

Archived Information

PROJECTS WITH INDUSTRY (PWI)

Goal: To facilitate the establishment of partnerships between rehabilitation service providers and business and industry in order to create and expand employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Relationship of Program to Volume 1, Department-wide Objectives: These objectives support Strategic Plan Goal 3.4 ensuring access to services that provide adults with disabilities the opportunity to strengthen their skills and improve their earning power over their lifetime.

FY 2000—\$22,071,000

FY 2001—\$22,071,000 (Requested budget)

OBJECTIVE 1: ENSURE THAT PWI SERVICES (THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY) RESULT IN COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT, INCREASED WAGES, AND JOB RETENTION FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

Indicator 1.1 Placement rate of individuals with disabilities into competitive employment: The percentage of individuals served who are placed in competitive employment will increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Percentage of individuals served who were placed in competitive employment</i>			<p>Status: FY 1999 performance fell short of the 1999 target by 2 percent.</p> <p>Explanation: Although the program fell short of its established FY 1999 performance target, FY 1999 performance was higher than performance for FY 1998. In FY 1998 and 1999, there were fewer grantees (104 and 101, respectively) compared with FY 1997 (119).</p> <p>The percentage of persons served who are significantly disabled and the percentage of previously unemployed persons have increased. The projects serving these populations face greater challenges in obtaining competitive employment. The FY 2000 target has been adjusted to reflect gradual improvement in reaching the 62 percent target.</p>	<p>Source: Grantee performance indicator data. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> January 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: The sources and data quality are validated by checking to see if the data are reasonable. On-site compliance reviews are also conducted of at least 15 percent of grant recipients annually to (a) determine whether the grant is managed in accordance with Federal requirements; (b) identify areas where the project can be improved; and (c) assess the project's mission as it relates to the Department's mission.</p> <p>Limitation of Data and Planned Improvements: The primary limitation of the data is that they are self-reported. Technical assistance and regular monitoring is provided to grantees in order to receive updated reports from the grantee regarding progress toward meeting project goals.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
FY 1997:	59% (11,300)*			
FY 1998:	49% (6,792)*			
FY 1999:	59% (8,239)*	61%		
FY 2000:		61%		
FY 2001:		62%		
<p>* The number in parentheses indicates the actual number of individuals served who were placed in competitive employment.</p>				

Indicator 1.2 Change in earnings of individuals who are placed in competitive employment: Projects With Industry projects will report that participants placed in competitive employment increase earnings by an average of at least \$218 per week.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Average increase in weekly earnings</i>			<p>Status: FY 1999 performance exceeded the 1999 target by \$17.</p> <p>Explanation: FY 1999 performance reflected an average increase in earnings of \$226 per week. In FY 1999 there were fewer grantees (101) than in the baseline year of FY 1997 (119). On average, the FY 1999 group of grantees demonstrated higher performance on this indicator. However, we have only raised the FY 2000 and FY 2001 targets to \$218 per week because of the variability in annual performance.</p>	<p>Source: Grantee performance indicator data. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> January 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Same as Indicator 1.1.</p> <p>Limitation of Data and Planned Improvements: Same as Indicator 1.1. In addition, performance data on this indicator are further limited because the national average is calculated based on self-reported project averages.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
FY 1997:	\$207			
FY 1998:	\$209			
FY 1999:	\$226	\$209		
FY 2000:		\$218		
FY 2001:		\$218		

OBJECTIVE 2: ENSURE THAT PWI SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST NEED.

Indicator 2.1 Percentage of individuals served who were unemployed for 6 months or more prior to program entry who are placed in competitive employment: The percentage of previously unemployed individuals served who are placed into competitive employment will increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Percentage of previously unemployed individuals served who were placed in competitive employment</i>			<p>Status: FY 1999 performance fell short of meeting the target by 4 percent. Despite declines in actual performance in 1998 and 1999 from the 1997 base year, progress toward the target is likely in 2000.</p> <p>Explanation: Although the FY 1999 target was not met, the overall number of previously unemployed persons who were placed in competitive employment increased as compared to FY 1998. In addition, both the number and percentage of persons served who were previously unemployed has increased. Projects serving this population face greater challenges in obtaining competitive employment.</p>	<p>Source: Grantee performance indicator data. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next Update:</i> January 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Same as Indicator 1.1.</p> <p>Limitation of Data and Planned Improvements: Same as Indicator 1.1.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
FY 1997:	60%			
FY 1998:	48%			
FY 1999:	58%	62%		
FY 2000:		60%		
FY 2001:		61%		

KEY STRATEGIES

Strategies Continued from 1999

- ❖ To address grantees' difficulty or noncompliance with the placement standards and the wage standard defined in Projects With Industry regulations, the program will provide ongoing technical assistance to grantees who demonstrate difficulty or noncompliance with these standards, including monitoring progress through off-site monitoring and progress reports.
- ❖ To address grantees' difficulty in developing partnerships with business and with state vocational rehabilitation agencies, the program will provide, through national conferences and other means, opportunities for exemplary Projects With Industry projects to share information on methods and models for building strong partnerships with industry, and with state vocational rehabilitation agencies. These efforts will include dissemination of information on effective Business Advisory Councils, including representatives from labor and from the disability community.

New or Strengthened Strategies

- ❖ To address grantees' difficulty in placing previously unemployed individuals, the program will provide technical assistance to grantees that demonstrate poor performance in this regard.
- ❖ To address grantees' difficulty in placing previously unemployed individuals, the program will work with other Federal offices within and outside the Department to provide opportunities for grantees to identify and exchange information addressing work disincentives affecting previously unemployed individuals with disabilities.
- ❖ To address grantees' difficulty or noncompliance in meeting the targets for placement rate and percentage of individuals served who were unemployed for 6 months or more prior to program entry who are placed in competitive employment, the program will monitor progress of grantees who demonstrate difficulty or noncompliance with these standards through off-site monitoring and progress reports.
- ❖ To identify strengths and weaknesses of the program and to better understand program performance, the Rehabilitation Services Administration is initiating an evaluation study of the Projects With Industry program in FY 2000.

HOW THIS PROGRAM COORDINATES WITH OTHER FEDERAL ACTIVITIES

- ❖ To identify job and career availability within the community, Projects With Industry projects are required to coordinate with the local workforce investment board for the community under Section 118(b)(1)(B) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- ❖ To increase coordination between Projects With Industry and state vocational rehabilitation programs, the project's Business Advisory Council must include a representative of the appropriate state vocational rehabilitation program.

CHALLENGES TO ACHIEVING PROGRAM GOAL

- ❖ Despite the advances brought about by the Americans With Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act, developing partnerships with business still remains a challenge. Many employers remain reluctant to hire individuals with disabilities. Some employers are skeptical about their ability to do the job. Others persist in believing that hiring an individual with a disability is costly and a bad business risk.

INDICATOR CHANGES

From FY 1999 Annual Plan (two years old)

Adjusted—None.

Dropped

- ❖ Indicator 1.3 (job retention) was dropped. This indicator stated that "an indicator will be developed to assess the percentage of individuals who maintain employment 9 months after employment." As a result of changes made by the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation, the implementing regulations have been amended to require that projects report the number of individuals who are employed at 3 and 9 months after placement in competitive employment. Projects will begin reporting this data in FY 2000. After the Department establishes a performance baseline, an appropriate indicator will be established.

From FY 2000 Annual Plan (last year's)

Adjusted

- ❖ The FY 2000 targets for Indicators 1.1 and 2.1 were adjusted to reflect gradual improvement in reaching the FY 2001 target.
- ❖ The FY 2000 and 2001 targets for Indicator 1.2 have been raised to reflect increased performance in 1999.

Dropped—None.

New—None.