

**STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PROGRESS REPORT FOR WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT
July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007**

In accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) #3-06, Job Service North Dakota submits the following Progress Report on Workforce Information activities for the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007. This report is organized into three sections as directed by the TEGL. Section A describes the accomplishments for each core product or service. Section B presents a summary of the Customer Satisfaction Assessment. Section C contains recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Suite of Core Products.

A. CORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1. Continue to populate the Workforce Information Database with state data:

The Workforce Information Database (formerly known as the ALMIS Database) is the foundation of the workforce information applications for North Dakota's electronic delivery system. It provides an expansive data storage system from which other data delivery systems may retrieve pertinent workforce information. As such, it is important that this database contains the most current and accurate data possible. The LMI Center updated the Workforce Information Database core tables with new data as it became available, populated new tables, and tested for data integrity. North Dakota is currently using the Workforce Information Database version 2.3.

The LMI Center loaded the most recent version of the employer database from InfoUSA as soon as the CD was available. The database provides users with a current listing of employer data that can be accessed by firm name, city, county, industry, or firm size. The use of the InfoUSA database allows us to provide employer-specific information to our customers without release of confidential employer data from our UI Tax or QCEW files.

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections:

The LMI Center has updated the NAICS history files in both the short-term and long-term industry employment projections programs. As a small state, North Dakota's CES program does not provide adequate industrial and geographic detail to be utilized as the basis of the industry time series. Instead, North Dakota opted to use the QCEW which provides much more detailed data. However, QCEW data was not available until May 2007. As a result, the statewide and sub-state short-term industry projections for the 2006 to 2008 period were completed in June 2007. These industry projections were then posted to our LMI website in June 2007. Statewide short-term occupational projections were then completed in August 2007 and will be submitted to the Projections

Management Partnership in September 2007. These projections will then be posted to our LMI website in September 2007.

North Dakota has also produced short and long term occupational projections at the sub-state level for each of the three MSA's and for the balance of state. However, the extremely small OES sample in many of the sub-state industry cells can result in weak or non-existent occupational staffing patterns in some area/industry cells. As a result, we are evaluating these sub-state occupational projections for the various sub-state areas to see if they are reliable enough to publish.

The LMI Center has developed several products utilizing the projections data. The *North Dakota Employment Projections to 2014* which provides the full occupational and industrial detail for the 2014 projections was published in the fall of 2006.

In the previous program year, the LMI Center developed a new product designed for students. The *Occupational Trading Cards* utilized information from our occupational projections and our OES wage information in a colorful baseball card type format. Each of the nine trading cards contains information on wages, training requirements, number of annual openings, and employment for specific occupations within that occupational family. The cards have been extremely popular with schools, career fairs, career counselors, and even in our One-Stop resource rooms. After several reprints of the original trading cards, the LMI Center updated these cards this program year, giving them a brighter look and updating them with the new 2014 projections data and the most recent occupational wage data.

The LMI Center has also begun work on a series of occupational group brochures. These new brochures, designed to complement the Occupational Trading Cards, were developed to provide older students and adult job seekers with pertinent occupational information such as the new 2014 projections data, wage data, training requirements, skill requirements, etc., in an adult format. The layout and design work for these Occupational Profile Brochures has been completed with printing scheduled for the fall of 2007.

The LMI Center again provided projections and wage data to the CRN for the *Career Outlook*, an annual tabloid provided to high school students, their parents, career guidance counselors, One-Stop resource rooms, etc. In addition, Marcia Slag from LMI has been involved with NDCRN in assisting with the layout and content of the *Career Outlook*.

3. Publish an annual economic analysis report for the governor and the SWIB.

In North Dakota, the Workforce Development Council is responsible for the development of the State of the Workforce Report. This report also serves as the center piece for the Governors Workforce Summit held in October. The LMI Center was heavily involved in the planning and organizational meetings for this report. The WDC contracted with a consultant, Workforce Associates Inc. led by Dr. Richard Judy, to produce this report for North Dakota.

At the organizational meetings, representatives from the LMI Center and other state data sources provided input on the content, scope, and processes needed to develop this report. The LMI Center then provided information on demographics, wages, industry and occupational employment, labor availability studies, employment projections, LED, and a variety of other labor market information at the statewide and sub-state levels to the consultant.

Representatives from the LMI Center will be involved in the review and critiquing of the draft report. The final report is scheduled to be released at the Governor's Workforce Summit on October 10, 2007.

4. Post products, information, and reports on the Internet.

For years, the LMI Center has relied on a home grown electronic delivery system called the LMI Data Warehouse as its website. The LMI Data Warehouse contained all the information on the ALMIS database as well as additional workforce information items produced only by North Dakota. Data items produced regularly in the LMI Center were loaded upon release into the Data Warehouse. In addition, all hard copy publications were loaded onto the website in PDFs within a week or two of publication.

This past year, the LMI Center was in the process of implementing a new electronic delivery system purchased from Geographic Solutions. Several individuals from the LMI Center dedicated most of their time to data loading, testing, page design, and implementation of the new system. While there were multiple delays and issues to be worked out with Geographic Solutions, it was worth the wait. The new system, which was named NDWIN (North Dakota Workforce Intelligence Network), has been extremely well received. We have received very positive feedback from our customers on the capabilities of the system, ease of use, and overall appearance of NDWIN.

In addition to the Analyzer portion, NDWIN contains a Publications Section which contains PDFs of all our LMI publications. A third section called the Resource Center contains links to FAQs, a glossary, list of acronyms, methodologies, contact information, and a related sites section. These sections were designed and populated by the LMI Center's web team. The entire LMI staff went through training on NDWIN in February and the new NDWIN system was launched in May 2007. The LMI staff has conducted basic training on NDWIN for our One Stop offices, and several other partner agencies and user groups and is planning for a round of more in-depth training sessions in September and October 2007.

The launch of NDWIN was the culmination of several years of planning and savings. Because we are a small state with limited resources, we have been strategically planning for this major project for some time and have consulted with ETA's LMI Federal Project Officer (FPO) on numerous occasions. As past grant savings opportunities have arisen, we have pooled the dollars associated with those savings with the long-term goal of upgrading the infrastructure of this major delivery mechanism for our workforce

information. The delays experienced in this project did cause a pushback in the actual delivery date from the previous program year. As a result, the pooled funds for this major expenditure were carried over from the previous program years.

While we are generally pleased with the new NDWIN system, there are still several bugs that need to be worked out. As a result, the LMI Center is continuing to work with Geographic Solutions to resolve those issues and will provide final payment to the vendor once those are completed.

The LMI Center has developed several new web-based products for our customers and is continuing to explore ways to utilize the web to minimize the costs and increased turnaround time associated with printing and hard copy distribution. As an example, the new *Compensation Guides*, *Demographic Profiles*, and *Affirmative Action* publications are available only on our website. Because of the limited shelf life of some products and the many area/industry combinations of others (i.e. users can pick from over 160 area/industry combinations for the *Compensation Guides*, about 75 areas for the *Demographic Profiles*, and all 53 counties for the *Affirmative Action* publications), the use of PDFs was the most efficient and timely method of delivery. All of these web based products can be accessed at the Products Section of NDWIN.

5. Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards.

The LMI Center continues to work closely with the Workforce Development Council (WDC). (The WDC is North Dakota's only Workforce Investment Board.) Designated staff have attended the WDC meetings and LMI staff members have made several presentations to the WDC and its subcommittees during the past program year. We have provided technical expertise to the WDC in the development and design of new surveys to provide valuable information on labor availability and occupational skills needs in the workforce.

The LMI Center partnered with the WDC and the Department of Commerce to conduct Labor Availability Studies in 34 North Dakota communities/areas. This was the third round of these very useful and highly requested surveys. The Social Science Research Center at the University of North Dakota completed the telephone survey in the spring of 2006. The LMI Center then compiled the results and provided the analysis and narrative reports to the 34 communities.

In collaboration with the WDC and the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA), the LMI Center completed work on an Employer Needs Survey and Labor Availability Study in July 2007. This unique combination of concurrent studies allows civic leaders in Bismarck-Mandan to compare the workforce needs of the businesses in their areas with the available labor supply in their vicinity.

The LMI Center held monthly economic briefing meetings to discuss monthly employment and unemployment data releases, other new workforce information, current economic conditions in the state, and a variety of related topics. Representatives from the

Department of Commerce, Tax Department, Workforce Development Council, Office of Management and Budget, Governor's Staff, Dislocated Worker Unit, FINDET, and our Job Service Executive Director are invited to attend.

The Workforce Development Council and the North Dakota Petroleum Council recently partnered to sponsor a special Workforce Skills Needs Study for North Dakota's Petroleum Industry. LMI staff served on the steering committee and assisted with this effort by providing industry classifications for sample members, occupational staffing patterns, industrial employment data, and technical assistance to the consultant hired to conduct this study.

With the support of the WDC, Job Service North Dakota has joined the LED partnership with the Census Bureau. The LMI Center assembles the history files of wage records and QCEW data and submits them to the Census Bureau each quarter. In return, the Census Bureau provides us with Quarterly Workforce Indicators for the state and each county in North Dakota. The LMI Center provided a link to this very useful LED data on NDWIN. The LMI Center also provided training to key users, such as the Governor and his staff, Department of Commerce staff, Workforce Development Council staff, Job Service senior management and customer service office staff, and local economic developers. North Dakota is anticipating the release of the 'On the Map' package from LED in September 2007.

The LMI Center worked closely with the Workforce Development Council on two other major WDC projects. As a part of the group that put together North Dakota's WIRED grant application, LMI worked closely with the grant writer to provide the information for the workforce intelligence segment of the WIRED grant proposal. We were also heavily involved with the Workforce Development Council in formulating the State's Two Year Strategic Plan. LMI staff provided a variety of workforce information and helped to write specific sections of the plan relating to workforce information.

As a part of North Dakota's Talent Initiative, the LMI Center has worked with the WDC, Department of Commerce, and several other partner agencies in developing the workforce intelligence items needed for this initiative. Staff from LMI worked with individuals from the Department of Commerce and Workforce Development Council to identify the specific NAICS codes to be included in the Governor's five targeted industries, and develop the criteria for the high wage/high demand industries. Additional workforce intelligence items including occupational staffing patterns and occupational skills needs requirements for the targeted industries have been developed to support the Job Service Talent Initiative. As members of the various workforce intelligence teams, the LMI staff continues to work to develop intelligence on potential labor pools, employer needs, and job seeker needs.

The LMI Center has been and will continue to be involved with the BRAC issues associated with the realignment of the Grand Forks Air Force Base. Individuals from the LMI Center are a part of the agency's BRAC group, and have been involved in the planning activities for the NEG grant and in working with the Grand Forks Area leaders.

LMI staff provided labor market information on the Grand Forks region, helped to evaluate the various consultant proposals for the BRAC Economic Impact Analysis Study, and provided technical assistance to the Grand Fork BRAC group during the survey design and information collection processes. Most recently, LMI was involved with the evaluation of the BRAC consultant's finding, and helping to set up secondary research projects for the BRAC group.

The LMI Center continues to handle a variety of ad hoc requests from the WDC for workforce intelligence items, special research projects, and statistical methodologies expertise.

6. Conduct special studies and economic analysis.

In addition to the special studies and economic analysis products previously mentioned in core products 2-5, the LMI Center has produced a variety of other workforce intelligence products during the past program year.

The annual *North Dakota Employment and Wages* was published in August of 2006. This publication displays covered employment and wage data at various industrial and geographic breakouts in an updated format.

One of our most popular publications, *Wages for North Dakota Jobs*, came out in March 2007. This publication provides detailed occupational wage and employment information for the state of North Dakota, the three MSA's, and four substate regions. Based on customer feedback, the format of the publication was changed to list the wage information from all the areas (statewide, MSA's, and substate regions) together for each occupation.

Conversations with our local One-Stop offices, economic developers, and business customers indicated a need for occupational wage and fringe benefit information at a local and industry level. In response to this need, the LMI Center developed *Compensation Guides* specifically targeted to individual cities and industries. These guides provide data from our fringe benefit surveys, occupational wage and employment data, occupational descriptions, and related information in one easy-to-use publication. Each guide provides information for those occupations employed by a particular industry in a specific city or area. *Compensation Guides* for over 160 industry/area combinations were created and were put in PDF format on our website. Since these *Compensation Guides* debuted in April of 2004, they have become extremely popular. The LMI Center updated these Compensation Guides again this program year with new occupational wage and fringe benefits information in April 2007.

The LMI Center conducts Fringe Benefit Surveys in 13 North Dakota cities and areas. During this program year, surveys were completed in all of these 13 cities and for the balance of the state. The results of these surveys were compiled and published in PDF format on our website. This year's survey included several new questions dealing with

health care coverage, due to the LMI Center's partnership with University of North Dakota's Center for Rural Health on this year's Fringe Benefits Survey.

In addition, the LMI Center developed the *2007 North Dakota Benefits Guide* in March 2007. This glossy brochure contains a compilation of fringe benefits information from the 13 cities. The format for this new publication allows easy comparisons of fringe benefits information from city to city, industry to industry, or by size of firm. This publication received an honorable mention at the NASWA LMI Awards Contest last year. The publication has been in high demand and print quantities were raised to meet the growing number of requests for this pertinent information.

In the fall of 2003, the LMI Center developed a new product entitled *Local Area Profiles* in support of local economic development efforts and our local One-Stop offices in 13 of our largest cities. The *Local Area Profiles* utilize data from the QCEW program and other sources to provide data on industry employment and wages, number of firms, firm size, census information, and other related information for the current year and the previous year. The response we received from local economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, our business services representatives in our One-Stop offices, and other local civic and business groups was extremely positive. While these profiles have been beneficial to all cities in promoting their communities, those cities that are not MSAs, and as a result do not have any other source of employment information, found it especially valuable. Printing of the 2006 edition of the *Local Area Profiles*, which contains updated QCEW information, census information, new tax data, and the new top fifteen employers listing for each city, was completed in November 2006. The statewide *Local Area Profile* was also updated and printed. The LMI Center began assembling information for the 2007 edition of the *Local Area Profiles* late this summer.

Based on comments from our customers, the LMI Center developed a series of Career Posters on topics such as Jobs in Demand, How Education can Affect Your Wage, High Wage Two Year Degree Jobs, Jobs in Demand, and High Wage Industries. These posters have been utilized in the resource rooms of our One-Stop offices, schools, libraries, etc.

The 2007 Largest Employer Listing was updated on our website in late August 2007. This annual listing provides a ranking of the top 100 employers in North Dakota based on total employment. In addition, we updated the listing of largest employers for each of the 14 largest cities in North Dakota.

Using the "IMPLAN" software, the LMI Center has done several impact analysis studies. These studies have varied from the impact of plant closings and major layoffs to the potential impact of new manufacturing plants locating in a community. The LMI Center recently purchased an updated version of IMPLAN and sent an analyst to IMPLAN training.

In response to requests from local economic developers and Native American tribal leaders, the LMI Center completed work on *Demographic Profiles* in August of 2004.

Based on the most recent census information, the *Demographic Profiles* contain general demographic information, selected social characteristics, selected economic data, and housing characteristics available in PDF format on our website. Profiles were developed for all the North Dakota counties, reservations, MSAs, selected cities, and the state as a whole. Since no new Census information was available, the guides could not be updated this program year.

To better explain all its products and services, the LMI Center has developed a brochure entitled *Your Guide to LMI*. In addition to being a promotional piece for our LMI Center, this guide provides a brief explanation of all our LMI publications and NDWIN and provides an order form for customers to request publications. This Guide, which was distributed in August 2007, will be utilized by our One-Stops in their resource rooms, at career fairs, workshops, and in business services activities.

The LMI Center has also utilized these grant funds for training purposes. Several of our LMI staff have attended national conferences and training sessions to maintain currency in the national trends, identify best practices in other states, learn new statistical programs and software, and network with their counterparts from other regions of the country. All of these training activities have added to the knowledge base and technical abilities of the LMI Center staff. This in turn has and will continue to manifest itself in many new and innovative products and services for our customers.

The training of our customers is also a very high priority in North Dakota. Members of the LMI staff have provided over 50 presentations or training sessions for various customer groups during the past program year. These ranged from formal in-depth training sessions of two or three days to short presentations to specific customers groups.

In conjunction with the launch of our new website NDWIN, the LMI Center has conducted a series of training sessions in each of our One-Stop offices, the Commerce Department, NDCRN, FINDET, Career and Technical Education, Job Service staff and a variety of other customers. The lab type training sessions provide an explanation of all the features of NDWIN as well as an explanation of the information contained in NDWIN.

The LMI Center partnered with our NDCRN to put on a series of nine ICDM type training sessions throughout the state. This computer lab based training was designed to train career guidance professionals in utilizing LMI in the career decision making process. These training sessions were very popular and plans are to do another round of these next winter.

With the roll out of the LED program, the LMI Center did a series of presentations and training sessions on LED. Presentations/trainings were done for the Governor's Office, Department of Commerce, Job Service North Dakota Senior Management Staff, and each of the Job Service Customer Service Offices.

Several LMI presentations were made to the Workforce Development Council, as well as to the North Dakota Youth Council, the Governor's staff, North Dakota Commerce Department, North Dakota State Tax Department, and Job Service Senior Management.

LMI Staff members made presentations to staff from eleven of our One-Stop offices on how to utilize our LMI products in working with businesses and job seekers. Many other local presentations/training sessions were provided to a wide range of customer groups such as Career Fairs at Dickinson and Fort Yates, the Fargo-Moorhead Human Resources Association, the Dickinson Manufacturers Roundtable, the Council of United Way Agencies, the Fargo-West Fargo Public Schools, the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bismarck State College, Gateway to Opportunity, Marketplace Outreach Conference, etc. In other cases, the LMI Center provided PowerPoints, speaker's notes, and supporting information for our One-Stop staff members to make presentations to local civic or business associations.

All of the publications listed above have been loaded on our LMI website as PDFs.

B. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:

North Dakota feels very strongly that customer feedback is extremely important in planning for and developing an efficient and comprehensive workforce information delivery system. North Dakota used a combination of strategies to obtain feedback on customer satisfaction with existing workforce information and services, as well as suggestions for developing new products and improving existing products. As mentioned in the discussion of our activities for the various core products in Section A, the LMI Center has utilized the feedback we have received from our customers to develop several new products and delivery formats. This customer feedback will continue to be the key element the LMI Center will use in evaluating current LMI products and services and in the planning for future LMI activities.

1. Customer Satisfaction Surveys:

The LMI Center completed a customer satisfaction survey late in the previous program year. As a result, it was decided not to do another survey this program year but wait until program year '07 to do another formal customer satisfaction survey. Instead, an emphasis was placed on obtaining customer feedback from informal focus groups, presentation evaluations, and one-to-one conversations with our customers.

2. Informal Focus Group and Meetings:

During the past year, staff members from the LMI Center made an effort to sit down and visit several of our key customers about products and services in a very informal focus group/discussion group-type setting. In addition, we have had several one-on-one sessions or group discussions with One-Stop offices, North Dakota Career Resource Network, WDC staff, Commerce Department, and local economic developers. These

conversations have been invaluable in discovering their workforce information needs and how we might be able to help them. Listed below are notes from some of these discussions.

General comments:

- Really like the new look of LMI publications
- Looking forward to using NDWIN
- Like new colorful layout—doesn't look like a stuffy government agency put it out
- LMI Staff is great to work with, very responsive and professional
- Very few people in our office actually use the Data Warehouse, they just go to the publications page
- New LED information has a lot of potential for economic developers
- Could use information on skills needs
- Need to be mindful that not all areas (i.e. rural, tribal reservations) have access to internet
- New look of the products make us (One-Stop Staff) look professional with our customers
- Will NDWIN be able to develop customized area products?
- Demographic Profiles very useful in Turtle Mountain
- Can Compensation Guides be printed for each office?
- Like recent changes in LMI publications
- LMI staff has always been very helpful to me.
- Some publications are too overwhelming –could we get summary sheets
- The new LMI publications ROCK!!
- Can LMI develop a template that we can use to put together customized packages of local labor market information for businesses looking to locate in our area?
- Miss the analysis the LMI used to provide
- Does LMI actually use our comments in designing publications?
- Appreciate the support we got from Michael and Warren, I have them on my speed dial.
- Some data is old by the time we get it.
- Need more localized products
- Great new publications—you are on the right track
- People like to see graphs, charts, bullets, --its easier for them to understand
- Work with local office staff in evaluating new ideas
- Utilize local office staff in tracking down nonrespondents to largest employer listing
- We do not always hear about it when new publications come out.
- Could CSA IV host a focus group of local economic developers and LMI?
- Can LMI provide city documents similar to what is done in Rolla Local Office?
- Thank you for coming out and asking us for feedback
- Would like to see more mapping of data
- Can you add the Air Force Bases to your mailing lists
- It's nice to have something professional looking to give to businesses when we call on them.

Comments on New/ Proposed LMI Products:

- Staff had a number of positive comments on the new look of the LMI products, liked the bright colors, and thought they looked appealing to customers.
- Could we get a Career Poster for those occupations requiring a 2 year degree?
- Like the look of the new Area Profiles, much more appealing than the old red, white, and blue ones.
- State Benefits Guide--more analysis on what it means
- New publications don't look like they came from stale government agency
- Looking forward to new Occupational Trading Cards—old ones were very popular

- Guide to LMI is great idea
- Love the new format for the Wages for North Dakota Jobs—Having the occupational wages for each area listed under the individual occupation saves a lot of page turning.
- Like the look of new calendar—very professional
- How about a poster on high demand jobs
- Don't need a poster on high wage counties
- Put posters on web so they can be printed out and used as handouts.
- Can we still get an occupational brochure that summarizes all occupations?
- Could we get occupational posters in smaller size?
- Could you print out city specific benefits guides?
- Keep up good work on new design of publications--new colorful look, graphics, etc
- Like this idea of having occupational brochures for resource rooms
- I see us handing out Guide to LMI as we make employer visits
- Can you provide a schedule when these new products will come out?
- New LMI Guide should help to cut down on number of publications we take with us on employer visits
- Like the spiral binding on larger publications like Wage Book and Projections
- Several of our customers are still asking for the old style planner type calendars

LMI products currently using/most useful:

- Compensation Guide very useful for business customers
- Use Labor Availability Study with my local economic developer
- Wage Survey booklet—really like new format
- Area Profiles, Wage info
- New Benefits guide is so much easier to use and understand.
- Demographic Profiles, Census Info
- Baseball cards are a big hit at Career Fairs
- Compensation guides work well
- Useful in a more generic way
- Wage and Benefits information is most requested
- Area Profiles—being used in Fargo by Chamber, even real estate companies.
- Use Wages book often, as it is easier to use than the Data Warehouse
- Use Projections trifold a lot
- Benefits Survey, Wages, LES
- Schools just love the trading cards
- Area Profiles info useful for economic developers

Employer discussions/questions:

- #1 request is wage ranges by industry
- Employers need immediate answers
- Work with economic development associations on a regular basis
- Staff does limited analysis to support general info of labor force
- What compensation package do I need to offer to attract and retain qualified workers in my industry and in my area?
- Wage related data and benefits are most common requests
- Mainly ad hoc requests
- Requests for job descriptions
- Staff is asked about doing training needs evaluations for businesses – could we do this throughout the state?
- Need localized information on wages
- Census data

- Most common complaint is that the info is not up to date

What do businesses ask for that is not currently available?

- More current wage data
- Retention info
- Local information for small towns
- Different pieces of our publications (that they view as necessary) rolled into one piece, specifically for a business
- Turnover rates
- We are already providing a lot of the info they need
- Information such as what we proposed in the template
- Easily accessible labor availability info and wages
- Occupational wages within more immediate area

What kinds of tools or aids would you like to see developed that might help you in working with employers?

- Customized packages
- Occupational Supply/Demand by area (openings vs. applicants)
- More publications for smaller towns and counties
- Wage and Benefit info for their area/industry
- Pieces of info from different publications combined into one
- Template we proposed
- Ability to generate their own reports
- Specialized publications specific to their area – similar to LES, but more often
- Info more specific to their area

Does local office staff need LMI training and to what extent?

- Really need training on LED
- Will there be training on NDWIN?
- It would be good to have periodic training on new products
- Should train local office staff before any employer sessions – perhaps twice per month
- They are working on developing their own scripts to use on LMI based common questions
- They will use the tutorial for job seekers and businesses for a review
- Could possibly use yearly (very general) LMI course for local office staff
- Staff need to become more competent in using and finding info on the Data Warehouse
- Like using tutorial that was developed for job seekers side and business services side
- Yes - they don't use it daily
- It is hard for them to understand the different pieces of information available and how it can be used
- They would like to see us do scenarios in a lab setting, so staff can actually walk through it themselves
- They would like to see us more often

Other comments:

- Do we need to date the info on the website – can there be a “Most Current Data” button and a “Historical Data” button? Employers see the dates on the most recent data we have, and think that our website has not been updated.
- Can't wait to see NDWIN.
- Need to help enable staff to understand LMI for self-sufficiency
- Would like to see us develop data elements for geographic areas in the form of narrative reports and high-quality power point presentations (i.e. Balancing Act)
- Grand Forks is co-locating with SBA, SBDC which will be an opportunity for joint marketing efforts and to serve as a joint resource area

- In mailing publications, we need to identify and send specifically to people in local offices
- LMI posters were well-received; would like to see more developed
- Like both the wheel and Products and Services booklet ideas as products
- Would like to see something like “Regional RoadMaps” developed
- Could use an LMI presentation on power point for resource room staff – mainly FAQs
- Screen saver in resource room would be useful
- Suggested doing ongoing labor availability studies
- SBA centers in each CSA would have some helpful suggestions
- Develop focus groups rather than advisory groups to capture different people at different stages
- Notify local offices of major changes immediately (i.e. discontinuation of publications)
- Would like for us to provide customized info in PDF format
- Add instructions in wage books, etc. on how to use or find info in Data Warehouse
- Should have LMI products and services info and links to our info, on mini-CD’s for handouts
- Would like to see us there on a more regular basis

3. Feedback From Presentations and Training Sessions:

We have also received valuable feedback from participants in our training sessions and presentations. We closely review the evaluation forms we receive from training sessions and have often received very timely ideas and suggestions from informal discussions with individuals during or after these sessions.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES TO THE SUITE OF CORE PRODUCTS:

The list of core products and services for the Workforce Information Grant has evolved over the past few years. The current suite of core products provides a relatively concise grouping of the most common categories of products produced by most states while allowing individual states the flexibility to tailor products to the most critical needs in their state. Although it is important for several of the products, such as the Workforce Information Database and Projections to be consistent across the nation, the many differences from state to state require that individual LMI departments maintain this flexibility to address the workforce information needs unique to their state.

As such, North Dakota does not have many recommendations for changes to the suite of core products. The following are a few observations we have made based on conversations with our various customers.

The need for fringe benefit information is becoming more and more of a critical need for our business customers. Fringe benefit surveys should be able to identify differences in fringe benefit packages offered by the geographic area, industry, and size of businesses. North Dakota currently conducts its own fringe benefits surveys as a part of core product 6, but this is one item that not all states currently produce.

Our customers are constantly requesting more localized products and services. Individual communities are looking for workforce information that they can use to measure the health and growth of their communities and that they can use to promote their areas. We believe that each state needs to develop some series of localized products.

As we have developed new products and services and made existing ones more useful, our customers are becoming very reliant on many of the products we produce under the Workforce Information Grant. Accordingly, it is critical that adequate funding continues to flow to the state LMI departments through the Workforce Information Grant so that these customers will continue to have access to the workforce information they need and have come to depend upon us to produce.