



STATE OF MAINE  
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT  
PROGRAM YEAR 2013  
ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by the Maine Department of Labor  
and the State Workforce Investment Board

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## INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires that each state that receives an allotment under WIA Section 127 (Youth activities) or Section 132 (Adult and Dislocated Worker activity), must prepare and submit a WIA Annual Report of performance progress to the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the requirements found in WIA Sections 136 and 185.

The State of Maine is submitting this document in response to the WIA requirement on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

# WIA PERFORMANCE DATA

**Maine met or exceeded the negotiated performance thresholds for PY13.**

MAINE PY13 PERFORMANCE RESULTS		
	Negotiated	Actual
<b>WIA Adults</b>		
Entered Employment	83.4%	74.5%
Employment Retention	86.8%	87.5%
Average Earnings	\$10,900	\$11,147
<b>WIA Dislocated Workers</b>		
Entered Employment	87.5%	89.6%
Employment Retention	90.5%	88.6%
Average Earnings	\$15,147	\$14,364
<b>WIA Youth</b>		
Placement in Employment or Education	64.8%	66.2%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	70.0%	71.0%
Literacy / Numeracy Gain	30.0%	31.3%
<b>W-P Labor Exchange (LEX)</b>		
Entered Employment	57.0%	55.0%
Employment Retention	80.0%	82.0%
Average Earnings	\$12,500	\$12,263

Maine has recently initiated an auto-exit function in its MIS system which we anticipate will significantly affect performance in PY15 and may have some negative affect on performance at the end of PY14. Over the past decade the performance tiers have been reaching ever-higher levels, creating, in some local areas, unrealistic goals for the populations being served and the geographic economies in which they reside. To accommodate the need to meet or exceed performance staff have compensated by sustaining client enrollment periods until clients attain the required outcomes. Although the requirement for auto-exit has been in place since the

beginning of WIA, Maine's MIS system had not been reprogrammed to perform the function until recently. With little to no control over the length of participation, the number of carry-ins, or whether services are provided during enrollment or follow up, it is anticipated that local area service plans will be affected.

The state workforce agency is working closely with local areas to strategize steps that will remediate any negative impact, including ramping up outreach to target populations and agencies that serve them, expanding job-driven approaches to participant training and service recruitment and focusing clearer documentation of services.

**Table B – Adult Program Results**

	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
			Numerator	Denominator
Entered Employment Rate	83.4%	74.5%	Numerator	324
			Denominator	435
Employment Retention Rate	86.8%	87.5%	Numerator	350
			Denominator	400
Average Earnings	\$10,900	\$11,147	Numerator	\$3,823,350
			Denominator	343

**Table C – Outcomes for Adult Special Populations**

Reported Information	Public Assistance Recipients Receiving Intensive or Training Services		Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Older Individuals	
Entered Employment Rate	81.86%	194	65.96%	31	62.50%	20	39.39%	13
		237		47		32		33
Employment Retention Rate	88.06%	236	78.95%	30	80.65%	25	83.33%	25
		268		38		31		30
Average Earnings	\$10,751.70	\$2,505,146	\$12,922.59	\$374,755	\$12,209.30	\$293,023	\$10,476.95	\$251,447
		233		29		24		24

**Table D – Other Outcome Information for the Adult Program**

Reported Information	Individuals Who Received Training Services		Individuals Who Received Only Core and Intensive Services	
Entered Employment Rate	81.65%	258	72.22%	26
		316		36
Employment Retention Rate	88.35%	311	86.36%	38
		352		44

Average Earnings	\$10,912.63	\$3,339,265	\$13,147.66	\$473,316
		306		36

**Table E – Dislocated Worker Program Results**

	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
		Entered Employment Rate	87.50%	89.56%
			Denominator	450
Employment Retention Rate	90.50%	88.61%	Numerator	428
			Denominator	483
Average Earnings	\$15,147.00	\$14,634.20	Numerator	\$6,204,901
			Denominator	424

**Table F – Outcomes for Dislocated Worker Special Populations**

Reported Information	Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Older Individuals		Displaced Homemakers	
	Entered Employment Rate	77.78%	35	84.62%	11	75.95%	60	83.33%
		45		13		79		6
Employment Retention Rate	88.00%	44	76.19%	16	85.90%	67	75.00%	3
		50		21		78		4
Average Earnings	\$15,263.66	\$671,600.97	\$11,086.45	\$177,383.15	\$14,742.35	\$972,994.94	\$19,552.18	\$58,656.53
		44		16		66		3

**Table G – Other Outcome Information for the Dislocated Worker Program**

Reported Information	Individuals Who Received Training Services		Individuals Who Received Only Core and Intensive Services	
	Entered Employment Rate	90.96%	352	78.57%
		387		56

Employment Retention Rate	89.22%	364	86.89%	53
		408		61
Average Earnings	\$14,416.81	\$5,190,049.9	\$16,033.51	\$849,776.29
		9		53
		360		

**Table H.1 – Youth (14-21) Program Results**

	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
			Numerator	
Placement in Employment or Education	64.80%	66.16%		174
			Denominator	263
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	70.00%	70.97%		154
			Denominator	217
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	30.00%	31.34%		42
			Denominator	134

**Table H.2 – Youth (19-21) Program Results**

	Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		
			Numerator	
Entered Employ. Rate	64.80%	79.46%		89
			Denominator	112
Employment Retention Rate	70.00%	<b>82.7%</b>		<b>86</b>
			Denominator	104
Earnings Chg in six months	30.00%	\$4,552.69		450716
			Denominator	99
Employment & Credential Rate	30.00%	47.73%		84
			Denominator	176

**Table H.1.A – Outcomes for Youth Special Populations**

Reported Information	Public Assistance Recipients		Veterans		Individuals With Disabilities		Out-of-School Youth	
Placement in Employment or Education Rate	65.31%	96	0.00%	0	62.35%	53	74.38%	119
		147		0		85		160
Attainment of Degree or Certificate Rate	75.51%	74	0.00%	0	67.24%	39	70.97%	44

		98		0		58		62
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	22.22%	14	0.00%	0	25.93%	14	31.34%	42
		63		0		54		134

**Table L– Other Reported Information**

	12 Mo. Employment Retention Rate		12 Mo. Earnings Change (Adults and Older Workers) or Replacement Rate (Dislocated Workers)		Placements for Participants in Nontraditional Employment		Wages At Entry Into Employment For Those Individuals Who Entered Unsubsidized Employment		Entry into Unsubsidized Employment Related to the training Received of Those Who Completed Training Services	
Adults	88.25%	338	\$6,547.08	\$2,101,612.63	6.17%	20	\$5,278.07	\$1,678,425.06	63.57%	164
		383		321		324		318		258
Dislocated Workers	91.19%	466	105.45%	\$6,600,106.61	7.69%	31	\$7,084.20	\$2,833,680.09	67.05%	236
		511		\$6,259,189.29		403		400		352
Older Youth										

**Table M – Participation Levels**

	Total Participants Served	Total Exiters
Total Adult Customers	27,544	25,188
Total Adult (self-service only)	26,023	24,181
WIA Adults	26,855	24,743
WIA Dislocated Workers	713	459
Total Youth (14-21)	823	380
Younger Youth (14-18)	466	185
Older Youth (19-21)	356	158
Out-of-School Youth	469	234
In-School Youth	354	146

**Table N– Cost of Program**

**Activities**

Program Activities			Total Federal Spending
Local Adults			\$1,972,538
Local Dislocated Workers			\$2,056,320
Local Youth			\$2,422,013
Rapid Response (up to 25%) §134 (a) (2) (b)			\$559,532
Statewide Required Activities (up to 15%) §134 (a) (2) (b)			\$451,171
Statewide Allowable Activities §134 (a) (3)	Program Activity Description	3.75% of Adult, Youth, and DW funds for State Activities	\$20,000
		TAT (Tech. Assist. Trng.)	\$2,654
Total of All Federal Spending Listed Above			\$7,484,228

Note: Tables B, E, H.1 & M used to populate table)

**Table O (formulas to fill statewide data) Statewide**

	Total Participants Served	Adults	832		
		Dislocated Workers	713		
		Older Youth (19-21)	356	822	
		Younger Youth (14-18)	466		
	Total Exiters	Adults	562		
		Dislocated Workers	459		
		Older Youth (19-21)	158		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	185		
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level	within 80% of Neg. Perf. Level	
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.40%	74.48%	89%	82.0%
	Dislocated Workers	87.50%	89.56%	102%	
Retention Rate	Adults	86.80%	87.50%	101%	
	Dislocated Workers	90.50%	88.61%	98%	
Average Earnings	Adults	10,900.00	11,146.79	\$247	102.3%
	Dislocated Workers	15,147.00	14,634.20	(\$513)	96.6%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	64.8%	66.2%	102%	
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	70.0%	71.0%	101%	
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	30.0%	31.3%	104%	
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")					
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
		0	3	6	80% to 100% = met >100% = exceeded

**Table O** Aroostook/Washington LA (ETA Code: 23030)

(Data Source: Region worksheet)

	Total Participants Served	Adults	145		
		Dislocated Workers	96		
		Older Youth (19-21)	98		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	71		
	Total Exiters	Adults	86		
		Dislocated Workers	51		
		Older Youth (19-21)	31		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	15		
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		within 80% of Neg. Perf. Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.4%	72.55%		87%
	Dislocated Workers	87.5%	90.20%		103%
Retention Rate	Adults	86.8%	83.64%		96%
	Dislocated Workers	90.5%	90.20%		99.7%
Average Earnings	Adults	\$10,900	\$10,300	(\$600)	94.5%
	Dislocated Workers	\$15,147	\$12,873	(\$2,274)	85.0%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	64.8%	100.00%		154%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	70.0%	79.31%		113%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	30.0%	61.54%		205%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a		
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	
		0	5	4	80% to 100% = met >100% = exceeded

Table O

**Tri-County LA (ETA Code: 23020)**

(Data Source: Region worksheet)

	Total Participants Served	Adults	149		
		Dislocated Workers	154		
		Older Youth (19-21)	60		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	85		
	Total Exiters	Adults	94		
		Dislocated Workers	78		
		Older Youth (19-21)	28		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	25		
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		within 80% of Neg. Perf. Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.4%	75.6%		91%
	Dislocated Workers	87.5%	82.2%		94%
Retention Rate	Adults	86.8%	91.0%		105%
	Dislocated Workers	90.5%	87.6%		97%
Average Earnings	Adults	\$10,900	\$9,924	(\$976)	91.0%
	Dislocated Workers	\$15,147	\$12,905	(\$2,242)	85.2%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	64.8%	69.8%		108%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	70.0%	77.1%		110%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	30.0%	42.9%		143%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a		
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	80% to 100% = met >100% = exceeded
		0	5	4	

Table O

**Central/Western LA (ETA Code: 23035)**

(Data Source: Region worksheet)

	Total Participants Served	Adults	200		
		Dislocated Workers	161		
		Older Youth (19-21)	65		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	160		
	Total Exiters	Adults	144		
		Dislocated Workers	124		
		Older Youth (19-21)	39		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	89		
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		within 80% of Neg. Perf. Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.4%	74.2%		89%
	Dislocated Workers	87.5%	87.1%		99.6%
Retention Rate	Adults	86.8%	83.2%		96%
	Dislocated Workers	90.5%	88.2%		98%
Average Earnings	Adults	\$10,900	\$10,988	\$88	100.8%
	Dislocated Workers	\$15,147	\$12,375	(\$2,772)	81.7%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	64.8%	57.1%		88%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	70.0%	67.0%		96%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	30.0%	22.2%		74%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a		
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	80% to 100% = met >100% = exceeded
		1	7	1	

Table O

**Coastal Counties LA (ETA Code: 23040)**

(Data Source: Region worksheet)

	Total Participants Served	Adults	338		
		Dislocated Workers	302		
		Older Youth (19-21)	133		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	150		
	Total Exiters	Adults	218		
		Dislocated Workers	195		
		Older Youth (19-21)	60		
		Younger Youth (14-18)	56		
		Negotiated Performance Level	Actual Performance Level		within 80% of Neg. Perf. Level
Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.4%	74.6%		89%
	Dislocated Workers	87.5%	94.9%		108%
Retention Rate	Adults	86.8%	90.1%		104%
	Dislocated Workers	90.5%	89.0%		98%
Average Earnings	Adults	\$10,900	\$11,993	\$1,093	110.0%
	Dislocated Workers	\$15,147	\$16,318	\$1,171	107.7%
Placement in Employment or Education	Youth (14-21)	64.8%	71.0%		110%
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	Youth (14-21)	70.0%	70.6%		101%
Literacy/Numeracy Gains	Youth (14-21)	30.0%	22.1%		74%
Description of Other State Indicators of Performance (WIA §136 (d)(1)) (Insert additional rows if there are more than two "Other State Indicators of Performance")			n/a		
Overall Status of Local Performance		Not Met	Met	Exceeded	80% to 100% = met >100% = exceeded
		1	2	6	

**Table P – Veteran Priority of Service**

	Total	(%) Served
Covered Entrants who reached the end of the entry period	1,779	
covered Entrants who received a service during the entry period.	1,779	100%
Covered Entrants who received a staff-assisted service during the entry period.	57	3.2%

**Table Q – Veterans' Outcomes by Special Populations**

Reported Information	Post 9/11 Era Veterans		Post 9/11 Era Veterans who received at least Intensive Services		TAP Workshop Veterans	
Entered Employment Rate	86.96%	20	90.00%	18	0.00%	0
		23		20		0
Employment Retention Rate	78.95%	15	83.33%	15	0.00%	0
		19		18		0
Average Earnings	\$15,523.24	\$232,848.59	\$15,523.24	\$232,848.59	\$0.00	\$0.00
		15		15		0

## **REPORTING ASSURANCE**

The Maine Department of Labor submits all required WIA financial, participant and performance data reports in accordance with instructions issued by USDOL and as laid out in 20 CFR 667.300 and within required reporting deadlines. In addition, Maine performs all federally mandated report and data element validation annually. Maine will continue to meet all deadlines for reporting as required.

## **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

In September 2014, the Maine Department of Labor, Bureau of Employment Services created two surveys for Program Year (PY) 2013 – “WIA Participant Satisfaction” and “Maine Job Bank Employer Satisfaction.” These surveys were created and managed through SurveyMonkey, which is an online, survey development, cloud-based software service that provides customizable tools for data collection and analysis. The surveys went out to all participants that received WIA services during PY13 via e-mail. Likewise, all employers that posted orders on the Maine Job Bank during PY13 were e-mailed a specific Customer Satisfaction Survey via Survey Monkey.

### WIA Participant Satisfaction

Using the instructions outlined in TEGl No. 6-00 and TEGl 6-00, change 1, we accomplished our goal to measure whether WIA programs and services met participant needs and expectations and help them to succeed in attaining employment. Of the 1,122 WIA program participants that were sent a survey, 1,065 did not respond, five opted out, 99 bounced back and 56 responded resulting in a five percent response rate. A detailed breakdown of the WIA Participant Customer Satisfaction Survey questions and results are as follows:

## CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

<b>WIA Participant Satisfaction Survey Results</b> (Recipients Total of 1,122, 56 Responded for a Survey Response Rate of 5.0%)			
<b>Measure (Scale)</b>	<b>Q1</b> What is your overall satisfaction level with the services offered or provided by the CareerCenter or one of the partners listed above? 1 = Dissatisfied to 10 = Very Satisfied	<b>Q2</b> Considering all of your expectations about the services provided to you, to what extent did the services Fall Short of or Meet your expectations? 1 = Way Below Expectations to 10 = Exceeded Expectations	<b>Q3</b> Based on the services actually provided to assist you in gaining employment, how closely do you think the services you received actually met your needs? 1 = Didn't Meet Needs and 10 = Met Needs Completely
1	3.6%	1.8%	3.6%
2	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%
3	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%
4	0.0%	1.8%	3.6%
5	0.0%	3.6%	3.6%
6	0.0%	5.4%	0.0%
7	3.6%	5.4%	8.9%
8	12.5%	19.6%	7.1%
9	23.2%	21.4%	17.9%
10	53.6%	37.5%	46.4%
Don't Know	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
<b>Performance Result Breakdown</b>			
<b>Category Summary</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>
Lowest Scale	3.6%	1.8%	3.6%
Below Median	7.2%	10.8%	16.2%
Above Median	89.2%	78.5%	71.4%
Median to Highest	92.9%	89.3%	80.3%
Highest Scale	53.6%	37.5%	46.4%

As the results indicate for Question 1 (Q1), 92.9 percent was reached for combined results of “Satisfied to Very Satisfied,” whereas 7.2 percent was below “Satisfied to Dissatisfied.” An average of 89.2 percent was “Above Satisfied” and 53.6 percent was “Very Satisfied.” For Q2, “Way below Expectations” was at a low 1.8 percent, whereas “Exceeded Expectations” was 37.5 percent. “Median to Highest” percentage is at a solid 89.3. Of the survey responses for Q3, “Met Needs Completely” reached 46.4 percent; the lowest scale of “Didn’t Meet Needs” represents 3.6 percent. “Median to Highest” in “Met Needs Completely” is 80.3 percent.

### Maine Job Bank Employer Satisfaction

All employers utilizing the Maine Job Bank during PY13 were surveyed regarding their satisfaction with the services and whether or not the services met their expectations. A total of 2,997 employers were sent a survey questionnaire and of those 2,740 did not respond, 11 opted out, 147 bounced back and 257 responded for an overall response rate of 8.6 percent. A detailed breakdown of the MJB Employer Satisfaction Survey questions and results are as follows:

<b>Maine Job Bank (MJB) Employer Satisfaction Survey Results</b> (Recipients Total of 2,997, and 257 Responded for a Survey Response Rate of 8.6%)			
<b>Measure (Scale)</b>	<b>Q1</b> What is your overall satisfaction with the services offered or provided by the Maine Job Bank? 1 = Dissatisfied to 10 = Very Satisfied	<b>Q2</b> Considering all of your expectations about the services provided to you, to what extent did the services Fall Short of or Meet your expectations? 1 = Failed to meet Expectations to 10 = Exceeded Expectations	<b>Q3</b> Based on the services actually provided, how closely do you think the services actually met your needs? 1 = Didn't Meet Needs and 10 = Met Needs Completely
1	4.7%	8.2%	12.5%
2	3.5%	5.1%	5.1%
3	5.4%	5.4%	6.2%
4	4.7%	5.1%	4.7%
5	11.3%	13.6%	13.2%
6	6.6%	8.2%	6.6%
7	12.1%	9.3%	10.5%
8	16.7%	19.8%	14.4%
9	15.2%	13.6%	12.1%
10	17.5%	9.3%	11.3%
Don't Know	2.3%	2.3%	3.5%
<b>Performance Result Breakdown</b>			
<b>Category Summary</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>
Lowest Scale	4.7%	8.2%	12.5%
Below Median	29.6%	37.4%	41.7%
Above Median	49.3%	42.7%	37.8%
Median to Highest	68.1%	60.2%	54.9%
Highest Scale	17.5%	9.3%	11.3%

As the results indicate for Question 1 (Q1), 68.1 percent was reached for combined results of “Satisfied to Very Satisfied,” whereas 4.7 percent was below “Satisfied to Dissatisfied.” An average of 49.3 percent was “Above Satisfied” and 17.5 percent was “Very Satisfied.” For Q2, “Failed to meet Expectations” was at a low 8.2 percent, whereas “Exceeded Expectations” was 9.3 percent. “Median to Highest” percentage is at 60.2. Of the survey responses for Q3, “Met Needs Completely” reached 11.3 percent; the lowest scale of “Didn’t Meet Needs” represents a high percentage of 12.5 percent. “Median to Highest” in “Met Needs Completely” is 54.9 percent.

These MDOL utilized questions that had been broadly approved by USDOL for states to use to meet compliance with this requirement. While the responses give us some idea of the overall satisfaction of the customers they do not provide enough information for service improvements. Maine intends to coordinate a customer satisfaction team made up of Local Board and Service Provider members to identify specific components of customer satisfaction they want to address. MDOL anticipates conducting more than one satisfaction survey using revised questionnaires developed by the team and going forward hopes to get to a point where surveys can be conducted quarterly so that the services are fresh in customers minds and in order to get better and just-in-time data with which to address improvements.

## WAIVERS

The following waivers were requested and approved on April 23, 2003 by Jane Oates, Assistant Secretary of Labor, in her response to the submittal of the State Strategic Plan:

- **Waiver permitting the state to replace the performance measures required under WIA Section 136(b) with the Common Performance Measures;**

The state requested a waiver to negotiate and report WIA outcomes against the Common Performance Measures only. This waiver removes the requirement for the state to negotiate and report performance measures tied to WIA adult and dislocated worker credential rates; participant and employer customer satisfaction; older youth measures; and younger youth measures. The state will use the three adult common performance measures to negotiate goals and report outcomes for the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The state will use the three youth common performance measures to report outcomes for the WIA Youth program. While the documentation of a recognized credential is waived for performance purposes Maine will continue to identify the type of credentials earned by participants on the Workforce Investment Act Standardized Record Data system (WIASRD) as required. This waiver has been granted through June 30, 2017.

The new nine measures include:

- Adult Entered Employment Rate
- Adult Retention of Employment Rate
- Adult Average Earnings
- Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate
- Dislocated Worker Retention of Employment Rate
- Dislocated Worker Average Earnings
- Youth Placement in Employment or Education Rate
- Youth Attainment of a Degree or Credential Rate
- Youth Numeracy and Literacy Gains Rate

- **Waiver of the time limit on the period of initial eligibility for training providers as provided in 20 CFR 663.530**

Maine has requested and been granted this waiver previously. This waiver, which has also been approved through June 30, 2017, postpones the requirement of the state to determine subsequent eligibility of eligible training providers each year. The waiver offers training providers an opportunity to re-enroll and be considered as initially-eligible training providers without requiring detailed studies on performance of students completing their programs. WIA adult and dislocated worker participants can only utilize their Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to pay the cost of tuition for programs and providers that have been approved to go on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Without this waiver, subsequent eligibility determination would involve a costly review on behalf of the training providers requesting approval to be on the list. Data that would

have been required to be reported and analyzed in order for a program to remain on the list would be based on:

- Completion rates for *all* individuals participating in the program of study;
- Percentage of *all* individuals in the program of study who obtain unsubsidized employment;
- Earnings at placement of *all* individuals in the program of study;
- Completion rates for just WIA participants in the program of study;
- Percentage of just WIA participants in the program who obtain unsubsidized employment;
- Retention rates of WIA participants in the program of study six months after obtaining employment;
- Earnings of *Workforce Investment Act* participants who participated in the program of study six months after obtaining employment; and
- Rates of licensure, certification, and skill attainment for *Workforce Investment Act* participants completing the program of study.

While many educational institutions are starting to conduct studies and document student outcomes, the specific requirement for this level of research and analysis would be off-putting to training providers who do not have the resources and would have a negative impact on number of providers from which WIA participants can select approved programs. This waiver will continue to be important for all states until such time as funding provided can be provided to support training provider performance mandates or WIA is reauthorized.

- **Waiver of the required 50 percent employer contribution for customized training as provided in WIA Section 101(8)(C)**

Maine requested the ability to permit the use of a sliding fee scale for the employer contribution to the cost of Customized Training (CT) based on the size of the employer. The Act requires that employers pay a minimum of 50 percent of the cost of Customized Training. While larger employers can absorb this level of cost, over 90 percent of employers in the state of Maine are very small with less than twenty employees and this cost would be prohibitive for most. This waiver will encourage smaller employers to hire and train WIA participants using the Customized Training approach, an approach which will provide them with specific occupational skills required by the business and result in direct employment. The waiver sets the employer cost match based on business size as follows: employers with 50 or fewer employees would be required to pay 10 percent of cost; employers with 51-250 employees would be required to pay 25 percent of the cost; and employers with more than 250 employees would be required to pay the full 50 percent of the cost as required by law. Maine will continue to abide by the requirement to utilize CT funds only for adults who meet low-income priority or dislocated-worker eligibility requirements. This waiver has been granted through June 2017, and while it has not yet been utilized, Maine is working with all local areas to promote the use of the

CT waiver for the Jobs Driven NEG grant project being implemented in Maine currently. Maine requires local areas to report on use of this and all waivers on a quarterly basis.

- **Waiver of WIA Section 134(a) to permit local areas to use a portion of local funds for incumbent worker training.**

The State requested a waiver to permit local areas to conduct allowable activities as defined under WIA Section 134(a)(3) with local WIA formula funds, specifically to use funds for incumbent worker training. Under this waiver up to ten percent of local WIA Adult formula and Dislocated Worker formula funds can be used to provide incumbent worker training when it is used as a layoff aversion strategy. Because of this and the fact that these funds are also restricted to serving lower income adults this waiver has not been used. Many companies at risk of downsizing are not identified until the actual downsizing occurs or if identified in advance pay wages that would put the potential incumbent participants outside of the income guidelines. These factors have made it very difficult to use this waiver, which local areas originally understood would allow additional skill training for low income workers.

- **Waiver of Requirement to Conduct Program Evaluations WIA Section 172 (20 CFR 665.200(d):**

Maine requested a waiver of the requirement to conduct program evaluations which was approved by the USDOL on 12/30/2014 for the PY13 program year. It is anticipated that during PY14, Maine will conduct an evaluation of how changes in the requirements for documentation of service provision and the newly implemented auto-exit system will affect performance outcomes and what this will mean going forward for Maine. Local areas contend that the levels of performance being achieved in Maine regarding employment, retention, and earnings gains are already at the highest possible level and that these levels cannot be realistically maintained. Maine has implemented new service tracking and auto-exit requirements that will allow us to evaluate realistic levels of performance for Maine during PY14.

- **Waiver allowing use of Individual Training Accounts for Youth (20 CFR 664.500)**

Region staff recommended that Maine request a waiver for use of Individual Training Accounts (ITA) for youth following a program review that identified that some service providers in Maine had been utilizing ITAs for youth that were not co-enrolled as Adults. Maine applied for and was approved for this Waiver; however, interest in the waiver has not been reported by Local Areas and it is our understanding that the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act does not allow use of ITA for youth and will not entertain waivers starting in July of 2015. To avoid confusion among youth service providers, we have elected to not promote the use of ITAs for youth going forward.

## **WIA Five Percent Funds**

In Maine, the WIA five percent funds have been used to cover the cost of administering the programs, program oversight and reporting. Specifically, it funded personnel in the Bureau of Employment Services who conduct policy development, monitoring and evaluation activities and required reporting, and staff to the State Workforce Investment Board and its activities. The level of these funds is not sufficient to fund all of the required activities under the law.

## **EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

During PY13, the Bureau of Employment Services conducted Workforce Investment Act, and the Wagner-Peyser Act monitoring and evaluation of each of the four Local Workforce Investment Boards and Service Providers for the 2012 program year (PY12)

Program monitoring has two main purposes:

- 1) To ensure that the CareerCenter system is in compliance with the intent and substance of the rules governing funding streams, and
- 2) To provide an understanding of the systems operating to achieve the overall workforce investment goals.

The first purpose satisfies the mandate of the State oversight agency to ensure that statutes, regulations, and policies are being followed. While comparatively narrower in scope than the second purpose, monitoring for compliance supports the State Workforce Investment Board's goal of accountability and meets legislated oversight requirements.

The second purpose allows the monitoring effort to take a strategic perspective. Monitoring becomes a way to develop an understanding of the systems the CareerCenters draw upon to deliver information and services to customers. Presumably, the systems in place are a result of efforts to achieve State and local board goals. The systems are composed of the working relationships with public and private entities and may take forms such as partnerships, agreements, collaborations, coalitions, and protocols. Working relationships may be internal or external to the CareerCenter facility. They may have been established by a local board for the entire area or established independently by a CareerCenter.

The monitoring plan this past year included a thorough review of both programmatic and fiscal/administrative compliance for the previous PY12 period. Additional monitoring tools were implemented to conduct a thorough review of Local Board governance and strategic planning and of the required LWIB governance documents including required MOUs, CLEO Agreements, Board By-Laws, OneStop Operator Agreements, Board Certifications, and required policies. LWIB sub-recipient monitoring and performance planning for each area was also

reviewed. The following represents a schedule of specific local area monitoring activity during PY13 which covered PY12 local area governance, Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program and file reviews, and Wagner Peyser and CareerCenter facilities reviews.

Monitors have completed all program and fiscal reviews for PY12 and reports identifying best practices, concerns and findings have been completed and corrective action plans developed.

**Local Area PY12 Governance and Program Monitoring Reviews Conducted in PY13**

Local Area 3: Central/Western Workforce Board  
PY12 Review Conducted July 29 – August 1, 2013  
Site: Lewiston CareerCenter

Local Area 4: Coastal Counties Workforce Board  
PY12 Review Conducted February 3-5, 2014  
Site: Rockland CareerCenter

Local Area 2: Tri-County Workforce Board  
PY 12 Review Conducted: April 8-11, 2014  
Site: Bangor CareerCenter

Local Area 1: Aroostook/Washington Workforce Board  
PY12 Review Conducted June 2-6, 2014  
Site: Presque Isle CareerCenter

**Planning Schedule for PY13 Governance and Program Monitoring to be conducted during PY14**

Local Area 3: Central/Western Workforce Board  
PY13 Review Conducted October 20-22, 2014  
Site: Wilton CareerCenter

Local Area 4: Coastal Counties Workforce Board  
PY13 Review to be conducted December 2-4, 2014  
Site: Portland CareerCenter

Local Area 2: Tri-County Workforce Board  
PY 13 Review to be conducted: March 23-26, 2015  
Site: Bangor CareerCenter

Local Area 1: Aroostook/Washington Workforce Board  
PY13 Review do be conducted May 25-28, 2015  
Site: Machias CareerCenter

## Workforce Investment Activity Cost Data

Maine allocates approximately 85 percent of the WIA Title I funds it receives to four Local Workforce Investment Areas. The WIA Title I funds allocated to adults, dislocated workers and youth had a direct impact of the range of strong performance outcomes for each of these groups.

The CareerCenters have been working as effective teams consisting of Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser, and to some extent Bureau of Rehabilitation service providers, to offer registered customers the highest level of support necessary to gain access to employment.

<b>UNIT COST DATA</b>	<b>Cost-Efficiency RATIO</b>	<b>TOTAL OBLIGATIONS*</b>	<b>TOTAL INDIVIDUALS SERVED</b>
<b>Overall, All Program Strategies</b>	\$4,056	\$9,599,616	2,367
<b>Adult Program</b>	\$2,371	\$1,972,538	832
<b>Dislocated Worker Programs</b>	\$2,884	\$2,056,320	713
<b>Youth Programs</b>	\$2,946	\$2,422,013	822

*\*Unit Cost Data is based only on WIA Formula Funded Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs.*

## VETERAN SERVICES

Maine CareerCenters, along with community and business partners, sponsored dozens of job fairs in the past year – many focused solely on veterans. In June, First Lady Ann LePage kicked off the *First Annual Government Jobs in Maine Job Fair* (for Veterans) held at the Augusta Armory. State, Federal and Municipal government employers participated. About 75 veterans and 50 non-veterans attended the event. Several interviews and/or job offers have since been made. Both Governor Paul R. LePage and the First Lady participated, spending the first hour networking with government employers and veterans' resource representatives, thanking them for their time and commitment to the hiring and advancement of veterans. This Administration, especially the Governor's Office, continues to show unprecedented support for Maine's veterans. The Government Job Fair was sponsored by the State of Maine, Bureau of Human Resources, the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and the Maine National Guard. Plans are underway to offer the event again next year.

In Portland, in cooperation with several partners, MDOL co-hosted the first Occupational Licensing and Job Fair for Veterans at the Stevens Avenue Armory in March 2014. The event was sponsored by the Maine Military and Community Network (MMCN), Maine Department of Labor's JVSG Program and Occupational Licensing/Department of Professional and Financial Regulation. Four occupational licensing staff (electrical, plumbing, boiler operator and fuel technician), 15 employers, and 34 veterans participated in the event, which was later replicated in Bangor.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), a USDOL funded program, provided \$789,000 in PY 2014, supporting 12.5 FTE veterans staff positions, two of which were limited term positions added to build veterans staffing capacity in different regions of the state. Maine's staffing was comprised of six full time and five half-time Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialists (DVOPs) and four full-time Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) working within 12 Career Center offices and numerous itinerant sites. One of the LVERs serves as the state Veterans Program Manager based at central office in Augusta. This staffing plan included a heavier emphasis on DVOP positions to ensure that intensive services are adequately provided to veterans with barriers to employment.

The JVSG staff development plan for 2014 included training for both JVSG grant funded staff as well as training for our CareerCenter partners to include: WP, WIA and VR. In 2014 we provided the following trainings for staff:

- Military Culture 101 Workshops. In the third quarter, we provided one Military Culture 101 workshop at the Presque Isle CareerCenter for 20 CareerCenter and LWIB staff and

managers. The Military Culture 101 workshop was sponsored by MDOL, MBVS, Maine National Guard, and ESGR. This is the fourth in a series of Military Culture 101 workshops that have now been offered at CareerCenter locations around Maine. The workshop focused on: Military Culture 101, Invisible Wounds, Overview of Resources Available through Bureau of Veterans Services, and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR).

- CareerCenter Veterans' Refocusing Workshops. In response to the JVSG Refocusing Guidance in the spring of 2014, we began training CareerCenter managers and staff about the new customer flow for Veterans at our CareerCenters. We revised the customer flow chart and developed a one page *Veterans Services Questionnaire* to assist Wagner-Peyser staff in appropriately screening veterans for referral to vet staff and/or other resources.

Our JVSG and WP staff continued to support the VOW Gold Card and VRAP initiatives by providing the following services:

#### **VOW Gold Card**

- 1,548 Gold Card veterans were served by Maine's CareerCenter staff in PY 2014 of a total of 7,309 served (21 percent).
- 163 gold card veterans received services from JVSG staff. 149 (93 percent) of the Gold Card veterans received staff assisted services and 93 (57 percent) Gold Card veterans received intensive services.
- The JVSG staff conduct regular follow-up with Gold Card veterans (at least every 30 days), as well as others until the veteran has successfully found employment or been referred to VR&E or other resources.

#### **VRAP – Veterans Retraining Assistance Program**

- As of March 30, 2014, 225 Maine veterans were enrolled/participated in VRAP. Of those, 130 had exited the program. Maine's VRAP participants are training in the following high-demand occupations: Computer Support Specialists, Tractor-Trailer Drivers, Heating and Air Conditioning Installers, Operations Managers, Substance Abuse Counselors, Medical Records and Health Info Technicians, Machinists, Medical Assistants, Architectural and Civil Drafters and Automotive Service Technicians. Maine's JVSG staff provide follow-up services

Maine's DVOPs and LVERs continue to collaborate with local agencies and programs such as Easter Seals of Maine, Volunteers of America, Goodwill's Veterans Program, Disability Employment Initiative, Maine's Business Leadership Network (promotes the hiring and advancement of people with disabilities), the Apprenticeship Program, and Ticket to Work, Bureau of Veterans Services, Maine Military Community Network, Voc Rehab, VR&E, Chambers of Commerce, LWIBs, Homeless Shelters, American Legion, Maine National Guard, Employer

Support of Guard and Reserve. In addition, the Veterans Program Manager provides staff leadership on the State Workforce Investment Board's (SWIB) Veterans' Employment Committee, which focuses on Veteran 'Priority of Service' programs and other issues impacting Veterans.

**Performance Targets and Outcomes for Jobs for Veterans State Grants, Quarter ending June 30, 2014.**

<b><i>DVOP Specialists: (Source: VETS-200A):</i></b>	<b>Negotiated Standard</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Intensive Services Provided to Individuals by DVOP Specialists/Total Veterans and Eligible Persons Served by DVOP Specialists in the State ( <i>New</i> )	49	64
Veterans' Entered Employment Rate (VEER) <i>Weighted</i>	58	61
Veterans' Employment Retention Rate (VERR)	78	77
Veterans' Average Earnings (VAE) (Six Months)	\$13,250	<b>\$12,066</b>
Disabled Veterans' EER (DVEER)	53	<b>50</b>
Disabled Veterans' ERR (DVERR)	78	<b>65</b>
Disabled Veterans' AE (DVAE) (Six Months)	\$13,400	\$13,191

**Performance Targets and Outcomes for One-Stop Services for Veterans, Quarter ending June 30, 2014.**

	<b>Negotiated Standard</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Veterans Entered Employment Rate (EER)	52	53
Veterans Employment Retention Rate (ERR)	80	80
Veterans Average Earnings (AE)	\$13,750	<b>\$13,658</b>
Disabled Veterans EER	47	<b>46</b>
Disabled Veterans ERR	79	79
Disabled Veterans AE	\$13,700	\$14,714

The actual performance as compared to the negotiated standards trended up again for this period, meeting or exceeding a majority of our negotiated standards. The good news is that our Disabled Veterans' EER increased substantially to 50 percent, although we still lag behind the negotiated standard of 53 percent by three percentage points. In states with a small population, like Maine, just a few (more or less) veterans entering employment can have a significant impact on overall numbers. We are pleased to note (again!) that we have exceeded (by 13 points!) our new intensive service target of 49 percent. Six of our eight full service CareerCenters exceeded the 49 percent goal this quarter.

We are hopeful that when employment outcomes for federal and DOD jobs are included in our system that our Entered Employment and Average Earnings for Disabled Veterans will begin to improve for both the JVSG grant and our One-Stop Centers. All efforts to improve performance through increased staff training, strengthening collaborations with Chamber of Commerce and partner agencies to increase employment opportunities for targeted veterans groups will continue.

### **Priority of Service**

Maine continues to implement the Veterans' priority of service as defined and required by 38 U.S.C 4215(b) and 20 CFR Parts 1001 and 1010. The Maine one-stop delivery system (Maine CareerCenters) is the core mechanism that is used to support, expand and maintain services to our Veteran population throughout the State. Priority of Service is made available and provided to all eligible veterans and eligible spouses, transitioning service members, Chapter 31 veterans, Native American veterans, and other groups targeted for special consideration, including difficult to serve veterans and veterans with barriers to employment.

Priority of service applies to Workforce Investment Act Adult, Dislocated and Youth Grants, National Emergency Grants, Demonstration Grants, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Wagner-Peyser, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other core programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and administered in Maine by the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL). Accordingly, MDOL has issued guidance to the State's Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs) requiring local policy issuance to providers of the above applications to include priority of service for Veterans requirements in *agreements* (plans, contracts and subcontracts).

MDOL, in conjunction with our DVET, *monitors* LWIB issuance, implementation and compliance of the priority of service statute and policy. LWIBs are subsequently required to conduct the same monitoring with any and all contractors receiving Department of Labor funds. DVOP Specialists and LVERs are responsible for advocating for Veterans and monitoring the priority of service principle within the Maine's CareerCenter network. Any case where a Veteran or

eligible spouse is denied services over a Non-Veteran will be documented and brought to the attention of the Bureau of Employment Services for review and further action as appropriate.

Priority of service for Veterans and eligible spouses supports the tenets of “precedence” and “awareness” as defined in 20 CFR 1010. With regard to precedence for all U.S. DOL core-funded programs, Maine Veterans and eligible spouses receive access to services earlier than non-covered persons. Indeed, if limited resources restrict a particular service, then, a Maine Veteran or eligible spouse will receive access instead of or before Non-Veterans. Again, precedence will apply to every qualified job training program funded, in whole or in part, by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Under the tenet of “awareness,” Maine focuses on points of entry for services, both physical and virtual modes. All Maine CareerCenters and itinerant sites have signage in their entry ways that defines priority of service for Veterans. At the initial point of contact with CareerCenter staff at reception, Veterans’ status is determined and priority for services is discussed. For all hard-copy products (pamphlets/brochures) describing U.S. DOL core-funded programs, priority of service for Veterans is inscribed. On all MDOL websites, priority of service for Veterans is highlighted. This applies as well to the websites of LWIBs, program operators and others receiving U.S. DOL core program funds. In the revised Maine Job Bank, a screen reflects what priority of service for Veterans means, particularly as it relates to precedence.

### **Special Initiatives**

In the past year, several special projects for veterans were initiated. Some highlights include:

*IDEXX Meet and Greet for Veterans Employment Staff.* A Planning and Procurement Manager at IDEXX Labs in Westbrook, ME brought together several IDEXX HR and Talent Acquisition managers and hosted a Meet and Greet for Veterans Employment Staff around the state on February 20, 2014. Invitees included FIVE Maine Department of Labor JVSG staff, FIVE ESGR and Military Leadership Staff and ONE H2H staff. IDEXX staff provided an overview of their products and job opportunities and offered a tour of the facility so that employment counselors would better understand the work environment for prospective veteran referrals. IDEXX recently launched a Patriot Corner Committee, coordinated by an employee, who is the wife of a currently deployed MNG member. Under the umbrella of the Patriot Corner Committee, IDEXX started this new Veterans’ Hiring Initiative. Employment counselors were directed to email resumes of qualified veteran applicants to identified IDEXX staff, who will review and submit them to hiring managers, as appropriate. This gives veterans a leg-up in the hiring process.

*Point in Time Survey* – One of our CareerCenter Vet Reps participated in the statewide Point in Time Survey in January 2014 along with 15 other representatives from a variety of Maine agencies. The good news is that Homelessness for Veterans in Maine decreased from 10.8% last

year to 8.9 percent this year. Volunteers counted a total of 1,200 homeless individuals in Maine on January 28, 2014, an increase of 25 in total over 2013. Of the 1,200, 107 identified as veterans. In addition, just over 500 veterans were served at Maine's emergency shelters in 2013 – about 50 percent of those in Cumberland County and another 20 percent at shelters in Penobscot County. Having a sense of where the majority of homeless veterans are located in Maine provides our DVOPs with important outreach information to address this critical issue.

### **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Spring Career Fair, Spectacular Events Center in Bangor, May 28, 2014**

The Occupational Licensing and Job Fair committee teamed up with the working group of Bangor's Annual Spring Career Fair to provide both fairs at the same time, date and location. This minimized the planning and outreach time for both groups. About 80 employers and 450 job seekers attended the fair with just over 35 veterans coming through the doors to meet with Occupational Licensing Staff and Veterans' Resources. This provided an opportunity for local veterans' staff to meet with employers and veterans and make potential job matches right then and there. The event was sponsored by the Maine's Tri-County CareerCenter, MDOL, ESGR, H2H, MMCN, and the Bangor Daily News.

### **NVTI Trainings in Denver**

One hundred percent of our JVSG staff and about half of our WP staff successfully completed NVTI's new online training: *AJCs: Preparing Veterans for Meaningful Careers*. Seven of Maine's DVOPs and LVERs attended trainings at NVTI in Denver in the past year. Trainings included: Facilitating Veterans Employment (FVE), Case Management (CM) and Employer Outreach (EO).

# LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARDS HIGHLIGHTS

Each of Maine's four local areas worked diligently to develop and implement their five year strategic plans. The local WIBs got a late start on this but the final plans are very robust and focus on the level of service integration that will be demanded by WIOA in the future. Boards scheduled specific work sessions and teams to develop portions of their plans and specific steps to increasing integration of program resources, especially between industry, education, economic development and workforce development partners.

The strategies outlined in the plans are being implemented and some local areas continue to engage partners to address industry sector needs in their local areas.

## LOCAL AREA 1 AROOSTOOK-WASHINGTON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (AWWIB)

**AWWIB's Five Year Strategic Plan-** The Aroostook-Washington County, Maine workforce development system is designing and implementing a Workforce Center of Excellence (WCOE) model. This model engages on an active and ongoing basis **people, education and training providers and employers**. Each of these stakeholders has a unique role to play in the success of a workforce development system. They all have independent interests, acknowledging the fact that collaboration and resource sharing is the key to success.

The 5-year strategy plan is built upon four primary goal areas:

- ✓ Resource Integration
- ✓ Industry Engagement
- ✓ Human Capital Development
- ✓ Innovation and Entrepreneurship

**AWWIB LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE:** With approval from the AWWIB, staff recently redesigned and launched the new Aroostook & Washington Workforce Investment Board website: [www.awwib.org](http://www.awwib.org). Readers are able to find information related to workforce development activities in Local Area One (Aroostook and Washington Counties)

Visitors can find past agendas and meeting minutes, a schedule of upcoming meetings, information about the goals and strategies of the Local Aroostook-Washington Workforce

Investment Board (AWWIB) as well as a plethora of resources and links to partners in the region.

**Maine Military Authority (MMA) NEG - PERFORMANCE SUMMARY:**

National Emergency Grants (NEGs) temporarily expand the service capacity of Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker training and employment programs at the state and local levels by providing funding assistance in response to large, unexpected economic events which cause significant job losses. NEGs generally provide resources to states and local workforce investment boards to quickly reemploy laid-off workers by offering training to increase occupational skills.

As of June 30, 2014 Aroostook Community Action Program delivered the following program outcomes:

- MMA NEG Enrollments totaled 56 participants or 102 percent of the planned level of 55
- MMA NEG program Separations totaled 20 or 400 percent of the planned level of 5
- MMA NEG program Job Placements totaled 20 or 400 percent of the planned level of 5
- MMA NEG program Average Wage at Placement was \$12.86
- MMA NEG program Employer Assisted Benefits totaled 16
- MMA NEG program Female Job Placement totaled 4

**AWWIB – Healthcare ETA Project:**

The purpose of the Healthcare ETA project was to train individuals with a focus on the healthcare sector and specifically to increase the number of credentialed health care workers in high demand occupations.

The project helped reduce the bottleneck of applications in educational institutions by promoting the use of on-line educational opportunities and help deal with barriers to education with the use of supportive service funds to alleviate the expenses of attending classes, such as travel costs, child care and emergency funds for vehicle and health issues for those students that qualify.

Students completed training in the following:

- Bachelor of Science (Nursing)
- Associate Degree (Nursing)
- Certified Nursing Assistant
- Allied Health Professional

PERFORMANCE MEASURE  <i>Performance Measure name only, do not include measurement parameters.</i>	EXPECTED LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE  <i>What's in your grant proposal?</i>		CURRENT REPORT QUARTER  <i>What did you do this quarter?</i>	CUMULATIVE TOTAL  <i>What are your project totals to date?</i>	
	A  Numeric Target	B  Target Percentage	C  Actual Numeric Level	D  Actual Numeric Level	E  Percentage of Expected Level (D/A)
Outreach	55	-	0	164	298.2%
Enrollment Rate	53	96%	0	139	262.3%
Training Completion Rate	45	81.8%	2	129	286.7%
Placement Rate	45	81.8%	4	103	228.9%
Retention Rate	40	72.7%	7	60	150%

**Jobs Innovation and Accelerator Challenge (JIAC) – ETA (Ends September 30, 2015)-** The overarching goal of the employment and training component is to train individuals in careers that are in high demand and have been identified by the renewable energy cluster (REIC) as careers that are currently needed to be filled by use of H-1B visas due to a lack of a skilled workforce in the region. Services and resources are being provided by AWWIB's service providers ACAP and Bureau of Employment Services (BES).

American workers will receive education and training needed to fill jobs that are currently being filled by foreign labor due to a shortage in the region.

The major objectives of the GrEENMe ETA initiative are:

- 1.) Increase the number of incumbent renewable energy employees, unemployed workers, displaced workers, Veterans, and underserved communities who advance their training and earn degrees, with a specific focus of the industry recognized careers of biological technicians, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and engineering managers.
- 2.) Improve access to information about renewable energy career pathways and training options within the renewable energy cluster in northeastern Maine.
- 3.) Maintain and strengthen partnerships among the regional employers, education and workforce sectors to advance the development of a skilled renewable energy workforce.

### **JIAC Program Outcomes**

Total Participants Served	44
Total Participants Completed Training	37
Total Participants still in training	6
Total Participants Employed	22

### **Service Provider-Aroostook Community Action Program (ACAP):**

ACAP continues to move forward with Workforce Center of Excellence (WCOE) initiatives to better align programs with the needs of businesses. ACAP is better connecting training programs and providers with job seekers to meet the needs of the employers.

ACAP strives to work with the AWWIB partners and educators to help stem student outmigration, to inform junior high and high school students of upcoming job opportunities in the region.

*Example: Education to Industry Summit (two years in a row) Aroostook Partnership for Progress held their second [Education to Industry Summit](#) Thursday, Aug. 7 at the [University of Maine at Presque Isle](#). This event followed up to their first event, which outlined creating a “sense of urgency”, and this year the theme was a “call to action”. An employer panel featuring TAMC, Katahdin Trust and other companies were present, along with a job shadow/internship panel, an overview of the Opportunities Aroostook initiative, and a discussion of whether your business is “Education to Industry” ready.*

**Read More:** [Aroostook Partnership for Progress Education to Industry Summit](#)

ACAP works to aid businesses with aging workforces by providing them with potential prospects to help them maintain or grow their businesses.

In response to the needs of the employers ACAP has helped to organize WCOE forums for the following in the past year:

- 1) Forest Industry (Irving Woodlands opening Pinkham Mill, Ecoshel opening, Fraser Timber)
- 2) Manufacturing Industry (Boiler Operators needed specifically)
- 3) Long Term Healthcare Providers (St. John Valley in particular and CNA-Plus program)
- 4) Logging/Trucking Industry (Off Road CDL add on and CDL course in St. John Valley))

ACAP continues to respond to the needs of Dislocated Workers in the Region:

- 1) Maine Military NEG (added resources because of the interest in re-training)
- 2) Creative Apparel (accessed additional Rapid Response Funds for re-training)

## **LOCAL AREA 2 TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (TCWIB)**

**NEW TCWIB CHAIRMAN** - The TCWIB welcomed their new Chairman Ben Sprague to lead the board in their workforce development duties. Chairman Sprague led the annual meeting held on June 19, 2014 at the Brewer Performing Arts Center. The TCWIB meets the third Thursday of March, June, September and December every year.

**THE CHIEF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS (CLEOS)** from Penobscot, Piscataquis, and Hancock Counties designated Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) to serve as the fiscal agent for the TCWIB. Starting July 1, 2013 NMDC began their work to administer the financial management under the direction of the TCWIB. NMDC is responsible for fiscal administration for all TCWIB workforce contracts.

During PY13 the CLEOs in TCWIB Local Area 2 and Aroostook and Washington Counties Local Area 1 agreed to hire one executive director to administer program contracts for both local areas. The transition to one executive director began July 1, 2014. The Commissioners in collaboration with both Workforce Investment Boards is based on attempting to identify cost savings across regions.

**LAYOFFS AND NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANTS:** The TCWIB's most noteworthy activity over the past year and a half has been to address the major layoffs in manufacturing. The Portland Press Herald stated in a recent article, *"The Maine paper industry, which has been reeling from weak demand, high energy costs and foreign competition, has seen its workforce cut by half since 2000."* Companies in the Tri-County region that have been impacted include Great Northern Paper, Lincoln Paper and Tissue, Old Town Fuel and Fiber and most recently Verso Paper. The TCWIB and its partners have been working to address challenges and serve over 1,200 dislocated workers affected by this industry downturn.

1. **Great Northern Paper** - In the Millinocket and East Millinocket region Great Northern Paper, which had been the largest single employer in Northern Penobscot County officially closed and filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in September of this year. The region's workforce system including the Maine Department of Labor and Eastern Maine Development Corporation has been delivering services and providing resources from the Katahdin Job Training Center in East Millinocket where approximately 250 people have been affected by the paper mill closure.
2. **Lincoln Paper & Tissue-** A National Emergency Grant application was submitted in response to the announced layoff of 200 workers by the Lincoln Paper and Tissue, LLC in Lincoln, Maine on December 13, 2013. Early activities delivered by the workforce system

have included rapid response sessions which were held on December 19, 2013 and other outreach efforts through the local workforce development office in Bangor and East Millinocket. The first 135 of these workers were terminated from December 15 through 31. The remaining workers were terminated in the early weeks of 2014.

**EPIC MAINE- Exploring Pathways to Industries & Careers in Maine:** The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board's Youth Council worked closely with local partners to host the first annual EPIC Maine on Thursday, April 24, 2014. EPIC Maine is a large event for young professionals and youth from ages 16-24 who reside in the tri-county region of Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock Counties.

EPIC Maine is a collaborative effort put forth by the following partners: Tri County Workforce Investment Board, Eastern Maine Community College, Penobscot Job Corps, Husson University, Eastern Maine Development Corporation, and the Maine National Guard. Our success will be contingent upon regional support from businesses and educators. [www.epicmaine.net](http://www.epicmaine.net)

The purpose of EPIC Maine is to motivate and engage older youth and young adults to think about what career track(s) they may be interested in. Industries present at our first annual event included: ***Hospitality/Tourism; Forestry; Advanced Manufacturing; Construction; Transportation; Finance; Bioscience/Healthcare; Information Technology; Education; Entrepreneurship; and more.*** The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board looks forward to our second annual EPIC Maine event.

**TCWIB FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN- LOCAL AREA TWO GOALS:** The TCWIB submitted their strategic plan to the SWIB in March of 2014. The SWIB voted to approve the plan during their May 23, 2014 meeting. The board and its partners will focus on the following goals during the next five years.

**Goal #1: Demand-Driven Training Solutions** –TCWIB will convene regular discussions with education/ training providers, including secondary and post-secondary institutions. We'll create a searchable database or asset map of all training programs and courses, indexed to the various occupational demands within the region. TCWIB will survey businesses in high growth industry sectors to glean feedback on changing skill and certification requirements. TCWIB will promote and expand its customized training role in support of expanding businesses and economic development plans. TCWIB will continue to promote WorkReady™ programs.

**Goal #2: Address Workforce Demographic Challenges** – TCWIB will increase employer partnerships to support employer needs due to changing workforce demographics, including services to address the aging workforce, shrinking youth populations and long-term unemployed workers. Activities will include increasing awareness about the benefits.

**Goal #3: Alignment of Workforce and Economic Development** – TCWIB will continue as an active partner with key groups such as Mobilize Eastern Maine (MEM), the chambers of commerce in Local Area 2, and professional clubs and business associations. TCWIB will work

closely with EMDC, MEM and the Piscataquis County Economic Development Council to strengthen relationships and coordinate regional initiatives, events and activities.

**Goal #4: Improvement of Workforce System Outcomes** – TCWIB will update MOUs among all workforce development programs and promote cross-training opportunities between partners to ensure best practices and highest quality of services are maintained in the region.

**WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Program and Youth Program Contract Procurement:** During Program Year 2013 the TCWIB voted to competitively procure their Adult & Dislocated Worker Program contract and the Youth Program contract. The TCWIB identified a review committee who received the proposals in November 2013. After reviewing and scoring the proposals the TCWIB voted to award Eastern Maine Development Corporation both workforce contracts.

**Service Provider—Eastern Maine Development Corporation:** Eastern Maine Development Corporation contracts with the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board to provide services and resources to youth, dislocated workers and adults in Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock Counties. Below are a few of the great accomplishments which have transpired throughout Program Year 2013.

**Career Advisor E-Newsletter** – In PY 2013 EMDC launched a new WIA customer newsletter called “The Career Advisor.” The Career Advisor is published as an online resource for currently active and former WIA participants. The publication provides updates on planned program activities and service schedules, information on local labor market conditions and employment opportunities as well as selected stories on participants who have made successful transitions to new career opportunities through the WIA program. The Career Advisor was launched as an element of the partnership EMDC has had with the City of Bangor AmeriCorps program that provided a volunteer who worked with WIA customers to provide support and assistance out of the Bangor Career Center

**Workforce Parenting Opportunities Training and Mentoring** – In PY 2013 EMDC Workforce staff partnered with a number of local agencies and organizations including Literacy Volunteers of Bangor, Brewer Housing Authority, Bangor Health and Community Services, Good Shepard Food Bank, and RSU 26 Adult Education to deliver a training program for young adults who are currently pregnant and/or parenting, or both. The training sessions were facilitated at the Brewer Community Training Facility, a newly built education and training center operated by the Brewer Housing Authority. Six young women attended the 12 week pilot program which consisted of classroom instruction covering Nutrition, Computer Skills, CPR/First Aid, Work Readiness (Road Trip Nation Curriculum), Cultural Literacy (embedded in a “Branching Out of Poverty” context), Learn, Explore, Discuss: Topics in Parenting Young Children, and culminating in eight weeks of Work Experience placements. Several of these young women have matriculated from this program to further training in the Healthcare Industry.

A critical component of this training is pairing each of the participants with a volunteer mentor from the community who has committed to supporting their mentee for one full year. The mentors are six professional women who are accompanying their mentees to the Parenting

Education classes once a week for four weeks and will continue weekly meetings scheduled on an individual basis. Mentors have provided guidance, support, encouragement and healthy role modeling for these young parents over the course of the year as they identify and access the resources necessary to remove their barriers to employment and education.

This has been a pilot program and we are seeking to secure additional funding to expand outreach to this vulnerable population of young adults.

**EMDC Youth Initiatives Project** – Building off of EMDC’s very successful Career Compass youth project, which was launched in June of 2012 and has served approximately 50 WIA enrolled youth with extensive employability training combined with career exploration, 3<sup>rd</sup> party certifications and hands-on training and work experience with local businesses. EMDC has launched an expanded **Youth Initiatives Project**. This project will add several new features to the foundation of the regions’ youth employability strategies including:

- **Youth Entrepreneurship:** Youth will receive training and expert advice from business owners focused on starting and running a business. Youth will complete a business plan and hear from experts as they shape their vision for their own company.
- **Youth Visioning:** Youth from area high schools will be invited to engage in development of EMDC’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This will be done as a pilot in partnership with the Penobscot Regional Educational Partnership which includes over fifteen school districts in Eastern Maine
- **Youth Mentoring:** EMDC will partner with local young adult organizations such as Fusion, to create new opportunities for youth to connect with young professionals in various sectors to gain a better understanding of the career opportunities in our region.
- **Youth Experience:** EMDC’s website is being upgraded to offer an on-line job board that is focused on available jobs for youth in our region who are seeking a first time work experience. This site will also feature employers interested in hosting youth for an internship or job shadow (semester, single day, etc.) This interactive site will be used by EMDC Youth Career Advisors as well as participating guidance counselors at area schools.

### **Local Area 3**

#### **CENTRAL/WESTERN MAINE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD (CWMWIB)**

CWMWIB focused a significant amount of effort and time to develop the WIA five-year strategic Local Plan during PY13. In order to develop the local plan, CWMWIB developed several all-volunteer sub committees and an overall Planning/Steering Committee. The sub-committees were made up of a Workforce Committee, a Business/Economic Development Committee, and an Education Committee as described in this section. As the working subcommittees convened and minutes were reported out, CWMWIB staff met frequently with the Steering Committee to keep them abreast of the progress and feedback. The Steering Committee made suggestions for

improvement or suggested other people or partners who should be at the table for the various groups and helped make the contacts possible. At the same time all members of the Board were invited to attend at least one sub-committee meeting if they had time, or to provide their input via e-mail. This turned out to be an excellent process to get feedback, new ideas, best practices and the many challenges that the current workforce development system will have to confront in order to realize the goals of a “strong, vibrant, sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities for employers and high demand-high wage jobs for job seekers.”

CWMWIB invited key partners/stakeholders to participate in 1-3 focus groups from late November 2013 into January 2014. The majority of these were held at the Lewiston CareerCenter with the Education Focus Group meeting held at Central Maine Community College in Auburn. They had a combination Business/Economic Development Focus Group, an Education Focus Group, and a Workforce Focus Group. The Business/Economic Development Group was facilitated by the director of Lewiston Adult Education and included two chamber of commerce presidents, the City of Lewiston Economic Developer, economic developers from the surrounding counties, the Governor’s Account Executive, Franklin Memorial Hospital, and the two regional EDDs (AVCOG, KVCOG). The Education focus group included partners from area community colleges, UMA, USM, Kaplan University, K-12 admin in Auburn, the local ASPIRE Program Manager from DHHS, and several adult education directors. Improved communication between the business world and education was one of the key issues identified through this process, CWMWIB staff moved immediately to address this issue and brought all the members of the Business Economic/ Development group and combined them with Education group for one large meeting held 1/16/14 at the Lewiston CareerCenter so they could speak to and discuss with each other their common challenges and issues to improve the workforce development system in Region three.

The Workforce Focus Group included most of the One-Stop CareerCenter staff members who worked on describing the array of participant services to a variety of different populations that are served including youth, Veterans, older workers, disabled workers, ex-felons, etc. These planning events with the aforementioned Focus Groups have been encouraging and the consensus is to continue these meetings on a regular schedule to ensure that all partners are aware of the capabilities/resources of each partner and to identify opportunities for collaboration. Follow up meetings are pending to discuss how the strategies will be accomplished and by whom. CWMWIB will continue to use these focus groups for future workforce development meetings (and electronic surveys) to keep the lines of communication open for all of the business/education/training partners so that they always have input into the strategic plan and can suggest changes to the plan as the economy and new and emerging industries change the landscape of Region 3.

The focus groups convened and ideas/comments and dialogue from all meetings were recorded on a digital recorder and all meeting notes were sent (via e-mail) out to all attendees, the CLEO, the CWMWIB Board and the Steering Committee. All Board members and CLEO were routinely included in the process and were invited to attend any of the scheduled meetings. They were also encouraged to submit written input/comments they wanted to make for building a highly effective workforce development system. Everyone involved in this system had a chance to be heard. The draft plan was given to the Steering Committee on February 28, 2014 for their review and comments. The draft plan was sent to the CWMWIB Board on 3/7/14 for their review and approval. Once the Board approved the draft plan it was sent to the CLEO, all participants of the focus groups and all partners in the One Stop CareerCenter for review and comment on the draft plan. The draft plan was posted for a 30 day public comment from March 12, 2014 through April 11, 2014. No public comments were received during that time period. The plan was approved at the SWIB meeting on May 23, 2104.

Reduce the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs through employer demand-driven training.

- Welder training program ongoing at New England School of Metalworking in Auburn in conjunction with S.F. Pathways in Lewiston. This training program was developed at the Lewiston CareerCenter in collaboration with both the employer, the instructor, Warren Swan from NESMW, CareerCenter staff, and Wayne Messer from MEP. The instructor and employer were involved in program design all the way through interviewing final candidates to be selected for training. The first training graduation was June 27, 2014 with six successful graduates all offered employment at SF Pathways. Commissioner of Labor Jeanne Paquette was the graduation speaker along with Don Mondor, Plant Manager and Warren Swan. A second round of training with six more qualified students started September 29, 2014 and all are doing well.
- Worked with St. Mary's Hospital and D'Youville Pavilion, CMCC, Maine Quality Centers on Eldercare Specialist Customized Training where another 11 recently graduated in April of 2104.
- Currently working with MDOL-BES and regional partners to implement new Health Care Workforce Academy Pilot Project funded partially by the JD-NEG Grant. CWMWIB is in close collaboration with MaineGeneral Medical Center in Augusta and St. Mary's Medical Center/D'Youville Pavilion in Lewiston along with CVS Caremark.

Local Area Three was awarded a 3-year grant to implement Round 4 of the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) program. The DEI grant is jointly funded and administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). The DEI grant is designed to improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes for adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

Two Disability Resource Coordinators were hired to implement the program through February 2017; one staff is located at the Augusta CareerCenter and the other position is at the Lewiston CareerCenter. The Disability Resource Coordinators (DRC) work with CWMWIB to support the One-Stop Employment Service CareerCenter system in the successful inclusion of low income persons with disabilities in the workforce. The DRCs work to build effective community partnerships that leverage public and private resources to better serve persons with disabilities and to improve employment outcomes.

Another important element of the DRC's role is to work to improve coordination and collaboration among employment and training programs carried out at the state and local level, as well as to expand the use of ENs, with a focus on growing BES's Ticket to Work program. This initiative is designed to assure the accessibility of one-stop services and programs for all community members with disability and serve as a resource to CareerCenter and partner staff and employers where the employment of persons with disabilities is concerned. Participation in this initiative enables CWMWIB to take an active role in creating sustainable systems and policies to better serve persons with disabilities at the local area CareerCenters, including policies that increase/improve prospective employment opportunities (for persons with disabilities) with businesses.

A major component of CWMWIB's work is to promote a public workforce investment system that is coordinated, integrated, and effective for the widest range of jobseekers and responsive to business customers' needs. The DEI grant enables CWMWIB to accomplish this by improving the accessibility, capacity, and accountability of the One-Stop CareerCenter system to serve persons with disabilities resulting in education and career pathways that lead to unsubsidized employment and economic self-sufficiency.

***Local Area 3 is addressing the industry/sector needs for the region;***

- **Health Care:** CWMWIB is continuing to meet with health care industry employers after the Maine Health Care Sector grant ended. Currently working with MDOL - BES and regional partners to implement new Health Care Workforce Academy Pilot Project. CWMWIB is in close collaboration with Maine General Medical Center in Augusta and St. Mary's Medical Center in Lewiston along with CVS Caremark. The plan is to eventually enroll 30 job seekers into this academy using WIA/NEG training funds and or other sources of training dollars to give the trainees basic health care skill sets they need to work in entry level jobs in a hospital and to create career pathways from those who are interested and able to advance their education into more professional or licensed health care occupations. This is to help meet a growing demand in healthcare to replace retiring health care workers and meet demand over the next five years. CWMWIB is coordinating efforts with faculty and staff from CMCC, St. Mary's Regional Medical

Center and the Adult Ed Directors from Augusta, Lewiston and Auburn to deliver the health care training modules.

- **Information Technology:** CWMWIB is working closely with Central Maine Community College (CMCC) and Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC) on the Maine is IT! Grant, which is designed to address the critical and growing need in Maine for skilled information technology workers across many of Maine’s industries. CWMWIB met with CMCC, the lead applicant for the grant to discuss how to assist in the process of development and preparing the workforce to take these IT courses over the next 3 years; CWMWIB is supporting CMCC and KVCC in both pre-training and post-training activities to prepare the workforce that will result in successful completion of the IT courses. CWMWIB provided support to KVCC by facilitating a focus group meeting consisting of IT companies within Local Area 3 and KVCC staff to help design new IT curriculum.

***Major accomplishments/rewards/recognition received by the Local Area during PY 13:***

WIA programs and services provided during PY 2013 were very effective; our combined Local Area met or exceeded the following required performance rates:

- Adult Program: Average Earnings exceeding the planned level by 106 percent. Total Exiters and Total Entering Employment actual activity exceeded the planned levels (167 percent, 153 percent, respectively). Also encouraging is that overall, actual activity exceeded planned levels in Placement with Employer-Assisted Benefits (157 percent) and Females Entering Employment (176 percent).
- Dislocated Worker Program: Total Exiters and Total Entering Employment actual activity overall exceeded planned (127 percent, 111 percent, respectively). For the region combined, actual activity exceeded planned levels in Placement with Employer-Assisted Benefits (106 percent) and Females Entering Employment (122 percent).
- Youth Program: The following activities exceeded planned rates; In-School Youth Enrollment (112 percent), Total Exiters (113 percent), Females Entering Employment (119 percent).

A continuing major challenge is to address the pressing need to offer the WorkReady Credential training program in Local Area Three as well as throughout Maine **on a regular basis**. One of the major complaints from employers in our region is the lack of employability or “soft-skills” exhibited by a large segment of the labor force. WIA funds are very limited and there is no real other source of funds so the frequency of training is hindered by this lack of available funding.

Local Area 4  
COASTAL COUNTIES WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD  
(CCWIB)

This past year, the Coastal Counties Workforce Board provided guidance in the development of a new Local Plan for our six-county region. The board set new goals and strategies to make certain that we were in sync with the economic development districts' plans and the continuing but ever-changing needs of regional employers.

**Workforce Board Goals**

1. Identify workforce skill needs by obtaining key data from businesses on both micro and macro levels.
2. Strengthen workforce participation by promoting viable training pathways that align with business skill needs.
3. In addition to meeting USDOL performance measures, the Board will further define WIA program success and create relevant measures.

**Workforce Board Key Priorities**

**A. Better Access to High-Quality Data**

Obtain useable economic data to identify current and future workforce trends and business needs, uncover gaps in training or education, and shape services and strategy around the actual needs of businesses in the region.

**B. Recognize Diversity in Both Trainees and Training Methods**

Increase the use of different training methods to better address self- sufficiency needs, employer-focused credentialed training, special populations, and the increasing need for flexibility in approach.

**C. Form Strategic Partnerships**

Implement working agreements with economic development districts, chambers of commerce, and other business partners to identify and respond to emerging needs/growth so that future workforce needs are more efficiently handled.

**D. Use Resources Strategically**

Realign training strategies, resulting in more orchestration of effort and maximization of benefits for both employers and participants while leveraging system partner resources to increase benefit/cost ratios of WIA programming.

## **E. Measure Relevant Outcomes**

Implement two additional measures:

1. Increase the number of new businesses (in all industries) provided a service
2. Isolate, increase (if necessary), and sustain customer satisfaction

Sequestration's effects were felt by early summer of 2013. Before July 1, we learned that operations would be adversely affected by the sequestration that Congress had imposed on both domestic and defense spending. The effect was problematic for service delivery with a reduction of more than \$350,000 in the first quarter and a subsequent reduction of four staff at Goodwill Workforce Solutions. Nearly a complete halt of training opportunities throughout the summer months also ensued. Add to that a federal shutdown on October 1 and it is not hard to imagine that momentum for WIA enrollments had slowed considerably.

Fortunately, it was the Targeted Occupations of Strategic Pathways (TOPS) grant effort, now beginning its third year, which kept us relevant to employers. Our work with Goodwill Workforce Solutions and Southern Maine Community College continued to bring forth important results for businesses and training for workers in our region despite of the sequestration and a federal shutdown.

There was great news in mid-October when we learned that we had won a \$1.3 million grant award entitled the "Make It in America Challenge" from the USDOL. This grant effort was part of collaboration among the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, and Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.

Our grant award will be used to reduce H-1B visa dependency in targeted sectors. This will be accomplished by increasing access to H-1B career pathways for unemployed workers by offering internships combined with industry-recognized credential training to create a "co-op" experience at selected Maine manufacturing companies. In addition, industry-recognized credentials and customized skills training to Maine manufacturing companies' incumbent workers will also be provided.

In an effort to strengthen the link to Economic Development, CCWI has reached out to the three economic development districts within the region to create a comprehensive foundation for regional planning. In furtherance of strengthening our associations with Economic Development, we have undertaken involvement in the Mobilize Maine Initiative.

Mobilize Maine, a grassroots economic development model, is under way in all three of these economic development districts. These initiatives focus on creating local leadership teams to address issues and opportunities identified by their communities. This bottom-up approach to economic development focuses on mapping and strengthening regional assets, including skills, businesses, activities, and special places.

### **WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker**

The Adult Program provides employment and training services to eligible individuals age 18 and older who require assistance and skills upgrading in order to secure meaningful employment,

with priority given to those who are low income. The Dislocated Worker program provides these services to eligible individuals who have been terminated or laid off or have received a notice of termination or layoff from employment, who are eligible for or have exhausted unemployment insurance, or who are displaced homemakers.

The past year was very busy for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Enrollments exceeded expectations as the economy continued to rebound. Although unemployment in Maine continued to exceed pre-recession rates, customers realized their employment goals as a result of training and assistance through WIA.

One such example involves a gentleman who had been released from prison after a lengthy sentence for felony drug charges. Prior to his incarceration he was a plumber, but his license had expired during his time in prison. His attempts to secure employment in the year after his release were unsuccessful and, as a result, he found himself sleeping on friend's couches and relying on public assistance to get by. Through the WIA Adult Program, this individual was able to attend the refresher courses that were required for him to reinstate his license as well as pay for his examination and licensing fees. Soon after completing training, he obtained full-time employment with a local plumbing company earning \$22.00 per hour.

CCWI, working with its primary service provider Goodwill Workforce Solutions, supports the regional economy by advancing a range of workforce training programs to meet the changing needs of local businesses and job seekers. The region's CareerCenters and Workforce Solutions Centers had more than 54,000 customer visits from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, and 1,075 individuals received WIA-funded employment and training services over that period of time. The average entered employment rate across the three WIA formula programs was 84%, and all WIA National Performance Measures were met or exceeded.

### **WIA Youth Program**

Youth Services provides employment and training opportunities to youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who have barriers to employment, with a focus on youth who are out of school and disengaged. From July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014, the program served 264 youth throughout the region; 211 were out of school and 53 were in school. Despite challenges that some of the youth face, they also experience great successes.

The following story of a young man referred to WIA by his high school Guidance Department illustrates this. He was graduating from high school with no future plans – he was very quiet and shy, had never had a job, and was only interested in computers. The young man met with a WIA Youth Employment Counselor to identify some goals and next steps. He participated in a summer work experience with a local restaurant and was ultimately hired. His workplace skills and confidence were boosted through the paid work experience, so much so that a few months later he contacted WIA staff about enrolling in college.

WIA Youth Services staff assisted him with the application and financial aid process and, although he was anxious about starting school, he did. He is now enrolled full-time at Eastern Maine Community College and achieved a 4.0 GPA. He even wrote his Employment Counselor

the week school began to say “how awesome” college was. He plans to complete a 2-year program at EMCC and then transfer to the Engineering Program at the University of Maine.

### **Technology Occupations through Pathway Strategies (TOPS)**

In October 2011, CCWI was awarded a four-year, \$5 million H-1B Technical Skills Training grant by the US Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA). This grant, funded by employer-paid H-1B visa fees, is designed to encourage Maine’s Midcoast employers to hire resident individuals with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related skills and experience. The intention of these grants on the national level is to upgrade the skills of the labor pool in the United States in order to reduce the reliance on foreign workers in high-tech/ high-skill occupations through the H-1B visa program.

Called the Midcoast Technology Occupations through Pathway Strategies (TOPS), the public-private partnership will provide a combination of On-the-Job (OJT) and classroom training to 300 participants. The project will assist employers with hiring and training workers along a career pathway for a broad range of mid and higher level STEM-related occupations. Key partners on this initiative include Goodwill Industries of Northern New England, the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRRA), Southern Maine Community College, and the Maine Centers for Women, Work & Community.

As of June 30 2014, TOPS had provided 175 participants with OJT in nearly 40 different companies including Biddeford Internet Corp/Good Works Internet (GWI), Integrated Marine Systems, Mölnlycke Healthcare, Unified Technologies, Dream Local Digital, GrafTech International/Fiber Materials, Inc. (FMI), Systems Engineering, Maine Standard, Final Draft CAD, LLC, Tilson Technology Management, Wentworth Technology, and Fluid Imaging Technologies. Over \$1.5 million dollars, including employer-paid OJT wages, were leveraged through TOPS as of that date

### **Make It In America (MIIA) Challenge Grant**

In October 2013, Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc. (CCWI) and its partners were awarded \$2,050,000 in federal funding to support the establishment of an advanced manufacturing accelerator. CCWI has been awarded \$1.3 million by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration, while the U.S. Economic Development Administration is funding \$750,000 of the project for the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority to establish TechPlace, an Advanced Manufacturing, Science and Technology Business Accelerator on the campus of Brunswick Landing (the former NASB).

The funding was made possible through a collaborative “Make It in America Challenge” (MIIA), which includes a number of federal agencies coming together to accelerate job creation, worker training, foreign direct investment, and domestic business expansion. Targeted industries include aerospace/aviation, composites/advanced materials, renewable energy, and biotechnology manufacturing. CCWI’s funding will be used to reduce H-1B dependency in the targeted sectors by providing industry- recognized credentials and customized skills training to Maine manufacturing companies’ incumbent workers and increasing access to career pathways

for unemployed workers by offering internships combined with industry- recognized credential training to create a “co-op” experience at selected Maine manufacturing companies.

In addition to the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority, Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) will receive \$375,000 in National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) funding to deliver training and technical services. Other key partners in this initiative include the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, the Brunswick Development Corporation, Goodwill Industries of Northern New England, Southern Maine Community College, and the University of Maine.