

Annual Report Narrative on the  
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
to  
the United States Department of Labor

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## THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

### **Local Workforce Development Areas/Regions**

One of the goals of WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) American Job Centers (AJCs) is to offer job seekers and employers ready access to the many Workforce Development System (WDS) resources available in a local region. A brief description of the seven local areas/regions and the WFWV AJCs are as follows:

- **Region One** consists of five comprehensive centers, three satellite centers and one affiliate center. The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) oversees service delivery in 11 counties of southeastern WV; Fayette, Greenbrier, McDowell, Mercer, Monroe, Nicholas, Pocahontas, Raleigh, Summers, Webster, and Wyoming. The region is mountainous and rural in nature. The coal industry continues to experience a large number of dislocations throughout the region as well as the closure of several chain retail stores. Training services are being utilized to assist many citizens in the local areas to retrain in new career pathways. Industry expected growth in the area includes, but is not limited, to: Administrative/Support Services, Construction, Health Care and Social Services, Wood Product Manufacturing and Professional Services. In an effort to combat the opioid crisis, last year the LWDB piloted the Transitional Jobs program to assist individuals in their recovery efforts.
- **Region Two** consists of one comprehensive center located in Huntington, one satellite site in Logan, and seven affiliate sites including four Community and Technical College (CTC) sites. The affiliate sites provide WIOA services and Temporary Assistance for Needy families (TANF) services in all locations. Of the seven counties that make up the region, only two (Putnam and Cabell) have unemployment rates below the State average of 4.5%. Mingo has the highest at 6.5%, Logan has 6.1%, Lincoln has 5.7% and both Boone and Wayne have a 5.2% rate. The number one industry in the region is Medical-13 of the top 20 growing occupations are tied to this industry. The other seven growing occupations are: Management Analysts, Meeting, Convention and Event Planners, Marketing Specialists and Research Analysts, Elementary School Teachers, Middle School Teachers, Government Program Interviewers, and Social and Human Service Assistants.
- **Region Three** consists of one comprehensive center serving the citizens of Kanawha County including dislocated workers, adults, and youth. Staff arrange to go to other locations to provide services based upon need. Kanawha County is mostly urban but has a significant outlying rural population. In years past, the region was economically driven by Chemical Industries, Manufacturing, and Coal. Although Chemical and Manufacturing are still an economic force, neither have shown significant growth in the last two years. Although coal has seen some growth in Kanawha County recently, it is still a volatile occupation seeing openings and layoffs. Because of this shift in the economic climate, currently the largest industry sectors include Health Care, Hospitality, Retail, and Banking/Finance. As Charleston is the county seat, there is growth in local, state, and federal government jobs. The region has three main rivers, the Kanawha, Elk, and Great Coal. With the decline of coal, significant river and train traffic have also decreased. On the upside, three main interstate systems converge in Charleston. We have shown an increase in the trucking industries with hubs such as FedEx and UPS located at strategic exits.

- **Region Four** consists of nine counties that comprises a region of rural and urban populations. It is served by one comprehensive center and six affiliate centers. The region is supported by a variety of industries including Health Care, Plastics/Polymers, Professional Services, Warehousing, Transportation, Oil and Gas, and Construction. Government employment at the federal, state, and local levels also employ a considerable number of the region's citizens.
- **Region Five** consists of two comprehensive centers and one satellite site. Six counties comprise the area overseen by the LWDB. The region is bounded by the Ohio River on the north and west and the state of Pennsylvania on the east. In 2015, the region was estimated to have a population of 153,000, which reflects a loss of 5,086 residents during the past five years. Economic recovery in the region has been driven, in large part, by the natural resources industry. Other high demand industries in the region include: Healthcare, Retail, Professional and Technical Services, Utilities, and Construction and Manufacturing.
- **Region Six** consists of one comprehensive center and three affiliate centers that serve 13 counties in North Central WV. The region's location along the I-79 corridor is advantageous in that it includes some of the state's biggest technology driven employers such as: Electronic Warfare Associates, First Energy Corp., ManTech International Corp., Northrop Grumman, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), all located in the I-79 Technology Park which is also houses the Pierpont CTC (North Central) Advanced Technology Center (ATC). The region is also home to three airports including the North Central WV Airport in Bridgeport, which has the longest runway in the state, serving commercial carriers and has major aviation-related businesses being directly served by the facility. These include Bombardier Aerospace, Aurora Flight Services, Lockheed Martin and Pratt, and Whitney Engine Service. These facilities have become a major economic stimulus, supported in workforce development by Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Center and Pierpont CTC through the Aerospace Education Program with Aerospace Technology rapidly becoming a substantial part of our local economy. The region has posted the second-largest increase in population of any WV region over the past several years and has consistently had an unemployment rate that comes in well below the statewide average. The public sector is the main feature of North Central WV's economic development with the presence of higher education institutions, namely West Virginia University (WVU), Fairmont State University, and Davis and Elkins College in addition to several major federal institutions including the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Service Department, Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Lab, Louis A. Johnson VA Medical Center, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and US Bureau of Prisons. Healthcare services represents another cornerstone to the economy with the presence of several hospitals such as, Ruby Memorial Hospital, Mon General, Fairmont Regional Medical Center, United Hospital Center and various other healthcare facilities. WVU Medicine recently completed a series of expansions, including a 114-bed tower at Ruby Memorial and a new outpatient care facility at University Town Center in Morgantown. Rebounding natural gas production and new natural gas pipeline infrastructure being added to the region has provided a significant boost to the local economy and with the upswing of oil and gas activity, an increase to the Manufacturing sector is anticipated.

- **Region Seven** consists of two comprehensive centers. Eight counties are served by the LWDB. The region offers a contrast of the rural in western counties and fast-paced suburban sprawl of the eastern counties, part of the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area. The region expects population in the eastern most counties to continue to show rapid growth. The western counties are also anticipated to show growth, albeit at a slower pace. Healthcare, Transportation, Agriculture, Warehousing, Advanced Manufacturing, Professional Services, as well as Leisure and Hospitality are all primary contributors to the expanding regional economy.

**WAIVERS**

WFWV did not request waivers for PY17.

**EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS**

WFWV selected the ‘Repeat Business Customer’ and ‘Retention with Same Employer’ approaches to measure Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Points were awarded to each service based on the degree of intensity. Services with the highest point level equate to a deeper level of long-term relationship building with an employer.

**EVALUATIONS**

WFWV and state agencies are partnering on a comprehensive approach to evaluation and research. WFWV has the capacity and expertise to convene the various partners to ensure coordination and effectiveness. Performance accountability measures the following indicators from respective core programs:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline</b>
Job seekers receiving services in required quarters	10,547
Job seekers receiving referrals to partner services in required quarters	3,521
Customers placed in employment in required quarters	457
Employer contacts made in required quarters	2,445
Median earnings of customers placed in employment	\$3,952.36
Credential attainment	76.9%
Measurable skill gains	10.4%
Effectiveness in serving employers customer service calls	(see previous section)

Evaluations will be conducted based on the indicators listed above. WFWV has established baseline raw numbers for the indicators. Now that baseline numbers have been established, bi-annual reports will be developed.

WFWV has implemented a customizable “point-menu” system awarding points based on the degree of intensity and the value of workforce services provided. Services earning high points would clearly

reflect deeper relationships with employers and activities that are the result of longer term relationships.

To date, the point system has been defined by WFWV and a technical assistance training with core partners and all business consultants will take place in January 2019. The technical assistance training will cover the definition of the services, the point values, and policy and procedure on how to enter the services into the MACC (State MIS) system.

### **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

WFWV is still in the developmental stage of a statewide approach to customer satisfaction. Each of the state's seven LWDBs have had the flexibility to develop and use their own surveys or questionnaires in our initial trial stage. The methods used were varied and ranged from a small percentile up to and including 100% of all customers. Several thousand surveys were provided to customer both individuals and employers. WFWV has not established a statewide data base to collect this information yet but will be establishing that early next year. The seven LWDBs will be meeting with state level staff to standardize questionnaires and reporting. This will be done through the MACC. Response rates have ranged from a low of 5% to a high of 100%. In our technical assistance training we will share ideas as to get a better response rate overall. One of the regions made the simple change of letting the responder remain anonymous and that increased their rate by 48%. WFWV will be establishing a statewide Business Service Team (BST) in calendar year 2019. A major part of what they will do is incorporate customer satisfaction measures to our business customers in their day to day activities. With the standardization of regional surveys and reporting of outcomes in our internet-based reporting system we will be able to establish baselines and measure the improvements we achieve in the future.

As part of its program improvement efforts, WV Department of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) continues to support the implementation of consumer satisfaction surveys of its clients to ensure quality services for WVDRS consumers. The WV State Rehabilitation Council (WVSRC) conducts the consumer satisfaction surveys (with full WVDRS assistance and cooperation). The WVSRC is primarily responsible for completion of the consumer satisfaction survey for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) consumers. WVDRS continues to provide and supplement fiscal and human resources needed for its successful completion. WVSRC members selected a survey method that allows former WVDRS clients and individuals who were not accepted for VR services to be contacted via mail surveys as soon as they exit WVDRS from various VR statuses throughout the fiscal year. Selected highlights of the 2017 Consumer Satisfaction Survey of WVDRS Clients as reported by the WVSRC are presented below.

The latest consumer satisfaction report-Consumer Satisfaction: Report of Survey Findings, was prepared by the WVSRC in November 2017. The findings were based on consumer satisfaction information gathered from 284 responses across the six WVDRS districts. Respondents to the consumer satisfaction survey were asked to rate their agreement with statements about their interactions with WVDRS. The ratings were "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Respondents were provided an option to indicate replies that were neutral or that the survey item was not applicable. Overall, the level of satisfaction remains high despite a slight decrease from the previous results. This may be due to a 35% reduction in the number of respondents

coupled with a larger number of respondents with unsuccessful case closures. Most often, consumers whose cases were closed successfully report higher levels of satisfaction than those who were closed as unsuccessful. Major findings of the consumer satisfaction survey include: respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (85%), their questions were answered clearly by WVDRS (82%), they were involved in their plan development (70%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (76%), and they received the services they needed (70%). Respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) would be (76%) and their counselors told them about job opportunities (70%). Consumers also reported high ratings for accessibility of local offices (85% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (83%), and the overall experience with WVDRS (77%).

The consumers were asked to recall which client's rights information had been explained to them. There were 228 individuals who responded that at least one right had been explained (80% of the sample). Most individuals indicated that they had received several rights explanations. The most commonly explained rights to consumers were (1) their participation in developing the rehabilitation plan (90%) and (2) knowing about all of the services that were available (76%). When asked about needs that were not met by rehabilitation services, 109 of the 189 consumers who responded to this question reported that they had no additional needs (58%). Consumers who did report additional needs most commonly requested education/training, employment-related services, medical services, and transportation-related services.

Overall, the responses in this sample are very similar to the responses from the previous year. There had been a noticeable reduction in reported satisfaction over the past five reports, but this year, the responses appear to have stabilized. To maintain high quality of services and promote a greater satisfaction level for our consumers, WVDRS welcomes and considers compliments, complaints, suggestions, and recommendations that our clients reported in the consumer satisfaction survey. The WVSRC and WVDRS were also interested in examining the pattern of responses for transitioning youth (clients who were age 24 or younger). Youth surveys were color-coded so the participants could be isolated. Their responses formed a subset of 99 returned surveys. Overall, youth satisfaction remained lower than the responses of the whole group. Transitioning youth respondents felt that their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (62%), their questions were answered clearly by WVDRS (69%), their counselor stayed in contact so they knew what was happening (66%), and they received the services they needed (59%). Youth respondents also reported that they knew what each step of their IPE would be (69%), WVDRS counselors helped them develop a plan to get a job (67%), and their counselors told them about job opportunities (79%). Transitioning youth also reported ratings for accessibility of local offices (77% gave an "Above Average" or "Excellent" rating), their counselors (71%), and the overall experience with WVDRS (65%).

## **UPDATED UNIFIED STATE PLAN GOALS**

### **Goal 1: Workforce Development System Integration**

To ensure total integration the core partners have worked together to create a better understanding of what a truly integrated workforce system looks like. Partner meetings are held monthly at the state level with all partners. LWDBs also hold monthly or quarterly meetings with all local partners.

Common referral and information forms have been developed to decrease duplication of efforts spent on data and information collection. WVDRS maintained and continues to maintain a presence with each of AJCs.

Cross training of WDS staff has been a priority. To ensure that all staff are knowledgeable of the wide array of services available, a website-based test on statewide workforce services has been developed by WFWV. This test will be administered to all staff. A certificate will be awarded to all staff who pass the test. Local efforts regarding cross-training are continuous as well. An AJC has launched a cross-training PowerPoint series, where each AJC partner develops a PowerPoint that provides pertinent information about their organization which is shared via email with the rest of the partner network including front line staff and is then followed up with an on-line 5-10 multiple choice question quiz. A regional cross-training completion certificate is awarded per person for each PowerPoint/Quiz completed. The first PowerPoint training/quiz, which highlighted "America's Job Center 101", was completed by 222 individuals across the region, which far exceeded expectations. In addition, partner information is shared daily on the region's very active Partner Network Facebook Page.

The development of a common Information and Technology (IT) system to be used by core partners has been a priority. Representatives from the three core partners met on a regular basis to create a document outlining the required data elements to be shared and how those elements will be exchanged. Through the Re-employment Systems Integration Dislocated Worker Grant (RSI-DWG), the three core partner agencies continued to develop an integrated data sharing system. WFWV is modifying the MACC to extend the integrated registration and case management system to incorporate sharing of customer information with the WVDRS's Title IV programs and the WV Adult Education (WVAE) Title II programs. Each partner will be able to query data in real time to obtain information for the customer to review and correct as necessary prior to program enrollment. In addition, ongoing service delivery can be reflected in all partner systems by utilizing additional real time data exchanges. Each partner will integrate the data from the other systems into their current case management system in ways that are familiar to their case managers reducing the need to retrain front line staff.

### **Goal 2: Customer-Driven Approach (Individual & Employer)**

Partners within the WDS have worked diligently to identify the needs of employers. Employer's needs in WV were identified in several ways. Partner team meetings were routinely held and consisted of local Economic Development Authorities and representatives from the Governor's Guaranteed Workforce Program. Regions held roundtable discussions sponsored by local chambers, Economic Development Authorities and the WV Manufacturing Extension Partnership. All LWDBs also had one-on-one meetings with employers in their areas. One LWDB has affiliate sites on the campus of CTCs whose Governing Boards are composed of local employers who take an active interest in what direction they are heading. Collaboration with local labor unions has also helped to help identify their growing needs. LWDBs also worked closely to determine employer needs through sector strategy teams. Common job descriptions for the Manufacturing sector is one of the positive developments of the sector strategy teams.

The BSTs' strengthened relations with area employers by researching their workforce needs and subsequently providing them with access to a talent pipeline, especially for industry sectors experiencing a shortage of talent. The BSTs conduct informational sessions where businesses learn about grants, tax credits and other services available to help them become more competitive. On the Job Training (OJT) policies and Transitional Job policies have been changed by some regions to allow for increased reimbursement rates with employers who will utilize those types of training to meet their hiring and training needs.

WVDRS used its Employment Specialists to gather information regarding employers at the local level, including information regarding job placements for individuals with disabilities and regarding current and expected employer needs. WVDRS has an in-house Employer Services Section (ESS) that specializes in providing employers with disability-related information, services, and pre-screened job seekers. The WVDRS ESS has 11 Employment Specialists that cover all 55 counties in WV. Each Employment Specialist has a unique understanding of local labor market information (LMI) including what jobs are available, what jobs are in demand or decline, and employer networks. WVDRS' team of Employment Specialists provided business owners and employers with critical business options and assistance in staffing, employee retention strategies, education on disability-related issues, job accommodations, and information about financial incentives for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. Direct contact with employers is a key strategy to identify competitive integrated employment and career exploration opportunities for VR consumers, including students with disabilities. Employment Specialists therefore contact employers directly to identify current and future job openings. To facilitate this, WVDRS utilizes labor market information provided by WFVW to identify the top employers in each county; contact is always made with the top ten employers in each county. WVDRS Employment Specialists conducted over 1,000 employer visits with more than 800 employers in both FYs 2016 and 2017. Information from these employer visits is entered into the MACC system and is available to all partner agencies. When meeting with employers, Employment Specialists provide valuable information, including the WVDRS Employer Resource Guide. The resource guide provides information regarding staffing services, training programs and incentives for hiring people with disabilities, financial incentives, accessibility assessments, accommodating employees with disabilities, basic disability etiquette, attitudinal barriers, the Americans with Disabilities Act, locating a WVDRS office, and where to find additional resources. Each LWDB has a WVDRS representative who is active in the Board's activities and decision-making process. The ESS maintains a database of each WVDRS-employer interaction with VR employment specialists. The information collected includes the business name, contact person, and current job openings by occupation. If needed, a referral to the WVDRS Rehabilitation Technology Unit is made to address workplace accommodations. This list is distributed to Counselors to potentially match a job-ready VR consumer with a current job opening. Through positive working relationships, 19 employers, including some of the largest in the state, now send job postings directly to WVDRS' ESS.

Assessing skill gaps and needs of individuals seeking employment and/or training continued throughout PY17. Regions continued to work with area schools and institutions in examining/analyzing existing curriculum against the needs of targeted industry-related skills certifications. Area schools and institutions are doing a better job identifying gaps in existing curriculum and developing new curriculum to fill skills gaps. WVDRS completed IPEs for 3,637 individuals with disabilities in FY17.

These IPEs follow an assessment made by counselors to determine the individuals' skills, needs, and desires pertinent to employment, as well as vocational counseling and guidance to help determine an appropriate employment goal. The WDS ensured that individuals with barriers, especially those with disabilities, had increased access to and for opportunities for employment, education, training, and support services.

Inclusion Teams were created to make sure that not only the physical locations of the AJCs were accessible, but that services were accessible to all as well. The Inclusion Team was responsible for a "re-work" of the AJCs in terms of seating to make a more open path for persons with disabilities. Space at tables in the AJCs were marked for wheelchair access. WVDRS assisted in the setup and design of the AJCs to enhance the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.

WVDRS provided services such as training, job development, job placement, etc., to assist individuals with disabilities as well. WVDRS registered its job-ready consumers with WFWV to better serve employers by providing them with a base of potential employees. WVDRS continues to work with agencies within the criminal justice system to improve services to individuals with disabilities. During the first half of PY17, 50 individuals referred by WV correctional institutions have become WVDRS consumers. Additionally, WVDRS has served 115 individuals with a self-reported ex-offender status. WVDRS also works with the WV Division of Corrections, the Parole Services Employment Coordinator, and Oxford Houses in WV to jointly serve individuals residing in sober living homes across the state. WVDRS is also working with the Parole Services Employment Coordinator to improve ongoing efforts to effectively serve parolees with disabilities who are seeking employment. WVDRS will be presenting at the WV Division of Probation's Statewide Probation Education Conference to inform and improve outreach efforts among probationers with disabilities. WVDRS is partnering with the Director of Community Services within the WV Division of Juvenile Services to better serve youth with disabilities involved in the juvenile justice system, particularly those attending school at the community-based youth reporting centers. WVDRS has continued collaborative efforts with the WV Bureau of Behavioral Health and Health Facilities (BHBF) to expand employment opportunities for individuals with behavioral health challenges (e.g., mental health, substance use disorders, and developmental disabilities). During the first half of PY17, 284 individuals referred by mental health providers have become WVDRS consumers. To better serve individuals with traumatic brain injuries, WVDRS collaborates with the WV Bureau for Medical Services to improve access to resources for its consumers. WVDRS is also a member of the Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS). In coordination with BHBF, BRSS TACS has developed an action plan. WVDRS will identify strategies for ensuring the credentialing process is accessible and relevant to people with all types of disabilities. WVDRS will also assist in the development and dissemination of a directory of recovery support services available in WV, including access to recovery coaches, recovery residences, peer centers, and other recovery supports.

### **Goal 3: Career Pathways Development**

Discussed in the following section of this report.

#### **Goal 4: Increase Opportunities for Youth**

Youth services continued to be a priority within the WDS during PY17. Dual enrollment in the Adult program has been promoted to provide the broadest array of services possible for older youth based upon their assessed needs. Collaboration continued with Youthbuild, Job Corps, and AmeriCorp. We also partnered with the CTC system to provide Affordable Career Training workshops to area youth. These workshops gave students an overview of available programs and grants. Youth programs have developed a system to provide a pathway to success for youth who are willing to put forth the effort. From “Boot Camp” job readiness training, to mentoring activities with local employers, this program continues to prepare young adults for success in the workforce, providing them with appropriate work experiences and activities to become tomorrow’s leaders.

WVDRS counselors provided Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities, especially job exploration counseling, to give students with disabilities and their parents/guardians a better understanding of labor market conditions, current and emerging career opportunities, and the necessary education and training requirements related to those opportunities. In 2017, the Summits were held in 11 areas. WVDRS staff participating included the Pre-ETS Counselor, Employment Specialist, and Rehabilitation Service Associates (RSAs) assigned to the Pre-ETS territory. Class size for each of the workshops was approximately 30 students. Students earned minimum wage for the time that they attend. WVDRS also included representatives from WFWV and WVAE to participate in the workshops to provide additional information to the students. A concerted effort was made to introduce Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math (STEAM) to students in the Career Exploration Opportunity (CEO) Summits. Topics covered included career planning, career preparation, SSI/SSDI Information, understanding the importance of necessary personal documents, communication, conflict management, employer expectations, attendance and punctuality, timeliness of task completion, being able to work without supervision, positive work ethic, managing multiple tasks, high-growth jobs, personal brand, and job hunting tools such as resumes, cover letters, interviews, and digital profiles. Throughout the academic year, WVDRS Employment Specialists also provided Pre-ETS at the local high schools. The Employment Specialists conducted mock interviewing, career exploration, and other employment related topics. The Providing Opportunities Within Education and Rehabilitation (POWER) program provides students that ability to job shadow careers that they are interested in. The Employment Specialists have worked to identify a vast array of employers located throughout the State. There are currently 81 employers involved in the POWER Program. In 2017, WVDRS partnered with Community Access, Incorporated (CAI) to implement a program, entitled “Pathways to the Future,” to support the design and implementation of programming and outreach while addressing the new direction mandated by WIOA. Specifically, the program addressed the five required Pre-ETS for high school students with disabilities through an expansion of the Student Transition to Employment Program (STEP). The program assisted school districts by offering training and technical assistance in setting up community-based work experience programs for students with disabilities. The project helped level the playing field between resource-rich metropolitan areas and isolated rural settings that often have few services available. In addition, a strong statewide outreach to teachers, parents, students, and other VR stakeholders was a component of the project. The project had the following goals: 1. To assist school districts in setting up community-based Work Exploration programs. 2. To develop statewide parent training network utilizing the Parent Community Resource Centers. 3. To develop a network of specialists to work with

WVDRS, WFWV, and WV Department of Education (WVDOE) staff. 4. To develop a statewide cross-sector outreach program with a strong emphasis on traditionally underserved populations. WVDRS has maintained a “Pathways to the Future” website ([www.pathwayswv.org](http://www.pathwayswv.org)), which serves as a self-service resource for students with disabilities statewide to receive Pre-ETS. The website provides valuable information and tools regarding career planning, education planning, independent living, self-determination, and work-based learning. The website was bolstered by banners that were placed in high schools in all 55 counties of the state. Additionally, several pages of the College Foundation of WV’s website ([www.cfww.com](http://www.cfww.com)) have links to the Pathways website. These banners and links directed students with disabilities to the website and its resources.

### **SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS (GOAL 3)**

#### **Business Engagement Strategies**

WV LWDBs and Partners have become markedly more proactive in Business Engagement this past year. Recognizing the fact that all the training in the world will not suffice without an appropriate job at the other end is a logical conclusion. Therefore, WV has taken steps to improve Business Engagement at all levels and throughout the entire state.

Here are some examples of exemplary partnerships with employers. In one LWDB, 72 employer contacts were recorded and 62 positions of employment resulted from that. This included a partnership with WV CTCs. Another LWDB has quarterly sector meetings for Manufacturing, Health Care and Information Technology. Some of these are offered as afterhours events to increase the number of Business Representatives. Common job descriptions, high school participation days, and Tech Camps are a few of the partnerships worked out with regional employers. A very interesting Partnership has been developed in our Northern Panhandle as it borders with Ohio and Pennsylvania. Thirteen workforce boards in the states of Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia (The Tri-State Consortium) are developing a Business Resource Network Employer Outreach Model. The primary goal of this partnership is to connect workforce development, economic development and education in a seamless and customer focused partnership to deliver more effective and efficient Business Services to employers.

WVAE’s Career Pathways Program continued to implement Career Pathway Bridge programs offering participants multiple entry and exit points to accommodate academic readiness and employment opportunities based on their Education and Career Plan. These bridge programs have led to entry into postsecondary education and achieving industry-recognized credentials. WVAE’s Career Pathways Program partnered collaboratively with all core and required partners, numerous additional state agencies, local educational authorities, workforce development boards, community colleges, career and technical education centers, and business and industry. As appropriate, Integrated Education and Training opportunities have been implemented to allow participants to develop their adult education and workplace/workforce related skills while simultaneously training for an in-demand occupation.

WV has just received plans from the LWDBs to expand their business service outreach. They will work in Partnership with WVDRS, WVAE, and Economic Development to schedule, record and track

outcomes on a common internet-based system. State level staff will train and coordinate efforts on this project.

### **Work-Based Learning/Apprenticeship**

WFWV recognized the need for a dedicated team to work together to educate employers on the benefits of apprenticeship programs. Started the discussion on developing a plan to increase apprenticeships in WV in February 2017. On July 13, 2017 WFWV had a planning meeting with the head of each of the partners–

- a) Kathy D’Antoni-Associate State Superintendent of Technical Education and Governor’s Economic Initiatives with the WV Department of Education Career and Technical Centers
- b) Sarah Tucker-Chancellor WV Community and Technical College System
- c) Casey Sacks-Vice Chancellor WV Community and Technical College System
- d) Marijane Waldron-Director WV Department of Rehabilitation Services
- e) Lucinda Curry and Charlotte Weber-Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI) Advanced Manufacturing Center
- f) Sharon Adams and Jeff Huffman-WV Development Office
- g) Ken Milnes-WV State Director -USDOL Office of Apprenticeship

The team put together seven different events to educate employers on the benefits of apprenticeship. The LWDBs were at the table and coordinated the events with the development office and all other partners. There were 400+ attendees at the seven summits held around the state with 220+ from the employer community. After the first seven events concluded with much success there was still a demand for more summits. The last was held in late August and had the most employers in attendance (45).

We will not slow down the momentum spurred by the summits held all over the state. We will continue to be aggressive in selling the benefits of apprenticeship to employers knowing this is how training will be delivered in the future.

WV took hold of the opportunity to highlight apprenticeship as a great model to work with employers. We brought together state agencies/partners and worked with the WV Department of Commerce (WV DOC) and WV Development Office (WVDO) to take the lead on this project because of their strong involvement with employers. The partnerships will continue to grow as we advance the work on apprenticeship programs for employers. We commend the WV CTC system for taking the next step in accelerating apprenticeship programs in WV by applying for the latest apprenticeship grant opportunity.

OJT has been a very important part of Work Based Learning (WBL) in WV. All seven of our LWBs had individuals placed in OJTs. Over 150 individuals were enrolled in these programs and we anticipate numbers to increase this year with the emphasis we are placing on Business Services.

### **Transitional Jobs**

The opioid epidemic has had a significant impact on WV and has created an additional burden on the labor force participation rate that is already in last place in the United States. Therefore, individuals in

recovery became an important target for our Transitional Jobs program. Helping these individuals enter into Transitional Jobs has become a priority at the state level and has also filtered down to many of the LWDBs as well.

Many partnerships have been developed to facilitate the placement of these individuals into employment. Residential recovery centers have been used to serve as host sites for participants who were near completion of their time at the recovery centers and wanted to pursue work opportunities in the recovery field. Several participants attained their Peer Recovery Coach Certificates and CPR/First Aid certification. Three individuals were hired at the residential centers and began employment utilizing OJT to further their skills.

A unique partnership was developed between a LWDB, a local café, whose mission is working with youth in prevention and adults in recovery, the WVDRS and a County Drug Court. This partnership provided the opportunity for three young women to participate in paid work-based experience while learning culinary skills and earning local, state and national certifications.

Partnering with WVAE has proven invaluable to providing much needed resources, on-site, to people in recovery programs who otherwise would not have access due to transportation barriers. The demand for intensive career services, and the partnerships that have developed, has been key to the strong start for Transitional Jobs.

## **STATE'S PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM**

### **Re-Employment and System Integration (RSI)**

The WFWV Client Data Systems Integration project team worked towards its goal of providing enhanced case management services for customers in WV. The enhancement of services will be obtained through the collection of real time information from its partners, which includes the WVAE and WVDRS. The following milestones were completed during this period:

- Selection of project manager
- Integrated registration completion
- Selection of preliminary case management data to be shared
- Selection of secondary case management data to be shared
- Infrastructure hardware installation

### **Exit**

WIOA Guidance Notice No. 7-16 states: For purposes of performance calculations, exit is the last date of service after which an individual received services through the adult, dislocated worker, or youth program under WIOA Title I, the Adult Education and Literacy program under WIOA Title II, or the employment services authorized by Wagner-Peyser as amended by WIOA Title III, and no future services other than follow-up services are planned. (20 CFR 677.150) Ninety days of no service does not include self-service or information-only activities or follow-up services. (20 CFR 677.150)

### **Negotiated Performance Levels**

For Titles I and III core programs, the local areas' negotiated performance levels are the same as what has been negotiated for the state.

### **Fiscal and Program Monitoring/Data Validation**

Financial management and program operations reviews of the WIOA activities related to the statewide system continued to be conducted annually on the seven LWDB offices, including the National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG) fund allocations and other NDWG awards to project operators for clean-up services caused by severe storms and flooding, job driven opportunities for the long term unemployed and career retraining for those impacted by mass layoffs in the coal industry throughout the state. The reviews are conducted to evaluate fiscal and program activity solvency and accuracy and to determine their compliance with federal and state regulations. Work papers developed by WFWV staff enable reviewers to document specific information obtained from the reviewed entity for evaluation. Other related materials are also examined and office staff activities are observed for determining execution effectiveness. The results are then reported. The financial management portion of the on-site visits is designed to determine if expenditures are made against the appropriate cost categories; if they are within the cost limitations specified; if there is compliance with other provisions, regulations and applicable laws; and to provide technical assistance as needed and appropriate. Other activities include assisting with the correction of financial transactions; assisting with design and compliance; and budgeting process design and control.

The program operations portion of the on-site visits include WFWV staff verifying and validating performance data prior to federal reporting by checking the accuracy of a sample of computerized records and comparing keyed entries against the original source(s). On-site visits also include reviews of WIOA participant files, LWDB and Youth Council memberships, and equipment/inventory systems procedures to determine their compliance with federal provisions, regulations, and other applicable laws and to provide technical assistance as needed. WFWV continues to be committed to continuous improvement of its information and data systems and ensuring the integrity of program operations.

On-site reviews of participant files revealed Findings and/or Concerns in two main categories: Eligibility and Documentation, and Data Mismatches or Entry Errors. While there were other broader areas, such as Case Notes and Supportive Services, all issues seemed to fit into these categories. Of the samples reviewed, it was determined that the following percentages of files had issues:

<b>ELIGIBILITY AND DOCUMENTATION</b>	
<b>Adult</b>	2%
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	7%
<b>Youth</b>	5%

<b>DATA MISMATCHES OR DATA ENTRY ERRORS</b>	
<b>Adult</b>	1%
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	2%
<b>Youth</b>	0%

SAMPLE SIZES							
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
<b>Adult</b>	8	10	7	8	8	8	8
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	8	10	7	8	8	8	7
<b>Youth</b>	8	10	7	8	8	8	7
<b>Total</b>	24	30	21	24	24	24	22

Comprehensive and thorough reviews document effective practices being used by the state workforce system and identify training and/or technical assistance needs of staff. Evaluations result in establishing and implementing methods for continuous improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the statewide workforce investment system and improving employability for job seekers and competitiveness for employers.

WFWV staff provide an overview of the results and recommendations of the evaluations during exit meetings with WLDB directors and staff. Compliance findings require submission of corrective action plans that offer solutions. In addition to the monitoring reviews, WFWV conducts meetings or site visits with LWDBs and NDWG project operators to provide additional technical assistance as deemed or necessary.

### STATE FUNDED ACTIVITIES

#### **Rapid Response**

Rapid Response (RR) services and activities were provided to:

- 55 companies statewide
- 2,832 dislocated workers

In WV, the RR Team approach has proven to be the most successful process in reaching more dislocated workers and linking them to more workforce services at the state and local level as well as community resources to help them transition back into the workforce as quickly as possible. RR Informational Meetings offered statewide for dislocated workers provide a format that is more user friendly to the impacted workers as they do not have to wait to be seen at any of the local AJCs. Immediately, following layoffs or even prior to layoffs, the impacted workers are offered summary information about all the available benefits and reemployment and retraining services through highlights presented to them by State and Local RR team members at the statewide RR/Employee Informational Meetings. These meetings offer the workers the opportunity to ask any questions they may have, provide them with a list of community resources and contact information, and give them the option to meet one-on-one with any of the various agency representatives following the meetings. In summary, the RR Informational Meetings conducted statewide are WV's top outreach strategy in connecting one-on-one with dislocated workers and being the initial point of contact for referrals to WFWV's AJC and overall to WDS.

As some dislocations involve issues relating to wage and hour regulations, the State Department of Labor will sometimes be added as a part of the RR team. In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) often sends a representative for sizeable dislocations to participate as a part of the RR team to explain EBSA benefits. Therefore, State, Federal, and Local RR team partners consist of representatives from the following:

- State Dislocated Worker Services Unit
- Local WFWV AJCs (Wagner-Peyser services, Unemployment, etc.)
- Local Workforce Development Boards
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources
- WV Division of Rehabilitation Services
- State Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Labor/Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA Benefits)
- Certified Marketplace Navigator for Health Insurance/WV Healthy Start Navigator Project
- Peer Support Services for Dislocated Workers

In accordance with WFWV's RR policy for the delivery of statewide rapid response services and activities, the State Dislocated Worker Services Unit (DWS) coordinates and conducts statewide RR services for dislocations impacting 50 or more workers involving state and local partners for offering RR Informational Meetings to explain the full array of reemployment and retraining services and community resources available to all of the impacted dislocated workers. When possible, RR meetings are combined with as many other events as possible, such as job fairs, community resource and training provider fairs, etc. Special workshops are also scheduled periodically which may include resume assistance, interviewing skills, and job search assistance. The seven LWDBs handle the provision of RR services for dislocations impacting 49 or fewer workers and perform more one-on-one services with those employers in their regions experiencing either business closures or reduction-in-force plans and make more individual contacts with the affected workers to link them to available services and resources.

Therefore, depending upon the size of the dislocation, either the State DWS unit or the LWDB, make the initial contact with the employer for confirmation of layoffs and obtain specific details surrounding the layoff event as needs vary from dislocation to dislocation event and offer assistance to each employer to explain the services available to the employer and the full array of services and activities available to transition the impacted workers directly to other jobs or retraining programs that will lead to other employment opportunities. The employer is always offered the opportunity when possible to meet with representatives of the State and Local RR team to explain the services that can be offered free of charge to the employer and the impacted workers hopefully prior to the layoffs occurring, such as on-site workshops for resume writing, etc., employee informational meetings, resource fairs, etc., which can all be strategically scheduled as the reduction-in-force plan is being implemented.

Following RR Informational Meetings, there is a close coordination between the State and the Local LWDBs in strategizing and leveraging all available resources between local formula WIOA dislocated worker funds, NDWGs, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), etc. Therefore, WFWV has policies for

dually enrolling WIOA dislocated workers with NDWGs and TAA to blend the various funding streams to provide quality wrap-around services that match the needs of dislocated workers.

In WV layoff aversion is the responsibility of the WVDO who strategically plans and implements all layoff aversion strategies directly with the Governor and Governor's Office staff. As WFWV is also under the WV DOC, a critical protocol has been established that our State DWS unit notifies the WVDO of all dislocations for which RR services are being scheduled in order to not interfere with any layoff aversion plans that are being planned for keeping companies in business and preventing reduction-in-force plans.

### **Wagner-Peyser Activities**

Acquiring new and increasing the number of job openings is a vital component of WV's strategic plan goal attainment. This requires collaboration with mandated partners to educate employers on available services and promotion of the WFWV AJCs. To that end, WFWV secured 48,330 job openings with 29,465 job orders in PY17. The increase is a direct result of successful cross training models for WFWV field staff and partners.

To further this initiative, each AJC continues to enhance the job seeker experience to include resume development and employer testing services in the public computer centers. In addition, staff provide soft skills (interviewing, test preparation, etc.), career counseling/guidance, networking opportunities, job and apprenticeship referrals, and follow-up services.

Early intervention strategies are in place for Unemployment Compensation (UC) claimants. In depth-in person interviews can begin at week four of the claim cycle utilizing the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment workshop. Employability development plans that identify barriers and action(s) to overcome are developed and referrals made to AJC partners. Regional labor market information and local resource guides are distributed. Available job orders are reviewed, and customers are referred to openings and training for which they qualify.

Career services are available for special need groups, particularly for those individuals who may have barriers to employment. Employment Service staff members participate in specialized training segments that increase awareness and offers knowledge on developing resource pools and partner positioned solutions to ensure successful employment outcomes leading to economic self-sufficiency. Funds are used for these customer support initiatives enabling these job seekers and the staff who serve them navigate among multiple services provided.

### **NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS**

All NDWGs awarded to WFWV are closely coordinated with RR activities to ensure that information regarding any type of NDWG whether it be a Mass Layoff NDWG or a Disaster NDWG is shared with dislocated workers during any RR Informational Meetings. The RR meeting format is used as one of the outreach strategies for recruiting dislocated workers who are eligible for retraining or reemployment services through a Mass Layoff NDWG or for temporary jobs available through a Disaster NDWG for disaster relief clean-up efforts in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) declared counties.

To better leverage all available resources for dislocated workers, WFWV and the LWDBs work closely together following any RR meeting to appropriately blend all funding streams between local formula WIOA dislocated worker funds, NDWGs, TAA, etc. Therefore, WFWV has policies for dually enrolling WIOA dislocated workers with NDWGs and TAA so that when dislocated workers access services through WFWV AJCs, all the funding streams and strategies are carefully integrated for the best provision of activities and services to dislocated workers. For instance, all Disaster NDWG participants are dually enrolled as a WIOA dislocated worker and a NDWG participant so that upon completion of temporary disaster relief employment, the NDWG participant is immediately referred back to their WIOA career planner for wrap around services for job search assistance or retraining in a demand occupation leading to reentry into the labor force as quickly as possible.

### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

WFWV provided technical assistance to LWDB staff/contractors on June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018. In summary, the following information was reviewed with staff:

- All information pertaining to WIOA participants, including activities, beginning and ending dates, participant status, and all other information is required to be reported in the MACC for all participants who receive services, and is required to be entered in the MACC by staff or contractor staff within two business days of the time that the information is available.
- Monitoring report and desk reviews have reflected the following issues:
  - Case notes reflect inactivity/no evidence there is activity, yet services remain in progress.
  - Case notes reflect services were provided, yet services were not assigned.
  - Supportive service justifications are poorly documented.
  - Case notes do not tell a cohesive story.
  - Documents/signatures are missing from files.
  - Data not keyed into MACC timely.
  - Case notes that provide no more information than the service title
- Soft exit occurs once a participant has not received any services funded by the program or partner program for 90 consecutive days, has no gap in service, and is not scheduled for future services.
- Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 33-12 was handed out to staff. Specifically, page 5, was reviewed with staff regarding youth case file maintenance and case notes.
- TEGL 10-16, change 1, page 34, was reviewed with staff regarding follow-up services.
- TEGL 21-16 was handed out to staff. Specifically, page 19, was reviewed with staff regarding youth follow-up.
- Staff were reminded the status update service is to only be assigned during participation, not after exit/during follow-up. The status update, which does not affect soft exit from occurring, documents contact with the customer while they are in a service for a duration of time. For instance, if a customer is enrolled in an Individual Training Account (ITA) service for six months,

the contact staff has during that time must be recorded as a status update to demonstrate the ITA service has been verified it's still active.

- Adult mentoring requirements-Examples of qualifying activities and non-qualifying activities were discussed.
- The Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is to be used as a meaningful tool that can and will change over time, as necessary, to meet the needs of the individual.
- The Individual Service Strategy (ISS) represents an individual plan for each young person and includes an employment goal, appropriate achievement objectives (including education goals), and appropriate services that take into account information learned from the objective assessment.
- Supportive services must include a justification. Eligibility includes being determined WIOA eligible, participating in career and training services, and being unable to obtain supportive services through other programs that provide such services. Examples of what can be provided for, and what cannot be (such as fines for traffic violations) were discussed.
- Staff were reminded there are several reports available in MACC they can access 24/7. Types/examples of reports available are:
  - Management-
    - ITA Counts for Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Groups
    - Youth Assigned Services
    - Registrations and Exits
  - Performance-
    - Local Adult Entered Employment and Retention Rate
    - Local Dislocated Worker Entered and Retention Rate
    - Local Youth Placement in Employment or Education
    - Local Youth Attainment of Degree of Certification
  - Automated-
    - Soft-Exits for the Past 3 Days
    - Sixty-Day Advance Soft Exits
    - Local WIOA Participants with Expired, Open Services
    - Current WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Registrants

MACC reports are available for staff to use as a tool to monitor their data. Staff can also use the MACC job seeker search function to create their own queries/reports. Staff were reminded that if they need specific data they have difficulty producing a report for, WFWV staff can provide the data to them upon request and/or create a report for future access.

- Case Notes should identify, at a minimum, the participant's status for a specific data element, the date on which the information was obtained, and identify the career planner who obtained the information. Case notes must be clear, relevant, and useful. Staff participated in a case note exercise made available from the WorkforceGPS website. As a result, the BRO CRIP structure was reviewed:
  - Background statement
  - Reason statement

- Observation statement
  - Content statement
  - Results statement
  - Impressions statement
  - Plan statement
- The definition of ‘unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation’ was discussed as well as forms of documentation that can be used to demonstrate ‘unlikely to return’.
  - The participant/applicant statement (self-attestation) should be used as a last resort. When used, it should identify the status for a particular data element, in detail, must contain the participant’s signature, and reflect the date the information was attested to.
  - Basic career services, individualized career services, training services, and follow-up services were addressed. Services that are provided must be assigned in MACC. Services are not meant to be ‘cookie cutter’. Applicable program services are to be made available as appropriate, and the services provided are to be individualized to the customer. Staff are to think ‘value added’ when providing and documenting services provided. Block start/end dates are to be avoided. Eligibility for training services was reviewed. Staff were reminded they must not keep services open if they aren’t being provided.
  - The deskaid staff received during the technical assistance training will be adapted into a WIOA manual in the coming months.
  - Staff were notified that WFWV will begin monthly desk reviews (to begin July 2018) and they will receive feedback on any issues found.
  - If some of the data issues found with services and case notes contradicting each other (for example-case note reflects the customer has not attended classes and cannot be reached, yet the tutoring service remains in progress) is due to local processes, such as the person who provides services is not the same person as who assigns services, local areas will need to review their processes and amend as appropriate.

### **PROMISING PRACTICES**

Wagner-Peyser-With UC going to a web-based application it has been a challenge to get foot traffic into the AJC for Job Service/Wagner Peyser Service. A promising practice that we are using at the AJC is that Wagner-Peyser staff contact the persons that are registering for job service that are receiving UC via phone to explain the services we can provide to include career counseling, resume assistance, job referrals, etc. Another tool that we have used for reaching out to job seekers is participation in Job and Career Fairs throughout the state. Wagner-Peyser staff call veterans from a list of “non-verified veterans” to verify the person as a veteran but to also tell them about available services to them to include priority of service and possible Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) service.

During PY17 specific focus has been placed on training and continuity within the JVSG program that ultimately impacts veteran employment positively from the local office level to the services provided to the veterans. These efforts first began with updating information and resources contained in a hardcopy version of standard operating procedures and making it available on the agency’s network

drive allowing simultaneous electronic updates. New hires are given access and encouraged to begin reviewing the material immediately.

When budget allows, management attended quarterly training events alongside their JVSG staff members. This ensures that information covered is provided to staff as well as their responsible office managers. When management attendance is not feasible the State Veterans Coordinator follows up each event with an overview of topics covered, resources and copies of all training materials via e-mail. Managers have a direct line to the State Veterans Coordinator to ask questions and obtain clarification. A new approach to outreach has been implemented in an effort to increase foot traffic into the AJCs which has been reduced since. Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPS) have begun conducting outreach outside their normal areas of responsibility especially to connect with community partners at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMCs). VAMCs serve veterans in much broader areas versus just the counties that a single DVOPS may typically cover.

One potential promising practice in serving individuals with criminal histories is the development of reentry councils across WV. In many areas across the state, there are monthly reentry council meetings. WVDRS bring together partners (e.g., WFWV, DHHR, Department of Corrections, Recovery centers), employers, and individuals with criminal histories to help them overcome barriers to employment and other barriers that impact reentry. WVDRS held CEOs at ten locations, across the state, during a two-week period in June 2018. This WVDRS initiative meets major components of Pre-ETS activities under WIOA. The week-long WVDRS sponsored CEO Summits provided tools and information to support students with disabilities (ages 14-21 years, enrolled in an education or training program) in obtaining long-term career success. The curriculum included career planning and preparation, self-assessments, completing job applications, interviewing skills, how to dress for employment, work ethic, cell phone and internet safety and self-advocacy. WVDRS served 199 students at throughout the state at the ten locations. Efficiency was achieved by partnerships at each location in which partners contributed free classroom space, facility or campus tours, information, or other services.

### **WorkForce West Virginia Collaboration and Partnering**

The WV Legislature has continued to work closely with the WFWV system during PY17. Legislators continually receive updates and information from various partners within the WFWV system via an oversight commission comprised of members from both the Senate and House of Delegates. In 2007, legislation passed consolidating the 'State of the One-Stop System' report, and the 'Funding Stream Report'. This consolidation allows WFWV to identify all workforce development training funds within the state and how they may or may not be distributed throughout the AJCs. WFWV continues to update the State of the State as appropriate.

WFWV's partnership with the WV Military Connection program continues to provide employment and training support for WV military personnel and veterans. The WV Military Connection program partners consist of WFWV, the USDOL Veterans Employment and Training (VETS), the WV Department of Veterans Assistance, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, WV National Guard Adjutant General's Office, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and the WV Community and Technical College (CTC) system. The troops returning home from deployment or exiting the armed forces have a

comprehensive list of resources on a website designed especially for them. The website ([www.wvmilitaryconnection.org](http://www.wvmilitaryconnection.org)), is administered by WFWV staff to offer guidance for service members about local, state, federal, and private sector assistance in the areas of employment, training and education, benefits, healthcare, and family resources. It also provides guidance in converting military experience to civilian careers and provides career development information for service members unsure about the next step in employment. WFWV Veterans Employment Coordinator, Darina Shapley, is currently serving as chairman for the WV Military Connection group.

WFWV leadership has worked diligently with USDOL VETS to strategically place veterans' representatives throughout WV. WFWV has 13 DVOPS who provides coverage to every WFWV AJC for provision of services to eligible veterans and eligible persons. WFWV DVOPS perform outreach to find and provide intensive services to eligible veterans with significant barriers to employment. Through the provision of intensive services, veterans gain long term sustainable employment. WFWV also has three Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVERs) who provide outreach to business and industry to promote the hiring of veterans. They also facilitate the veterans' program within WFWV.

WFWV has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Hilton Worldwide Inc. in order to assist WV service members, prior service members, and their spouses, gain employment faster and easier. The program consists of a donation of 100,000 reward points to eligible persons who are screened and submitted by WFWV staff. Qualifying activities include a verified job search, registration for a training workshop, registration for job fair, housing searches for employment, job interviews, or training for a new job. Once approved, the points are entered into a HHonors account for purposes pertaining to seeking employment. The value of the points varies by location, but on average, it is equivalent to three nights at any Hilton Worldwide Inc. hotel.

Eligible applicants include veterans, active service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and military spouses. During PY17, 20 veterans utilized the program to assist in their job search activities which also included interviews, housing searches and to obtain training or certifications related to a job offer.

**STEM Workshop:** During the summer of 2018, the Region VII WDB contracted with NESCorp to provide a 3-day S.T.E.M. workshop focused on enhancing the technical and tactile skills of clients in relation to the IT career field of study. In addition to incorporating the fundamental navigation of Microsoft Office (MS Word, MS Excel, MS Power Point); clients gained knowledge from industry professionals on the history of IT and media; how to safely build, repair and troubleshoot various laptops and desktops, installing the necessary hardware and software to create documents including but not limited to resumes, and spreadsheets; ultimately constructing and retaining a functional Laptop while gaining invaluable employability skills to meet today's labor demands. During the program, twenty-five (25) WIOA eligible youth successfully completed the workshop.

### **Drug Testing**

On July 11th, 2012, WFWV issued Guidance Notice 15-12, and subsequently issued Guidance Notice, Change 1 on July 20th, 2012. The purpose of this policy was to provide guidance to LWDBs and their operators regarding mandatory drug screening for WIA/WIOA training-level participants.

Section 181(f) of Title I of the WIA/WIOA specifically provides states the authority to test and sanction WIA/WIOA participants for the use of controlled substances. On April 24, 2012, the Governor of WV signed Executive Order 8-12, charging WFWV to develop and implement a drug screening policy for WIA/WIOA Title I training-level services.

Effective July 16, 2012, all participants that entered into training-level services funded by WIA/WIOA Title I, ITAs and OJTs, were required to be screened utilizing urinalysis for the use of the following controlled substances prior to the beginning of training:

- Amphetamines
- Cannabinoids/THC
- Cocaine
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine (PCP)
- Benzodiazepines
- Propoxyphene
- Methadone
- Barbiturates
- Synthetic narcotics

A total of 1,402 drug screenings were completed during PY17. Only 1.5% of these screenings resulted in a sanction.

### **On-line Marketing and Services**

WFWV continues to expand marketing and services on-line through our modernized website. The Responsive Web Design (RWD) allows page layouts to adapt to the user agent such as desktops, tablets and mobile phones. In February 2018, our new Job Seeker and Employer Portals were rolled out. This new design is a more “user friendly” step-by-step guide to help job seekers get their high school diploma, learn job etiquette, get proper training & education, improve their job seeking skills, and help them find a job. The new site also helps employers find the best qualified worker, explore tax credits and navigate the unemployment processes. During PY17 the agency website [www.workforcewv.org](http://www.workforcewv.org) had over 2.4 million page-views, an average of 193,750 page-views per month. Website visitors spent the most time on our Job Seekers pages.

### **SUCCESS STORIES**

A customer first came to the Adult Learning Center in July 2017. In China, she had been a dentist, but in the United States she was faced with a daunting task—starting again with her education and her career, all while raising two small children at home. She joined our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) class, and from the very beginning she showed amazing commitment and initiative in her learning. She was a natural small-group leader among her English Language Learners (ELL) classmates and an exemplary student from the start. She had phenomenal scores on her exit assessments, including a 952 on the Best Plus 2.0, a speaking assessment for ELLs. After great effort and many hours of studying in class and through distance learning, she passed the Total Administrative

Services Corporation (TASC) exam with distinguished scores in Math in the Spring of 2018. She set her sights on a career in the medical field and started to buckle down on her Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) preparation and worked on the application process for the Medical Assistant program at our local CTC. After a few TABE attempts and lots of studying, she managed to get passing scores, including an impressive 12.9 in Reading, Math, Language, and Language Mechanics. In May of 2018, she walked across the stage at graduation to accept yet another diploma in her career as a student. This time, her husband and two young sons were in the WVU Creative Arts Center audience to cheer her on as she accepted a high school diploma from the United States, a high honor for her, despite her previous accomplishments. This Fall, she is enrolled in the Medical Assistant program. Her positive attitude, humility, and commitment to her academics continue to bring her success as she works toward a new career here in the United States.

The DVOPS met this veteran during weekly outreach activities conducted at the Huntington VAMC at a basic computer class sponsored in coordination with the Compensated Work Therapy (CWT) program and Veterans Upward Bound. At that time, he was already registered with WFWV but information about the JVSG program and individualized career services was provided. Shortly thereafter he was assessed by Wagner-Peyser and referred to the DVOPS. The veteran was low-income since being dislocated in December 2015 from a long-time millwright electrician position with AK Steel. His sole financial resource was compensation from his participation in CWT which is \$8.75/hr. A major obstacle that he faced was an outdated, physical copy of his resume which was completely overhauled into an electronic version with guidance and input provided by the DVOPS. He also received weekly assistance with the online employment application process since he only possessed limited computer skills. He had multiple interviews with KoneCrane including telephone and in-person and was offered a full-time Field Operative I position earning \$24/hr. Included in his offer of employment was use of a company truck and an all-expenses paid trip to Phoenix for training and orientation. It is because of a collaborative approach alongside community partners that he has been able to secure meaningful employment.

For much of his life, this customer had lived a lifestyle he wasn't proud of and found himself devoid of hope at 40 years old. He had worked several jobs but had no career and had never maintained long term employment. Desperate, he found himself at a transitional living center in southern WV. He worked on his own recovery while there and developed a passion for the field of recovery coaching. In June 2018, this passion led to his enrollment in the Transitional Jobs program offered by the LWDB. He embraced and thrived in his role as a Residential Monitor. His work ethic and passion impressed the Executive Director so much that he offered him a position at the center upon completion of the program. Throughout his 18 months at the center and his 12 weeks in the program, he gained a hope for the future, acquired more self-worth and built up his confidence. He found himself no longer living with the limitations of his past and realized he had the skills and opportunities for a worthwhile career and life.

The LWDB was meeting with a County Commission administrator who asked if we could help with finding personnel for a pool they operated that was part of State Park. It was agreed that we would ask our Youth Contractor to assist and the Commission would hire a director. Our contractor interviewed and trained nine work experience youth ages 16-24 to serve as life guards and maintenance personnel

for the pool and picnic shelter areas. It was the most successful season the Commission has ever had operating the pool and shelter and provided work experience for nice youth who did a super job according to the Commission.

A customer was in need of a change and a job in his life, so he wanted to obtain his CDL license. He took the four-week program and was a wonderful student. He applied at many different trucking companies and they all wanted him to work for them. He decided to work for C.J. Hughes based out of Huntington, WV and he now is a driver/pipe layer. He started his job 13 days after graduation. He now has a successful career making a great wage of \$22.00 an hour.

A customer moved from New York to WV and was having an extremely difficult time gaining full time supportable employment in the small community. He had been working with a security company but was on the night shift and did not get to spend much time with his family. He was also not making enough money to support his family. He came into the AJC to speak to a career planner about ways to gain better employment. They discussed the possibility of enrolling in a specialized training program to obtain more employable skills that would help him find suitable employment. He decided to enroll in a short-term training program with the CTC to become a certified deckhand and work on barges or river boats. He completed training in November and gained employment with Murray American Energy Corp. shortly after completing the training. He is still currently employed with the company as a deckhand and is making \$17 per hour. Because of his willingness to set and achieve a personal goal, he is now able to support and provide for his family.

A 23-year-old WV resident was laid off and sought services at the AJC in Wheeling. He decided to join the Ironworkers Local 549 as a new Apprentice under WIOA funding. With hard work and dedication, he completed the Apprenticeship Training Program. Dylan graduated to Journeyman and is now working full-time for the Ironworkers. His annual income has increased by 33% and he loves going to work every day.

A low-income adult was working as a cashier at a local supermarket when he first came to the AJC. He had previously earned an Associate of Arts Degree in General Studies and a certificate in Allied Health and was interested in Nursing as a career. Although the client ultimately wanted to be a Registered Nurse, he felt that the right initial step for him was a Licensed Practical Nursing program. He was very eager to start his career path and was accepted into the program at James Rumsey Technical Institute. Upon completing training, he passed his State boards and immediately applied at the VAMC in Martinsburg. After interim jobs at Valley Health Urgent Care and Clary Grove, he was offered and accepted a job at his employer of choice, the VAMC.