

Aging Worker Initiative: Strategies for Regional Talent Development

Macomb/St. Clair Workforce Development Board



Grantee: Macomb/St. Clair Workforce Development Board (Michigan)

Industry Focus: Demand occupations in multiple industries

Location of Grant Activities: Southeast Michigan

Key Partners: Detroit Workforce Development Department; Oakland County Michigan Works; Southeast Michigan Community Alliance; Livingston County Michigan Works; Washtenaw County Michigan Works; Macomb Community College; Macomb Small Business and Technology Development Center; Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce; CVS; Bank of America; AARP Foundation and AARP Michigan; Detroit Area Agency on Aging (SCSEP grantee); Operation Able; Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan; United Way of Southeast Michigan Senior Collaborative; Michigan Office of Services to the Aging; Michigan Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Growth.

Grant Amount: \$979,400

Leveraged Funds: \$10,840,900

Challenge: Unemployment rates in southeast Michigan are among the highest in the nation. There has been a continuing loss of high-wage jobs related to the auto and construction industries over the last decade, and the skill sets of many unemployed workers do not align with those in growing industries. Due to the state of the regional economy and the auto industry, older workers are experiencing job loss and forced retirements before they may be ready – or financially able – to leave the workforce. Unemployed older workers have specialized needs with regards to developing career pathways, identifying relevant and obtainable vocational training, and receiving guidance to develop their own businesses. However, at this time the One Stop Career Center system in the region does not provide special consideration or customized services to older workers.

Addressing the Challenge: This project establishes a system to help unemployed older workers navigate and take advantage of the workforce and training services available in their local areas. Older Worker Navigators will be trained and implemented in One Stop Career Centers throughout the region. Navigators will facilitate the process of career exploration, development of appropriate career ladders, selection of vocational training and/or basic skills remediation, as well as provide job search, assessment, and case management assistance to older workers. A local community college is developing a Credit for Prior Learning program that will give credit to older workers for their prior learning and experience and help them obtain a degree/credential in a shorter period of time. The project will leverage significant Workforce Investment Act funds and the Michigan No Worker Left Behind program to provide training in demand occupations to project participants.

Projected Outcomes:

- 2,823 older workers will receive services from Older Worker Navigators.
- 1,397 older workers will begin education/training activities.
- 1,117 older workers will complete education/training activities and receive a degree/certificate.
- 894 older workers who complete education/training activities will enter employment, and 760 will enter training-related employment.
- 30 workforce development professionals will receive Older Worker Navigator training.

