



ARKANSAS **WORKFORCE** CENTERS

Bringing People and Jobs Together.™



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT TITLE I-B ANNUAL REPORT

Program Year 2005
July 2005 — June 2006
The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board
October 2006

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ARKANSAS WORKFORCE CENTERS
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September 27, 2006

U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration
Attn: John R. Beverly, III
Administrator, Office of Performance and Technology
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room S-5206
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Mr. Beverly:

The State of Arkansas is pleased to submit our Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Annual Report for the 2005 Program Year. The information contained in this report was compiled and transmitted in accordance with the Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 9-06, dated August 15, 2006 and all of its related reference documents.

We wish to thank our many state and local partners for all of their tireless efforts in making WIA an effective means for helping our citizens make positive changes in their lives through education, training, and other professional development opportunities. Also, we want to thank the Department of Workforce Services and the AWIB agency staff for their assistance in gathering the information and data contained in this report.

Finally, we thank our State Workforce Investment Board Chairman, Steve Lux, and each of our board members for their continued guidance and enthusiastic participation in the outcomes from WIA initiatives. We hope that our report provides an overall picture of WIA in Arkansas.

Should you have any questions regarding this report or other WIA activities in our state, please contact Staci L. Croom of our office at 501.683.5373.

Sincerely,



Sandra Winston
Executive Director

SW/slc
Cc: Joe Juarez, Regional Administrator (Region IV)

Mike Huckabee
Governor

Arkansas Workforce Investment Board
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Sandra Winston
Executive Director

WORKFORCE
INVESTMENT
IN
ARKANSAS



BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

Arkansas' Act 1125, known as The Workforce Investment Act has as its primary purpose to outline a workforce development plan for Arkansas and to comply with the Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 by providing workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce investment systems.

These systems work together to increase the employment, retention, and earning of WIA participants and to increase occupational skill attainment resulting in an improved, qualified workforce, a reduction in welfare dependency, and an enhanced, productive, and competitive labor force.

By appointing a board comprised of talented individuals with specific knowledge and experiences, Governor Mike Huckabee ensured that his council of advisors would also be a network of statewide leaders from every sector effecting economic growth for the State. The Governor took the initiative to make WIA have a profound and lasting effect on the State and its citizens.

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board is the primary advisory body for workforce policy and guidance, and its role is vital to the continual improvement of the overall workforce investment system. In addition, the board and the state workforce system were provided with six sectors, later defined as *The Governor's Six Priority Areas*:

- (1) High Growth Initiative
- (2) Mature Worker Initiative
- (3) Career Pathways Initiative
- (4) Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Initiative
- (5) Youth Initiative
- (6) Persons With Disabilities Initiative

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

As research has shown, workforce investment programs develop and maintain a “job ready” workforce through training and skill enhancement, and each of these elements is critical for sustained economic growth.

The State Board’s guidance is also critical to the implementation of WIA programs to assist Arkansas youth transition from school to the world of work. Similarly, our programs provide core and supplement resources that move welfare recipients to independence and assist persons with disabilities become more self-sufficient.

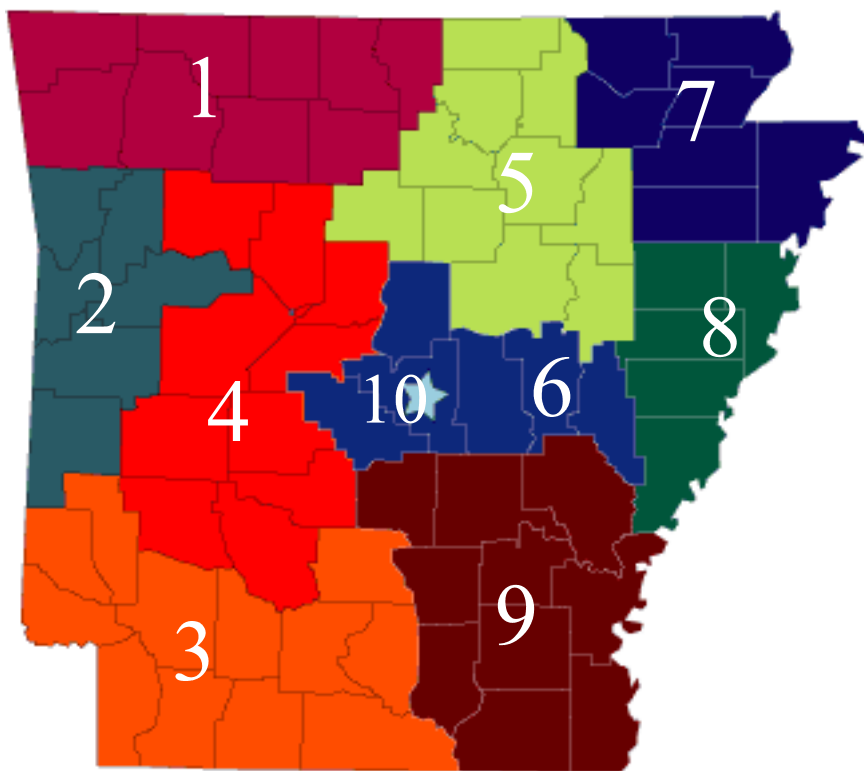
Finally, our programs are welcomed support for laid-off or displaced persons returning to work in comparable or better jobs as well as One Stop Service providers for communities and businesses that must cope with ever-changing market economies. But, none of these direct, person to person forms of assistance could occur without our Local Workforce Investment Areas and their partners.

The grassroots administration of WIA services is carried out through the State’s ten local workforce investment areas (LWIAs). These ten LWIAs divide the state into specific regional areas based on common geographic and economic factors. Each area contains at least one comprehensive service center and many other affiliate service centers.

Arkansas Workforce Centers provide locally developed and operated services linking employers and jobseekers through a statewide delivery system. Convenient "one-stop" centers are designed to eliminate the need to visit different locations.

The Centers are designed "by employers for employers" to find and train qualified workers and help jobseekers find new opportunities by integrating multiple workforce development programs into a single system. When it all comes together, it is a winning partnership in Arkansas!

ARKANSAS' WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS AT A GLANCE



1. Northwest



2. Western



3. Southwest



4. West Central



5. North Central



6. Central



7. Northeast



8. Eastern



9. Southeast



10. Little Rock



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Arkansas' workforce investment system shows its strength in our direct WIA achievements as well as our indirect and support measures to address unique and unexpected situations that can affect the labor and economic outcomes for our state. Our state has consistently exceeded target levels set by the U.S. Department of Labor regarding former WIA performance measures and the newly enacted common measures.

Although the performance numbers will speak for themselves, it is the statewide and response driven WIA activities that speak highly about our State and its leadership commitment to servicing individuals in transition, whether expected or unexpected.

By providing education and training services that help make the difference, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, its partners and staff would like to share a list of some of the many activities and accomplishments that defined the spirit of workforce investment in Arkansas during PY 2005:

- Arkansas received funding under a National Emergency Grant (NEG) and additional funds to employ Reintegration Counselors to provide immediate and necessary assistance to Hurricane Katrina Survivors who relocated or temporarily resided in the State. The Workforce Investment Board Agency worked with its state and local partners to assure timely assistance in various relief efforts for evacuees.
- The Youth Training Collaborative was established to address the needs of WIA youth in the state by forming a network of professionals and services to link youth with educational and training opportunities for high growth and high demand jobs.
- AWIB provided funding for local partners in several important WIA areas such as: Performance Enhancement; Common Measures; Employer Service; Business Planning; Workforce Center Certification; Youth Common Measures and Performance Enhancement; National Meetings; Procurement, Accrual Accounting; and Case Management Training.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

- AWIB and its agency staff partnered with the Department of Workforce Services in launching the statewide Mature Worker Initiative in conjunction with the Governor's Six Priority Areas.
- The AWIB Agency developed its Incentive Policy Guidance and the State Board awarded a total of \$300,000 in incentive funds across the ten local workforce investment areas for PY2004 performance.
- AWIB approved funding for a Public Awareness and Outreach Campaign for all of the local areas that focused on furthering name recognition, promoting public business familiarity with center services and expanding accessibility for both jobseekers and employers.
- AWIB approved eighty-seven (87) grants to sixty-seven (67) companies totaling over \$1.7 million in Incumbent Worker Training for PY 2005, and an aggressive and success-driven monitoring program was established to ensure the proper allocation and utilization of these funds.
- A statewide computer-based software system, KeyTrain was implemented to provide all local areas and providers with a standardized way to assess job seeker skill level, work readiness, and occupation skill matching for clients.
- In December 2005, Arkansas became the newest user of America's Job Link, the nation's One-Stop workforce development system. Our state is now part of a 29 state alliance that follows a philosophy of sharing "to provide quality, reliable, workforce development software designed to meet the current and emerging business needs of the workforce development community.
- One of the AWIB partner agencies, The Department of Workforce Services was awarded a \$5.9 million grant from the Department of Labor to train workers for advanced manufacturing careers in Arkansas as part of the President's High Growth Job Training Initiative.

- The Arkansas Workforce Information Core Products and Services Grant topped the charts with its outstanding public information and data resources through several media sources including:

Career Videos on CD-ROM

The Future Awaits Publication (*includes pre-employment basics for youth*)

Over 30 specialized reports on wages, staffing, and occupations

The NGA Skills Matching System (*specific to jobs in Arkansas*)

- Several websites were launched or simply updated to provide occupational and career information products for public use. Each is available at the following websites.

Discover Arkansas — *a web-based LMI delivery system*

www.discoverarkansas.net or www.discover.arkansas.gov

ArkOSCAR — *the Arkansas version of the Occupation and Skill Computer Automated Researcher*

www.arkoscar.org

2005-2006 Career Watch — *career magazine providing students and parents with over 20 areas of interests in the world of work*

www.careerwatch.org

Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) — *automated WIA Certification and Eligible Training Provider System*

www.arkansascrs.org

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

STATEWIDE
PROJECTS



THE GOVERNOR’S SPECIAL PROJECTS

Statewide initiatives were implemented to target specific population groups benefiting from WIA funds and services. These funds translated into four action items:

- (1) Invest in the implementation of a statewide computer and internet based service provider for career readiness management and assessments as well as work habit modules to enhance soft skills assessment--*KeyTrain*;
- (2) Provide support to *Arkansas’ 21st Century Community Learning Centers* that operate during “out-of-school” hours (before school, after school, holidays, weekends, or summer recess) through a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Education;
- (3) Provide support to the *State Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.) Program* that offered over 100 youth, ages 14-19, the opportunity to learn and work on college campuses for 6-1/2 weeks under a statewide comprehensive summer enrichment program encouraging high school completion and consideration of post-secondary education; and
- (4) Fund a *Statewide Outreach Campaign* to disseminate information to general and targeted populations about state and local new and current initiatives in workforce development.

Each idea addressed government actions, available partnerships, supporting evidence and data performance measurement opportunities, inclusion with state and national initiatives, and other partner agency recommendations.

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

MATURE
WORKER
INITIATIVE



THE MATURE WORKER INITIATIVE IS BORN

During the 2005 Program Year, Arkansas was chosen as a pilot state to launch a mature worker initiative later announced during “Hire Older Workers Week” by Governor Mike Huckabee. Based on information about how the percentage of older workers in the workforce is presently increasing while at the same time younger worker percentages are decreasing, The Governor selected this initiative as one of his top priorities for the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, between 2004 and 2012 up to 43 percent of the current workforce will be eligible to retire in the next 10 years. The labor force in Arkansas and across the country will experience a shortage of qualified workers as the Baby Boomers begin to retire. The following two generations will have smaller work participants, and sixty-one (61%) of the entrants age 16 –25, will not be fully qualified for the available job market.

In response to this inevitable shortage in the labor market, the national AARP office launched a workforce initiative to link featured employers with mature job seekers. AARP hopes to increase the awareness and appreciation of mature workers by developing relationships with the public workforce system, states, chambers of commerce, national and local training providers, trade associations, labor unions, community organizations, policy makers and business leaders.

The following Arkansas companies are part of AARP’s Featured Employers Program: Adecco; Borders Group, Inc.; Cendant Car Rental Group – Avis/Budget; Cingular Wireless; Comcast Cable Communications, Inc.; Express Personnel Services; Kelly Services, Inc; Manpower, Inc.; MetLife, Inc.; New York Life Insurance Company; Quest Diagnostics; The Home Depot; Universal Health Services; Verizon; and Walgreens.

Adapted from full article available at <http://www.state.ar.us/esd/General/PDF/ARMatureWorkerSummary.pdf>.

THE MATURE WORKER INITIATIVE TIMELINE

- December 2004 – AARP contacted Gov. Huckabee to see if Arkansas would participate as a pilot state for the AARP Mature Worker Initiative.
- January 2005 – Gov. Huckabee agreed to the request. Arkansas then received the AARP Mature Worker Concept Paper, and AARP reviewed Arkansas’ job matching system and other mature worker programs. Planning began with conference calls with AARP officials to discuss the initiative.
- February 2005 – Other state government partners who have implemented programs for mature workers were identified, and AARP announced the launch of its initiative on Feb. 28, 2005, in Washington, D.C.
- March 2005 – Local and national AARP officials met with state agencies to review the concept paper, discuss the state plan and define steps for implementing the initiative.
- April 2005 – The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board selected a subcommittee to work on the initiative.
- September 2005 – Gov. Huckabee signed a proclamation announcing “Hire Older Workers Week.” (Go to www.arkansas.gov/esd.)
- March 2006 – AARP Web sites were linked with the DWS and AWIB sites.
- April 2006 – Gov. Mike Huckabee formally announced the initiative, and the first regional meeting with community and business leaders was held in Little Rock.
- May 2006 – A regional meeting was held in Hot Springs.
- June 2006 – A regional meeting was held in Fort Smith.

Taken from: <http://www.state.ar.us/esd/General/PDF/ARMatureWorkerSummary.pdf>. This site also lists the events that have continued under this initiative in PY 2006.

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

INCUMBENT WORKER

TRAINING PROGRAM



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Arkansas Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP) is funded annually through the utilization of discretionary funds provided by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (AWIB). Applications are publicly solicited from established employers, industrial groups, and other non-profits doing business in the state for at least a year, and all training dollars are to be spent on their current workforce.

An Ad Hoc committee of AWIB members, private business representatives, and economic developers conducts a blind review of the proposals and determines the fundable award. Each funding award is unique because Arkansas' Incumbent Worker Training Program offers increased funding for employer specific training to participating businesses, and PY 2005 proved to be a banner year.

By providing approximately \$2 million in training dollars, Arkansas was able to award 93 grants and assist 67 companies with their training needs, resulting in higher wages, upgrades in worker skills, and in some cases, larger shares of the market.

During site visits by staff, it was noted that training was delivered in various forms, including traditional classroom settings, on-the-job experiences, distance learning opportunities, workshops, field maneuvers, seminars, in-house and/or computer based instruction, labs, and equipment-specific.

The IWTP project benefits business and industry by nurturing the skills of existing employees, increasing employee productivity and spurring company growth. The program has allowed Arkansas to better prepare its workers for the advanced manufacturing arena, and to compete in high growth industries of the 21st century.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW CONTD.

In many instances the bottom line of participating companies has improved, and resulted in increased wages for some of the trainees leading to upward mobility and creating additional entry-level positions. A program bonus is a boost to local economies and to the quality of living for all Arkansans.

Once the training segment is completed for the program year, participating company representatives submit a final report stating any readily apparent accomplishments. Additionally, participants complete a survey providing feedback and comments on the instructor, usefulness of the training, and their expectancies upon completion.

Through monitoring efforts and on-site visits, it has become increasingly clear that Arkansas companies produce some of the most diverse products in the world. Examples of those taking advantage of the Incumbent Work Training Program include, but are not limited to:

- The largest manufacturer of rubber bands in the world,
 - International training center for technical engineers/mechanics who analyze performance and service corporate aircraft while in flight,
 - Industrial size garbage disposals/crushers
 - Mass production of hen eggs and chicken processing,
 - Testing and production of chemical products and control bacteria
 - Paper and plastic container products,
 - Baby food and wipes,
 - Healthcare services,
 - Gigantic railcars,
 - Greeting cards,
- and many more.

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

WIA YOUTH INITIATIVE



YOUTH PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The WIA Youth Program is funded annually through funds provided by the US Department of Labor Workforce Investment Act (WIA) to the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (AWIB).

In PY 2005, Arkansas focused on the development of a collaborative organization to provide overarching programming, resource allocation, and case management to the neediest youth through the establishment of the Arkansas Youth Development Collaborative (AYDC).

The AYDC, one of the Governor's Six Priorities, has been in operation slightly over one year, and the development of action plans are in progress to reach the following goals:

- Expand the collaborative to better serve the neediest youth;
- Focus on connecting youth with high quality secondary and post secondary educational opportunities and high-growth employment opportunities through alternative education;
- Actively engage high-growth industry to develop relevant demand driven models to meet their employment needs; and
- Implement a systematic approach to improve the State's communication networks to ensure proper access to needed services for the neediest youth.

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

LOCAL NOTABLES

“ SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREAS”



Dislocated Worker

Cheryl Palmer was a dislocated worker coming to WIA for help to finish training with SAU Tech Nursing Department. She had worked for the same company for 11 years, and then was laid off. Her lifelong dream had been to become a nurse and to work with geriatric patients.

Cheryl completed her training with Southern Arkansas University-Tech in May 2006 and was hired immediately by Ouachita Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Camden. She often shares how thrilled she is to be at her present position, how she works as a floor nurse on the night shift so she can give last minute medications and see that the patients are settled comfortably for the night.

Cheryl admits that she took time away from her family to fulfill this dream, but she loves the clients and expresses all of the time that she is so thrilled to go to work doing what she loves best. She is so appreciative of the W.I.A. program and all the encouragement and financial assistance given to her. Cheryl graduated Cum Laude and was among the top graduates at the Arkansas State Nursing Board exam. She is definitely a “Local Notable.”

Adult

Angela Jackson is a single mother of two who, with financial help from W.I.A., completed her degree at South Arkansas Community College in El Dorado as an Occupational Therapy Assistant. When Angela came to the Dallas County Workforce Center and made application for assistance, the paperwork had to be processed quickly for approval to ensure her eligibility for the program she desired.

Upon completion of her studies, she obtained a job with a Nursing Home at a phenomenal salary, and continues to work for the Fordyce School District. She overcame so many obstacles to finish her training and now she is able to enjoy the fruit of her labors. She drove many miles for training and clinicals, but W.I.A. was able to give her supportive service for transportation while she traveled.

She has said, repeatedly, “If it had not been for W.I.A. and the assistance the program offered, I probably would not have been able to finish school as quickly as I did.” She is so grateful and does not hesitate to tell everyone what a great program this is and how the case managers really care for the people they serve. Congratulations Angela for being a Southwest LWIA “Local Notable.”

Adult

Tiffanie Kidd is definitely a “Local Notable.” She is a single mother with one elementary school age daughter. She has overcome so many barriers and obstacles to be able to complete her Nursing degree with Arkansas Baptist School of Nursing and Allied Health.

She graduated in June 2006, and is currently in the hiring process for a nursing position; however, she is temporarily employed with a Little Rock company that provides prescription medication information and assistance to people who qualify.

In spite of the fact that Tiffany wasn’t able to secure housing in the city where she attended classes, she drove to school everyday.

When her means of transportation failed, she called on a classmate who befriended her with a place to stay and a ride to school until she was able to secure transportation on her own.

She had to start her day at 4:00 AM in order to make clinicals. It is that kind of determination that makes Tiffanie special.

Her determination to finish school and become a Licensed Practical Nurse was relentless. She was one of two first recipients of the Ouachita County Single Parent Scholarship and has been recognized by the Single Parent Scholarship program with our partner the Central Arkansas Development Council as a spokesperson for their program and for WIA.

All the sleep deprivation, early morning hours, undependable car troubles, child care issues, and diligent study would have daunted others, but not Tiffanie. In the end, it is bound to pay off.

Adult Success

Summer Byrum is a WIA client that entered our program while working in a small grocery store and had no means of improving her skills. Through WIA funding and support, Ms. Byrum is now an RN working at National Park Medical Center making almost 3 times her previous salary. That's local and notable!

Youth Success

Lynsey Moore, a single mom with a newborn, was enrolled in the Youth Employment Service program where she began with her GED, parenting skills, interactive literacy and WAGE program. After successfully completing these tasks, Lynsey continues striving to improve her skills to provide a better life for herself and her daughter. Lynsey enrolled in college, completed her first semester, and was recently awarded a Single Parent Scholarship. Lynsey is one of our very special "Local Notables."

Katrina NEG Success

Peter Nakhid was the first Katrina Evacuee that entered our Hot Springs Workforce Center. We assisted him and his family with clothing and assisted Mr. Nakhid and his wife with job search.

Mr. Nakhid began volunteering as a counselor with the Red Cross in Hot Springs. Mr. Nakhid and his family wished to relocate to Atlanta, so we called a former Arkansas employee who works in an Atlanta Workforce Center and obtained information to give to Mr. Nakhid.

The Nakhid's went to that Center and were directed to a Church outside of Atlanta, where Mr. Nakhid found employment as a counselor.

He was then assigned to a project in Haiti, a "Home for Sisters" as well as hospice for the infirmed. Today, Mr. Nakhid is the Home Director, and in our opinion, he is a "Local Notable that went Global!"



December 6, 2002 is a date that *Michael Adkerson* will not soon forget. On that date Michael became a dislocated worker for the second time in 18 months. He had worked at local boat manufacturer that closed its doors due to bankruptcy.

He found a job with another local manufacturer a few months later. After working for 9 months he was told that the line he was working on was being sent overseas and he no longer had a job. Some people would have taken this as bad news—not Michael. He looked at it as an opportunity to further his education.

Michael came into the Arkansas Workforce Center knowing he wanted to complete a degree in business. He utilized the UI, TAA, TRA and WIA programs to ensure success. There were sacrifices for his fiancé and their four children, but he completed his Associate of Applied Science in Business Technology and was hired by a new employer to our area, Whisper Creek Log Homes.

He began in Quality Control and was promoted, in less than a year, to Production Manager. He now has a higher earning potential than he ever dreamed possible. Some people might refer to Michael as the come-back kid, but to us, he is definitely one of our very special “Local Notables.”

Adult Success

Stephanie Patterson was enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program by the Blytheville WIA Workforce Center in December of 2004.

She had been an office manager at a local business, but she was laid off when business slowed. She knew that there was a great demand for registered nurses, and sought assistance through the Blytheville WIA Workforce Center to obtain her goal of becoming a RN.

She graduated from Arkansas Northeastern College on May 12, 2006 with her Associates in Applied Science Nursing Degree. She currently works for a hospital in Memphis, TN making four times her former salary with increased job security.

Stephanie is glad she made it through the trying and difficult times of being unemployed and is very grateful for the opportunity the WIA program gave her. She believes that she is proof that even a negative situation, like a layoff, can be turned into something positive, and that is why she is a Northeast “Local Notable.”

Katrina NEG Success

Janet Alexander was displaced, by Hurricane Katrina, from her home and job. After staying in shelters in other areas of the state, she ended up in Jonesboro. She came into the Jonesboro Workforce Center in search of employment, but had a difficult time finding anything that suited her interests or experience.

Janet had been the receptionist for a company that owned numerous restaurants in the New Orleans area and was accustomed to a very busy work environment.

The Department of Workforce Services (DWS) referred Janet to Workforce Investment Act (WIA) for assistance where she was enrolled in Temporary Subsidized Employment and placed with DWS at the Jonesboro Workforce Center.

She was the perfect candidate to assist clients with their computer job search, resume completion and the distribution of supportive services information.

Janet did an excellent job and her work ethic was noticed by everyone in the office. When DWS had an opening for an intermittent interviewer, Janet applied and was hired. She is an inspiration to others and definitely a Northeast LWIA “Local Notable.”

Youth Success

Bridgette Davis was referred to the Jonesboro Workforce Center for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services by the HUD Self-Sufficiency Program.

She had worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) before moving to Jonesboro, but her license expired during transition, and she could no longer work in that field. She needed to find a job and get a home for her children.

After assessment, she was enrolled in the work experience program and placed with Crowley's Ridge Development Council (CRDC). She worked assisting clients applying for the Energy Assistance Program. Impressed with Bridgette's dependability, her supervisors encouraged her to apply when job openings were posted. She did and was quickly hired!

She has been working as a secretary, for CRDC, for about 10 months and is currently being considered for a promotion to a position with more responsibility and higher pay. Her goal is to buy a computer and begin taking online classes in January toward her degree. Bridgette is definitely a "Local Notable!"

Youth Success

In May 2005, the Blytheville WIA Workforce Center enrolled **Erica Gillard** in its youth program. She was a single parent, a high school dropout, and having difficulty finding a job.

Once enrolled, Erica took classes at the local adult education center and in August of 2005 she obtained her GED. Upon completion, Erica enrolled in the work experience program and was placed at the Mississippi County Court House as a clerk.

The work experience activity helped Erica gain the skills necessary to get and keep that job. She also enrolled at Arkansas Northeastern College and took some basic courses to improve other skills.

In May, she was offered a job at Lowe's Home Improvement Center as a customer service representative. She loves her job and is proud to be a Northeast "Local Notable."

Program Highlights that are “Local and Notable”

During PY 05, two affiliate workforce centers relocated to the existing local Department of Workforce Services offices. WIA staff are now located within the DWS offices, which are now known as Arkansas Workforce Centers.

Case managers continued to attend staff development and capacity building training as well as statewide and national training conferences.

A new pilot program was developed to target out-of-school youth. The Dropout Recovery program, based at Batesville High School, identifies out-of-school youth throughout Independence County.

Once identified, staff coordinators helped youth overcome their barriers to completing secondary education, and provide the services needed for the student to return to high school for a diploma, obtain their GED, and enter either the job market, postsecondary education, or the military.

Services are customized to the individual student’s needs and have included tutoring, basic skills improvement, arranging for a final test to receive class credit, job referrals, interview skills training, and resume writing.

Since January 06, 15 participants have been served through the Program, which was renewed for a full year beginning July 1st.

Katrina NEG

Roland Whitney is a success story and our very special “Local Notable.” He had limited experience working in mechanics, but without a certification from an accredited program his salary capped at little more than minimum wage.

Following Hurricane Katrina, he evacuated New Orleans to White County, where Connie Jackson of North Central Arkansas Development Council (the North Central area’s One-stop Operator) enrolled him in training under the Hurricane Katrina National Emergency Grant.

The grant paid his tuition, along with support services, so he could enroll in diesel mechanics training at ASU-Searcy. He attended the program and successfully graduated. The weekend after his graduation, he traveled to New Orleans, and on the following Monday Roland started work at the Port of New Orleans making three times his former salary.

Without the certification he received through the Katrina NEG, he could never have earned the wages he is currently receiving or began rebuilding his life in New Orleans as quickly.

Adult Success

Jason Tate took his grandmother’s advice and came into the Workforce Center at Helena. He was working at Pizza Hut for a respectable salary, but knew he wanted more out of life. He decided to seek out his career options, so he met with Reba Wesley, Lead Career Advisor at Helena, and she explained the services available to him through the center.

He made several attempts to find a better paying job but was unsuccessful. He decided that he wanted to obtain his Commercial Drivers License and drive tractor-trailers. With funding provided through Title I, Jason attended C-1 Truck Driver Training School in Little Rock.

He obtained his CDL and now works full time as a Truck Driver and earns twice his former salary. Since working in his newfound career, Jason has married and had a son. His career goal is to purchase a truck so he can do contract work. He says coming to the Workforce Center is one of the best decisions he has made and how he became one of our “Local Notables.”



The Eastern Local Workforce Investment Area

“Local Notable”

Katrina NEG Success



As I reflect back to the first time I came to the Workforce Center, I remember feeling emotionally overwhelmed and socially disorientated. I was trying to find the strength to hold it together and make sense out of what was left of my shattered life as a result of Hurricane Katrina. I fulfilled my first appointment with Mrs. Patterson, which resulted in a proficient and positive orientation of the Katrina NEG. I was assigned a temporary job with the Turrell High School. I’ve been introduced to an extended family at the Workforce Center who was not only concerned about my economic hardship, but also sensitive to my emotional and mental well-being.

It’s been one year, and I can proudly say that I have successfully completed the Temporary Work Experience program. In fact, after some professional grooming and training with Mrs. Patterson and the workforce staff, I’ve developed marketable interpersonal skills that have landed me a permanent employment and continuation with higher education. I am currently hired as a Teacher’s Aide at the local high school, a candidate for the Arkansas Licensure Program, and currently a member of the Arkansas Archaeological Society.

I am grateful to all of the incumbents that participated and made it possible for me to transition back into the main stream of life. There will never be enough words in the English language that can express my gratitude, but just to say a few, thank you very much.

Respectfully,

Dawn M. Lawrence

“Local Notable”

Adult Success



My first visit to Arkansas Workforce Center was a great and wonderful experience. The receptionist at the front desk was very nice after I informed her about what I was interested in doing. She helped me make an appointment with Sharon Warren and Angela Vornes (Career Advisors). Each of them helped me in every way they could.

I wanted to further my career by getting CNA Certified, so they placed me with a work experience opportunity at Crittenden Adult Day Services where I learned the skills to become a Certified Nursing Assistant.

I came back to Arkansas, after moving to Texas briefly; the Workforce Center had me complete an application to work under a Job Training Contract with Warren Unilube. After only one week, I was hired.

I now work at Warren Unilube and I am very happy. Since obtaining employment with Warren Unilube, I have received a promotion to a position with greater responsibilities. Thanks to the caring people at Arkansas Workforce Center, I now have a job that I am proud of and feel that I can be successful in whatever I try to accomplish.

Thank You

Michelle Morris Vaughn

STATESIDE STEEL AND WIRE, INC.

The meeting began like many others in the West Memphis Workforce Center. Attendees talked about a new company in West Memphis that would manufacture chain link fencing to be shipped around the world. The company had located a potential building but would need staff to handle the operation, and that's where the Workforce Center came in to play.



By the end of the meeting it was agreed that all of the new jobs (up to 85) would be posted in Arkansas Job Link, and applications would be taken at the local workforce center. The



workforce center assisted in providing business services such as: scheduling interviews; providing criminal background checks; drug screenings; and motor vehicle reports.

An initial job fair was held at the local Holiday Inn and over 300 applicants applied. Assessments were completed, screenings done, and interviews scheduled. Seven months later, Stateside Steel and Wire is operational in West Memphis with a full complement of staff, all processed through the Workforce Center in West Memphis. Some staff were hired as On the Job Training participants.



The Department of Economic Development provided orientation and training for the start up staff. According to Vice-President Jeff Ketterer, "The cooperation has been amazing in West Memphis!"

ARKANSAS

PY 2005 into PY 2006

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT IN ARKANSAS

“GREAT EXPECTATIONS”



The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and its partners expect great things during the 2006 program year. Many of our local areas and their education and training partners are experiencing numerous opportunities to be on the forefront of labor and economic change in the coming years.

Although plans are in place to ensure that the most *comprehensive and unified approach to workforce investment* will continue to be implemented throughout our state, Arkansas plans to take the advice of the Department of Labor in looking at possibilities within *regional economies*.

By focusing data trends, labor resources, and market economies regionally, WIA leaders hope to find more ways to utilize WIA dollars to help our citizens make positive changes in their professional lives and economic well-being.

In addition to the growing opportunities within our state for change and growth, Arkansas' workforce investment leaders are also seeking more opportunities to *network and collaborate with states in our geographic region* who share similar labor market issues and unique population needs.

For example, our state continues to share the cause to provide better economic opportunities for citizens in the *Delta Regions* of Arkansas and Mississippi, consistency in services for clients in *Texarkana, AR and Texarkana, TX*, and coordinated employer responses for the *oil and gas industry demands in Arkansas, Texas, and Oklahoma*.

Nevertheless, Arkansas is still unique and a natural for positive change centered on workforce investment initiatives. Recent economic developments have made it abundantly clear that our state and its citizens will be in a prime position for many exciting labor opportunities.

Our challenge and mission is to be proactive in providing opportunity through education and training that will meet and satisfy client needs, employer wants, and market demands. This is just the beginning and below we share more about *what the AWIB believes is "On The Horizon."*

ON THE HORIZON

Look for more news about these activities, our partners, and other exciting things to come from our State in PY 2006:

- The *natural gas boom* in north-central Arkansas is expected to create nearly 2500 jobs by 2008, and the two-year college at Morrilton is positioned to be a primary partner in training potential job seekers in partnership with the Northwest, West Central, and Western Local Workforce Investment Areas.
- Arkansas expects to be at the table regarding *energy outlook* discussions in the U.S. and other discussions of concerns regarding *natural gas supplies*. Major manufacturing companies will continue to be critical to the possible growth opportunities for Arkansas's labor market and economic outlook.
- The *Arkansas Association of Two Year Colleges'* (AATYC) twenty-two (22) members is a vital partner within the Arkansas Workforce Investment System and continues to provide one of the primary resources for education and training to meet high demand high growth industry demands. The AATYC's Workforce Consortium solicits input from AWIB and other partners to identify training needs, best service response methods, and how to prepare for future global economic challenges.
- The nationally noted *Arkansas Career Pathways* Initiative will continue to make strides in serving our states' populations with the greatest need through coordinated efforts by the Department of Higher Education and eleven (11) of the state's two-year colleges an alternative model for delivering sector-focused post-secondary training.
- Arkansas's LMI commitment to *Workforce Information Delivery* systems will include partnership and consultation with the AWIB and LWIBs, publishing of special studies and economic analyses, and development and finalization of an internet-based Lifestyle/Budget Calculator that lets students project the education requirements associated with high wage occupations and desired standards of living. Check it out at *Real-Life In Arkansas* (www.real-life.arkansas.gov).

ARKANSAS

PY 2005

STATE AND LOCAL PERFORMANCE DATA



The State of Arkansas continuously seeks to improve all of its workforce services, and values performance measures as the reflection of the most integral part of our mission—serving our citizens effectively. The following tables represent Arkansas’ state level and local area performance data for PY 2005.

Table A – Workforce Investment Act Customer Satisfaction Results

Table B – Adult Program Results At-A-Glance

Table C – Outcomes for Adult Special Populations

Table D – Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program

Table E – Dislocated Worker Program Results At-A-Glance

Table F – Outcomes for Dislocated Worker Special Populations

Table G – Other Outcome Information for the Dislocated Worker Program

Table H – Older Youth Results At-A-Glance

Table I – Outcomes for Older Youth Special Populations

Table J – Younger Youth Results At-A-Glance

Table K – Outcomes for Younger Youth Special Populations

Table L – Other Reported Information

Table M – Participation Levels

Table N – Cost of Program Activities

Table O – Local Performance

ARKANSAS

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STATE AND LOCAL WIA PERFORMANCE DATA

TABLE N
“COST OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES”
DATA FOR LWIAS
NOT INCLUDED ON THESE REPORTS



ARKANSAS

PY 2005

INCUMBENT WORKER

TRAINING PROGRAM

FULL REPORT



ARKANSAS

PY 2005

TENTATIVE EVALUATION PLAN FOR “I CAN LEARN PROJECT”



I CAN LEARN

The Arkansas Workforce Investment Board has invested in the I Can Learn Education System to improve eight grade math scores of students in schools in the Delta regions of Eastern Arkansas.

The I Can Learn Education System provides computer assisted instruction combined with individual tutoring. The system utilizes a comprehensive instructional system that incorporates thorough student assessment and gap analysis, parent-teacher consultations including goal setting sessions, personalized study plans, learning software designed to engage and motivate students, 1:1 tutoring by credentialed teachers, and automated progress and performance reports to accelerate student achievement. The system utilizes a modified direct instruction approach which includes a pretest, introduction to the lesson through a real-world problem, content presentation, individual and guided practice, and posttest.

The investment by AWIB presently impacts seven high schools with software packages and an update for an additional junior high school:

School	Usage	Full Time Usage
1. Central High School (West Helena)	Provide concentrated focus on math/algebra concepts	Yes
2. Lee High School (Marianna)	Used to reinforce district selected textbooks	Yes
3. Augusta High School (Augusta)	Full time exclusive math/algebra class	Yes
4. Barton High School (Lexa)	Full time exclusive math/algebra class	Yes
5. Clarendon High School (Clarendon)	Used to double dose students with math concepts	Yes
6. Turrell High School (Turrell)	Used to double dose students with math concepts	Yes
7. Dumas High School (Dumas)	Full time exclusive math classes	Yes
8. Osceola Jr.	Used to double dose students with math concepts	Yes

Site Visit Schedules

SCHOOL	Site Visit Schedule
1. Barton High School (Barton)	First visit October 11, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
2. Clarendon High School (Clarendon)	First visit October 11, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
3. Central High School (West Helena)	First visit October 11, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
4. Lee High School (Marianna)	First visit October 11, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
5. Turrell High School (Terrell)	First Visit October 12, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
6. Osceola Junior High (Osceola)	First visit October 12, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
7. Dumas High School (Dumas)	First visit October 13, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.
8. Augusta High School (Augusta)	First visit October 10, 2006, Quarterly thereafter.

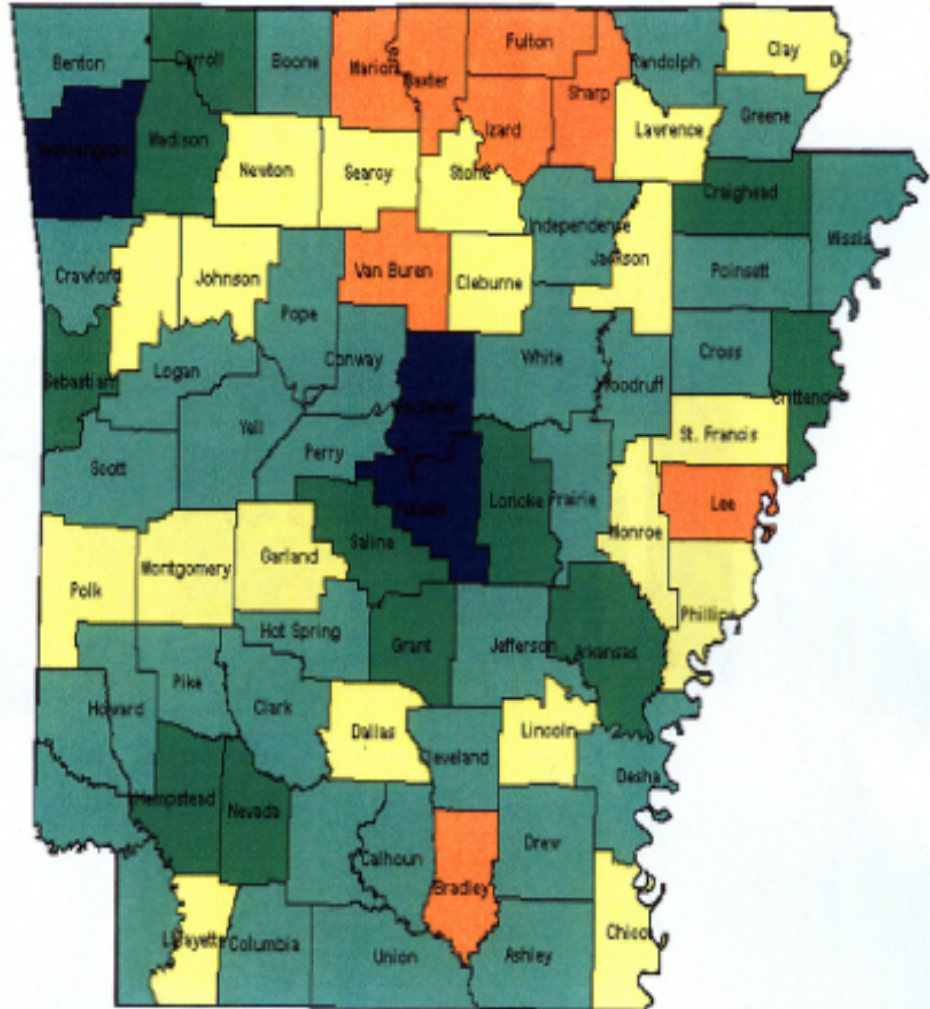
Evaluation strategies:

1. AWIB is prepared to monitor the progress of the students at each site initially from the monthly progress reports submitted by JRL Enterprises staff and JRL contracted evaluator.
2. An initial site visit will be conducted to establish the baseline data for the school year to be used for later evaluations of the program and student achievement.
3. During subsequent site visits there will be random reviews of students testing to determine levels of achievement and progress.
4. Each school will be enlisted to submit an implementation strategy for the I Can Learn system with the assistance of the AWIB State Youth Coordinator and the JRL representative.
5. AWIB will enlist the services of a reputable independent evaluator to complete an overall WIA evaluation process.

Percent Age 45+ Civilian Employed by County: Arkansas, 2000 Census

The 2000 Census provided data on employment by age and county. Analysis of this information finds that civilian employment by county ranged from over 50 percent of the 45+ population in Arkansas in Pulaski, Washington, and Faulkner counties, to less than 35 percent in several counties including Fulton, Lee, Van Buren, Marion, Baxter, Izard, and Sharp.

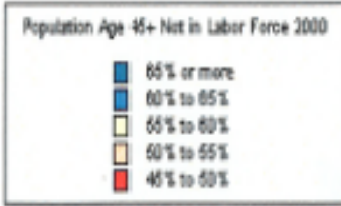
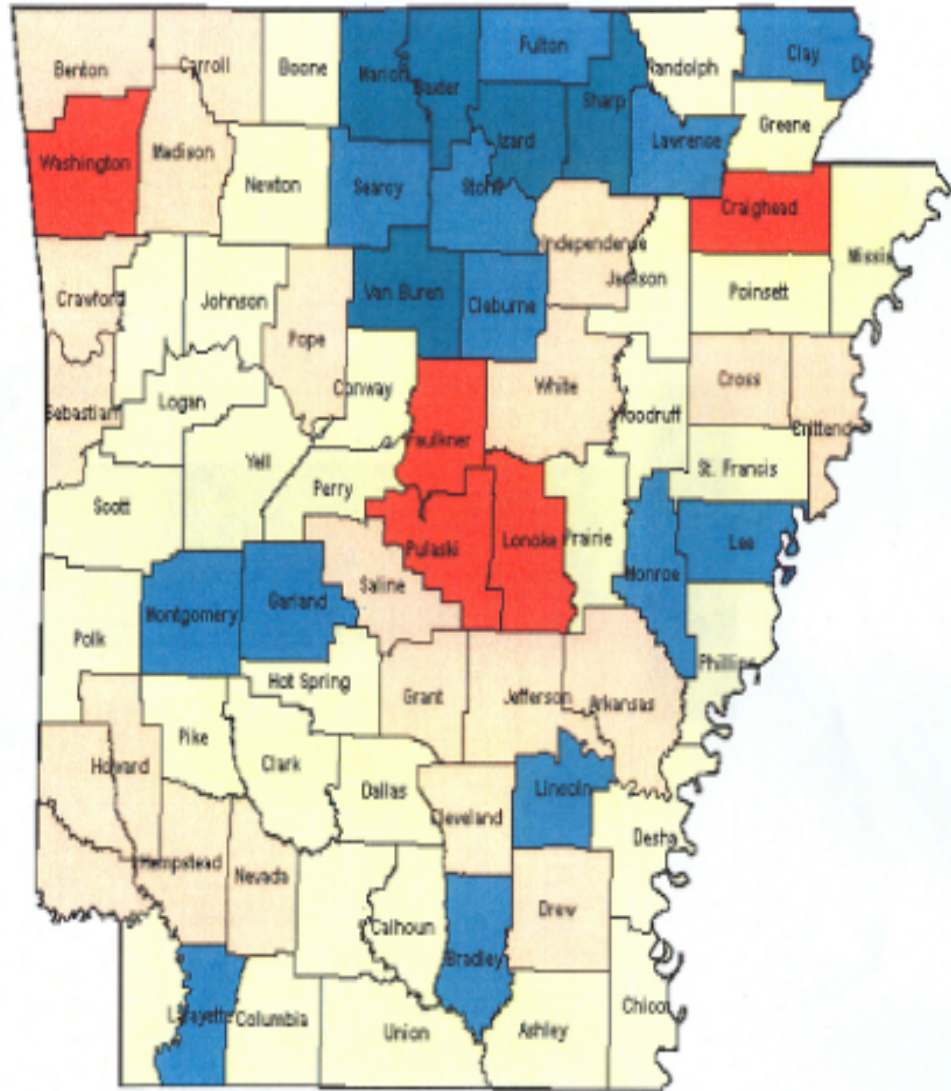
The variation by county is a function of many social and economic factors, including age of the population, and economic character.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census STF3, Table PCT35. Prepared by AARP Knowledge Management.

Percent Age 45+ Not in the Labor Force by County: Arkansas, 2000 Census

Relatively high proportions of the 45+ population are classified as 'not in the labor force' in counties that are clustered in the north central portion of the state, including Marion, Baxter, Izard, Sharp, and Van Buren.



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census STF3, Table PCT35. Prepared by AARP Knowledge Management.