



PHOTO: MICHAEL CARPENTER

MANY ONE-STOP CENTERS INVITE EMPLOYERS TO ATTEND JOB FAIRS AND TO INTERVIEW JOB APPLICANTS. JOB FAIRS OFFER JOB APPLICANTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET EMPLOYERS, LEARN ABOUT COMPANIES, AND EXPLORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES.

Outcome Goal 1.1

Increase Employment, Earnings, and Assistance

Overview

American workers must have quick and easy access to a broad array of high quality and highly effective workforce development services to continue to enjoy increased employment and earnings in the global economy of the 21st Century. One-Stop Career Centers provide the focal point for meeting the challenges of a global economy. Through the One-Stop Centers, communities can build the local partnerships and organize the workforce development services that enable adults to acquire the skills needed for jobs and career changes that lead to high wages and for businesses to meet their ongoing recruitment and human services needs.

Technology has dramatically increased the Department's ability to offer services and products to customers in a broad range of formats and at almost any time. National, State, and local automated workforce delivery systems that support job matching, labor market information, resource directories, and occupational and career information are online to enable direct customer access or to assist staff in providing services, and are available anywhere that personal computers can be found, such as customers' homes, businesses, and public libraries. To provide for the special needs of persons with disabilities, the One-Stop Centers have improved access to their facilities and services.

Serving the Public

The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), with support from the Women's Bureau, the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and the Office of Disability Employment Policy, operate a number of programs that provide the information and skill-building opportunities that lead to increased employment and earnings.

Adult and Dislocated Worker programs authorized under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) provide the workforce preparation, training, and support services needed to increase the participants' skills, employment opportunities, and earnings.

Wagner-Peyser Act employment services include a range of labor exchange services, such as access to resource rooms with the latest technology that job seekers use to obtain employment; staff-assisted job search assistance and counseling; job

referral and placement; recruitment and screening services for employers; and labor market and career information. Electronic information is available to bring together job seekers and employers nationwide through the CareerOneStop portal, which integrates America's Job Bank, America's Career Information Network, America's Service Locator, and a wide variety of labor market and workforce development tools.

ETA's Office of Apprenticeship Training, Employer and Labor Services works to increase the number of apprenticeship occupations, providing opportunities for satisfying and rewarding careers in highly paid, skilled occupations.

VETS programs target veterans requiring special assistance, such as service-connected disabled veterans, and homeless, minority, or older veterans, as well as younger veterans recently separated from active service.

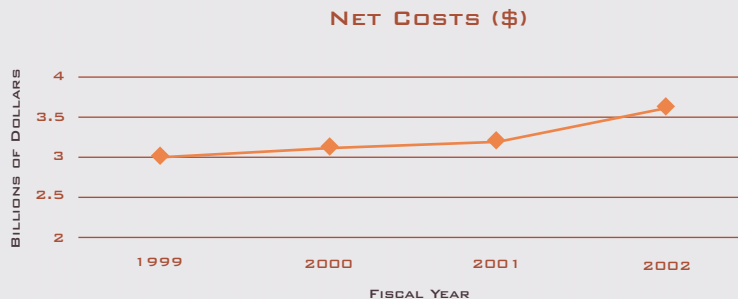
The Women's Bureau seeks to ensure that issues current to women are identified and supported in Departmental programs.

The Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives is designed to help assure that the Workforce Investment Act system builds new partnerships with small community and faith-based organizations. These institutions are known and trusted entities in poor and disadvantaged communities and are critical to achieving the WIA system goal of universal access to employment services.

The Office of Disability Employment Policy works to ensure that individuals with disabilities have full and complete access to all of the services delivered through the One-Stop system.

Program Costs

FY 2002 program costs of \$3.6 billion for Outcome Goal 1.1 support ETA's adult training programs and employment services, in addition to the employment services and training provided for veterans by the Veterans' Employment and Training Service. These costs are up from \$3.2 billion in FY 2001, primarily due to increased services prompted by the declining economy.



DOL Challenges for the Future

A key Secretarial area of emphasis is re-orienting and improving the effectiveness of the Department's job training programs to meet the needs of the 21st Century workforce. The Department will increase collaboration within the One-Stop framework, leveraging the full array of services available from all partners, to enable all workers to secure employment with the opportunity for increased earnings and career advancement. To more effectively meet the needs of workers, the Department is focusing increasingly on engaging the business community as both customer and partner to ensure strong economic growth and good jobs with good wages for our citizens. The Department will seek to ensure that the workforce investment system is demand-driven to meet business needs for the right workers with the right skills at the right time.

The Department and its partners also will take advantage of available technology and address infrastructure and capacity needs, and seek new ways to break down the barriers to integrated One-Stop service delivery. The Department has increased its emphasis on performance accountability for all programs and services. The collective goal is to provide high quality services and information that best serve the nation's job seekers and employers.

The economic impact of the September 11th terrorist attacks and the continued fluctuations of the economy have had significant impacts on our workers and businesses, and the Department continues to support strategies designed to effectively meet the needs of both customer groups to promote strong economic growth for businesses, individuals, and families for the coming decade and beyond.

Increase Employment and Earnings for Adults

In Program Year 2001, of those registered under the WIA adult program, 78% will be employed in the third quarter after program exit, with increased average earnings of \$3,361.

Results: The Department achieved its goal. The program achieved a six-month retention rate of 78.9 percent and an earnings increase of \$3,555.

Program Description: The Workforce Investment Act's Adult Program improves the quality of the workforce, reduces welfare dependence, and enhances the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation's economy. The Department allocates adult employment and training funds by formula to the States, which further distribute the funds to local Workforce Investment Areas. The One-Stop Centers in each area deliver adult services that fall into three tiers:

1. Core services, such as resume writing assistance, labor market information, and job search strategy workshops, are available to all adults;
2. Intensive services, such as career assessment, are targeted primarily to unemployed individuals who are not able to find a job without staff assistance; and
3. Training services for individuals who need to acquire new skills in order to find and retain a job.

During Program Year 2001, the One-Stop Centers provided Workforce Investment Act services to approximately 388,775 adults, an increase of 56 percent from the number served in Program Year 2000.

Analysis of Results: The Department exceeded the Program Year 2001 performance targets, which DOL developed through negotiations with the State agencies. The results reflect performance reported by 53 States and jurisdictions for the fourth quarter of Program Year 2001, ending June 30, 2002.

The results for Program Year 2001 represent a slight improvement in retention from Program Year 2000 when 78 percent of workers reported employment in the third quarter following participation. However, average wage gains decreased by \$129 from the previous year. In its preliminary analysis of Program Year 2001 performance, the Department has not determined any major trends among State performance that would account for this decline in earnings from Program Year 2000. A factor that may have contributed to the decline is the mix of WIA registrants in Program Year 2000 with many participants from its predecessor program who had little or no wages before entering the program. With all adults eligible for services under the Workforce Investment Act, the Program Year 2001 registrants presumably included more participants with higher earnings before their entry into the program, and increasing average earnings gains therefore presented a greater challenge. Early in 2003, the Department will have more extensive information on WIA registrants that will permit further analysis. Another factor that may have contributed to this decline is the softening of the labor market with increases in unemployment and pressure on wages.

States and local areas use the Unemployment Insurance wage record reporting system as the performance reporting data source for employment, retention, and earnings measures. The Department considers this source reliable, and has undertaken a data validation of WIA performance measures in order to further assure that the data effectively support the problem analysis, management decision-making, and continuous improvement elements of State and Federal oversight.

Strategies: In addition to the issuance of guidance addressing issues uncovered in "Readiness Reviews" conducted in Program Year 2001, such as eligibility determination policies, low participation of eligible providers, and inconsistencies with registration for adults, the Department works in partnership with States and localities to assure that they have specific help in areas where it is needed and continuous, up-to-date information on what works, as follows:

- Beginning late in 2002, the Department has undertaken special technical assistance focused upon States and localities experiencing difficulties in achieving their negotiated performance standards. The Department is in the process of identifying State and local needs for assistance based upon Program Year 2001 performance.

- The Department will begin to develop approaches intended to address the workforce needs of persons of limited English speaking ability that will focus on first assessing and identifying their needs for workforce preparation, and then developing techniques to meet these needs through training and other interventions attuned to their language needs. This will result in broader program participation and should contribute to increased outcomes.
- The Department will continue showcasing the best programs. A principal vehicle for doing so will be a national "Workforce Innovation" conference which showcases projects with technological innovations that have improved employment and training services for adults and other customers of the Workforce Investment System.
- The Department will focus its efforts more on the needs of business for skilled workers and create a "demand-based" workforce investment system. The Department has a job training initiative aimed toward high-growth industries, and a project to develop partnerships that will meet business needs and provide good job opportunities for workforce system registrants.

Audits and Program Evaluations: In a September 2002 report, *Workforce Investment Act Performance Outcomes Reporting Oversight*, the Office of Inspector General raised concerns about whether the third party data reported by States for WIA performance were accurate and supportable. The Department generally agreed with the concerns raised by the Office of Inspector General and indicated that it believed that the concerns would be addressed with the deployment of a data validity and verification policy and tools that have been under development and are scheduled to be deployed in 2003. See Appendix 3 for more information.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: The Department continues to focus on the core performance measures for workforce programs and to emphasize high levels of achievement for programs under the Workforce Investment Act through negotiations with the States. ■

(Goal 1.1B — FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan)

Improve Registered Apprenticeship

Strengthen the registered apprenticeship system to meet the training needs of business and workers in the 21st Century. In Fiscal Year 2002:

- Increase the number of new apprenticeship programs over the established baseline by 10%;
- Increase the number of new businesses involved in apprenticeship over the established baseline by 10%;
- Increase the number of new apprentices over the established baseline by 10%; and
- Increase the number of new programs in new and emerging industries – at a minimum, Information Technology, Health Care and Social Services – over the established baseline by 10%.

Results: The goal was achieved. The indicators reflect the following increases over the baseline: a 75 percent increase in new apprenticeship programs; a 99 percent increase in new businesses involved in apprenticeship; a 64 percent increase in new apprentices; and a 23 percent increase in programs in new and emerging industries.

Program Description: Registered apprenticeship combines on-the-job training and related classroom instruction to enable workers to learn the practical and theoretical aspects of a highly skilled occupation. Registered apprenticeships are career-training programs based in an industry that determines the skills its employees will need and trains them to achieve the relevant knowledge. Joint employer and labor groups, individual employers, and/or employer associations voluntarily sponsor the programs. Completion of a registered apprenticeship program provides a certification of skills that are recognized

throughout the country. Registered apprenticeship programs offer access to career opportunities in highly paid, relevant, specialized occupations; alleviate skilled worker shortages in businesses; and ensure the competitiveness of the Nation's workplaces.

The Department manages the National Registered Apprenticeship System, approving training programs and registering apprentices in 23 States. DOL delegates the management authority through Federal-State partnerships with State Apprenticeship Councils/Agencies in 28 States, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

Analysis of Results: While the goal targets percentages of increase, the numerical increase in the indicators offers a better perspective on the significant growth experienced in the Apprenticeship program during the fiscal year. End of Fiscal Year data reflects the following increases: 2,952 new programs or a 75 percent increase over the 1,685 baseline; 5,883 new businesses or a 99 percent increase over the 2,953 baseline; 129,388 new apprentices or a 64 percent increase over the 78,770 baseline; and 326 new programs in new and emerging industries or a 23 percent increase over the baseline of 266.

Strategies: Throughout FY 2002, the Department featured the apprenticeship model as a viable option to meet employers' needs for an increasingly skilled and technically competent workforce, while continuing to promote enrollment in apprenticeship training to a variety of workers interested in acquiring or upgrading their skills. For example:



PHOTO: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, MARK THEISSEN PHOTOGRAPHER

Christine turned a fear of fire as a child into a focused interest which became an occupational pursuit. Christine worked with the Boise National Forest on a fire rehabilitation crew and later as a Senior Firefighter for the Lower Snake River District (LSRD) of the Bureau of Land Management. While working for LSRD, Christine was selected for the Joint Fire Apprentice Program. The apprenticeship program afforded her the opportunity to work in a variety of fire positions including engines, fire investigations, training, forest fire prevention, dispatch, and the use of helicopters in fighting fires. She has gained extensive fire knowledge through her academy experience, permitting her to work in positions of increasing responsibility. Christine is currently working on the development of training software for Homeland Security, training personnel to use the Incident Command System.

- DOL provided technical assistance on initiating apprenticeship programs to businesses, industry, and labor organizations in collaboration with the National Association of State and Territorial Apprenticeship Directors and State Apprenticeship Councils (NASTAD). Information distributed at the Department's 21st Century Workforce Summit also spurred activities, including new apprenticeship programs, to solve looming challenges, such as structural changes affecting the workforce and the economy, labor and skill shortages, demographic changes in the workforce, and technological innovations in the workplace.
- DOL sponsored nationwide forums and conferences, such as the Advancing Apprenticeship into the 21st Century Forums in partnership with NASTAD, the Apprenticeship Marketing Outreach Project, and the Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration Forums. These sessions offered insights into the current needs of businesses and workers. Equally important, employers participating across industries proved receptive to exploring non-traditional ways of meeting their needs for skilled workers. The Department will apply the insights to developing new models and strategies during FY 2003 that will strengthen and expand registered apprenticeship in key businesses and industries.
- DOL also targeted over \$12 million in Workforce Development Investment Project funds to introduce apprenticeships into industries such as health care, quality childcare, information technology, transportation, energy, research and evaluation services, and aerospace. For example, CompTia, the Computing Technology Industry Association, is utilizing a grant from DOL to design, develop and test apprenticeship in 11 occupations involving 19 companies in the information technology field.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: During FY 2003, DOL will introduce two new indicators that will measure the number of apprentices who graduate and the wage gain projections of entry and graduating apprentices, to ensure a balanced focus on enhancing the program's benefits to both the business community and the apprentices. ■

(Goal 1.1C — FY 2002 Annual Performance Plan)

Increase Job Seekers' Entry into Employment

In Program Year 2001, 76% of job seekers registered by the Wagner-Peyser Act funding stream will have unsubsidized jobs six months after initial entry into employment (Six Month Retention Rate).

Results: The goal was not measured. The Employment Service will not begin collecting employment retention outcome data until Program Year 2002, due to delays in implementing the new Labor Exchange Performance Measurement System.

Program Description: Wagner-Peyser funded labor exchange services assist job seekers in finding employment and employers in finding qualified workers. Delivered through the One-Stop systems of the States, the public labor exchange provides universal access to core employment services (e.g., career guidance, job search assistance, job referrals, workforce information, re-employment services, etc.) in three distinct modalities: self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted services. The goal of the public labor exchange is to assist job seekers with immediate transition to a new, better, or the next job. Local Workforce Investment Board policies allow for flexible delivery structures, permitting job seekers to obtain services onsite at a comprehensive career center or affiliated site, or electronically. In addition, employer-focused strategies to increase employment outcomes for business are an integral focus of States' public employment services.

Analysis of Results: During Program Year 2001, State Workforce Agencies worked towards full implementation of a comprehensive performance accountability system implemented for the Employment Service that included new performance measures, revised reporting procedures, and the establishment of levels of performance. Implementation of the new performance measure of employment retention at six months—one of the four new labor exchange measures—will provide consistency with the Workforce Investment Act performance measurement system.

In Program Year 2001, the Department also implemented a pilot with eight States to evaluate prospectively the impact of the new labor exchange outcome measures. Using wage record data matched with registrant information from Program Years 1999 and 2000, pilot data point to Statewide retention rates ranging between 65 and 75 percent for job seekers.

Strategies: Retention at six months is a completely new performance measure for the Labor Exchange and will provide useful management data on the efficacy of One-Stop employment services in meeting the needs of customers seeking long-term employment. The primary methodology to promote retention as an outcome for the public labor exchange is to ensure that individuals with the right skills and qualifications are referred to employers who list jobs. Therefore, strategies for this goal are focused on helping business clearly articulate the skills, competencies, and hiring criteria for their jobs and helping job seekers to identify their skills and competencies and to help them take advantage of the broader services in the One-Stop setting.

In PY 2001, ETA sponsored training for a variety of groups in the use and application of the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) tools, including a new version of O*NET OnLine designed to help users provide career counseling and accept and fill job orders by better describing the tasks, skills and education. As a result of the training and outreach activities, public and private organizations have integrated O*NET into their career counseling and labor market Internet pages.

As part of ETA's strategy to improve the quality and use of workforce information, the Agency's investment in labor market information research and development focuses on four interrelated areas: use of standards and data collection; a set of State-delivered core products and services for customers; pursuit of ongoing research and development of new products; and building the capacity of the workforce system to deliver workforce information through One-Stop systems. In addition, States in PY 2001 received investments totaling \$38 million for workforce information core products and services as part of the Department's strategy to increase positive employment outcomes for both employers and job seekers. To facilitate the sharing of States' workforce information practices and the latest workforce information products, DOL, in consultation with partners, began development of a web-based strategy for publishing and maintaining core products information for use by State Workforce Agencies nationwide. These efforts support a more effective labor exchange process.

ETA created the Business Relations Group in PY 2001 to coordinate a broad-based outreach strategy to educate businesses about the value of the public workforce system in meeting their human resource needs. A key activity has been "Partnerships for Jobs", the intent of which is to broker a more effective connection between business and the workforce development system leading to strategies to help business meet their short- and long-term workforce needs.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: The Department, in collaboration with the Office of Management and Budget, is developing common performance measures for all employment and training programs. The purpose of this initiative is to develop common performance measures that address the goal of getting a job, job retention, and improved earnings for participants, and the costs of all affected programs. In FY 2003, the Department will begin the process of revising definitions of existing measures and reporting requirements consistent with existing laws so that the common measures may be implemented in Program Year 2004. ■

(Goal 1.1C — FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan)

Job Listings with the Employment Service

In Program Year 2001, increase by 10 percent the total number of job openings listed with the public employment service, including both those listed with State Workforce Agencies (SWA's) and those listed directly with America's Job Bank (AJB) via the Internet.

Results: The goal was not achieved. The combined number of job openings listed with State Workforce Agencies (7.2 million) and America's Job Bank (4.6 million) decreased by 5.0 percent from Program Year 2000.

Program Description: As part of providing labor exchange, recruitment, and other technical services to employers, the public employment service publishes job openings. Employers can advertise their job openings with State Workforce Agencies (SWA's), job seekers can research these opportunities, and staff can screen and refer suitable candidates to these jobs at the request of the employer.

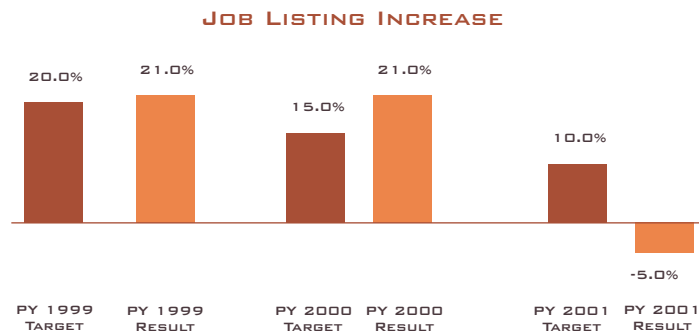
America's Job Bank (AJB), an Internet-based labor exchange system, complements the services provided by the public employment services offices in the States. Job seekers can search for a job in AJB's online listing of openings and post a resume to an online database free of charge. Employers who register to use the service can search the resume database for potential candidates in addition to being able to post their job openings on the site. The site provides both employers and job seekers a "scout" feature, offering users the ability to save searches based on search criteria they choose, have the system automatically run those searches again at user-defined intervals, and then e-mail them the search results. Most jobs listed with the SWA's are subsequently posted on America's Job Bank. (Jobs posted on AJB from SWA listings are excluded from the AJB count in the table below.)

CATEGORY	PROGRAM YEAR 1999	PROGRAM YEAR 2000	PROGRAM YEAR 2001	PERCENT CHANGE
STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY		6,969,557	7,207,701	+3%
AJB		5,425,638	4,592,068	-15%
TOTAL JOB OPENINGS	10,233,161	12,395,195	11,799,769	-5%

*THE PY 2000 NUMBER OF TOTAL JOB OPENINGS LISTED REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 21% OVER PY 1999. THE DATA FOR PY 1999 AND PY 2000 HAVE BEEN ADJUSTED SINCE THE PUBLICATION OF DOL'S FY 2000 AND 2001 ANNUAL REPORTS TO REFLECT FINAL DATA.

Analysis of Results: Results reported for this measure reflect the downturn in the economy throughout Program Year 2001 and the economic impact of the terrorist attacks on employment. The unemployment rate of 4.5 percent at the start of Program Year 2001 climbed to 5.8 percent by December 2001, inching up to 5.9 percent by the close of Program Year 2001.

Strategies: ETA created the Business Relations Group in Program Year 2001 to coordinate an agency wide effort to better serve America's workers by meeting the needs



of business. The Department initiated a broad based outreach strategy to educate businesses about the value of the public workforce system in meeting their human resource needs, including services available through One-Stop systems locally and AJB. For example, the Business Relations Group brokers more effective connections between large, nation-wide businesses and the decentralized public workforce system; develops strategies to connect businesses of all sizes with the system through work with industry and human resource associations; develops strategies to meet the workforce needs of high-growth industries; and generally builds the capacity of the workforce system to meet the needs of business.

The redesign of AJB and its integration into the new CareerOneStop portal will make the site more intuitive and user-friendly. Business focus groups identified many of the new features and changes to the system. It will incorporate features that have now become industry standards to aid in the business customer's ability to easily navigate the site. The site will also feature a new interface to allow businesses to more easily post large numbers of jobs into AJB via a file transfer process and a new job order writing tool to assist employers in preparing better job descriptions to attract more and better qualified applicants.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: ETA will revise this goal for Program Year 2003 using a methodology that can measure continuous improvement relative to increased listings of job openings and that is adjusted to reflect changes in the economy. ■

(Goal 1.1D — FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan)

This CVS/pharmacy Regional Learning Center was the first public-private partnership that combines the One-Stop Career Center goal of placing people in rewarding jobs with the CVS corporation's commitment to training its employees. The Center is co-located with the District of Columbia's Employment Services One-Stop Career Center.



PHOTO: SHAWN MOORE

Help Veterans Enter Employment

Thirty-four percent of veteran job-seekers registering for public labor exchange services will be employed in the first or second quarter following registration.

Results: The goal was achieved. During the first three quarters of FY 2002, 42.84 percent of veterans assisted by the public labor exchange entered employment. Fourth quarter data are not available.

Program Description: The Department's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) is responsible for maximizing employment and training services to America's veterans by ensuring priority of service to veterans in Wagner-Peyser funded programs throughout the public labor exchange.

The Department funds State Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs). DVOP staff provide a variety of specialized services through the public labor exchange, including career coaching, vocational guidance, assessment, job search and job development services, referral to training, and other supportive activities for those veterans requiring special assistance. LVERs ensure that veterans receive services on a priority basis in local employment service offices, train local office staff, facilitate job search and Transition Assistance Program workshops, and conduct outreach to employers and community groups on veterans' issues.

Analysis of Results: Fourth quarter FY 2002 data were not captured due to a transition in the fourth quarter to a new performance reporting system. Data for the first three quarters of FY 2002 were collected under previous reporting procedures that required follow-up contacts with veterans registered with the public labor exchange. Based on these three quarters of data, 835,870 veterans were registered with the public labor exchange nationally and 358,119 veterans or 42.84 percent of those registered entered employment.

The recently implemented Labor Exchange Performance Measurement System includes new performance measures and an improved system of obtaining outcome information based on unemployment insurance wage record data. Studies in selected States have indicated that the previous reporting procedures—based on follow up contacts with job seekers—significantly understated the outcomes of the public labor exchange compared to data available from the unemployment insurance records.

Strategies: Our top human capital management priority is working with our State partners to achieve full staffing in DVOP and LVER positions to ensure the adequacy of veterans' job placement capabilities. VETS is also implementing a self-assessment process for staff at the State and Regional levels that should yield efficiencies and increase workforce productivity.

In another initiative consistent with the President's Management Agenda, the Department will assess managing future State grants for veterans' employment services as a performance-based system. This approach is similar to the one adopted recently by the Department's Employment and Training Administration in addressing employment efforts on behalf of older workers. As contrasted with the current system of fixed grants, funds will be provided to the States on a more flexible basis, considering such factors as job outlook and individual States' performance in placing veterans in employment.

DOL implemented a national outreach program that promotes employment, licensing, and certification opportunities for veterans. Through a series of pilot programs, VETS is assessing civilian job opportunities where military training can be transferred to jobs in the civilian economy requiring a credential. Where pilot projects are successful and the employer or organization hosting the project realizes a benefit, continuation of the project will depend upon funding from another source. A VETS project currently underway at the Florida Community College in Jacksonville trains systems administrators separating from the Navy in computer network security.

LVER staff are assisting transitioning service personnel to identify the credentials and training needed for jobs requiring licenses and or certifications in a variety of industries that will be available upon their separation from the military service.

Goals Assessment and Future Plans: Under the new Labor Exchange Performance Measurement System, each State will negotiate performance goals for FY 2003. FY 2003 will be a transition year, as States gain experience under the new measurement system by establishing and refining the new data collection system and building core performance information regarding services to veterans. The new measures closely mirror those prepared by the U.S. Employment Service, and more complete data available from State Unemployment Insurance wage records have permitted the Department to set significantly higher and more realistic performance targets beginning in FY 2003. ■

(Goal 1.1D — FY 2002 Annual Performance Plan)

Homeless Veterans Obtain Unsubsidized Employment

Increase the employment and retention rate of homeless veterans enrolled in Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Projects (HVRP)

- At least 54% of veterans enrolled in HVRP enter employment
- Establish baseline for retention rate.

Result: The goal was not achieved since one of the two indicators was not met. The FY 2002 entered employment rate was 54 percent, achieving the 54 percent target. The second indicator, establishing a baseline for retention, was not achieved.

Program Description: The Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project funds employment, training, and other support services (e.g., medical treatment, counseling, transportation) to enable homeless veterans to reintegrate successfully into the workforce. Organizations receiving grants under this program typically provide job search, counseling, placement assistance, remedial education, classroom and on-the-job training, and supportive services such as transportation and transitional housing — often in concert with HUD, VA, and other service providers. Grantees are also strongly encouraged to collaborate with rehabilitation agencies for such services as drug and alcohol counseling. During FY 2002, 14,100 of the Nation's 250,000-275,000 homeless veterans received assistance from the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project.

Analysis of Results: During the past year, the Department improved the entered employment rate from 53 percent to 54 percent for participants in the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Project by reinforcing the rate of entered employment as the primary focus for service providers, while continuing to assist participants to overcome the multiple problems that prevent them from securing and retaining employment. The program's services now target training to match available jobs. In addition, the Department has developed closer relationships with associated Federal, State, and local community based organizations to leverage resources to provide expanded and "seamless" services to homeless veterans. Once on the job, homeless veterans are contacted periodically to ensure their successful transition from homelessness to gainful employment, in line with a continuum of care philosophy. Such follow-up visits support self-esteem — a significant factor in the reintegration of a homeless veteran into the workforce — and improve job retention.

The Department has not received participant retention reports from all grantees for FY 2001. When these reports are submitted, a baseline for retention will be established.

Strategies: The Department expanded its technical assistance efforts to current service providers, with emphasis on first-time grantees to: (1) assist them in accessing Federal, State, and local community resources; (2) improve reporting systems at the local level; (3) establish a task force composed of experienced grantees; and (4) emphasize longer term follow up services, job retention, wage enhancement, and improved quality and applicability of training. In addition, the Department identified potential service providers/grantees, including faith-based and community organizations. DOL also assisted grantees by orienting them to the problems of homeless veterans, including substance abuse, mental and physical disabilities.

Living in a homeless shelter, Gordon, an Army veteran, was a drug user still battling his addiction, when he saw an advertisement by the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service and Education Center for free computer training. Gordon applied and was accepted. At the Center, he was fortunate to find advocates in its directors and computer training coordinator who encouraged him to pursue his interest in further education at the Community College of Philadelphia. After graduating and gaining valuable job experience in some of the shelters he had previously lived in as a resident, he found a job as a Placement Specialist/Job Developer in the Philadelphia Veterans Center from which he had graduated. Gordon says he is proof of how things change if you apply yourself, but most of all just don't quit!



PHOTO: MICHAEL CARPENTER

Goals Assessment and Future Plans: In FY 2003, the goal targets an increase to 56 percent of veterans enrolled in the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Project entering employment. The retention baseline will be established when all FY 2001 retention reports are received from our grantees.

Planning for the immediate future targets two key areas of emphasis:

Capacity Building. VETS, in a capacity building effort to improve a grantee's ability to serve the employment and training needs of Homeless Veterans, is initiating changes in the Grant solicitation process. A greater emphasis will be placed on grants from applicants that view homelessness as a community-based effort and on work with other federal, State and local community resources in serving this population.

Stricter grant funding. VETS has placed tighter constraints on the use of HVRP funds to ensure that grantees use these funds for employment and training services and solicit other funding sources (e.g., HUD to provide for housing, HHS to meet emergency medical needs, and DVA to serve counseling and treatment medical care) to meet other program delivery requirements.

Goals Assessment and Future Plans: In FY 2003, the goal targets an increase to 56 percent of veterans enrolled in the Homeless Veteran Reintegration Project entering employment. The retention baseline will be established when all FY 2001 retention reports are received from our grantees. ■

(Goal 1.1E — FY 2002 Annual Performance Plan)

Increase Employment for Persons with Disabilities

Implement 12 demonstration programs through grants designed to develop and test strategies and techniques that need to be implemented in order for One-Stop Centers and WIA youth programs to effectively serve persons with significant disabilities.

Results: The Department exceeded the goal. Sixteen demonstration programs for One-Stop Centers and WIA Youth programs were implemented. Additionally, 22 demonstration programs in other areas related to employment of adults and youth with disabilities were implemented.

Program Description: DOL established the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) to provide leadership to increase employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities. The new organization supports the President's *New Freedom Initiative*, with the objective of positively impacting employment opportunities for the millions of adults and youth with disabilities. The employment rate for persons with a severe disability in 1997 was 31.4 percent, and 82 percent for persons with a non-severe disability, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This low employment rate for people with disabilities clearly presents the magnitude of the challenges the new organization faces.

ODEP undertakes pilot projects to assess promising practices and effective workforce development strategies for people with disabilities. The goal is to obtain meaningful employment, training, and employment supports. ODEP's current efforts focus primarily on selecting, initiating, and evaluating pilot projects. Each pilot project should lead to immediate service impacts at participating sites. The results should generate data useful to make fact-based decisions in the workforce development system. Once a practice is employed, it should have the capability of success if it is generalized for replication in the broader workforce development system.

Analysis of Results: The 38 pilot projects initiated in September 2002 vary from two to five years in length. Baseline results for people with disabilities receiving services at pilot project sites will be available for reporting in the FY 2003 Annual Report. Outcome results, in terms of people with disabilities receiving services at pilot project sites as they move into the mainstream workforce development system, will be available for reporting in the FY 2005 Annual Report. At locations where individual pilot projects are initiated, baseline data for placement and retention rates will be established as a basis for measuring the impact at the pilot location on increased rates of employment and retention for people with disabilities.

Strategies: Pilot projects undertaken in FY 2002-2005 target the development of models to enhance the capacity of the workforce development system to provide services to people with disabilities. Partnerships with government agencies engaged in employment, training, and employment support programs provide the vehicle for implementation of the promising practices and policies proven effective on a pilot basis.

Tim is a 29 year-old man with developmental disabilities whose previous work experience had been limited to part-time jobs in fast food restaurants. Tim sought out the help of the Career Place, the one-stop career center near Boston that is a national demonstration site for DOL's Customized Employment Grant Program. Barbara, the Career Place's disability specialist first connected with Carol, a job developer from East Middlesex Industries (EMI), a non-profit community-based organization that works with the developmentally disabled. Barbara and Carol saw an opportunity to build on Tim's work experience. Together, they helped Tim develop a career action plan, craft a new resume, and hone his interview skills. Thanks to the partnership between the Career Place and EMI, Valley Services, a major food service company, hired Tim. He has embarked on a rewarding career, one that provides a competitive salary, full benefits and the independence Tim was seeking.



PHOTO: DOL

Goals Assessment and Future Plans: In FY 2003 the Department will initiate 42 new pilot projects targeted at providing employment, training, and employment support services to adults and youth with disabilities, and will establish baselines to measure the results of the pilots in improving entry and retention in employment for the pilot participants. During development of the Department's 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, DOL will establish targets for the employment and wage gains anticipated nationwide as the result of the adoption of the successful practices identified through the pilot projects. ■

(Goal 1.1F — FY 2002 Annual Performance Plan)

The Workforce Investment Act — Improve Participant Customer Satisfaction Scores

In Program Year 2001, participants will be satisfied with services received from workforce investment activities as evidenced by a rating of 69 or higher on the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI).

Results: This goal was achieved. The participant satisfaction score was 76.3 at the end of the fourth quarter of Program Year 2001.

Program Description: The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) envisions a workforce system that is customer-focused, business-led, and community-centered. The Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs delivered through One-Stop Career Centers provide individuals with access to career support and assist them in finding jobs. Establishing customer satisfaction benchmarks for job seekers who receive services from these programs assists States to develop continuous improvement strategies.

Analysis of Results: In order to gauge the participants' satisfaction with the services they receive, the Department requires States to use the American Customer Satisfaction Index. Because the Index is used widely across the private and public sectors, it allows not only assessments of internal performance, but also comparisons with other organizations outside of the workforce system.

The Program Year 2001 participant customer satisfaction score was 76.3, which is slightly less than the score of 76.9 achieved in 2000. This compares favorably to recent customer satisfaction scores for major U.S. companies such as Target, 77; Wal-Mart Stores, 75; Bank of America, 68; or the Allstate Corporation, 76. The Department has begun examining the customer satisfaction scores for Program Year 2001 in relation to the prior year to assist States to develop improvement plans and to adopt other possible corrective actions.

Strategies: Throughout 2000 and 2001, DOL and nine States collaborated on a project to improve the measurement of customer satisfaction, particularly at the local level, to support enhancements in customer services and program planning. The nine participating States received direct technical assistance regarding the measurement of customer satisfaction and the use of this information for program improvement and, following the training, assisted DOL to develop a Customer Satisfaction Handbook. This Handbook, now available to all States and the One-Stop system, provides survey examples, report formats, and technical guidance on the development and use of such materials. In addition to assisting States to measure customers' satisfaction with the services of One-Stop Centers, the Handbook is general enough for use across all DOL employment and training programs.

Through conferences, teleconferences, and face-to-face discussions, DOL works with the States to enhance the collection and use of WIA customer satisfaction data to improve performance and delivery of services to customers, to develop measures beyond those required by the Workforce Investment Act, and to help front-line staff become customer-focused.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: The Department encourages States and localities to continue to measure customer satisfaction, consistent with WIA provisions, as an important strategy for improving program operations, but has not included this goal in the Annual Performance Plans beyond Program Year 2001, as DOL focuses more directly on the core program outcomes – placement, retention, and earnings. The use of customer satisfaction measures will be re-examined in the process of reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act and implementing the Office of Management and Budget's common performance measures for Federal job training and employment programs. ■

(Goal 1.1G — FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan)

The Workforce Investment Act — Improve Employer Customer Satisfaction Scores

In Program Year 2001, employers will be satisfied with services received from workforce investment activities as evidenced by a rating of 66 or higher on the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

Results: This goal was achieved. The employer satisfaction rating was 74.2 at the end of the fourth quarter of Program Year 2001.

Program Description: The Workforce Investment Act envisions a workforce system that is business-led, customer-focused, and community-centered. Employers' satisfaction with services received from and offered by One-Stop Career Centers is integral to providing individuals with access to career support and assistance in finding jobs. One Stop Career Centers offer career support and job search assistance to individuals, and recruitment and job preparation services to help employers meet their human resource needs. Establishing customer satisfaction benchmarks for employers that receive services from these programs assists States to develop continuous improvement strategies.

Analysis of Results: To gauge the satisfaction of participants with the services they receive, the Department requires States to use the American Customer Satisfaction Index. Because the Index is widely used across the private and public sectors, it allows not only assessments of internal performance, but also comparisons with other organizations outside of the workforce system.

At 74.2, the Program Year 2001 rating for employers' satisfaction reflected improvement over the 71.3 rating achieved in Program Year 2000. The score of 74.2 compares favorably to recent customer satisfaction scores for major U.S. companies such as the Wachovia Corporation, 72; Lowe's Companies, Inc., 75; or Southwest Airlines Corporation, 74. More than forty States had customer satisfaction scores that exceeded 70. The Department has begun examining the customer satisfaction scores for Program Year 2001 in relation to the prior year to assist States to develop improvement plans and to adopt other possible corrective actions.

Strategies: Serving the business customer has become an important focus across DOL programs. Accurate measurement of employers' satisfaction with the services received through One-Stops enables DOL to assess the progress of the Department's programs in meeting the expectations of our business customers. Throughout 2000 and 2001, DOL provided direct technical assistance regarding customer satisfaction to nine States that used the training to assist DOL to develop the Customer Satisfaction Handbook. This Handbook, now available to all States and the One-Stop system, provides survey examples, report formats, and technical guidance on the development and use of such materials. In addition to assisting States to measure customer satisfaction, the Handbook is general enough for use across all DOL employment and training programs.

The Department created a Business Relations Group to improve employer satisfaction with program services by forming business partnerships to identify the needs of high growth businesses, develop strategies to meet these needs, and strengthen outreach and connection to the business community. Through conferences, teleconferences, and face-to-face discussions, the Department works with the States to enhance the collection and use of customer satisfaction data to improve performance and delivery of services to customers, to develop measures beyond those required by the Workforce Investment Act, and to help front-line staff become customer-focused.

Goal Assessment and Future Plans: The Department encourages States and localities to continue to measure customer satisfaction, consistent with WIA provisions, as an important strategy for improving program operations, but has not included this goal in the Annual Performance Plans beyond Program Year 2001, as DOL focuses more directly on the core program outcomes – placement, retention, and earnings. The use of customer satisfaction measures will be re-examined in the process of reauthorizing the Workforce Investment Act and implementing the Office of Management and Budget's common performance measures for federal job training and employment programs. ■

(Goal 1.1H — FY 2001 Annual Performance Plan)