Annual Performance Report

Workforce Information Grant PY 2010

August 2011

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions, Economic Research and Analysis Bureau (ER&A) met or exceeded the workforce information objectives and grant deliverables in Program Year 2010 for the Workforce Information Grant (29 CFR 97.40(b)(1)). This report summarizes achievements for each activity identified in the Statement of Work Deliverables. All data and publications referenced in this report can be found online at:

 http://www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html

A. Accomplishments

1) Populate the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with state and local data.

This year, New Mexico continued to support and update the Workforce Information Database (WIDb) with core data as required in the PY 2010 grant as well as with other data. Our primary WIDb analyst stayed abreast of current best practices during the program year and ensured compliance with guidelines issued by the Analyst Resource Center. Version 2.4 of the Workforce Information Database is currently in use.

We coordinated with a private vendor, GeoSolutions, for continued upgrades and maintenance of the state's LMI delivery system, which we call "LASER" (Labor Analysis, Statistics and Economic Research). The Workforce Information Database is an integrated part of the Virtual One-Stop (VOSS) system, referred to as the "New Mexico Workforce Connection," and is used by research staff and state and local WIBs. Further enhancements were again added this year, improving graphical and mapping capabilities using MS Silverlight. State staff conducted training in both the VOSS and LASER systems to familiarize users with the data in the Workforce Information Database.

2) Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections.

This year, both long- and short-term industry and occupational projections were produced using the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projections Workgroup and the Projections Managing Partnership. Statewide short-term occupational employment projections for 2010-2012 were completed and submitted ahead of the deadline. Long-term projections for the state's four workforce regions and four MSAs were also updated, covering the period 2008-2018.

We developed new publications highlighting both the short-term and long-term projections and disseminated them through a variety of means, including PDF pages on the website.

3) Conduct and publish relevant economic analysis, special workforce information, and/or economic studies determined to be of benefit to the Governor and state and local WIBs.

The 2011 State of New Mexico Workforce Report was published in January. The report was designed for use by policymakers including the Governor, legislators, the state and local WIBs, and the economic development community. This year's report consolidated information into a more readable format than in previous years, with improved graphics and more regional data. The report emphasized data generated by ER&A and was enhanced by a variety of additional inputs, including census data and education statistics.

ER&A staff supported the New Mexico Job Training Incentive Program, which provides subsidies for job training to companies expanding or relocating to New Mexico, with information on wage levels and occupational forecasts. We serve in a technical capacity and also as an advisory board member to evaluate economic development proposals submitted to the state's Job Training Incentive Program for funding.

New Mexico's ER&A staff provided analysis of proposed legislation during the state legislative session to determine potential impact on the state's economy. Various studies of the projected regional industry and occupational growth, as well as analysis of regional wage information, were supported by tools such as IMPLAN 3.0.

We made use of an ongoing subscription to a news clipping service to monitor employment developments in communities around the state. Events are categorized in terms of proposed expansions, contractions, openings, and closings. The data are used to compile briefing papers and community profiles that are frequently requested, and the information is also published in our monthly Labor Market Review. We work with the local university to incorporate these developments for use as add factors in the econometric model used to forecast state revenues.

ER&A economists are encouraged to write special articles for inclusion in the monthly Labor Market Review on topics of their choice. These articles typically discuss subjects such as new and innovative ways of presenting data and accessing labor market information that is often requested but not always easily found.

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

During the year, a number of new or updated items were added to our website. These can be reviewed at http://www.dws.state.nm.us/LMI/dws-lmi.html and in LASER at http://laser.state.nm.us/gsipub/index.asp?docid=364. Data produced under this workforce information grant include both long-term and short-term industry and occupational projections for the state and for each of the New Mexico MSAs and WIAs. Other

products posted on the Internet include special reports (such as the annual State of the Workforce Report), the monthly Labor Market Review, County Profiles, the Wage Estimates Delivery System, New Mexico Annual Social and Economic Indicators, job hunter guides, and data produced as part of the BLS cooperative agreement.

5) Partner and consult on a continuing basis with workforce investment boards and key workforce and economic development partners and stakeholders.

ER&A staff members continue to partner and consult with staff and board members of the state and local WIBs to provide data and support for purposes that include strategic planning and resource allocation. ER&A provides training for board staff members in the use of workforce information needed for informed decision making and customer support. Additionally, data developed by ER&A are used to forecast local employment trends and to highlight occupations that offer workers jobs with higher than average wages and offer employers access to a skilled workforce. Prior to making technical assistance visits, ER&A provides senior state workforce agency leadership with briefing report summaries and analysis of local economic conditions.

ER&A was involved with a project that would allow New Mexico's students to access a suite of educational and labor market resources on a single site that is supported by the state's Public Education Department and Higher Education Department. ER&A supports the long-term commitment to the future workforce needs of the state and is involved in ongoing projects with the state's educational community. ER&A staff members serve on boards and provide guidance to educational planners to ensure that the projected needs of the state economy are considered. Discussions are ongoing to develop an online electronic student management system, including career exploration, as an integral part of student educational decisions.

During the year we participated in meetings regarding developing a New Mexico longitudinal data system to provide answers on how students are progressing from education to the workforce. We also started to participate in a task force related to family-friendly policies and women in the workforce.

B. Customer Consultations

Our website provides customers and stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions or provide feedback, either by communicating with us electronically or calling one of our economists directly. The ER&A Webmaster receives feedback and evaluation of products and services on a daily basis, and we make it a priority to respond to questions within one business day. Experience has shown these methods to be successful in meeting our customer needs and expectations; however, we are constantly seeking new ways to further add customer value.

Customers frequently consult with ER&A to determine the impact of various economic events, such as business openings and closings. The bureau maintains good lines of informal contact with members of workforce boards, economic development

organizations, and other community and business groups to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information. ER&A staff makes presentations of workforce information to WIBs, educators, professional organizations, and other business and community organizations. At these presentations, customers are given the opportunity to comment on the information that we present and to suggest improvements. Workshop comments and evaluations are used to make future presentations more relevant.

C. Partnerships and Collaborations

ER&A was awarded a State LMI Improvement Grant which provided an opportunity to undertake its first attempt to gather baseline green jobs estimates, identify worker skills in green jobs, inventory and assess available education and training programs, and evaluate the federal and state investments that encourage future growth in the green economy. Results of a private-sector employer survey showed that in 2009 there were 35,800 green jobs in New Mexico, representing 5.9 percent of total private-sector employment. Primary green jobs accounted for 2.1 percent of the total. While green jobs were identified throughout the state, the majority were located in and around Albuquerque. The number of green jobs identified in each New Mexico region was as follows: Central, 21,500; Northern, 8,300; Eastern, 3,400; and Southwestern, 2,200. This grant allows the Department of Workforce Solutions to extend resources to rural communities by providing workstations to job seekers in a Mobile Workforce Center so that they have access to green-related and other labor market information important in their job search.

The Department of Workforce Solutions was awarded the Affordable Care Act State Healthcare Planning Grant to assess current and projected shortages in the health care workforce and to subsequently develop a comprehensive statewide plan aimed at addressing those shortages. Ultimately, the assessment and recommendations will assist policymakers in determination of workforce strategies that will result in providing better health care to all New Mexicans. New Mexico's population is diverse, and it will be the continuing responsibility of the grant to educate, recruit, and train providers not only technically and clinically, but also in culturally appropriate and competent ways.

The state's WIRED leadership team has continued its collaboration with ER&A staff to maintain an up-to-date directory of businesses.

New Mexico ER&A is an affiliate to the New Mexico Data Center/Business and Industry Data Center (SBD/BIDC). As a partner to the state data center we assist in the dissemination of census data throughout the state and are often referred questions and data requests from researchers and business leaders where their data needs overlap with labor market information. We also participate in SBD/BIDC affiliates workshops and data users conferences each November, using the opportunity to host breakout sessions on topics such as occupational projections. The audience includes business leaders, grant writers, and others in the data using community.

D. Recommendations for Improvements or Changes to the Deliverables

We encourage increased tracking of specific outcomes that result from state expenditures using the workforce information grants. With recent added pressures to reduce expenditures and cut government programs, it is now more necessary than ever to demonstrate the effectiveness of Labor Market Information programs, share best practices, and be accountable for every dollar spent.