

September 22, 2004

Ms. Helen Parker
Regional Administrator
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
61 Forsyth Street, S.W., Room 6M12
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Ms. Parker:

We are delighted to present you with the Program Year (PY) 2003 Workforce Information Core Products and Services Annual Report for the State of Kentucky. This Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 9-03. We are very pleased about the activities accomplished this past year that met a varied array of customer needs. We look with anticipation toward PY 2004 and future years, and the opportunity to work more closely with the State Workforce Investment Board to produce a wider variety of workforce information products and services.

We are confident the PY 2003 Workforce Information Core Products and Services Grant funds were used to develop the most responsive workforce information system possible.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact Carlos Cracraft at 502-564-7976. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Penny R. Armstrong

Executive Director

**Kentucky's
Workforce Information Core Products and Services
Annual Report
For PY 2003**

Education Cabinet
Department for Workforce Investment
Office of Employment and Training
Research and Statistics Branch
Workforce Information

Kentucky is pleased to present the 2003 Annual Report on the Workforce Information Core Products and Services achievements.

Without a doubt, more progress than ever was achieved during PY 2003. Nearly all of the planned activities were completed, or nearly completed. Even though the quantity of staff working on this grant is small in number, they continually produce and provide substantial amounts of valued products and services for a wide array of customers.

For the first time in PY 2003, a sustained effort was made to improve and expand the areas of marketing and customer service. During the mid-part of the Program Year, four promotional mailings were sent to 1,300 high school guidance counselors, college career counselors, Chamber of Commerce officials, economic development officials, and Workforce Investment professionals. These mailings publicized the internet site (www.workforcekentucky.ky.gov), along with other workforce products and services available. Also, individual products and publications pertaining to the above customer groups were highlighted. It was obvious that this marketing effort had a positive outcome. As a result, there was an immediate 65 percent increase in visits to the Workforce Kentucky website. In addition, there was a significant increase in other modes of contact to the Research and Statistics Branch.

Additionally, two brochures were developed to promote the Workforce Kentucky website. One pamphlet featured website information that would be of interest to employers and the second suggested items of interest to economic developers. These informational brochures were distributed at various conferences, presentations, workshops, and meetings.

Two items relating to new products and services should be noted. Kentucky joined the Federal/State Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program managed by the U.S. Census Bureau. This program will provide Kentucky with timely Quarterly Workforce Indicators at the county and Workforce Investment Area (WIA) levels. We will begin to receive this dynamic information early in PY 2004 with updated information available on a quarterly basis. (See Section 5 for more detail on the LED Program in Kentucky.)

A second innovative item involved making publications available in modes other than hard copies. During PY 2003, customers could obtain publications in an electronic format for the first time. Consumers were given the option of downloading publications from the Workforce Kentucky website. Also, many of our publications are now accessible on business card CDs. These opportunities not only offer more options for customers, but also eliminate postage and mailing costs.

1. ALMIS Database

Continued progress was made in populating Kentucky's America's Labor Market Information System (ALMIS) Database. The ALMIS Database was populated with routine monthly numbers along with historical updates and revisions for many types of statistics. Some of the data types are: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS); Current Employment Statistics (CES); Consumer Price Index (CPI); Total and Per Capita Income; Statewide Industry Employment Projections; Statewide and Area Development District (ADD) Occupational Projections; Statewide and ADD Occupational Wage Data. In addition, a system upgrade to Workforce Informer Version 2.0 was completed in PY 2003 and the upgrade to Version 2.1 initiated. The ALMIS Database is one of the primary statistical databases accessed by the Workforce Kentucky application.

2. Long and Short-Term Projections

In PY 2003 Kentucky completed the publication of long-term occupational projections, 2000 to 2010, for statewide and ADDs. These were completed by December 2003. The 2000 to 2010 projections data was also added to the ALMIS database on Workforce Kentucky and averaged 274 visits per month between January and June. A statewide NAICS time series was also developed and completed by March 2004. Kentucky also completed statewide long-term industry and occupational projections for the period 2002 to 2012 by June 30, 2004. Kentucky also planned to produce short-term projections for the first time in PY 2003. These projections were to be completed by June 30, 2004, however, due to a delay in necessary data from the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville, the short-term projections process did not begin until June 28, 2004. The short-term projections were completed soon after that date and will be included in the plan for PY 2004-2005.

3. Continue to Publish Occupational Analysis Products for Customer Needs

Kentucky Occupational Outlook to 2010

The occupational projections data from base year 2000 to the year 2010 were incorporated into Workforce Kentucky and were also published in the *Kentucky Occupational Outlook to 2010*. This publication was completed in December and released via internet, in paper copy, and on a business card CD. The cover was modernized to give the publication more aesthetic appeal. The Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system was utilized for all occupational titles within the publication as well. The publication was well received, with approximately 20,000 electronic downloads from January to June and about 150 paper copy distributions. These copies were requested by a wide variety of customers, including job seekers, students, employers, and various other economic and workforce entities.

Kentucky Area Development District Occupational Outlooks

The Occupational Outlook publications for each ADD were completed in electronic, paper format, and printed to a business card CD during this time span. These had not been updated for a period of six years. We have made a commitment to ensure that they are updated every four years. These publications detail the same information as the *Kentucky Occupational Outlook to 2010* but list the data as it pertains to the smaller economic regions within the state. Between January and June, these publications were accessed via Workforce Kentucky around 2,000 times, were mailed or handed to customers in paper copy in a quantity of about 560, and approximately 100 business card CDs were distributed that contained both the statewide and all the ADD area publications. These publications were most requested by job seekers, students, and employers.

Kentucky Career Profiles

The update to the *Kentucky Career Profiles* began in the spring. The updated version is intended to detail 150 occupational titles as opposed to 250 like its predecessor. The new version required a change from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) coding system to the SOC system. As the work on the publication progressed, the conversion from the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system to the new North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) also mandated a change in certain areas of the publication. Because of these changes, this publication has been essentially crafted again from scratch rather than merely updated. This is one of our more popular publications. It details job descriptions, educational requirements, locations of training, skills, abilities, knowledge, tasks, activities, work context, advancement opportunities, working conditions, outlook opportunities, earnings data, locations of employment, industries of employment, alternate occupational titles, and related occupations for a list of 150 occupations ranked by fastest annual growth

rate and most annual job openings concurrently. This data is extracted from a variety of sources, including the O*Net, America's Career Infonet, Kentucky ALMIS data, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and then arranged to best fit scenarios within the state of Kentucky. As a carry over from PY 2003, this publication will be completed in the fall of 2004.

Kentucky Career Outlook Kit

The Kentucky Career Outlook Kit is a business card CD that contains the *Kentucky Occupational Outlook* and the *Kentucky Career Profiles* in an easy-to-use format. This is a carry over, and will be completed promptly after the *Kentucky Career Profiles*.

4. ALMIS Employer Database

The Info-USA employer database (2nd edition of 2003 version), which includes 147,577 employers, was incorporated into the ALMIS database during PY 2003 and is accessible through the Workforce Kentucky platform. Many current and new customers continue to be impressed with the ability to access information on all Kentucky employers. The 1st edition of the 2004 version of the Info-USA employer database was also received during PY 2003. Once the system upgrade to Workforce Informer Version 2.1 is completed, that version, along with future versions, will be loaded onto the ALMIS Database and incorporated into Workforce Kentucky.

5. Provide Information and Support to the Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) and Produce Other State Information Products and Services

The Research and Statistics Branch recognizes the need for strong cooperation with the State and Local Workforce Investment Boards. During PY 2003, the Branch maintained active consultation on workforce information issues with State and Local WIA professionals and board members. This included attendance and discussions at the quarterly meetings of the Kentucky WIB Business and Industry Committee. In addition, the Branch provided regular support to the Local WIA professions during the year in meeting their demands for workforce information products and services. Finally, the State WIB Executive Director and the LMI Manager had regular ongoing dialogues concerning the use of workforce information to meet the needs of the WIA customers.

Kentucky Total and Nonwhite Population and Labor Force Data by County 2002

This publication was completed in December 2003 and shortly thereafter was made available on Workforce Kentucky and in printed copies. It is utilized by Kentucky employers to complete their annual affirmative action reports and is one of the most requested pieces of labor market information. Requests for printed and electronic copies totaled 5,244 between January and June 2004.

Kentucky Labor Market Information Directory

This directory provides detailed information regarding reports, publications, and data produced by the Research and Statistics branch. A staff contact listing will also be included. We were unable to complete this in PY 2003, but have assigned it to a new employee for completion in November 2004.

Kentucky Labor Market Information Newsletter

The *Kentucky Labor Market Information Newsletter* highlights the labor market conditions for the state of Kentucky and provides additional statistics that are of interest to various workforce customers. This newsletter is distributed to 2,260 customers each month. During PY 2003, we updated the newsletter with a more contemporary header and added new tables. A recently added staff person with expertise in graphic design will further redesign our newsletter.

Occupational Wage Data

We were able to produce and publish updated occupational wage data for the state and 14 ADDs. Since the OES program now produces estimates every six months, we were able to update our wage data with the most current information. This wage data is accessible through Workforce Kentucky. Additionally, spreadsheets containing publishable occupations for Kentucky and the 14 ADDs are available upon request. This data continues to be one of the most frequently viewed areas on our website, as evidenced by over 700 visitors per month retrieving this wage data. In addition, numerous phone requests come to the Research and Statistics Branch weekly requesting occupational wage data.

Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Program

On October 24, 2003, Kentucky submitted a Memorandum of Understanding to the U.S. Census Bureau to join the Local Employment Dynamics Federal-State Partnership (LEDFSP). Notification of acceptance was received on December 15, 2003 and computer programming began on February 2, 2004. By the end of PY 2003, Kentucky had submitted 29 quarters of employee data and 12 quarters of employer data to the census, which was a sufficient amount of historical data to produce LED data. Additionally, programmed procedures to capture and transmit both sets of data for future quarters have been developed.

6. Kentucky's Electronic Information Delivery System (Workforce Kentucky)

As with any web publication, this project is perpetual and continuous. All current and historical data originally intended for this website have been deployed. In addition, the site is augmented with new data when it arrives. With the site officially launched, we began to market and craft it in such a way to encourage return visits, a necessity of any internet domain. The appearance, arrangement and content of the site have been systematically improved. New articles have been added, and we will continue to do so in the future. Unemployment Insurance data tables are added monthly in Adobe Acrobat format. These tables have been downloaded 300 times a month on average (with 100 paper

distributions per month as well). The look and the feel of the site were altered in order to make it more appealing.

Web traffic has seemingly risen in direct correlation with these changes. According to Web Trends software, a utility that monitors traffic to the site, the average number of visits to the site during the second half of PY 2003 rose by fifty percent from the average number during the first half, from around 12,000 to about 18,000. This is a substantial increase, and we hope to continue enhancements that help accrue additional traffic. This website is tailored to benefit every type of user or customer within the state or nation, including employers, job seekers, students, career counselors, economic developers, employment counselors, education and training providers, and Workforce Investment Act professionals. Feedback regarding the site has been quite positive, and we will strive to continuously improve it.

7. Support State Workforce Information Training

During PY 2003, numerous staff received necessary training and interacted with LMI staff from other states that work on comparable Workforce Information products and services. Two staff attended the three-day Applied (advanced) LMI Analyst Training sponsored by the LMI Institute. Also, the staff person responsible for the Industry and Occupational Projections deliverables attended both the Long-Term Industry Projections and the MicroMatrix software trainings. In addition, a staff person represented Kentucky at the Workforce Information Consortium meeting. Three staff attended training during the year that focused on design and appearance capabilities for the Workforce Kentucky website. Further, staff attended some 22 ETA and BLS sponsored trainings pertaining to the statistical programs and their output.

There were also training sessions conducted for users of Workforce Information. Sixteen gatherings were held with employer, economic development, Workforce Investment Board, and other customer groups providing them with direction that will enable them to make full use of the vast informational resources. A total of six to seven hundred participants attended these training sessions. Additionally, demonstrations on the Workforce Kentucky website were offered at an agency open house that attracted many interested visitors.

Customer Satisfaction Assessment

The Research and Statistics Branch recognizes the importance of customer satisfaction assessment and its role in improving current products and services. The Branch was more proactive than ever in PY 2003 in interacting with customer groups. During all meetings, presentations, conferences, and demonstrations, opportunity was given for customers to provide input. This helped promote ongoing dialogues between the users and suppliers of labor market and workforce

information. However, more collaboration among the Branch and customer groups is needed to assess their needs and improve and/or develop products or services. The Branch will need more staff resources before it can increase its customer-responsive vision.

In conclusion, the funds from the Workforce Information Core Products and Services program provide essential workforce information to Kentuckians. It enables Kentucky to provide a wide array of print and electronic products to many varied customers. We will continue to assess their needs, and respond to meet them as mandated in Section 309 of the Workforce Investment Act. A sustained commitment will be required to transform labor market and workforce information to meet customer needs more effectively.