

## State of Utah

### PY 2007 Workforce Information Core Products and Services

#### Annual Performance Report

Below you will find a description of the activities conducted by Utah's Workforce Information Division during PY2007 for each of ETA's core products. The goal of these activities was not only to meet the requirements of the PY2007 TEGL, but to also deliver superior customer service through the production and dissemination of labor market information. As you can see, Utah sets high standards for itself in this endeavor, but to meet those standards, it was necessary for us to leverage financial resources from our state's workforce administration. For each core product, the portion of ETA grant money expended on that product is listed. However, this does not reflect the total cost of that activity. In total, delivering quality core products cost us an additional \$392,550, which was leveraged from the department.

#### **Core Product A: Continue to Populate the Workforce Information Database with State and Local Data**

##### ***PY2007 Expenditure: 66,689***

Utah has started transitioning its Workforce Information Database core tables to version 2.4 as prescribed by ETA, with an expected completion date of October 2008. During PY2007, all of the core tables were populated with current state data. The core tables were populated in accordance with guidelines issued by the Database Consortium. In addition, Utah also populated six non-standard WID tables—mostly geared toward O\*NET and skills, as well as eight Utah-specific WID tables. Utah updated the content of the database in a timely manner. Utah maintained the occupational licensing data and updated the required files. In addition, Utah made several enhancements to the Utah Economic Data Viewer (UEDV) over the program year, including:

- Adding a graphic for Utah's star rating system to aid the user in more quickly assessing the rating of a particular occupation
- Rewording the explanation of an occupation's star rating to make it easier to understand and more like the language used by BLS
- Streamlining the data update process by implementing automation to the editing and summing of the QCEW data
- Adding a linking path from the job listings in an occupational profile to the electronic job board application
- Reorganizing the industry listings into "trees", using the NAICS digit levels as branches
- Creating a link from the occupational wages to the occupational report

- Inserting a mapping link into InfoUSA
- Adding BED tables as a preliminary step to displaying the data for our users (we are still exploring this as we better learn the BED data and its best uses)

Many of these changes were implemented to address feedback, both formal and informal, that Utah had received from users. In working with our customers, we found that we were able to implement these changes in the most effective manner, ensuring a value-added outcome.

Another significant project Utah took on for the UEDV was to integrate Utah's FirmFind tool into UEDV. FirmFind is similar to InfoUSA in that it is a database of Utah employers which includes industry coding, and location and contact information. FirmFind, however, is a more powerful tool in the following aspects:

- Source data is the QCEW microdata (as allowed by Utah law)
- Database is also searchable by occupation (using the staffing patterns generated by the Estimates Delivery System [EDS])
- Data can be searched by county or Workforce Services regions

FirmFind was built before the inception of ALMIS (now WID), using computer language which was cutting edge at the time, but has now become outdated. Some users of the UEDV had suggested linking from an occupational report to the FirmFind output for that occupation. Because of FirmFind's old language, we were unable to do so. Utah's WID administrator examined the FirmFind structure and concluded that it would be possible, and quite advantageous, to move the FirmFind system into the WID. Work was started on this project in April of 2008, and it's scheduled to be completed in December 2008.

### ***Feedback from Customers***

Feedback was collected in the form of a pop-up web survey on two different occasions, each time focusing on a different module. The approach Utah took this year to collecting feedback was different in that we chose to ask more open-ended questions. Responses are summarized below:

- Occupational Explorer Module responses:
  - a) Please describe the one thing that is most useful to you on this web site
    - i) Response: The occupational wage information is the most useful thing for the customers that responded. The occupational outlook information is the next most useful thing followed by many general comments expressing that they just like it because overall it is easy, fast, and has a good layout. LMI in general was mentioned many times as well as the link to current job openings. There were numerous comments expressing that the career information is helpful for customers.
  - b) Please describe one thing we can do to make this web site more useful for you:

- i) Response: A significant number of customers responded to this question by saying that it is great the way it is, they like it, don't change anything. The things that could be done to make it more useful are to keep the information and data as current as possible and to continue to refine the tool for searching for job titles more easily.
- County and Statewide Information Module responses:
  - a) Please describe the one thing that is most useful to you on this web site:
    - i) Response: The most useful thing to the customers that responded is the overall timeliness and quality of the information. The most useful piece of information to them is the unemployment and employment growth information closely followed by the localized information for counties and cities. Wages, job outlook information, and job openings were also included.
  - b) Please describe one thing we can do to make this web site more useful for you:
    - i) Several respondents indicated that the web site is just fine the way it is. The most significant recommendation for improvement is ensuring that all of the data and publications are kept as current as possible. A few respondents would like to be able to find specific pieces of information more easily.

This feedback will be used in PY2008 to implement changes and improvement to the UEDV, as it is our goal to ensure the UEDV is meeting our customers' needs in every possible aspect.

### **Core Product B: Produce and Disseminate Industry and Occupational Employment Projections**

#### ***PY2007 Expenditure: 70,612***

Utah developed and disseminated long- and short-term industry and occupational employment projections, using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Consortium and the Projections Managing Partnership. Utah successfully developed statewide short-term projections for the 2008-2009 period and statewide long-term projections for the 2006-2016 period. Utah continued to populate the WID Database with the 2008-2009 statewide short-term and 2006-2016 statewide long-term projections data and submitted the data for public dissemination.

In the last few years our Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) sample has been expanded to support more sub-state areas. As such, work began on increasing our sub-state projections divisions from two to five. This included building the historical industry employment data for the new sub-state areas since our QCEW data needed for the models was lost some years ago.

Utah made industry projections available on the Workforce Information website in the form of a document linked on the statewide information page. Potential for confusion in publishing our industry projections arises from the fact that our Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB) also creates industry employment projections. That set of

projections is mandated to be the official source for statewide budget planning and forecasting. Because of this, our industry projections on the web include a statement of clarification, along with a link to the GOPB's projections.

Both long and short-term occupation projections were presented to Utah's customers in many formats, including the UEDV, a full-listing spreadsheet on the careers.utah.gov Web site, in the Choices system which is the State of Utah's career information delivery system, and many articles in Utah's *Trendlines* and *Workforce News* magazines. The projections were highlighted in presentations and trainings done throughout the state for many different user groups.

The long-term occupational projections were used for economic analysis purposes and to help customers better understand where the Utah economy is heading. Short-term projections were also used for economic analysis purposes and to help customers better understand where the Utah economy is heading. Utah successfully made long-term occupational projections available in hard copy and electronic formats within 60 days of developing the data. Additionally, Utah's UWORKS system (our employment counselors' client career planning tool) now links directly to the appropriate occupational information in the Workforce Information Database. This will make it much easier for employment counselors to use the projections to help their clients make informed career decisions.

### ***Feedback from Customers***

Utah is currently working on redesigning its primary long-term occupation projections publication (formerly known as *Job Trends*). Because Utah is projecting new sub-state areas, it was decided that the opportunity for redesign had presented itself. The redesign is being treated as a chance for Utah to address feedback we've received regarding our projections data (see for example, Utah's Annual Performance Report for PY2006) and to better meet the needs of our customers. The publication is set to be released January 2009. Feedback will be collected in order for Utah to evaluate the effectiveness of the redesign and the degree to which customer needs were met.

### **Core Product C: Publish an Annual Economic Analysis for the Governor and the state WIB**

#### ***PY2007 Expenditure: 39,229***

Utah was somewhat limited in its ability to independently fulfill this deliverable because of the preexistence of an annual economic analysis report for Governor Huntsman. This report, which has been produced yearly for at least the last two decades, is led by the Department of Economic Analysis (DEA) within the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB). DEA compiles the census data (as the state's Census program managing agency) and writes the overarching analysis. For the economic sector-specific analysis (e.g. labor market, tax revenues, industry analysis, etc.) the DEA turns to the

Governor's Council of Economic Advisors (CEA). This is a group of statewide economists who together provide the governor with council regarding pertinent economic issues for the state of Utah. Our chief economist is a primary member of the CEA and it is through him that we contribute the labor market and industry analysis for the annual Economic Report to the Governor (ERG).

In the 2008 report, our chief economist provided data and analysis on such topics as job growth, unemployment rates, industry projections, and specific key industries such as construction, defense, energy, high technology, and tourism, travel and recreation. He also attended work group sessions where the content of the report was discussed, and contributed to the editing process for the final report.

To circumvent some of the limitations Utah faced in completing this deliverable by not being the sole owners of the governor's report, Utah produced a supplementary report focusing on each of the 29 counties in Utah. The goal of this report, entitled Utah Counties in Review: a 2007 Report, was to touch on more region-specific information instead of the exclusive statewide view taken by ERG. The general approach of this report is to give a year-end review of Utah's counties in terms of economic change and development. Each county has its own section in the report. Within each section a report is given which relies on both data generated through our LMI programs and other agencies throughout the state. These data include population, gross taxable sales, construction permitting, and demographics. Along with reporting this data for the year 2007, an article is included for each county, written by the respective regional economist, which discusses major economic events in 2007 for that county. This report was made available to our customers through our web site, both in the complete 29-county form and individually on each county's web page.

### ***Feedback from Customers***

ERG was presented to the governor at a Wasatch Front Economic Forum meeting in January of 2008. In attendance were many economists and economic developers from both the public and private sector, including those who had contributed to the report. The governor gave a short speech where he stressed the importance of the report as a tool for economic development and policy making. He then expressed his intent to use the report to stress to his constituents the importance of early childhood education as a foundational springboard to continued economic prosperity for the state of Utah.

Utah's Counties in Review report was highlighted on the Utah's Workforce Information homepage. In doing so, customers were made aware of this newer publication and consequently, the report was downloaded 80% more times over the 30-day period than it was in its first year of existence. The publication was also introduced to our customers in presentations, and many current users have commented on how helpful it is to have information on all 29 counties in one document.

## **Core Product D: Post Products, Information, and Reports on the Internet**

***PY2007 Expenditure: 82,380***

For program year 2007, Utah posted a vast array of workforce information on the Internet through several different modes, including publications in downloadable/printable formats, data and statistics in the Utah Economic Data Viewer and in downloadable/printable formats, press releases of the latest labor market information, and economic news directly within the web pages themselves. Users are alerted to the postings when they sign-up for our e-mail subscription service. Additionally, our web site is designed so that “headlines” rotate on our front page highlighting a new article or press release as they are published.

*Trendlines*, a bi-monthly publication devoted to current topics important to the Utah economy, was published six times during PY 2007 and made available to our customers on the web. Customers were also able to access *Workforce News* on the web. *Workforce News* is a quarterly publication devoted to discussing regional labor market information and current events. Eight versions are published each quarter, each devoted to a different economic region of the state. The eight regions together cover the entire state, and are arranged as follows: Wasatch Front North, Bear River, Wasatch Front South, Mountainland, Uintah Basin, Southeast, Central, and Southwest. Both *Trendlines* and *Workforce News* are also made available to customers through hard copy distribution.

### ***Utah’s Career Publications (updated in PY 2007)***

- *Women’s Career Guide*, a guide specifically tailored to providing career information and advice to working women in Utah. Topics covered include, but are not limited to: balancing work and family; finding quality child care; non-traditional jobs for women; negotiating salary; working from home; getting ahead; legal issues; marketing one’s self; income; and re-entering the workforce.
- *Career Guide for Older Workers* is another publication in the “Utah Career Guide” family. Articles focus specifically on issues faced by workers over 40. Topics such as health insurance, returning to work after retirement, Social Security, keeping skills current, age discrimination, and funding education in the midst of a career change are covered.
- Area Wage Tables are the primary source for Utah’s customers to find a full listing of the newest wage estimates made available by Utah’s Workforce Information group. For each wage area (defined by OES) a table of all publishable occupations is made available with the inexperienced, median and middle range of the corresponding wages.

Each of these publications was distributed in hard copy format, and made available on the web in a downloadable/printable full version and by individual articles, graphs, and tables. All source data for these publications is also made available in a downloadable

format for the “higher-end” users which allows them to use the data for their own statistical research.

Utah also made available on its web site all reports, special studies, and associated publications. This includes the Economic Report to the Governor (discussed in Core Product C), the County Annual Report (discussed in Core Product C), Local Employment Dynamics (LED) research (discussed in Core Product F), the *Hard at Work: Women in the Utah Labor Force* publication (discussed in Core Product F) and the Utah Job Vacancy Survey (discussed in Core Product F).

County-level data was also produced and made available on the web. These data were delivered in a few different formats, including county fact sheets, county economic and demographic profiles, and county largest employers lists. (These products are all discussed in Core Product E.)

Utah also produced some web-only products, such as the monthly employment report and Trendlines Extra (discussed in Core Product E).

All web products are placed on the web within days of production, and in some instances of hard-copy publications, even before the publication is printed. Utah continually encourages our customers to go to the web to access our products and the latest labor market information. In our publications we often promote our web links, either in relation to an article or as a stand-alone advertisement.

### ***Feedback from Customers***

During the 2007 program year, Utah collected feedback from customers on the *Women's Career Guide* by way of a prepaid postcard insert. The following is a summary of the results:

- 90 percent of customers found the usefulness of the articles/information to be outstanding or above average
- 100 percent of customers found the ease of reading/understanding the publication to be outstanding or above average
- 80 percent of customers found their likelihood of sharing the publication with other to be outstanding or above average
- 90 percent of customers gave the publication an overall rating of outstanding or above average

### ***Core Product E: Partner and Consult on a Continuing Basis with Workforce Investment Boards and Key Talent Development Partners and Stakeholders***

***PY2007 Expenditure: 94,149***

Utah partnered on a continuing basis with the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and the supporting regional workforce councils in program year 2007. Utah continues to maintain a close working relationship with its state and regional councils that is, in part, assisted through the organizational structure of our state agency (Department of Workforce Services, DWS). During PY2007, Utah's SWIB rolled out an extensive state-led targeted industries campaign. Through this project, the regional councils were advised to work with their designated regional economist, council liaison, and workforce development lead on identifying industry targets specific to their local economies, then creating partnerships and marketing campaigns geared toward recruiting workers for key shortage occupations.

In support of this campaign, the following products and services were provided to the SWIB and regional councils:

- Expert council on the local economy in preparation for roll-out of campaign, including extensive participation in planning meetings
- Participation in regional campaign kick-off presentations
- Informational packets addressing questions of labor force, unemployment, industry job growth and occupational wages specific to targeted industries and local economies
- Presentations tailored specifically to the regions' chosen industry targets
- Consultation on marketing materials, including providing relevant labor market information and analysis

Utah also continued to provide labor market information in support of our Generation II WIRED grant for biotechnology. The data were used in presentations to industry partners, in informational publications created by education partners, and in reports submitted to ETA.

Additionally, Utah successfully published several newsletters to communicate information to customers at the state and local levels.

- The magazine-style newsletter *Trendlines* was published every other month and contained state and local information along with articles of general information. Themes were, at times, driven by target industries such as construction. The intent of *Trendlines* is to give the reader a general idea of what is happening in the economy.
- *Trendlines Extra*, a Web-only bullet point listing of economic information, was updated each month and was made available only on our web site.
- The *Workforce News* newsletters were published quarterly providing the reader general economic information at the region and county level. These newsletters are supported by detailed tables, charts, and graphs available only on our web site quarterly. This publication has been integrated with a DWS Business Services publication in order to leverage resources within the department. Readers can now



see LMI along side schedules of region-specific events such as career fairs and chambers of commerce meetings.

- Occupational Wage Flyers were published in May of 2008 when new wage data were made available. They provide customers with a quick list of occupations and wage information in a flyer format. The flyers were created for the state and sub-state levels.
- Web products were updated regularly including: Fact sheets for each county, demographic and economic profiles for each county, major employer lists for each county, and occupations with training potential lists for local areas.

Regional councils each had access to a regional economist assigned to their region that developed and produced information and responded to the needs of his/her particular region. The regional economists worked closely with regional councils, employment centers, schools, and a wide variety of other local stakeholders and customers to develop and continually improve products and services to meet customer needs. To partner and serve the needs of the regional councils, our regional economists do a range of activities, from data requests to economic reports to informational presentations. The regional economists also provided council to workforce development planning that was conducted by the regional councils during the 2007 program year.

Utah's regional economists produced hard-copy newsletters called *Workforce News* for each county and updated information on the web site four times during PY 2007. Utah published the *Trendlines* newsletter every other month and published Trendlines Extra each month. The regional economists updated county fact sheets for each county and the economic and demographic profiles for each county. Utah continues to gather customer feedback by sending out a card every other year to customers receiving hard-copy publications, to see if the customer wants to continue his/her subscription. This helps us refine our mailing lists.

- Utah used customer feedback to improve its Web site, Web interfaces, publications, trainings, and presentations during PY 2007.
- Utah's regional economists served regional and state workforce investment boards during PY 2007.
- Utah published the *Trendlines* newsletter six times during PY 2007 (every other month).
- Utah published Trendlines Extra each month during PY 2007.
- Utah published *Workforce News* each quarter during PY 2007.
- Utah updated all county-level web-only information such as the demographic and economic profiles, fact sheets and largest employer lists for PY 2007.
- Utah's target industry career ladder information was updated with the latest wage and outlook information during PY 2007.

Utah also provided research and labor market analysis in support of a Technology-Based Learning grant application submitted by a Utah university ETA. This report gave an in-depth analysis of key industries as delineated by the grant, including healthcare, advanced manufacturing, retail trade, financial activities, homeland security, construction, geospace

technologies, hospitality, aerospace, transportation, information technology, energy, biotechnology, and automotive industries.

To aid in our governor's efforts toward talent development, which is one of the tasks charged to the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED), Utah headed a committee of state economists in a project aimed at creating NAICS definitions for the governor's economic clusters. In partnering with state economists from other agencies, definitions were agreed upon to the degree that all agencies' data can be used in the Governor's performance measures.

Utah also participated in the governor's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Initiative. The purpose of this initiative is to ensure that our public education system meets the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy by educating students in subjects on the cutting edge of economic development, specifically in the science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. The role of Utah's LMI division in this endeavor is to: provide relevant data on the national, state, and local economies; evaluate education and workforce data used by other researchers, and provide consultation and research for the governor's four Kaizen sessions focused on early childhood education, education governance, education finance, and workforce development.

### ***Feedback from Customers***

During the 2007 program year, Utah collected feedback from customers on the *Trendlines* newsletter by way of a prepaid postcard insert. The following is a summary of the results:

- 86 percent of customers found the usefulness of the articles/information to be outstanding or above average
- 93 percent of customers found the ease of reading/understanding the publication to be outstanding or above average
- 57 percent of customers found their likelihood of sharing the publication with other to be outstanding or above average
- 86 percent of customers gave the publication an overall rating of outstanding or above average

### **Core Product F: Conduct Special Studies and Economic Analyses**

#### ***PY2007 Expenditure: 39,228***

During the 2007 program year Utah conducted many special state, local, and sub-state regional studies and economic analyses to provide information support for communities in economic transition and state and sub-state workforce development initiatives.

*Hard at Work: Women in the Utah Labor Force* is a publication dedicated to providing key demographic and labor market data and analysis. This publication was created in the 2006 program year, then updated in the 2007 program year. Topics addressed in this web-only publication include female labor force participation rates; occupations of Utah's working women; and hours, wages, and marital status of working women in Utah.

The reason for creating this publication was to separate out the career advice and career information provided in the *Women's Career Guide* from the data and harder-hitting analysis. This allowed Utah to better focus its efforts on the specific needs of individual customer groups. *Hard at Work* provided the data needed by many policymakers in our state congress who grappled with women's issues when addressing many different pieces of proposed legislation during the last legislative session. Our regional economists worked in conjunction with the Director of DWS's office of communication to ensure that state legislators who were requesting this type of information were provided with a copy (electronic or hard) of the publication along with direction on how to find the data most important to them.

Furthermore, Utah began conducting the Fourth Quarter 2007 Job Vacancy Study (JVS) in August of 2007 and published the study's findings in April of 2008. The JVS is designed to quantify and characterize the demand for labor in Utah. The JVS is labor intensive and requires a significant amount of resources to produce. The study's conclusions yielded three publications, *Metropolitan Utah Fourth Quarter 2007 Job Vacancy Study*, *Uintah Basin Fourth Quarter 2007 Job Vacancy Study* and *Southwestern Utah Fourth Quarter Job Vacancy Study*, all of which were made available on our web site. Hard copies were provided to requesting constituents and also made available to our customers. Presentations were also conducted for different customer groups and agency partners in order to educate them on the survey results.

In PY2007 Utah completed its research on LED's turnover rate, which was published on the web as a technical paper entitled *Labor Turnover in Utah*. In completing this research, Utah worked closely with statisticians overseeing the LED program as we discussed alternative ways in which the turnover statistic presented by LED could be calculated. This effort not only produced an information research paper for our customers interested in turnover rates for particular industries and/or demographic groups, but also resulted in uncovering a systematic data processing error in the LED program that has since been remedied.

Utah also had the opportunity to conduct two special studies for our partners in the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). The end product of each study was a technical paper that was posted to our web site, in addition to being presented to USOE.

The first study, entitled *The Fiscal Consequences of Dropping out of High School*, was based on a request to replicate research done in the state of Rhode Island on the cost to the state (in terms of demand for social assistance) as it correlated to educational attainment.

A second study, entitled *The Economic Value of a GED: Data from Utah*, was the result of an attempt to wed USOE data on GED test takers to our state workforce agency's wage records. In this study Utah examined wages of tests-takers before and after taking the exam in an attempt to ascertain a measure of the benefit of the credential in terms of labor market outcomes. USOE used the results of this study in a presentation given at a national conference for adult education professionals. The study has also been cited by the GED National Testing Service.



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SWA Administrator

September 25, 2008

Date



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SWIB Chair

September 25, 2008

Date