

ARKANSAS: WORKFORCE INFORMATION PY' 04 ANNUAL REPORT

CONTINUE TO POPULATE THE ALMIS DATABASE WITH STATE DATA

All mandatory core tables of the ALMIS database, version 2.2, were updated by June 30, 2005. Arkansas also populates many of the ALMIS Database's non-required demographic and economic tables and is building tables that will power local WIB Area profile reports in the "Discover Arkansas" system. We maintain the Uniform Resource Locators (URL) of <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> and <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>, that are the official website addresses for our Internet delivery of ALMIS Database information

The 2005 version of the *Directory of Licensed, Certified, and Registered Occupations in Arkansas* database files were updated and submitted to the National Crosswalk Service Center on June 15, 2005, with the first printed version being released on August 1, 2005. The process of updating the 2007 version of this publication will commence in January of 2007.

PRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE INDUSTRY AND OCCUPATIONAL EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

Long-Term

The state and sub-state level Industry and Occupational Employment Projections for 2002-2012 were successfully completed and printed, and file sent to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium. We are currently gearing up for the 2004-20014 processes. Statewide long-term projections are also made available through our ALMIS Database website at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>.

Short-Term

The state and sub-state level Industry and Occupational Projections for the 2003-2005 period, utilizing a base period of 1st quarter 2003 and projected out to 1st quarter 2005 have been completed, and the necessary files sent to the Projections Management Partnership Consortium.

Arkansas has completed the 2004-2006 state and sub-state Industry and Occupational Projections and sent the necessary files to the Projections Consortium on June 16, 2005.

State and sub-state level Short-Term Projections can be found through our ALMIS Database website at <http://www.discoverarkansas.net> or <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov>

PROVIDE OCCUPATIONAL AND CAREER INFORMATION PRODUCTS FOR PUBLIC USE

Discover Arkansas (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov): “Discover Arkansas” is the State’s new web-based LMI delivery system supporting the WIBs, business, education, other agencies, and the public, utilizing information in Arkansas’ ALMIS database. This fully ADA compliant system was officially released on January 31, 2005.

ArkOSCAR (www.arkoscar.org)*: Through collaboration with the Texas LMI Department, we’ve developed an Arkansas-specific web version of the popular Occupation and Skill Computer-Automated Researcher. ArkOSCAR is a powerful O*NET-based application that allows One-Stop Centers and schools to assist dislocated workers, youth, and other job/career seekers in their career exploration by leveraging O*NET data with current State LMI (Wages, Occupational Growth Projections, Job Openings, Demographic data, and more). The system contains seven different ways to help users explore job and career possibilities, including automation of the first two O*NET Assessment tools. The system provides multiple links to - and even searches in - America’s Job Bank. ArkOSCAR displays an engaging window into the powerful O*NET database and is an excellent way for users unfamiliar with O*NET to learn about occupational possibilities.

*To visit ArkOSCAR, from the sign-in page (www.arkoscar.org), select “Out-of-State” from the “LWIA or EDS” drop down menu, and then type in “54321” in the “Password (Zip Code)” window.

Career Videos on CD-ROM: Arkansas continues to expand their distribution list for Career Videos on CD-ROM, as we duplicate the newest releases of the videos for our existing customers and growing base of new customers, which includes our WIA partners and schools throughout the State, at no cost to the customers. The “Discover Arkansas” Occupational portal (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov) also provides access to the career videos.

Career Watch (www.careerwatch.org): Arkansas distributed 112,600 copies of this very popular tabloid-type career magazine in the last year. *Career Watch* provides Students (and their parents) over 20 areas of interest in exploring the world of work. Topics covered ranged from career planning, resumes, apprenticeships, work ethic, military opportunities, top occupations, occupational profiles with wage information, scholarship information, financial aid programs, higher education in Arkansas, and more. A guide for the 2004-2005 edition was also produced for teachers. The Career Watch magazine is also available for downloading at www.careerwatch.org.

The Future Awaits : Arkansas continued its distribution of this popular publication, which focuses on teaching young adults pre-employment basics, including resume preparation, how to apply for jobs, appropriate dress, interview tips, and even basic guidance on how to complete federal tax forms.

National Governors Association (NGA) Skills Matching System: To provide information on the skill needs of jobs/occupations in Arkansas, we have created a skills matching prototype system, through the support of the NGA "Pathways to Advancement Policy Academy". This new tool, which is incorporated into the Discover Arkansas LMI portal, links Arkansas' growth industries to the nationally recognized Educational Career Clusters. It also identifies if a growth industry is a targeted industry by the Arkansas Department of Economic Development or an industry that has been identified by the Department of Labor's High Growth Job Training Initiative. The tool identifies occupations related to each growth industry and career pathway and provides information on skills, projections, wages, training programs, licensing requirements, and notes if it is a high demand occupation in Arkansas.

Affirmative Action (www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.Arkansas.gov): In addition to our very popular publication supporting WIBs, business, education, other agencies, and the general public, the "Discover Arkansas" website contains an entire Affirmative Action section with statewide, MSA, and county tables that can be downloaded onto the user's PC.

Other Printed Publications: During this past year, the Department of Workforce Services' Labor Market Information section has produced various other LMI-based publications, such as their "Directory of Licensed, Certified, and Registered Occupations in Arkansas", annual Wage Survey, "Arkansas Labor Market", the very popular "Projected Employment Opportunities List" (formerly known as the Demand Occupations List), and others. Most of these publications are accessible on-line from the LMI Publications page of our "Discover Arkansas" website at www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov.

**ENSURE THAT WORKFORCE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT REQUIRED
BY STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS ARE
PROVIDED**

Projected Employment Opportunities List (formerly the "Demand Occupations List"): Arkansas continues to produce this very popular publication that identifies future job opportunities and links them to training programs with the State. The publication presents information in two columns, with the first providing the occupation's code, title, and a Statewide estimated average annual wage. The second column lists the corresponding training code and title for the occupation. A list is included for the State

and each of the 10 Local Workforce Investment Areas. This product is distributed to help the workforce system and its users make better training decisions.

Local Employment Dynamic (LED): The Census Bureau has accepted Arkansas into the Census-led, and ETA/BLS-supported, LED program. Developed through a multi-agency, Federal/State collaboration, LED provides the public a powerful window to key State and local workforce indicators supporting businesses, program planners, and job seekers. Employment, Job Flow, Job Creation, New Hires, Job Separations, Job Turnover, and Average Monthly Wage information is very useful by itself, but with the ability to segment by Gender, Age Groups, Geography, Industry, and Business Size, it becomes exceptionally powerful. The leveraging of Census, BLS (QCEW/ES-202), and ETA (UI Wage Record) data - under strict data sharing and confidentiality agreements - will answer many questions for businesses, program planners, and job seekers such as:

- + Where are the workers in my industry and county?
- + How much are workers like mine paid?
- + How does the job turnover for other firms in my industry compare to the turnover at my workplace?
- + Where are the jobs in my WIB area?
- + How much do the occupations in my WIB area pay?
- + How long can I expect this type of job to last in this WIB area?
- + Where are the jobs where I live?
- + How much can I expect to be paid in different industries?
- + How long can I expect my type job to last in this location?

We anticipate having the State-specific LED website up in PY 05 provided Federal funding from the Census Bureau, BLS, and/or ETA remains in place and stable.

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) (www.arkansascrs.org): Arkansas unveiled the first nationally recognized WIA certification system in operation back in December 2001. ACRS streamlined a paper system, which averaged 90 days for WIA provider certification into a 24-hour automated approval process. ACRS provides an interactive, customer driven, search engine to review all educational entities within State boundaries.

Workforce Area Profiles: Arkansas has created localized labor market profiles for each of its local workforce investment areas. The profiles contain the local demand occupations with local wages and key important information for each local area.

Other WIB Support Activities: During PY'04, the LMI Section has:

- a) Presented on five different topics at four different State WIB meetings.
- b) Attended and/or presented at 22 local WIB meetings.

MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE ELECTRONIC STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS

While Arkansas' LMI section provides many Workforce Information Delivery systems, below are the main current activity highlights in this Workforce Information area, for PY'04:

Discover Arkansas (www.discoverarkansas.net): "Discover Arkansas", released on January 31, 2005, is one of the newest parts of the Workforce i-NFORMER family of second-generation LMI delivery systems. Arkansas was a member of a 22 State Consortium in developing this new type of LMI delivery system, which draws information from Arkansas' ALMIS database and the O*NET occupational databases. Besides the system providing a huge amount of Occupational information, "Discover Arkansas" provides access to wages, employment and unemployment information, industry information, LMI publications, employer contact information, training provider information, and local area reports for WIBs. Due to Arkansas law concerning state government websites, "Discover Arkansas" is fully (508) "Bobby Compliant" and meets the higher accessibility standards set by the State.

ArkOSCAR (www.arkoscar.org): Arkansas, with collaboration with the Texas LMI Department, updated this powerful occupational exploration and career information delivery system with new, current O*NET and Arkansas labor market information in March 2005.

Career Watch (www.careerwatch.org): Provides access to a web version of the State's popular *Career Watch* magazine. It allows direct viewing or downloading of any part or to the whole publication.

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) (www.arkansascrs.org): Arkansas developed and still maintains the first nationally recognized automated WIA certification and Eligible Training Provider system.

To maintain ACRS integrity, the LMI staff meets quarterly with the State Workforce Investment Board and Local Workforce Investment Boards to continually improve and develop products, services and training to meet the needs of the local communities and the state.

SUPPORT STATE WORKFORCE INFORMATION TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Arkansas remains committed to the Educational community and continues to participate in educational training programs, conferences and career fairs across the state. Some of the activities DWS/LMI have participated in this past year were:

Arkansas Education and Guidance Conference April 2004, held in Eureka Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted breakout sessions on the use of LMI products, Career Videos and ArkOSCAR.

Arkansas Career Orientation Teachers Conference held July, 2004 in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated all LMI product and also conducted breakout sessions for counselors and administrators on ArkOSCAR, Career Watch magazine and the Future Awaits publication.

The November, 2004, Arkansas Counseling Association Conference held in Hot Springs, AR, where we displayed and disseminated LMI products and conducted breakout sessions on the use of LMI products and ArkOSCAR.

We remain highly supportive of staff development and utilized training developed through the LMI Institute. Below are some of the training events that our staff attended in PY'04:

One staff member attended the State projections Analyst Training on Short-term Projection.

One staff member to basic analyst training

Two staff members attended the ALMIS Database training.

Three staff members attended the LMI Forum.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

Below are the results of our efforts during this Program Year, the grading scale, and reports of the customer satisfaction surveys that were sent with each of our LMI publications.

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Usefulness</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Very Satisfied	Very Useful	A = 4 pts. / 3.8-4.0
Satisfied	Useful	B = 3 pts. / 3.0-3.7
Indifferent	Fair	C = 2 pts. / 2.9-2.0
Dissatisfied	Not Very Useful	D = 1 pt. / 1.5-2.8
Very Dissatisfied	Not Useful At All	F = 0 pts. /Below 1.5

Breakdown of Satisfaction and Usefulness by Publication

Directory of Licensed Occupations		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		76%
Satisfied		34%
Overall Score	3.75=B	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		63%
Useful		37%
Fair		
Overall Score	3.62=B	

Long-Term Projections		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		36%
Satisfied		63%
Indifferent		3%
Overall Score	3.4=B	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		36%
Useful		63%
Not Very Useful		1%
Overall Score	3.4=B	

Short-Term Projections		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		10%
Satisfied		90%
Overall Score	3.1=B	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		10%
Useful		80%
No Answer		10%
Overall Score	3.11=B	

Wage Publication		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		45%
Satisfied		55%
Overall Score	3.58=B	
	Wage Publication continued:	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		22%
Useful		78%
Overall Score	3.62=B	

Career Watch Magazine		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		91.67%
Satisfied		8.33%
Overall Score	3.92=A	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		91.67%
Useful		8.33%
Overall Score	3.92=A	

Top 10 Occupations by Educational Level		
Satisfaction		Percent
Very Satisfied		57%
Satisfied		33%
Indifferent		10%
Overall Score	3.43=B	
Usefulness		Percent
Very Useful		32%
Useful		50%
Fair		18%
Overall Score	3.23=B	

In summary, Arkansas has been relentless in its pursuit to furnish the citizens of Arkansas with good, reliable, and accurate labor market information. We continue to strive for excellence in our products' customer satisfaction assessment and will continue to adapt our information using suggestions from these surveys, through future Workforce Information grants.