Department of Workforce Services

Jobs for People. People for Jobs.

2005 Annual Report

From the Director

Many changes occurred at the Department of Workforce Services in 2005!

Effective July 1, 2005, our name was changed from the Arkansas Employment Security Department to the Department of Workforce Services to better reflect our role as a provider of workforce services.

We want employers and job seekers to look to us for all their employment needs. Our new vision and mission statements explain our goal to be Arkansas' preferred provider of workforce services.

As an Arkansas Workforce Center partner, our 32 offices are committed to providing quality services in a timely fashion. Please contact me or any of our offices if we can be of service to you.

This annual report highlights some of the many ways we help the citizens of Arkansas.

Artee Williams
DWS Director

Vision Statement

To be Arkansas' preferred provider of workforce services and solutions.

Mission Statement

To enable the Arkansas workforce to compete in the global economy by linking a comprehensive array of services for employers and job seekers.

Programs and Services

Legislative action in 2005 transferred the Temporary Assistance For Needy Families block grant and the Transitional Employment Assistance Program from the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services to DWS. The TANF and TEA programs assist needy families to increase their own employment potential. DWS will provide case management services to include supportive services and referrals to education, training and employment services.

The act also created the Work Pays Program, which provides assistance to former TEA clients in pursuing their career goals through supportive services, job retention and advancement strategies.

The DWS offices at Fayetteville and Jonesboro relocated with other Workforce Center partners. The new locations provide additional space so employees can better serve customers.

The Wynne Workforce Center also opened in 2005. DWS staff are co-located with Workforce Investment Act staff at the technology center and provide workforce services for area employers including advanced manufacturing and automotive technology industries.

DWS produced the 2005-2006 edition of *Career Watch Arkansas*. DWS distributed 100,000 copies of the publication to Arkansas' public schools, DWS offices and Arkansas Workforce Centers. Classroom sets were also provided to career orientation teachers.

The publication features information about resume writing, financial aid and higher education programs, careers and agency partners, and detailed information about occupations, wages and projected employment opportunities.

Training Projects

Arkansas Career Link is one initiative that was implemented in 2005 to enhance the development of the Arkansas work-

force, stimulate job growth by providing employers with trainees at no cost and provide job seekers opportunities to explore new industries and jobs while receiving unemployment benefits.

The program allows laid-off workers who qualify for unemployment insurance benefits to simultaneously receive on-site workplace training and regular UI benefits.

Training is provided by employers for a limited period (a maximum of 24 hours per week for up to eight weeks). Upon the successful completion of training, trainees receive certification of job skills acquired and consideration for employment. The goal is for trainees to get marketable job skills and to reduce the strain on the trust fund.

Jonesboro served as a pilot location for this program. Six employers participated, and several claimants completed the program.

The $1 million on-the-job training program DWS implemented for the Transitional Employment Board is under way. The program's primary objective is to provide work opportunities for low-income families that will prevent their need for welfare assistance.

To accomplish this, the Transitional Employment Board authorized DWS to subgrant up to $1 million in federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds for pilot projects geared to providing on-the-job training opportunities to indi-

viduals eligible for TANF and clients receiving TEA benefits.

The funds will be subgranted to Local Workforce Investment Areas, who will administer the program.

Grants Received

The aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita resulted in tens of thousands of evacuees calling Arkansas home. To assist with re-employment efforts, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded DWS a $3 million National Emergency Grant to provide employment-related services to Hurricane Katrina evacuees. The funds were distributed to the 10 Local Workforce Investment Boards, who provide these services.

The U.S. Department of Labor also awarded DWS an $800,000 grant to hire eight reintegration counselors. The counselors locate evacuees across the state and assist them with their needs. This includes counseling, assisting with job placement and referral to other agencies for things such as food, transportation, clothing and jobs.

Due to the number of immigrants moving to Arkansas, the state was selected as a pilot state to create centers to help immigrants become part of the local community through employment and immigration assistance. DWS received $850,000 to create the New Arkansan Resource Network.

Little Rock, Rogers, Russellville and Malvern, areas with a high number of immigrants, were selected as locations. These locations will provide job placement, community service referrals, translation, language and occupational training, resettlement assistance, supportive services, and technical and legal assistance concerning documentation, civic responsibilities and other appropriate services.

Automation Projects

DWS is developing several automation projects to assist job seekers and claimants.

Claimants can now file their own unemployment insurance claims using the Local Office Arkansas Claims system at the department's 32 offices. LOARC is the agency's Intranet benefit claim filing system. Staff are available to assist claimants who file using the system.

DWS' goal is to make access to our services efficient and convenient. Easy Arkansas Claims is the Internet system for filing claims and is the next step in this process. EZARC is LOARC with an added layer of security to provide additional protection needed to reside on the World Wide Web.

DWS is working with the Social Security Administration to access its database in a real time environment to verify identity at the time claims are filed via EZARC.

DWS recently awarded a $1.1 million contract to Tier Technologies Inc. to upgrade and enhance the existing DWS Interactive Voice Response System using natural language speech recognition. Claimants will be able to file initial claims by phone.

Job seekers may now search for employment using the Arkansas JobLink system, a self-service, Web-based system implemented in the summer of 2005 that gives job seekers access to job listings and employers the capability of posting job orders and searching resumes. There is no fee to use the system, which is available from any

personal computer. DWS and Workforce Investment Act staff are available to assist employers and job seekers who want to use the system.

To better assist the public needing labor force statistics, DWS launched the Discover Arkansas Web site in February 2005. The state-of-the-art Web site provides labor market and economic information to assist employers, job seekers, students, economic developers and analysts.

The site draws from a database containing employment statistics, business listings, occupational wage and salary information, economic and demographic data, and education and training information.

Users who register are able to save their data queries and use them again. These queries will automatically be updated when new data is available. Customers also are able to save publications and articles and create a profile of interest.

Financial Statement

DWS' appropriation for 2005-2006 is $959,150,503. The appropriation for 2006-2007 is $958,685,741.

A percentage of grants received are retained for administrative expenses. About $43 million was utilized for administrative expenses during calendar year 2005.

The Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund's balance on Dec. 31, 2005, was $124,844,586. Revenues collected from unemployment insurance contributions, reimbursement from other states, Reed Act distributions and interest income were $294,880,508. Expenditures for unemployment benefit payments and Reed Act withdrawals were $241,225,395.

Grants Received
FY 2005-2006

Grants	2005-2006
Personnel Services	$35,610,154
Maintenance & General Operations	$32,982,468
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	$620,000,000
Special Fund	$13,025,741
Workforce Investment Act	$58,000,000
UI Trust Fund Loan Interest	$3,000,001
New Hire Registry	$532,139
Community Investment Initiative	$2,000,000
Disaster Relief Payments	$2,000,000
Training Allowances & Payments	$15,000,000
Reed Act	$77,000,000
Transitional Employment Program	$100,000,000
Total Funding:	**$959,150,503**

DWS Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund
December 31, 2005

Balance, Beginning of Year	$71,189,473
Revenues	
Unemployment Insurance Contributions	$275,949,044
Reimbursement From Other States	$13,294,807
Reed Act Distributions	$0
Interest Income	$5,636,657
Total Revenues	$294,880,508
Expenditures	
Unemployment Benefit Payments	$240,083,306
Reed Act Withdrawals	$1,142,089
Total Expenditures	$241,225,395
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues Collected Over Expenditures	$53,655,113
Balance, End of Year	$124,844,586

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Department of
WORKFORCEServices

Statistics

Total Clients Served

• DWS served 233,833 clients. Examples of services received include the following:

- Employment Services
- Re-employment Services
- Unemployment Insurance
- Trade Adjustment Assistance
- Veteran Services
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Legal

• A total of 7,531 fraud and nonfraud overpayments were established totaling $5,265,556. $2,151,703 was recovered in 2005.

New Hire Registry

• The New Hire Registry reported 814,667 new hires in 2005.

Unemployment Insurance

• $240,083,306 was paid in regular unemployment insurance benefits and $13,870,783 in federal unemployment insurance benefits. This totals $253,954,089.

• 16,746 quarterly wage reports were filed using the online UI tax filing, wage reporting and payment site. Electronic Funds Transfers totaled $15,350,957.

Hope Migrant Farm Labor Center

• 22,988 qualified individuals registered for migrant services. Services include the following:

- Registrations
- Referral Assistance
- Interviews
- Lodging

Tax Credits

• 8,159 people were certified for the Work Opportunity and Welfare-to-Work tax credits. This resulted in potential tax credits of $22,949,300 for Arkansas employers.

Web sites

• Several Web sites assisted job seekers with their job search this past year.

• Arkansas JobLink
www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov
• Discover Arkansas
www.discover.arkansas.gov
• Career Watch Arkansas
www.careerwatch.org
• ArkOSCAR
www.arkoscar.org
• Arkansas Government Jobs
www.arstatejobs.org

Department of Workforce Services
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www.arkansas.gov/esd
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