

**State of Utah**  
**PY 2006 Workforce Information Core Products & Services**  
**Annual Performance Report**

Below you will find a description of the activities conducted by Utah's Workforce Information Division during PY2006 for each of ETA's core products. The goal of these activities was not only to meet the requirements of the PY2006 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 \$343,503, which was leveraged from the department.

**Core Product 1: Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database with state and local data.**

***PY2006 Expenditure: 59,858***

Utah has completed the transition to version 2.3 of the Workforce Information Database (WID); which included converting the remaining four core tables. All of the core tables were populated with state data over the program year. 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 towards 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 “Search” feature in the web interface for occupational information. This Search feature incorporates the user search by SOC codes.
- Adding several enhancement features to the web interface that let the users find and view data in an efficient way such as the ability to view hourly and annual Occupational Wage data by Utah wage areas.
- Technical enhancements to better ensure the data viewer's access reliability.
- Regular reviews of users' keyword searches to refine the search tool.
- Linking to the Utah Economic Data Viewer Occupational Wage module from the Department of Workforce Services native applications such as UWORKS.

Finally, Utah gathered customer feedback through a form that was made available on the Web and a focus group for the UEDV.

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

A web survey was conducted on the UEDV site two times during PY2006, for two weeks each time. It was programmed to pop up after the customer built a report. Five statements were on the survey and a five-point rating scale was used to measure the customers' satisfaction.

- “It was easy to navigate through the system”: 66 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.
- “It was easy for me to find the information I was looking for”: 53 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed.
- “I will likely use the UEDV tool in the future”: 89 percent agreed or strongly agreed.
- “I would recommend the UEDV to my colleagues”: 89 percent agreed or strongly agreed.
- “Overall, I am satisfied with the UEDV tool”: 82 percent agreed or strongly agreed.

### ***Opportunities for Improvements***

- Informal feedback shows that our efforts to refine the occupational keyword search have been noticed and that we should continue to improve the tool.
- Customers continue to be surprised that we have a tool of this nature. We should continue our efforts in marketing the data viewer.
- Some customers struggle to find the specific information they are looking for. It would be to our advantage to research ways in which we can organize the website supporting UEDV such that more customers are successful in finding what they need.

### ***Core Product 2: Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.***

#### ***PY2006 Expenditure: 57,929***

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 2006–2008 period and sub-state long-term projections for the 2004–2014 period. Utah continued to populate the ALMIS Database with the 2006–2008 short-term and 2004–2014 sub-state long-term projections data and submitted the data for public dissemination. Currently, our sub-state divisions are metro and non-metro, where metro includes the five most heavily populated counties along the Wasatch Front and non-metro includes the 24 other counties in Utah. In the past couple of years our Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) sample has been expanded to support more sub-state areas. As such, work has started on further increasing our sub-state projections divisions from two to five, but will not be

implemented until the 2006-2016 round of projections. This is primarily due to the fact that the historical QCEW data needed for the models was lost some years ago. Our early efforts toward this goal of projecting for more sub-state areas have included finding resources that will allow us to backcast the missing data.

Utah made industry projections available on the Workforce Information website in the form of a document linked on the statewide information page. The 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. Our industry projections on the web include a statement of clarification, along with a link to the GOPB's projections.

Long-term occupational projections were published in several publications including *Utah Careers*, the *Utah Job Trends* publications, in brochures, on the careers.utah.gov Web site, in the Choices system which is the State of Utah's career information delivery system, and on our Web site through the UEDV. They were also highlighted in *TrendLines* magazine and in trainings and presentations. 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 highlighted in *TrendLines* magazine also. The 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, the work has been completed in linking Utah's UWORKS system (our employment counselors' client career planning tool) directly to the appropriate occupational information in the Workforce Information database. This will make it much easier for employment counselors to use and access this information.

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

During PY2006 a focus group was held to evaluate *Job Trends*, our primary occupational projections publication. Fourteen participants attended the focus group and the following feedback was received:

- Customers liked the skills information that was provided along with the occupational outlook.
- Employment counselors' rely on the data to give credibility and authority to the recommendations they give their customers.
- Gives customers options and hope they didn't have before, especially those who don't plan to complete four years of college.
- Writing style made the publication easy to read and understand.

### ***Opportunities for Improvements***

- It was noted that the publication would be more appealing if it were in color. In the future if our budget allows, we should consider making this change.
- Currently, most occupations are listed in SOC code order. Since most customers are not familiar with SOC, we may look to organizing the occupation lists in alphabetical order instead.
- Some concerns were expressed regarding the readability of the publication for Workforce Services customers who use intensive services. Since it has been noted by many other customers that they find the publication easy to use, it would be best for us to address this problem by better educating our front-line staff on how they can use the publication to assist this special group of customers.

### **Core Product 3: Publish an annual economic analysis report for the governor and the SWIB**

***PY2006 Expenditure: 47,782***

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 2007 report, our chief economist provided data and analysis on such topics as job growth, unemployment rates, industry projections, and specific key industries such as manufacturing and construction. 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 2006 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

2006, an article is included for each county, written by the respective regional economist, which discusses major economic events in 2006 for that county. This report was made available to our customers through our website, 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 2007. 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.

Regarding the *Utah's Counties in Review*, this is a new report developed right at the end of the program year (because of the timing of data releases by BLS) and as such we have not yet collected feedback. As we tend to be one of the only entities in the state discussing economic data at the county level, we expect the publication to be well received.

### ***Opportunities for Improvements***

In the upcoming program year Utah should focus on further marketing the new *Utah Counties in Review* report to ensure that our customers are aware of the publication and how they can use it for their own unique needs. It is our belief that it can be useful to the whole range of customers that we serve, which includes such entities as the SWIB, the Governor's Office of Economic Development, our own Workforce Development team, state and local policy makers, employers, and job seekers.

### **Core Product 4: Post products, information, and reports on the Internet**

#### ***PY2006 Expenditure: 79,815***

For program year 2006 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 website 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 2006 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 2006)*

1. *Utah Careers*, a guide which offers wage and outlook information for hundreds of occupations, plus Holland Code tools to find the right kind of job; advice on writing resumes, interviews, keeping a job, balancing work and family; finding good child care, using our state Career Information Delivery System; education/training options, and more.
2. *Women's Career Guide*, a guide specifically tailored to providing career information and advice to working women in Utah. Topic 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.
3. *Where are the Jobs in Utah?* is a publication geared to Utah's youth. The purpose of this publication is to orient students to the occupational wage and outlook data gathered and maintained by Utah's Workforce Information group. The writing style is tailored to a younger audience, and the subject matter specifically addresses what youth believe about the labor market.
4. *Utah Job Trends*, *Utah Job Trends Metro*, and *Utah Job Trends Non-Metro*, which include information about the occupations in demand in the Utah job market at the statewide, metro and non-metro levels, were all updated with the newest wage and projections data. These three publications serve as our primary sources for delivering the latest occupational projections data.
5. *Area Wage Tables* is 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 website all reports, special studies, and associated publications. This includes the Economic Report to the Governor (discussed in Core

Product 3), the County Annual Report (discussed in Core Product 3), Local Employment Dynamics (LED) research (discussed in Core Product 6), the *Hard at Work: Women in the Utah Labor Force* publication (discussed in Core Product 6) and the Utah Benefits Study (discussed in Core Product 6).

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

This program year, feedback was gathered by way of focus groups for both the *Where are the Jobs in Utah?* and *Utah Job Trends* publications (feedback for *Utah Job Trends* is discussion in Core Product 2). The focus group for *Where are the Jobs in Utah?* was made up of youth in foster care in Utah and the professionals that work with them.

Summaries of the responses are as follows:

- They like, most of all, that this publication exists and is made available to students through the school districts and such human services programs as foster care.
- They like the information the publication contains.
- They found the publication useful and needed.

### ***Opportunities for Improvements***

- It was noted by some of the focus group participants that they were somewhat overwhelmed by the number of different websites listed as sources for “additional information”. In the next printing Utah should look for ways to consolidate the information and links into one or two primary “launching point” links. These one or two websites should be highlighted, with full descriptions of what the customer could expect to get in terms of labor market information when visiting the sites.
- Utah should also continue to look for ways to reach out to youth and connect with them through this publication, perhaps by highlighting not only the occupations in demand but also the occupations that they are more likely to have preconceived interests.
- Again, Utah should also look to market the publication further. It’s clearly a well-known publication in the public school system and in some human services agencies. Utah should look for additional avenues to market and distribute this and all other youth products.

### ***Core Product 5: Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards.***

#### ***PY2006 Expenditure: 98,962***

During the 2006 program year, Utah found many opportunities to partner and consult on a continuing basis with State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) and the regional councils who report to the SWIB. 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 (DWS). DWS continued to use a targeted

sector approach to bringing together job seekers and employers. This strategy has been endorsed by the state and regional councils, and requests for our assistance in this goal have increased as the strategy has been further developed. LMI was used to identify industries and show counselors and job seekers jobs that are in demand, which jobs pay well, and how to visualize a career ladder. 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 2007 when new wage data was made available. They provide customers with a quick list of occupations and wage information in a flyer format. The flyers are created for the state and sub-state levels.
- Web products were updated regularly including: Fact sheets for each county, demographic profiles for each county, major employer lists for each county, and occupations with training potential lists for local areas.

Workforce investment boards (i.e. 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 2006 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 2006. 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 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 2006.
- Utah's regional economists served regional and state workforce investment boards during PY 2006.
- Utah published the *TrendLines* newsletter six times during PY 2006 (every other month).
- Utah published *TrendLines Extra* each month during PY 2006.
- Utah published *Workforce News* each quarter during PY 2006.
- Utah updated all county-level web-only information such as the demographic and economic profiles, fact sheets and largest employer lists for PY 2006.
- Utah's target industry career ladder information was updated with the latest wage and outlook information during PY 2006.

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

Feedback on the *TrendLines*, *Workforce News*, and *Utah Careers* was gathered during the 2006 program year in the form of a post card inserted in the printed publication that were mailed out to customers on our mailing lists. Customers were asked to rate the publications on three criteria: content, usefulness, and overall impression. A 5-point scale was used with 5 being the highest rating: 1-Poor, 2-Unsatisfactory, 3-Okay, 4-Above Average, 5-Outstanding.

The results were as follows:

- 87 percent of customers found the information in the publication to be outstanding or above average.
- 82 percent of customers found the usefulness of the publication to be outstanding or above average.
- 89 percent of customers found the publications overall to be outstanding or above average.

### ***Opportunities for Improvements***

- Customers' comments indicated that they highly value the local information we provide; we should continue to provide the information and seek out new customer groups who may not be aware of, but could benefit from the local LMI we can provide.
- Comments were also made regarding the conciseness of the publications. We should keep that in mind as we work with our authors who often wish to write longer articles. The opportunity exists for authors to post longer versions of their articles on the web version of the publication. Utah should encourage its publications authors to exercise this option for those customers who may desire more information than what is given in the printed version.

- Customers also commented on the timeliness of the publications. Since that is driven primarily by the data, we need to educate our customers on the data gathering process. It is important for our customers to understand how the importance of that process to the integrity of the data.

**Core Product 6: Conduct special studies and economic analyses**

***PY2006 Expenditure: 68,803***

During the 2006 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. 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.

Utah's conducted a benefits study during PY 2006, although it was slated to have been conducted in PY 2005. Utah used the tools and direction provided by BLS's Benefits Study Consortium to conduct a survey of Utah's employers regarding the benefits they may offer their employees. Utah was able to conduct this survey by leveraging some financial resources from DWS. Utah's Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) partnered with us in this endeavor because of their keen interest in this topic as a potential issue in their initiatives programs. As such, GOED added specific survey questions to the tool we developed using the advice of the Benefits Consortium. The results of the study were summarized in an eight-page report which was issued in PY 2006. The report was made available in a downloadable/printable format on our website and hard copies were mailed to a few key customers. A press released was also issued and posted to our website.

Utah has also accelerated its efforts in better understanding the value, and heightening the awareness, of LED data. The result of this was to publish a full issue of *TrendLines* magazine dedicated to introducing our customers to what LED has to offer. Articles

within the special issue addressed such things as regional turnover rates, labor market froth, wages of workers by age, retirement/baby boomer issues, and women's presence in various industries. Utah has also put efforts toward gaining a ground-level understanding of the methodology used by the Census bureau in calculating some of the key LED variables. One that is of great interest to us is the turnover rate. Over many years, numerous requests have been made of Utah's LMI shop to report turnover rates. LED in this case has been an extremely helpful factor and because the importance of this variable has been made clear to us, we are in the process of writing a more technical paper which explains the methodology of calculating the rate by the Census and how it may or may not align with how employers view the turnover rate. The publication date for the paper will be in PY 2007, but much of the research has been conducted in PY 2006.

In addition to these special studies which resulted in publications made available to our customers in hard and electronic copy, many ad hoc data requests were filled in PY 2006 that are of note here because they certainly should qualify as special research. One such example is the technical and data expertise we provided to GOED as they approached the legislature with a bill regarding rural economic development initiatives. In that bill they sought to create a wage level requirement for recipients of the initiative monies, and we were able to provide them with our expertise on the best standard to apply such that the recipients wages could be compared to the best possible statistic available through Utah's LMI.

Utah also provided data and expertise toward WIRED initiatives. In addition to the Career Ladder publications geared toward targeted WIRED-like industries that were updated with the latest wage and outlook data, Utah also provided data and analysis for the biotech WIRED plan (to be submitted to DOL in September 2007) as well as the WIRED grant application for Advanced Manufacturing. Utah also developed industry fact sheets used by our workforce development group in educating the public and our partners on the role of WIRED industries in Utah's economy.



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SWA Administrator

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September 19, 2007

Date



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SWIB Chair

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September 19, 2007

Date