

New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Office of Labor Planning and Analysis
Annual Report Program Year (PY) 2007
Workforce Information Core Products and Services Grant

Introduction:

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), Office of Labor Planning and Analysis (LPA) is providing a report on the past year's activities as required by the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) for Program Year (PY) 2007 for the Workforce Information Core Products and Services grant. The integration of this federal funding with other sources of fundings has enabled LPA to maximize the quantity and quality of its products and services provided to the One-Stop Career Center community and other users of workforce information.

LPA has worked in coordination with other program areas within the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to provide the required core products and services as stated in the *New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan - July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2007*. Except for those core products that have a national focus, all other activities are supported within the context of that plan which stresses the importance of providing accurate and timely labor market information to the citizens of New Jersey for a demand-driven One-Stop Career Center system. The *New Jersey One-Stop Workforce Investment System Unified State Plan* stipulates that "The Office of Labor Planning and Analysis will, in consultation with the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), its partners and the local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), be responsible for gathering this [labor market] information and making it available to the SETC, its members and WIBs." The work plan was developed in consultation with the SETC, our statewide Workforce Investment Board, and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). The work plan has been supported by the SETC and other partners responsible for the implementation of statewide workforce development programs as being responsive to the needs of New Jersey's One-Stop Career Center community.

There are four primary mechanisms for the delivery of Labor Market Information (LMI) products to the One-Stop Career Center community: the Workforce New Jersey Public Information Network (WNJPIN) website, the LPA Internet website, the dissemination of LMI information through a variety of printed publications, and outreach activities conducted by labor market analyst field staff. Career and occupational information are provided through the WNJPIN website, the LPA website, and printed publications. In addition, LPA staff continues to *focus on capacity building* and providing LMI *skills development* to employment and *training* providers, employment counselors and planners.

A. Accomplishments Regarding Core Products and Services

1. Continue to populate the Workforce Information (formerly ALMIS) Database with state and local data.

Achievements and outcomes

- LPA staff continues updating all required (see list below) Workforce Information Database (WID) using Version 2.3. Other non-required WID tables were updated in conjunction with the completed development of the new Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) website.
 - Three licensing tables, as required
 - School tables (completers and school names)
 - Current Employment Statistics (CES)
 - Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)
 - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)
 - Industry/Occupational Projections
 - Industry/Occupational Estimates
 - OES Wages

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

Achievements and outcomes

- Developed a set of long-term (2006-2016) statewide industry and occupational employment projections.
- The national 2006-2016 employment projections, developed by US Bureau of Labor Statistics, were a key input into the development of these New Jersey employment projections. The development of the projections were synchronized with the development of the New Jersey long-term population and labor force projections to insure that these projections were consistent with longer term trends in population and labor force growth.
- The projections were reviewed by our field staff for reasonableness and consistency. Senior management reviewed the projections to ensure that the projections were consistent with the Department's policy initiatives.
- The projections are available to the public and all interested users on the Department's website. An article summarizing the high-lights of these projections was published in the June edition of the New Jersey Economic Indicators, a monthly publication.

- Performed an in-depth analysis of previously produced projections series covering the 1996-2006 and 2002-2012 periods to determine how closely our previous projections matched up to actual data. The goal was to evaluate previous projections and identify assumptions and trends which may improve the quality of future projections. Findings from this exercise were summarized in an internal report.
 - Developed a set of statewide short-term (2007-2009) industry and occupational employment projections. The projections were provided to staff in the North Carolina LMI operation for posting on a national Web site which contains state occupational employment projections.
 - Developed the time series for the county 2016 industry employment projections which are currently under development.
- 3. Publish an annual economic analysis report for the Governor and the SWIB.**
- The Annual Economic Analysis Report for the New Jersey Governor and the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) has been attached starting with page 10.*
- 4. Post products, information and reports on the internet.**

Achievements and outcomes

- All LPA publications, reports and data are available on our website at: www.nj.gov/labor/lpa. The website is maintained on a daily basis to provide current information to the user community.
- Monthly reports and publications posted to the website include: the *New Jersey Economic Indicators*, a comprehensive look at New Jersey's economy with current and historical data, and statistical snapshots comparing economic indicators for the nation and the state. It also includes articles on different aspects of the economy and brief analyses of current trends. The *Employment Situation Press Release* contains the latest monthly estimates of New Jersey's employment and unemployment data. It also provides detailed data on changes within industry sectors with **data files** for labor force, employment, unemployment, and building permits.
- Quarterly reports and publications posted to the website include: *Regional Employment & The Economy Newsletters*, three regional (Northern, Southern, and Central) reports that track how employment, unemployment and other economic and labor market conditions have changed over a three-month period in a region. **Data files** for Quarterly Census of Employment (QCEW) for jobs covered by unemployment insurance statewide and by county. **Local Employment Dynamics (LED)** a program that uses state and federal information

to provide a series of Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) including turnover rates, new hires and job creation for local areas by industry, age and sex.

- Semi-annual reports and publications posted to the website include: **Occupational Wage Survey Data**, files contain wage data for individual occupations for the state and Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). Wages are presented for over 600 occupations at the state level and about 350 at the MSA level. Data is presented by occupational and industrial groups.
- Annual reports and publications posted to the website include: **County Community Fact Books**, a quick look at major economic, demographic and labor force trends by county, complete with informative and colorful charts, graphs and tables. The **Annual Statistical Review**, a statistical summary of the New Jersey economy and the accomplishments of the various programs and operations within the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development over the past year. The **Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses** provide comprehensive statistics on work related injuries and illnesses in New Jersey, including incidence rates, counts of all cases and demographic and case characteristic details from reported cases involving days away from work. **Data files** for population and household estimates, income and poverty, the state domestic product, and the annual demographic profile.
- Biennial reports and publications include: **Projections Series** (current period 2006-2016), a concise look ahead at the changes that are anticipated to occur to New Jersey's population, labor force and employment levels. It also contains industry and occupational outlooks. **New Jersey's Hot 50**, user-friendly information that is designed to help New Jersey's students and job seekers make good educational, training and career decisions and focuses on the 50 occupations that are anticipated to have the greatest demand for qualified workers in the coming years. The **New Jersey Occupational Outlook Handbook** presents a comprehensive reference for guiding decisions with vital information for more than 600 occupations in New Jersey. The **Licensed Occupations in New Jersey** provides information on more than 130 occupations in the state that require a license from a state agency.

5. **Partner and consult on a continuing basis with Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs).**

Achievements and outcomes

- During PY 2007, LPA continued to provide LMI and technical support to New Jersey's local WIBs. LPA field staff attended WIB meetings and actively pursued opportunities to serve on WIB LMI and planning subcommittees. For example, a field analyst serves on the Greater Raritan WIB Economic Development committee designed to help businesses locate into the area.

- LPA continues to play an important role in the development and promotion of the WIRED framework working in conjunction with local WIBs. New Jersey received three different Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grants - the Northern New Jersey, the Central New Jersey and the Delaware Valley (in cooperation with Pennsylvania and Delaware). The Division of Labor Market and Demographic Research (LMDR) has been instrumental in providing data and analyses for the success of the Northern and Central New Jersey proposals. LPA management (the LMDR Director and Assistant Director) serves on the steering team and executive council for the Northern New Jersey WIRED initiative. In addition, Director and Asst. Director are co-chairs for the data team. The Assistant Commissioner of LPA has a seat on the executive council of the Delaware Valley Innovation Network (DVIN) WIRED initiative.

6. Conduct special studies and economic analyses.

Achievements and outcomes

- ***Fort Monmouth Study, Phase II:*** An analysis of the workforce challenges to be brought about by the Ft. Monmouth Base Closure, combined with the assessment of various redevelopment policy options. The study includes analysis that identified skills gaps for displaced employees of the base and recommends training programs to help transform the workforce for employment in the emerging Information Technology & Communications industry sector.
- ***Prisoner Re-entry Study:*** An analysis of the barriers and complications to employment for released prisoners as they attempt to re-assimilate into society. The study included surveys of employers and One-Stop counselors. The tracking of re-entrants through wage records was used to identify employment successes.
- ***Economic Effects of Planned Atlantic City Casino Hotel Construction Projects:*** A critical assessment of the planned development of four “Las Vegas” style casino/hotel projects in Atlantic City in terms of the economic impact on employment at the state, regional, and local levels using an input-output model.
- ***Minimum Wage Study:*** An annual report on the adequacy of the New Jersey minimum wage and its recommendations as to whether or not the minimum wage should be increased and to what level. Contains analysis and history of past and recent minimum wage increases, along with scenarios and recommendations for future increases.
- ***Cyber Command Proposal:*** A report detailing the combined strengths of New Jersey’s workforce and the superior location as the home for the U.S. Air Force’s Cyber Command Base. Analysis included a detailed breakdown of the state’s Information Technology workforce complete with locations of companies and workers in the industry and their demographic and educational components.

- **Industry Focus Reports:** Analysis of workforce and employment trends within industry clusters in New Jersey. Analysis of industry-specific workforce to enhance an industry or industry cluster's ability to locate talented workers. Studies were done for the Life Sciences, Transportation/Distribution/Logistics, and Financial Services industry sectors. These reports were used in support of economic development and various WIRED initiatives.

B. Customer Consultation:

The plan adopted for Program Year 2007 to conduct customer consultations to assess the usefulness of state-produced labor market information (LMI) products and services consisted of developing e-mail surveys that were sent to members of the workforce community. An e-mail survey was sent to all schools and training vendors on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Another e-mail survey was sent to the contact people at the boards of the three Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) regions in New Jersey. The surveys asked about the usefulness of LMI products and the ways in which these products could be improved.

1. E-mail survey: Eligible Training Provider List

A survey was e-mailed to all schools and vendors on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in the spring of 2008. Requests were e-mailed to 620 training providers asking them to provide feedback about the usefulness of LMI products in assisting them and the individuals receiving training with career, business or other decisions. There were a total of 108 completed surveys received yielding a response rate of 17.4 percent.

The first question asked respondents how helpful they found four labor market information products. Almost two-thirds of the respondents indicated that the Labor Demand List (*Jobs in Demand*) was helpful. The next highest in favorable responses were the *New Jersey Occupational Outlook* and the *New Jersey Hot 50 Occupations Publications*. Over half of the respondents reported that the *New Jersey Licensed Occupations* was helpful.

When asked if each publication was available in the respondents' placement offices, almost half of the respondents indicated "yes" in each case. Of the respondents indicating "yes," over two-thirds reported that the labor market products were used by their placement staff and a similar proportion of respondents indicated that the products were available for use by students either in hard copy or via the internet. Asked how satisfied they were overall with the labor market products, over half of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied.

Comments from respondents about how the labor market products are used in their placement offices include: assisted students as reference material and career guidance; instructors and counselors provided materials to students and staff; and used it in recruitment. Several respondents commented that they were not aware of some of the labor market products.

Comments from respondents who indicated how labor market products could be improved to better serve their needs were: more detailed breakdowns; greater accuracy; keep products up-to-date; e-mail the information or links to schools; and more user-friendly data. Others commented that the publications were good as it can be and others asked to receive the products.

Comments from respondents about their labor market information needs reiterate similar items as described above, while a few respondents suggested providing presentations to schools and companies about researching and using various labor market products. There were also a significant number of phone calls received from recipients of the survey who were not aware of the labor market products and were interested in learning more about them. In addition to providing verbal feedback, e-mails with labor market product website links were sent to individuals along with other contact information when requested. Given the amount of calls received, it reaffirmed the need for improving the marketing effort of the agency to alert potential users that labor market products and services are available for their needs.

2. E-mail survey: WIRED Board Staff

A customer survey was sent to contact persons on the boards of the three WIRED regions in New Jersey. While working in partnership with the WIRED entities, the Department's Office of Labor Planning and Analysis (LPA) provided industry cluster information which included the following: demand for jobs, supply of workers, market gaps, and workforce development challenges. The survey asked the regional contacts to provide feedback about the usefulness of this information and of other labor market products used for their business or other decisions.

The first question asked how helpful the industry cluster information was in assisting with decision making. Similarly, the second question asked how helpful was the information provided about the strongest industries in the respective regions. The respondents agreed that they found this information helpful. Comments from the respondents indicated that the industry data was enlightening and useful, and that Labor Market Information (LMI) staff have been very helpful, particularly in assisting with gap analysis of a particular industry. The WIRED contacts also expressed their general appreciation for the information provided to them and expressed their gratitude toward LMI employees who worked directly with them.

When asked to assess their overall satisfaction with the information that was provided, the responses were positive. Asked if they used the Department of Labor and Workforce Development website, two of the WIRED contacts indicated that they had used the website. The types of information accessed were: general economic reports, employment and labor force estimates, occupational wage data, industry and occupational employment data, population and demographic data, and projections.

Comments about how products and services could be improved included: providing skills needs of the future workforce, skills of the current workforce in central Jersey, a listing

of areas in the country that are the strongest competitors in specific fields and why, and specific needs of biotech/pharma industries that New Jersey is not meeting. Other general comments included: the Office of Labor Planning and Analysis should work more closely with the One-Stop computer system so there is real time data for New Jersey, and the demand list should not include occupations that are no longer in demand.

C. Recommendations for Improvement:

The internal committee of LMI producers and customer consultation staff members will continue to meet to discuss the surveys' findings and offer recommendations to improve labor market products in order to better serve our customers' needs. Some of the more frequent comments received were: to make users aware of the products that are available, and to provide the most up-to-date and accurate data.

Specific actions taken or planned include the following:

- LMI staff continues to endeavor to make labor market products as detailed as possible so that customers are provided with the most localized data breakdowns available.
- The most recent revision of the Department's website provides query options to meet many of the users' specific requirements. Currently, additional applications for program-specific areas are being constructed and are expected to be introduced in stages throughout the next year. LMI staff plans to improve marketing efforts once the LMI portion of the LWD website is further developed.