, at the University of Maryland) – was aimed at: (1) obtaining more in-depth information from employers on the numbers and types of workers likely to be needed; (2) skill and training requirements; (3) ways in which the WIBs could best meet the needs of local employers; (4) informing employers in key sectors about the availability of workforce development services through local WIBs; and (5) helping local WIBs in their efforts to build closer relationships with local employers. JFI conducted a total of 80 visitations to firms across a 10-county area (i.e., an area covered by three of the four WIBs). Local WIBs helped to identify and select employers within the targeted sectors. Visits with employers generally lasted 45 minutes to one hour. Topics covered included many of the same ones covered in the large-scale survey, but the in-person format permitted time for probing further firm responses. Topics covered included: occupations where the firm has experienced chronic job vacancies; major skill sets where the firm most experiences chronic job vacancies; skills sets needed and expected to be needed over next five years; and training needed to fill anticipated openings. In their responses, employers placed particular emphasis on the WIB providing recruits with good attitudes, basic skills, and life skills. Local WIBs felt that the business visitations were very helpful in reaching out to and establishing relationships with local employers in critical sectors within the local economy.

Focus Groups with Employers. The state WIB contracted with JFI to conduct nine focus groups with employers – one with employers in each of the four partnering WIBs and one focus group with employers in each of the five industry sectors. Industry associations and local WIBs helped in recruiting participants for the focus groups. The five focus groups targeting each of the industry sectors were conducted at the state level. The focus groups conducted for each of the four WIBs included local employers (from within the local WIB's service area) that were within one of the five industry sectors. One of the WIBs, which was very busy at the time with a large plant closure, held its

focus group with WIB board members during a regularly scheduled board meeting. A total of 10-15 employers generally attended each of the focus groups. JFI staff moderated the sessions and used a focus group discussion guide. The sessions – which focused on staffing needs and skill requirements of employers – included much give and take among attending employers. The sessions also provided the WIB with an opportunity to reach out and connect with local employers.

Health Care Summit. An important spin-off of the community audit project was a Health Care Summit, which was held in August 2003. The community audit provided critical seed money to partially pay for the one-day event (\$30,000 of a total \$80,000 cost of the summit was paid for with community audit funds), as well data and analysis that underpinned plenary and break-out sessions held at the summit. The summit focused on both the supply-side (e.g., capabilities for training new workers, numbers of new workers likely to enter various fields) and the demand-side (e.g., likely staffing needs of employers) conditions. A notebook was prepared (*Charting New Directions*) to guide the summit, which was in part based on data collected during the community audit. Break-out sessions were conducted in five key strategic areas: (1) strategies for attracting and recruiting of new workers, (2) strategies for retaining existing health care workers, (3) professional/career development approaches (e.g., career pathways, career ladders/lattices) to upgrade skills of existing workers and retain them within health careers, (4) formulating effective state policies and generating needed financing to support health careers, and (5) recruiting health professionals leaving the military to fill health care positions in Maryland.

A total of 168 individuals attended the summit, which included representatives of major health care employers in the state, state/local workforce development agency staff, officials from health care education and training institutions, the governor, and many others. Action steps were identified in each of the five strategic areas and subcommittees were set up to carry forward, further develop, and execute strategies following the conference. A report highlighting major aspects of the five key strategies was prepared and widely disseminated (*Charting New Directions: Governor's Health Care Workforce Summit Monograph*).

EARLY EFFECTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The community audit helped the four partnering WIBs, as well as the state workforce development agency, to develop a much better understanding of labor market (supply and demand) conditions within the five targeted industry sectors. In addition to the enhanced knowledge and documentation of these five sectors, the project helped the state workforce development agency to expand and improve its working relationship with the four local WIBs and helped local WIBs to inform local employers about services available through the workforce development system and begin to establish relationships with these local businesses. State and local workforce development agency staff involved in the project indicated that the survey of employers, business visitations, and focus groups provided both an opportunity to collect valuable information on skills and training needs of key employers and to explain the wide variety of services available through the workforce development system for both employers and workers.

Products of the community audit have been made available via the Internet, as well as in hardcopy reports. The health care summit enabled the workforce development agency to bring together leaders in the field, including the largest and most important employers in the health care sector, to discuss and make commitments to strategies for enhancing recruitment, training, and retention of health care workers in the state. Overall, the project produced a wealth of quantitative data on labor market conditions and training needs in the five targeted sectors (through the large-scale survey) and, at the same time, produced much needed in-depth and qualitative assessments based on detailed interviews conducted with employers (during the focus group sessions and business visitations). The data and analyses have been (and will continue to be) used to update the strategic plans by each of the four participating local WIBs, develop plans for training workers to meet employer needs in the five targeted sectors, and engage and partner with local employers around issues of workforce development.

Views of a Local WIB on the Impacts of the Community Audit. The director of one of the four partnering WIBs viewed the project as opening a way to engage the local employers:

- “The sectoral approach made sense to us...we wanted to be a player with the industries in the five targeted sectors.”
- “The business visitations provided a non-threatening way to approach employers...we used the visits as an entrée to local employers.”
- “The community audit took our conversations with employers to a higher level...it started dialogue with employers and helped us to know what to ask of employers.”
- “As a result of the community audit, we made between 100 and 150 new connections with local employers...the agency (i.e., local WIB) is now seen as a player in the health care sector...in the manufacturing sector, firms come to us for dislocated worker assistance...as a result of the community audit, we can now ‘talk-the-talk’ within each of the industry sectors.”

State and local workforce development officials identified several important lessons they had learned in the process of conducting the community audit:

- Subcontracts should be used to obtain the expertise needed for data collection, analysis, and report writing. The staff at Jacobs Frances Institute were instrumental in the development of survey instruments and discussion guides, and were responsible as well for data collection, analysis, and report writing.
- While the mail survey was valuable for collecting quantitative data on labor market needs of employers and conditions faced by employers in the five sectors, the sample size was not sufficient at the local WIB level to conduct detailed analysis by sector. While the mail survey did not prove to be a very good at identifying specific workforce skill needs by occupation within the selected sectors, the focus groups and business visitations provided very useful information in this area.
- Business visitations, and to a lesser extent the focus groups, were very useful tools for gaining an entrée to local employers – providing an opportunity for local WIBs to reach out to new employers, convey information about services available through the local WIB, and beginning to build a relationship with employers. Local WIB staff indicated that employers were often not all that knowledgeable about available services.
- Local WIBs and employer associations were particularly helpful in identifying employers in the sectors for inclusion in the focus groups and visitations.

- Use the community audit to learn about existing labor market information (LMI). One local WIB official observed: “The community audit opened our eyes to what was available through the state LMI unit...we are using the state LMI group 1000 percent more than before the community audit.”

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Community Audit Demonstration Program

St. Louis Region Site Summary

Grantee	East-West Gateway Coordinating Council (EWGCC)
Contact	Blair Forlaw
Grant Amount	\$150,000
Matching Funds	\$0
Period of Performance	5/1/01-8/31/03
General Focus or Sectoral	Sectoral Focus in Health Care
Geographic Area	St. Louis Metropolitan Area including the City of St. Louis; Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, and St. Louis Counties in Missouri; and Madison, Monroe, St. Clair Counties in Illinois

COMMUNITY AUDIT GOALS

Initially, the goals were to fill four information gaps necessary for effective strategic development for the regional labor market:

- Demographic, social, and economic characteristics of the labor market;
- Outcomes and opportunities associated with current strategies to expand the labor force;
- The nature, capacity, and performance of other employment-related systems (transportation, child care, etc.); and
- The current base of resources available to support the development of human capital at the local and regional levels to help partners develop policy and strategy around several key goals which will drive the Regional Workforce Development Plan.

COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS

Reports/Documents:

- *The State of Health Care Workforce, Metro St. Louis*
- *An Atlas of Work-Related Support Services (GIS Maps);*
- *Federal Funding Streams for Workforce Development*

Website:

<http://www.workforcefutures.org>

Systems: Health Care Intelligence System – Power Point Discussions

Once activities were begun, it became apparent to the grantee that to undertake this kind of research activity for the entire labor market and all its industries would be impossible so the project focus was scaled back. While the nature of the goals remained the same, the major focus became the health care sector.

GRANTEE AND KEY PARTNERS

The East-West Gateway Coordinating Council (EWGCC), the regional council of governments and metropolitan planning organization of St. Louis, applied for the Community Audit Demonstration Grant to inform the ongoing development and refinement of regional and local workforce development strategies. The six area WIBs, from Missouri and Illinois, served as workforce development partners and assisted in

guiding the regional community audit. The other partnering organizations were the St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association, and the University of Missouri.

BACKGROUND

The grant application was submitted on behalf of two states and six WIBs. At the time, the EWGCC was working with the Lt. Governor of Illinois and the Missouri Department of Economic Development in looking at cross-state issues and the community audit seemed to be an ideal regional workforce development activity. There was a need to create coherent policies, plans, and programs based on the demographics of the region; workers and employers were often in separate service areas; training programs needed to address regional needs; transportation policy needed to reflect workforce needs; etc. The six regional WIBs were involved, albeit in some cases reluctantly. One WIB submitted an individual proposal at the same time this regional proposal was submitted.

EWGCC brought the six partner WIBs to the table. At a meeting, the EWGCC learned about the information needs of the WIBs and how to best serve customers through the audit. Attendees at the planning meeting decided to look at supply side information, especially in the area of health care, through meetings with employers, meetings with community college districts, and collection of secondary data. The EWGCC gained the WIBs support and tailored the community audit to their needs.

The focus on health care and developing a health care intelligence system evolved from the initial research conducted for the community audit. EWGCC and its partners found that this was a more manageable and useful focus as it was a galvanizing workforce issue in the St. Louis region; there was a need to have a coordinated plan to bring skilled workers to employers.

GRANT ACTIVITIES

Data Collection. EWGCC staff (including a researcher and GIS specialist) analyzed 2000 Census data, regional economic data to look at employment trends, and county statistics. The EWGCC staff held a focus group and many interviews with schools of nursing and health care employers. University of Missouri staff reviewed ES-202 data and information on entry-level health care workers. All of this information was analyzed and compiled into products related to the *State of Health Care Workforce in Metro St. Louis* and health care intelligence system. One of the principle benefits of the intelligence system was that as changes are made in health care policy (at any level) or as facilities open or close, those factors were entered into a database and labor market impacts predicted. This system allows the employment and training community to develop programs which are responsive to current and anticipated needs.

Focus Groups. The EWGCC held focus groups with nursing educators and health care employers to assess current registered nurse and licensed practice nurse shortages and problems facing the education and training system in producing the numbers of graduates needed to fill available jobs. Educators talked about problems related to enrollment, teacher shortages, and student dropout rates. Health care employers discussed their experiences with recruiting and retaining workers, employee burn-out, employee morale,

and lack of soft skills training.

Negative perceptions of some health care occupations may start in middle or high school if educators do not have sufficient information about the occupations and opportunities in the health care field.

GIS Research. GIS research was used not only in developing a health care workforce report and intelligence system, but for broader purposes. The EWGCC decided that it would be very useful for workforce planners and economic development organizations to have information on the demographics of the workforce, transportation patterns, educational facilities, health care facilities, employer locations, and a host of other important workforce services in an easily readable form. For example, providing this information on maps of the regions shows very clearly where the workers are as compared to job locations. The maps are accompanied by charts and discussions regarding what the information means to planners. To develop the maps, the GIS specialist relied mostly on Census data to map population demographics. Other existing reports and data were used to plot the location of educational facilities, hospitals, and employers. The final product is called *An Atlas of Work-Related Support Services*.

Other Products. Grant funds were not specifically involved in the initial creation of the workforce website (www.workforcefutures.org) but it was under development during the time that research was being done for the grant. Materials gathered for the grant products were used to enhance the website. In addition, the *Federal Funding Streams for Workforce Development* was created as EWGCC accessed a number of federal reports and websites. They felt that compiling information regarding which agencies were involved in workforce development would be useful to them and other workforce professionals.

EARLY RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The project has resulted in the development of a series of recommendations for improving the health care workforce:

- Address workplace conditions
- Improve image
- Market the profession to non-traditional students
- Encourage career ladder programs
- Standardize training and certification
- Strengthen work-support systems
- Build St. Louis Regional Health Care System

Armed with the results from these activities, the EWGCC is working with the local community college system, universities, and economic developers to plug the local “brain drain” from the St. Louis area by creating jobs and a quality of life to keep local talent and attract new talent.

While not a measurable result, the EWGCC expects the partnerships with the cross-state WIBs will continue into the foreseeable future thus strengthening the ability of WIBs to create regional workforce policy. EWGCC anticipates that the existence of the website

Lessons Learned – Setting Appropriate Goals for a Community Audit. A major lesson learned during this community audit was that a more narrowly-focused set of goals allowed the grantee to develop more useful products for the workforce and economic development community. The grantee made the determination to more narrowly focus project goals and make appropriate changes to its data collection and analysis approach early in the process after consulting with the major partners.

will promote information sharing and closer ties with the health care system in St. Louis. The Health Care Intelligence System will house data and analyses that will be continually updated. Products of the system have been finalized and distributed such as the *Atlas of Work-Related Support Services*. The website of resources to assist workforce development professionals, education and training representatives, policy makers, transportation boards, and economic developers is operational.

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APPENDIX F:
BACKGROUND ON LABOR MARKET INFORMATION (LMI)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON
THE LONGITUDINAL EMPLOYER –
HOUSEHOLD DYNAMICS (LEHD) PROGRAM**



Click here for instant access to the data



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Home

The LED Program at the Census Bureau, together with its [state partners](#), provides new information - the [Quarterly Workforce Indicators \(QWI\)](#) - on Local Employment Dynamics that is:

Local at the county and sub county level - so that decisions can be made in the right context

That has information on **Employment** for workers in different industries and different age and sex groups - so that you know where the jobs are - together with earnings - so you know what people are getting paid

And that provides **Dynamic** information on the rapidly changing economy - with information on where jobs are being created and destroyed, how much turnover there is in each industry together with long-term trends

We're developing a number of products for employers, economic development agencies, transportation agencies - so keep an eye on our website to see what we're up to. But our first product - the [Quarterly Workforce Indicators \(QWI\)](#) - is available for 22 states. Click on the map above to see new information about your industry's employment, job creation, turnover, earnings and new hires by age and sex - for your county your metro area, and your workforce information area.

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Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Just as national economic indicators measure the performance of the overall economy, the QWI measure the performance of the local economy - where jobs are, for what kind of workers, how much workers can expect to make and employers expect to pay them.

Use the links on the left to explore the ways in which you can use the Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

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Low Wage Work

The need to improve the earnings of low-wage workers remains a challenge for current welfare policy. The LED program data - with the insights into the interactions between workers and firms over the 1990's until 2002 provide a unique opportunity to examine

1. The long-term experiences of low-wage workers - particularly their transitions out of low-wage status
2. The impact of firm and industry on their ability to exit out of low-wage work.
3. The importance of location.

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[Transportation](#)

Summary

The Census Bureau has partnered with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics to evaluate the potential of the new data for transportation planning. The project produced Origin-Destination (O-D) tables for two states - Florida and Illinois - at the block level.

In addition, for each residence block, the LED program produced

1. The number of employees
2. The number of employees in different wage ranges (low, medium and high)

And for each workplace block, the program produced

1. The number of businesses
2. The types of businesses (by industry)
3. The number of businesses in different payroll ranges (low, medium and high)

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Human Capital and Productivity

The Human Capital Project

Measuring the quality of the workforce is extremely difficult, yet increasingly important to developing an understanding of what kind of workers businesses hire and how this affects business competitiveness. Getting information on the education and occupation of large samples of workers is expensive and burdensome.

This project uses the LED data to estimate the amount of human capital each employee brings to the current employer in the form of measured skills (experience and education) and unmeasured skills (estimated using a model from labor economics). A major contribution of this work is LED's ability to directly link the relationship between firm investment in technology and the demand for skilled workers. State partners receive these estimates for the businesses in their home states.

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION
ON LABOR MARKET INFORMATION
AVAILABLE THROUGH PENNSYLVANIA'S
CAREER LINK SYSTEM**

Background

As Pennsylvania's State Employment Security Agency, the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) provides labor market information useful to job seekers, employers, economic developers, legislators, etc. CWIA plays a significant role in supporting the one-stop centers (CareerLinks) that service the employer and job seeker communities through labor market information (LMI). CWIA understands its role as support for all three levels of service; core, intensive and training. A first step was to determine specifically what services currently available through CWIA could directly support intensive and training services.

Experience has shown that a large number of the CareerLink staff do not fully understand how this information can be used to address the needs of their clients. A smaller, but still large, number of CareerLink staff was not even aware of the existence of LMI.

It was apparent to CWIA that just supplying the CareerLinks with data was woefully insufficient in meeting the needs of job seekers and employers using their services. A plan to meet the training needs of the CareerLink staff was developed and implemented through CWIA's Partner Outreach and Program Support Section.

Pennsylvania's CareerLinks are under the purview of the Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs). As CWIA has relationships with nearly every one of the twenty-two LWIBs, the process begins with them.

Process

- Present the initiative to the LWIB
- Gather LWIB support to pursue the training
- Approach the CareerLink site administrator(s) and offer the service stressing our role, their role, the importance and value of LMI to them and their clients and that the training is offered at no charge to the CareerLink
- CareerLink site administrators select the most appropriate date and time for the training session
- Sessions are designed as personal and hands-on, therefore sessions are recommended for no more than 15 attendees and last for about three hours which leaves ample time for one-on-one training and extensive Q&A sessions
- Training packets are sent in advance of the training to provide an overview of what to expect and what is expected of the attendees during the training session
- The training sessions are held at the local CareerLink using their equipment – staff are both relaxed and are more apt to learn when they are not taken out of their environment
- Approximately four weeks after the session allowing time for implementation of the new knowledge, follow-up questionnaires are sent to the attendees to gather their candid feedback and to gauge CWIA's efforts
- Subsequent training sessions may be, and in most cases have been, modified as a result of attendee feedback
- Once all CareerLinks within a Local Workforce Investment Area have taken advantage of the service, a meeting is held with the LWIB to discuss the next step – LMI liaisons.

- The LMI liaison (an existing CareerLink staff member) provides a local “LMI expert” as a resource to the CareerLink and allows CWIA to focus its limited resources on more in-depth LMI requests and local workforce development projects
- An LMI liaison training sessions is scheduled again at no cost to the CareerLinks
- The liaison session provides an LMI refresher course and goes further to share the concept of the LMI liaison and build an understanding of what is being asked of them
- Approximately four weeks after the liaison session, follow-up questionnaires are sent to the site administrators asking them to confirm their understanding of the liaison role and what have they done to implement the concept
- CWIA provides support throughout this initiative and will assist any CareerLink to overcome non-administrative hurdles to take full advantage of the service

Results

- ⇒ This initiative has heightened CareerLink staff knowledge and overall awareness of the local labor market and the outside forces that drive their labor exchange system and related services.
- ⇒ The local CareerLink offices now have the capacity to immediately respond to routine questions from employers and business leaders thus enhancing their image in the local community.
- ⇒ This initiative has enabled CWIA to establish a direct contact with the CareerLink which enhances CWIA’s support role. We now have the capacity to quickly and efficiently respond to their needs of a more complicated nature.
- ⇒ Several of the CareerLinks have turned to LMI as a marketing tool promoting LMI services and access as an integral component of the CareerLink system. It has served well in providing meaningful information for job developers, business resources personnel, rapid response teams and LMI CareerLink workshops.
- ⇒ This training has cultivated relationships between the local CareerLinks and the local media through encouraging them to use the CareerLink as a research source for stories in business sections and community development thus getting their name in the public mainstream.
- ⇒ Customized labor market information, much of which was designed in house, has enhanced the self-assistance goals and objectives of the CareerLink as this information is prominently displayed in the Career Resource area.
- ⇒ We have learned that the staff training and related outcomes to include establishing a sustained relationship with the local CareerLinks is enhanced when endorsed by the Local Workforce Investment Boards.

APPENDIX G:

**ILLUSTRATION OF HOW FOUR GRANTEES
USED THEIR COMMUNITY AUDIT PRODUCTS**

Appendix G: Illustrations of How Four Grantees Used Their Community Audit Products

CADP Site	Specific Product (s)	Use And Results
<p>City of New Orleans, Office of Workforce Development (LA)</p>	<p><i>Connections: A Regional Workforce Partnership Community Audit (Report)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resulted in the development of <i>The State of the Workforce for New Orleans</i>, the Mayor's five-point plan to boost the New Orleans workforce. • Integrated the results of substantial research (both demand- and supply-side) into the development of JOB-1 work plan. Incorporated recommendations resulting from the audit into the workplan: <i>Strategies to Meet the Demands of the New Economy</i>. These documents can be found on the JOB 1 home page and on the Vision Page: http://new-orleans.la.us/home/departmentsAndAgencies/workforce/index2.php • To develop this report, focus group sessions were held with employers from 10 industry/business sectors, which resulted in the development of employer-sponsored training activities even before the release of the report. • The report and the process established the role of workforce development as a tool for economic development.

CADP Site	Specific Product (s)	Use And Results
Center for Workforce Innovations (Valparaiso, IN) (not all products listed)	<i>Community Workforce Compact Goals & Objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched four goal teams who have the objective of turning workforce recommendations into actions. • Goal team process provided a forum for representatives from many different organizations to join together in a common goal and “where everyone checked their titles at the door.”
	<i>Report on Northwest Indiana Learners</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged industry collaboration with post-secondary schools. • Youth Council is developing a strategic plan based on the Report on Northwest Indiana Learners. • Schools engaged in changing curricula to meet articulated needs.
	<i>State of the Workforce Report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided data for successful Economic Development Strategy Grant application. • Schools engaged in changing curricula to meet articulated needs.
	<i>Steel Industry Workforce Report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steel report used during bargaining sessions between companies and union. • Steel focus brought the steel companies together on issues of common interest.
	<i>Center of Workforce Innovations and the Lake County Integrated Services Delivery Board Community Action Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used by the WIBs and action items have been created to address workforce development issues. • Four communities formed an economic development alliance. • The neighboring WIBs involved have developed a better working relationship recognizing that some of the problems they face are regional in nature.

CADP Site	Specific Product (s)	Use And Results
Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board (PA)	<p><i>Lancaster County Workforce Investment Area: Scan of Employment</i> – This report provides a series of detailed charts analyzing employment levels and change over a 5-year period at the 3- and 4-digit SIC code level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resulted in sector employment interventions in two priority industry clusters: health care and construction, which included: a major media campaign; the mobilization of the one-stop centers in the region to service the effort; the development and implementation of new educational programming to increase accessibility to entry-level jobs; and a major effort to advance incumbent workers in eight hospitals in the region. • Received a \$15,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to conduct qualitative research focusing on knowledge and skill gaps in four technology-based career ladders: industry maintenance, maintenance of information technology systems, industrial controls, and lab technician. • In addition, since the completion of the community audit cluster analyses, the Lancaster County WIB has contracted with 12 other workforce development boards across the state – representing about 35 counties – to produce the same types of industry cluster analyses that had been undertaken in Lancaster County.

CADP Site	Specific Product (s)	Use And Results
KentuckianaWorks (Louisville, KY)	<p>Occupational Outlook Website and Supply and Demand analysis for region</p> <p>KentuckianaWorks received numbers of calls about the website and decided to publish a brochure with extracts from the site and information on how to use site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web site and the Census data analysis are being used in the development of strategic plans. • Analyses are being used by the education and training community to assist in curriculum development and student advising. • More than 30,000 copies have been printed and the demand is continuous. • In addition, because the educational community has been using the resource, its limitations are now highlighted. Identifying the skills and training needed for occupations just whets the appetite for information regarding where training can be found. KentuckianaWorks is now exploring adding links to educational resources. The links would be expected to include full details on courses, time and cost of training.