

2004 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT *of* EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

For more information, call:
1-888 844-3577
Or visit: www.mdes.ms.gov

For a list of WIN Job Centers, call:
1-877-US2-JOBS
Or click on www.wininmississippi.org
And follow the "WIN Job Centers" link.

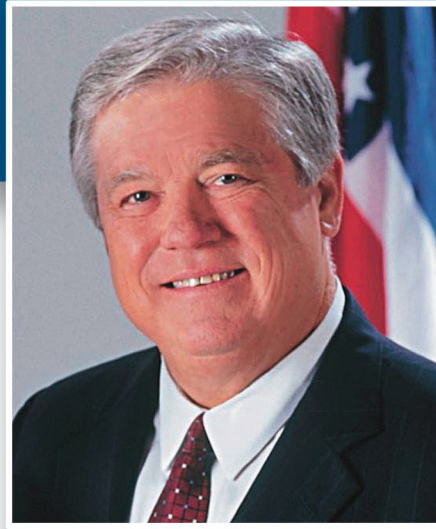


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INCREASING EMPLOYMENT IN MISSISSIPPI

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*Our goal
in Mississippi is to use
WIA and the State Workforce Board
to align our resources
in one system to provide employers
with well-trained
workers and individuals
with the opportunities
to get their first job,
their next job
or a better job.*

”

Haley Barbour, *Governor*

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Shaping the Future of Mississippi's Workforce Development

In calendar year 2005, administration of the WIN in Mississippi system and its network of WIN Job Centers shifted from the Mississippi Development Authority to the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. This move helped further streamline the collaborative efforts of state agencies and partners involved in workforce development.

The Mississippi Department of Employment Security is the major partner in the Workforce Investment Network in Mississippi. In 2004, Governor Haley Barbour worked with the legislature to pass Mississippi's Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004. The Act provided for an integrated state workforce development system, aligning resources and structures to more effectively and efficiently meet the demands of Mississippi's businesses and job seekers. The Act transferred the powers and responsibilities of the Mississippi Employment Security Commission to the new Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) in the Office of the Governor, beginning July 1, 2004. A new State Workforce Investment Board was formed and local workforce investment areas were combined, in order to streamline activities, reduce administrative costs, and focus on workforce activities.

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY: A New Partner and a New Era Begins

In calendar year 2005, the legislature passed a bill that transferred all responsibility and administration of the Workforce Investment Act to MDES. The Mississippi Department of Employment Security serves as the lead executive agency to support the State Workforce Investment Board to increase employment opportunities in Mississippi and improve Mississippi's economic health.

In addition to the WIA funds, MDES administers the funds received from the U.S. Department of Labor for activities and services supported by the Wagner-Peyser Act, Unemployment Insurance, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, services are provided for Dislocated Worker and Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Corps recruiting, and Veterans Assistance.



As part of the Workforce Investment Network, the Mobile WIN Job Center has all of the leading edge technology and equipment that can be found in many of Mississippi's 65 comprehensive WIN Job Centers. The vehicle has an Internet satellite uplink for job seekers conducting job searches. Businesses can also post jobs and screen for qualified workers. There are full-functioning computer workstations, and an instructor screen for use in on-site classroom programs. The MDES Mobile WIN Job Center provides on-the-spot services for employment seekers and educational activities regarding job training and career exploration. Utilization of the Mobile WIN Job Center has included high schools, job fairs and Rapid Response assistance.

MDES has taken the challenge in consolidation of the workforce activities emphasizing cooperation among state agencies to increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skills attainment and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the state.

MDES has changed, not just in location but also in service. Benchmarking job centers against best practices, cross-training local office employees, and moving toward WIN Job Center model standards throughout the state have been a priority. Through partnerships, the WIN Job Centers provide comprehensive services to all Mississippi businesses for employee recruitment and job applicants referral and to job seekers by offering job search and placement assistance, career counseling, job training programs, and other special employment programs. Worker training and skills up-grading are also provided in order to build a workforce that meets the needs of a growing state.

MDES has further implemented a set of goals and formulated strategies to produce a results-oriented strategic plan. The changes have been positive and exciting, and the mission is simple: **Increasing Employment In Mississippi.**

WIA AND WIN: an Overview

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 established the framework for the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi.

The WIN in Mississippi system includes over 65 comprehensive WIN Job Centers that are a single source, user-friendly resource for employment and training services for job seekers and businesses.

WIN combines federal, state and community workforce development programs and services and makes them easily accessible at the one-stop WIN Job Centers, or through on-line electronic sites.

WIN consists of locally designed and managed programs that provide customer choice and convenient access to services and information for the business customer seeking qualified workers and the job seekers as well.

In Program Year 2004, there were four Local Workforce Investment Areas in the state that received grants to administer various local programs.

The Boards of Supervisors of each area established a Local Workforce Investment Board comprised of local business and public sector representatives.

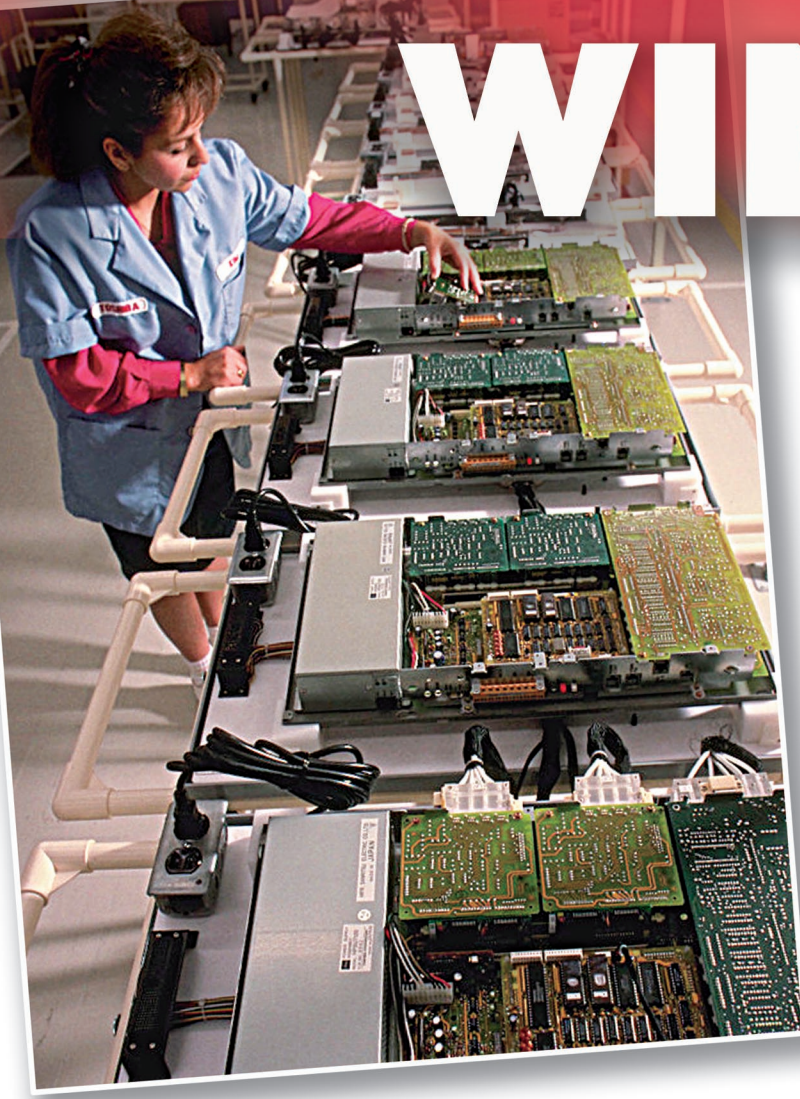
These boards and local elected officials are responsible for designing local WIN services to meet the needs of the community.

The local area boards develop plans that address local needs and are consistent with the overall vision of the Governor for workforce development.



The new MDES headquarters is a state-of-the-art facility and provides employees with the up-to-date resources to better serve Mississippi's job seekers and businesses. It is located on 15 wooded acres at 1235 Echelon Parkway in north Jackson. It replaces the former location on West Capitol Street, which served the agency since 1959.

WIN PROFESSIONALS AND PARTNERS



The WIN in Mississippi system represents a collaborative effort with private business, local elected officials and local and state public agencies. This collaboration ensures that the needs of local businesses and job seekers are met in the community, through tailored solutions designed to promote workforce development and economic growth.

WIN in Mississippi Partners*

- Mississippi Department of Employment Security
- Local Workforce Investment Areas
- Local Elected Officials
- State Board for Community and Junior Colleges
- Mississippi Department of Education
- Mississippi Department of Human Services
- Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Mississippi Development Authority
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

*May include other partners in the local areas

“

Working together, Mississippi's community and junior colleges, and WIN Job Centers help to produce a more competitive and technological workforce by meeting the needs of local businesses and job seekers. As the demand for more skilled jobs increases, it is imperative for both entities to continue designing and implementing programs that provide our citizens with a quality education and workforce training which allows them to gain the skills needed to move immediately into the workforce at higher wages, thereby, stimulating the state's economy.

”

Dr. Wayne Stonecypher

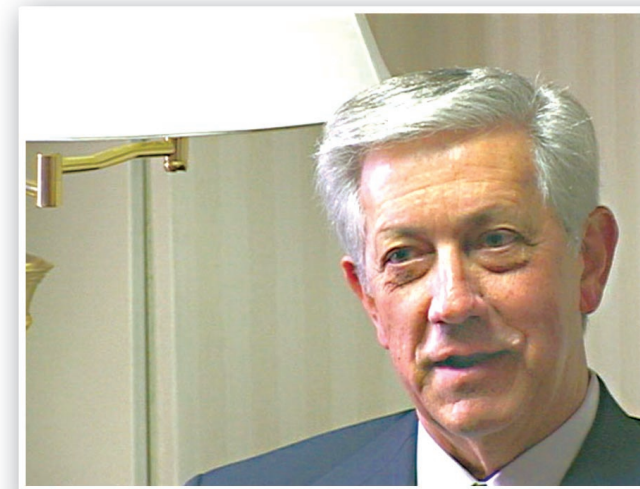
Executive Director, Mississippi State Board for Community and Junior Colleges

STATE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The State Workforce Investment Board is a vital part of the WIN in Mississippi system. The Board membership represents the diverse population of the state, with the Chairman of the Board and a majority of the members representing small and large businesses.

Other members include representatives of labor, education, local government and community leaders.

This dedicated group of individuals assists the Governor in meeting the federally mandated responsibilities under the Workforce Investment Act and ensures that the vision for an effective workforce development system is realized.



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All of the members of the State Workforce Investment Board have one objective in mind: how we can help Mississippians get better jobs and be better trained for those jobs.

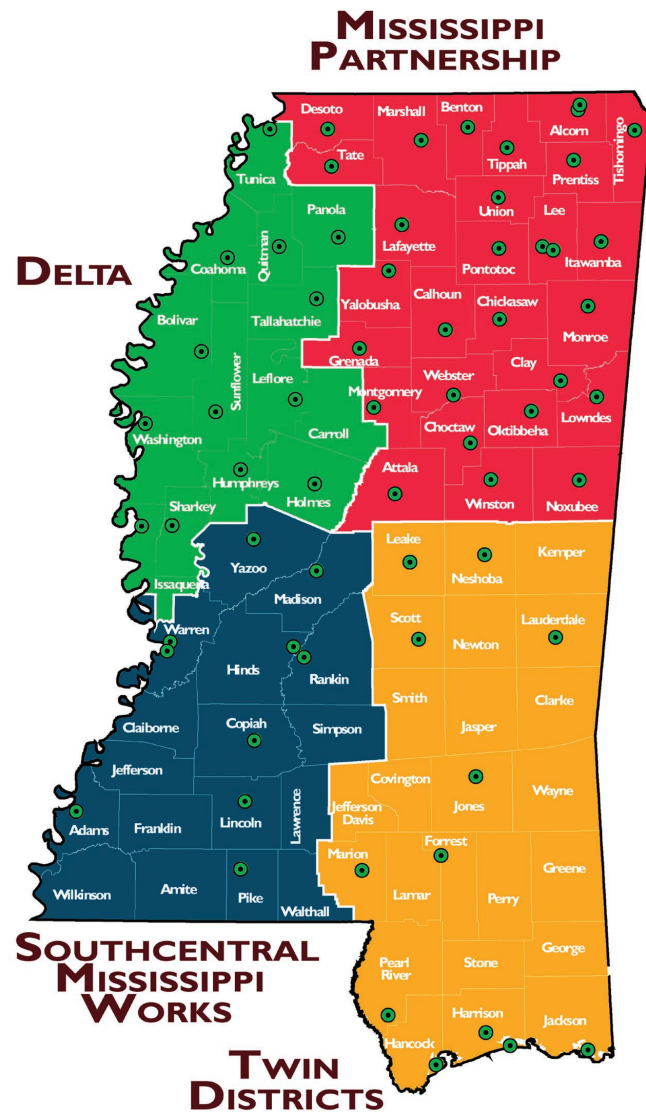
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George Schloegel

Chairman, Mississippi Workforce Investment Board

WIN IN MISSISSIPPI WIN Job Center Locations

DELTA



South Delta Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 1776
Greenville, MS 38702
662-335-6889

WIN Job Centers:

Batesville
 Tylertown Plaza
 10316 Woodland Road
 662-563-7318

Belzoni
 501 Hayden Street
 662-247-2264

Carrollton*
 Courthouse Square
 Lexington Street
 662-453-7141

Charleston*
 Child Support Office
 662-453-7141

Clarksdale
 Federal Building
 236 Sharkey Avenue, 3rd Floor
 662-624-9001

Cleveland
 119 South Commerce Avenue
 662-843-2704

Greenville
 800 Highway 1 South
 Delta Plaza
 662-332-8101

Greenwood
 313 Lamar Street
 662-453-7141

Indianola
 226 N. Martin Luther King Dr.
 662-887-2502

Lexington
 106 West Wood Avenue
 662-834-2426

Marks*
 263 East Main Street
 662-624-9001

Mayersville*
 Issaquena Courthouse
 132 Court Street
 662-332-8101

Rolling Fork*
 120 Locust Street
 662-332-8101

Tunica
 1054 S. Fitzgeralds Boulevard
 Robinsonville, MS 38664
 662-363-2764

MISSISSIPPI PARTNERSHIP

Three Rivers Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 690
Pontotoc, MS 38863
662-489-2415

WIN Job Centers:

Ackerman*
 Courthouse Annex
 662-285-6998

Amory
 1619 Highway 25
 662-256-2618

Ashland/Access Point*
 Justice Complex
 662-224-6310

Booneville
 101 Cunningham Boulevard
 662-720-7459

Calhoun City*
 102 South Main Street
 662-628-8345

Columbus
 400-B Wilkins Wise Road
 662-328-6876

Corinth
 31 CR 401
 662-287-3247

Corinth Affiliate
 714 Taylor Street
 662-286-3308

Eupora*
 114-A Highway 9 North
 662-258-7086

Fulton*
 34 East Marion Street
 662-862-3824

Grenada
 1751 Poplar Street
 662-226-2911

Hernando
 225 Loshier Street
 662-429-9874

Holly Springs*
 230 College Street
 662-252-7664

Houston
 665 North Jefferson Street
 662-456-3563

Iuka
 1107 Maria Lane
 662-423-9231

Kosciusko
 115 Northside Shopping Center
 662-289-2621

Louisville
 600-B North Court Avenue
 662-773-5051

Macon*
 16129 Highway 45
 662-328-6876

New Albany*
 301 North Street
 662-534-1933

Oxford
 2130 West Jackson Avenue
 662-234-3231

Pontotoc*
 29 East Washington
 662-489-3956

Ripley*
 111 East Spring Street
 662-837-7411

Senatobia
 4975 Highway 51 North
 662-562-3351

Tupelo
 146 S. Thomas Street, Suite A
 662-842-4371

Tupelo/Access Point
 2176 Eason Boulevard
 662-620-5250

Starkville
 100 Felix Long Drive
 662-323-2272

Water Valley*
 307 Main Street
 662-473-2445

West Point
 117 East Jordan Avenue
 662-494-4144

Winona*
 109 Liberty Street
 662-283-4105

SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District
P. O. Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39296
601-981-1511

WIN Job Centers:

Brookhaven
 545 Brookway Boulevard
 601-833-3511

Canton
 Madison County WIN Job Center
 152 Watford Parkway Drive
 601-859-7609

Hazlehurst
 1016 Carroll Drive
 601-894-2121

Jackson
 420 East Woodrow Wilson Drive
 601-321-7931

Jackson
 350 West Woodrow Wilson Drive,
 Suite 300
 601-981-2171

McComb
 416 Marion Avenue
 601-684-4421

Natchez
 310 Briarwood Road
 601-442-0243

Pearl
 212 St. Paul Street
 601-939-0786

Vicksburg
 1625 Monroe Street
 601-638-1452

Vicksburg/Specialty Center
 100 Smokey Lane
 601-638-2770

Yazoo City
 306 East Jefferson Road
 662-746-1141

TWIN DISTRICTS

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District
700 Hardy Street
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
601-545-2137

WIN Job Centers:

Bay St. Louis County Office
 3060 Longfellow Drive
 228-467-9572

Biloxi
 2306 Pass Road
 228-388-7997

Carthage
 202 C.O. Brooks Street
 601-267-9282

Columbia
 1111 Highway 98
 601-736-2628

Gulfport
 12121 Highway 49 North
 228-539-6800

Hattiesburg
 4100 Mamie Street
 601-264-0502

Forest
 229 South Davis Street
 601-469-2851

Laurel
 1721-B West 10th Street
 601-649-7813

Meridian
 1100 17th Avenue
 601-483-1406

Pascagoula
 4111 Amonett Street
 228-762-4713

Philadelphia
 1120 East Main Street, Suite 11
 601-656-2811

Picayune
 1839-B Cooper Road
 601-798-3472

* Part-time offices

WIN JOB CENTERS

Work With Job Seekers and Laid-Off Workers

The centerpiece of the WIN in Mississippi system, in terms of services and program delivery, is the network of over 65 comprehensive WIN Job Centers throughout the state.

These centers provide customers easy access to a variety of services in the areas of employment, education, training, human services and economic development.

Job Search and Placement Assistance

WIN Job Center staff helps job seekers create or update résumés, conduct job searches and prepare for job interviews. The staff also provides information on occupations in demand and available job training to help job seekers be more competitive in the job market.

Internet Access for Job Openings and Résumé Posting

Job seekers have access to Internet connected computers and the WIN Job Center staff are available to assist with computer-based career exploration and job openings.

Access to Office Equipment: Computer, Fax Machine, Photocopier

A customer conducting job searches has the use of computers, telephones, fax machines and photocopiers at no cost.

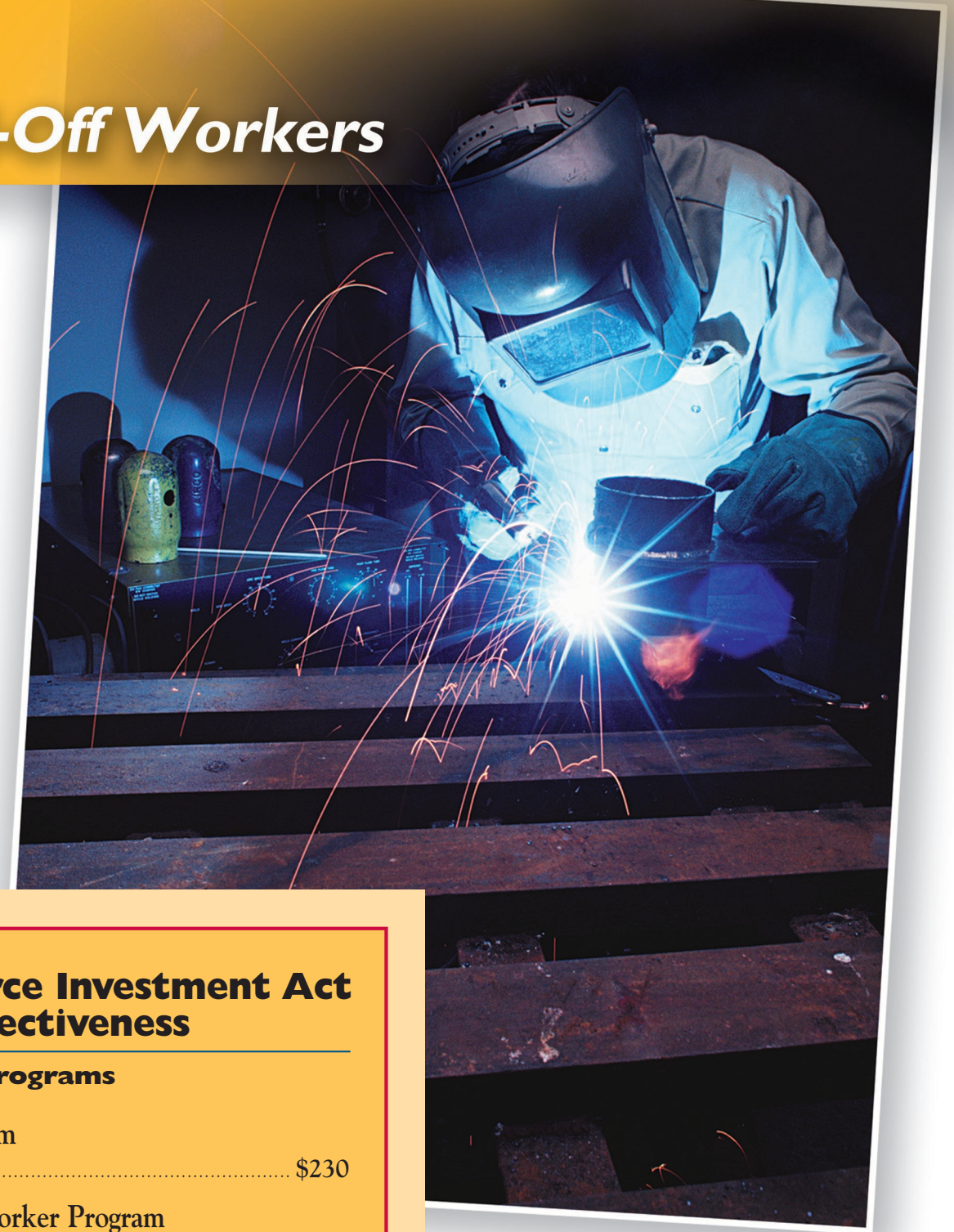
Information and Referral to Training

The WIN Job Centers are the customer's entry point to employment services and training programs.

Training programs are available to eligible individuals enrolled in WIA who cannot find adequate employment through normal job search strategies.

This assistance may include occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, skills upgrading, job readiness training and adult education and literacy activities.

Adult and dislocated worker training requires the use of an Individual Training Account (ITA) voucher that allows a customer to choose from a list of eligible training providers.



Workforce Investment Act Cost Effectiveness

Formula Programs

Adult Program

Cost Per Participant \$230

Dislocated Worker Program

Cost Per Participant \$290

Youth Program

Cost Per Participant \$1,970

Total WIA Program

Cost/Participant \$346

WIN Job Centers

Work With Businesses



If you're doing business in Mississippi – or if you're considering a move here – you'll find the WIN in Mississippi system and the WIN Job Centers are eager to assist with searching for qualified employees, researching state, local and federal regulations, exploring the state's economic development services and more.

Supporting the employment needs of businesses, the WIN Job Centers are the focal point of the WIN in Mississippi system. The services provided by the WIN Job Centers are vast and comprehensive. They serve as the state's workforce broker: bringing people and jobs together.

The WIN in Mississippi system works to gather and produce meaningful information that identifies business needs and employee skill levels. The WIN Job Centers provide information on a variety of services and referrals to training opportunities to help businesses meet their human resources recruiting, screening and training needs. Unless otherwise stated, services are provided at no cost to businesses.

Recruitment and Screening

- Recruit, screen and refer a variety of job seekers, ranging from entry level workers to skilled professionals
- Recruit full-time, part-time and seasonal workers
- Post job openings
- Host job fairs
- Partner with businesses to clarify job descriptions and eligibility criteria
- Screen applicants to ensure that the right workers with the right skills are interviewed

Training

- On-the-Job Training (OJT) is designed to help businesses find workers by reimbursing a portion of expenses incurred during the initial training process. The WIN Job Center reimburses a company up to one-half the cost of training eligible workers through OJT. The amount received is based on the trainee's wage at hire date. The amount available to be reimbursed depends upon the intensity of the skills required for the position. OJT is limited to 50% of the businesses' workforce and the discretion of the Local Workforce Investment Area's Board. Businesses may be reimbursed for up to six months. The length of training usually ranges from

160 hours to 1,040 hours per employee. Upon completion of the training, the company may be eligible for the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit. *(To be eligible, a business must have two full-time employees and provide Workers' Compensation Coverage.)*

- Refer businesses and job seekers to training programs that support the human resource needs of businesses
- Provide information on other types of training services such as pre-employment, incumbent worker and customized training which assist the company with the cost of skills upgrading.

Other Services

- Provide businesses with access to the labor pool
- Provide information about wages and employment trends
- Keep companies informed about state demographic and economic information
- Provide information on Alien Employment Certification guidelines. These guidelines are for businesses who want to seek foreign workers to fill company employment needs but are unable to recruit specially skilled individuals from local labor markets
- Provide office space for interviewing and on-site screening
- Inform businesses of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) which offers employers a federal tax savings of up to \$2,400 per person for hiring an individual who qualifies under a specific target group
- Assist companies with Rapid Response services to help manage a layoff

In program Year 2004, a video and companion brochure targeted to businesses was produced in a collaborated effort of WIN partners and professionals and the State Board of Community and Junior Colleges. Both the video and the brochure explained the WIN in Mississippi system and covered such subjects as: a menu of services, different training programs, the WIN partners and professionals and the relationship with the state's fifteen community and junior colleges. It was made available to the Local Workforce Investment Areas for distribution to the individual WIN Job Centers in their areas, as well as MDES Business Outreach personnel.



WIN JOB CENTERS

Work With Community and Junior Colleges

The workforce education program, administered by the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges (SBCJC), is designed to assist a Mississippi company in developing the productive workforce it needs.

The strategy for completing this goal includes a custom job-training program designed and carried out in partnership with the company through the local community or junior college that serves the county where the company is located. The local community or junior college will work with the company to develop a plan for the number and type of individuals to be trained and the time frame for training.

Those plans in the form of training projects are funded with State of Mississippi appropriated funds on a year-to-year basis, which is in addition to the federal funds that support the Workforce Investment Network (WIN).

Pre-employment Training

Pre-employment training provided by the local community or junior college can take from one to four weeks, while trainees attend on their own time. This training provides, among other things, an opportunity to demonstrate initiative in attendance and work ethics, and may include sessions in interpersonal skills, team building, diversity in the workplace, or some specific job skill before any commitment is made by the company to employ an individual.

Post-employment, Retraining, and Upgrade Training

Training is designed to meet the specific needs of the company and includes, but is not limited to: management skills, leadership, team building, maintenance, robotics, OSHA, safety, lean manufacturing, capacity building, and performance excellence.

Travel

Most of the travel and lodging cost associated with train-the-trainer instruction is reimbursable in accordance with the State of Mississippi per diem rate. All travel must be pre-approved by the Workforce Division of the SBCJC.

Media Development

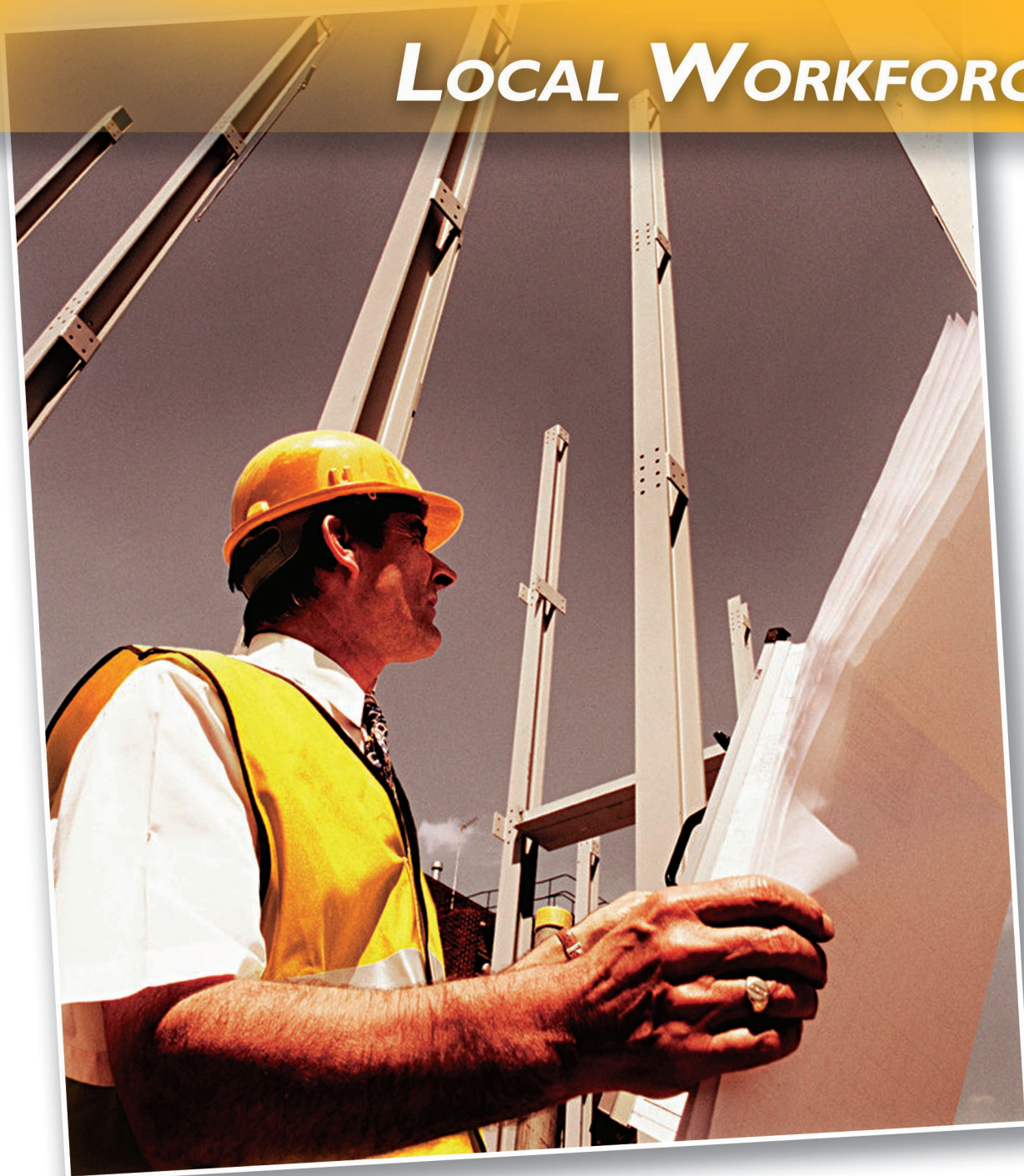
The Workforce Development section of the Research and Curriculum Unit (RCU) at Mississippi State University, through support by the SBCJC, can provide technical support services for the development of training media such as technical manuals, videos, and e-learning modules.

Tax Credit

The Skill Training Income Tax Credit is an incentive for eligible businesses to offer training to their Mississippi employees. The credit is comprised of the expenses the business incurs in that training. The training does not have to be held on the community or junior college campus to qualify for credit. For expenses to qualify for the Skills Training Credit, the training program must be offered by, or approved by the community or junior college in the district where the employer is located.



LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS



The four Local Workforce Investment Areas are charged with implementing the initiatives set forth in the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

The following is a brief overview of each Local Workforce Investment Area.

DELTA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA

South Delta Planning and Development District, Fiscal Agent
Primary Contact: Mitzi Woods
Post Office Box 1776
831 South Broadway
Greenville, Mississippi 38702
Phone: 662-335-6889
Fax: 662-332-5175

Description

The Delta Workforce Investment Area (DWIA) is comprised of fourteen counties in the northwestern area of the state and operates under the fiscal direction of the South Delta Planning and Development District. The role of DWIA is to provide funding and support to the WIN Job Centers and to the public and non-profit providers who operate the youth programs. Additionally, the DWIA provides assistance with Rapid Response orientation sessions to dislocated workers.

Local Area Accomplishments

New WIA Director Named – In November 2004, Mitzi Woods was named WIA Director to oversee operations of the Delta Workforce Investment Area.

VITA Services – The Tunica and Greenwood WIN Job Centers served as VITA (volunteer income tax assistance) sites to help individuals who could not afford professional tax preparation.

Cleveland WIN Job Center Upgraded – The Cleveland WIN Job Center was upgraded to a comprehensive site. This project was designed to develop a model case management system for customers in the one-stop centers as the focal point of all participating partner agencies to ensure that each customer has a meaningful job related outcome.

Rapid Response Session Held – Rapid Response sessions were held at Shaw, Clarksdale, Greenville, Lexington, Batesville and Cleveland.

DWIA Newsletter Published – The *WINning in the Delta* newsletter was published six times a year to highlight activities in the Delta Workforce Investment Area.

Specialty Site Funded – The Small Business Resource Center of the Mississippi Delta Community College funded as a specialty site, provided 1162 counseling hours to 243 clients and conducted 20 workshops for 285 clients.

WIN Job Center Site Renovations Continue – Renovations are progressing at Greenville, Greenwood, Belzoni, and Rolling Fork WIN Job Centers.

Youth Programs Expanded – Twelve youths received certificates from the Nurse Mentorship Nurse Aide Certification Program. The Nurse Academy was made possible through a grant from the Mississippi Development Authority to the Mississippi Office of Nursing Workforce and in collaboration with Mid-Delta Home Health Agency, Delta Regional Medical Center, MS Delta Community College, WWISCAA, and DWIA.

Another highlight in the youth program was the establishment of a concentration boot camp to provide tutoring for students preparing for the GED exam at Bolivar County Community Action Agency, Inc. South Panola School District's Out-of-School program had 24 participants receive their GED and 9 to receive scholarships to Northwest Community College.

The SELECT: Focus on Youth in the Mississippi Delta newsletter, devoted to highlighting youth activities, is published four times a year.

Workshop Attendance – DWIA Staff attended the workshops including Data Validation, Choices, DWIA Work Readiness Skills, and Common Measures.

Awards

The National Association of Development Organizations presented an award to the Cleveland Win Job Center for the WIN-Cap project.

THE MISSISSIPPI PARTNERSHIP

Three Rivers Planning and Development District, Fiscal Agent
Primary Contact: Clark Casteel
Post Office Box 690
75 South Main Street
Pontotoc, Mississippi 38863
Telephone: 662-489-2415
Fax: 662-489-0958

Description

The Mississippi Partnership provides services to 27 counties in northeast Mississippi. Three Rivers Planning and Development District (TRPDD) serves as the Fiscal and Administrative Agent for the local area. All one-stop WIN Job Centers are under a consortium of four one-stop operators who serve as local lead agencies. They include Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Northeast Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community College, and Itawamba Community College. Currently 13 youth service providers conduct WIA programs for economically disadvantaged youth.

Local Area Accomplishments

Out-of-School Youth Services Expanded – The Mississippi Partnership expanded its services to out-of-school youth during Program Year 2004 by implementing a system to provide incentives to youth who receive a GED during program participation. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) were also offered. One hundred youth received GED incentives and four youth received an ITA.

Certified Nurses Assistant (CNA) Program Started – During Program Year 2004, a Certified Nurses Assistant (CNA) program for youth in the Lift, Inc., a WIA program, was implemented. This program was a collaborative effort between the Mississippi Partnership Workforce Investment Board; Lift, Inc.; Itawamba Community College (ICC); Gilmore Memorial Hospital; and the Office of Nursing Workforce. Through this program, 18 youth received eight weeks of classroom training and mentoring/job shadowing under the supervision of a Registered Nurse. Upon completion of this portion of the training, the youth entered a four week CNA program administered by ICC, at which time all youth were eligible to take the state licensure test to become Certified Nurse Assistants.

Marshall-Benton Area Job Fair Held – The Mississippi Partnership helped organized the Marshall-Benton Area Job Fair. The event was held on March 1, 2005. Thirty-one employers attended the job fair and five hundred job seekers also attended. A total of 293 confirmed job offers were made. The Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services was present to assist job seekers with disabilities.

Business Services Expanded – The Mississippi Partnership has expanded the services to more businesses through local community colleges. The services are more tailored to the businesses' needs and are more beneficial throughout the workforce system.

Grants Received – East MS Community College, Itawamba Community College, Northeast MS Community College and Northwest MS Community College all received the Community College Incentive Grant which helped the local area expand workforce services through the community colleges.

WIN Job Center Improvements – Several WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Partnership Workforce Investment Area were enhanced or relocated. The Pontotoc WIN Job Center relocated to Highway 15 Bypass. The Amory WIN Job Center expanded its facilities to include a new computer lab. The Water Valley and the Ripley WIN Job Centers were renovated.

Awards

At each quarterly WIA board meeting, an adult or dislocated worker and youth participant are recognized and awarded a certificate for completing the WIA training program.

SOUTHCENTRAL MISSISSIPPI WORKS

Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, Grant Recipient
Primary Contact: James McGuffee
1170 Lakeland Drive
Jackson, Mississippi 39216
Phone: 601-981-1511
Fax: 601-981-1515

Description

Southcentral Mississippi Works (SMW)s Workforce Investment Area serves 17 counties in the central and southern portion of the state through a network of ten WIN Job Centers. Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, in partnership with Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District, acts as the administrative entity for the local WIA Board and the local elected officials and provides guidance and oversight for workforce activities in the 17 county area.

Local Area Accomplishments

Senior Transition Program Launched – Southcentral Mississippi Works Local Workforce Investment Area launched its Senior Transition Program for In-School Youth.

The program works to reinforce and enhance work readiness, college readiness and independent living skills of WIA eligible high-school seniors who are on track to graduate.

The program, coordinated through the area's WIN Job Centers, leverages local community resources and businesses to provide real world perspectives through a series of workshops that address each student's personal goals and needs as they transition from high school to their chosen next stage in life.

Awards

The Madison County WIN Job Center, located in Canton, Mississippi was recognized as the best One-Stop (WIN Job Center) in the state by the International Association of Workforce Professionals (IAWP). The One-Stop award recognizes outstanding workforce development services in a One-Stop setting.

The criteria for the award includes the extent to which customers have access to services, the provision of a seamless system of service, and flexibility in providing services that meet the customer's needs.

TWIN DISTRICTS WORKFORCE AREA

Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, Fiscal Agent
Primary Contact: Gary Lukens
700 Hardy Street
Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39401
Phone: 601-545-2137
Fax: 601-545-2164

Description

The Twin Districts Workforce Area is comprised of 24 counties in the southeastern part of Mississippi. Acting as grant recipient/fiscal agent for the Twin Districts Area is Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District. Staff services are provided by Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District and the sub-fiscal agent of the East Central Planning and Development District.

Local Area Accomplishments

Expansion of Local Area – The Mississippi Comprehensive Education and Training Consolidation Act of 2004 provided for an expansion of the Twin Districts Workforce Investment Area's (TDWA) 19 counties to 24, by adding the five counties that comprised the former Gulf Coast Workforce Area. The seamless transition is credited to the efforts of the combined staffs of the South Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) and the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES). As such, clients entering the WIN Job Centers for services were unaware of this major change.

WIA Enrollment Cited – During PY 2004 the TDWA began universal enrollment for the clients of its WIN Job Centers. A total of over 59,850 clients were enrolled into the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program and received services through the WIN Job Centers. In a recent presentation by a United States Department of Labor (USDOL) representative, TDWA was cited as having enrolled almost 10% of all WIA clients in the nation.

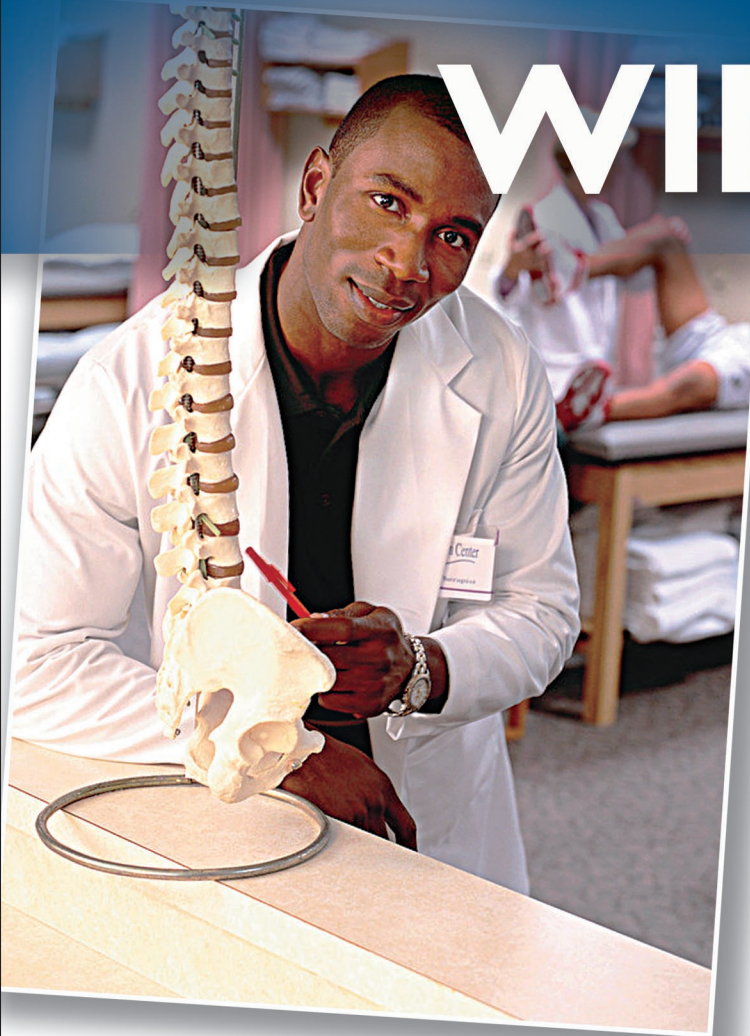
One of the goals of USDOL and the state has been to expend 80% of WIA funds within the year those funds are allocated. TDWA has exceeded this goal by expending all carry over dollars and 87% plus of the Program Year 2004 WIA allocation.

Awards

At the December 2003 meeting of the TDWA's Local Workforce Investment Board, awards were presented to staff for major accomplishments. Amanda Moriarty of the Columbia WIN Job Center and Robin Stewart of Picayune were awarded certificates of appreciation for training and developing procedures which led to a successful transition during the incorporation of the Gulf Coast Workforce Area.

ACCESS System Perfected – The TDWA perfected a system known as ACCESS that provided "real time" information on monetary expenditures for Individual Training Accounts (ITA)s and On-The-Job Training Programs (OJT). With expenditures close to maximum levels and training services being awarded to many WIA clients, accurate information of expenditures was crucial to achieving an effective operation. Plaques recognizing outstanding efforts were awarded to: Cliff McGinty of MDES in Jackson, Ron Adams and Robert Huddleston of the Hattiesburg WIN Job Center, Keri Pippin of Jones County Junior College and Diane Carlisle of SMPDD.

WIN Works in Mississippi in Many Ways



The Governor's Job Fair Network

The Governor's Job Fair Network works with the leaders of communities throughout the state to organize and conduct community based job fairs. The focus of each job fair is to help the unemployed to become employed.

The Governor's Job Fair Network goes only into communities that desire a job fair event. Community leaders including mayors, county supervisors, chambers of commerce, economic development offices, WIN Job Centers, private industry and media representatives are some of the entities that initiate the request for scheduling a job fair in their area. The job fairs have been tremendously successful in matching the unemployed with business and industry of our state. The primary reason for this is due to the local involvement of community leaders.

The Governor's Job Fair Network has a very narrow focus: to help those that are unemployed find immediate and meaningful employment and to help businesses meet their employment needs.

Navigator Program

In July 2004, Mississippi was selected to participate in the Disability Program Navigator Initiative. Funded jointly by the U. S. Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration, this initiative helps individuals with disabilities access the services and supports they need to reach their employment goals and become self-sufficient utilizing the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi. Nearly \$24 million has been distributed among 17 states to date, including Mississippi.

The Disability Program Navigator Initiative promotes full seamless access for job seekers with barriers to employment to those programs and services that enhance successful entry or reentry into the workforce and that increase employment. Navigators serve as resources to the WIN Job Centers and, as necessary, work in tandem with other partners of the WIN System to coordinate service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

Eligible Training Providers

Individuals who wish to access WIA training services first work with WIN Job Center staff to determine their eligibility to receive Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). Once approved for training, WIA participants may select programs from a catalog of approved providers. Since the inception of WIA, the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) in Mississippi has been published in a variety of formats, including printed copies, CDs distributed to WIN Job Centers and local areas, and an Internet-based list.

The ETPL is currently undergoing extensive enhancements to become a completely Internet-based system. The enhanced website has a projected live date of October 1, 2005 and will simplify the way that eligible providers and institutions wishing to become providers submit applications to have training programs approved for inclusion on the list. This new system will also speed the approval process, move the State to a paperless system and better meet the technology needs of the 21st Century workforce.

JOB FAIR RESULTS *July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005*

Total number of Job Fairs:	14
Total number of employers served:	799
Total number of job applicants served:	20,240
Total number of job offers made the day of the job fair:	6,276
Total number of projected hires during the next year from job fair applicants:	7,650