

# EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## FINAL REPORT

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## Executive Summary

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In Program Year 2000, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) funded 39 local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to participate in the sectoral employment demonstration (SED).<sup>1</sup> The demonstration was conducted to help DOL determine whether sector-based strategies could be adopted and used effectively by local WIBs. In the context of this demonstration, *sectoral initiatives* primarily seek to identify workforce needs and opportunities within a local or regional industry or cross-industry occupational group while also focusing on economic performance and competitiveness. These efforts target a specific population—such as low-income workers, dislocated workers, or new entrants to the job market—to meet both industry needs for a competitive workforce and the needs of those targeted for improved job opportunities. Sectoral initiatives are typically long-term efforts that, over time, attempt to improve the functioning of their regional labor markets, benefiting both workers and employers.

DOL was particularly interested in examining the potential for successful involvement in sectoral initiatives by local WIBs, chiefly because the goals of these activities paralleled the role envisioned for the boards under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). These roles include developing employer linkages, coordinating with economic development, promoting private sector involvement in the workforce investment system, and developing workforce investment plans as part of a comprehensive workforce investment system focusing on individual employment goals and the needs of firms for skilled workers.

This report documents the range of projects undertaken and the outcomes achieved by the 38 WIBs that participated in the demonstration. The demonstration included 26 formation grantees that received one-year grants (some with three-month extensions) to form stakeholder groups, collect and analyze labor market data, analyze industry opportunities and training capacity, and develop a strategic plan for the selected industry sector. Twelve organizations were awarded 15-month implementation grants (some with 3- or 6-month extensions) to undertake specific sectoral interventions, such as outreach, recruitment, curriculum development, training, and designing career paths for the benefit of individual participants within the context of specific industry/occupational sector needs.

The evaluation ran from September 2002 through December 2003, taking place toward the end of the grant period. Evaluation activities consisted of (1) a review of grant files, (2) telephone discussions with all grantees, (3) site visits to 12 grantees (6 formation and 6 implementation), and (4) cross-site analysis across qualitative variables associated with project organization and process, as well as outcome indicators, where available.

<sup>1</sup> The evaluation includes 38 grantees. One grantee withdrew from the demonstration.

## Key Findings

### ***Sectoral Grantees Focused on Business Goals***

- Over 80 percent of the grantees chose a target industry that was experiencing a labor shortage.
- Over half of the grantees stated that encouraging growth in the targeted sector was one of the reasons for their choice of industry.
- Other reasons reported for choosing a sector were to improve industry competitiveness, to retain the industry as an employer in the community, and to prepare an industry for demographic or technological changes.

### ***Meeting the Needs of the Labor Force***

- Most grantees defined their target population broadly and included more than one group, such as incumbent workers and displaced/unemployed workers.
- Recruiting participants was a challenge for forty percent of the grantees. Outreach techniques included direct advertising; working with social service agencies, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders; and using workplace resources.
- A number of grantees changed or expanded their target populations over the course of their projects. Three major reasons given for target population changes were (1) an overall expansion of the target group to compensate for lower than anticipated participation, (2) a decision to include groups with fewer barriers to employment, and (3) an increased focus on incumbent workers in order to create entry-level openings as these workers advance.
- Because of the limited time frames and funding associated with the sectoral employment grants, many grantee organizations focused primarily on business and industry needs and then defaulted to working with a target population that could most easily be prepared to meet those needs. While these projects may have been quite useful to the workers involved, they were less likely to involve hard-to-serve populations. Such strategies are in contrast to those that initially focus equally on industry and selected target populations.

### ***Meeting the Needs of the Sector***

- Goals associated with improving industry competitiveness were reported by 11 of the demonstration grantees. Specific issues addressed included improving the image of the industry to attract workers and facilitating relationships between employers and public training providers, such as community colleges.

- Some sectoral grantees worked with industries that were having difficulty meeting a higher skill need. Grantees designed incumbent worker training programs to develop more advanced skills needed by the industry to remain competitive.
- Most grantees (31 of 38, or 80 percent) chose a target industry that was experiencing a labor shortage. Although a downturn in the labor market during the grant period reduced workforce needs, shortages remained in the health care field. Many grantees cited labor shortages as an important reason for their choice of sector.

### ***Employer/Industry Involvement***

- Three distinct approaches were used to designate a target industry and set of occupations: (1) targeting the firms of an identified industry, (2) targeting a specific occupational area that crosses a range of industries, and (3) working with a single large employer. The first of these was the most common approach, taken by 29 of the grantees.
- Most of the grantees said they built on previous efforts undertaken in the selected sector.
- Grantees used labor market data, employer surveys, and focus groups, and worked with industry associations to gain an understanding of employer needs.
- Challenges faced by sectoral grantees in working with employers included the WIB's limited knowledge about the industry sector, employer mistrust or negative impressions about government workforce development initiatives, and employer reluctance to share information with other employers. These challenges were successfully addressed by many grantees.
- Nine of the 38 grantees attracted direct employer financial contributions, while 13 received in-kind contributions from employers.

### ***Sector Programs and the WIB System***

- WIBs in a variety of institutional settings were able to engage in sector work. Effective WIB roles ranged from a high level of WIB member involvement in attracting support from the business community, to day-to-day involvement of One-Stop staff in recruiting and orienting participants, to primarily conducting contract monitoring activities and overseeing implementation by another community organization. Different organizational settings can offer varying sets of resources—there was clearly no one “best” organizational structure for initiating and operating a sector project.
- For about one-third of the WIBs, the project was particularly energizing and led to such outcomes as rethinking strategic plans or reshaping operations around sector-based work.
- Conversely, another one-third of the WIBs noted that board involvement in the project was relatively low. Reasons for this low level of interest included the small size of the grant relative to the overall WIB budget and no perceived need for the WIB to take on more than an oversight role with respect to the project.

- Implementing agencies combined the resources of in-house staff with the expertise of consultants and outside agencies in various ways. No particular staffing pattern or patterns emerged as the best way to staff a sector project.
- Respondents from 21 sites stated that the sector initiative helped improve the WIB's relationship with employers. The same number stated that they plan to continue with sector work and expand the approach to other sectors.
- By the end of 2002, 11 grantees had obtained additional WIA funding for their sector initiatives, and 8 grantees had received additional grants from state agencies, foundations, or DOL to continue their initiatives. In response to a follow-up request in March 2004, one additional grantee reported receiving WIA funds and two additional grantees reported receiving grants from other sources.

### ***Outcomes/Accomplishments: Formation Grantees***

- Grantees formed broad stakeholder groups that included employers, community colleges, unions, and industry associations.
- Almost 70 percent of the formation grantees found that the stakeholder groups encouraged employers to work together.
- In addition to the required strategic plan, more than three-quarters of the formation grantees established ongoing coalitions that will continue to meet. Almost half of the formation grantees (12) responded to a follow-up request almost two years after their grants expired, and all indicated that they are continuing or planning to do sector work.
- Sixty-five percent of the formation grantees leveraged additional resources to continue their planning efforts and stakeholder meetings, and/or to begin implementing their plans.

### ***Outcomes/Accomplishments: Implementation Grantees***

- Ten of the 12 implementation grantees increased training options available in their community/region.
- Seven of the 12 implementation grantees facilitated career ladders/advancement opportunities, and the same number established new pipelines for workers in an industry, most often targeting youth.
- All but one of the implementation grantees undertook projects that enrolled students in training, serving from 24 to 578 individuals. Eight of the 12 implementation grantees reported successful job placements for trainees, and 2 grantees reported average wage gains of 18 percent or more.

### ***Lessons for Program Operators***

- WIBs can play many roles in sector projects, depending on their interest in and knowledge of the sector, staff capacity, and ability to serve the target populations. Successful WIBs used their assessment of these factors to inform decisions about the roles and responsibilities that would be appropriate to take on directly and those that would be best to delegate.
- Sector projects need to recruit and maintain the right mix of stakeholders. This is a dynamic process, since the roles and responsibilities and relative importance of the various stakeholders can change over time. For example, some grantees found that it was important to have the buy-in of chief executive officers (CEOs) of target businesses early in the project and that supervisory or human resources staff involvement was critical at later stages of a project.
- Successful sector projects build in frequent opportunities to solicit feedback from employers and program participants, and they are willing and able to make midcourse corrections as needed.
- Among the sectoral employment demonstration grantees, promising practices were identified in stakeholder collaboration; leveraging training resources and building training capacity; coordinating resources to address target population needs; employer involvement for continuous improvement; and developing and supporting career ladders, retention, and advancement.

### ***Implications for Policy***

The following factors that pertain to the sectoral employment demonstration grants have broader implications for policy and future DOL demonstration grant initiatives.

- **Balancing employer and worker needs.** The sectoral employment demonstration reflects a policy focus of the WIA to develop a stronger link between the public workforce system and employer needs in the business/workplace environment. However, the reality of balancing employer and workforce needs can present challenges to serving those most in need. In the economic downturn of 2001 in which many sector projects found themselves, a reduced demand for workers resulted in some projects refocusing their target populations to those who could gain skills quickly, usually better educated or incumbent workers.
- **Time frame.** Demonstration grants are, by definition, time-limited, but the time frames depend on the goals of the grant. For the formation grants, whether or not a one-year grant period was reasonable depended on the extent to which a core stakeholder group

existed for the targeted industry.<sup>2</sup> Although most of the grantees were able to prepare a strategic plan in the allotted time and most coalitions intended to continue to meet after their grants ended, grantees said that a longer grant period (such as 18 months) would have been better for developing collaborative relationships and planning. Implementation grantees faced different challenges with their 15-month grants.<sup>3</sup> Start-up activities took longer than anticipated for some grantees. These activities included developing curricula, identifying training providers, recruiting training participants, and making improvements to the physical site. Finally, the short time frames of the grants limit the ability to report outcomes. Some implementation grantees established or supported training programs and enrolled participants, but the grant ended before participants completed training. For other grantees, participants completed training, but it was too soon to report employment outcomes or, for incumbent workers, job advancement or wage gains. Still other grantees addressed career ladders and long-term human resources practices in an industry, such as benefits, employer-supported training, and advancement. It is too soon to determine whether these sector projects will have a lasting influence on employer practices. Effecting such changes will require that the grantees, or their partners, stay with the initiatives for the long haul.

- **Accountability.** All sectoral employment demonstration grantees (formation and implementation) were required to identify specific measured outcomes pertaining to their project activities. Since grantees pursued a wide range of activities, outcome measures and the methods for documenting outcomes varied considerably. It is important to consider both readily quantifiable outcomes (such as number completing a training program) and more qualitative outcomes (such as whether the project promoted collaboration between employers and training providers). Since most of the sectoral demonstration grants were formation grants aimed at convening stakeholder groups and planning, the more qualitative outcomes are critical to understanding the accomplishments of the grantees. Such outcomes include bringing new partners together, creating stakeholder groups that cross traditional divides of professions and disciplines, and crossing geographic boundaries. These activities, while difficult to quantify, help build the infrastructure needed to maintain sector projects.
- **Resources.** The sectoral employment demonstration grants were small and generally comprised a very small portion of a WIB's budget. Nevertheless, WIBs found that the grants provided resources that would otherwise not be available for collaborative activities and that the award of the grant helped to engage partners and staff. Grantees had discretion to use grant funds in ways that best supported the objectives of the grant, including staff, contracted services, and purchase of curriculum materials. This flexibility was welcomed by grantees. Grantee strategies and accomplishments were necessarily tailored to the small size and short-term nature of the grants. While grantees responded positively to the flexible funding, formation grantees were disappointed in the lack of follow-on implementation funding and had varied success in sustaining their projects.

<sup>2</sup> Half of the formation grantees requested and received extensions of one to three months, with one receiving a five-month extension.

<sup>3</sup> Eight of the 12 implementation grantees requested and received extensions of three months; 2 other grantees received extensions of six months.

- **Capacity building.** The sectoral employment demonstration grant program included some efforts to bring grantees together to share ideas and experiences. Several grantees noted that this was a particularly helpful benefit of participating in the demonstration. Some grantees are well integrated in the existing and growing network of groups involved in sectoral initiatives, while others are very new to this field and seek more information and guidance. Continued interaction among the grantees and other organizations involved in sectoral initiatives will build capacity as they share best practices and establish a network of peers for ongoing consultations. Organizations involved in sector projects can then use this information to benchmark their own progress, identify effective strategies, and build support (both public and private) for their activities. This support is especially important because sectoral projects must continue beyond the grant period if they are to achieve success.

## I. Introduction

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In Program Year 2000, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) funded 39 local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) to participate in the sectoral employment demonstration (SED).<sup>4</sup> The demonstration was conducted to help DOL determine whether sector-based strategies could be adopted and used effectively by local WIBs to improve employment opportunities and industry performance in their regions. DOL was particularly interested in examining the potential for successful involvement in sectoral initiatives by local WIBs, mainly because the goals of these activities paralleled the role envisioned for the boards under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA). These roles include developing employer linkages, coordinating with economic development, promoting private sector involvement in the workforce investment system, and developing workforce investment plans as part of a comprehensive workforce investment system focusing on individual employment goals and the needs of firms for skilled workers.

DOL contracted with the Urban Institute and the Aspen Institute to collaborate on an evaluation of the SED. This report documents the range of projects that were undertaken and the outcomes achieved by the 38 WIBs that participated in the demonstration. In addition, the report discusses the ways the demonstration findings confirm and qualify the utility of the sector approach in a WIB context. It is hoped that the information in this report will be helpful to both federal policymakers and local WIBs as they continue to work toward becoming more demand-driven and effective in their mission of improving employment opportunities and business prosperity.

### **Background: What Is Sector-Based Development?**

Sector-based employment development is part of a general category of activities called *targeted industry approaches*. Since the early 1990s, *targeted industry strategies* have emerged as a framework for a number of workforce development and economic development efforts, including several major foundation-funded employment initiatives that have incorporated this strategy.

*Sectoral initiatives* primarily seek to directly improve the matching of low-income or other targeted job seekers to employment opportunities in local and regional economies. A central focus is to restructure training, recruitment, and hiring patterns in selected industries to improve the access of specific populations in regional labor markets. In addition to increasing access to existing jobs, sectoral initiatives may also seek opportunities to increase the quantity and quality of jobs available within an industry sector. These efforts also may focus on improving industry performance and economic competitiveness. Over the past 15 years, sectoral employment has developed from a few isolated projects around the country to an emerging and

<sup>4</sup> The evaluation includes 38 grantees. One grantee withdrew from the demonstration.

vibrant subfield in the broader workforce and economic development arena. A 2003 survey found that the field is growing, with 77 percent of the respondents reporting their sector programs were started within the previous five years. In addition, it was noted that the range of institutional settings in which sector programs are housed has broadened. Today, sector initiatives can be found in nonprofit organizations, community colleges, workforce investment boards, business associations, labor-management partnerships, and other entities. Sector programs also work in a variety of industries—more than 23, according to one count (Tarr 2003).

To achieve their goals, sector projects must do more than simply deliver good workforce development training and services to individuals. Indeed, a central objective of sector projects is systemic and institutional change. Sector projects seek to change the way an industry's labor market and the workforce development system serve job seekers and firms. By working to make positive changes to workforce recruitment, preparation, placement, utilization, and retention within the context of the human resource needs of an industry, sector projects seek good and expanded job opportunities for targeted populations. In turn, the attention given to systemic and institutional change also permits the consideration of workforce development as an important component of business strategy, affecting business performance, innovation, and competitiveness. The final result of all these activities should be a more efficiently functioning labor market that serves the needs of both business and workers.

How this broad agenda is translated into action depends on which type of industry the sector initiative has targeted. Effective sector projects are constantly balancing the tension among their multiple goals. The key question is when are these multiple goals complementary and when do they compete? How do effective organizations manage these goals? Which resources and relationships are crucial in helping sector projects balance the tension between the needs of workers and the needs of firms, the direct delivery of services and systemic reform, and increasing access to employment and improving the quality of employment?

Some note that industry targeting also has advantages for the delivery of workforce training in general. The focus on a specific sector, rather than on all locally available sources of jobs, puts clearer parameters and a greater degree of specificity around the employer set. "Employers" are a very heterogeneous group. By working with employers in the same industry, the workforce development program has the opportunity to dig deep in terms of understanding not only the needed worker skill sets but also the overall competitive pressures of the industry, the drivers of the dominant business models, the relationships among industry players, and so on. In sum, an industry-specific approach is thought to engender a greater depth of understanding of the employer situation and a fuller picture of current and projected workplace needs, facilitating better working relationships with employers.

### **What Do We Know about the Effectiveness of Sector-Based Approaches?**

To a large extent, the jury is still out on whether targeted industry approaches such as sectoral employment initiatives can achieve their expressed goals. However, there is a developing literature on the operations and effectiveness of targeted industry approaches, including sector employment, industry clusters, and sector economic development. Several evaluation studies released in recent years have included nonexperimental evidence that sectoral

employment development initiatives have the potential to improve employment and earnings outcomes for low-income individuals across a range of sectors.

A recent study examined six sector projects in depth. Using a pretest and posttest research model, the evaluators conducted a three-year longitudinal study of program participants and documented substantial and sustained improvements in employment and earnings for individuals in all programs. Evaluators found that 94 percent of respondents were employed for some period in both follow-up years of the study, compared with only 67 percent in the baseline year, and that the percentage employed full time increased each year. The median personal earnings of program participants rose from \$8,580 at baseline to \$14,040 in the year following training and to \$17,732 in the second year after training as the result of an average 31 percent increase in wage rates as well as increases in hours worked<sup>5</sup> (Conway and Rademacher 2003). In addition, over 78 percent of jobs provided access to benefits such as health insurance, paid vacation, and paid sick leave (Zandiapour and Conway 2002). Employers who were interviewed as part of this study valued the programs, citing, among other things, the programs' success in finding new sources of talent for hard-to-fill positions. Many programs also provide various industry-specific services that employers valued, such as advocating for the industry in public arenas, providing information, and brokering services that help employers access new markets.

Similar results were found in a separate study of 10 sector projects. The median hourly wage for program participants who worked full time during the two years before entering the sector programs was \$7.00 an hour, and the mean hourly wage of the most recent full-time job before training was \$8.15 an hour. Among participants who completed the program, the median wage at placement was reported to be \$8.50 an hour, and the mean wage at placement was \$9.73 per hour (Elliott et al. 2001).<sup>6</sup>

A key concern in assessing the impact of sector projects on workers is whether job quality for job seekers and incumbent workers improved as a result of the project's operation. A national survey of sector practitioners indicates that 44 percent of program participants were placed in jobs paying from \$7.50 to \$9.49 per hour—well above the minimum wage. When these practitioners' responses were controlled for high- or low-wage industry, 43 percent of program participants in high-wage industries were placed in jobs paying \$9.50 to \$10.99 per hour, while 24 percent were placed in jobs paying \$11.00 to \$14.99 per hour. For low-wage industries, placement wages for 45 percent of workers were between \$7.50 and \$9.49 per hour, while 28 percent of workers earned \$9.50 to \$10.99 per hour (Kellner 2000).

An underlying assumption of sector programs is that, all other things being equal, some industries are capable of providing greater labor market opportunities than other industries for low-income workers. This suggests a question: Is the potential genius of sector interventions their capacity to improve the quality of employment opportunities in a target industry or to identify industries that offer the opportunity for superior wages and job quality for low-income workers? One study focused on whether—after controlling for differences in human capital, family characteristics, demographics, and economic conditions—certain industries provide better quality jobs than other industries. The target group for the study was employed single mothers

<sup>5</sup> Zero earners are excluded from this calculation.

<sup>6</sup> This study is ongoing, and further evaluation results are expected to be released later in 2004.

with children under 18 years old. Preliminary findings from that study suggested that certain industries produce better than average wages for single mothers—including mothers leaving welfare. Interestingly, some of these industries are the same ones most heavily targeted by sector programs: manufacturing, health care, and construction. (See Foster-Bey and Rawlings 2002.) These results suggest that one thing sector programs may do well is identify the industries in a local economic region that provide above-average job quality for disadvantaged workers.

Finally, one of the central goals of sector interventions is systemic change. There is limited research on whether these programs have been able to effect systemic reforms. Some evidence has been gathered indicating that several of these programs have contributed to effecting change in their targeted industry, while other studies suggest more limited effects were achieved or could occur in the future (Conway 1999, Inserra et al. 2002, Elliot et al. 2002).

### **DOL's Sectoral Employment Demonstration Program**

The sectoral employment demonstration (SED) program was designed to “test the feasibility of the workforce development system to plan and undertake local/regional initiatives involving a particular industry sector in order to increase access to employment for designated target groups and to strengthen the economic competitiveness and performance of the sector’s firms.”<sup>7</sup> The program sought to build on the experience of previous sectoral activities such as those cited above. In its broadest terms, the SED program sought to determine whether the sectoral approach could become a viable option for local WIBs, as it had been for other workforce institutions.

Local WIBs were to determine how they might go about developing capacity to pursue these demonstration objectives. The types of activities that DOL encouraged grantees to take on centered on improving human resource strategies in a sector by working with employers on issues such as recruitment, career ladders, training, and mentoring. Grantees were also expected to identify and target specific groups in the community in need of employment assistance and gear their sector initiatives toward helping these groups improve their employment outcomes.

Under the SED, two types of grants were made. Sectoral initiative formation grants were given to 26 WIBs. The purpose of a formation grant was to help a WIB plan and design a sector intervention project for implementation. Sectoral initiative implementation grants were given to 13 WIBs, with 12 completing the demonstration. The implementation grants were intended to support the application of a sector strategy to a target industry.

Applicants for both types of grants were selected on the basis of the goals and methods they proposed for engaging a broad range of local stakeholders; gathering industry, training, and labor force information; fostering collaboration between the employer community and the local WIB; and affirming a serious commitment to strategic planning. The grantees are listed in exhibits I-1 and I-2.<sup>8</sup> Profiles of the grantees are provided in a separate appendix.

<sup>7</sup> Solicitation for Grant Applications (SGA) as announced in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 66, No. 72, Friday, April 13, 2001, p. 19225.

<sup>8</sup> Because some grantees commonly use names other than their organization’s title and some have similar names, the charts indicate how each grantee is referred to throughout this report.

### ***Formation Grants***

Formation grants were given to help support the initial development and planning of a local sectoral initiative. Formation grants ranged from just over \$50,000 to \$75,000. The performance period was 12 months, with 3-month extensions given to some. Activities under the demonstration could include the following:

- Establishing a coalition of stakeholders in a local labor market area to select an industry sector, identify target groups(s) to be served, provide ongoing community support, identify programs/policies needed to improve employment access to the sector, identify industry and employer needs, and oversee the development of demonstration activities.
- Analyzing labor market data for the selected industry sector and analyzing data on target population groups.
- Analyzing impediments and opportunities for improved human resources utilization in the targeted industry sectors.
- Analyzing local area training capacity and providers.
- Establishing contacts with ongoing projects in the target industry or similar sectors.
- Developing a strategic plan for implementing a specific sectoral intervention.

**Exhibit I-1: Formation Grantees**  
**(Bold type indicates grantees that were visited for the SED evaluation)**

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Industry Sector</b>	<b>Referred to in this report as</b>
Alaska High-Tech Business Council/Anchorage Mat-Su WIB	Anchorage, AK	Multisector	Alaska High-Tech
Aroostook/Washington County WIB	Caribou, ME	Health Care	Aroostook
<b>Mayor's Office of Employment Development</b>	<b>Baltimore, MD</b>	<b>Biosciences</b>	<b>Baltimore</b>
Boston Private Industry Council	Boston, MA	Health Care	Boston PIC
Capital Region Workforce Development Board	Raleigh, NC	Health Care	Raleigh
Capital Area Workforce Development Board	Austin, TX	Financial Services	Austin
County of Atlantic/Atlantic Cape May WIB	Atlantic City, NJ	Hospitality	Atlantic Cape May
County of Union	Elizabeth, NJ	Printing and Graphics	Union County
<b>Cuyahoga County Workforce Development</b>	<b>Cleveland, OH</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Cleveland</b>
Delaware County Office of Employment and Training/WIB	Upper Darby, PA	Health Care	Delaware County
<b>D.C. Workforce Investment Council</b>	<b>Washington, DC</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Washington, DC</b>
Metro South/West Employment and Training Administration	Norwood, MA	Health Care	Metro South/West
Jefferson Parish WIB	Jefferson, LA	Automotive Technology	Jefferson Parish
City of Los Angeles WIB	Los Angeles, CA	Entertainment	Los Angeles
North Central Missouri College/Northwest Missouri WIB	Trenton, MO	Allied Health	North Central Missouri
Northern Virginia WIB	Fairfax, VA	Information Technology	Northern Virginia WIB
<b>Northwest Workforce Development Council</b>	<b>Bellingham, WA</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Bellingham</b>
Polk Works/Polk County Workforce Development Board	Bartow, FL	Health Care	Polk County
Workforce Solution/Ramsey County Workforce Service Area 15	St. Paul, MN	Hospitality	Ramsey County
Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County	Seattle, WA	Manufacturing	Seattle-King County
Lane Workforce Partnership	Eugene, OR	Health Care	Lane County
<b>Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc./Chesapeake Workforce Alliance</b>	<b>Havre de Grace, MD</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Chesapeake Workforce Alliance</b>
Workforce Development Council/Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission	Charlottesville, VA	Health Care	Thomas Jefferson
Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board	Pittsburgh, PA	Health Care	Three Rivers
<b>Region 2000 WIB</b>	<b>Lynchburg, VA</b>	<b>Manufacturing</b>	<b>Lynchburg</b>
Workforce Resources, Inc.	Menomonee, WI	Health Care	West-Central Wisconsin

### **Implementation Grants**

Implementation grants were designed to support the implementation of an initiative that had already been developed and was either ready to begin or already under way. Grantees in this category were expected to have identified the targeted individuals, firms, activities, and outcomes for the project. Implementation grants were \$150,000. The performance period was 15 months, with some 3- and 6-month extensions. Acceptable activities under the implementation grants included the following:

- Additional planning and enhancement of existing stakeholder work.
- Outreach and recruitment of individuals from the target population(s).
- Providing or arranging for training to meet industry sector needs and upgrade skills of the target population.
- Providing or arranging for supportive services needed by the target population.
- Identifying outcomes related to improved economic performance of the targeted sector and improved economic opportunities for the designated target population.

**Exhibit I-2: Implementation Grantees**  
(**Bold type indicates grantees that were visited for the SED evaluation**)

Grantee	Location	Industry Sector	Referred to in this report as
Verdugo WIB, City of Glendale	Glendale, CA	Entertainment	Verdugo
<b>Iowa Workforce Development Region 10 WIB/Kirkwood Community College</b>	<b>Marion, IA</b>	<b>Customer Service Call Centers</b>	<b>Kirkwood</b>
<b>Lancaster County WIB</b>	<b>Lancaster, PA</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Lancaster County</b>
<b>Pima County WIB</b>	<b>Tucson, AZ</b>	<b>Plastics Manufacturing</b>	<b>Pima County</b>
Prince George's Workforce Services Corporation	Landover, MD	Sales and Service	Prince George's County
Regional Workforce Development Board of Greater New Haven	New Haven, CT	Health Care	New Haven
Spokane Area Workforce Development Council	Spokane, WA	Biopharmaceuticals	Spokane
Workforce Central Florida	Winter Park, FL	Information Technology	Central Florida
<b>Workforce Development, Inc.</b>	<b>Rochester, MN</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Rochester, MN</b>
Workforce Opportunity Council	Concord, NH	Health Care	Southern New Hampshire
<b>Worksystems, Inc.</b>	<b>Portland, OR</b>	<b>Health Care</b>	<b>Worksystems</b>
<b>WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc.</b>	<b>Fremont, OH</b>	<b>Marine Mechanics</b>	<b>WSOS</b>

### **Overview of Grantee Characteristics**

Almost half of the grantee sites were in the East. Seventeen sites (13 formation, 4 implementation) were in the East; 9 sites (5 formation, 4 implementation) were in the West; 7 sites (4 formation, 3 implementation) were in the Midwest; and 5 sites (4 formation, 1 implementation) were in the South. Thirteen sites (8 formation, 5 implementation) include at least some rural areas; the others are in urban areas or serve a mix of urban and suburban regions.

More than half of the grantees selected the health care industry as the sector of interest; 20 grantees (15 formation, 5 implementation) chose health care for their sector initiative. Other industry sectors chosen were manufacturing (2 formation, 1 implementation); hospitality (2 formation); entertainment (1 formation, 1 implementation); sales/customer service (2 implementation); information technology (1 formation, 1 implementation); finance (1 formation); biotechnology (1 formation); biopharmaceutical manufacturing (1 implementation); printing/graphics (1 formation); automotive technology (1 formation); and marine mechanic trades (1 implementation). One formation site selected multiple industry sectors. Most of the grantees selected a broad range of dislocated workers, low-income populations, and entry-level workers as their target population.

### **Evaluation Objectives and Design**

This evaluation was designed to capture information that would indicate how well the SED grantees carried out the grant activities and met the goals and objectives specified in their proposals to DOL/ETA, with the overall purpose of addressing the following key questions:

- What worked or facilitated achievement of objectives (best practices), and what challenges or barriers did grantees face?
- How does the approach relate to the overall role of Workforce Investment Boards?
  - How did the sectoral employment demonstration influence WIBs' relationships with local employers?
  - Can the WIB system provide an appropriate institutional setting for planning and implementing a sectoral initiative?
  - Is the sector approach helpful for getting both WIB members and staff more fully and substantively engaged in the organization's work?
- Did the project improve the grantees' relationship with and capacity to respond to the needs of local/regional employers?
- Did the project increase the grantees' understanding of the needs and problems of the local labor force?
- Did the project provide the grantees with a framework to more effectively design a workforce development system that can link to economic development activities?

- Did the sector initiative provide grantees with important insights into managing the tension between serving the needs of employers and serving the needs of the target population?
- What are the strengths and limitations of sector interventions as a tool to improve the performance of the workforce development system and improve industry competitiveness?

Data collection activities included the following:

- Review of all materials grantees provided to DOL for project monitoring, including applications, interim and final reports, and other information relevant to understanding the regional and labor market context for the projects.
- Telephone discussions with informants from key partner organizations and with WIB staff and board members at each of the 38 projects. We spoke with an average of two informants per site. Telephone discussions were conducted between November 2002 and January 2003.
- Visits to 12 sites (6 formation and 6 implementation) to gather additional details and context to complement and illuminate the findings of the telephone discussions. Site visits were conducted between February 2003 and June 2003.

Sites were selected for visits on the basis of their ability to give a picture of the variety of local experiences across the country and reflect at least some of the diversity in status and strategies that characterize the SED grantees. Included were sites that seemed particularly successful and those that faced challenges and that collectively offered lessons to others. Sites also were selected to provide variation across a range of dimensions.<sup>9</sup> Four sites are in the East, four in the Midwest, one in the South, and three in the West. Five sites include rural areas, and seven are urban or mixed urban/suburban. The sites reported a range of WIB involvement, from low (another agency has the lead role and the WIB's role is minimal) to high (the WIB and/or staff has the lead role in the project). Industry sectors represented include health (7), biotechnology (1), customer services/call centers (1), electromechanical/technical (1), manufacturing (1), and marine trades/mechanics (1). The sites visited included programs targeting dislocated and unemployed workers, incumbent workers, and immigrants, and both local and regional efforts.

## Organization of This Report

The remainder of this report presents the findings of the SED evaluation. Chapter II describes employer/industry involvement in the SED projects, and chapter III discusses how the projects addressed target population/workforce needs. Chapter IV describes WIB and staff involvement in the projects under the various grantee organizational settings and staffing arrangements. Chapters V and VI summarize lessons learned and policy implications. Throughout the report, examples are provided from interviews and site visits with grantees.

<sup>9</sup> Implementation grantees are overrepresented in our sample because, on the basis of the telephone interviews, they offered more to observe on a site visit.

## **II. Sector Programs and Employer/Industry Involvement**

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### **Chapter Highlights**

- Twenty grantees (53 percent) stated that encouraging growth in the targeted sector was one of the reasons for their choice of industry
- Most grantees (31, or 80 percent) chose a target industry that was experiencing a labor shortage.
- Three distinct approaches were used to designate a target industry and set of occupations: (1) working with a coalition of employers in an identified industry, (2) targeting a specific occupation area that crosses a range of industries, and (3) working with a single large employer. The first approach is the most common, taken by 29 of the grantees.
- Most of the grantees (26, or 68 percent) indicated that they coordinated with previous initiatives in the selected sector.
- Grantees used labor market data, employer surveys, and focus groups, and worked with industry associations to gain an understanding of employer needs.
- Challenges faced by sectoral grantees in working with employers included the WIB's limited knowledge about the sector, employer mistrust or negative impressions about government workforce development initiatives, and employer reluctance to share information with other employers.
- Nine of the 38 grantees (24 percent) attracted direct employer financial contributions, while 13 received in-kind contributions from employers.

### **Choosing and Defining the Target Industry**

Sector programs are designed to match a particular target population with a set of industry-specific or occupation-specific employment opportunities; thus, a key step in the formation of a sector initiative is the selection of the target industry.<sup>10</sup> The implementation grantees, naturally, had largely completed this phase of work before the application process; for the formation grants, investigating and defining a target industry was a substantial portion of the work. Most of the formation grantees identified the industry they wanted to target—such as health or information technology—in their proposals. However, in many cases, further investigation of the local industry was required to better understand workforce needs and specific areas of opportunity in the industry. Some grantees listed more than one possible choice of industry, but all chose a sector that was included in their original application.

<sup>10</sup> The exception is Alaska, which chose not to target a specific industry and, thus, did not really create a “sector” project as this term is commonly understood.

- In *Polk County, FL*, the Polk Works Workforce Development Board's state-mandated High Skills/High Wage Committee did some preliminary work to identify occupations with high wages, high skills, projected growth, and large labor shortages, and narrowed the focus to health care, information technology, and insurance before settling on health care, chiefly because of the critical shortage of workers, availability of training programs, and willingness of business and training partners to participate. The board's research and work with local employers eventually led it to narrow the focus within health care to nursing occupations.
- *Three Rivers WIB* in Pittsburgh, PA, selected the health care sector and, over time, decided to concentrate on nursing career ladders and related training for incumbent workers.

Three distinct approaches were used to designate a target industry and set of occupations: (1) targeting the firms of an identified industry, (2) targeting a specific occupation area that crosses a range of industries, and (3) working with a single large employer. The first approach was most common, taken by 29 of the grantees. Six grantees chose the second approach, defining their target by occupation and a common set of job competencies rather than by industry. The third approach is to work with one very large employer and tailor offerings to specifically meet the skill needs of that workplace. Only *Worksystems* took this approach, working with the largest employer in Portland—Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU). The approach allowed Worksystems to leverage resources from the employer and from the union serving OHSU workers so the initiative could be sustained at the end of the grant period. Worksystems has other initiatives in the health arena and has been able to take the lessons from the OHSU experience and apply them to serving health care workforce needs in Portland more generally.

## **Business Goals**

For a number of the grantees, business development goals were a strong factor in their choice of a target sector. Some grantees explicitly linked their projects to regional business development strategies, while others addressed concerns expressed by employers about future business challenges. Below is a description of the types of business goals that grantees sought to address, with some specific examples that illustrate how grantees thought a sector initiative might facilitate progress toward the goal.

### ***Foster Business Growth***

Twenty grantees stated that encouraging growth in the targeted sector was one of the reasons for their choice of industry. Often these organizations linked their choice of an industry sector to an economic development strategy that had been put forth for the region.

- *Baltimore* chose to target the biotechnology industry largely because of its prominence in the city's economic development strategy. The mayor was an active supporter of the nascent biotechnology industry, and the economic development agency was very focused on efforts to attract, retain, and grow this industry in Baltimore. For example, the city is

developing an industrial park for biotechnology. The industrial park is slated to be near a low-income residential area; thus, an examination of how the city's residents might be appropriately linked to this source of jobs seemed in order. In this case, however, the findings from the formation grant convinced the WIB to go slowly in developing an initiative to bring low-income residents into the biotech industry.

- The *Prince George's County* grantee targeted the retail sales and service sector. The decision to focus on this sector was driven by a strategic choice encouraged by the former county executive. Retail recruitment was and is a major goal of the county's economic development strategy, and the county executive wanted the economic development agency and the WIB to work in concert.
- *Spokane's* Biopharmaceutical Manufacturing Education Demonstration project, an outgrowth of the county's goals as outlined in its strategic plan, was intended to increase the economic competitiveness of and foster growth of biopharmaceutical manufacturing firms in the Spokane area and increase access to employment for dislocated workers. This project built on previous state-funded sectoral work conducted by the same group of industry stakeholders, which determined that this industry was growing rapidly in the region, with two major employers, plans for a third, and a projected 6,800 new jobs. Among its other goals, the project was to provide services to help retain biopharmaceutical manufacturing employees in the area and help the businesses grow.

### ***Improve Business Competitiveness***

Another business goal addressed the concerns of existing employers about recruitment and retention or the need to upgrade worker skills to take advantage of technological advancements. Some programs worked with industries that were having difficulty meeting a higher skill need; they designed incumbent worker training programs to help low-wage, entry-level workers advance while at the same time allowing employers to build the more advanced skills they need in their workforce to be competitive. Goals associated with improving industry competitiveness were reported by 11 of the demonstration grantees.

- The *Lynchburg* grantee focused on electromechanical technicians, an industrial maintenance position that cuts across manufacturing subsectors, because the industry was increasingly relying on advanced technology. While many of the incumbent workers had substantial experience in the industry, they had been trained years ago, primarily through apprenticeships and on-the-job training. Employers faced a continuing need for new skilled workers and needed new training options to help incumbent workers adapt more quickly to the advanced technologies their jobs now required.
- The *Los Angeles* project looked at the impact of technology on existing areas of the entertainment industry—effects on current and future jobs—to target the growth and emerging sectors. The grantee found that a lack of appropriate data was a significant challenge. The jobs are so new that Standard Industrial Codes specific to these sectors do not exist, and there are no standard job descriptions for most of the emerging jobs. The

grantee used a wide range of information for projections, including surveys of trends in home entertainment purchases and other industry studies of consumer demand. They identified demand in digital distribution, web development, DVD authoring, game development, interactive entertainment, and web-based entertainment. This is a rapidly changing industry, and the partners are continually studying and reassessing the labor market.

- **Central Florida's** program addressed the needs of employers across high-technology industry sectors that were becoming increasingly dependent on skilled information technology (IT) workers. This project provided employers with the opportunity to train workers currently earning less than the average entry-level wage (\$14.50/hour). Participants selected for training included workers who had some IT background and experience but lacked the higher level skills needed for advancement, as well as those who were willing to take training that would lead to some type of industry certification.
- In **Atlantic Cape May**, the WIB led efforts to bring together major employers in the hospitality industry to address labor shortages and workforce development needs for the Atlantic City casino-hotel expansion. Atlantic City Partners, a collaborative group composed of the key industry stakeholders, developed an action plan to address labor shortage issues. The shortages were caused by increased competition from other local industries pursuing the same potential employees for similar low-wage, low-skill jobs and by employers outside the immediate Atlantic City area for workers who would have to commute to jobs in the city's resorts and casinos.

### **Ease Skills Shortages**

Most grantees (31 of 38, or 80 percent) chose a target industry that was experiencing a labor shortage. It should be noted that the grant proposals were written when labor markets were fairly tight (proposals were due to DOL in early 2001), but implementation occurred during a weaker labor market. However, in the health care field, the dominant industry sector in this grant initiative, labor shortages continued to exist, and many of the grantees cited these shortages as an important reason for their choice of sector.

- **Lancaster** was facing a very low unemployment rate combined with a serious impending shortage of health care workers, particularly nurses and allied health professionals. Further, Lancaster saw that the health care field offered opportunities for family-wage jobs, unlike some of the hospitality and other tourism-related jobs that are plentiful in the area. In addition, the area is seeking to support the movement of retirees into local assisted living communities, and having adequately staffed health care facilities is critical to this goal. Finally, the availability of quality health care services is important to the overall quality of life in Lancaster and is seen as a critical part of the infrastructure needed to support economic development in general. Thus, the Lancaster WIB had a variety of motivations for addressing the shortage of health care workers. Lancaster's approach involved a communications campaign to interest workers (who may have been part time or underemployed in other industries) in careers in health care. The campaign was backed by various services available at the One-Stop Centers to help connect people

to training opportunities in health care. While there may have been other contributing factors, the individuals we spoke with agreed that the Lancaster WIB's efforts played a substantial role in the dramatic increase in nursing school enrollments during the initiative.

- ***West-Central Wisconsin*** also addressed labor shortages in the health care industry. This nine-county, primarily rural region involved a broad group of employers and educators and held county-level forums to develop a plan that addressed recruitment, promotion, retention, and communication issues. The project worked with high school School-to-Work coordinators, teachers, students, and parents to interest new labor market entrants in health careers. The project also developed a plan for distance learning to provide skill development opportunities in rural areas.

### ***Address Demographic Transitions***

In some areas, demographic changes or impending changes created new challenges for businesses. An influx of immigrants with limited English skills, a growing retiree community, the outmigration of educated youth, and an aging population are some of the concerns addressed in the sector projects.

- In ***Rochester, MN***, much of the growth in the local labor force came from the growth in immigrant communities, but these individuals faced both linguistic and cultural barriers to success in the workplace. Thus, a goal of the health care project was to help immigrant members of the community access the language training and skill development opportunities they needed to be successful in a health care setting. This initiative was designed to address the needs of health care employers to find new workers and hire workers who can serve the diverse members of the community, as well as to help immigrants in the community find better jobs.
- ***Atlantic Cape May*** contracted for an environmental scan to identify available sources of labor within commuting distance of Atlantic City. One of the four labor groups targeted for potentially filling shortages in the hospitality industry was seniors and retirees. Focus groups were conducted to learn more about the level of interest and the barriers perceived by older workers and retirees regarding industry jobs in Atlantic City.
- The ***Alaska High-Tech*** project was designed to target recent and rising high school and college graduates to encourage them to remain in the state for employment. The grantee was concerned that Alaska is facing a brain drain because young workers are leaving the state to pursue employment opportunities. The grant looked broadly at major employers/industries in the state to identify opportunities that would attract and retain young workers.

## Engaging Employers/Employer Roles

Employers were key partners in almost all the SED projects. The involvement and role of employers differs at each stage of a project, from defining the project and participating in data collection, to articulating specific skill requirements and training needs, to ongoing collaboration and contributions toward sustaining the project.

### ***Outreach Techniques***

In the early stages of a project, employers were involved in defining the issues to be addressed and providing background information and industry data. In some cases, getting employers to participate in the projects was a natural outgrowth of previous initiatives; in other cases, the grantees made specific outreach efforts. Some key techniques for reaching out to employers are discussed in this section.

**Working with previously established employer coalitions.** Most of the grantees (26 of 38, or 68 percent) indicated that they coordinated with previous initiatives in the selected sector. In some cases, employer coalitions were already established as a result of earlier projects. For example:

- Under a state grant, the ***Bellingham*** grantee convened the Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills. This group continued to participate in the sectoral grant and to encourage the participation of other health care employers in the region.
- The ***Delaware County*** grantee had a sectoral employment project in 1999 that established the Healthcare Provider Consortium. The consortium provided a forum for employer collaboration and a group of employers that were ready to participate in the new sectoral grant.
- The ***Three Rivers*** WIB identified five industry sectors for possible sectoral work, then sponsored workforce summits in each sector. The health care summit held in February 2001 brought together industry leaders who ultimately formed the stakeholder coalition needed for this project.
- The strategic plan for the ***Thomas Jefferson*** Planning District's WIB called for the creation of Business Education Round Tables (BERTs) in each local planning district as "forums for communication" to bring together relevant regional stakeholders in workforce development and education. Each BERT included sector groups, such as health services sector groups, composed of employers, labor organizations, employer/industry associations, training institutions, and WIB members. The sector groups were responsible for determining strategies and actions required in that sector in the local communities.

**Working with an industry or business association to reach out to employers.** Over half of the grantees worked with established industry associations on their sectoral initiatives. Collaborating with an industry association enabled the grantee to quickly identify key employers and, with the endorsement of the industry association, establish credibility for the initiative. This was especially helpful for grantees that had not previously worked with employers in the targeted industry. For example:

- The *Seattle-King County* Workforce Development Council worked with the Kent County Chamber of Commerce to recruit employers in the manufacturing sector.
- The *Washington, DC*, Workforce Investment Council tapped into the network that was part of the Chamber of Commerce's Career Ladders project to recruit employers.
- The *Los Angeles* project was contracted out to the nonprofit Entertainment Industry Development Corporation (EDIC). EDIC recruited employers using contacts it had from previous work in the industry.
- *Spokane* contracted most of the work for its sector project to the Inland Northwest Technology Center (INTEC). INTEC's membership, which formed the primary stakeholder coalition for this sector project, included representatives from 27 regional biotechnology companies, an industry group, and education and training personnel.

**Leveraging WIB member relationships.** Some grantees had WIB members who represented the targeted industry, and these individuals helped recruit others in the sector. In both examples below, the level of WIB involvement made the sectoral initiative highly visible in the employer community, facilitating the recruitment of additional employers.

- Board members of the Northwest Workforce Development Council in *Bellingham* included representatives of most of the major health care employers and training providers in the region.
- In *Lane County*, the chair of the WIB also chaired the grant's stakeholder group, the Health Care Career Alliance.

**Strategic hires or consultants.** Project staff or consultants who are well connected to the target industry can quickly identify and recruit employers.

- This was the strategy adopted by *Southern New Hampshire*, which contracted with the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund (NHCLF) to administer its sectoral demonstration project focusing on long-term care. In 1999, NHCLF participated in a national sectoral employment project in the same industry, funded by the Mott Foundation, and this experience proved very helpful in bringing stakeholders together.
- *Delaware County* contracted with the Women's Association for Women's Alternatives (WAWA), a community-based organization, to carry out project activities. WAWA had been involved in a previous sectoral employment project with the same partners.
- *Bellingham* hired an independent consultant to coordinate the project because of his extensive background in the health care industry in the state of Washington. (The grantee originally tried to hire a staff person to fill this role, but the consultant's qualifications turned out to be an important asset to the project.)

### ***Understanding Employer Needs***

Grantees used both quantitative and qualitative data to gain an understanding of employer needs. Quantitative data generally provided information on the size and trends in the selected industry, such as number of employers and employees, growth trends, and earnings. Qualitative information addressed skill requirements, career ladders, and employer concerns with respect to employee training, recruitment, and retention. Most grantees used a combination of the methods, as described below, to obtain information about an industry and employer needs.

**Use of labor market data and local or state research resources.** Most grantees used available labor market data to identify high-growth industries and focus on jobs and skills that are in demand by employers. Although national data were used to compare local and regional experience with national trends, several grantees commented that the national data were not specific enough, and most grantees sought state, regional, and local data as well. Employers were an important source of local labor market information. Nine grantees had conducted community audits under a previous DOL grant initiative or with other funding sources. These projects involved collecting and analyzing labor market data to identify high-growth industries and the skills needed by employers. Many grantees were adept at obtaining information and assistance in data analysis from state labor departments, economic development agencies, and colleges and universities, and area health education agencies were useful resources for several of the health care initiatives. For example:

- The ***Chesapeake Workforce Alliance***, encompassing a 10-county area in Maryland, used data on Maryland health care workforce trends to identify the health care occupations most in demand.
- The ***Los Angeles*** project used a consulting group to examine the impact of technology on the entertainment industry and project the effects on current and future jobs. This information was used to select specific emerging growth areas for the project, such as game development and interactive entertainment.
- ***Polk County*** used state and local labor market information and collaborated with three other partners to expand the ERISS database (a commercially available database of local businesses in specific size and industry categories) to 18 counties in Florida. This information will be used to continue to identify health care occupation needs throughout the region.

**Use of surveys and focus groups.** The research process often included surveys of employers as well as interviews and focus groups with employer representatives. Half (19) of the grantees conducted employer surveys and just under half (17) conducted employer focus groups. Employer input was sought by planning grantees for identifying target industries, occupations, and training needs. Implementation grantees obtained employer input on skill requirements and training needs, design of training programs, and retention and advancement strategies.

- The ***Washington, DC***, grantee conducted focus groups with employers, training providers, and low-income residents to confirm labor market data that suggested entry-level positions in health care as a project focus. Members of the local WIB helped facilitate the focus groups.

- **Kirkwood** based its choice of the call center industry on the findings of a seven-county survey of employers conducted by the WIB under an earlier grant. During the period of the SED grant, focus groups were held with employers to identify training needs and other priorities. The project also conducted a Best Practice Retention Survey of call center industry employers to learn about the factors that affect the retention of call center employees.
- **Cleveland** hired two consultants to collect data on the needs of the health care sector from different perspectives. The first consultant conducted a series of one-on-one interviews with employers to gain their perspectives on workforce and training issues in the industry. The second conducted a series of focus groups, speaking with more than 300 potential employees, including displaced workers, students, and unemployed individuals. As a result of these efforts, the grantee identified key employers and was able to use these initial contacts to reach out to other employers and encourage their participation in the grant.
- The **Rochester, MN**, grantee reviewed available labor market data and conducted surveys with about 50 local employers to verify the need for employees in the health care industry and gather information about specific issues related to recruitment, training, certification, and retention.

**Use of local business/trade associations.** Industry and trade associations were used by many grantees (21 grantees indicated that they worked with such groups) to obtain a better understanding of employer needs and help shape the sectoral employment demonstration.

- The **Baltimore** Biosciences Coalition, a group of community and business leaders, worked with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development to identify employer skill needs and assess local training capacity.
- The Plastics Industry Cluster, a group of local employers, worked closely with the **Pima County** grantee to identify skill shortages and support training for incumbent workers.
- The **Seattle-King County** grantee built on the ongoing efforts of several local industry groups in its manufacturing sector initiative, including the Kent Chamber of Commerce Manufacturing Panel, the Puget Sound Consortium for Manufacturing Excellence, and Seattle Jobs Initiative Manufacturing Training Program.
- Several of the grantees that focused on health care worked with their state hospital associations. For example, the Connecticut Hospital Association worked with the Regional Workforce Board of Greater **New Haven**. The hospital association provided technical information and worked with employers to identify needs and select an appropriate assessment tool for potential workers.

### ***Developing/Maintaining a Collaboration with Employers***

Challenges faced by sectoral grantees in working with employers included the WIB's limited knowledge about the sector, employer mistrust or negative impressions of government

workforce development initiatives, and employer reluctance to share information with other employers. Grantees developed a number of strategies to overcome these challenges and collaborate with employers, including establishing credibility, providing something of value to employers, overcoming competition among employers, and helping employers network for business opportunities.

**Establishing credibility.** Particularly for grantees that had limited experience working with employers in the target industry, it was important to establish credibility early in the project. For a number of grantees, their ability to pull partners together to prepare the grant proposal and the subsequent award of a grant provided the legitimacy needed to engage employers on an ongoing basis. About one-third of grantees indicated that early accomplishments helped to establish credibility. For example:

- The *Lane County* grantee obtained employer input in the proposal development and planning phase of its formation grant. Local health care employers, including two large hospitals, were invited to help define the sector and design the project.
- *Washington, DC*, used the reputation and connections of its consultant, Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), to gain credibility with employers.

**Providing Value.** Grantees were able to sustain and sometimes increase employer involvement by providing something of value, such as access to a new pool of potential workers, assessment and screening of potential workers, customized training, or improving the image of the industry among job seekers.

- The staff of the *Lancaster County* project developed a set of television advertisements highlighting health care careers and instructing workers to contact the One-Stop Center.
- The *New Haven* grantee subsidized educational costs for incumbent workers selected by employers and held a career fair for each partner hospital at the One-Stop Center.
- *Kirkwood* conducted a study of the types of technology companies use in their call centers and created an online database for companies to access this information.

**Overcoming competition among employers.** Bringing together employers in the same industry presented challenges for some grantees, because the employers viewed each other as competitors and, therefore, were reluctant to cooperate or share information.

- Skilled facilitation of partner meetings and identification of common ground helped to overcome this challenge for several grantees, including *Chesapeake Workforce Alliance* and *Bellingham*.
- The *Aroostook* grantee found that a project design clearly focused on the needs of employers helped to bring employers together. The rural nature of the area also may have reduced employer competition issues for this grantee, because participating institutions were geographically dispersed and therefore not in direct competition.

- Grantees that focused on a set of skills or occupations that crossed industries faced fewer barriers with respect to employer competition. For example, *Kirkwood's* employer partners operate customer service call centers in a range of industries, and the *Lynchburg* grantee focused on an occupation that is common to a range of manufacturing industries in the region.

**Helping employers network for business opportunities.** Some grantees offered networking opportunities for employers that kept them engaged in the project and helped them see the value in collaborating with each other. For example:

- The *Seattle-King County* grantee sponsored a breakfast for the community, focusing on manufacturing leaders, to showcase research and recommendations from the manufacturing panel.
- The lead hospital involved in the *North Central Missouri* grant held a luncheon for the smaller community hospitals in the region (10 hospitals attended) to share the information that had been gathered and the lessons learned from the SED project.

### ***Employer Contributions to Projects***

Employer contributions to the sectoral projects included monetary as well as in-kind resources and a variety of advisory services. Most grantees (24 of 38) said that employers reviewed project materials. Employers advised formation grantees on industry needs, skill requirements, and assessment criteria. Employers provided more direct services to implementation grantees, including giving recruitment advice, designing and reviewing training curricula, lecturing at class sessions, and offering workplace experience through field trips, clinical placements, and internships.

**Monetary contributions.** Nine grantees (four formation and five implementation) reported financial contributions from employers for their projects. Employer funds went toward coalition activities (e.g., meeting expenses, staff) as well as training programs, tuition assistance and scholarships, and paid leave for participants. Two of the largest employer financial commitments were reported by the following grantees:

- *Polk County* (\$990,000). The Polk County Workforce Development Board partnered with the Community College's Allied Health Council to gain a commitment from the four local hospitals for a nursing recruiter and 30 nursing scholarships annually for three years.
- *Lancaster County* (\$560,000). In Lancaster County, 34 local health care employers committed financial support to the project from the start. The employers paid for airtime for a set of television advertisements highlighting health care careers.

**In-kind contributions.** Thirteen grantees (6 formation and 7 implementation) reported in-kind contributions from employers, including hosting meetings at employer sites, providing

space for training, and donating staff time to coordinate project activities, such as distributing surveys.

- In the *WSOS* project, the county had unused space in a recently completed facility. Grantee staff were able to convince a key industry leader to establish a training site in the county's new building. In exchange, this industry leader provided its older training equipment for use by program participants.
- *Worksystems* received substantial in-kind support from Oregon Health Sciences University in the establishment of a career center on the campus of this large employer. OHSU provided the space, office furniture, office equipment, and computers for the center. OHSU human resources staff and managers worked with the union that represents more than 4,000 OHSU employees to identify job classifications and link them with skill sets, training requirements, and training providers. OHSU also worked with the union and with Worksystems to create a web-based application for using the job skills information.

**Advisory services.** Grantees solicited insight and expertise from employers to ensure that their projects reflected an understanding of the sector and met the needs of employers. In at least two implementation projects, employers played a critical role in shaping the training that was provided.

- In *Prince George's County*, employers who sat on the WIB's Sales and Service Advisory Committee helped develop the training curriculum and trainee orientation. Employers also taught some class sessions. Their participation in the orientation—describing career ladders in the industry cluster—helped dispel misconceptions about sales and service jobs being limited to low-wage, dead-end work.
- Employers have ongoing involvement in the customer service call center training provided by *Kirkwood*. In addition to advising on the initial design for the training, employers provide feedback to the training contractor based on their experiences with graduates they have hired. For example, on the basis of this feedback, the training contractor has increased training on preemployment issues such as professional dress and demeanor and interviewing skills and has introduced computer skills work earlier in the curriculum.

**Hiring commitments/projections.** Only 2 of the 12 implementation grantees received commitments from employers to hire workers trained or referred from the sector project, and in both cases the employers had to retreat from these commitments because of the economic downturn. Employers cannot predict shifts in the market, and such commitments would be inconsistent with standard business practices.

- In *Pima County*, employers initially made commitments to hire workers. Although they could not keep those commitments when the economy softened, the businesses continued to work with the project, and the companies whose incumbent workers were being trained assumed most of the training costs for those workers.
- *Spokane* reported that it had “implied commitments” from key area biopharmaceutical employers, indicating that they believed that the skills training programs were valuable

and they would hire newly trained workers. However, the economic downturn greatly curtailed the projected number of new hires, and those who were hired for entry-level positions were hired through placement agencies as part-time employees with no benefits.

Several other grantees were able to obtain commitments from employers to interview and give serious consideration to applicants referred by the sector project, and many grantees, both before and after implementation, reported that employers provided projections of the number of workers they might need.

- The *Kirkwood* project was able to get a commitment from employers to consider completion of the call center training course to be equivalent to the same amount of time (12 weeks) of employment experience in the call center industry. This provided opportunities to participants who would otherwise not have been granted interviews, as most employers require some previous call center experience.

## Responding to Industry Downturns

Although the sectoral demonstration grants began during a period of economic growth and most were responding to tight local labor markets or skill shortages, the sectoral approach can be applied effectively during periods of downturn as well. Of the 38 grantees, 15 (39 percent) reported that a downturn in the targeted industry presented challenges for the project. For example, *Spokane's* project was based on projections of worker demand collected from surveys of area biotechnology companies and interviews conducted as part of the SKILLS grant almost two years before implementation of the training programs. By the time the program participants had graduated, the economic downturn was a reality. A major employer that had planned to break ground for a new facility scrapped its plan, and the demand for new workers had decreased dramatically. While the downturn clearly posed a challenge for these grantees, some adapted by focusing on incumbent workers and others were able to turn the situation into a strategy for weathering the downturn.

- The *Ramsey County* grantee, with its focus on the hospitality industry, found that the economy created a situation outside the control of project stakeholders. The project came about in response to worker shortages in the hospitality industry throughout the 1990s and into 2000 and had originally targeted immigrants as a source of new entrants into the labor market. The events of 9/11 created a severe crisis in the hospitality industry, moving training to a much lower priority for managers and altering the level of commitment and participation in this project. For example, general managers no longer attended steering committee meetings, and the individuals who did attend (generally from human resources departments) had less authority to commit their organizations. The project adapted to the downturn by focusing on incumbent workers.
- *Central Florida* reported that the project's overlap with the post-9/11 economic downturn resulted in a need to reassess strategies and potential participants in the program. Employers either had begun to downsize or were considering it and were interested in opportunities to upgrade or supplement the skills of existing employees.

- The *Kirkwood* call center training project found that having a diverse group of employers provided some advantages during an economic downturn. Financial services call centers that provided information about annuities were very busy when interest rates were high, but they have since had layoffs and are not hiring training graduates. However, other employers that are partners in the call center training programs, such as those that handle collections, have seen an increase in business, so program graduates are still able to find jobs.
- The *Chesapeake Workforce Alliance* found that interest in health care jobs increased as a result of the downturn in the economy. Employment in one of the counties in this project was heavily concentrated in manufacturing. As layoffs and plant closings increased, the health care sector project provided opportunities for short-term training and new careers that the workforce agency could offer to jobless workers.

## Summary

While employer roles vary, the experiences of the projects demonstrate that the sector approach is a viable path for engaging employers. Over half of the 38 grantees agreed that the sectoral grant improved relationships with employers, and over half indicated that the stakeholder group encouraged employers to work together. Employer participation helped define the target industry, clarify employer needs, and leverage resources.

### **III. Sector Programs and Meeting the Needs of the Labor Force**

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#### **Chapter Highlights**

- Most grantees defined their target population broadly and included more than one target group, such as incumbent workers and displaced/unemployed workers.
- Recruiting participants was a challenge for forty percent of the grantees. Outreach techniques included direct advertising; working with social service agencies, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders; and using workplace resources.
- The degree to which sites identified and addressed barriers to employment varied greatly. Seventeen of the sites did not specifically note a barrier to employment that they were addressing in their project.
- A number of grantees changed or expanded their target populations over the course of their projects. The three general reasons for changes in target population were (1) overall expansion of the target group to compensate for lower than anticipated participation, (2) a decision to include groups with fewer barriers to employment, and (3) an increased focus on incumbent workers in order to create entry-level openings as these workers advance.
- Partially in response to the limited time frames and funding associated with the SED grants, many grantee organizations focused primarily on business and industry needs and worked with the target population that could most easily be prepared to meet those needs.
- All but one of the implementation grantees undertook projects that enrolled students in training, serving from 24 to 578 individuals. Eight of the 12 implementation grantees reported successful job placements for trainees, and 2 grantees reported average wage gains of 18 percent or more.

#### **Categories of Target Population**

The DOL sectoral employment demonstration grants called for identification of specific groups in the community in need of employment assistance. Many local agencies were accustomed to thinking about workforce needs and had a long-standing set of issues they were trying to address for various target populations. For these agencies, almost any industry might help them meet a workforce goal; thus, they began by identifying an industry with a clear need, then tried to see how meeting that need might also address the needs of one of their target population groups.

Most grantees defined their target population broadly and included more than one target group. This lack of specificity was especially common in rural areas, where small populations can make specific targeting too limiting. About 70 percent of grantees were targeting incumbent

workers (28 grantees) and displaced/unemployed workers (25), with 20 targeting both groups. Over 80 percent of grantees (31) indicated that one goal of their project was to connect a population to the workforce. Most often they focused on connecting new entrants, especially youth, to the labor market in a particular sector, but some programs targeted welfare recipients and other low-income populations.

The target groups most frequently identified by grantees are listed and described below. The categories are not mutually exclusive (e.g., an individual might be a low-income worker and an incumbent worker).

- **Dislocated workers.** Some grantees were able to identify specific groups that had been recently laid off or had received a notice of layoff as a result of plant closings. More often, the focus on dislocated workers included all unemployed workers.
- **New entrants to the labor force.** New entrants to the labor market include students, recent high school graduates, and others who may not have recent work experience, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and returning workers (e.g., homemakers or retired workers). Among the sectoral employment demonstration grantees, youth were the most commonly targeted group of new entrants.
- **Underemployed workers.** A few grantees specifically targeted people employed in part-time or intermittent jobs. For example, *Lancaster County* targeted individuals employed in retail and hospitality occupations, in the belief that they would find the potential for full-time work and advancement in health care occupations attractive.
- **Low-income workers.** A few grantees used a set income or wage level to define their target population, and almost all grantees included low-income workers in their target population by virtue of the focus on entry-level workers or the advancement of incumbent workers from low-paying to higher wage jobs. *Kirkwood* defined its target population as individuals whose income is at or below 80 percent of the median income, which included TANF/Welfare-to-Work participants. The *Washington, DC*, grantee originally targeted welfare leavers but later expanded its target population to all low-income residents of the city.
- **Incumbent workers.** Currently employed workers, particularly those employed in the sector selected by the grantee, were the most common target population. Over 60 percent of grantees said they were working on the issue of career ladders or career advancement. For example, *Central Florida* chose to target incumbent workers in the IT sector. Under this initiative, employers were offered the opportunity to secure training for entry-level employees, individuals with some IT background/experience but lacking higher level skills needed for advancement, or employees willing to take training that would lead to industry certification.
- **Special needs populations.** A few grantees targeted groups with particular barriers to employment, such as immigrants with limited English skills and persons with disabilities. The *Rochester, MN*, grantee targeted workers with limited English proficiency. The

*Baltimore* grantee targeted residents of the city's federal empowerment zone, an area of concentrated high poverty and limited access to jobs.

## Reaching the Target Population<sup>11</sup>

The grantees used a range of strategies to reach their target populations and tailored their approaches to local needs and community resources. Forty percent the grantees reported participant recruitment difficulties. Strategies used to reach target populations included direct advertising, working with social service agencies and other providers, and working with workplace resources. Examples of the use of direct advertising include the following:

- The *Lancaster County* grantee used a regional television advertising campaign to highlight health careers and direct workers to the One-Stop Center. This initiative resulted in thousands of inquiries, and hundreds of participants signed on for health care training programs. Web sites were also used to advertise programs.
- *Kirkwood* used classified ads in the newspaper to advertise its programs and found this to be among the best outreach techniques. In addition, Kirkwood distributed flyers in the places its target population was likely to live or shop.

Human services providers, such as TANF agencies, were a source of some referrals to the *Kirkwood* and *Prince George's County* projects (although respondents in Kirkwood indicated that this source provided very few referrals).

- *Prince George's County* also recruited participants through a network of community partners, primarily community-based organizations (CBOs) such as homeless shelters, community ministries, and Even Start Family Literacy.
- The *Lane County* grantee received assistance from CBOs and community colleges in sharing information about health careers with target populations.

To reach incumbent workers, grantees obtained assistance from employers and unions.

- Under the *Worksystems* project, Oregon Health Sciences University disseminated information about the career center to employees by distributing flyers and brochures. The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the union that represents the workers targeted by the career center, included information about the center in its newsletter.
- Implementation grantees that provided training to incumbent workers, such as *New Haven* and *Southern New Hampshire*, served workers who were referred by their employers.

<sup>11</sup> While both formation and implementation grantees described challenges and solutions in meeting the needs of their target populations, this issue was addressed primarily by the 12 implementation grantees. Some formation

## Identifying and Meeting Worker Needs<sup>12</sup>

The degree to which sites identified and addressed barriers to employment varied greatly. Seventeen of the sites did not specifically note a barrier to employment that they were addressing in their project, 11 sites identified one barrier that their target population faces, and 9 identified more than one barrier that presented a challenge for connecting targeted groups with employment. Barriers encountered by the projects included lack of work experience, long-term unemployment, limited English proficiency, educational deficits, inadequate transportation, lack of child care, and physical or mental disabilities. To serve the needs of participants and provide the qualified workers sought by employers, grantees and their stakeholders developed a range of strategies described in this section.

**Case management/counseling.** Grantees addressed issues from career counseling to supporting workers in the transition from welfare to work. Case management and counseling services were generally contracted out to service providers or coordinated with existing support services in the community. For example:

- In *Prince George's County*, community partners such as homeless shelters and community ministries that worked with the target population continued to provide case management.
- The *Verdugo* grantee used independent contractors to provide career counseling and skills assessment to contingent workers in the entertainment industry.

**Strategies for addressing limited English proficiency (LEP).** Seven grantees cited LEP as a barrier faced by program participants.

- The *Rochester, MN*, grantee worked with a large LEP population. Project staff recognized that English literacy was a barrier for entry-level workers and that LEPs faced both language and cultural barriers in passing certification tests. The grantee offers "The Promise of Language" literacy program, which includes voice recognition software to improve communication and test-taking skills of LEPs. Several types of training sessions were conducted, including workforce literacy classes for TANF-eligible workers with limited English. These sessions provided job readiness activities as well as preparation for certified nurse assistant (CNA) training or work in entry-level jobs in environmental or dietary services. In addition, software modules focusing on health care concepts were developed to prepare current entry-level health care workers to pass the CNA exam and to support the CNA skills training curriculum.
- The career center established at Oregon Health Sciences University under the *Worksystems* sectoral grant purchased software for self-guided instruction for nonnative English speakers.

grantees were still refining their defined target population and planning strategies for reaching their target populations.

<sup>12</sup> While some formation grantees did implement strategies to address target population needs, services to the target population were beyond the scope of the formation grants.

- The ***Bellingham*** grantee supported a customized licensed practical nurse (LPN) training program for bilingual populations.

**Addressing child care and transportation needs.** Nine grantees reported that participants faced transportation barriers, and seven grantees mentioned child care as a barrier for participants. Grantee involvement in addressing these barriers most often took the form of arranging or coordinating subsidies to mitigate the cost of transportation or child care. For example:

- In the ***Kirkwood*** project, eligible low-income participants were able to use TANF and/or WIA funds to pay for child care and transportation.
- WAWA, the community-based organization that operated the sectoral project for the ***Delaware County*** grantee, worked with the Delaware Valley Child Care Coalition to prepare a map that included the location of health care employers, day care centers, and home child care providers to help workers in their search for employment and child care.

**Assisting with other work supports and special needs.** A few projects assisted workers with other special needs, usually on a case-by-case basis.

- The vocational rehabilitation agency and Kirkwood Community College's Educational Development Office helped students with disabilities who enrolled in the call center training program established under ***Kirkwood's*** grant.
- The ***WSOS*** sector program included the services of a WSOS career counselor who arranged for various supportive services for participants in the marine mechanics training program, such as transportation assistance (e.g., gas vouchers), help with rent payments, food vouchers, referrals to the local food bank, and access to the weatherization project. While many of these supportive services were provided directly by WSOS, the grantee's links with other community agencies (e.g., United Way, the Salvation Army) enabled it to refer participants to other resources in the community. In addition, the local workforce development agency and the Department of Job and Family Services were co-located at the county training center.

**Educational remediation.** Six grantees specifically mentioned low education levels as a barrier faced by participants. To address this issue, grantees added remedial components to their training programs or used community partners to provide supplemental education services.

- ***Prince George's County's*** sales and service training curriculum incorporates literacy training using the Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards developed by the National Council for Literacy.
- Pima County Community College offered remedial as well as college-level coursework for participants in the plastics manufacturing training offered under the ***Pima County*** sectoral project.
- The local public school systems provided basic and remedial education for participants in the ***Lancaster County*** health care training initiative. The Lancaster County area literacy

council also worked with the LPN program to assist trainees. Lancaster County identified a “content gap” that prevented individuals with sufficient reading and math skills to begin advanced study for health care occupations. The school system designed a course that taught candidates the basics of such subjects as biology and physiology, to prepare them to successfully pursue nursing or other allied health degrees.

**Assisting with the costs of education.** The cost of education was mentioned by six grantees as a barrier to participants. In addition to employer assistance, WIBs were able to leverage funds to help participants with training costs.

- The *Kirkwood* project used WIA training funds for eligible participants.
- The *Polk County* grantee awarded 15 scholarships (totaling \$42,000) to high school seniors interested in entering a health occupation. The grantee has also increased the individual training account (ITA) limits for health care training and education from \$5,000 to \$7,000 per student.
- The *Lancaster County* grantee has coordinated various funding streams to fund workforce development activities in the health care sector, including Pell grants, ITAs, low-interest state education loans, and H-1B funds.
- The *New Haven* grantee used grant funds to support training for incumbent workers selected by their employers, and TANF and WIA funds to support training for entry-level health care workers.

## **Matching the Target Population to the Industry**

Grantees played a pivotal role in linking potential workers to an industry. Successfully matching workers and employers requires an understanding of the industry and the target population to customize recruitment and training and create realistic expectations for both participants and employers.<sup>13</sup> Grantees addressed this issue through three main types of activities: understanding industry culture, screening potential participants/workers, and introducing candidates to the industry.

**Understanding industry culture.** Grantees and their stakeholders, such as training providers, tried to understand an industry and its culture in order to portray information accurately to potential workers and design appropriate training curricula.

- The *Austin* grantee focused on the banking and financial services industry, and used an innovative approach to ensure its understanding of the industry. The local school system, a partner on the project, sent teachers to banks and credit unions for job shadowing with tellers in order to create a training program that fit the needs of employers.

<sup>13</sup> For example, one of the projects, *Baltimore*, found that the target industry selected was not well enough established to serve the target population. Baltimore targeted residents of the city’s empowerment zone, and they had low education levels and limited work experience. The industry sector selected was biosciences, where most jobs require at least a bachelor’s degree. A need for lower skilled positions was expected to develop as the industry grew and became established. As a result, the project is not proceeding beyond the planning stage.

- In the *Kirkwood* call center training program, the classrooms were set up to simulate a call center environment, and time at employer locations was structured into the curriculum to ensure that participants understood the work environment and culture for which they were preparing.

**Screening.** Several grantees screened potential participants for readiness (for employment or training) as well as industry interest and aptitude.

- In the *New Haven* sectoral project, stakeholders, including the Connecticut Hospital Association, worked with employers to identify needs and select an appropriate assessment tool for potential health care workers. The community college then administered the assessment tool on a monthly basis to interested One-Stop customers.
- The *Rochester, MN*, grantee added an assessment for LEP clients to its standard orientation procedures in an effort to determine whether clients had the appropriate English language, reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills required to obtain employment. Assessments included the Computer Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and the Basic English Standards Test (BEST).

**Introducing candidates to the industry.** In providing information about careers in the selected industry, grantees had dual objectives: to interest new workers in the industry and to accurately describe what potential workers could expect in the industry/jobs being promoted. The second objective is important to the success of the initiative because it reduces the likelihood of individuals dropping out of the training program or leaving their jobs because the skill level, working conditions, or pay do not meet their expectations.

- In *New Haven*, the Area Health Education Center worked with other project stakeholders to produce a Health Occupations and Technology Guide that has been distributed to community colleges, high school and middle school guidance offices, and One-Stops. In addition, One-Stops in New Haven conducted informational workshops on health care careers.
- The sectoral project in *Delaware County* produced a Healthcare Career Matrix that depicts paths of career advancement, as well as detailed training requirements for several occupations on the matrix.

## Changes in Target Population

A number of grantees changed or expanded their target populations over the course of their projects. Three general reasons for target population changes were offered.

**Overall expansion of the target group to compensate for recruitment difficulties or lower than anticipated participation.** A number of grantees were concerned about meeting their commitments to employers or meeting the goals set in their grant applications. Expanding the target population was one way to address shortfalls due to recruitment or attrition.

- For example, the *Union County* grantee began with a focus on incumbent workers but widened its effort to include the general population, in part because the number of students in the initial classes was lower than hoped.

**A decision to include groups with fewer barriers to employment.** Some grantees found that their target populations required more preparation than they had expected to qualify for the available jobs or more services to overcome barriers to employment. Lacking the time or resources to successfully carry out their projects with hard-to-serve populations, some grantees decided to change their target populations.

- The *Raleigh* grantee originally focused on dislocated manufacturing and technology workers and underrepresented minority groups. However, the focus shifted to secondary school students who would be entering the workforce in the coming years. Dislocated workers were originally targeted because of increased layoffs in the area, but project research indicated that these workers and minority adults faced higher barriers to entering the health care workforce. The area's youth were seen as having lower barriers and a better long-term chance of advancing up health care career ladders.
- The *Pima County* grantee made a similar change. The project initially focused on incumbent, dislocated, and new workers but found that dislocated workers were harder to reach because they were not seeking jobs in the target industry (plastics). The dislocated workers tended to have higher technical skills and demanded higher wages than most jobs targeted in the sectoral project, so the staff targeted older youth (recent high school graduates). Youth were steered toward entry-level employment, and incumbent worker training was designed to help them advance to mid-level positions.

**Adoption of a pipeline approach.** As the job market tightened, staff at some sectoral projects realized that incumbent workers would need to advance to create entry-level job openings. Several grantees called this strategy "backfilling."

- The *Lynchburg* grantee initially planned to target secondary school students and incumbent workers but found that it would be necessary to upgrade the skills of the existing workforce to open up opportunities for new entrants. Therefore, the project focused on incumbent workers in local firms during the grant period.
- The *Worksystems* grantee planned to train administrative and other workers to move up to IT jobs at OHSU. As a result of the downturn in the IT market in Oregon, fewer jobs than predicted opened up, because IT workers were not leaving OHSU for jobs in the private sector. To accommodate this situation, the grantee trained entry-level workers (e.g., food service, sanitation, and transportation workers) in basic computer and office skills so they could move into administrative jobs, as well as moving administrative workers to entry-level IT jobs.

## Participant Outcomes

Of the 12 implementation grantees, 11 included training initiatives that lend themselves to standard measures such as number enrolled, number completing training, number attaining certification, and number employed. The one exception was *Southern New Hampshire*, an implementation grantee that focused on creating employer-designed training using a career ladder approach. This grantee did not fund a training program but did use a train-the-trainer approach to provide soft skills training to 20 direct care workers and agency training staff to assist in future problem solving and career ladder development. All but one of the implementation grantees that did include training were able to provide some participant outcome data (see exhibit III-1). The *Lancaster* grantee did not provide training directly but coordinated with One-Stop partners—such as a career and technology center, a community college campus, a school of nursing, and the local public school system—to arrange for training. Because the grantee had to rely on many organizations for reporting, it was not able to provide data on the number of students enrolled.

## Summary

These examples illustrate the balance sectoral projects must strike between meeting the needs of the target population and those of the employer. Recruitment, successful completion of training, initial employment, retention, and advancement all depend on understanding and assessing these needs and communicating realistic expectations to prospective workers and employers. Many grantee organizations focused primarily on business and industry needs, then worked with the target population that could most easily be prepared to meet those needs. These projects may have been quite useful to the workers involved, but they were less likely to involve hard-to-serve populations—such as women transitioning from welfare or disabled persons—because they were not designed with an eye toward the type of work supports that would be needed by very low income groups.

With respect to meeting target population needs, the accomplishments of formation grantees included disseminating information to promote careers in the selected industry, influencing employer practices with regard to training (such as leave time and developing career ladders), and promoting policies that improve employment and training opportunities and access to these opportunities for low-income individuals. Implementation grantees were able to increase training options in their communities and build career ladders and advancement opportunities. Several grantees engaged new pools of workers in an industry, and several others broadened their target populations to meet employer needs within the time and resource constraints of their projects.

**Exhibit III-1: Summary of Participant Outcomes Reported by Implementation Grantees<sup>14</sup>**

Grantee	Enrollment	Completion	Certification	Job Placement	Advancement/ Wage Gain
Verdugo	24	24	NA	14 of 16	Contract worker rates ranged from \$15/hour to \$96/hour.
Marion, IA	105	80		65.5% within 3 weeks of graduation	
Pima County	30			3	
Prince George's County	42	41		33	
New Haven	42 incumbent workers 95 new entrants 76 assessments	41 incumbent workers 95 new entrants		68 new entrants	41 incumbent workers. Average 18% wage gain for all participants. Average wage was \$19/ hour.
Spokane	34 attended orientations. 18 enrolled	11	NA	7	
Central Florida	34	34	5	NA	NA
Rochester, MN	33 certified nurse assistant (CNA) 19 personal care 21 health awareness	73	33 CNA 19 First Aid/CPR	31 CNA 15 personal care/environmental service	12 personal care workers retained 12 months or more.
Worksystems	578 enrolled in at least one course 200 workers accessed resources as walk-ins.		28 Microsoft or A+	NA	89; average wage gain of 18.9%
WSOS	57	32 last classes 9 current class 41 total	44 work ethic 48 boat safety 41 marine training	33	25 have achieved a wage gain. Average gain .50/hour. (Does not include current class).

<sup>14</sup> In March 2004, implementation grantees were contacted for updates to their participant outcome information. Eight of the 12 implementation grantees responded, and 3 (Verdugo, Worksystems, and WSOS) provided updated information reflected in this table.

## **IV. Sector Programs and the WIB System**

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### **Chapter Highlights**

- WIBs in various institutional settings were able to engage in sector work. Different organizational settings can offer varying sets of resources; there was no one “best” organizational structure for initiating and operating a sector project.
- The involvement and interest of WIB members in the project varied within WIBs. In general, the employer members whose industries were the target of the sector project were among the most engaged members of the board.
- For some WIBs (12 of the 38), the project was particularly “energizing” and led to such outcomes as rethinking strategic plans or reshaping operations around sector-based work.
- Conversely, 13 of the WIBs noted that board involvement in the project was relatively low. Reasons for this low level of interest included the small size of the grant relative to the overall WIB budget and no perceived need for the WIB to take on more than an oversight role with respect to the project.
- Implementing agencies combined the resources of in-house staff with the expertise of consultants and outside agencies in a wide variety of ways. No particular staffing pattern or patterns emerged as the best way to staff a sector project.
- Respondents from 21 sites stated that the sector initiative helped improve the WIB’s relationship with employers
- Twenty-two of the grantees stated that they plan to continue with sector work and expand the approach to other sectors.

### **Variations in the Institutional Structures and Roles of Grantee Organizations**

One of the hypotheses of the evaluation was that the WIB system can provide an appropriate institutional structure for planning and implementing a sectoral initiative. Eligibility for the SED grants was limited to local WIBs, but in examining the operations of the grantees, it is apparent that the WIB system encompasses a wide variety of institutional settings. To understand the variety of approaches the WIBs took to engaging in sector work and to evaluate the fit of sector work within the WIB system, it is necessary to consider three aspects of grantee operations: (1) the organizational structure of the local WIB and the disposition of grant funds, (2) the involvement of local WIB members in the SED project, and (3) staff support for the project. In this chapter we provide some background on the establishment of local WIBs and the variety of organizational contexts. We also describe how board members and staff were involved in the sectoral projects.

Under WIA, local workforce investment areas are designated by the governor, and a WIB is established for each area. Local WIBs are appointed by the chief local elected official, using criteria established by the governor and the State Workforce Board. The chair of each local WIB must be a representative of the private sector/business community. Boards include representatives from business (which must be the majority), local education entities, labor organizations, CBOs, economic development agencies, all One-Stop partners, and other entities. Local WIBs develop plans, provide oversight, select local One-Stop operators, and coordinate activities with economic development agencies and employers.

In order to facilitate reform of the workforce system under WIA, workforce investment areas are strongly encouraged to create local WIBs and separate board staff functions from program operation activities; they are prohibited from direct service provision and operation of One-Stop Career Centers. However, recognizing that many states and localities were already reforming their workforce systems before WIA, Congress included a number of provisions that encourage local flexibility. The law provides an option to use an existing entity to carry out the required functions of the local WIB; the governor may waive the prohibition against direct provision of training services by local WIBs; and local WIBs may directly provide nontraining services with the agreement of the chief local elected official and the governor. The local WIB itself may serve as a One-Stop operator only with the consent of the chief elected official and the governor. As a result of these options, the landscape of local WIB organizations is varied.

### **Local WIB Organizational Structures**

The organizational structures for the WIBs observed in this evaluation are independent workforce development agencies, nonprofit organizations operating as workforce development agencies, local government agencies, and multi-WIB projects.

**Independent workforce development agencies.** The most common organizational structure that we observed in this demonstration was one in which the WIB operations were carried out by an independently incorporated nonprofit agency formed to address local and regional workforce issues. In some cases, this was a new organization formed since WIA; in others, the state designated a preexisting entity whose main focus is workforce development. Nineteen<sup>15</sup> of the sites in this demonstration reported operating through this type of structure. These organizations generally seek to brand their services under their incorporated name and are often comfortable combining funding streams from a variety of public, private, and philanthropic sources to support project implementation.

- One of the stronger examples of this structure is the ***Boston PIC***, a 501(c)(3) organization formed in 1979 with a mission “to strengthen Boston’s communities and its workforce by connecting youth and adults with education and employment opportunities that prepare them to meet the skill demands of employers in a changing economy.” As an independent nonprofit agency, the Boston PIC has established a distinct identity with its employer

<sup>15</sup> Two of the local WIBs included in this category are actually operated by public institutions of higher education: Kirkwood Community College and North Central Missouri College. In both cases, operations of the workforce development agency had been contracted to the colleges, and they were operating as independent workforce development agencies.

constituents and with the workforce development community in the Boston area. The WIB sets the vision for the organization's workforce development efforts and elects a board that plays a more direct role in overseeing the operations of the organization. As a private organization with a public-sector mandate, the Boston PIC has been able to play a large role in workforce development efforts in Boston. The organization taps a variety of local, state, federal, and philanthropic funds and can combine those to support projects. This funding base has provided some stability and given the Boston PIC a greater ability to maintain its work in the health sector, its chosen target industry, than some of the other grantees in the demonstration.

**Nonprofits operating as workforce development agencies.** Some local WIBs, especially those that operate through preexisting organizations, are housed in nonprofit agencies that are not exclusively devoted to workforce development, such as economic development agencies and community action agencies. In this demonstration, two grantees (*Alaska High-Tech* and *Lynchburg*) were economic development agencies. One grantee, **WSOS**, is a community action agency that partnered with an economic development organization that is also the lead workforce development agency.

- In *Lynchburg*, the WIB is housed in the Region 2000 Regional Commission, an economic development organization. The project brought together a variety of partners across a large geographic region working with several municipal governments. Economic development entities and trade associations were well represented on the project advisory committee. The organization was sensitive to the fact that manufacturing is the largest industry in the area and chose to focus on a set of skills that applies to a range of manufacturing subsectors.
- **WSOS** worked in partnership with the Ottawa County Community Improvement Corporation, the lead economic development and workforce development organization for the county. Together, these two organizations had the resources needed to implement the project in terms of understanding the workforce development needs of a target population and being able to partner and coordinate with employers, education and training providers, and local social service agencies. Their close connections with and understanding of the needs of marine dealers on nearby Lake Erie alerted them to the shortage of qualified marine mechanics, the difficulties faced in retaining them, and the need for training.

**Local government agencies.** A number of WIBs—including five of the grantees in this demonstration (*Aroostook*, *Baltimore*, *Atlantic Cape May*, *Union County*, and *Northern Virginia WIB*)—are located in the offices of elected officials (e.g., mayor or county commissioner) or local government agencies. For example, a large city government, a small city government, and a rural county government were grantees. For most of these entities, the location in a government office provided at least a minimum amount of staff support that could be reliably drawn upon (see the discussion of project staffing later in this chapter).

- One of the *Baltimore* respondents, in particular, felt that it was an advantage to be part of the city's office because of the staff and other resources that could be drawn upon in support of the project. On the other hand, some of the respondents from the Baltimore

site felt that locating responsibility for the project in the office of the mayor gave the project an explicitly political tone and sometimes diverted attention from achieving the project goals.

- In *Union County*, the WIB is administratively located within the county government. WIB activities related to this grant were managed and conducted by staff in the county's Office of the Director of Human Services.

**Multi-WIB projects.** A somewhat different organizational approach was collaboration with other WIBs. Some of the grants were explicitly made to a consortia of WIBs, and some grantees chose to work with WIBs in their region to ensure that the initiative matched up well with the regional labor market. Respondents noted that collaboration also offered the opportunity to pool resources and leverage the research and planning work over a broader area for implementation. As with any collaboration, however, additional staff time needs to be devoted to ensuring that the partners understand their relative roles and responsibilities and can function well as a team. Some respondents from regional collaborations noted that some control must be given up and that ensuring a consistent level of quality of operations across the various WIBs can be a challenge.

- An example of this type of collaboration is the *Chesapeake Workforce Alliance*, a collaboration of three Maryland WIBs located along the Chesapeake Bay and the Delaware WIB. The targeted industry sector was health care, and the grantee believed that the region encompassed through this collaboration would form a more appropriate basis for an analysis of the issues associated with the health care workforce than the area of any one of the WIBs. For example, staff noted that it was a more appropriate region over which to think about training capacity, as well as shortages in specialty areas. Moreover, it was a region across which health care workers might commute and could consider employment and training choices. In addition, staff felt that they could better leverage their limited resources by working together rather than designing approaches on their own.
- In *Cleveland*, Cuyahoga County's Northeast Ohio Health Care Coalition sector initiative adopted a regional approach designed to address the shortage of health care workers in an eight-county area that includes the cities of Cleveland and Akron. The Cleveland area is served by two WIBs—the Cuyahoga County WIB (which was responsible for the sectoral grant) and the City of Cleveland WIB (which was not involved in the project). In April 2003, at the time of the site visit, the sector team was preparing to approach the city WIB to try to gain its support for and commitment to this initiative. The WIBs serving the other counties in the coalition were not engaged in the project but were “part of the long-term plan,” according to the sector team. Staff expressed regret that they hadn't done a better job of involving staff from other WIBs in this region in the planning process, because the skills shortage in health care is a regional issue not limited to Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

## Disposition of Grant Funds

The preceding section described types of organizations represented among the sectoral demonstration grantees. However, there is a distinction between the grantee organization and the organization that was most involved in grant activities. Under WIA, the chief local elected official is the grant recipient and is liable for the use of funds, but this official may designate an entity to serve as the local grant subrecipient or fiscal agent. Some WIBs leverage the effectiveness of existing institutions in their area to implement grant initiatives and essentially pass through funding to these organizations to implement projects. In this demonstration, two WIBs operated primarily as pass-throughs for funds to go to other organizations to operate the sector projects. *Alaska High-Tech* worked through the Alaska High-Tech Business Council, and the *Los Angeles* WIB subcontracted to the Entertainment Industry Development Corporation, a public-private partnership focused on the economic health of the entertainment industry in the region. Other grantees used a combination of WIB member and staff involvement and subcontracts to carry out grant activities.

The following sections describe the sectoral grant activities, addressing first the activities of WIB members, then staff support of the projects.

## Involvement of WIB Members

Implicit in the demonstration was the hypothesis that a sectoral initiative can provide an opportunity to engage WIB members in substantive ways. In a number of instances, this hypothesis appeared to be supported—WIB members were very helpful in working toward the achievement of project goals. Nine of the grantees reported a high level of involvement of WIB members in the project compared with involvement in other projects they have run. Employer members actively engaged in the work and leveraged their contacts in the local business community in support of project goals. WIB members reaching out to other project constituents, such as training providers or community-based organizations, was less commonly reported. The amount of attention the projects received from members of the local WIB varied across projects and within projects, with some grantees reporting that only certain WIB members were highly interested in the work. Twelve grantees reported that the sector project “energized” the WIB, inspiring new strategic thinking and in some cases a reorganization of activities around a sector-based approach.

Several grantees noted that the grants provided resources that would otherwise not be available for collaborative activities and that the award of the grant helped to engage partners and staff. In some cases, the grant activities, despite the limited resources directly associated with the grant, were the spark that caught the attention of WIB members. On the other hand, 13 grantees reported a relatively low level of WIB involvement, perhaps because of the small size of the grant relative to the overall WIB budget or the perception that there was no need for the WIB to take on more than an oversight role with respect to the project. In some cases, the fit of the grant with ongoing work was such that the sector project was not noticed as something new. The following are examples of how WIB members were involved in sectoral projects:

- In *Lancaster*, one WIB member was the vice president for human resources at the region’s major hospital. This high-level hospital executive provided insight into the labor needs of the target area’s health care institutions and helped the staff understand the

relative importance of a workforce effort to the growth of the industry. He capitalized on the hospital's role as a major regional employer and recognized industry leader to lend credibility to the staff as they pursued other industry employers and training providers. The support and participation of a major regional institution helped the staff convey the importance of the sectoral initiative to a broader community.

- In *Jefferson Parish*, which focused on automotive technology, one WIB member was the owner of several automobile dealerships and the vice president of the Greater New Orleans Dealership Association. He had a long history of spearheading efforts to improve and increase training opportunities in this industry for high school youth and was crucial to this project in terms of recruiting employers and securing their participation in the stakeholders group.
- One of the members of the *Washington, DC*, Workforce Investment Council board was chairing a related health care sector project. Consequently, she was able to offer links to the health care employer network already established as part of that project, as well as insights and expertise on industry issues. She assisted in both the recruitment and facilitation of employer focus groups. Also on the board was a representative from an organization that owned several area hospitals and was, at the same time, involved in a joint initiative with the Department of Employment Services to provide recruitment, training, mentoring, and placement for trainees in the organizations. He was instrumental in identifying and recruiting employers.

### **WIB Staff Roles in Sector Projects**

In addition to providing opportunities for WIB members to engage, a sectoral initiative can provide an opportunity to engage WIB staff in substantive ways. All local WIBs need staff support to implement their programs. Some WIBs distinguish between staff assigned to the board and the program operations staff, while other WIBs do not. WIB staff (those that directly support the board and those that work in program operations) are employed by various public and nonprofit agencies that offer different kinds of expertise and resources. Many of the WIBs had preexisting relationships with a variety of local organizations and consultants; thus, each WIB had a different set of external resources upon which to draw. Finally, the fit of the project with ongoing work and the familiarity of staff with the targeted industry often influenced the degree to which they felt the need to contract with external consultants or organizations. Thus, our observation of a wide variety of staffing patterns for the projects is not surprising. Examples described in this section include WIB staff located in One-Stop Career Centers, staff employed by economic development agencies, and contractors serving as partners in sectoral projects.

In this demonstration, 4 of the 38 grantees (*Bellingham, Pima County, Kirkwood, and Verdugo*) were also One-Stop operators, and some grantees drew upon One-Stop staff to implement their sector projects.

- In *Pima County*, staff from the One-Stop wrote the original proposal and were responsible for implementing and managing the work of project partners, including facilitating interaction among such partners as employers and training providers. Pima County also used its One-Stop capabilities to recruit trainees and to provide or broker training services.

- In **Bellingham**, the One-Stop staff included experienced facilitators who convened meetings and workforce development professionals who were familiar with the training resources in the region.
- Experience and contacts as a One-Stop operator enabled **Kirkwood** staff to recruit participants, provide orientation sessions for prospective students, and direct students and employers to support services to enhance student success and job retention.

Other sites—such as **Lancaster**, **Verdugo**, and **New Haven**—leveraged the outreach and service-provision capabilities of their local One-Stop systems but housed the fiscal agency and strategic management of the project in another organizational entity.

Some projects were staffed by employees of local or regional economic development organizations, either because the WIB was housed in an organization whose mission focused on economic development or because the sectoral grant involved partnerships with economic development agencies. These organizations often brought existing relationships with the employer community to the project, facilitating the process of researching workforce needs of employers and generally involving employers in the project. However, economic development organizations may not have the understanding or experience needed to consider and address the employment or advancement barriers faced by a particular target population. The **Aroostook** grantee worked in partnership with a community-based human services agency to bring an understanding of how to address barriers to employment to the project. **WSOS** was a collaboration between a community-based project and an economic development organization.

Among the demonstration projects, 28 of the 38 reported working with outside contractors or consultants. The most common role for consultants (14 of 28) was carrying out some portion of the project research. Several WIBs hired outside professionals to assist with group facilitation (12 of 28), project management (8 of 28), or curriculum development (8 of 28). Many of the projects used a combination of in-house and partner or contractor staff. The following is just a sample of the range of approaches WIBs took to staffing their sector projects:

- In **Aroostook**, the WIB worked closely with a local economic development agency and a community action agency. Staff from those two outside organizations took the lead in putting together the project proposal, with help and direction from the WIB director. Upon funding, staff from the two organizations directed the planning research (which involved additional external organizations), facilitated meetings of project stakeholders, and wrote the final planning document, again with the help and support of the WIB director. Relatively little of the project work was done by WIB staff (of which there are only two), but all the interviewees commented that their organizations are accustomed to collaborating with each other and that this is an effective way to maximize local resources.
- In **Rochester, MN**, WIB staff did virtually all the project work. They wrote the proposal, handled the day-to-day project management, surveyed employers to gain needed input, and developed and marketed the software that was the focus of this project. The project fit well with existing work and the staff had developed internal capacity to carry out the specific tasks associated with the sector project.

- In *Verdugo*, WIB staff took responsibility for overall project design and management and, together with One-Stop staff, did much of the outreach, recruitment, and screening of project participants. They also developed employer relationships and support for the project. A range of consultants and outside agencies—some of which had worked with the WIB before—were hired to provide very specific aspects of training or career counseling. Thus, Verdugo worked with a blend of staff and external resources.
- In *Baltimore*, staff kept responsibility for oversight of the project but worked primarily through two consultants who brought industry expertise and connections. Originally, the project managers at the Baltimore WIB had hoped to hire a staff person to run the project, but when they were unable to hire their selected candidate, they turned to consultants. Interviewees commented that they thought the use of consultants, in the end, helped them start in a better place, as the consultants understood the industry, had contacts, and could conduct the project with a high degree of credibility. The grant money would not have been enough to hire a staff person with this level of expertise. In addition, the results of the planning phase indicated that it was not the appropriate time to begin a large initiative in the biotech industry. Thus, the WIB avoided the mistake of investing staff resources to develop a level of expertise in this industry that it did not need.
- In *Seattle-King County*, WIB staff partnered with the Kent Chamber of Commerce and the Northwest Policy Center of the University of Washington. WIB staff were responsible for project management, strategic planning, participating in meetings, and disseminating information. The Kent Chamber of Commerce used its industry contacts to recruit employers and facilitated meetings of the Industry Action Team. The Northwest Policy Center conducted the labor market research.

The grant solicitation directed grantees to dedicate a certain amount of money to paying staff (as opposed to consultants or outside vendors) to encourage them to develop staff resources that would make it more likely that the project would continue at the end of the grant period. In particular, sector projects often require a degree of industry knowledge that many WIBs do not possess at the beginning of a project. In some cases, staff resources were combined with consultant resources in ways that helped transfer knowledge from consultants to staff members, much as the grants were designed to do. However, the review of the various staffing structures and the comments of interviewees suggest that staff resources may not need to be built up within the entity that houses the WIB per se but rather should be developed within the community. In fact, some grantees commented that by partnering with organizations that already had the skills needed for the project, the WIB did not recreate existing capacity in its service area and more efficiently used the limited resources available. Many WIBs have several organizations that they frequently collaborate with on a range of projects. In some sense, the capacities of these organizations are part of the infrastructure the WIB relies on for continuity in its work, even though the organizations are not explicitly housed in the WIB. Given the fluid relationships that were observed among WIBs and their local partners, it is hard to identify a single staffing pattern, based on agency of employment, that seems to be an important contributor to project success.

## **Summary**

In general, we have observed positive beginnings of a sector project among a majority of the grantees. These projects are housed in a variety of institutions and are supported by a variety of staffing patterns. This variation is appropriate in light of the unique set of local resources available to each grantee, the varying needs of the targeted industry and the local workforce, and the wide range of existing capacity to implement sector work across the grantee sites. It should be noted, however, that what we have seen is a beginning—sector strategies are long-term approaches and generally develop over time in terms of their chosen mix of services, connection with the targeted industry, and ability to operate effectively within that industry.

## **V. Lessons for Program Operators**

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A number of lessons and insights gathered over the course of the evaluation could be useful to other local Workforce Investment Boards that are considering adopting sector-based strategies in their own activities.

### **Factors That Facilitate Success**

The sector approach can be a useful framework for WIBs that are interested in contributing to local or regional efforts to align education and training resources with market needs. The demonstration gave WIBs an opportunity to build or expand their capacity to work strategically with employers and other stakeholders on shared workforce challenges. Such an effort requires collaboration among stakeholders to successfully conceptualize, design, implement, and monitor a sector initiative. The time investment is typically at least 18 months to two years to develop a viable plan or achieve full-scale implementation, and ongoing operations to fully address the goals of a plan are an even longer term proposition.

Because so many variables can influence the design and implementation of a sector project, there is no single path for WIBs to follow to ensure a successful outcome. However, effective grantees tend to share several core characteristics, even though the projects themselves look quite different. The following factors appeared to be most important in determining success:

- The ability of the WIB to strategically determine its role in the sector project. WIBs can play many roles in sector projects, depending on their interest in and knowledge of the sector, staff capacity, and ability to serve the target population. Successful WIBs assessed these factors to decide which roles and responsibilities to take on directly and which to delegate.
- The recruitment and retention of the right mix of stakeholders. This is a dynamic process, as the roles, responsibilities, and relative importance of the various stakeholders may change over time.
- The habit of frequently soliciting feedback from employers and program participants and making midcourse corrections as needed.

Successful sector projects displayed these core characteristics in different ways. Among the SED grantees, we identified promising practices in stakeholder collaboration; leveraging training resources and building training capacity; coordinating resources to address target population needs; soliciting employer feedback; and developing and supporting career ladders, retention, and advancement. Creating and sustaining a successful sector project is a process, and the grants were generally part of a larger effort. Because successful sector projects combined a range of resources and collaborative elements, we provide a few examples of how sites fit the pieces together.

## Stakeholder Collaboration

As has been noted throughout this report, WIBs played a variety of roles effectively in their sector projects. Some managed and led the process themselves, some hired consultants with industry expertise, some outsourced the project entirely to another organization, and some pooled resources across multiple WIBs. The key to success was not the role, it was the *fit* of that role with the resource and skill base of the organization. In successful projects, the WIB used a process of self-assessment to inform its decisions about which roles and responsibilities to take on directly and which to delegate.

Because sector projects are collaborative, they start by focusing on “who needs to be at the table.” But, in trying to assure that all project stakeholders will be on board with the initiative, some projects may cast the net too widely. Sites that did a good job of self-assessing (“knowing what they didn’t know”) tended to be better positioned to structure projects with the right mix of partners, staff, and external assistance to accomplish the objective.

Stakeholder involvement and input are essential for a sector initiative to succeed, but stakeholder participation is not a straightforward or easy process to manage. The roles, responsibilities, and relative importance of various stakeholders change over time as a project moves from design to implementation, or as the economy shifts or technology changes. Successfully managing the dynamic process of identifying, recruiting, and maintaining the right mix of partners to keep an initiative moving forward is a major factor in long-term success.

For planning grantees, the challenge in forming a stakeholder group was twofold: (1) to identify and reach out to all the stakeholder groups that might be important to the initiative’s success and (2) to choose among potential stakeholders so the number was not overwhelming. Potential stakeholders could include employers who need qualified employees and can explain the skill sets and behaviors that are required, training and education providers who can design and deliver course content that will enable students to fill those jobs, community-based organizations and government agencies that can help residents overcome barriers to employment, and union leaders who can maintain job security and job quality for their members. **Bellingham** was one grantee that did an exemplary job of convening key stakeholders, defining roles, and moving forward with its plans.

**Northwest Workforce Development Council, Bellingham, WA:  
A Systemwide, Action-Oriented Approach to Stakeholder Collaboration**

Convened in April 2001 by the Northwest Workforce Development Council (NWDC), the Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills addresses skilled health care employment needs in a four-county semirural area between Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia. Participating organizations from the four-county area include the five hospitals in the region, skilled nursing and long-term care facilities, a physician's clinic, labor representatives (Washington State Nurses Association), and the three postsecondary health career training institutions in the region (Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, and Skagit Valley College).

This formation grantee's SED project built on previous work, strategically identified key stakeholders, and opened up communications between employers and training providers. Its plan outlined specific action items, many of which were successfully addressed during the grant period. The selection of a consultant to serve as project coordinator who had credibility with employers and legislators and significant experience in the health care industry was another factor that contributed to the project's success.

The Northwest Alliance was initially formed under a state-funded SKILLS project grant. This grant was used to collect and analyze labor market data. In addition, staff at the largest hospital in the area (St. Joseph Hospital) had prepared a workforce plan that also identified the health care skills shortage issues in the area. Part of the success of the alliance was attributed to the fact that this hospital was represented on the board of NWDC and took the lead in recruiting other employers.

About 20 employers were identified, and 10–12 were active partners. While the employers hadn't had working relationships with each other in the past, their recognition of the problems they faced because of high staff turnover and skills shortages made them willing to come together to find solutions. The larger employers were sensitive to the fact that the region has a "delicate ecosystem" of workers. Rather than steal workers from each other, employers realized that all would gain by collaborating to develop career ladder opportunities and retain workers in an organization. With skilled facilitation by the staff of NWDC, the employers and the training providers learned how to work together cooperatively.

For example, training institutions assumed that employers would not be willing to provide additional training sites or to supplement teachers' salaries, but both of these assumptions were false. The project successfully addressed challenges related to competition between community and technical colleges in the region and incompatibilities between the schedules and policies of educational institutions and the needs of employers.

The Northwest Alliance and NWDC are addressing shortfalls in nursing, imaging technology, and allied health services by implementing strategic actions in four areas: (1) increase interest in health and allied careers, (2) increase the available labor pool, (3) expand local training capacity, and (4) develop resources. To address the first area, alliance members partner with high school career counselors, health teachers, and career and technical education directors to introduce health and allied occupations to high school students.

To increase the labor pool, the NWDC has supported a community and technical college WorkFirst preemployment program that targets nurse assistant preparation and provides life and work skills training, as well as a customized LPN program for bilingual minority populations. An Introduction to Health Careers class is conducted for multilingual, multicultural individuals. The alliance markets employer tuition reimbursement opportunities and NWDC tuition advance funds to potential and incumbent workers.

To address training capacity, employers and training providers worked cooperatively to gain approval for the start-up of a new radiologic technologist program at the local technical college. The alliance continues to focus on ways to increase training capacity for RNs by considering a number of options, including holding additional classes during the evening hours, expanding summer programs, and using skilled nursing facilities for clinical placements. In the area of retention, the focus is on specialty training for nurses. Four hospitals have formed a critical care consortium that has developed an online orientation class supplemented by a weekly seminar. Because the NWDC met with some early successes (e.g., creation of a strong and enthusiastic stakeholder coalition), it has been able to leverage other resources and maintain support for its program.

In general, planning grantees were more apt to cast the net widely, at least for initial input. In translating a project plan into an effective on-the-ground program, implementation sites showed the importance of engaged partners, clear partner roles and responsibilities, and the maintenance of effective working relationships, particularly with training providers. *Polk County* is an example of a grantee that worked collaboratively with training providers and other stakeholders to leverage resources for training.

**Polk County Workforce Development Board:  
Building on Research and Collaboration to Support Training Needs**

The Polk County Workforce Development Board (PWDB) of Polk County, Florida, used its sectoral grant to design and implement a communitywide effort to address the workforce needs of the health care industry and to leverage nearly \$2 million in resources to address these issues.

PWDB's state-mandated High Skills/High Wage Committee, which was responsible for oversight of all sectoral grant activities, conducted research to identify occupations with high wages, high skills, projected growth, and large labor shortages, and narrowed its focus to health care, information technology, and insurance. The committee selected the health care industry for its sectoral initiative, chiefly because of the critical shortage of workers, the availability of training programs, and the willingness of business and training partners to participate. PWDB also reviewed state and local labor market data (becoming the first workforce development board in Florida to use the ERISS database) to understand industry and employer needs.

PWDB was extremely successful in bringing together the relevant stakeholders, including all the major hospitals, several long-term care facilities, Polk Community College, the Polk County School Board Technical Centers, the Polk County Health Department, the Polk County Medical Association, the Tampa Bay Partnership, the High Tech Corridor Council, Workforce Florida, Inc., and the Florida Association of Homes for the Aging. Representatives from each of the stakeholders were among the 200 community leaders and health care professionals who attended two health care summits in 2002 to discuss promising workforce practices in the health care industry. The first summit focused on the needs of acute-care facilities; the second focused on the needs of long-term care facilities in the county. Workforce 2020, the PWDB outreach organization, funded these meetings and will continue to provide resources to sponsor similar community meetings to address health care issues.

Employers were initially reluctant to become involved with this project; historically, there was ill will among the top hospitals, in part because of a lack of trust and

the competition for workers. PWDB efforts to take on a leadership role paid off, and it was eventually able to convince the employers to come to the table together. Employers participated in focus groups, shared best practices, and provided feedback on training needs and related issues to the community college.

Staff reported that this project improved the relationship between the employers and the WIB because the employers saw the benefits of the project to their businesses. Findings from the labor market research, focus groups, and summits, as well as other feedback from the stakeholders, resulted in the recognition that local capacity for training was underutilized. This pointed to the need for additional resources to pay for training for nursing and allied health care programs, efforts to increase awareness of employment opportunities in the health care profession, and recruitment of needed employees.

As a result of the sectoral grant, PWDB was able to leverage nearly \$2 million in cash and in-kind resources to expand its community health care initiative, particularly in terms of resources for training. The U.S. Department of Education provided \$500,000 for a Collegiate High School Allied Health and Medical Academy, which enables high school students to earn a diploma while working toward an associate's degree in one of several health-related areas. Polk Community College committed \$212,000 in in-kind support. PWDB also partnered with the college's Allied Health Care Council to gain a commitment from local hospitals to provide funding (\$994,000) for a nursing recruiter and 30 nursing scholarships annually for three years, which is expected to double the number of nursing graduates. In addition, PWDB will award 15 scholarships (totaling \$42,000) to high school seniors interested in entering a health care occupation. PWDB also provided funds (\$26,000) for the development of a CD-ROM containing health care career information that will be distributed to all high school students in Polk County. Finally, PWDB has increased the individual training account (ITA) limits for health care training and education from \$5,000 to \$7,500 per student.

## Coordinating Resources to Address Target Population Needs

One area in which self-assessment is critical concerns the grantee's ability to address target population needs. As pointed out in chapter III, many grantees did not design their programs with work supports in place for those with serious or multiple barriers to employment. Workforce Development in *Rochester, MN*, is an example of how a grantee addressed the needs of a target population by building on its own organization's strengths and experience as well as collaborating with partners in the community.

### **Workforce Development, Inc., Rochester, MN: Addressing Needs of the Target Population to Develop Qualified Candidates for Employers**

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI), used its sectoral grant to develop an innovative program to address two significant workforce development issues facing its service area in Southeastern Minnesota: a shortage of workers for health care jobs and a huge increase in the region's immigrant population, particularly Somalis, Sudanese, and Hispanics.

The Mayo Clinic and several other local health care providers (nursing homes, hospitals, etc.) approached WDI for assistance in addressing the shortage of workers to fill health care positions. WDI staff also reviewed available labor market data and conducted surveys with about 50 local employers to verify the need for employees in the health care industry and gather information about specific issues related to recruitment, training, certification, and retention.

WDI recognized that a large supply of potential workers existed among individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP); however, administrators also recognized that these workers faced significant language barriers that necessitated various literacy services to help them obtain the required certifications for health care jobs and then get and retain the jobs. Staff at local colleges acknowledged the need for tutors and other resources to help LEPs pass the exams.

Because of WDI's extensive experience with ESL and literacy programs, in 2002 it was awarded a grant through IBM's Community Services Program to work with an interactive voice recognition instructional software program (Reading Partners) that helps LEPs improve their English comprehension and speaking

ability. The innovative software is tailored to teach words and concepts that are specifically associated with an occupation such as certified nurse assistant (CNA). WDI used the resources provided by this grant to support work on additional modules for this program. New Reading Partner modules focusing on health care concepts were developed to prepare entry-level health care workers to pass the CNA exam and to support the CNA skills training curriculum. CNA training sessions were held in several different formats for specific populations at WDI offices, at community colleges, and onsite at employer locations. For example, seven workforce literacy classes for TANF-eligible workers with limited English skills were conducted at two WDI locations. These classes provided job readiness activities as well as preparation for CNA training or work in entry-level jobs in environmental or dietary services.

WDI has developed a unique set of services (referred to collectively as "The Promise of Language") specifically designed to prepare LEPs for jobs in the health care industry. These services help LEPs identify career ladders and develop the language skills necessary to obtain and retain jobs, help employers understand the special cultural and language needs of these potential employees, and provide the occupational vocabulary, training tools, and comprehensive curricula that can help LEPs develop the communication skills required for success in the health care field.

WDI staff also identified cultural and language biases in many of the state health care certification exams and have led efforts at the state level to have these tests revised.

## Ongoing Reassessment and Changing Circumstances

One of the reasons sector programs in other contexts have generated strong employment outcomes and become known for their ability to serve the needs of employers is that they build in frequent opportunities to solicit feedback from both types of customers—businesses and program participants. That feedback enables program managers to make rapid changes to the programs when necessary. Midcourse corrections are usually made for one of two reasons: to keep training content in step with the changing skill needs of employers in the industry or to restructure a program when it becomes clear that participants are not successfully completing the program or acquiring the skills, attitudes, and behaviors that employers want and need. The sectoral demonstration projects included some excellent examples of how this feedback process works. *WSOS* used employer and participant input to improve both the structure and content of its training program. *Kirkwood* worked with employers on an ongoing basis to improve training and address other needs of employers.

**WSOS Community Action Commission:  
Retooling Training to Respond to Employer Needs**

WSOS Community Action Commission and the Ottawa County Improvement Corporation received an SED grant that was used to implement a training curriculum in marine mechanics for incumbent workers, dislocated workers, and new entrants. The area is on Lake Erie in Ottawa County, Ohio, and the partner organizations identified the marine trades as a critical industry to target because so much of the region's economic activity is linked to tourism and recreational boating activities.

Before the grant, the partners surveyed 150 local boat sales and service-related businesses in the region and indexed more than 480 marine-related services that these businesses provide. They were in the process of forming a Marine Trades Advisory Board to address shortages in qualified marine mechanics and retention issues related to the seasonal nature of the business. With the completion of a state-of-the-art facility (the Ottawa County Community Resource Center), the partners were able to persuade a major marine engine manufacturer (Volvo Penta) to relocate its training site from Chicago to this new facility, bringing over \$500,000 in materials and equipment for use by the trainees. Together with employers and the local Adult Career Center, the partners developed a curriculum and career ladder program leading to the Skills for Life Marine Trades Certification.

The 300-hour occupational skills curriculum would have been sufficient to give participants the certificate in marine mechanics to take to employers. However, the partners were encouraged by the employers and the community members who helped design the project to consider other factors in addition to job-specific skills that help individuals succeed and advance in the workplace. As a result, an intake and assessment phase was added to determine job readiness and educational levels and to identify any family needs that might lead to employment barriers and affect job readiness (e.g., dependency issues, transportation and child care needs).

Those in need of supportive services were referred to appropriate area service providers before proceeding with the training program. The skills training coursework was preceded by training in work ethic and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary boat safety. Red Cross CPR and First Aid training were also added to the program in response to feedback from employers.

Under the SED grant, 33 individuals enrolled in the program and 21 received a marine trades certification. All the graduates received scholarships from Volvo Penta to enroll in a weeklong specialty training course. More than half were still employed at six months, and 60 percent had received a wage increase. (These six-month figures do not include data for the third class.) Staff and employers felt that the program design was essentially sound and working well for the target population. Even so, the partners felt that ongoing feedback about what worked and what didn't would help them improve the program in the future. Staff followed up with participants, including those who dropped out.

Lessons learned through feedback from employers and participants were critical and led to changes in the program design as it has continued to serve new groups of students. For example, staff learned that training modules must be timed to coincide with the off-season for the marine industry. The first class started in late fall, when employees typically work overtime to prepare boats for winter storage; consequently, participants often found it difficult to make it to class on time. Because employers were reluctant to deal with employees' personal issues, a WSOS career counselor joined the team and worked with employees to address supportive service needs. The curriculum for the program was modified and updated throughout the life of the program in response to input from both participants and employers.

**Kirkwood Community College, Marion, IA:  
Employer Involvement in Continuous Improvement**

Kirkwood Community College in Marion, Iowa is the workforce agency for Iowa Workforce Development Region 10, a seven-county region including Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, as well as rural areas.

Under the SED grant, Kirkwood implemented a 12-week training course for call center customer service operators that runs from 9:30 to 1:30, Monday through Friday. The curriculum covers information about the call center industry, basic work skills (punctuality, goal setting, etc.), specific skills needed for customer service/tele-sales, and a job simulation/practicum. Participants also receive training on resume writing, interview skills, and job placement.

Six initial employer partners were actively involved in the design of the training. The training contractor worked with operations or human resources staff representing these employers to develop the preemployment curriculum. The results of each training are presented to the employer group, which meets quarterly. Employers give feedback to the training contractor about improvements to the training based on experiences with graduates hired. A number of changes and additions have been made in response to employer needs. For example, at first the trainers underestimated the need to prepare participants for the work environment, so these portions of the curriculum were expanded. To address the wide diversity in computer skills among the participants, they introduced hands-on computer activities earlier in the class.

Kirkwood runs 2-3 class sessions per year, depending on employer demand. Kirkwood calls employers regularly to see what they anticipate their hiring needs will be, and schedules classes accordingly. As the SED grant was ending, Kirkwood staff, WIB members, and the training contractor launched an improvement plan. They met one-on-one with five of the industry partners to see what

they thought of the program and how to improve the training. Some of the suggestions discussed included certifying that graduates have attained a certain typing/data entry speed and expanding the student visits to short-term internships. Kirkwood will use this information to make changes, to recruit additional employers, and to solicit contributions from employers to continue the program.

Kirkwood also initiated a leadership training course for program graduates who are employed in the call center industry. Employers wanted to keep a low profile and did not want to offer paid time off to workers attending the course because they did not want workers to think that the course would lead to a promotion. Again, Kirkwood responded to employer feedback by offering the course in the evening and emphasizing that the course is voluntary.

Employers also identified priorities for some related activities, including a retention study and an initiative to share information on call center technology. Responding to these suggestions, Kirkwood conducted a survey of retention rates of its graduates and compared it the general experience of companies. They found that retention of program graduates was the same as for employees hired from other channels. Differences in retention were associated very strongly with where a graduate was working rather than how well the graduate did in the training. This finding highlighted the need for companies to focus on their own practices in order to address retention issues. Kirkwood also conducted a study of the types of technology companies use in their call centers. They created an online database for companies to use in order to access this information. This has given the companies an understanding of who in the area is using what technology, and has been a reason for them to network and share information.

## **Developing and Supporting Career Ladders, Retention, and Advancement**

A number of grantees mentioned the importance of career ladders to attract workers to an industry, retain workers, and create a supply of new jobs at the entry level in periods of limited growth. However, addressing these structural aspects of industry employment requires a longer term vision and the ability to stick with an initiative over time, often by piecing together several grants and maintaining ongoing relationships with stakeholders. *Worksystems* was able to

develop an innovative tool for promoting career ladders and advancement because of its experience in the health care sector, its ongoing work with the same employer, and the delegation of tasks among the key partners.

**Worksystems, Inc.:**  
**Developing and Supporting Career Ladders, Retention, and Advancement**

Worksystems, Inc.(WSI), is the regional WIB serving the Portland, Oregon, area, including Multnomah, Washington, and Tillamook counties and the city of Portland. WSI serves as a convener, intermediary, and facilitator for new approaches and partnerships among employers, industry associations, and training providers. The SED grant—conducted in partnership with Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU), Portland’s largest employer, and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), which represents more than 4,000 workers at OHSU—was one of several WSI projects in the health care sector. Before receiving the SED grant, the same partners, supported by a grant from the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, implemented an onsite training program at OHSU for certified nurse assistants, certified medical assistants, and radiologic technologists.

WSI’s experience in the health care sector and its close working relationship with OHSU and AFSCME meant that the partners “hit the ground running.” Working with one large employer made it possible to be very specific in documenting skills needed for particular jobs and to tailor training curricula accordingly. The project targeted AFSCME-represented incumbent workers, especially entry-level workers in facilities, office, and IT job classifications at OHSU. Because of the slowdown in private-sector IT employment, experienced IT workers at OHSU were not leaving their jobs, and this limited advancement opportunities for entry-level workers. In response to this situation, the project focused more on training service workers for entry-level administrative positions and those in administrative positions for advancement in the administrative/office manager career tracks.

JobLink, an interactive web-based application, is a key component of the OHSU Career Center. Human resources representatives and managers from most departments at OHSU (including Administration, Facilities, Food and Nutrition, IT, and Patient Care) worked with AFSCME on career mapping (identifying job classifications within career tracks and linking them to skill sets, training requirements, and training providers). OHSU worked with AFSCME and with WSI’s web team to create JobLink. Job classifications within career tracks were identified, and each job was linked to skill sets, training requirements, and training providers.

Using JobLink’s Skills Explorer, workers answer a series of questions about their skills and interests, and JobLink matches their responses with positions at OHSU. JobLink indicates which jobs the person is 75 percent or 50 percent qualified for and the skills or further training the individual needs for the specific jobs. JobLink’s Jobs Explorer displays a career path in a selected job family. For example, for jobs in the administrative family, Jobs Explorer lists the job description, wage classification, and number of currently open positions at OHSU, as well as education, experience, and skill requirements for all jobs in the job family or for specific jobs selected by the worker. The Jobs Comparisons feature allows the worker to investigate the differences in required skills, education, and wages between his or her current job and other positions at OHSU.

The career center offers both classroom and online training courses. Many of the courses were custom designed for OHSU positions.

## **VI. Implications for Policy**

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### **Introduction**

With the completion of this study, the Department of Labor has documented the experiences, accomplishments, and lessons from three employment demonstration grant programs: the skills shortages demonstration (Padden and Hewat 2003), the incumbent worker demonstration (Teegarden et al. 2003), and now the sectoral employment demonstration. While each of these programs has a different focus and scope,<sup>16</sup> common threads run through them, and some of the policy implications we identify here are supported by the two previous studies. In this chapter, we discuss the role of WIBs, balancing multiple goals, time frames, accountability, grant funding, and capacity building and related policy implications.

### **Role of the WIB/Workforce Development System**

The SED program was based on an underlying hypothesis about the role of WIBs in sectoral interventions; specifically, that the WIB system can provide an appropriate institutional setting for planning and implementing sectoral initiatives and that a sectoral initiative can provide an opportunity to engage WIB members and staff in substantive ways. Chapter IV provides examples that support this hypothesis, although WIBs varied in the roles they played and in their level of involvement in the grants. While active WIB leadership can be valuable, WIB involvement that finds effective ways to help leverage and support sector efforts that are already under way or to be a catalyst for new ones is also beneficial.

### **Balancing Employer and Workforce Needs**

The sectoral employment demonstration, like the skills shortages and incumbent worker demonstrations, reflects a policy focus of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to develop a stronger link between the public workforce system and employer needs in the business/workplace environment. This demand-driven approach is considered “win-win” for workers with the requisite skills and for employers who need these skills to maintain economic competitiveness. The effort to balance employer and workforce needs presents challenges, however, and may threaten services to those most in need. In the economic downturn in which many of the sector projects found themselves, a reduced demand for workers resulted in either searching for the most qualified employees or training employers’ incumbent workers. In this situation, the public workforce system was especially challenged in its effort to serve the less skilled and disadvantaged.

<sup>16</sup> Skills shortages demonstration grants ranged from \$500,000 to \$2 million. Under the sectoral employment demonstration, formation grantees received a maximum of \$75,000 and implementation grantees were awarded up to \$150,000. Incumbent worker demonstration grants averaged \$879,000 each over a two-year period, and state system-building demonstration grants (also part of the skills shortages grant program) were \$50,000.

## **Time Frame**

Demonstration grants are, by definition, time-limited, but the appropriate time frames depend on the goals of the grant. For the formation grants, the reasonableness of a one-year grant period depended on the extent to which a core stakeholder group existed for the targeted industry. Thirteen (50 percent) of the formation grantees requested and received extensions of one to three months, and one grantee received a five-month extension. Although most of the grantees were able to prepare a strategic plan in the allotted time and most coalitions intended to continue to meet after their grants ended, grantees indicated that a longer grant period (such as 18 months) would have been better for developing collaborative relationships and planning.

Implementation grantees faced different challenges with their 15-month grants. (Eight, or 67 percent, of the implementation grantees requested and received extensions of three months, and two grantees received six-month extensions.) Start-up activities took longer than anticipated for some grantees. These activities included developing curricula, identifying training providers, recruiting training participants, and making physical site improvements. Some implementation grantees found that participants needed preemployment or remedial training before they could move on to the training classes developed under the demonstration grant.

Finally, the short time frames of the grants limit the ability to report outcomes. Some implementation grantees established or supported training programs and enrolled participants, but the grant ended before the participants completed training. For other grantees, participants completed training, but it was too soon to report employment outcomes or, for incumbent workers, job advancement or wage gains. Still other grantees addressed career ladders and long-term human resources practices in an industry, such as benefits, employer-sponsored training, and advancement. It was too soon to determine whether the sector projects will have a lasting influence on employer practices. Effecting such changes will require that the grantees, or their partners, stay with the initiatives for the long haul.

## **Accountability**

All SED grantees (formation and implementation) were required to identify specific measured outcomes pertaining to their project activities. Since grantees pursued a wide range of activities, outcome measures and the methods for documenting outcomes varied considerably. It is important to consider both readily quantifiable outcomes (such as number completing a training program) and more qualitative outcomes (such as whether the project promoted collaboration between employers and training providers). Since most of the grants were formation grants aimed at convening stakeholder groups and planning, these more qualitative outcomes are critical to understanding the accomplishments of the grantees. Project objectives addressed three key groups: participants; employers, and the broader stakeholder community.

### ***Outcomes for Participants***

Some formation grantees focused on forming coalitions, collecting and analyzing labor market data, and identifying employer needs. Beyond defining and identifying a target

population, providing participant services were beyond the scope of these projects. Some grantees, including both formation and implementation grantees, did conduct activities that addressed broad participant outcomes. For example, they designed print and media materials to introduce participants to an industry, produced directories to inform participants about training opportunities and training requirements, and developed training models that provide career ladders and/or advancement opportunities. While relevant grantee activities can be measured (e.g., informational materials produced, career fairs conducted), participant outcomes associated with these activities are much harder to define or measure and are not tracked by existing information systems. Thus, the participant outcomes that were identified are mostly anecdotal in nature. A few grantees were able to quantify outcomes such as the number of incumbent workers identified by employers for training, the number of training scholarships funded, the number of individuals who attended career fairs, expansion of training capacity (e.g., approval of new training programs at a community college), and the number of inquiries and number of participants who signed up for training.

As we discussed in chapter III, most of the implementation grantees included training initiatives and were able to provide some participant outcome data (see exhibit III-1). These data have some limitations, however. First, the extent to which such data can be accurately and fully reported varies by organizational setting and capacity. In collaborative grants like most of the SED grants, the grantee organization may have to rely on others to provide outcome data. Often participating organizations have different enrollment procedures, schedules, and data collection systems, which creates a problem in collecting complete and consistent information. One grantee (*Worksystems*) served a single employer, and all employer records were on a single data system, enabling the grantee to track training participation, job changes, and wage gains. The second limitation to participant outcome data is that the information is a “snapshot” for each grantee at a certain time. For some grantees, the snapshot was very early in implementation, so the number of participants may be small and it may be too soon to report graduates or job placements. While it is important to track and document participant outcomes as completely and consistently as possible and for as long as possible, we caution against relying on outcome statistics alone, because the SED grantees were involved in many other substantive activities that cannot be measured as readily.

### ***Outcomes for Employers***

Outcomes for employers included an increase in the supply of qualified workers, improved skill levels of workers, and improved access to customized training for their workers. Ultimately, employers sought improved productivity and reduced costs associated with turnover and training. Evidence of most of these outcomes is anecdotal; quantitative measures of improved retention and cost savings require a longer demonstration period. For formation grantees, simply involving employers in a stakeholder group that provided a forum for discussing employer needs with workforce development professionals, training providers, and others—such as economic development specialists, union representatives, and social service providers—was an important outcome for employers. In our assessment, all but one of the 26 formation grantees accomplished this goal. As demonstrated by many of the projects in this study, sector projects often build on previous efforts, so even those formation grantees that are not currently continuing

may have created a foundation for future work. Over 80 percent (10 of 12) of the implementation grantees increased the training options available in their community/region, a positive outcome for both employers and participants. Almost 60 percent (7 of 12) indicated that the project established new pipelines for workers in the industry, another benefit for employers.

Several grantees reported difficulty engaging employers in identifying and measuring outcomes. In some cases, the individuals involved in the stakeholder coalition were not directly involved in training or performance measurement for their companies. Sometimes employer outcomes had to be adjusted over the course of a project because of changing industry or local labor market conditions. For example, *Kirkwood* found that the number of workers needed by the participating employers changed. Also, after some experience with graduates of the training program, employers suggested improvements and modifications to the training. This constant feedback loop kept employers engaged and ensured that the training was responding to employer needs.

### ***Outcomes for Other Stakeholders***

The SED grants clearly included collaboration and systems change as part of their goals, and the grantees did report some outcomes for other stakeholders. Examples of such outcomes include bringing new partners together (16 of 38), creating stakeholder groups that crossed traditional divides of professions and disciplines (10 of 38), and crossing geographic boundaries (7 of 38). These outcomes are not readily measured, but the fact that 20 of 26 formation grantees said their coalitions will continue to meet after the grant ends is one indication of success. Almost half of the formation grantees (12 grantees) responded to a follow-up request almost two years after their grants expired, and all indicated that they are continuing or planning to do sector work. On a longer term basis, it might be possible to document outcomes such as the number of participants referred by the welfare agency, the extent to which training providers made changes or additions to their course offerings (and the scheduling of courses) in response to employer needs, and the development of solutions to geographic barriers to training or recruitment, such as transportation options and distance learning programs. As noted in the evaluation of the skills shortages demonstration, “The workforce system tends to look to job placement and wage replacement as key outcome measures for participants. For projects that attempt to build infrastructure, such as regional skills consortia, those outcomes are not likely to be realized during a one- or two-year project. It is possible to measure progress on creating the infrastructure that DOL hopes will lead to those outcomes.” (Padden and Hewat 2003, p. 4)

### **Resource Issues**

The SED grants were small and generally comprised less than 10 percent of a WIB’s budget. Nevertheless, WIBs found that the grants provided resources that would otherwise not be available for collaborative activities and that the award of a grant helped engage partners and staff. Grantee strategies and accomplishments were necessarily tailored to the small size and short-term nature of the grants.

### ***Flexibility of Funding***

Grantees found that the grant mechanism provided a flexible source of funding for activities such as meetings, collaboration, and information dissemination. Grantees had discretion to use grant funds in ways that best supported the objectives of the grant, including staff, contracted services, and purchase of curriculum materials.<sup>17</sup> Were it not for grant funds, many of these activities would have had to compete with ongoing program operations for limited administrative funds.

### ***Implementation Funding***

Grantees varied in their success in sustaining their projects: 20 of the 26 formation grantees are continuing their activities at some level, and 6 of these grantees have moved forward with implementation activities. Seven of the formation grantees reported receiving other grants, from state agencies, private foundations, or DOL. Formation grantees were disappointed by the lack of follow-on implementation funding under the sectoral employment initiative. Although an assurance of additional funding for implementation is desirable, it may not be possible. Technical assistance for implementation and sustainability planning, such as that provided by DOL, could continue to be helpful in this regard.

### ***Capacity of Small Grants to Leverage Change***

It is important to recognize the limitations of small grants and to set expectations accordingly. Effective sites focused on accomplishing specific pieces of a project. Most grantees (26 of 38) indicated that their activities built on or coordinated with previous efforts in the selected sector. This is a good strategy for making the most of a small grant, but it is hard to evaluate the outcomes of the sectoral grants because they are so intertwined with other WIB, employer, and community efforts. From a policy perspective, it is reasonable to view small grants as seed money to promote new collaborations; support effective ways to open lines of communication among employers, community colleges, and other stakeholders; and include WIBs in the mix of broader community initiatives. As noted in the evaluation of the incumbent worker demonstration projects, “Projects that used the demonstration grant to expand and deepen a strategic path already in place seemed best positioned to address start-up issues, effectively engage stakeholders—especially employers—and sustain the work of the project after the life of the grant.”(Teegarden et al. 2003, p. 4.)

## **Capacity Building**

The sectoral employment demonstration grant program did include some efforts to bring grantees together to share ideas and experiences. Several grantees noted that the August 2001 meeting (shortly after the grants were awarded) was a particularly helpful benefit of participating

<sup>17</sup> Implementation grantees that included participant training were required to allocate 30 percent to 40 percent of their grants to training and necessary supportive services costs. Sectoral demonstration grant funds could not be used to pay stipends or salaries to participants, acquire production equipment, or purchase real estate or buildings.

in the demonstration. It was noted, however, that more opportunities to meet and share experiences and ideas would have been useful. Some grantees are well integrated in the existing and growing network of groups involved in sectoral initiatives, while others are very new to this field and seek more information and guidance.

Fostering continued interaction among the grantees and other organizations involved in sectoral initiatives will build capacity by encouraging them to share best practices and establish a network of peers for ongoing consultations. Organizations involved in sector projects can then use this information to benchmark their own progress, identify effective strategies, and build support (both public and private) for their activities. This support is especially important because sectoral projects must continue beyond the grant period if they are to truly achieve success.

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## **Technical Appendix: Methodology**

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The study methodology was a process evaluation. Process or implementation evaluation focuses on how a program was implemented and operates. It identifies the procedures undertaken and the decisions made in developing the program. It describes how the program operates, the services it delivers, and the functions it carries out. Process evaluation addresses whether the program was implemented and is providing services as intended. However, by additionally documenting the program's development and operation, process evaluation assesses reasons for successful or unsuccessful performance and provides information for potential replication. (See [www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org](http://www.bja.evaluationwebsite.org))

**1. Understanding the demonstration design.** The project team reviewed the explicit and implicit goals and objectives of the sectoral employment demonstration (SED) and how these goals and objectives were translated into the SED's activities. This task included a review of documents related to the design of the demonstration and discussions with the Employment and Training Administration/Department of Labor (ETA/DOL) project officer for the sectoral demonstration grants.

**2. Review grantee files.** The project team reviewed grantee profiles, grantee plans and other documents posted on ETA's Sectoral Workspace on the Internet, and paper files available at ETA.

**3. Telephone discussions.** Telephone discussions were conducted with representatives of all 38 grantees during the period November 2002 through January 2003. Respondents were first identified through ETA's grantee contact list and updated information provided by the ETA project officer. Generally, discussions were held with the key staff person involved in the project, but additional discussions were held with WIB members, other stakeholders, and consultants, depending on the project. We spoke with an average of two respondents per project. Each telephone discussion lasted 45 minutes to an hour. Discussion guides were prepared that addressed the following topics:

- General/organizational background
- Target industry—selection process, description of industry
- Target population—selection process, recruitment, addressing needs
- Level of employer participation
- Training providers
- Stakeholder participation
- Role of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Role and type of staffing
- Goals/objectives
- Funding
- Future plans

**4. Site selection.** The purpose of the site visits was to provide additional detail and context to complement and illuminate the findings from the telephone discussions. For example, site visits typically include more interviews, with a broader range of respondents, than telephone

discussions. Furthermore, site visits provide an opportunity to observe interactions among key stakeholders, the physical setting of grant-related activities, and the role of the WIB and key industries in the community.

In selecting sites, our objective was to identify a sample that gave a picture of the variety of local experiences across the country, reflecting at least some of the diversity in status and strategies that characterize the SED grantees. The visits included some sites that seem to have been particularly successful, as well as some that have faced challenges and can offer lessons to others. Sites were selected to provide variation across the following key dimensions:

- Whether the site is an implementation or a formation grantee
- Geographic location (region of the country—eastern, southern, midwestern, western)
- Geographic area covered (single county, multicounty, state)
- Service area demographic characteristics
- Local economic conditions
- Setting—primarily urban, suburban, rural (to the extent such characterization is possible—most WIBs cover mixed settings)
- Industry targeted
- Level of WIB involvement
- Population(s) targeted

Site selection involved a three-step process: refining site selection criteria, arraying sites and relevant characteristics on a matrix, and selecting sites. After completing most of the telephone interviews, the project team met to discuss emerging themes and their implications for site selection. On the basis of this discussion, refinements were made to the site selection criteria. For example, target population was found to be of limited use in distinguishing among grantees, as most grantees targeted a broad range of dislocated workers, low-income populations, and entry-level workers. As an alternative, project team members were asked to note any sites that were unique with respect to target population. Unemployment rates were used as an indicator of the local economic climate during the grant period; both 2001 and 2002 rates were included, as some grantees reported significant changes over the grant period. One emerging theme was the variation in the sectoral approach among grantees. For example, some focused on an occupation rather than an industry; some focused on a range of skills; some addressed career ladder issues within an industry; some worked with a single employer; and some had broad industry representation. Another emerging theme was the influence of the WIB configuration and the level of WIB involvement—both members and staff. The sociodemographic and political contexts were deemed to be important for further exploration during site visits.

In addition to grantee characteristics, we made a particular effort to identify sites where a visit would “add value” to the project. Thus, for example, sites that were in hiatus because the grant had ended and additional funding was being sought were not deemed suitable candidates for a visit, especially if we had completed telephone interviews with the two or three remaining key staff of the project. On the other hand, grantees that had faced challenges but indicated that they had given some careful thought to their experiences and could be articulate in sharing their lessons with others were considered viable candidates for a site visit. A detailed site selection matrix was prepared that included grantee characteristics as well as interviewer comments for all 38 SED grantees. All project team members reviewed this matrix and made site visit recommendations. Exhibit A-1 shows the sites visited for the study.

While implementation grantees are overrepresented in the sample, they offer more to observe on a site visit. The sites offered diversity across the relevant characteristics identified in the study design and site selection process. Four sites are in the east, four are in the midwest, one is in the south, and three are in the west. Five sites include rural areas, and the others are urban or mixed urban/suburban. Sites reported a range of WIB involvement, from low (another agency has the lead role and the WIB’s role is minimal) to high (WIB members and staff have the lead role in the project). Industry sectors represented include health (7), biotech (1), customer services/call centers (1), electromechanical/technical (1), manufacturing (1), and marine trades/mechanics (1). The selected sites include programs targeting youth and immigrants, and they include regional as well as county-level efforts.

**Exhibit A-1: Sites Visited for the SED Evaluation**

Formation Grantees	Implementation Grantees
Mayor’s Office of Employment Development Baltimore, MD	Iowa Workforce Development Region 10 WIB/Kirkwood Community College Marion, IA
Cuyahoga County Workforce Development Cleveland, OH	Lancaster County WIB Lancaster County, PA
District of Columbia Workforce Investment Council Washington, DC	Pima County WIB Tucson, AZ
Northwest Workforce Development Council Bellingham, Washington	Workforce Development, Inc. Rochester, MN
Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc./Chesapeake Workforce Alliance Havre de Grace, MD	Worksystems, Inc. Portland, OR
Region 2000 WIB Lynchburg, VA	WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. Fremont, OH

**5. Conduct site visits.** Each site visit was conducted by an experienced field researcher who spent one to two days onsite. About one-third of the visits (particularly those within local travel distance from Washington, D.C.) were conducted by two researchers. The researchers used a modified version of the telephone discussion guide and conducted semistructured interviews with a wide range of respondents, such as One-Stop administrators, grantee staff, WIB members, employers, training providers (including community colleges), community organizations, business/trade organizations, unions, and corporate human resources representatives. The respondents varied from site to site, and interview questions were tailored accordingly.

**6. Analysis.** Data analysis was descriptive in nature, making use of primarily qualitative data. Initial categories for tabulating information were derived from the discussion guides and from our understanding of likely sources of variation in One-Stop partners, collaborative efforts, implementation barriers encountered, and other variables. The research team debriefed periodically to review preliminary findings and refine analysis categories. Using these categories, a series of spreadsheets was completed for cross-site analysis, documenting information on all 38 grantees.

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# EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

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## APPENDIX: SITE PROFILES

**FINAL**

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**FORMATION**

**GRANTEES**

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Anchorage/Mat-Su WIB (Alaska)

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** The project centers on the Greater Anchorage area, which is a mix of urban, suburban and rural. The total coverage area represents ½ of the state's population.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** August 2001-September 2002

***Industry Sector:*** This grant was proposed as a multi-sectoral "Consortium of Consortia" focusing on the common workforce development issues of the state's major industries. These include: Process Manufacturing, IT/Computer Sciences, Construction, Fish Processing, Health Care, and Hospitality. Unlike conventional sectoral initiatives, this grant project did not select a single industry or occupation on which to focus, however, DOL allowed them to proceed with a multiple-industry project. This does not seem consistent with the general approach to sectoral work in which organizations choose a particular industry or occupation on which to focus.

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Anchorage & Matsu WIB was the grantee for this project. The WIB coverage area contains over ½ of the state's population. The WIB contracted with the Alaska Hi-Tech Business Council (AHTBC) to manage and staff the grant.

***Key Partners:*** Two organizations were the primary partners for this grant. AHTBC is a statewide information technology industry association, and its activities include managing an information technology career consortium and promoting technology-based approaches to economic development. AHTBC hired the Alaska Process Industries Career Consortium (APICC) as a subcontractor to assist with this grant. APICC is a nonprofit organization that focuses on workforce development issues in the processing industry.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Because the WIB outsourced the project to AHTBC and allowed them to manage the grant in full, the WIB members were not highly involved with the grant. Some WIB members attended project meetings, received project reports and gave input on the overall direction of the effort, but the board did not provide oversight to the project. AHTBC asserts that those WIB members that were involved mostly used this project to facilitate business and personal networking.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** This grant did not target a specific industry or set of industries or occupations. Instead, it considered all of the state's major industries because Anchorage is the economic center of the state, and most of the state's major industries have a presence there. The project staff surveyed employers in a number of industries regarding their general labor skills demand, and they used federal labor market information. The staff asserted that the federal secondary data did not fully reflect the complexities of Alaska's economy; therefore they supplemented the federal data with data from state and local government, interviews, and surveys.

**Target Population(s):** This project was designed to target recent and rising high school and college graduates who may be starting their workforce participation in the state. AHTBC believes that Alaska is facing a "brain drain" in which younger workers are leaving the state to pursue better opportunities, leaving Alaska with an aging workforce. This grant was designed to explore these issues.

**Related Programs:** This project did not build off of existing or prior WIB programming. Instead, it fit within the framework of AHTBC's and APICC's continuing activities.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** For the most part, there was very little direct employer participation in this project. AHTBC engaged the staff of various industry trade associations that were members of the "Consortium." AHTBC staff – based on their experiences with industry firms - felt that the employers would not see the direct payoff of participating in this project. They also believed that most of the region's firms had only a general interest in workforce development issues. Additionally, AHTBC held that the state and regional business community takes an antagonistic or skeptical approach to the role of government in the private economy. As such, the project staff did not present this project to employers and chose to seek out the staff members of the nonprofit industry trade groups.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The stakeholders group was designed to include the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association Health Consortium, Alaska Human Resources Investment Council, Balance of State Workforce Investment Board (which covers the rest of the state outside of the Anchorage area), University of Alaska system, Alaska Vocational Technical Education Center, the Alaska Native Coalition for Education and Training and other state and local organizations and agencies. The project staff brought the organizations together via word-of-mouth, and they relied on pre-existing relationships among the staff at the various organizations to bring the groups onboard. The project staff reports that as the initiative progressed, these stakeholders were not very involved with it.

**Training:** The University of Alaska system, which includes all of the state's public higher-education institutions, was contacted to provide input about training, but no



## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Local Area 1 Workforce Investment Board for  
Aroostook/Washington Counties

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** A large rural area comprising the two northernmost counties in Maine,  
Aroostook and Washington Counties.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** August 2001- July 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Health

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The grantee and implementation agent for this grant was the  
Northern Maine Workforce Investment Board, which is housed within the  
County of Aroostook.

***Key Partners:*** The Northern Maine Development Commission (NMDC) and the  
Aroostook City Action program.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:***

The Board's role was described as providing leadership for the project. A new WIB Director came in during the course of the project, and he noted that the project was a priority for the WIB. Several members of the WIB joined the consortium group that the project created. Much of the research work and development of a strategic plan was accomplished by the key partners noted above, in cooperation with the WIB director. The WIB has collaborated with these organizations on other projects.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:***

The target industry for this grant was initially unspecified, but during the course of the grant the health sector was chosen. Within health, they targeted the occupations of certified nurses assistant (CNA), personal care attendant (PCA), nurse (primarily LPN), and some of the allied health professions such as x-ray technician. The project considered both acute care and long-term care settings for the targeted occupations.

***Target Population(s):*** The target population was broadly defined to include low-income, displaced and unemployed or underemployed individuals. Respondents estimated the total population of the two counties at 110,000 and note that

this population is spread over a land area roughly four to five times the state of Rhode Island. Thus they generally do not define their target population too narrowly.

**Related Programs:** n/a

**PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:***

The project began to engage employer's interest through its research phase, and respondents noted that these employers were helpful in bringing other employers to the table. The project engaged both CEOs of hospitals and heads of nursing homes. Respondents found engaging the employers surprisingly straight forward, and speculated that it might be because the project was clearly designed to address their felt workforce needs. Respondents also noted that the employers did not resist cooperating with one another, and hypothesized that the geographic dispersion of the institutions, which lessens the degree to which they compete with one another, might have facilitated this cooperation. As the project moved toward its implementation phase at the close of the grant, employers offered to match funds raised from other sources in support of the project, up to between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:***

In addition to employers and training providers, the stakeholder group included the regional economic development agency and a community action agency. The stakeholder group worked together in determining the priorities for the project.

***Training:***

The project involved the presidents of the two local university system colleges, the president of the local technical college, and some other adult education providers. One respondent stated that they had essentially all the training providers represented. Respondents stated that cooperation among the training providers was quite good, and noted that LPN courses from the technical college now transfer to the university for credit in the RN program. Respondents noted that training capacity for nurses was sufficient, but that specialty areas continue to be a struggle. As a result of this project, the university has established a lab technician program, and the technical school is exploring offering a radiation technician program.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** n/a

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The program is seeking funding for implementation. The program brought together a diverse coalition and at the close of the planning phase all consortium members signed on to an eight point strategic plan. Respondents noted that some of the success of this coalition was in facilitating a dialogue among employers and between training providers and employers. At the time of the interview the consortium had formed an education committee to inventory the types and amount of healthcare training available locally, an employer group to identify precisely the skills they need and the training required to fill open positions, and a funding group to develop resources in support of the project.

***Innovative Practices:*** Consortium members began working with the University of Southern Maine on a distance learning project to offer training in specialty areas that are not available locally.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** n/a

***Job Placements:*** n/a

***Future Plans:*** Project organizers were exploring a number of avenues in their efforts to raise funds for implementation. Respondents also noted that they had found the sector approach useful, and hope to apply it to other sectors.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Baltimore, MD

***Geographic Area Served:*** Urban area within large metropolitan region

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** September 1, 2001 – August 31, 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Biosciences

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Baltimore WIB is part of the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED). There are two mayoral staffers whose primary responsibilities are WIB-related projects, and these individuals managed the sector grant. In addition, two consultants were hired to work on the project's research and to convene meetings among industry employers and the other stakeholders.

***Key Partners:*** The key partner was the Baltimore Biosciences Coalition (BBC). The BBC is a group of community and business leaders – separate from the WIB but inclusive of several WIB members - that was convened to work on industry-related issues with employers and others involved in the industry.

#### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WIB members were very involved with this project. They helped develop the project's goals, set its direction, and they helped leverage their professional connections to develop the industry coalition. The staff reports that the WIB members were more involved with this project than on other projects. Because bioscience was targeted as a major growth industry to which resources should be directed, the project was on the WIB's monthly meeting agenda.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The project targeted the biosciences industry and looked primarily at entry-level jobs that only require a high school diploma or GED. The staff based their work on employment projections that predict that the regional bioscience industry will have nearly 8,000 jobs available once the region's two major biotechnology park projects are completed. The staff noted that there was tension among the WIB members around the targeted industry/job issue because the business representatives were looking for long-term industry growth strategies, while non-business members were concerned about near-term job placement opportunities.

***Target Population(s):*** The target populations were youth workers and low-income persons. In particular, the project targeted residents of Baltimore's federal Empowerment

Zone. Because of the city's high concentration of poverty, the WIB was looking to create an industry pipeline through which disadvantaged workers can access stable jobs that provide growth opportunities. They also wanted to provide a vehicle through which employers can access qualified, willing workers in the city.

**Related Programs:** MOED and the WIB have developed and managed Welfare-To-Work, ex-offender, and low-wage worker programming.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Employers were engaged through the Baltimore Biosciences Coalition, and one employer was a WIB member. The staff reports that the employer representatives were mostly senior-level executives at the bioscience companies, and they feel that the business representatives were actively engaged. However, some employers questioned the political dynamics of the initiative and did not feel fully informed about the goals of the project.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Other stakeholders included local economic development organizations, the public school system, local universities and community – based organizations such as the East Baltimore Development Corporation, the Greater Baltimore Alliance, and the Job Opportunities Task Force.

**Training:** The project was not designed to develop a specific training curriculum; it was designed as a planning process to assess the industry's needs. It also sought to link workforce development to the mayor's economic development agenda. However, there was some confusion among BBC members as to whether developing training resources should have been an outcome of this grant. Through BBC meetings, the project staff became aware of Biotechnology Institute (BTI). BTI is a local nonprofit organization that trains low-income, low-skilled workers for entry-level employment and matches those workers with jobs in the biosciences industry. Local foundations and the industry provide funding for the organization. The project staff concluded that BTI has sufficient capacity to meet the current training needs of the industry and that the organization is positioned to carry out any future training should the need arise. Because the demand for entry-level bioscience labor is currently lower than the potential supply of workers, no training was planned. The project also noted that most in-demand employment opportunities in then industry currently require at least bachelors or graduate degrees and thus are beyond the reach of the target population.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** MOED and the WIB jointly employ a staff liaison that works onsite with the Baltimore Development Corporation – the city's major economic development organization. This person works to incorporate workforce development activities into the city's economic development initiatives. MOED/WIB had done a skills grant in health care that worked on career development and curricular issues.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** The staff feels that this project met its original objectives as a planning effort, and they do not plan to implement a new bioscience training effort at this time since industry demand is low and BTI can easily satisfy current needs. The WIB has shifted its attention to organizing a network of human resource executives in the biosciences industry to help the WIB address industry issues and to build a community among the businesses in the industry.

**Innovative Practices:** None

**Participation and  
Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** N/A

**Job Placements:** N/A

**Future Plans:** The WIB is applying the lessons that they learned about taking a sectoral approach to its work, and they are considering sector projects in other industries.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), Boston, MA.

***Geographic Area Served:*** The project serves the city of Boston.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** July 1, 2001- June 31, 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Boston PIC, Boston's WIB, was the grantee and PIC staff ran the project.

***Key Partners:*** The PIC contracted the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University to provide labor market research and to conduct a job vacancy survey for the project. This research was important for establishing the framework from which the staff approached working with the other stakeholders and the target population.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The WIB members used their healthcare industry connections to assist the project staff with recruiting employers, particularly those in the acute care industry. Several WIB committees included health care employers that were not WIB members. The staff reported a high level of interest among WIB members in working on healthcare sector projects because the industry is a significant part of the local economy. Since the conclusion of the project, several health care industry representatives have joined the WIB, and this is something that the staff attributes directly to the sector project.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care was the target industry for this grant, and the PIC defined the industry and occupations broadly. However, the project tended to focus on larger healthcare institutions, such as hospitals. The staff used the grant to learn more about the industry and occupations and to help the PIC form stronger relationships with local healthcare institutions.

***Target Population(s):*** The project research showed that the immigrant population represented the bulk of labor force growth in the region, while the native-born population is declining, leading the staff to conclude that immigrants and incumbent workers were the best target for long-term job growth in the regional health care industry. The research also indicated that incumbent workers in the healthcare industry faced educational barriers and poor academic preparation that inhibited their abilities to advance in their careers. The research showed that workers in the immigrant community faced language deficiencies that needed to be overcome so that they could fulfill their labor market potential.

**Related Programs:** The PIC managed other grants in healthcare prior to and during the same period as the sector grant. The PIC received two grants from DOL - the Regional Skills Shortage grant and an H-1b grant – that they used for work in building career ladders in nursing, medical imaging, pharmacy technician and surgical technician professions. The PIC administers a DOL-funded project called the Incumbent Health Care Worker Training Collaborative that provides a source of funding for training and career ladder programs for entry-level workers.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The primary employers involved were New England Medical Center, New England Baptist Hospital, Partners HealthCare System, Children’s Hospital, and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. The PIC worked with several trade and industry associations, the Massachusetts Extended Care Federation, the Paraprofessional Health Care Institute (an organization dedicated to improving employment opportunities in the long term care industry), the Home and Health Care Association of Massachusetts, and the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, to get information about the workforce needs of employers in these sectors. The staff also utilized their personal and professional networks to develop contacts among the local health care employers. The employer representatives consisted mostly of human resources executives, and several of them participated in activities with the WIB’s workforce committee.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The PIC staff worked with local unions, such as Service Employees International Union, and with community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve the city’s immigrant and low-income population.

**Training:** As a formation grant, this project did not involve training activities. The staff recruited the city’s largest health care training providers, such as community colleges and customized training organizations, to participate in planning and research activities. As part of this grant, the PIC sought to develop relations with trainers with whom they had not worked with previously. All of the providers were asked to make their students accessible to the project staff for input on trainee experiences. The staff reports that the project’s labor market research was seen as a value-added service for the training programs could use, and it was considered a reward for their participation in the project. The staff felt that the trainers were helpful to the project’s survey and that the communications with the trainers helped the PIC staff reflect on their efforts.

### **Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** The PIC has previously worked on workforce development projects and issues in health care. The staff has managed incumbent worker grants, developed programs that link local high schools with businesses to generate work opportunities, and managed healthcare-related projects connecting employers and adult workers. The PIC currently runs a program that works to provide high school students interested in health care careers with high school and paid work experiences that help them to connect their academic skills

with workplace skills and develop relationships with adult health care workers.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** This project represented a small portion of the WIB budget, but the staff felt that the process was useful. The project will continue in some form with a dedicated staff person working part-time on it. The staff does not feel that they were able to dedicate enough staff resources to the grant because of employee attrition and budget cutbacks, which slowed down the work and limited what they could achieve. This lack of staff resources was seen as the biggest challenge.

***Innovative Practices:*** The staff engaged in critical self-analysis and reflection to assess the challenges and opportunities for the effort. Based on this assessment, they developed an estimate of the cost and resource needs for a full rollout of a sectoral effort, including the associated fundraising costs. The staff reports several key lessons that they learned about working with employers. They believe that it is necessary to be clear and consistent with information requests from business and to fully explain intentions. The PIC feels that they should make the businesses' participation sensible, flexible and appropriate, and they should be certain that there is a good fit between the project and an employer in order to foster a long-term relationship.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A  
***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** The staff has developed a formal fundraising plan and is in the process of implementing it.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

- Grantee:*** Capital Region Workforce Development Board, Raleigh, NC
- Geographic Area Served:*** The project centers on Wake and Johnston counties in North Carolina, a medium-size metropolitan area.
- Grant Type:*** Formation
- Grant Period:*** August 1, 2001- July 31, 2002
- Industry Sector:*** Health Care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Capital Region Workforce Development Board, the WIB, was the grantee for this project and the WIB staff managed the grant.

***Key Partners:*** The WIB staff worked primarily with a newly formed local health care industry coalition, the Capital Area Health Care Coalition (CAHCC). This organization serves as a liaison between the WIB and the industry, and it was formed prior to this grant. The WIB hired a team of consultants to do the project research and to help guide the planning processes of the project.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** A number of health care training providers are on the WIB, and the staff reports that those members used their industry connections to help bring healthcare employers to the project. The WIB members were involved with project planning, and the staff provided them with periodic updates on the project's progress. Several board members from other industries offered to help the staff develop contacts in the health care industry by using their connections in the local business community.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The project team spent several months researching industry reports and analyzing data in order to determine what the area's growth occupations would be for the coming decade. The research included analysis of economic and demographic trends and projections of future health care needs. Key sources included reports from the American Hospital Association and the NC Nursing Association. The project team also carried out interviews and focus groups with employers, trainers and workers. Based on this research, they determined that the demand for health care workers was expected to increase despite the general economic downturn and declines in other industries. The project focused on those occupations that demonstrated significant, immediate or continuing worker shortages. Nursing, medical assisting, and imaging technology positions were identified as having worker shortages, strong job growth projections, and potential opportunities for developing career ladders.

***Target Population(s):*** This project initially focused on dislocated manufacturing and technology workers along with two underrepresented minority groups, African Americans and Latinos, with the intent of developing a long-range plan for the

recruitment of new workers into health care careers. However, the project staff and stakeholders shifted the focus away from dislocated workers and onto secondary school students who would be entering the workforce in the coming years. Dislocated workers were initially targeted due to the increased layoffs in other sectors, but the project team determined that this group needed services other than targeted recruitment. The WIB felt that the rapidly growing Latino population and the area's large black populations were not represented well in local health care industry employment and that these groups needed opportunities for increased economic self-sufficiency. As the project progressed, the research indicated that minority adults faced significant long-term barriers to entering the healthcare workforce such as cultural, language and education gaps. Feedback from project focus groups highlighted the need to attract younger African Americans and Latinos in order to impact their long-term career choices; the youth were also seen as having lower barriers than the adults, potential providing them with better chances at advancing up healthcare career ladders. Therefore, the project team shifted the focus away from dislocated workers and onto middle and high school students who would be emerging in the workforce in the coming years.

**Related Programs:** The WIB has funded previous programming for low-income workers, minority, and dislocated workers. The WIB oversees the area's One-Stop centers.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The primary employers involved with this project were the major hospitals and medical centers in the area - Wake Med, Rex Healthcare, and Johnston Memorial Hospital. The staff reported difficulty in getting long-term care facilities to participate due to the difficult financial and management situations at these facilities. CAHCC links the leading employers in the region, and it served as the primary vehicle for employer stakeholders. The employers financially supported the coalition, participated in focus groups, and helped with the collection of "best practice" healthcare workforce information.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The employer coalition suggested using existing professional associations and networks to develop the coalition effort, and the staff did outreach to the NC Nursing Association, NC Hospital Association, and the local Allied Health Education Center. The staff also engaged the local workforce training agencies, One Stop Career Centers, chambers of commerce, public schools, and public health agencies to gather information and get input to assist with managing the project. The staff brought the trainers, employers, and other stakeholders together in order to build relationships that will serve as the foundation for pursuing future workforce development initiatives in the sector.

**Training:** Developing a specific training curriculum was not the goal with this project. The WIB wanted to develop stakeholder coalitions, build industry-based workforce partnerships, and the members wanted to identify the key healthcare workforce issues for the region. The staff engaged three of the area's training providers, Johnston Community College, Wake Technical

Community College, and The Learning Curve Plus (a private company), but no training curriculum was created.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** The WIB now serves as an intermediary between the local industry and the community on general workforce development matters.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** This program is an ongoing effort. The WIB supports a sector-based approach in its health care work by looking at disadvantaged workers and industry needs. The staff feels like the original grant objectives were met.

***Innovative Practices:*** The project staff made a strategic decision to reevaluate its selected target population – dislocated workers and black and Latino adults - after assessing that these groups faced barriers to work that required more resources that the WIB was able to expend. The WIB decided that shifting to black and Latino youth entering the workforce represented a better long-term approach to diversifying the local health care workforce.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** As a result of the health care sector project, the WIB is considering adopting a sectoral strategy as their operating framework for future work. The WIB is seeking to leverage additional resources to continue gauging the industry’s needs over time. The WIB will continue to work on healthcare projects and has identified health care as an “industry of choice” for workers in the region.

**EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE**

**Grantee:** Capital Area Workforce Development Board (WIB), Austin, TX

**Geographic Area Served:** One-county Urban Area

**Grant Type:** Formation

**Grant Period:** July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002

**Industry Sector:** Financial Services

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**Administrative Structure:** The Capital Area Workforce Development Board (the WIB) was the grantee for this project. The WIB has incorporated itself as a non-profit, named WorkSource, in order to centralize their programs and develop a brand for their work that will appeal to businesses and workers. The WIB staff ran the project.

**Key Partners:** The Capital Area Training Foundation (CATF) was the primary partner on this grant. CATF is a local workforce intermediary organization that links private employers with local schools, community-based organizations and local governments to leverage resources for regional workforce initiatives in a variety of industries. CATF is located in the same building as the WIB and works very closely with the WIB staff.

**Role of the Workforce Investment Board:** WIB members were involved in providing input and attending project meetings. The board members generally are not involved with setting goals for specific projects, and they focus on setting the goals for overall WIB activities. Therefore, their interaction on this project was limited. The members had encouraged the staff to build off pre-existing workforce development efforts in the community, therefore the staff linked this project to the Great Austin @ Work initiative. Greater Austin@Work is a public-private partnership that hosts an annual, industry-based summit that includes over 200 employers. Its purpose is to discuss and address issues regarding the regional labor force. The WIB is one of the sponsors of the event along with industry associations and organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** The project targeted Teller positions with Banks and Credit Unions. At the 2001 Greater Austin@Work event, a group of banks, credit unions and other firms in the sector decided that the industry needed to devote more attention to workforce development, and the idea for a financial service sector project was the outgrowth of this effort. The companies had a significant demand for entry-level employees, and they needed to hire new workers in order to respond to business growth.

**Target Population(s):** The project focused on dislocated workers, high school graduates, Welfare-to-Work participants, and the unemployed.

**Related Programs:** The WIB is also responsible for developing and funding regional childcare initiatives and welfare-to-work initiatives.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The WIB staff applied for the grant, and after it was awarded, the project staff, via CATF, contacted most of the area's banks, credit unions, and investment firms for participation. They were able to actively engage seven companies, and the companies sent human resources directors and senior front-line managers as representatives. The seven specific employers were targeted for future training projects, and the project staff made several attempts to recruit new employers into the project.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Other project stakeholders included the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, local government officials, the public school districts, the local community colleges and university business schools. The staff also met with community-based organizations (CBOs) and worked on a plan to formally bring them into the project. However, at the conclusion of the grant period, the CBOs were not on-board.

**Training:** Because this was a planning grant, no actual training took place. Representatives from the local K-12 system helped craft the curriculum for future training, and the school system sent teachers to the banks and credit unions for job shadowing with tellers in order to create a training program that fit the needs of the employers. The WIB staff structured the training development portion of the project in a way that would bring the various educational institutions together to face common problems and to foster networking. The staff believes that there is sufficient training capacity to meet any future training needs for this sector.

#### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** The WIB continues to sponsor Greater Austin @ Work and partner with CATF.

### **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** During the course of the project, a dialogue began between education providers and employers in the finance industry. However, virtually all respondents noted that the economic downturn reduced demand for tellers, reducing the need for the project. Additionally, the public schools system faced financial uncertainty, and the budgeted funding that was provided for the curriculum developers and trainers was eliminated, further eroding any viability of the project. The result is that this project is not being continued. Despite this, the WIB reports that the project has encouraged connections and built relationships among the education providers, industry employers, and other partners that could provide the foundation from which to build a future financial services sector initiative if the local economic and industry outlooks improve.

***Innovative Practices:*** There were no innovative practices developed that were the direct result of the finance industry sector project.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** The WIB has contacted the National Network of Sector Partners to connect with other financial services sector projects so that they can share their experiences with the project with other organizations attempting work in the financial services industry. The WIB is considering collaborative partnerships with a sectoral focus in other industries that may provide more opportunities for workforce development and job opportunities.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** County of Atlantic/Atlantic Cape May WIB

***Geographic Area Served:*** Atlantic and Cape May counties, New Jersey

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 8/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Hospitality Industry

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Overall direction of this project was provided by the Executive Director of the WIB and day-to-day operations were managed by a strategic planner/program executive on loan from the Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC). Other consultants were hired to collect and analyze labor market data and environmental factors and trends, to conduct focus groups, and to organize and assist with logistical arrangements for the job fair.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the Atlantic Cape May WIB, key partners included Atlantic Cape Community College, the Center for Regional Business Research, (CRBR), staff from other Southern New Jersey WIBs and HR staff from the targeted industry.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WIB Board (45 members), which is primarily involved in this sectoral project through the Economic Development Committee and its industry specific subcommittees, has been very supportive of this initiative. Four casinos have representatives on the WIB and the president is a private employer in the tourism industry. After the initial sectoral work in the hospitality industry, representatives from both the retail and health care industries approached the WIB about initiating similar efforts in their sectors.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Hospitality industry – specifically entry-level jobs in the Atlantic City casino/hotel industry. The Atlantic Cape May WIB had worked with other Southern New Jersey WIBs, Southern New Jersey Community College presidents, and Human Resources directors from area casinos to address the critical labor shortages in their industry. Under this grant, the WIB hired the Center for Regional Business Research (CRBR) to perform a labor market review and analysis to identify issues affecting

labor demand and supply and to complete an environmental scan, or analysis of environmental factors, constraints and trends impacting the industry. Data collected from meetings with human resources professionals and managers, staff from area WIBs and the New Jersey Department of Labor also helped to define the target population and the geographic areas. Twelve focus groups were held with members of the targeted population that provided information and feedback from these potential workers on issues related to wages, transportation and beliefs about the industry. Individual and group meetings were also conducted with senior managers of HR departments and CEOs in the industry. Finally, project staff visited similar hospitality models in Nevada and California to learn more about collaborative sectoral initiatives.

**Target Population(s):** Dislocated workers, incumbent workers in need of skills upgrade to retain jobs and advance toward self-sufficiency, new entrants to the labor market, seniors/retirees, and seasonal workers.

**Related Programs:** Atlantic Cape May Community College and a nine-member casino-hotel consortium had leveraged \$1.9 million in New Jersey Department of Labor customized training dollars for skills development, literacy enhancement and job specific skill competency identification prior to receipt of this grant. In addition, over \$2 million in state and local funding created Atlantic City First (ACF) a readiness and literacy program for moving unemployed into entry-level positions. A community audit was also completed in April 2002.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** While casino employers initially expressed interest in the sector project, project staff worked most closely with CEOs from two of the smaller casinos. Unfortunately, the CEO who was the primary supporter and lead spokesperson for the initiative left for another job and staff were unable to locate a replacement for that role. Additionally, there was a great deal of turnover at the upper management levels as well as competition and mistrust among the employers and between the employers and the unions. Human Resources managers and staff were very interested in this project but project staff found that these individuals did not generally have the authority to make the required commitments for such a project. In the end, the CEO-led Casino Association indicated that they were not interested in pursuing the Atlantic City Partners Model as presented by project staff.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** In addition to the key partners listed above, other stakeholders included other Southern New Jersey community colleges, local unions, New Jersey Department of Labor staff, members of the New Jersey Legislature and other public officials.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided. However, the Atlantic City Partners Model called for short-term pre-placement training (e.g., job readiness) as well as post-placement training (e.g., job retention training). Local unions are now considering using this model for training for hospitality industry jobs.

**Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided.

Project staff did pilot the marketing component of the model by sponsoring the Atlantic City Partners Job Fair. This was a follow-up to increased interest in hospitality industry jobs resulting from Spanish-speaking media coverage of training programs that placed formerly unemployed adults in entry-level jobs. Atlantic Cape Community College and the WIB followed up with PSAs, additional broadcasts and internet announcements publicizing this industry-wide event which was attended by 217 individuals.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** While project staff were not able to gain the support of key industry leadership for pursuing the Atlantic City Partners model, ongoing efforts have continued. A presentation on the model was made to the top executives of the Atlantic City Casino Association. Collaborative efforts with the local union have explored the possibility of establishing of a benefit training fund to provide some of the services proposed under the model as well as a regional marketing training, placement and incumbent worker skill upgrade plan in the hospitality industry. The latter includes possible creation of an industry One-Stop in partnership with the WIB that would provide training and job placement services.

**Innovative Practices:** Although project staff were unable to implement their proposed sector model in the hospitality industry, they have built on their efforts to promote collaboration among key stakeholders. They are moving to use sector strategies to address labor supply needs and workforce development needs in other industries.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** N/A  
**Job Placements:** N/A

**Future Plans:** See above. Project staff are now pursuing similar sector work in other area industries in order to diversify and to find other means to improve worker wages and skill levels, and to narrow the growing income gap

between Atlantic and Cape May counties and the rest of the state. Other sector efforts are under way in both the health care and retail industries.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** County of Union – New Jersey

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** Union County, New Jersey – includes Elizabeth, Lyndon, Rahway and Plainfield and 17 smaller cities.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Printing and graphics

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This grant was managed by two staff in the Office of the Director of Human Services of Union County, which is the administrative entity for the Workforce Investment Board (WIB).

***Key Partners:*** The key partnership for this grant was formed between Union County and Union County College (UCC), specifically between the Office of the Director of Human Services of Union County and the Office of the Dean of Economic Development and Continuing Education. A full-time staff person devoted to this project was shared by the partnership. Other partners included the Industry Advisory Group, Kean University (a four-year institution) and the Union County Economic Development Corporation.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WIB Board, which serves primarily as a policy advisory board, played only a minor role in this sectoral project. Overall, Board members were “interested but not involved.” At the time of the interviews, the WIB Board was experiencing a period of major transitions; the membership of the Board was changing and new leadership was emerging. Interest in looking more closely at industry sectors and clusters was developing, and it was expected that the Board’s involvement in similar projects could greatly increase in the future.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs*** Printing/graphic arts industry. About three years prior to this project, the county had commissioned a study that identified a mix of 9-10 service and manufacturing target industries with competitive wages that were expected to grow in terms of number of firms and employees. The

printing and graphics sector was selected for intervention because it was felt that it was an easily defined sector that they could “get a handle on” and that it was an industry they could impact in the short-term.

**Target Population(s):** The target population broadened and expanded as the project evolved. Originally, the focus was on enhanced training for incumbent workers to upgrade skills but this widened to include the general population; specifically, new entrants/young people who might be unaware of potential opportunities in this field or others interested in making career changes.

**Related Programs:** Union County had conducted background research and selected a target industry sector prior to receipt of this grant. Staff reviewed national and local economic data and held a series of focus groups with employers to gather more information about the industry and the needs of employers.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Employers were initially recruited for participation in this project through a mass mailing and follow-up phone calls extending an invitation to participate in focus groups. Those who did respond and participated in the focus groups were interested and recognized the benefits of the project; over time, there were about seven key employers who were committed to the project. These employers became the core of the Industry Advisory Group.

Some employers were reluctant to participate; staff attributed this to several factors. Many of the printing/graphics companies were small and were unwilling to commit their limited time and/or resources to such a project without concrete evidence that there would be positive outcomes for their businesses. There was also a fair amount of fear and distrust of working with competitors and a reluctance to participate in efforts to bring more even more competitors into the region.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** In addition to the partners listed above, other stakeholders included industry trade associations, other local economic development organizations, technical schools, the New Jersey Department of Labor and the New Jersey Commerce and Economic Growth Commission.

**Training:** A printing and graphics arts sector academy offering a cluster of relevant courses through the Continuing Education department of the Union County College was developed (with industry input) and piloted during 2002 and 2003 and was being revised for the Fall 2003. While the number of students in the initial classes was fewer than hoped, some participants received technical certification in the field.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The Industry Advisory Committee continues to meet on a regular basis. There are also plans to host a number of networking events to increase awareness of the industry, including college programs to expose teens to potential careers in the industry, industry internships and summer youth employment in printing and graphics firms. Currently, additional funds are being sought to develop and provide customized training for this sector.

***Innovative Practices:*** Directors of the partnership formed for this project felt that their objective was to “link economic development and educational development planning and implementation for workforce development” for this industry.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** The grantee continues to seek additional resources from the WIB and foundations to fund implementation of the objectives of the strategic plan.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Cuyahoga County Workforce Investment Board

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** The Cleveland-Akron Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) which includes 8 counties in Northeast Ohio (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Median, Portage, Summit)

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Cuyahoga Workforce Investment Board was the recipient of the grant but day-to-day management of project operations was the responsibility of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association (GCGA), the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the GCGA, key partners included the Center for Health Affairs (the trade association for the region's Healthcare organizations), charged with responsibility for identifying and recruiting employers to participate in the Northeast Ohio Health Care Coalition and two consultants who were tasked with conducting one-on-one interviews, focus groups and surveys with employers and past and potential employees in the Healthcare field.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Overall, the role of the WIB Board was limited to project oversight and feedback on reports. Project staff reported directly to the Board's Incumbent Worker subcommittee; regular reports were made to that groups and information was passed on to the full Board as needed. Staff reported that the Board was "in transition" at the time of this project.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health Care. Prior to receiving this grant, GCGA had conducted related work in other economic development cluster areas (e.g., biomedical, manufacturing, insurance and information technology) and had started to focus on the critical Healthcare needs in the region. Northeast Ohio is home to three major regional hospital systems and the Healthcare industry employs 16-17% of the workforce. Staff collected available labor market information and conducted one-on-one interviews and focus groups with a wide variety of area Healthcare employers to

collect more information about key workforce and training issues in the industry – e.g., identification of specific positions with the most pressing needs for recruitment and retention, types of skills and training/certification needed and availability of training resources in the area. Focus groups conducted with over 300 current and potential healthcare workers (including displaced workers, students and unemployed) on the image of the profession, barriers to employment, etc. helped frame and contrast the data provided by employers.

***Target Population(s):*** Incumbent workers, dislocated workers, retired workers, economically disadvantaged workers and new entrants (including High School students)

***Related Programs:*** The Center for Health Affairs had created a CHA Health Career Guide, a resource that provides useful information to counselors and career placement advisors. They also coordinate the Northeast Ohio Nursing Initiative (NEONI) and hope to create a Nurse Resource Center..

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** While many Healthcare employers had already been meeting to discuss critical issues in their industry prior to this grant, one of the products of this grant was the creation of the Northeast Ohio Health Care Coalition, a group of regional stakeholders charged with developing a strategic plan to address the employment crises in the Healthcare industry. Employers participating in this group were, for the most part, identified and recruited by the Center for Health Affairs and included representatives from a variety of types of employers – e.g., hospitals, long-term care facilities, home health care, professional care, etc.

Employers participated in one-on-one interviews, provided feedback and input as needed, reviewed reports and findings and facilitated access to their staff.

Staff reported that employers were very interested in and enthusiastic about this project; securing their participation was not viewed to be a challenge. Staff also felt that the fact that employers who were competing for workers were willing to come to the table together to discuss these issues was an indication of how critical the healthcare crisis had become.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** In addition to employers, the Northeast Ohio Health Care Coalition included among its members representatives of community colleges, four-year colleges, labor, unions, local workforce development agencies and the WIB. The strategic plan notes that more than 350 stakeholders were involved through one-on-one interviews, focus groups, survey or review of plans.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

**Other (Employment-Related) Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** GCGA met the goals and objectives of this grant and produced a strategic plan that identified five specific areas to be addressed: education and certification; image and public relations, recruitment, retention and advancement, human resources practices.

**Innovative Practices:** Staff felt that the decision to partner with contractors and consultants to conduct certain components of the project contributed to the success of their efforts, both in terms of timing and resources. The Center For Health Affairs had the contacts in place with Healthcare employers for the Coalition and the two consultants who conducted the one-on-one interview and focus groups brought needed expertise on a short-term basis.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** N/A  
**Job Placements:** N/A

**Future Plans:** GCGA was pursuing other possible funding sources for continued work in this sector. They were preparing to approach the City of Cleveland’s WIB to try to gain their support and commitment to the sectoral initiative. Staff also reported that experiences with this sector project will help them as they move to address similar issues in other sectors. Additionally, although this particular grant has ended, at least one area Healthcare employer is moving forward with efforts to develop career ladders.

**EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE**

**Grantee:** Delaware County Workforce Investment Board

**Area Served:** Southeastern Pennsylvania—Urban/Suburban bordering Philadelphia, PA and Wilmington, DE

**Grant Type:** Formation

**Grant Period:** 7/1/01 - 6/30/02

**Industry Sector:** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**Administrative Structure:** Delaware County WIB was responsible for overseeing the project, but WIB staff functions are contracted out to a consulting firm (Benson, Widing, Jones, and Associates, Inc.). The WIB contracted with Women's Association for Women's Alternatives (WAWA), a community-based organization that serves women and children in the Greater Philadelphia region, to carry out the project activities.

**Key Partners:** Members of the Healthcare Provider Consortium (over 50 health care employers and training providers), WAWA, Delaware County Community College, National Economic Development and Law Center (Oakland, CA), Delaware Legal Assistance Association, Wider Opportunities for Women (Washington, DC), Delaware County Office of Employment and Training. WAWA's staff included 1 full-time coordinator and an additional 1.5 to 2 FTEs.

**Role of the Workforce Investment Board:** The goals of the initiative fit with the WIB's interest in creating career ladders, but the Board itself is not especially active. The WIB only meets three times a year, and this project is included in regular reports to the WIB. The Board is also working with WAWA on identifying WIA and other funds for implementation.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** Health Care. Previous research by the grantee and its partners identified health care, particularly nursing, as one of the industries offering the greatest potential for self-sustaining wages and opportunities for career advancement and mobility. Specifically, they targeted career paths from Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) through Registered Nurse (RN).

**Target Population(s):** The target population includes poor low-income persons, as well as incumbent and prospective workers.

**Related Programs:** This project grew out of an earlier sectoral employment intervention project initiated in 1999 by Delaware County's Office of Employment and Training to identify industry sectors that offer high growth, self-sustaining wages, career advancement, and ease of entry for low-income residents. This project brought key partners together that continue to support the current project, established the Healthcare Provider Consortium, and identified the lack of career paths for entry-level health care workers as a critical area for further work.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The Healthcare Provider Consortium includes employers representing hospitals, nursing and residential care facilities, and home health service providers. Employers were really interested because of the high turnover in the industry. The consortium provided the only venue where the employers could collaborate. Employers attended meetings, provided input on industry-based competencies, participated in focus groups, and completed a survey and follow-up interviews.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Stakeholders were identified and invited to participate based on their involvement in the previous sector project or prior relationships with employers in the Consortium. They participated in meetings and in focus groups, and served as curriculum advisors.

**Training:** Formation grant — no training was provided

The project did address a number of training issues and produced the following training-related products: a Healthcare Career Matrix that depicts paths of career advancement, as well as a listing of training requirements for several occupations on the matrix; a directory of health care training providers in Delaware County; and a design for a Certified Nurse Aide Training Pilot Program for youth ages 18 to 21, to be implemented in partnership with Fair Acres Geriatric Center.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant — services were not provided to individuals

Human resources-related issues such as pay, benefits, job quality, cost of training, and transportation and childcare barriers were discussed by the Consortium members. WAWA, in collaboration with the Delaware Valley Child Care Coalition, is preparing a map that includes the location of health care employers, day care centers, and home child care providers to assist workers in their search for employment and child care.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** A strategic plan was prepared that identified several strategies for moving forward in training and career advancement for health care workers. The project identified three distinct categories of skills needed: literacy skills, employability skills, and technical skills. The Consortium continues to meet twice a year and they are still doing outreach, but there are no longer staff dedicated specifically to this project.

Training projects are under way that either came about because of this project or were able to obtain additional support because of this project. District 1199C (Drug and Hospital Workers Union) received an H-1B grant that includes Delaware County. It is anticipated that the Delaware County WIB will fund WAWA and Delaware County Community College to implement the pilot CNA training program with Fair Acres Geriatric Center.

***Innovative Practices:*** This project had a strong focus on career ladders and lifelong education. They found that developing a career ladder plan was more complex and difficult than previously thought. Career paths vary, and not all entry-level workers define career advancement the same way. The project developed materials that would be useful to both workers and employers.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** In addition to the pilot CNA training program, the Coalition is seeking funding to: establish a literacy and job readiness laboratory for incumbent workers; develop an Internet-accessible literacy training program for incumbent workers; develop workshops/presentations to educate current and future health care workers about the health care field, occupations, and career ladders; and develop support services that will improve retention and advancement of employees.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** DC Workforce Investment Council (WIC)

***Geographic Area Served:*** Washington DC Metropolitan Area

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/1/01 – 11/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This grant was managed by the DC Workforce Investment Council (DC WIC), which is the local Workforce Investment Board in DC. The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), a nonprofit regional association of local governments, was the fiscal agent.

***Key Partners:*** Key partners with the DC WIC were Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW), National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC), COG, and the DC Chamber of Commerce.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The Executive Director of the DC WIC was responsible for management and day-to-day operation of this grant. The WIC's involvement was chiefly through its Labor Market Information/Employer Involvement (LMI) Committee – all of the key partners had representatives on this committee. Overall, this committee was very engaged and involved in this project – e.g., they participated in the selection of the targeted industry and some members helped facilitate the focus groups. Interestingly, a directive to adopt a sectoral approach to workforce development is part of the WIC's legislative mandate.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The targeted industry selected was health care, with a focus on entry and mid-level positions. The WIC contracted with the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC) to collect labor market data and develop projections, which enabled them to narrow the possible sector choices to three. The LMI committee eventually decided to focus on health care, based on local and regional need and ease of entry together with potential career ladders. A series of three focus groups with employers, training providers and TANF participants/low-income residents confirmed the data and the sector choice.

**Target Population(s):** Initially the target population was welfare leavers (specifically those leaving the rolls because of time limits) but that was later expanded to include all low-income DC residents. While they focused on the DC residents at their target population, their research on job growth indicated the need adopt a regional approach in terms of potential jobs.

**Related Programs:** Several similar projects were ongoing in DC during the same time period as this grant. During the first six months of 2002, the DC Chamber of Commerce managed a Community Healthcare Career Ladders grant funded by the VHA Health Foundation. This was a planning effort designed to establish a healthcare network to bring hospitals, educators and other stakeholders together to look at employment needs and ways to address skills gaps. Also in operation at the same time was ongoing Joint Training Initiative, a partnership among the Department of Employment Services, the Washington Hospital Center and Medstar Health, Inc., (which owns several DC-area hospitals) that provides recruitment, training, curriculum development, mentoring and placement services for trainees (DC residents 18 and older with a high school diploma or GED) in Medstar entities. Finally, Howard University's Center for Urban Progress had a Workforce Development Partnership (funded by DOL) whose goal was to develop partnerships among the private sector and educators and trainers.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Employer involvement was mostly limited to their participation in focus groups. WIC and WOW experienced some difficulty in convincing employers to participate in the coalition but were more successful with those with whom they had previously-established relationships or who had relationships with their partners, such as the DC Chamber of Commerce. WIC and WOW tapped into the network established as part of the Chamber's Career Ladders project to recruit employers to participate in the focus groups. The Medstar representative on the LMI committee was also instrumental in recruiting the employers that did participate. Most of the employers who were involved in this grant were from local hospitals. It was also noted that those employers who did agree to be involved were ultimately very involved – the core group of seven or eight employers also came to meetings, responded to ideas and played a critical role in the development of the strategic plan.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Training providers were initially recruited from the WIC's approved trainer list. No community colleges were involved (there are no community colleges in DC) but a variety of providers participated in the focus groups, including several 4-year colleges (e.g., Howard University,

Trinity College, Catholic University) and a few high schools, as well as representatives from in-house training programs operated by employers such as Medstar. The Workforce Organizations Regional Collaborative and the DC Jobs Council also participated and provided input from the training providers' perspective. Feedback from the trainers provided valuable information in terms of suggestions for developing curriculum as well as the final strategic plan. Overall, training providers were enthusiastic about participating in the focus groups and meetings and were interested in findings ways to work more productively with employers.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided.

**Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** Since the grant officially ended in November 2002 (they received a 3-month extension), there has been one meeting of the coalition to discuss plans and strategies to move forward. They are also in talks with the DC Hospital Association (which had expressed an interest in pursuing efforts in the healthcare sectoral area) to encourage them to take the lead in continued efforts in this area. Both WIC and WOW would like to stay involved as partners, but neither feels that they can take a lead role in the future. Efforts are underway to seek additional funds, perhaps from foundations.

**Innovative Practices:** The DC WIC was able to coordinate its sectoral grant project with the activities of several other similar projects operating in the city concurrently. For example, when they encountered difficulties engaging employers, they were able to piggyback on the healthcare network already established through the DC Chamber of Commerce's Community Healthcare Career Ladders program.

Nearly all of the major coalition partners had a representative on the LMI committee of the DC WIC, thereby creating a quick and easy mechanism for sharing information and feedback.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** N/A

**Job Placements:** N/A

***Future Plans:***

See Program Status above. Efforts to secure additional funding continue. Coalition members also identified and obtained funding which enabled them to conduct a resource-mapping project. At the time of the interviews, they were also working on a regional employer survey. There is a strong interest among the WIC board members in addressing the needs of other industry sectors through a similar approach.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Metro South/West Regional Employment Board (REB)

***Geographic Area Served:*** Eastern Massachusetts - covers the area west and south of Boston. Primarily suburban with 3 urban centers.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 9/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care/Hospitals

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Metro South/West Regional Employment Board (REB) was responsible for overall management of this project. The REB also acted as an intermediary between participating hospital teams and provided guidance throughout the project.

***Key Partners:*** Three community hospitals: MetroWest Medical Center in Framingham and Natick, University of Massachusetts Memorial Marlborough Hospital, and Caritas Norwood Hospital, as well as unions and local education providers (Jewish Vocational Service and the Workplace Education Program of Service Employees International Union [SEIU], Local 285).

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** WIB Board members had final authority on major decisions regarding this project. Individual board members were involved in the project to different degrees; for example, the Workforce Issue Committee was tasked with raising revenue to sustain the initiative. It was reported that the sectoral project “caught the WIB Board members’ imagination like nothing else has.”

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care with a specific focus on hospitals. The REB hired the Center for Labor Market Studies (CLMS) of Northeastern University to conduct a job vacancy survey and employer interviews to identify industry sectors with skills gaps and staffing shortages. The REB convened an ad-hoc committee, the Labor Shortages Policy Group (LSPG), to select a final target industry from among six candidates identified by the CLMS study. Hospitals were selected because of the availability of a large number of entry-level jobs with few prerequisites, the opportunities for professional advancement, projection of continued demand and the severity of labor shortages.

**Target Population(s):** Entry-level hospital workers (e.g., housekeepers, food service workers, patient transport staff and maintenance or environmental workers) and employed or unemployed low-income recipients of public assistance who were customers of three community-based organizations: the Waltham Alliance Community Development Corporation (WATCH); the South Middlesex Opportunity Council in Framingham and Natick; and Employment Options, Inc., of Marlborough.

**Related Programs:** The REB also formed the Workplace Education Collaborative (WEC), a business-education partnership created to link companies with education providers to meet their specific needs. The WEC is funded through grants from the Massachusetts' Commonwealth Corporation and U.S. Department of Labor. The WEC participated in the review of hospital teams' program designs.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The main employers involved in this project were the three hospitals named above. Two local hospitals did not participate – one indicated that they did not have a staffing problem, while the other had financial problems that prevented them from participating. The REB director recruited CEOs and then met with a senior executive from each participating hospital; internal meetings were then convened, teams were formed, and programs were designed within each hospital. Final program plans were reviewed by other project team members.

Each participating hospital formed a Regional Industry Team specific to their needs that will guide development of these programs. In addition, they will also develop 4 work teams of 4 to 5 members to address: basic core knowledge and skills; opportunities for promotion; technical training; and continuous improvement and future development.

Overall, the participating hospitals are viewed as directing the course of this project.

**Other Stakeholder Participation.** In addition to the key partners listed above, other stakeholders included community-based organizations, the One-Stop Career Centers, the members of the LSPG (e.g., representatives from the public school systems, community colleges, technical schools, the Massachusetts High Tech Council, etc.), and the WEC.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

REB and its partners developed a three-phase education and training program design and schedule which included: Building Core Knowledge

and Skills; Technical Training; and Employment in Nursing Assistant, technical and other specialized jobs.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The REB was recently awarded an 18-month grant of over \$650,000 from the Commonwealth Corporation to develop a core knowledge and skills component, provide mentoring support, and build the infrastructure of the hospital initiative.

Efforts are underway to recruit two additional hospitals as participants.

REB continues to seek additional funding to implement the proposed plan.

As of 10/03, almost 200 people have participated in classes at the hospital or in the community. Individual plans to transition participants into technical training have also been developed by staff, instructors and mentors.

***Innovative Practices:*** REB’s approach to the sectoral project was unique in that it helped to create a multi-team structure within each hospital that allowed individual employers to create their own program designs to address their specific needs, while still providing a structure for review and modification by other project partners.

REB staff attributed their success to fundraising efforts that provided them with resources from the outset that allowed them to “get their project going” and to the leverage provided by the sectoral grant funds.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:***

In addition to recruiting two additional hospitals, plans are also underway to seek funds to address the shortage of nurses. The REB and the Commonwealth Corporation have applied for an H-1B grant to train nurses. The current implementation plan is designed to provide services to 40 percent of the industry; the H-1B grant would allow them to cover 50

percent, with the possibility of expanding to an even greater share in the future.

REB also hopes to move their efforts beyond providing services to hospitals to include nursing homes. REB has also partnered with the Institute for Nursing Healthcare Leadership (INHL) to identify funds to develop and test support systems for nurses. They are hopeful that they will be successful in convincing hospitals to contribute more of their funds if these efforts can be proven to be cost-effective.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT  
DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Jefferson Parish WIB

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** Jefferson Parish, Louisiana (west of New Orleans; largest city is Metairie)

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Automotive Industry

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Project oversight was provided by the Jefferson Parish WIB, with day-to-day management performed primarily by one WIB staff person at the Jefferson Parish One-Stop Center. The WIB has 37 members.

***Key Partners:*** Delgado Community College, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO), Greater New Orleans Dealership Association, Jefferson Parish Public School's School-to-Career Program, and several automobile dealerships

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Selected interested WIB Board Members (primarily those involved in the automotive industry and/or serving on the WIB committee that oversaw this project) provided input and participated in the stakeholder group. Overall, the WIB Board played a limited role in this project.

A consultant was hired to conduct focus groups, field interviews and observation studies with employers to gain information about training, recruitment and hiring practices as well as the technical skills required in this industry. One-stop participants were also interviewed about general workforce issues. Staff also reviewed BLS, unemployment and ES data.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Automotive industry/automotive technicians. Automobile dealers serving on the WIB board helped draw attention to the local need for trained automotive technicians, and more specifically, the need for training at the high school level.

**Target Population(s):** The target population was primarily new entrants – defined as persons 18 years or older with little or no work history. There was also some interest in attracting retirees to the field.

**Related Programs:** The Regional Workforce Investment Area Partnership was conducting a community audit and identified 8 industry clusters as areas of interest. One of the clusters identified was construction, which included the automotive industry.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** This project had the interest and participation of about 15 employers (mostly automobile dealerships but also other employers in related businesses such as Pep Boys and Firestone Tires) primarily because they were in need of qualified employees; however, some employers were not interested in participating because they viewed the project with some distrust, due to the involvement of the public sector. Employers participated in focus groups and interviews, permitted business observations and provided information on their industry and training needs. WIB staff felt that the project had a positive impact on the relationship between employers and the WIB Board.

**Other Stakeholder Participation.** The stakeholder coalition was formed prior to spearhead efforts to apply for this grant. In addition to the employers, members of the coalition included Delgado Community College, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO), Greater New Orleans Dealership Association, Jefferson Parish Public School's School-to-Career Program, Metrovision Economic Development Partnership, LA Department of Employment Security, and the New Orleans Jobs Initiative.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

Delgado Community College offers automotive technician training programs, sponsored by GM and Ford. Employers feel that the greater need is for training at the high school level, as a lead-in to the community college program. One of the members of the stakeholders group – the Greater New Orleans New Car Dealers Association - was instrumental in helping to establish a training program at the local high school that includes part-time work at local dealerships. There is much interest in developing more of these programs at other local schools.

*Other (Employment-Related)*

*Services/Activities:* Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

*Program Status:* The strategic plan was completed in early 2003. Efforts to secure additional funding for implementation of the plan were as yet unsuccessful.

*Innovative Practices:* As part of the research conducted by the contractor and the WIB staff, efforts were made to educate members of the community about the automotive industry and both the need for and career opportunities available for automotive technicians. This project attempted to provide information that would dispel the image of the automotive technician as a lower status occupation.

*Participation and  
Activity Levels:*

*Enrollment:* N/A  
*Job Placements:* N/A

*Future Plans:* Efforts continue to secure new funding for further work in this area.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board

***Area Served:*** City of Los Angeles, CA

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** July 2001- June 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Entertainment, specifically, digital distribution (including web-based entertainment) and interactive games

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The project was conducted by the Entertainment Industry Development Corporation (EIDC) in partnership with the PMR Group, Inc., under contract to the City of Los Angeles WIB. EIDC is a non-profit corporation focused on the economic health of the entertainment industry in the region. The PMR Group, Inc. is a research and consulting group specializing in workforce analysis and the impacts of technological change.

***Key Partners:*** Entertainment Industry Development Corporation (EIDC), The PMR Group, City of Los Angeles WIB, Verdugo WIB (in Glendale, CA), and the State WIB. Additional partners included professionals, unions, employers, and associations in the targeted industries.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The Los Angeles City WIB served as the fiscal agent. Project staff briefed the WIB about their activities. Only a few WIB members were actively involved in this project. However, the WIB, EIDC, and PMR Group had worked together previously on projects in the entertainment industry. This project made the WIB aware of the targeted industries and the workforce issues. The WIB would be interested in and expansion of the project and implementing the plan if funds are available.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The project looked at the impact of technology on existing areas of the entertainment industry — effects on current jobs and what the new jobs would be — in order to target the growth and emerging sectors. They identified demand in digital distribution, web development, DVD authoring, game development, interactive entertainment, and web-based entertainment.

**Target Population(s):** Current and potential dislocated workers as well as new entrants to the labor market.

**Related Programs:** The partners in this project have been involved in various other projects related to the entertainment industry. The Los Angeles City WIB supported the development of a new web-based guide to seeking employment in the entertainment industry. EIDC also serves as the local School to Career Intermediary for entertainment and new media, and EIDC's Senior Vice President serves on the State WIB and the City Youth Council.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** There are a few entertainment firms on the local workforce development board, but the entertainment industry is made up of many small firms. EIDC recruited 12-15 employers using contacts they had from prior work and networking with existing groups that represent stakeholder interests. Employers were not asked to make a large commitment in time or resources. Employers were involved in focus groups with training providers to validate findings about the industry and occupations, and to talk about matching growth occupations with a skill set. Employers provided valuable insights and were enthusiastic about the project.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Training providers and industry experts participated in focus groups and provided information to EIDC/PMR Group for their labor market analysis. The Verdugo, CA One-Stop Career Center provided survey data on one-stop customers who had been employed in the film and television industry.

**Training:** Formation grant — no training was provided

Using EIDC and the PMR Group's existing database of training providers, this project has identified several sources of training for the targeted occupations. The strategic plan report contains detailed information on each training provider, including certificate programs, courses provided by CBOs, and four-year schools.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant — no other services or activities were provided.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** A detailed labor market analysis of the emerging digital distribution and interactive entertainment sector was completed, as well as a plan targeting specific strategies and initiatives to serve dislocated workers

and new entrants into the industry. The key partners and staff remain involved. This is a rapidly changing industry, and the partners are continually studying and reassessing the labor market. EIDC has received a grant from the Governor's WIA 15 percent discretionary fund for the Entertainment Data Project.

***Innovative Practices:*** The lack of appropriate data was a significant challenge. There are no Standard Industrial Codes specific to these sectors, and there are no Standard Occupational Codes or job descriptions for most of the emerging jobs. They did innovative work to uncover sources of information, pull data, and document information to provide credible projections. Source included state labor market information, survey data, focus groups, and industry studies of consumer demand.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:***

The partners want to continue to: develop systematic information about the target population; keep the business and training communities informed about market trends; design curricula for specific skills; provide upgrade training for incumbent workers in demand occupations; and develop a pipeline of entry level workers. They are seeking funding from WIA, foundations, and industry. While they have been successful in obtaining funding for related activities (see program status, above), additional funding is still being sought to implement these specific initiatives.

**EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE**

**Grantee:** North Central Missouri College/Northwest Missouri Workforce Investment Board

**Area Served:** Rural – 18 county region

**Grant Type:** Formation

**Grant Period:** July 2001 – June 2002

**Industry Sector:** Allied Health Professionals

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**Administrative Structure:** The WIB was the fiscal agent and managed this grant, but the project was largely employer-driven. The employers hired the project coordinator, who was located at one of the participating hospitals.

**Key Partners:** An industry-specific coalition was formed that included hospitals, the Missouri Hospital Association, and representatives of vocational-technical training center, community colleges, a four-year college that has a nursing program, the school district, Chamber of Commerce, an economic opportunity agency, and the area health education center (AHEC).

**Role of the Workforce Investment Board:** The WIB Board involvement in the project was minimal. This project used a committee structure, which kept the Board informed. The program coordinator came to the WIB meetings and explained the sectoral program. Two WIB Board members were directly involved in the coalition as employers, but other WIB members were very interested in learning about the project. The WIB staff (primarily the Executive Director) spent about .5 FTE on the project.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** Allied Health Professionals. The six high demand jobs that they selected were: pharmacists, respiratory therapists, imaging technologist, RN, LPN, and laboratory technician. They decided to focus on nurses first because of the intensity of the staffing crisis, and then planned to apply the model (e.g., recruitment and retention strategies) developed for nurses to other professions.

**Target Population(s):** Incumbent Workers

**Related Programs:** This project grew out of a community audit/environmental scan conducted prior to 2001 that identified the health care industry as a target. The community audit surveyed employers and asked employers what their issues were. The need was mostly found in health care. One of the hospitals and local colleges began the meetings. For the medical

center, the care of the community was at stake. The community colleges saw their responsibility to the community.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** Health care employers were very interested in this project—they were driving the process. The project team decided that it would be best to have the program coordinator located at the lead hospital (Heartland Medical Center). The employers hired the program director; coordinated through the hospital. Heartland Medical Center hosted team meetings. The employers also conducted a literature review, survey (the WIB staff developed the survey, but the hospital distributed it). The survey was sent out to over 500 health care providers in an 18-county area—the employers’ contacts were used to identify providers for the survey. The employers’ contributions were financial, staff, and contacts.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** The coalition, including all of the stakeholders held a three-hour meeting every month. Economic Opportunities Corporation, a community action agency had experience working with the target population. North Central Missouri College has a BSN program and had worked with Heartland Medical Center prior to this project. The area health education center was also involved. A consultant from the small business unit at the college was hired to write the strategic plan.

***Training:*** Formation grant — no training was provided

They did develop models for two “bridge” programs. One provides stepping stones with internal career ladders for non-medical staff to move into allied health professional careers. The second program is aimed at getting two- and four-year schools to meet to compare and adapt curricula in order to facilitate the ability of LPNs to continue their training for a BSN. The technical school trains LPNs in a twelve-month program. The local college has a BSN program that is four years. In Missouri, if individuals transfer between the two programs, they would need to start over. A nationally accredited testing service is looking at LPNs that recently graduated and seeing if they can reduce schooling by one year if an LPN chooses to continue and earn a BSN.

#### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Formation grant— no other services or activities were provided

### **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** There were five major goals and objectives for the project, and all were addressed. On the policy front, they worked on educating new legislators and making this a statewide issue. In terms of the pipeline, they brought in high school counselors and taught them about the workforce group. They have collaborated with schools and have created a critical care class. This will allow incumbent workers to move into other jobs and make entry-level individuals more marketable. They have

also designed bridge programs and employers are modifying and streamlining hiring practices. They conduct a market-based salary review at least twice a year. The LPNs have gotten raises each time, part of an effort increase their pay to a competitive level. Heartland Medical Center has only a four percent vacancy rate, while the national average is thirteen percent.

Much of this work is continuing without any new funds. The program coordinator is still employed by the hospital and can pursue some of the tasks in the strategic plan under her current job description. About half of her time is devoted to this initiative. The coalition and the WIB are working on raising other funds. They are requesting WIA money from the Governor’s discretionary funds.

***Innovative Practices:*** This project had a lot of in-kind support from stakeholders, including student interns. Employers were involved and committed. They conducted a survey on human resource practices and they considered vacancy rates.

Heartland Medical Center held a luncheon for regional hospitals. Ten community hospitals attended. They are small and don’t have the resources that Heartland has, but Heartland provided them with the information they gathered and the lessons they learned from this project. This access to information gave the small community hospitals a “jump-start.”

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** They are presenting their findings to others in the region. They have sent out a PowerPoint presentation to all eighteen counties.

They would like to implement a statewide plan and trying to promote this as a statewide policy issue. They have worked with the Missouri Hospital Association. At the local level, they will have people in health care jobs talk with school counselors to provide the counselors with information and tools to bring back to their schools to encourage health careers and understand the skills needed.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (NVWIB)

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** Northern Virginia – specifically for this grant, the portion of the Washington, DC metropolitan area that falls within the Commonwealth of Virginia (11 counties and one independent city).

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Information Technology

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Fairfax County government supports the NVWIB and the County Department of Family Services is the administrative entity with responsibility for working with the NVWIB. The Business Services Committee of the NVWIB was responsible for overall project oversight and for updating the full board on project activities and outcomes. Day-to-day operation of the grant was primarily the responsibility of one staff person at the Fairfax County One-stop Center (Department of Family Services) with guidance from the NVWIB Executive Director.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the NVWIB and its Business Services Committee, key partners were the Institute of Excellence in Information Technology (IE-ET) of the Virginia Community College system.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Although the NVWIB was in a period of transition and still in the process of sorting out roles and responsibilities at the time of this project, staff felt that the Board was more involved in this grant than in other similar efforts.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Information technology (IT). Based on an analysis of labor market data, staff identified the five leading industries in the region: business services, engineering and management services, general and special trade contractors, health services and retail stores. The largest of these, business services, included business and data processing services, the largest single employer of IT workers in Northern Virginia. Further research indicated that the greatest demand was for positions with the highest skill levels (e.g., computer programmers, systems analysts), so the initial approach was to retrain and reemploy dislocated workers and less skilled workers to expand this supply and thereby create opportunities in

entry level positions for those with more limited experience. However, because the IT field changes so quickly, demand had changed over the course of the project. Within the targeted industry, efforts to target certain occupations were more “reactive than proactive” based on the needs of employers.

**Target Population(s):** Dislocated workers, incumbent employees and new entrants, with an emphasis on the new entrant population. The intent of the grant was to identify career ladders and promotional opportunities, supported by in-service training and professional development programs. As existing workers advanced, they hoped to backfill the entry level positions with new entrants.

**Related Programs:** MetroTech, a workforce development initiative funded by the US Department of Labor, was operating concurrently with this sectoral grant initiative. This project was designed to address the hiring needs of employers in the DC metropolitan area seeking to fill technology positions information technology and biotechnology fields. Employers who agree to hire a recently laid off workers can access funds to train employees.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Reaction of the employers to this project was mixed; some were very interested while others were reluctant and concerned about the bureaucratic and administrative burden on them. Staff did feel that the sector project help employers view the NVWIB not just as an organization to help the disadvantaged, but as a potential resource available to assist them in filling their employment needs.

**Other Stakeholder Participation.** The stakeholders group for this project was in place before the sectoral grant was awarded; the NVWIB’s Business and Education subcommittee (now the Business Services Committee), a group of 10-12, provided ongoing advice and guidance to project staff through monthly meetings. Members included representatives from two and four year training institutions, government contractors, commercial training providers, and the Northern Virginia Technical Council, among others.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** At the time of the interview, the NVWIB had begun to move away from sectoral work in the IT field, primarily because there had been a slowdown in the demand for workers in this industry. Instead, the NVWIB was beginning to turn to similar sectoral work in other industries. See below.

***Innovative Practices:*** Staff felt that the experience gained through work on this IT sectoral grant will enable them to move forward into sector work in other industries. They also noted that they had been very successful in leveraging in-kind resources from both the private training systems and local colleges.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A  
***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** Based on the labor market analysis conducted as part of this project, NVWIB was using the experience gained from the IT sector work and turning to similar work in the health care field. The NVWIB was beginning to target workers to shift from other industries into the health care field and the community college was setting aside seats for training nurses, radiologists and other positions in the health care field.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Northwest Workforce Development Council
<b><i>Geographic Area Served:</i></b>	4-county area in Northwest Washington – Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan counties. This is a semi-rural area located on the I-5 corridor between Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA.
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Formation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	July 2001 – September 2002
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Health and allied services

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This grant was managed by the Northwest Workforce Development Council (WDC), or the local Workforce Investment Board. Since the WDC had historically been the local service provider, they chose to continue in that same capacity under WIA, with the Governor’s approval. The WDC is the local one-stop operator, providing adult, dislocated worker and youth services. The WDC has 40 employees and the Board has 26 members. The Executive Director of the WDC was responsible for grant management and oversight; WDC staff convened and facilitated meetings; and a consultant was hired to gather information, research labor market issues, and handle day-to-day project activities.

***Key Partners:*** Key partners with the WDC were the other members of the Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills, a regional coalition (21 organizations) of local health care employers and training providers, initially formed as part of a Health Services Skills Grant project (see below). Major partners include the five hospitals in the region, skilled nursing and long term care facilities, physician’s clinic, labor representatives, and the three post-secondary health career training institutions in the region, Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College and Skagit Valley College.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WDC’s Project Coordinator and other staff were responsible for providing ongoing support to allow employers to take the leadership role for the Alliance. Overall, WDC staff played the lead role in the operation of this project and other ongoing related efforts. Most of the major partners had representatives on the WDC Board. Members of the Board

were “very interested” in this project, primarily because of its high visibility and high level of success.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** The targeted industry selected was health and allied services, with the stated goal of developing and maintaining a skilled workforce to meet the projected demand for regional health care needs. The health care industry had previously been identified in the WDC’s five-year strategic plan as one of the fastest growing industries and one of the largest employers in this geographic region. In addition, staff at the largest hospital in the area (St. Joseph Hospital) had prepared a workforce plan that also identified the health care skills shortage issues in the area.

Initially, the focus was on health care occupations in general, but that was eventually narrowed to five priority occupations: radiologic technologists, RNs, LPNs, CNAs and Medical Assistants.

**Target Population(s):** The target population was very inclusive – this project focused on new labor market entrants, low-skill workers, workers with limited English proficiency (LEPs), dislocated workers, incumbent workers on nursing career ladders, etc. Efforts were made to recruit students still in school who had not previously been exposed to the possibilities of careers in the health care field.

**Related Programs:** This project built upon a SKILLS Project Grant that NWDC received from the state’s Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Council. This grant was used to collect and analyze labor market data and convene the Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills, which was formed in April 2001. A number of other related grant activities have been ongoing during the same time period as the sectoral employment demonstration project, including: a Health Services Resource grant from the state; two grants to Bellingham Technical College to establish a Radiologic Technology Program; a grant from the Employment Security Department to provide upgrade training to incumbent workers in health care; a SKILLS “Next Phase” grant to support K-12 activities and clinical training site capacity; and an H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant operated in partnership with three contiguous workforce development areas.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The WDC was at an advantage because the Alliance was already established at the time they started this sectoral project. Overall, the WDC was very successful in its efforts to recruit employers to participate on the Alliance using contacts on their Board. Part of the success of the Alliance was attributed to the fact that a major hospital (St. Joseph) was actively involved and encouraged other hospitals in the

region to participate. But, the Alliance was not limited to hospitals and actively sought other employers. The WDC identified about 21 employers for membership — over time, about 10-12 were active partners. Employers on the Alliance represent hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, and insurers. Employers participated in four meetings per year as well as individual interviews and surveys conducted as part of the formation grant. WDC staff felt that employers were very interested in and enthusiastic about this project – while they hadn't had relationships with each other in the past, their recognition of the problems they faced because of both high staff turnover and skills shortages made them willing to come together to find solutions.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** In addition to the employers, the other major stakeholders participating in this project were the two community colleges (Whatcom Community College and Skagit Valley College) and the technical college (Bellingham Technical College). It was considered important to have labor representation on the Alliance and the Washington State Nurses Association was an active stakeholder. Other union participation was limited because the other union involved lacked staff resources at the local level.

***Training:*** While training activities were not provided as part of this grant, progress was made in terms of addressing the inadequate capacity for training health care employees. Aware of insufficient training slots, employers and training providers worked cooperatively to gain approval for the start-up of a new Radiologic Technologist program at the local technical college. The Alliance continues to focus on ways to increase training capacity for RNs by considering a number of options, including holding additional classes during the evening hours, expanding summer programs, and using skilled nursing facilities for clinical placements. To increase the labor pool, the WDC has supported a community and technical college WorkFirst pre-employment program that targets nurse assistant preparation and provides life and work skills training, as well as a customized LPN program for bilingual minority populations. In the area of retention, the focus is on specialty training for nurses. Four hospitals have formed a critical care consortium that has developed an on-line orientation class supplemented by a weekly seminar.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Alliance members partner with high school career counselors, health teachers, and career and technical education directors to introduce health and allied occupations to high school students. An Introduction to Health Careers class is conducted for multilingual, multicultural individuals. The Alliance markets employer tuition reimbursement opportunities and WDC tuition advance funds to potential and incumbent workers.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** Since the grant officially ended in September 2002, work on this sectoral initiative has continued and efforts to raise additional funds to support the project have moved forward. The Alliance continues to meet, with staffing provided by the consultant who has been involved throughout the project. Because the WDC is also the one-stop operator, they have staff resources that can continue to support sectoral efforts, and they are moving towards a “sectoral one-stop” approach, with a health sector business liaison on staff. As noted above, the WDC and its partners have received additional funding from multiple sources to expand training capacity in the region and implement training programs for new and incumbent workers.

***Innovative Practices:*** The WDC was and continues to be successful in securing and combining funds from a number of diverse funding sources to both start-up and continue operating a healthcare sectoral initiative over a substantial period of time. Because the WDC met with some early successes (e.g., creation of a strong and enthusiastic stakeholder coalition), they were able to both leverage other resources and maintain support for their program. WDC staff felt their most noteworthy accomplishments included: the selection of a consultant to serve as project coordinator who had credibility with employers and legislators and significant experience in the healthcare field; the approval of the new radiology technologist program; and their success in aiding the employers and the training providers in learning how to better work together cooperatively (attributed in part to skilled facilitation by WDC staff). For example, training institutions assumed that employers would not be willing to provide additional training sites or to supplement teachers’ salaries — both of these assumptions were false. The project successfully addressed challenges related to competition between community and technical colleges in the region and incompatibilities between the schedules and policies of educational institutions and the needs of employers.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:***

See Program Status above. Efforts to secure additional funding continue. For example, the WDC is now pursuing funding from foundations to create scholarships to enable incumbent workers to participate in training that would allow them to advance from positions as CNAs to LPNs and to RNs.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Polk Works Workforce Development Board (PWDB)

***Geographic Area Served:*** Polk County, Florida - covers the area between Tampa (Hillsborough County) and Orlando (Orange County).

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This project was administered by 2 staff of the Polk Works Workforce Development Board (PWDB). PWDB has a staff of 20 and a \$11.2 million budget.

***Key Partners:*** All major local hospitals (Lakeland Regional Medical Center, Winter Haven Hospital, Heart of Florida Hospital, Bartow Memorial Hospital), Polk Community College (PCC), the Polk County School Board Technical Centers, the Polk County Health Department, the Polk County Medical Association, the Tampa Bay Partnership, the High Tech Corridor Council, Workforce Florida, Inc. and the Florida Association of Homes for the Aging.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The members of the PWDB Board were very involved in this project, primarily through its state-mandated High Skills/High Wage (HSHW) Committee, which was responsible for oversight and approval of all sectoral grant activities. Representatives for some key partners (e.g., the President of PCC and 3 of the 4 health care employers) served on HSHW Committee and Board members in general were described as being “very hands-on” and supportive of this initiative. Over the past two years, the PWDB Board has been transforming the way it approaches problems and has become much more active at both the state and local levels.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs :*** Health Care. PWDB’s HSHW committee had done some preliminary work to identify occupations with high wages, high skills, projected growth and large labor shortages and had narrowed the focus to health care, information technology and insurance before settling on health care, chiefly because of the critical shortage of workers, the

availability of training programs and the willingness of business and training partners to participate. PWDB also conducted interviews with employers, held focus groups and reviewed state and local labor market data (becoming the first WDB in Florida to use the ERISS data base) to understand the industry and employer needs.

**Target Population(s):** The target population was dislocated workers, incumbent workers and new entrants.

**Related Programs:** The Project Coordinator had been involved with the National Association of Sector Partners and was interested in pursuing this strategy.

As a result of the sectoral grant, PWDB was able to leverage nearly \$2 million in cash and in-kind resources to expand their community health care initiative. For example, the US Department of Education provided \$500,000 for a Collegiate High School Allied Health and Medical Academy, which enables high school students to earn a diploma while working toward an Associate's degree in one of several healthcare related areas.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** All of the major local hospitals (see above) as well as several long-term care facilities participated in this initiative. Employers were initially reluctant to become involved with this project; historically, there was ill will among the top hospitals, in part due to a lack of trust and the competition for workers. PWDB efforts to take on a leadership role paid off and they eventually were able to convince the employers to come to the table together. Employers participated in focus groups, shared best practices and provided feedback on training needs and related issues to the community college. This project improved the relationship between the employers and the WIB because the employers saw the benefits of this project to their businesses.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** See Key Partners. Stakeholders (see above) were among the 200 community leaders and healthcare professionals who attended two Health Care summits in 2002 to discuss promising workforce practices in the healthcare industry. The first summit focused on the needs of acute care facilities; the second focused on needs for the long term care facilities in the county. Workforce 2020, the PWDB outreach organization, funded these seminars.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

Dialogues between employers and Polk Community College revealed that although there was sufficient training capacity for health care occupations among local training institutions, the providers weren't filling all of the available slots. As a result of this project and the interactions with employers, the college was persuaded to be more flexible in terms of scheduling classes (e.g., more weekend and evening classes).

PWDB has also increased the individual training account (ITA) limits for health care training and education from \$5000 to \$7500 per student.

**Other (Employment-Related) Services/Activities:** PWDB will award 15 scholarships (totaling \$42,000) to high school seniors interested in entering a health care occupation. They have also developed a CD ROM containing health care career information which will be distributed to all high school students in Polk County.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** While there was disappointment that the program implementation funds were not available, PWDB continues to build on the momentum created by the sectoral grant to find other resources to support and expand its community health care initiative. In addition to the activities described above, PWDB partnered with Polk Community College's Allied Health Care Council to gain a commitment from local hospitals to provide funding (\$994,000) for a nursing recruiter and 30 nursing scholarships annually for three years. This is expected to double the number of nursing graduates over that time. The sectoral project was also the catalyst for revision of the WIB strategic plan to focus on both the need to address healthcare issues and the need to continue building and maintaining community partnerships within Polk County to minimize duplications of activities.

**Innovative Practices:** PWDB was extremely successful in its efforts to use the activities funded by the sectoral grant to leverage almost \$2 million in other resources to create a comprehensive and still expanding Community Health Care sectoral initiative. PWDB also committed time and resources for staff to visit and learn from the experiences of other successful sectoral projects in Boston and San Antonio. They also did a fair amount of networking with other WIBs in order to share ideas and strategies for this type of project.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

<b>Enrollment:</b>	N/A
<b>Job Placements:</b>	N/A

***Future Plans:***

See above. PWDB will continue to conduct outreach activities and stakeholder coalition meetings using the WorkForce 2020 resources. There are also plans to continue developing more E-learning opportunities within the health care field and to continue to educate youth about opportunities in this field. PWDB has also hired a grant writer to pursue other funding opportunities. Efforts are also underway to look at similar sectoral initiatives in other industries.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Ramsey County Workforce Service Area 15

***Area Served:*** St. Paul/Minneapolis region of Minnesota

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** July 2001 – September 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Hospitality

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The project was managed by Workforce Solutions, the administrative agency for the Ramsey County WIB. Day-to-day operations were the responsibility of a subgrantee, Labor Studies Resource Center, a non-profit organization operating under the direction of the St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly.

***Key Partners:*** Eight employers for nine different hotels across the Twin Cities; a convention center catering company; public policy analysts from the state's Department of Economic Security and from a private community-based organization; Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union; St. Paul Trades and Labor Assembly; nonprofit community-based training institutions; representatives of the Ramsey County and Minneapolis WIBs; and an economic development agency.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The WIB played a limited role in this project. In July of 2000, the St. Paul and Ramsey County WIBs merged and much of the WIB's energy was focused internally, on making the new WIB organization work. There are no hospitality employers on the WIB and the WIB had no prior relationship with the hospitality industry. The chair/principal of Labor Studies Resource Center is a WIB Board member. The Board took the approach that the steering committee for the project should set its own goals and report back to the board and keep the board informed. WIB staff involvement was .25 FTE for both planning and management.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Entry-level and more skilled occupations in the hospitality industry. The project came about in response to worker shortages in the Twin Cities' hospitality industry throughout the 1990s and into 2000. With encouragement from organized labor, there was an interest in providing career ladder opportunities and improving employment conditions. The occupations targeted were banquet servers, housekeeping, culinary, and other entry-level positions (i.e. cashiers and other front desk staff).

**Target Population(s):** The target population was originally immigrants, but it ultimately focused on all incumbent workers. The project had difficulty in getting the members of the steering committee to define the target population more narrowly.

**Related Programs:** This grant was an outgrowth of discussions between the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE) and the management of several hotels and convention centers. HERE had dedicated resources toward pursuing a joint labor-management initiative for training.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Eight employers from nine properties across the Twin Cities participated in the project. Each employer sent a representative to three steering committee meetings over 10 months (the meetings were to be attended by general managers, but most of the attendees were from Human Resources departments). Human Resources staff from each employer also participated in one focus group and collected data on job vacancies. Each general manager participated in a face-to-face interview with the project coordinator at the start of the project. Some steering committee members made site visits to the Nevada Partners/Las Vegas Culinary Training Academy and to the San Francisco Hotels Partnership.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Union representatives, policy analysts, and community-based organizations also participated on the steering committee. A representative of the Minnesota Department of Economic Security presented labor market data to the steering committee. In addition to the employer focus group, two other focus groups were conducted, one with education providers and one with community-based organizations. Incumbent and prospective workers participated in surveys.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

A focus group held with education providers indicated that culinary arts programs attract students and that locating jobs for graduates was not a problem. Educators expressed a need for on-the-job mentoring and ongoing communication with the industry.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** The steering committee approved a strategic plan in June 2002 that would establish the Twin Cities Hospitality Partnership Council to serve as the governing body of a hospitality training program. The steering committee identified the following priority areas for training: English

language improvement focused on banquet skills, computer-cashier skills, and culinary skills.

The economy played a large role outside of the control of project stakeholders. The events of 9/11 created a severe crisis in the hospitality industry, moving training to a much lower priority for managers. This affected the level of commitment and participation in this project. After 9/11, general managers sent human resources staff to steering committee meetings and these individuals had less authority to commit their organizations.

The stakeholder group has not met since the end of the demonstration. The principal staff coordination was coming from the Labor Studies sub-contractor and there have been no resources to maintain a position that could keep the stakeholder group together.

Additional funding is also necessary to proceed with implementation. The grantee was talking with National Network of Sector Practitioners to determine ways to continue working on the initiative. They continue to look for further funding, but have not been successful so far.

***Innovative Practices:*** Site visits to were conducted to initiatives in Las Vegas and San Francisco to gain an understanding of promising models. Grantee staff felt they identified specific training strategies that need to be developed to improve the overall quality of hospitality industry. They reported that the project brought policy makers, industry and community together in a way they had never been before.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** The WIB staff is planning to revisit with union stakeholders, in the hopes that they will provide a driving force to continue this initiative. The WIB will also need to make a staffing commitment to engage the public and private sector in this type of project, but funding has not been secured.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County

***Area Served:*** King County Washington and the Puget Sound region

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01- 9/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Manufacturing sector

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The grant was managed by the Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, which is the local WIB. WIB staff were actively involved in project management, strategic planning, attending meetings, and disseminating information.

***Key Partners:*** Kent Chamber of Commerce, Northwest Policy Center of the University of Washington, and the Puget Sound Consortium for Manufacturing Excellence.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Staff worked with the Kent Chamber of Commerce to recruit employers. Staff provided frequent reports on the project to the WIB Board and reported at quarterly Board meetings. The Board provided input and advice. Two WIB staff worked on the project for a total of about .75FTE.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Entry-level and mid-level jobs in small and medium-size manufacturing firms. The target group of employers ranges from \$3 million to \$80 million in annual sales and 20 to 500 employees. Manufacturing was selected because this industry accounts for nearly all of the Puget Sound region's exports, which make up 87 percent of the state's total exports. Despite the slowdown in this industry, regional employers continue to cite difficulty in recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce and manufacturing is a key source of living-wage jobs, particularly for those without a four-year college degree.

***Target Population(s):*** Lower level incumbent workers and new entrants seeking jobs in manufacturing.

***Related Programs:*** This project built upon other independent efforts in this sector, such as the Puget Sound Consortium for Manufacturing Excellence, Seattle Jobs Initiative Manufacturing Training Program, and the Kent Chamber of Commerce Manufacturing Panel. Under a DOL-funded Community Audit project, the Workforce Development Council (WDC) collected

and analyzed labor market data, and the WDC had an ongoing sector initiative in the construction industry.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** About 12 employers were involved. Representatives ranged from company presidents to general managers to human resources managers. They attended an initial full-day retreat and then met once per month (2-hour meetings) for six months. Employers also participated in surveys and interviews conducted by the Northwest Policy Center.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:***

Northwest Policy Center conducted the labor market research. Kent Chamber of Commerce identified and recruited employer participants and facilitated the meetings. Worksource (the One-Stop Career Center) and representatives of two community colleges participated in the meetings with employers.

***Training:***

Formation grant — no training was provided

The project recommended a regional training consortium to address the training needs of small to medium size manufacturers—aggregating the demand for training so that the needs of small employers are not overlooked.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Formation grant — no other services or activities were provided.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:***

The employer panel developed three specific recommendations and identified next steps for each. The recommendations are to: create a regional training consortium, develop a single point of contact for King County manufacturing employers, and develop an assessment center. These and other recommendations are described in the report “Manufacturing Still Matters,” which is available at (<http://www.seakingwdc.org/reports/Manumatters.pdf>). The WDC will continue to support the project partners and keep the industry panel going as they seek additional funding sources.

***Innovative Practices:*** Because the WDC did not have strong employer relationships in the manufacturing sector they teamed with a partner that knew the industry and the key employers — the Kent Chamber of Commerce.

The WIB sponsored a breakfast for the community, especially focusing on manufacturing leaders to showcase research and recommendations from the manufacturing panel. Over 200 people attended. Phyllis Eisen,

from the National Association of Manufacturers, was the keynote Speaker.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:***

The WDC continues to be a partner in looking for ways to implement the panel's recommendations. To date, Shoreline Community College and Renton WorkSource (one-stop) are moving towards an assessment center on site.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Lane Workforce Partnership
<b><i>Area Served:</i></b>	Lane County, Oregon, including the Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Formation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	7/01/01- 6/30/02
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Health Care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The grant was managed by the Lane Workforce Partnership, which is the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB). WIB staff roles included management of the project, research, and working with the advisory group.

***Key Partners:*** The project established a Health Care Career Alliance (HCCA) to serve as advisor to the planning process. The Alliance included representatives of employers, local community colleges, community-based organizations (including those serving the Latino community), WIB members, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU).

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The sector approach grew out of the WIB's unified strategic plan, and the Board is strongly committed to the project. The WIB staff and members provided the leadership in establishing the HCCA — WIB staff recruited different segments of the community to participate. Participation by WIB members was also extensive. The chair of the WIB also chaired the Alliance. The Board as a whole was also very interested in being informed about the project's progress and successes. Quarterly reports on the project were presented at WIB meetings.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care was selected because of the range of job opportunities and the relatively high wages. Three occupations were targeted: nurses, medical technology, and radiologic technician. The occupations were selected based on analysis of state labor market information and discussions with the State of Oregon's chief labor market economist. In addition, the validity of the statistical data was tested by directly interviewing local employers in the health care field.

- Target Population(s):** The project defined three target populations:
- Emerging — Youth and recent high school graduates
  - Transitional— Displaced and recently laid-off workers
  - Current— Incumbent entry-level in the healthcare field.

Increasing the focus on the current workforce —incumbent workers both inside the health care field and from other industries — was part of the WIB’s strategic plan.

**Related Programs:** The Lane Workforce Partnership submitted an H1-B Training Grant application to the U.S. Department of Labor in February 2000.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** During the proposal development and planning phase, employer input was a key to defining the sector: local health care employers, including two large hospital employers, were invited to help design the project. A formal survey of members of the health care sector was conducted regarding workforce needs, followed by focus groups to refine what was learned in the workforce survey. Since there are labor shortages in the occupations identified, employers are very interested in the project. The Alliance met monthly and the employers that were a part of the group provided continuous feedback on the project. They participated in meetings, provided information on skill requirements, and identified training issues.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Community colleges and community-based organizations were represented on the advisory group. CBOs and community colleges were helpful in sharing information about health careers with the target populations.

**Training:** The two local community colleges — Lane Community College and Umpqua Community College — were involved as part of the planning/advisory group. These institutions would be the primary trainers in a health care sector project. In addition, the project explored the use of distance learning in the Portland-based programs (medical technicians). A major issue is the lack of training capacity — the health care training programs in the community colleges are consistently full.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** The WIB organized a health career event to gauge people’s interest in health careers and to share information about those careers.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** A strategic plan was prepared in April 2002 that includes goals, objectives, strategic areas of focus, and action steps. Next steps include increasing the capacity of training providers, enhancing the current one-stop system to encompass health care sector expertise, coordinate support service resources, continue outreach to the target population, and work with K-12 schools to promote health care careers. The formation grant strengthened the WIB’s relationship with local employers — especially those in the health care sector. WIB staff will continue to be involved in sectoral work and the Alliance will continue to meet.

***Innovative Practices:*** The project combined many sources of information, including labor market data, employer survey and focus groups, a survey of incumbent health care workers, and follow-up interviews with incumbent workers.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** The WIB is seeking funds to implement the Health Care Sectoral Strategic Plan. The plan is to proceed in stages. The first priority will be medical lab techs. The grant has positioned the WIB to go after new outside funds. For example, they are considering a grant application in partnership with the Oregon Medical Labs to develop a training program around career paths for medical technicians. Over the past year, they have received three grants totaling approximately \$250,000 to further the health care initiative. Two of the grants are from Lane County government economic development funds. The third is from a current workforce fund managed by the Oregon Workforce Investment Board.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Chesapeake Workforce Alliance (CWA)
<b><i>Area Served:</i></b>	A ten-county area in Maryland, including the Eastern Shore of the Chesapeake Bay and the Susquehanna River region
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Formation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	7/1/01 – 5/30/02
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Health Care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Susquehanna Workforce Network (the WIB for Cecil and Harford Counties) was the lead agency managing this grant in partnership with two other Maryland WIBs, the Upper Shore WIB and the Lower Shore WIB, as well as the Delaware WIB.

***Key Partners:*** Key partners with the four WIBs were the Eastern Shore Area Health Education Center (AHEC), local hospitals and health systems, local community colleges, the Delaware Health Care Commission, and the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

#### ***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:***

Each of the WIBs identified representatives from the health care industry, education, and economic development, to serve as members of the regional Healthcare Stakeholder Coalition. The WIBs convened the stakeholders group, donated space for the meetings, and hired a facilitator. This was primarily handled by the Executive Directors of the WIBs and their staff. Although at least one of the WIB Boards was dominated by representatives of the manufacturing industry, with the decline of the manufacturing industry, the Board became increasingly interested in health care initiatives. WIB Boards were briefed at their regular meetings and Executive Committees received additional information.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care had already been identified as a labor/skill shortage industry, and the Chesapeake Healthcare Workforce Alliance was formed in November 2000. Using data on Maryland health care workforce trends, the top ten health care occupations in demand were identified and targeted for this initiative: occupational therapists, technicians, registered nurses, nursing assistants, aides, and orderlies; pharmacy assistants, pharmacists, licensed practical nurses, dental hygienists, and dental assistants.

**Target Population(s):** Workers ages 18-60; dislocated workers; career changers; women who are returning to the workforce.

**Related Programs:** This project grew out of a community audit grant, funded by DOL. Under that grant, CWA collected data for five industries. The health care industry was identified within the top five industries for employment and corresponding skill shortages throughout the CWA region. At the same time that the sectoral employment demonstration project was starting, the AHEC was beginning a study, funded by Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, on health care professional shortages on the Eastern Shore. The AHEC is also working with the Coalition to help employees access health insurance. One of the Coalition members (Christiana Care) had internal programs to improve retention and had created alliances with local community colleges and high schools to promote health careers.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Employers attended four meetings of the CWA Healthcare Stakeholder Coalition. They prioritized workforce challenges and needs, shared best practices, and, with the other members of the Coalition, developed a strategic plan for the health care industry in the region.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The Coalition also included economic development directors for the region, a state/regional economic development representative, and local community colleges.

**Training:** Formation grant — no training was provided

Worked with community colleges and other training providers to assess capacity and identify needs. Training capacity is an issue in some locations (e.g., Upper Shore) and in certain fields (e.g., dental hygiene). Lack of clinical placement settings also limits capacity in some parts of the region (e.g., Harford County). The Coalition is also exploring distance learning, especially for dental hygiene

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant — no other services or activities were provided.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** CWA Healthcare Stakeholder Coalition developed a Healthcare Strategic Plan. The plan identified three priorities: 1) to establish and maintain a regional healthcare organizational structure; 2) To develop a training pool of qualified health care workers in the region; and 3) to ensure health care training and education capacity in the region. The challenges in addressing

each priority are listed with corresponding strategies, tactics, responsibility, and expected outcomes.

Upper Shore faced a major layoff at a manufacturing firm, and this grant positioned them well to address the situation. Due to downsizing in manufacturing, they have workers now and community colleges are expanding training in health care occupations due to the initiatives of the sector grant. A community foundation provided funding to the AHEC and to Wor-Wic Community College to expand their nursing program.

***Innovative Practices:*** This project took a regional approach, defining the region, not by externally imposed boundaries, but by what made sense from a workforce development perspective. Each of the WIBs involved is relatively small and encompasses some rural/sparsely populated areas. By working together as a region, they were able to draw more attention to their skills and worker shortage issues and bring more resources to bear on their activities.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:***

The Stakeholder Coalition is committed to implementing the Strategic Plan. The Coalition plans to continue to meet to plan more definitions of career pathways with community colleges. They intend to share information from meetings with local human resources directors. Each stakeholder is absorbing a little of the cost for the meetings—the strategic plan summarizes the contribution that will be made by the various partners (e.g., support staff, meeting space, classroom space, clinical staff to supervise clinical experiences for trainees, paid time to employees for training). Additional resources are being pursued for full implementation of the plan. They are planning a web site, but implementation has been stalled until they determine who will maintain and pay for it.

The Coalition also has an ongoing relationship with the AHEC. The Lower Shore WIB plans to use WIA funds to contract for training for Certified Nurse Assistants, radiology technicians, and dental assistants.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC)

***Geographic Area Served:*** 10 counties and 1 city in Virginia (Counties of Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange, Rappahannock, Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson and the City Of Charlottesville)

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 8/31/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Services

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:***

Virginia Local Workforce Investment Area VI covers two sub-state planning regions: Planning District 9 (Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission – RRRC) and Planning District 10 (Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission – TJPDC). Because of differences in demographic and geographic characteristics, the Local Workforce Investment Board set up a separate One-Stop Service Delivery System in each district. Although TJPDC has overall fiscal and administrative responsibility for WIB activities, RRRC has responsibility for day-to-day oversight of ongoing operations in Planning District 9.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the two Planning Districts, key partners included the contractors hired by each of the two Planning Districts (Core Impact, Inc., and the Charlottesville Area School Business Alliance (CASBA) to perform the data collection and analysis for the planning process.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The work of the Business Education Round Tables, an informal organization of the Workforce Investment Board, set the stage for this study and provided ongoing input into the needs of the Health Sciences Sector. Periodic reports and updates were presented to the full WIB. WIB staff provided the overall administration and coordination of the project, including writing the strategic plan.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health services. Because the TJPDC serves as a state data center, local and regional labor market information was readily available. TJPDC briefly considered hospitality as a possible focus for sector work, but concluded that health services was a better choice because the hospitality industry was dominated by lower wage jobs with fewer

opportunities for career advancement. Analysis of available labor market data indicated that the largest number and percent of jobs in the regions were in the health-education-legal services sectors due to the presence of the University of Virginia and its Health Sciences Center as well as the region's position as a retirement destination. The latter had (and was expected to continue to have) a critical effect on the health care industry because of the increased health care needs of the elderly and the large number of people retiring. High turnover rates and staff shortages among nurses' aides, nurses, therapists and technicians were noted. Initially, TJPDC focused on moving people not already in the health care field (e.g., students, dislocated workers) into entry-level positions after providing them with training based on their newly-developed career ladders.

**Target Population(s):** Dislocated workers and new entrants, including students, out-of-school youth, and dislocated workers. Planning District 9's survey indicated that they needed to focus on the needs of incumbent workers as well.

**Related Programs:** The Business Education Round Tables (BERTs) in each Planning District, created to fulfill one of the goals of the Local Workforce Investment Board's Strategic Plan, brought together interested stakeholders to discuss training and education initiatives in the region and to take steps to ensure that those entering the workforce have the required skills. Each BERT has 9 sector subgroups (Agri-Business, Biotechnology, Business Finance, Construction Technology, Health Sciences, Hospitality/Tourism, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Retail and Health Science) that meet on an as-needed basis to generate proposals to be carried out by local community organizations.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Representatives of major regional employers served on both BERTs; a few also served on the WIB Board. Staff noted that many of the contacts with employers had already been established when the sector project began. Employers participated in meetings, helped identify specific health services occupations with shortages, and provided information regarding the skills and types of training required for workers. Staff reported that while there was strong interest among many employers, others did not have the time or inclination to get involved.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The BERTs (described above) served as the major stakeholder coalitions for this project. Health care sector sub-groups for both BERTs held kick-off meetings in late 2001 and met again in February 2002 to review data and findings presented by their contractors. Members of these groups included representatives from health care

employers (e.g., hospitals, nursing homes, retirement homes, etc.), community colleges, other training providers, and government agencies.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided

**Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** The Strategic Plan described a proposed intervention project to implement a regional Health Sciences Academy, geared toward new entrants and dislocated workers that would promote career awareness and training to encourage potential workers to choose and pursue a career in health science. The plan outlines a continuum of training preparation that will provide a number of entry points for potential workers and is based on a similar model successfully implemented for informational technology careers in 2000.

**Innovative Practices:** Local Workforce Investment Board established stakeholder coalitions (BERTs) to address education and workforce development needs in multiple industry sectors.

Staff noted that special attention was paid to the needs of employers as part of their efforts to recruit businesses for participation in sector work. For example, staff reported that they tried to schedule meetings with employers early in the morning and have a focused agenda so as to not to waste their time.

Additionally, the three final reports produced as a result of this initiative (the Strategic Plan and Data and Analysis Reports for each separate Planning District) were distributed to area high schools, One-Stop Centers and WIA Title I Youth Services contractors. These reports include job descriptions, career ladders, and required and available training for careers in the health sciences.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** N/A

**Job Placements:** N/A

**Future Plans:** At the time of the interview, TJPDC was pursuing other possible funding sources for continued work in this sector. Staff also reported that experiences with this sector project will help them as they move to address similar issues in other sectors.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB)

***Geographic Area***

***Served:*** City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Allegheny County is the largest county in Southwestern Pennsylvania and is the economic center of a 10-county region.

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 11/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This project was administered by the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB), with day-to-day management provided by one full-time staff member.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the TRWIB, the key partners were the Hospital Council of Western PA (HCWP), UPMC Health System, West Penn-Allegheny Health System, Presbyterian Senior Care, Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC), Health Careers Futures, Jewish Healthcare Foundation, the Pittsburgh/Allegheny County one-stop employment systems (CareerLink), Bloomfield Garfield Corporation (CBO), Kane Regional Centers, AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union Local 1199P, and the University of Pittsburgh.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Staff reported that WIB Board members were more involved in this initiative than in other similar efforts. Several of the board members were health care employers, and one board member in particular was involved in a major way throughout the life of the project. While the board provided oversight and, in general, left day-to-day project management to the designated project staff person, the board was described as being very “action-oriented” and willing to engage in the project.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs :*** Health care. In late 2000, the TRWIB, together with the Mayor of the City of Pittsburgh, the Chief Executive of Allegheny County and other partners announced their intent to hold a series of Workforce Summits to focus attention on industry sectors critical to the economy of Southwestern Pennsylvania – identified sectors were health care,

manufacturing, information technology, tourism/hospitality and business and financial services. The health care sector was selected for the first summit (the Southwestern Pennsylvania Healthcare Summit – held in early 2001) because it was one of the largest industries in the region and employed 15 percent of the workforce. Information presented at the summit highlighted the key position of the industry, the high turnover among certain occupations, and the shortage of workers in occupations at all skill levels. Following award of the sectoral grant, in January 2002, the TRWIB, together with Health Careers Futures and the Hospital Council of Western Pennsylvania, brought together stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to address health care workforce shortages and define issues to be addressed collaboratively, including diversity in the workforce, recruitment, retention, youth development, job redesign, high turnover, and unemployed and incumbent worker career development. This work built on a community audit, other labor market information, and focus groups with employers, training providers and other stakeholders. Key findings were consistent with those of the earlier summit, including the fact that shortages were unlikely to be temporary because of population and workforce demographics.

**Target Population(s):** Incumbent Workers. TRWIB eventually narrowed the project focus to career development for incumbent workers who in the past have underutilized reimbursement and support programs. The intent is to remove barriers for advancement including lack of mentors, insufficient disposable income to access tuition reimbursement, inflexible training schedules, and difficulties balancing work and family. The targeted population was later expanded to include the unemployed and underemployed.

**Related Programs:** The UCCDP (University of Pittsburgh's Community Career Development Partners) Health Care Employment project, a collaborative effort between the UCCDP, the City of Pittsburgh, the TRWIB and two regional hospitals, was seeking additional funding to provide opportunities for 100 residents to obtain and retain employment at hospitals and other health services employers. The project was designed to address pre-employment and post-employment barriers to obtaining and maintaining full-time employment.

A similar program designed to help welfare clients obtain entry-level, full-time employment has been operating since 1990.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Industry employers were very interested in and actively participated in this project by providing data and other information related to retention, vacancies, recruitment and screening methods, and system flow charts.

Initially, the employers did not fully comprehend the commitment required for a project of this scope; they thought they would simply seek out training dollars and funds for tuition assistance while project planners were more interested in pursuing large-scale system change in the healthcare industry. Health care employers were represented on the project's steering committee (a subcommittee of the original stakeholders committee). Staff felt that the sectoral project increased employers' awareness of and understanding of the capacity of the WIB, particularly in terms of their ability to collaborate on workforce issues.

**Other Stakeholder Participation.** See key partners. The original stakeholder coalition formed after the summit included representatives from hospitals, home health care, long term care, labor, training providers (one 4-year university as well as one community college), community based organizations, local government officials, and industry associations. Eventually this group was narrowed down to about 10-12 key partners who were consistently involved in planning and implementation.

**Training:** Formation grant – no training was provided.

The strategic plan included a commitment for 297 enrollees in certificate and associate training programs for LPNs, RNs and Allied Health programs. The strategic plan also outlined steps to focus on nursing career ladders within therapeutic and diagnostic clusters.

**Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** Formation grant – no other services or activities were provided

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** At the time of the interview, TRWIB had just received word that they had been awarded a \$994,000 incumbent worker demonstration grant from the US Department of Labor to implement the steps developed in the planning process under the sectoral grant. Key stakeholders continued to meet to pursue other sources of funding for continued work in this area. See below.

**Innovative Practices:** Staff pointed to the fact that the project was successful in bringing key stakeholders together who had previously been unwilling to look beyond the needs of their own institutions, in part due to the efforts of a key project partner. Similar sector work also continues in the other four industry sectors noted above.

**Participation and**

**Activity Levels:**      **Enrollment:**              N/A  
                                 **Job Placements:**        N/A

***Future Plans:***

As of 11/2003, the TRWIB's Three Rivers Health Incumbent Worker Training Initiative (based on the sectoral grant's strategic planning process) had 68 participants enrolled in various training components and the project was expecting additional participants through the end of the year. Printed reports indicate that TRWIB staff felt that they were particularly successful in identifying existing workforce development and support services funds, rather than using all of their U.S. Department of Labor grant dollars to fund program services. For example, TRWIB was working with Community Human Services to make \$300,000 in transportation loan funds available to TRWIB program participants and other entry-level healthcare workers for car purchase and repairs. TRWIB was also partnering with a regional hospital on a \$417,000 Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Critical Job Training Grant for job training in the health care industry – 120 had been enrolled as of November 2003.

**EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE**

**Grantee:** Region 2000 WIB

**Area Served:** Lynchburg, VA and surrounding rural area

**Grant Type:** Formation

**Grant Period:** 7/01/01- 9/30/02

**Industry Sector:** Manufacturing

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**Administrative Structure:** The grant was awarded to the Region 2000 WIB and managed by the WIB staff. The WIB is housed within the Region 2000 Regional Commission, a regional economic development organization. The WIB's grant administrator and a consultant researcher staffed the project.

**Key Partners:** The staff formed a project advisory committee that included representatives from regional economic development entities, chambers of commerce, the public schools and community college campuses, workforce development, local governments, industry employers, and trade associations. The partners indicated that this project allowed them to build strategic relationships among each other.

***Role of the Workforce***

**Investment Board:** The WIB provided general oversight and strategic direction for the project. The WIB members were interested in the project, but faced a somewhat sharp "learning curve" before they fully understood what a sector project entailed. Over time, the members became more engaged, particularly after the "career pipeline" model was created and introduced by the consultant. The board members made themselves available to project staff for consultation, and the initiative was regularly on the agenda of Board meetings.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** This project chose a sector of occupational skills that cut across manufacturing sub-sectors – Electromechanical technicians. This is an industrial maintenance position that relates to all sub-sectors of manufacturing. This occupation was selected because manufacturing is the largest industry in the area, is highly diverse, and needs skilled workers. The industry is also relying more on advanced technology over time. The consultant developed a graphical model – shaped like a pipeline - that showed the cycle of employment in the occupation from pre-entry to the highest level of technician. It also illustrated the points-of-entry for workers at each stage.

**Target Population(s):** Initially, the staff planned to target secondary school students and incumbent workers. They wanted to encourage students to consider

employment as electromechanical technicians and in manufacturing, and they wanted to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers. However, the project research indicated that upgrading the skills of the existing workforce was necessary in order to open up the opportunities for new entrants; therefore the project focused solely on incumbent workers in local firms. The incumbent all had significant experience in the industry, but they had been trained primarily through apprenticeships and on-the-job training over long periods of time. The companies felt that the workers were unable to quickly adapt to more advanced and changing technologies as their jobs required.

**Related Programs:** The WIB oversees the areas' One-stop centers.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Several employers were part of the advisory committee that brainstormed ideas and actively help set priorities for the project. The staff administered an in-depth project survey to a large group of employers, with as many as four to five individuals from each company involved in the survey. The company representatives were mostly human resource directors and front-line supervisors. The supervisors participated because many of them were technicians who had advanced through their careers within the industry.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The other collaborators were members of the advisory committee. Major partners include Central Virginia Community College, the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Association (a local industry trade association), the Chamber of Commerce, and Central Virginia Industries (an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers). The staff interviewed each of these stakeholders to gain information about current training and apprenticeship programs and educational resources available in the region. In addition, the industry associations helped recruit employers for the advisory committee.

**Training:** Training was not an objective of this grant, but the WIB staff successfully applied for a DOL Regional Skills Shortage grant in order to implement the training that the sector grant provided planning for. The community college utilized its strengthened partnerships with area companies to develop a customized training program built around identified company needs. The training module was approved for academic credit by the community college, and this will provide workers with a portable credential in the future.

#### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** The WIB staff used findings from a previously conducted Community Workforce Audit as part of the background research for this project. The audit provided a survey of companies in the region and focus groups with representatives of selected area companies. A DOL Regional Skills Shortage grant will be carried out based on the results of the sector grant.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** This project resulted in the development and rollout of a subsequent training module funded through the DOL Regional Skills Shortage II grant program that provides for incumbent worker skills upgrading. This training started as the sectoral grant period ended.

**Innovative Practices:** This project addressed a specific occupation that is common to a range of manufacturing industries. This was different from the majority of demonstration projects because most of them targeted a set of occupations within an industry in which to develop training. The staff brought together a variety of partners across a large geographic region with different municipalities to create an integrated initiative that benefits the workers and companies. The project team was also able to leverage additional funding to move this initiative from the planning phase into implementation phase based on the work done with the Formation grant. The staff worked with the community college to gain academic credit status for the customized training modules so that workers can have a portable credential.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

<b>Enrollment:</b>	N/A
<b>Job Placements:</b>	N/A

**Future Plans:** The staff is implementing training for incumbent workers with the new grant money. They have already identified 100 individuals that the companies want to train. They plan to continue working with the community college to ensure that the training modules are awarded academic credit. The staff is seeking to create a permanent training infrastructure that allows companies to invest in worker training even if public funding is not available. In addition, they are looking to plan a youth worker program to connect new entrants to positions as they open and to overcome the poor perceptions of these jobs by the general public.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Workforce Resources, Inc.

***Area Served:*** Rural West-Central and Western Wisconsin

***Grant Type:*** Formation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01- 6/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Workforce Resource, the regional WIB, was the fiscal agent and managed the grant. One lead staff person, employed by the WIB, served as a coordinator, and the executive director of the WIB had a fairly significant role. There was also one coordinator in each of the nine counties in the region. Workforce Resource contracted with Workforce Connections, a health care consulting firm, to work with the stakeholder group, known as the HealthWorks Alliance.

***Key Partners:*** HealthWorks Alliance includes representatives of hospitals (including a rural community hospital), clinics, long-term care facilities, education providers (including a college nursing program, a technical college, and school-to-work coordinators for public schools in the region). The Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association (WHA) and Wisconsin Healthcare Association (WHCA) were also partners. After the initial meetings, the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) and several more employers were added.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The WIB is the focal point for encouraging communication across all of the communities in the region. The sector approach was consistent with the Board's planning process. Project staff reported to the Board members about what they what they found. The Board was originally less involved, but became more engaged as the discussion turned to implementation.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The targeted industry is health care and the jobs they focused on were RN, LPN, pharmacists, radiologist, and qualified nursing supervisors. Healthcare was chosen because of its impact on the regional economy.

***Target Population(s):*** The project focused on eligible dislocated workers, incumbent workers, and new entrants. This broad-based approach was taken because the need for workers in the health care is so significant.

***Related Programs:*** The Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association and Wisconsin Healthcare Association were conducting a comprehensive study of healthcare employment prior to the start of the sectoral grant. A more generalized labor market survey, developed in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin-Extension was also under way in the region. Data from both of these efforts were used by the HealthWorks Alliance in their strategic planning activities. The sectoral

employment project also coordinated with efforts on the part of these health care associations to market and promote health careers in the region.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** Employers were interested in the project. The industry as a whole is engaged in trying to find a solution to labor shortages. Employers participated in monthly meetings of the HealthWorks Alliance. A broader group of employers participated in focus groups and in forums held in each of the nine counties in the region. Some forums included chief executive officers and directors of human resources, while others included intermediate-level administrators and human resource workers.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** Stakeholders participated the HealthWorks Alliance and in the focus groups and regional forums. The state associations (Wisconsin Health and Hospital Association and Wisconsin Healthcare Association) helped engage employers, and other stakeholders helped identify issues.

***Training:*** Formation grant —no training was provided

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Formation grant — no other services or activities were provided

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The HealthWorks Alliance prepared a “Prescription for Action” plan that addresses recruitment and promotion, retention, and communication issues. Without having implementation resources, activities have slowed down, but the Alliance is continuing to use the approach and connections that have been made. They are exploring options with Wisconsin Health Education Center for sharing an employee to serve as a specific healthcare sector coordinator.

***Innovative Practices:*** This regional approach involved many different employers and educators and took the initiative to the local level through county forums. The project worked with high school School-to-Work Coordinators, teachers, students, and parents to interest new labor market entrants in health careers. The project developed a plan for distance learning to provide skill development opportunities in rural communities.

### ***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** N/A

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** Workforce Resource plans to continue to apply lessons learned from grant. In the past, they organized initiatives on a geographically due to the large region. Now they are looking at using a sector or cluster approach beyond health care.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**GRANTEES**

**EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE**

**Grantee:** Verdugo Workforce Investment Board

**Geographic Area Served:** The project centers on the Verdugo region of California and the cities of Glendale and Burbank. It's a medium-size metropolitan area that is part of the larger Los Angeles metro area.

**Grant Type:** Implementation

**Grant Period:** August 1, 2001- July 31, 2002

**Industry Sector:** Entertainment

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

**Administrative Structure:** The Verdugo WIB was the grantee. The WIB is housed in the offices of the City of Glendale, and serves the cities of Glendale and Burbank. All WIB staff are employed by the city of Glendale, and they managed the grant.

**Key Partners:** The WIB partnered with the Entertainment Industry Development Corporation (EIDC) and the Contract Services Administration Trust Fund (CSATF). EIDC represents the major studios and networks in the industry, and CSA is a multi-industry employer organization. Both groups provided insight and information on the trends and workings of the local entertainment industry to the project staff.

**Role of the Workforce Investment Board:** The WIB members were not involved in the operations of the grant, but they were kept up-to-date on the progress via reports and meetings. The staff feels that interest levels of the individual board members were dependent on how heavily their companies or organizations rely on contingent workers. They noted that since many of the WIB members are new, a number of them were still getting acclimated to the WIB and the workforce system. The staff believes that WIB members have been positive about the project, and that it fits pretty well with other activities of the WIB.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs:** The project targeted the entertainment industry, and it focused on freelance/contingent workers within the entertainment industry. The staff notes that this particular project also provides an example of how a WIB can deal with contingent worker issues and that some lessons from the experience may be applied to projects in other industries that have high levels of freelance workers.

**Target Population(s):** This particular project focused on contingent and freelance workers in the entertainment industry. The project staff estimated that there are a total of 60,000 entertainment industry workers in the Verdugo area, which represents over 30% of the area's workforce. The staff cited industry research that indicates that 60% of these workers are employed on a freelance basis. The

staff feels that freelance workers are generally not well served by the workforce system.

**Related Programs:** The WIB has been working on a variety of projects in the entertainment industry for the last seven years. For example, they carried out a state-funded Rapid Response grant to address the effects of a potential actors and writers strike on the contingent workforce. The WIB also was awarded an H-1b grant by DOL that was used to assist with worker retraining in the entertainment industry.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The staff reported that employers were not strongly interested in the project because it focused on the status of freelance workers, who by definition are free to work for many different firms. However, the staff was able to work with the executive leadership of the CSA. The staff feels that employers would benefit from a sectoral effort because it would help to stabilize the regional pool of workers. However, they note that they would need a much larger project to fulfill this need.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Other participants in the project included the one-stop center, Small Business Development Centers, area technical training providers, independent contractors who provided career counseling and skills assessment services, and entertainment industry unions.

**Training:** The project designed services along three tracks: 1. Business management and entrepreneurship development, 2. Job search and career development, and 3. Industry skills upgrade. The goal for all three tracks is to give participants strategies to increase their income potential, and to provide them with the skills needed to remain in the industry over time. The staff questions whether there is sufficient training capacity in the region to meet the area's needs now that many entertainment-training vendors have cut back or gone out of business.

**Other (Employment-Related)  
Services/Activities:** None

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** The WIB hopes to continue this project and to continue focusing on contingent workers. They feel that it is necessary for the public workforce system to address the needs of contingent workers and reduce disincentives to working with this population. They note that projects assisting contingent workers may not positively impact WIB performance standards because those workers tend to drop out of training if a job comes up for them. Contingent workers also may have a history of earning relatively high wages; therefore demonstrating wage gains could be difficult. The staff feels that this project has laid the foundation for future sectoral work by the WIB.

***Innovative Practices:*** Blending employment training with business management skills to address the needs of contingent and freelance workers was innovative. It linked business development and workforce development agencies together to address the myriad needs for the targeted population. It could be a useful model for those programs that attempt to work with contingent workers or in industries that utilize these workers.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** 24

***Job Placements:*** 14

***Future Plans:*** Now that the project is over, the WIB will continue to pursue sectoral strategies for contingent workers in the entertainment industry and other sectors.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Iowa Workforce Development Region 10 WIB -- Kirkwood Community College, Marion, IA

***Geographic Area Served:*** 7-County region in Iowa, including Cedar Rapids and Iowa City as well as rural areas

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** August 2000 – March 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Call centers for companies that have customer service units (or their whole company is customer service) using integrated technology

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The grant was managed by Kirkwood Community College, which is one of three one-stop operators for the WIB in Region 10. A contractor to the college was responsible for much of the design and delivery of the training.

***Key Partners:*** Primary partners were the employers involved in the industry consortium, which now includes 12 employers.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The initial project idea came from WIB staff, who prepared the grant application. The WIB played limited oversight role in this project at first, but in the past year the WIB's oversight has increased. The WIB now receives a monthly report of all grants and has taken a greater interest in the project and another related initiatives. Kirkwood Community College, which serves as the fiscal agent for WIA, also coordinates all WIB meetings. This facilitates feedback to the WIB about the project.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Entry-level customer service, collections, or tele-sales positions in call centers. Interestingly, the call centers in this initiative are located in a range of industries including insurance, banking, traditional in-bound/out-bound telemarketing groups, and leasing companies. The starting wage is \$10 to \$12 per hour with benefits.

***Target Population(s):*** Project targets individuals whose income is at or below 80 percent of the median income level for the county, including welfare-to-work participants.

***Related Programs:*** This project builds on work that was originally done through a community development block grant from the state. Eight employers contributed

funds to provide the match for this grant. The call center industry came to their attention based on a 7-county survey of employers that was done to assess workforce needs. The state grant allowed them to do the research and design the training curriculum that served as the basis for this project.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** Initially recruited employers through the focus group process they used in conducting industry research. Engaged a small group of employers and gradually expanded that group. Employers have been involved in the design of the training. Employers also give feedback to the training contractor about improvements to the training based on experiences with graduates that have been hired. Employers also host students for a one-day visit to the work site and present at some of the class sessions.

In addition, employers identified priorities for some related activities. Initially they had proposed a joint marketing campaign to expand interest in call center careers, but as the labor market changed they identified new priorities, including a retention study and an initiative to share information on call center technology. The employers meet quarterly to review the progress of the project, and the outcomes of training to date.

### ***Other Stakeholder Participation:***

Human service providers have been a source of referrals to the project, but they have not been actively involved. WIA assisted students with child care funding. Vocational Rehabilitation and Kirkwood Community College's Educational Development Office have assisted students with disabilities. The telecommunications vendor used by the employers donated equipment and provided assistance in setting up the telephone lab for the class.

### ***Training:***

12-week training course that runs from 9:30 – 1:30 Monday-Friday. Curriculum covers information about call center industry, basic work skills (punctuality, goal setting, etc.), specific skills needed for customer service/tele-sales, and a job simulation/practicum. Participants are also assisted in attaining employment including training on resume writing, interview skills, and job placement. The training contractor works individually with those students who are having trouble finding a job after graduation. Graduates are invited back for a 3-week evening leadership class.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** The project conducted a retention survey to assess how retention experience of their graduates matched against the experience of employers.

The project also conducted a Best Practice Retention Survey with call center industry partners. The objectives of this study were to obtain information on factors that impact the retention of call center employees and to use the information for the purpose of improving retention of association member organizations.

### **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The project is on-going. They have to continually seek new funding sources, but have been successful in sustaining the program. Employers are committed to continuing their cash and in-kind contributions. WIA provides some of the funding. The program has begun to examine pathways for advancement and how they might work with participants and with companies to facilitate that process for their trainees. The leadership training course mentioned above is part of that effort.

***Innovative Practices:*** As part of their work with the companies, Kirkwood conducted a survey of retention rates of its graduates, and matched it with the general experience of companies. It found that its graduates were having the same level of retention as those the company hired from other channels, and that differences in retention were associated very strongly with where a graduate was working rather than how well the graduate did in the training. For companies, this finding highlighted the need for them to focus on their own practices in order to address retention issues.

All students have an opportunity to visit a call center and sit with a customer service worker and listen-in on calls. The grantee was able to obtain agreement from employers to consider the 12 week training to be equivalent to call center employment experience. This provided opportunities to individuals who would previously not have been granted interviews with these employers.

Kirkwood also conducted a study of the types of technology that companies use in their call centers. They created an on-line database for companies to use in order to access this information. For the companies, this has given them an understanding of who in the area is using what technology, and has been cause for them to network and share information. Since these companies are in different industries, they have been relatively comfortable sharing their experiences related to call center technology.

#### ***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** 105 from March 2001-March 2003

***Job Placements:*** Of the 80 students who graduated, 65.5% who were actively seeking employment had secured positions in the customer call service industry within 3 weeks of graduation.

***Future Plans:***

Kirkwood has used the sectoral model to approach other industries—banking, bio tech, manufacturing process control. The project manager finds the model helpful for outreach to industry to address workforce issues. The project has also helped them identify employers to serve on the regional WIB. Kirkwood plans to continue the project and expects to work it into their on-going activities.

The employer consortium is looking at new training and learning opportunities for call center workers.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Lancaster County Workforce Investment Board, Lancaster, PA

***Geographic Area Served:*** Small Metropolitan area (urban/suburban/rural mix)

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** July 1, 2001 – September 30, 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Lancaster WIB was the grantee for this project, and the WIB staff managed the grant.

***Key Partners:*** While funding from this grant was used primarily in Lancaster County, the programs that were developed were shared with two other Boards – Berks County WIB and South Central Pennsylvania WIB. In total, there were 15 One-Stop providers and 65 staff members involved across the ten counties.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** Prior to receiving this grant, representatives of the local health care industry approached the WIB about working on a project that would satisfy their need for skilled labor. The companies made a commitment to the WIB to support the project financially. Two members of the Lancaster WIB from the healthcare industry worked with the WIB staff to plan and set goals for the project. Other members provided advice to the staff on implementing the project. The Board supported and promoted the sector concept because they have organized their strategic planning to focus on a set of targeted industries, with healthcare being one of them.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care was the targeted industry for this grant and nursing/allied health positions were the targeted occupations. The WIB members wanted to start a targeted industry initiative. The staff analyzed a variety of data to identify the best industries in which to launch a sectoral project. Their research indicated that the region had a high concentration of healthcare services and facilities as compared to the state and nation. They also discovered that there was significant labor demand for skilled workers in the industry. The WIB saw this as a competitive advantage for which they could design a regional workforce development strategy to foster economic development.

***Target Population(s):*** This project targeted incumbent workers in healthcare and incumbent and dislocated workers in other industries. The WIB felt that incumbent workers at healthcare organizations, who were not in the nursing or allied health positions, could help fill immediate labor needs in the industry. The WIB

wanted to develop healthcare career ladders in order to convince new entrants to come into the field. Incumbent and dislocated workers in the 18-40 year old cohort were seen as the most likely to ascend up the proposed career ladder framework. The WIB members felt that workers in certain fields, such as retail and hospitality, were “underemployed” in low-quality jobs with limited growth potential that did not pay a “living wage.” Additionally, a significant number of workers had recently been dislocated as a result of declines in local manufacturing and technology industries. Workforce diversity was also an issue because the area nursing pool is disproportionately white and female.

**Related Programs:** The WIB has coordinated different finance streams to fund workforce development activities. These efforts include the use of Pell grants, Individualized Training Accounts, and low-interest state education loans.

### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The WIB worked with a total of 34 employers that included both acute and long-term care institutions. The companies committed to support the WIB financially. The staff developed a set of television advertisements highlighting healthcare careers and instructing workers to contact the One-Stop. After the staff showed the commercials to the employers, the companies agreed to pay for the airtime on a local station. The participating employers provided matching funds to the project in the amount of \$560,000. Different levels of executive decision makers represented the firms, and the size of the company determined who was engaged with the project. The staff worked with human resource executives from the hospitals and nursing homes, and they worked with the directors and/or owners of smaller facilities. Two of the employers who were on the WIB helped drive the project and an employer steering committee met every 4-6 months to review the progress of the project.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The One-Stop served as the primary point of interest for workers who responded to the commercials. One-Stop staff helped guide hundreds of workers through the process. The effort also relied on the local community college, vocational-technical system, and public school system for training.

**Training:** The Lancaster Career and Technology Center provided Training for C.N.A., LPN, and Allied Health positions. The Lancaster campus of the Harrisburg Area Community College provided training for the RN and Allied Health positions, and the Lancaster General Hospital School of Nursing also provided RN training. The local public school system provided basic and remedial education for participants. The area literacy council worked with the LPN program to assist trainees. Each of the trainers was a co-located One-Stop partner along with the WIB, facilitating the integration of partner activities.

#### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** The multi-WIB consortium has planned for a sector project in the construction industry, and they are in the process of rolling out a media campaign. It will be modeled on the health care sector project.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The project is on going and has been fully incorporated into the WIB's work as a major focal point. The health project will be continued indefinitely, and a second round of private and public funding from multiple sources is in place for the upcoming year.

***Innovative Practices:*** This project helped link a variety of local organizations that were all working on the same issues – feeding the demand for trained nurses and skilled allied health workers – and it allowed for better coordination among the regional players. The WIB was able to leverage over \$500,000 in private sector funding for this sector project, and additional private sector funding has been raised to continue it. The DOL grant money served as a catalyst for the project, and the WIB used the funds to support the development of the larger project by the staff. The media campaign used corporate-level advertising across the 10-county region that resulted in thousands of inquiries, and hundreds of participants signed on. The WIB staff helped negotiate articulation agreements between the LPN and RN providers that allows LPNs to skip first year of the RN program and receive credit for their relevant coursework and prior nursing experience. The WIB was also able to convince state economic development officials to recognize health care as a growth industry. They were the first health care project to receive state economic development funding.

### ***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** The nursing programs have increased their enrollments by 200 slots per year for LPNs and 300 slots per year for RNs. There were data collection issues related to the fact that the WIB was not the primary training provider and had to rely on other organizations for reporting.

***Job Placements:*** N/A. Students have yet to complete the training.

***Future Plans:*** The WIB has found additional public and private funding streams from which to finance the continuing project. The project is continuing under the direction of the Lancaster WIB and is a major part of its portfolio of work. They have centered their workforce investment strategy on sectoral initiatives and have launched a project in the construction industry with additional projects emerging in the food industry, the lumber and wood products industry, and in the industrial maintenance occupational group.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Pima County WIB
<b><i>Geographic Area Served:</i></b>	Medium Size Metro Area (urban/suburban)
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Implementation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	August 5, 2001 – December 31, 2002
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Plastics Manufacturing

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Pima County WIB was the grantee for this project. The Pima County One-Stop is the fiscal for the WIB and provides staffing for WIB projects. The One-Stop was the point of entry for the workers in this project and provided recruitment, enrollment, tracking and support services for job development and placement.

***Key Partners:*** An important partner was the Southern Arizona Institute for Advanced Technology (SAIAT). SAIAT is a nonprofit training organization funded by the local and state governments, and it has worked closely with the WIB staff on prior projects. The Arizona Plastics and Advanced Composite Materials Cluster (Plastics Cluster), a consortium of local plastics industry firms, also worked with the staff on the project.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** Overall, individual WIB members were not heavily engaged in this grant and allowed the staff to run the project. However, the plastics initiative was a response to the WIB's Strategic Plan that called for industry-driven training in fast-growing sectors and lead to the initial development of SAIAT. The WIB received monthly progress reports on the project, and the members were invited to participate in project meetings and events. One board member was the CEO of a plastics industry firm and served as the head of the Plastics Cluster. He helped provide leadership and industry insight to the project staff. In general, the staff reported that the WIB members encouraged them to work with businesses and add value to their operations.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The plastics industry was selected because the state's economic development officials identified the industry as an emerging growth sector for Arizona. Tucson was identified as the home to a significant cluster of the state's plastics companies. The industry came to the WIB's attention after industry officials notified the city economic development agency that they needed skilled workers in order to upgrade their workforce. This grant targeted jobs in the injection molding processes within the plastics industry. The project focused on 2 occupations, entry-level machine operators and mid-

level injection molding operators. These jobs are the most common in the local industry, and the businesses report higher-than-wanted rates of turnover in these positions.

**Target Population(s):** The project initially focused on incumbent, dislocated and new workers, but the project team determined that dislocated workers would be harder to reach because they were not seeking job opportunities in the industry. After layoffs in the information technology and manufacturing industry, the dislocated workers who sought retraining assistance through the One-Stop tended to have higher technical skills and wage histories than the average area workers, and they appeared to be less likely to accept lower wages in the plastics industry which was also facing a number of layoffs. The staff decided to target older youth (immediately post-HS) as new workers and incumbent workers. The youth were steered toward entry-level employment and the incumbent training component was designed to help them advance to mid-level positions.

**Related Programs:** The WIB has supported SAIAT programs that provide training in technology-based industries with companies such as Sun Microsystems and Raytheon. The One Stop offers soft-skills training, and has done other work in other industries via Welfare-to-Work, Trade Adjustment Act funds, and WIA Youth Opportunity funds. The staff also conducts surveys for their Hi-Tech Readiness program, a job training pilot program working in local industries.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Several employers were directly involved with the project. The company representatives were mostly high-level decision-makers such as human resource directors, senior line managers, or company owners and presidents. The initial group of industry partners was small and unorganized, but the economic downturn and common labor skills shortages in the local industry helped bring the employers together to form the Plastics Cluster. The employers provided information about career ladders, job classifications, wages, vacancies, turnover, training needs, and curriculum issues. They also identified incumbent workers at their companies who would benefit from the training. One firm took a central role in organizing the industry firms to pursue the sector project. Initially, the employers made commitments to hire workers, but they could not keep those commitments after the economy softened. However, the businesses continued to work with the project staff and participate in project efforts. Those companies with incumbent workers being trained provided 90% of the costs of the training and paid their workers for attending.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The Tucson Office of Economic Development provided insight on the relationship between training and business retention and expansion. Pima County Community College provided input on the training curriculum and offered remedial and college-level coursework for workers. Several companies offer tuition reimbursement programs to their workers to complement skills training.

**Training:** The training for the entry-level and incumbent workers was provided by SAIAT at its facilities. Prior to the grant, there was no specific training program in place to meet the needs of the plastics industry. The training staff - instructors with industry backgrounds - used available industrial equipment and computer simulation models to teach the workers. The entry-level track focused on basic skills training such as fundamental math and science, measurement & equipment, technical writing, and computer simulations of the plastics process. The incumbent track was designed with the assumption that experienced workers had basic industry and product knowledge, and it focused on providing an introduction to the theoretical aspects of plastics (products, advanced software, software simulations, etc) and solids that an advanced workers needs.

**Other (Employment-Related)**

**Services/Activities:** One-Stop staff provided case management and follow-up support for participants including career counseling, childcare and transportation assistance, and referrals for other services. The youth workers received stipends equivalent to the minimum wage for each hour of participation; these stipends were funded through Youth Opportunity grants. Pima Community College offers customized training and other for-credit courses that workers can attend to augment the sector training. Some companies offer tuition reimbursements to cover these costs.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** This project will proceed after the initial grant period is over because the WIB and the industry employers feel that the sectoral strategy worked well. The staff is performing more industry and labor market analysis, and they are working to further the link between the Tucson plastics project and other industry efforts in the state. The training program has been added to the list of local WIA eligible training providers, Youth Opportunity and WIA youth service providers, and the JOBS Occupational Training Referral Process.

**Innovative Practices:** Despite the national economic decline and a local industry downturn, the project staff was able to implement the project by relying on the other stakeholders to focus on their role and responsibilities. The WIB staff focused on coordinating the effort, and they used the One Stop as the point-of-entry for workers. The project relied on the employers to lead the project and take the initiative in building the business stakeholder partnership. The training provider brought its reputation in the business community and its relationship with the WIB to bear on the project and focused on providing targeted training to the identified workers. The result was the development of a new customized training program for the plastics sector that can be fully implemented.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment:** 2 (17 incumbents, 25 youth) enrolled, and 27 (13 incumbents, 154 youth) completed the training

**Job Placements:** 8 youths placed, 16 incumbents retained

***Future Plans:*** The project team performs a self-evaluation monthly to gauge progress and assess where the project stands. They have decided against working with dislocated workers in the near future. Because they feel that focusing on employer needs was the best approach to this project, they foresee working closely with the industry in the future on other projects. As a result of this project, the WIB is adapting a sectoral approach to its other efforts in other industries.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Prince George's Workforce Services Corporation

***Geographic Area Served:*** Prince George's County and the Washington, DC Metropolitan area

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/02 – 9/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Sales and Service

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The project was administered by the Prince George's Workforce Services Corporation, a non-profit organization that links employment and training to the needs of business.

***Key Partners:*** National Retail Federation Foundation and the Community Partners Network, composed of community organizations that provide services to the target population.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WIB was involved in the project from the beginning. Representatives from the WIB's Sales and Service cluster advisory group sit on the WIB. The WIB received reports on the project and discussed the results with staff and with project advisory members. The WIB staff contributed 3.5 – 4 FTEs to the project, including a full-time manager for the training institute.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The sales and services cluster includes the retail and distribution industries. It is one of eight industry clusters that the WIB has targeted for assistance in Prince George's County. Based on Maryland labor market information, this cluster is expected to be the fastest or among the fastest growing industry clusters in the region. Sales and service is not a single industry, but a cluster of industries defined around the function of sales and customer service. For example, financial services, and hospitality all involve some aspect of sales and customer service. The key occupations targeted are: cashiers, sales associates, and wait staff.

***Target Population(s):*** The target population included single parents and economically disadvantaged populations eligible for WIA and/or welfare-to-work

programs, dislocated workers, youth, older workers, and incumbent workers in related industries.

**Related Programs:** The Workforce Services Corporation's activities are closely tied to economic development initiatives. In 1999, the Prince George's County Executive launched the Workforce Development Partnership, which is organized around industry clusters. Each industry cluster has an Industry Advisory Committee to identify current and projected workforce development needs in the targeted industry sectors in the county and region over the next 25 years. Prince George's County has made a concerted effort to increase its economic base in several areas – retail recruitment was and is a major goal of the county's economic development strategy.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** The WIB's Sales and Services Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from several employers, provided oversight, guided planning, reviewed the curriculum, and assisted with instruction (e.g., taught some class sessions and provided guest speakers). Employer representatives were a mix of human resources staff, some department heads, store managers, and small developers. Employers were critical in the development of the training curriculum and in trainee orientation. They were also important in refining the project's understanding of career ladders in the cluster. In fact, the employers were able to dispel misconceptions about the cluster being dominated by low-wage, dead-end jobs. Employers did make informal commitments to hire successful trainees.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Recruitment of participants was done through the use of a network of community partners (primarily community based organizations such as homeless shelters, Community Ministries, and Even Start Family Literacy), as well as Maryland Job Services and the Prince George's County Department of Social Services. In addition to recruitment, community partners, were involved in referral, screening, case management, and job placement.

**Training:** This grant was used to implement the Prince George's Sales and Service Institute, which is located at the One-Stop Career Center. A comprehensive training curriculum is delivered in four to six week classroom instructional workshops. The curricula and materials were designed using nationally developed customer service and sales skill standards to meet the demands of a range of service-related employers. The program includes the following: standardized and industry-focused assessment; standards-based curriculum; industry-specific orientations; industry-specific job readiness and life skills; customized occupational

skills training; support services; career planning and guidance; job placement assistance and follow-up.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** National certification in customer service and sales is available for qualified workers through testing from the Sales and Service Voluntary Partnership, an industry partnership supported by the National Skill Standards Board.

Participants are taught to plan for career mobility by recognizing transferable skill sets and creating personal career ladders. They are instructed to take advantage of continuous learning offered by employers through tuition reimbursement, employer-sponsored training, and/or community colleges.

The curriculum incorporates literacy training using the Equipped for the Future (EFF) standards developed by the National Council for Literacy.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** Four classes of the Sales and Service Institute were held, with all but one student completing the training. A major challenge was recruiting training participants. Despite having community partners, the process was very slow. Grantee staff indicated that, to some extent, this may have been grounded in the poor perception of the cluster by job seekers and representatives from community organizations. In retrospect, respondents think they should have spent more time emphasizing career pathways in the industry. This would require focusing on incumbent as well as entry-level workers

***Innovative Practices:*** Students were informed of a partnership between the One-Stop and McDonald's Corporation for an Assistant Manager Trainee Program. Two students entered this program after finishing the training at the Sales and Service Institute. McDonald's guarantees Assistant Manager jobs to those completing their training.

Participants attend networking luncheons held by the DC and Prince George's Chambers of Commerce.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** 42; 41 completed the training

***Job Placements:*** 33

***Future Plans:***

Future plans include establishing satellite training centers located either in or around local malls and expanding the Institute's training services to more employers. The WIB will examine the applicability of applying the Sales and Service Institute training model in other clusters, such as Hospitality and Business and Finance, where sales and customer service are important components of doing business. They are also applying to be a test site for National Certification project in customer service.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Regional Workforce Development Board of Greater New Haven

***Area Served:*** New Haven, Connecticut is the urban center; Greater New Haven includes 14 towns

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** July 2001 – September 2002

***Industry Sector:*** Healthcare

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The Regional Workforce Development Board of Greater New Haven, which is the regional WIB, was responsible for policy oversight, contract monitoring, and project evaluation. Two WIB staff members were actively involved in the project, along with staff from the two employer partners.

***Key Partners:*** Employer partners were the Yale New Haven Hospital and the Hospital of St. Raphael, two of the largest employers in the region. Technical assistance provider partners were the Connecticut Hospital Association the regional Area Health Education Center (AHEC), and Gateway Community College.

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The WIB served as fiscal administrator and facilitated bringing the parties together. The Board of Directors adopted the sector project as a main priority, and there was much higher involvement from WIB staff on this initiative relative to other WIB projects.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Health care, especially nursing.

***Target Population(s):*** The target population included incumbent workers as well as high school students, dislocated workers, and individuals transitioning from welfare to work.

**PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** Employers were actively involved in choosing the design and mechanism for using training dollars. Partner employers determined the criteria used to select incumbent workers to whom training funds would be directed. For unemployed/underemployed/dislocated workers, the employers, in conjunction with the Connecticut Hospital Association, identified an assessment tool called HOBET (**H**ealthcare **O**ccupation **B**asic **E**ducation **T**est) to assess the suitability of potential entrants in the healthcare field. In addition, employers were involved in career exploration workshops that are held at the one-stop on a monthly basis.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** The Connecticut Hospital Association provided technical information, helped facilitate the meetings, and worked with the employers to identify needs and select an appropriate assessment toll for potential workers. The Area Health Education Center worked with the other stakeholders to produce a Health Occupations and Technology guide which has been distributed to community colleges, high school and middle school guidance offices, and one-stops. Under a subcontract to the WIB, Gateway Community College administered the HOBET on a monthly basis to interested one-stop customers.

**Training:** The hospitals identified incumbent workers who were in need of financial assistance to complete degrees or to attain licensure or certification in order to continue on a career path. All incumbent workers selected had completed at least one full year of employment is in some capacity at the hospital, met the criteria for the hospital's tuition assistance program, had attained proficiency in all performance evaluation areas, and were able to complete training by the end of the grant period.

The greatest demand for training was in the nursing field, from CNA programs, through LPN, RN, and Bachelor of Science Degree Programs in Nursing. Grant funds were used to subsidize educational costs for participants at a variety of local academic institutions, in-house hospital training programs, community colleges, public and private four-year universities, as well as private, non-degree training providers (such a those preparing individuals for CNA state-sanctioned credentials).

**Other (Employment-Related) Services/Activities:** A career fair was held for each partner hospital at the One-Stop. Career TEAM, the contractor who has run the New Haven One-Stop since WIA began, provides job readiness, job retention, recruitment, and outreach training. Healthcare careers exploration informational workshops as well as HOBET assessments were conducted at the one-stop on a monthly basis. A Health Occupations and Technology Guide, and a brochure that contains summary information from that guide, were produced and disseminated as part of this project.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

**Program Status:** The WIB met its objectives with respect to training completion, placement, and wage gains. In addition, by using WIA and TANF funds to supplement the project at the entry-level of the health care career path, the project was able to backfill lower level potions with one-stop customers as incumbent workers were promoted based on their additional training.

The relationship with partners has solidified as a result of this project, and a number of joint efforts, such as career fairs and the assessments, have been institutionalized at the one-stop. Project partners continue to work together to seek other funding.

**Innovative Practices:** Services provided/offered through the grant varied according to the specific needs of the individual and the employer. Anything the trainee needed to help them move up was supplied. The process was expedited by the fact that the training providers were already chosen by the individuals participating. The link with the one-stop was used for recruiting and assessing new entrants to the health care workforce.

**Participation and Activity Levels:**

**Enrollment-Incumbent Workers:** 42 incumbent workers from the two participating hospitals received funding for training.

**Job Placements-Incumbent Workers:** 41 of the 42 (or 98 percent) completed training and were promoted to higher level and/or higher wage positions within their hospitals.

**Assessments:** Counselors from Gateway Community College administered the HOBET to 76 individuals at the New Haven One-Stop. Consequently, each individual participated in a one-on-one session to review assessment results and receive career counseling.

**New Entrants:** 95 individuals were trained for entry level healthcare careers through matching TANF and WIA funds. A 71 percent placement rate was attained for this group.

**Wage Gains-All Participants:** Participants attained an overall 18 percent average wage gain (average wage was \$19.00 per hour).

**Future Plans:**

They want to conduct a customer satisfaction survey, with a three- and six-month follow-up. In December 2002, Southern Connecticut State University, Gateway Community College, and the WIB partnered to develop a proposal to the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration, (HRSA) to implement strategies to recruit young people into nursing, provide a joint admission and seamless integration between the community college's associate degree nursing program and the university's BSN program, and to expand overall enrollment in the BSN program.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Spokane Area Workforce Development Council (WDC)

***Geographic Area Served:*** Spokane County, Washington and Kootenai County, Idaho

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** 7/01/01 – 9/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Biopharmaceutical Manufacturing

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This project was administered by the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council (WDC) but the majority of the day-to-day operation of the grant was contracted to Inland Northwest Technology Education Center (INTEC), a non-profit organization formed as an outgrowth of discussions held during the development of the WDC's Local Area Strategic Plan and the recognition of a need for increased dialogue and planning between industry and education. INTEC is broken into three sector committees: information technology, telecommunications and biotechnology.

WDC staff (Executive Director and one other staff member) were responsible for monitoring fiscal information and periodic review for the grant. This information, together with ongoing project updates and presentations, was reported to the WDC Board.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the WDC, key partners include INTEC, specifically its biotechnology committee. Members of this committee include representatives from most of the 27 regional biotechnology companies in the region, the Biotechnology Association of the Spokane Region (BASR) – an industry group – and representatives from education and training organizations.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** Although the level of interest among the members of the WDC Board was high, their main role was one of oversight for this project. While the Executive Director of the WDC was very involved in the grant, the WDC Board's approach was described as "hands-off" – the Board was supportive and eager to hear about the success of the project but they left most of the ongoing management and operation to INTEC. None of the key employers had representatives on the Board.

**Targeted Industry/Jobs :** Biopharmaceutical Manufacturing. The goal of the grant was to increase the economic competitiveness and growth of biopharmaceutical manufacturing sector firms. Biopharmaceutical manufacturing was selected because labor market research (including a survey of the industry conducted in Fall 2000 conducted by INTEC) indicated that the focus should be on a high tech industry and because there was already a small number of these firms in the area that had plans to expand and had invested in new facilities development. In late Fall 2000, the WDC was awarded a state-funded SKILLS grant that provided resources for the planning phase for a biomedical technology sector initiative. Findings from this grant identified three critical skills required for employment in the targeted industry as well as two education and training gaps: seamlessly integrated education in biotechnology beginning in secondary school, carried through community colleges and expanded at four-year institutions and focused short-term training to fast-track potential workers into the expanding number of jobs in the industry. The decision was made to focus on entry-level technician positions because they felt they couldn't address the more lengthy training required for more advanced positions within the time limitations of this grant.

**Target Population(s):** The target population for this project was dislocated workers eligible for WIA services. WorkSource Spokane (the local One-Stop) and Career Path Services screened and recruited interested dislocated workers for the program, with an emphasis on those displaced from manufacturing jobs. Part of the rationale was that those dislocated from manufacturing jobs would be more familiar with the workplace requirements of jobs in biopharmaceutical manufacturing. The project goal was to train 3 cohorts of 20 each.

**Related Programs:** Building on the findings from the INTEC survey of biotechnology and biomedical sectors, in Fall 2001, the WDC was awarded a state-funded SKILLS grant by the State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to develop the biomedical technology industry areas. See above.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Overall, between 15-18 employers who were members of the BASR participated in the project, but most of the support came from two regional employers (Hollister-Stier and Biomedex). Employers came to meetings, contributed staff to support curriculum development by offering feedback on local needs in terms of skills and competencies, and assisted with the delivery of training (e.g., provided equipment as well as trainers). There was an "implied commitment" among the employers that the project was valuable and that they would commit to hiring program

participants. However, due to both industry hiring practices and the economic downturn, the total number of program hires did not meet expectations. See below.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** The stakeholder group (the biotechnology committee of INTEC – see above) was formed in mid-2000 with the creation of INTEC and met monthly. It brought together industry personnel with experience in education and training, OJT, regulatory affairs and also included representatives from community-based organizations and local government agencies. This coalition was charged with determining industry needs and creating mechanisms so that education and training organizations can quickly respond to emerging needs for skilled workers.

***Training:*** Curriculum development and delivery of training was subcontracted to Spokane Community College (SCC), the primary provider of training for dislocated workers. The college worked with the Institute of Extended Learning, an organization that provides customized training. A program consisting of eight modules taught over a nine-week period (to facilitate rapid reentry) was developed in 90 days by these two organizations with guidance from employers. Staff noted that SCC was able to “think out of the box” and was willing to use trainers from the industry. While three training sessions were planned, the third was not conducted due to low placement rates for the graduates of the first two.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Two orientations that provided information about wages, the industry, and program content were also held. Placement assistance was provided by INTEC and Spokane Community College

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** At the time of the interview, the two training sessions had been conducted and this grant was completed. In general, enrollment and placement activities were not as successful as hoped. Since enrollments were done through sites whose participants are WIA eligible, their standard model of immediate placement after training proved to be a limitation. Re-employment into a new technology industry takes longer than for a low-skills job, and this resulted in disinterest on the part of caseworkers. Placements were also less than anticipated because (1) the economic downturn prevented the expected expansion and planned new hires in the industry and (2) industry hiring practices favored part-time hires with no benefits from temporary placement agencies (limiting risk to employers). Staff learned that while survey data on projected hiring was accurate for the time, it had become obsolete by the time the

project was implemented (almost two years later); therefore expected increases in demand for workers did not materialize.

***Innovative Practices:*** Staff felt that the consortium’s success in developing a unique curriculum for a nine-week course over a ninety-day period demonstrated a successful collaboration and strong commitment on the part of the key stakeholders.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

<b><i>Enrollment:</i></b>	Session #1: 14 enrolled; 8 graduated Session #2: 4 enrolled; 3 graduated
<b><i>Job Placements:</i></b>	Session #1: 5 (pharmaceutical or related industry) Session #2: 2 (pharmaceutical or related industry)

***Future Plans:*** No efforts were underway to secure additional funding for this project. However, there were discussions regarding efforts to pursue additional sector work in the health care field.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Workforce Central Florida (WCF)
<b><i>Geographic Area Served:</i></b>	5 counties (Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Sumter) in central Florida – mix of rural/urban areas
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Implementation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	7/1/01 – 9/30/02
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Information Technology (IT)

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Workforce Central Florida (WCF), the Workforce Investment Board for this area, was responsible for administration of this grant. Overall day-to-day management was performed by two WCF staff.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to WCF, the key partners were three local community colleges – Lake-Sumter, Seminole and Valencia community colleges.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The members of the WIB Board were interested in this project, and were kept informed via summaries and reports, primarily through the WIB's state-mandated High Skills/High Wage (HSHW) Committee, which was responsible for oversight of project activities. Involvement with this sectoral initiative provided some Board members with their first exposure to an economic development approach to workforce issues.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Information technology (IT). The objective of this grant was to increase information technology skills by providing employers across industries with the opportunity to train workers earning less than the average entry-level wage. Under the project definition, high technology industry sectors include simulation and training, opto-electronics, semiconductor fabrication and aerospace industries. Information obtained through prior work with local area employers across many diverse industry sectors and an examination of existing labor market information data convinced the partners that this was a growth industry with a pressing need for training to address the shortage of workers with IT skills ranging from basic computer skills to high-level certifications.

***Target Population(s):*** Incumbent employees. Specific criteria for participants selected for training included: entry-level employees; individuals with some IT background/experience but lacking higher-level skills needed for

advancement; and participants willing to take training that would lead to industry certification. Under this initiative, employers were offered the opportunity to secure training for employees (30 training slots) with an hourly wage not exceeding \$14.50. This wage was chosen because it was determined to be equal to or less than the average wage for most entry-level positions.

**Related Programs:** Each participating training provider had an existing employer outreach initiative that educated them as to the employers' training needs. This information was used to determine which IT courses needed to be made available in the menu of services.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** WCF and the participating colleges used their existing knowledge of the regional employers and identified appropriate employer contacts with potential needs for IT skills enhancement in their businesses. The partners developed a project application that was distributed to employers who might be interested in these services and then worked with employers to gather data required to determine which of these had employees at the selected wage rate. Employer outreach staff from the three colleges then met with interested employers to discuss applications. 39 employers applied and 19 were accepted. Employers selected employees for participation in this project and also provided input as to the preferred types of IT courses to be offered through this program.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** Prior to receipt of this grant, WCF had collaborated with community stakeholders to form the WCF IT Coalition to "strengthen the economic competitiveness and performance of local businesses that were becoming increasingly dependent on IT skilled workers." Members included: K-12/secondary education, economic development, businesses, chambers of commerce, CBOs, and trade associations.

**Training:** The three community colleges selected to provide training were selected based on the menu of IT courses each offered, their regional service coverage area and their prior history of collaboration and cooperation. Thirty-three (33) courses were offered by the three colleges; one-third of these were for industry-wide certifications. Although they had some difficulty recruiting employees meeting the specified wage gap, 34 employees were trained as part of this program.

#### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

**Services/Activities:** Staff at the community colleges referred employers to other colleges if the requested training was not available at the local college.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** Training was provided and the project was completed.

***Innovative Practices:*** WCF staff observed that the decision to target an occupation versus an industry limited their sectoral initiative in some ways. Because they focused on providing services for a particular occupation, they really did not have a full group of industry leaders with whom to collaborate; rather, they worked with employers from different types of industries with training needs for IT workers. Staff also expressed some regret at not starting this effort with a planning grant; they felt they “stepped off the edge” and rushed to put their plan of action into operation.

WCF was made aware of the great need for training services among public sector employers (e.g., public school boards, sheriff’s departments) because most of the available state and local training funds are targeted to private employers.

This project provided an opportunity for WCF and the training providers to learn about the effects of post-September 11 economic conditions on employer training needs. Because employers were placed in a situation where they were forced to consider downsizing, they were grateful for the availability of training opportunities designed to improve skills of existing employees. Trainers also learned that smaller businesses generally do not have funds to allocate for training, particularly during an economic downturn. Finally, this process revealed that the participating employers were more interested in completion of training as opposed to industry certifications, in part due to their belief that credentials might make employees more attractive to other employers.

***Participation and***

***Activity Levels:***                   ***Enrollment:*** 34 participants (113 percent of the goal) from 19 employers completed one or more courses. 14 percent learned at least one industry certification

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** WCF staff learned that the use of employer applications to screen and identify employers for project participation greatly simplified administration and will continue to use this tool in other workforce initiatives.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

<b><i>Grantee:</i></b>	Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI)
<b><i>Geographic Area Served:</i></b>	10 county area in Southeastern Minnesota (mostly rural area; includes Rochester – 3 <sup>rd</sup> largest city in the state.)
<b><i>Grant Type:</i></b>	Implementation
<b><i>Grant Period:</i></b>	7/1/01 – 9/30/02
<b><i>Industry Sector:</i></b>	Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** The grantee for this demonstration was Workforce Development Inc. (WDI). The Southeastern Minnesota Private Industry Council, the WIB, incorporated itself as a 501c(3) non-profit organization, WDI, and it serves a 10-county area. WDI, with over 100 staff, has 11 locations (including 6 One-Stops) and provides services to welfare recipients, at-risk youth, immigrants and other WIA customers.

***Key Partners:*** Key partners with WDI were several health care employers (Mayo Clinic, Hiawatha Homes, Good Samaritan Center, Presbyterian Homes, St. John’s Homes), Riverland Community College, and IBM’s Rochester plant.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** The WIB members serve as the Board of Directors for WDI, and they worked with the staff primarily through the Community and Training Development Committee. Members were supportive of and interested in the project, particularly in terms of learning more about the possibility of turning the project’s work into a commercial venture. A few healthcare employers served on the WIB and were involved with the project. The WIB has since redesigned its subcommittee structure along industry sectors to better target activities.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** The targeted industry selected was health care, with a focus on entry-level occupations. The Mayo Clinic and several other local health care providers (nursing homes, hospitals, etc.) had approached WDI for assistance in addressing the shortage of workers to fill health care positions. WDI staff also reviewed available labor market data and conducted surveys with about 50 local employers to verify the need for employees in the health care industry and to gather information about specific issues related recruitment, training, certification and retention.

**Target Population(s):** Limited English Speakers (LEPs) with literacy and language barriers preventing them from obtaining and retaining jobs in the health care profession. This area has large Somali, Sudanese, Hispanic and other immigrant populations. WDI recognized that there was a large supply of potential workers among these groups; however, administrators also recognized that these workers faced significant language barriers that necessitated a variety of literacy services in order to obtain the required certifications for health care jobs. Staff at local colleges also acknowledged the need for tutors and other resources to assist LEPs in passing the exams.

**Related Programs:** Because of WDI's extensive experience with ESL and literacy programs, in 2002 they were awarded a grant through IBM's Community Services Program to work with an interactive voice recognition instructional software program (Reading Partners) for ESL training, specifically focusing on health care occupational vocabulary. WDI staff had also worked with the local health care providers' association (FIG) to secure small amounts of funding to conduct work in this area and had made presentations about the Reading Partners program to local nursing homes. WDI was also involved in Job Skills Partnership efforts with local technical schools, community colleges and ESL programs.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** WDI worked primarily with four employers (Mayo Clinic, Hiawatha Homes, Presbyterian Homes and Good Samaritan Center) but other employer members of the FIG were involved as well. Employers participated in focus groups and surveys, provided feedback on communication and retention issues with this population and provided in-kind staff time and limited financial support (some employers paid for training). Employers were very interested in this project at the onset, but interest had waned somewhat in the months just prior to the interviews, a fact attributed to the downturn in the economy and the increased availability of potential employees. WDI provided services to seven area health care employers under this grant.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** In addition to the partners listed above, other stakeholders included the Health Education and Industry Partnership (HEIP). It was noted that different stakeholders dominate the coalitions in each local community served.

**Training:** Several types of training sessions were conducted as part of this grant. For example, a total of seven workforce literacy classes for TANF eligible workers with limited English skills were conducted at two WDI

locations. These classes provided job readiness activities as well as preparation for C.N.A. training or work in entry-level jobs in environmental or dietary services.

In addition, new Reading Partner modules focusing on health care concepts were developed to prepare current entry-level health care workers to pass the C.N.A. exam and to support the C.N.A. skills training curriculum. C.N.A. training sessions were held in several different formats for specific populations at community colleges and on – site at employer locations.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** Six WDI staff were trained to conduct language skills assessments for LEPs as part of the standard orientation procedure for all participants. The assessment enables WDI staff to determine if a participant has the necessary language skills to would enable them to obtain employment.

Based on WDI’s collaboration with community colleges and health care providers, a WDI C.N.A 12-week curriculum/training model (including job shadowing, mentoring and language coaching) was also developed. In addition, WDI worked with the Healthcare Education Industry Partnership (HEIP) to develop the Mankato NAR Career Introduction program, a class designed to ensure that C.N.A enrollees pass the C.N.A. exam.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** Currently, WDI is seeking additional funding to move forward with efforts to market the Reading Partner software and services nationwide. They were recently awarded a two-year, \$200,000 grant from IBM to continue to develop their literacy work. As noted above, demand for WDI’s particular type of services focusing on LEPs has dropped off somewhat with the economic downturn because the available labor pool has expanded.

***Innovative Practices:*** WDI developed a unique set of services, called “The Promise of Language” that: helps LEPs identify career ladders and develop language skills necessary to obtain and retain jobs; helps employers understand the special cultural and language needs of these potential employees; and has developed the occupational vocabulary training tools and comprehensive curriculum that can help LEPs develop the communication skills required for success in the health care field.

WDI staff also identified the cultural and language biases in many of the state health care certification exams and have led efforts at the state level to have these tests revised.

***Participation and  
Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** 33 Hispanics passed C.N.A certification  
19 Personal Care workers passed First Aid/CPR  
20/21 completed Health Awareness course

***Job Placements:*** 31 Hispanic C.N.A. workers employed  
16 Personal Care workers retained 12 months or more  
15 Personal Care/Environmental Service Workers  
employed at the Mayo Clinic

***Future Plans:***

See above. WDI will continue its efforts to identify new ways to address literacy through technology and will seek new sources of funding for this work. WDI is also trying to identify another industry sector that is struggling and in need of assistance.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Workforce Opportunity Council, Inc.

***Area Served:*** Southern New Hampshire

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** 7/1/01 - 9/30/02

***Industry Sector:*** Healthcare — long-term care

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Workforce Opportunity Council, the statewide WIB, served as the fiscal agent for this grant. The WIB contracted with the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund (NHCLF) to administer the project.

***Key Partners:*** Three employers of direct care workers (Visiting Nurse Association of Manchester, Visiting Nurse Association of Concord, and Manchester Community Health Center), the University of New Hampshire, NHCLF and its affiliate, the New Hampshire Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute (PHI).

***Role of the Workforce Investment Board:*** The WIB members wrote the Request for Proposal, they set the criteria, reviewed proposals, and selected the contractor (NHCLF). WIB staff provided project oversight and monitoring. The WIB has a business-driven Demand Committee, and this project was viewed as one way to further develop linkages with employers and coordinate with economic development activities.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Direct-care health care workers (e.g., personal care workers, and nurse aides) providing home healthcare services.

***Target Population(s):*** The target population is incumbent workers in paraprofessional positions in healthcare — primarily low-income women with a starting salary between nine and ten dollars per hour.

***Related Programs:*** This project built upon prior work of NHCLF that was aimed at improving entry-level healthcare jobs in New Hampshire. NHCLF participated in a national three-year sectoral employment project funded by the Mott Foundation in 1999 that supports Quality Care Partners, an employee-driven staffing agency that places nurse assistants.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** Originally, four employers had committed to participate in this project, but one agency experienced an unexpected staff change early in the project and had to drop out. Employers cooperated with a survey of their workers conducted by the University of New Hampshire. Employers provided paid leave time for workers to attend the soft skills training provided under this grant. Each employer offered career ladder opportunities or career development activities to their direct care workers, tailored to employer needs and available resources. Employers also agreed to provide retention data. One employer offered informal career development; one employer offered a formal program, but it was limited in scope due to the small size of the organization; and one agency provided a formal career ladder that was broad in scope and opportunity.

***Other Stakeholder Participation:*** The University of New Hampshire conducted an initial workforce survey that included each of the participating employers. The New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, with PHI, brought the stakeholders together and provided training. PHI also surveyed the state for available opportunities for advanced training for direct care workers.

***Training:*** New Hampshire Paraprofessional Healthcare Initiative (PHI) provided soft skill training for both direct care workers and agency training staff so that the agency staff could observe the training and replicate it in the future. PHI provided copies of its problem-solving curriculum to the training staff of each agency/employer. The training was offered twice during the grant period. The agencies provided release time to enable their employees to attend the training.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** The main activity supported by this grant was not a training program, but creation of employer-designed career training using a career ladder approach.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** One employer developed an extensive career ladder, including training that offers homemakers the opportunity to move up to a homemaker 2 position and offers a pay increase. This employer has also instituted a clinical career ladder for their licensed nurse aides (LNA). The ladder requires advanced clinical or leadership training and offers wage increases upon completion. They also have specialty LNA positions that include preceptor, pediatrics, and phlebotomy. They are in the process of designing and planning next steps in hospice training. Most of the training is offered twice per year.

The second employer has a career ladder from homemaker to Personal Care Assistant (PCA), to three levels of LNA. For the LNA positions, there is a list of tasks that have to be completed in order to move up.

LNAs are offered the opportunity to complete these skill requirements annually and receive a 5 percent pay increase if they are successful.

The third employer is a community health center that employs a small number of direct care workers, which limits their ability to establish a formal career ladder. Instead, they inform workers of internal opportunities for advancement and encourage workers to apply for these positions.

The project found that direct care workers have a strong interest in professional development/training, but advanced training opportunities for LNAs in New Hampshire are very limited. Flat reimbursement rates under Medicare and Medicaid create a disincentive for employers to provide additional training.

***Innovative Practices:*** The “train the trainer” approach to the soft skills training provided by PHI will further the sustainability of this project.

One of the employers identified an area in which they could expand their market while also providing new skills and advancement opportunities to their workers. By training LNAs in phlebotomy, aides can, for a fee, travel to a client’s home to draw blood so that the client does not have to travel to a lab. This provides a valuable service to clients, increases revenue for the employer, and provides a step up for LNAs.

***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** Project goal was employer-designed career ladders, not training.

20 direct care workers participated in the soft skills training.

***Job Placements:*** N/A

***Future Plans:*** Both the WIB and NHCLF will continue to be involved in healthcare sectoral initiatives. They plan to support efforts that improve portability of training (e.g., through standardizing career ladders across employers) and efforts that support collaboration among long-term care providers. The WIB recently received an H1-B grant for LNA training.

***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION:  
GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** Worksystems, Inc.

***Area Served:*** Portland, Oregon area, including Multnomah, Washington, and Tillamook counties and the City of Portland

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** July 2001 – September 2002 (extended through March 2003)

***Industry Sector:*** Health Care

**ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** Worksystems, Inc.(WSI), the regional WIB, served as served as grant manager and fiscal agent. WSI staff originally planned to play a significant role in project oversight and day-to-day operations. Two months into the grant, day-to-day operational responsibility was shifted to the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), via a subcontract. AFSCME managed the Career Center from October 2001 through the end of the grant. A Career Center Development Committee, consisting of Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU) Human Resources staff, AFSCME leaders and members, and unit managers, served as an advisory group for the Career Center.

***Key Partners:*** OHSU, Portland’s largest employer; AFSCME, which represents over 4,000 workers at OHSU; and the Metropolitan Healthcare Workforce Consortium, a collaboration of 20 healthcare systems, training providers, and workforce development organizations.

***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** WSI serves as a convener, intermediary, and facilitator for new approaches and new partnerships. They develop and facilitate linkages between employers, industry associations, and training providers. WSI staff monitored the project, worked on project management and implementation, and provided web development and other technical assistance.

***Targeted Industry/Jobs:*** Information technology (IT) and administrative jobs in the health care industry.

***Target Population(s):*** AFSCME-represented incumbent workers, especially entry level workers in facility, office, and IT job classifications at OHSU.

***Related Programs:*** This project built on several prior health care sector projects, and WSI continues to be active in the healthcare sector. The Metropolitan Healthcare Workforce Consortium was formed in 1999 and had completed a report on healthcare industry workforce development needs. Supported by a grant from the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, the key partners in this DOL Sectoral Employment project had previously implemented an on-site training program at OHSU for Certified Nurse Assistants, Certified

Medical Assistants, and Radiologic Technologists. During the period of the DOL Sectoral Employment grant, one of the seven one-stop operators under contract to WSI received state funding to strengthen the Career Center's connections to the larger workforce development system. In 2002-2003, WSI partnered with New Care Directions and the Housing Authority of Portland to offer CNA training to public housing residents. WSI also partnered with SEIU and the University of Oregon to produce a training curriculum and recommendations for a certification program for home care workers.

## **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

***Employer Participation:*** OHSU, with over 11,000 employees, was the single employer involved in this project. OHSU provided the space, office furniture, office equipment, and computers. HR representatives and managers worked with AFSCME on career mapping (identifying job classifications within career tracks and linking them to skill sets, training requirements, and training providers). OHSU worked with AFSCME and with WSI's web team to create Job Link, a web-based application that presents the career mapping information interactively. OHSU also participated in disseminating information about the career center to employees.

### ***Other Stakeholder Participation:***

AFSCME supported renovations needed for the Career Center and provided furniture, computers, office equipment, telecommunications and networking connections. AFSCME also worked with OHSU on career mapping, and managed the career center, including purchasing software and hiring an administrative coordinator and trainers for the career center.

### ***Training:***

The career center offers both classroom and on-line training courses. Courses in administrative support and computer training include: communications and customer service at work, career toolbox (resume writing, interviewing techniques), entry level administrative and computer training, and two additional levels of administrative support and computer training focused on Microsoft Office software. IT training targeted certification for Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS), MOS Master, Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA), Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer, and A+ certification. In addition, the Career Center purchased software for self-guided instruction for those whose native language is other than English. The Center partnered with Portland Community College to offer a 3-credit medical terminology course on-site.

### ***Other (Employment-Related)***

#### ***Services/Activities:***

Career center staff developed the curricula for many of the courses offered, tailoring the material to specific OHSU job requirements and student needs. Job Link, described above, allows a Career Center user to research positions or complete a skill and interest inventory to learn about jobs for which he/she might already be qualified, or to learn about additional training needed to qualify for a particular job. Connect2jobs, a WSI website, is a related on-line tool that offers more general information on health care occupations and training (as well as other industry sectors). The site also links to resume tools, job search engines, and employer web sites.

The Career Center is a full-service operation, and provides assessment and counseling as well as on-site training. It is open to workers from 8a.m. to 7p.m. Monday through Thursday, and on Saturdays by appointment. Classes are held primarily in the early evening and on Saturdays, to accommodate employee work schedules. Workers can use the web-based tools and self-paced learning software as well as the career center library.

## **PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** The Career Center will continue as an OHSU/AFSCME partnership. During the final quarter of the grant period, OHSU committed to supporting the Career Center as part of its Human Resources Department, Training and Development Unit. A coordinator and trainer are supported by OHSU, with plans to add a career counselor.

***Innovative Practices:*** Some workers who have used the career center successfully volunteer to tutor new users. The Career Center has also proven to be a valuable resource at a time of hospital budget cuts. The career center provides services to those on layoff lists to identify and address skill gaps and prepare workers for other jobs that may be available at OHSU. The Career Center also uses injured workers who are on “light duty” assignments to supplement its staff.

### ***Participation and Activity Levels:***

***Enrollment:*** 505 workers were served by the Career Center  
261 participated in the Administrative Support Series  
58 participated in the Communication Series  
28 workers used self-guided curricula to work towards a Microsoft or A+ certificate

***Job Placements:*** 65 workers attained a career advancement with an average wage gain of 13.65%  
28 workers attained a Microsoft or A+ certification

***Future Plans:*** Over the next 2 years, OHSU plans to expand the Career Center to offer more counseling opportunities, enhance ESL and adult basic education, and offer business writing workshops. OHSU is also considering addressing additional career tracks and opening a satellite center at its campus in Beaverton, OR.

WSI plans to continue using the sectoral approach to engage the employer community, in health care as well as in other sectors, including metals and semiconductors. They are planning a reorganization of their one-stop system that will include developing two or three WIA-funded sector-specific one-stops.

## ***EVALUATION OF THE SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT DEMONSTRATION: GRANTEE PROFILE***

***Grantee:*** WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. (WSOS)

***Geographic Area Served:*** Ottawa (location of the training center), Erie, Huron, Wood, Sandusky, and Seneca counties in Ohio (area bordering Lake Erie)

***Grant Type:*** Implementation

***Grant Period:*** 9/01/01 - 12/31/02

***Industry Sector:*** Marine Mechanics

### **ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**

***Administrative Structure:*** This project was jointly administered by the WSOS Community Action Commission (WSOS), a non-profit community action agency, and the Ottawa County Community Improvement Corporation (OCIC), the local economic and workforce development agency. WSOS acts as the fiscal entity, but day-to-day facilitation of ongoing operations is shared between staff from each of the two partner agencies. Both WSOS and OCIC are contractors with the WIA administrative entity.

***Key Partners:*** In addition to the two lead organizations, major partners include local marine dealerships, the Penta Career Center (helped develop curriculum and provided training), Volvo Penta (a marine engine manufacturer), and other local community and economic development organizations.

### ***Role of the Workforce***

***Investment Board:*** While the WIB Board members were described as being very enthusiastic supporters of this project, their role was limited to general oversight. Day-to-day management was left to the partner organizations, who briefed WIB Board members on the project at monthly meetings. A few WIB Board members served on the project's advisory board, which also includes a county commissioner. The WIB Board is now taking steps to pursue sector efforts in other industries.

***Targeted Industry/Job:*** Marine Mechanics. The two partner organizations had identified the marine trades as a critical industry to target because so much of the region's economic activity is linked to tourism and recreational boating activities. Prior to award of this grant, they had surveyed 150 local boat sales and service-related businesses in the region, indexed over 480 marine-related services that these businesses provide, and were in the process of forming a Marine Trades Advisory Board to address both

shortages in trained and qualified marine mechanics and retention issues related to the seasonal nature of the business.

**Target Population(s):** Incumbent workers, dislocated workers, new entrants and low-income individuals who encounter barriers to workforce participation. Partner staff selected this group because they had had extensive experience working with this population and were familiar with their needs.

**Related Programs:** With the completion of their new state-of-the-art facility (The Ottawa County Community Resource Center), the partners were able to persuade a major marine engine manufacturer (Volvo Penta) to relocate their training site from Chicago to this new facility, bringing with them over \$500,000 in materials and equipment for use by the trainees.

Staff reported that a local vocational school had offered training in the marine trades in the past but that it had been eliminated. No similar training programs were being offered within a 150-mile radius.

#### **PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

**Employer Participation:** Employers were very enthusiastic about this project and contributed in many ways. For example, they provided information on specific skills and characteristics required for these positions, and the types of training needed. They also participated in the development of curricula and provided feedback on skills gained or lacking in program graduates. Ten marine dealership owners served on the project advisory board and many others participated in the upfront survey of employers.

**Other Stakeholder Participation:** In addition to employers, others who participated on the project advisory board from the project's inception included representatives of the workforce development board, community-based and economic development organizations, the local Department of Job and Family Services, and other county government officials. Former program participants were also members of the board.

**Training:** Together with employers and the local Adult Career Center, the partners developed a curriculum and "career ladder" program leading to the "Skills for Life" Marine Trades Certification. The 300 hour occupational skills curriculum would have been sufficient to give participants the certificate in marine mechanics to take to employers. However, the partners, with the support of employers and community members helping to design the project, also considered other factors beyond job-specific skills that help individuals succeed and advance in the workplace. As a result, an intake and assessment phase was added to determine job readiness and educational levels and to identify any family needs that might lead to employment barriers and affect job readiness (e.g., dependency issues,

transportation and child care needs). Those in need of supportive services were referred to appropriate area service providers prior to proceeding with the training program.

***Other (Employment-Related)***

***Services/Activities:*** The skills training coursework was preceded by additional training in work ethics (added in response to employer input) and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary boat safety. Red Cross CPR and First Aid training were also added to the program in response to feedback from employers.

**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

***Program Status:*** Under the SED grant, 33 individuals enrolled in the program and 21 received a Marine Training Certification. (See updated enrollment data below.) All of the graduates received scholarships from Volvo Penta to enroll in a weeklong specialty training course. More than half were still employed at six months and 60 percent had received a wage increase. (Note: These six-month figures do not include data for the third class). Staff and employers felt that the program design was essentially sound and working well for the target population. Even so, the partners felt that continued ongoing feedback both about what worked and what didn't would help them improve the program in the future. Staff followed up with participants, including those individuals who dropped out.

***Innovative Practices:*** Lessons learned through ongoing feedback from employers and participants alike led to changes in the program design as it has continued to serve new groups of students. For example, staff learned that training modules must be timed to coincide with the off-season for the marine industry. The initial class started in late fall when employees were scheduled to work overtime to prepare boats for winter storage; consequently, participants often found it difficult to make it to class on time. In addition, because employers were reluctant to deal with employees' personal issues, a WSOS Career Counselor joined the team and worked with employees to address supportive service needs. Finally, the curriculum for the program was modified and updated throughout the life of the program in response to input from both participants and employers.

***Participation and***

<b><i>Activity Levels:</i></b>	<b><i>Enrollment:</i></b>	57
<b><i>(Updated 4/04)</i></b>	<b><i>Job Placements:</i></b>	33

***Future Plans:*** The project has continued to operate and enroll new program participants. See updated enrollment numbers above.