Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Jobs for People. People for Jobs.

DWS
Department of
WORKFORCEServices

2008 Annual Report

From the Director ...

In 2008, DWS launched and expanded several programs for both employers and job seekers.

Artee Williams, Director

We continued to promote the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and provided information to employers about our new Training Trust Fund, which provides funding to train new and incumbent workers.

We also partnered with community colleges and local organizations to provide job training for returning veterans and dislocated workers.

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

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

The year was not without its challenges, as Arkansas saw an increase in business closures and layoffs around the state. The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force conducted numerous workshops for affected workers.

Career Readiness Certificate

In Calendar Year 2008, Arkansas awarded 7,739 Career Readiness Certificates. The program was rolled out statewide in January to meet the needs of employers for a qualified workforce. The certificate provides confirmation to employers that job seekers possess skills in reading, math and locating information — skills that all jobs require.

Arkansas employers have experienced dramatic reductions in turnover and training costs, and job seekers, who can earn a gold, silver or bronze CRC signed by the governor, have another credential they can use to assure employers that they have the basic workplace skills for 21st century jobs.

STATE OF ARKANSAS
Office of the Governor
GOLD
CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE
This is to certify that on the 14th day of January, 2008
IMA SAMPLE
successfully completed skill level five or higher of the
WorkKeys® Assessment Program in the areas of
Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.

CRCs awarded:		
Gold:	1,936	25%
Silver:	4,220	55%
Bronze:	1,583	20%

Get in the Game

Small businesses are the backbone of Arkansas' economy, and because DWS recognizes that entrepreneurship is another form of employment, the agency hosted the Get in the Game Entrepreneurial Conference and Expo in November. Entrepreneurial experts were on hand to provide information and tips to those wanting to start or expand an existing business.

More than 600 participants and 50 exhibitors, including the Small Business Administration, educational institutions and successful entrepreneurs, attended. Workshops were held throughout the day, providing information about various topics including business planning, financing and marketing.

DWS will host Get in the Game II in November 2009.

Community Day Events

DWS hosted four Community Day Events around the state in 2008 to provide information to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families clients (including Career Pathways and Work Pays clients), dislocated workers and the general public about the services DWS and its partners provide.

These events were held in North Little Rock, Pine Bluff, West Memphis and Bentonville, with between 200 and 300 people attending each event.

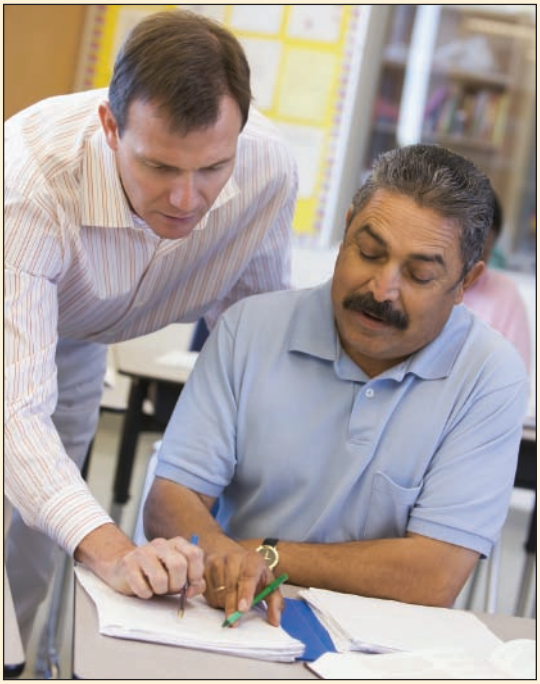
Various partners, including educational institutions and nonprofit organizations, attended each event, and employment-related workshops were held throughout the day.

Training Trust Fund Program

The DWS Training Trust Fund Program was created to improve the skills of new and existing employees. Through the program, qualified businesses can receive funds to train employees to meet industry skill requirements.

Priority is given to the following:

- companies that can avoid layoffs by training workers,
- those that can show productivity will be increased,
- business expansion, or
- those that will replicate the training internally.



Amount awarded: $1,878,502.59
Workers trained: 1,791

Truck Driver Training Program

In May 2008, Gov. Mike Beebe announced a new pilot initiative to train displaced workers and other eligible Arkansans as truck drivers. DWS partnered with the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, Arkansas State University at Newport, Mid-South Community College in West Memphis and the Arkansas Trucking Association to provide the training.

Tuition is paid for qualified applicants, as well as room and board in certain instances. Upon completion, graduates are connected with Arkansas trucking companies that have job openings. Applicants must work at least one year with an Arkansas trucking company to qualify for the tuition-free program.

For more information, go to **www.TruckingArkansas.com**.

Office Relocations

Staff at three offices relocated in 2008.

- The **Arkansas Workforce Center at Paragould** now accommodates additional partners and provides better access to the public.

- The **Arkansas Workforce Center at West Memphis** relocated to the Mid-South Community College campus. The center is the first to be located on a college campus and provides greater access to services, including seamless referrals to workforce training opportunities at the college.

- The **Arkansas Workforce Center at Rogers** is now located in an area closest to major employers with easy access for clients.

Services for Veterans

DWS participated in a pilot program with the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program to expand services to a larger population of disabled veterans. A full-time Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program specialist is now stationed at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs hospital complex at Fort Roots in North Little Rock to provide employment services to disabled veterans.

DWS also partnered with the Arkansas National Guard Reintegration Team to provide information about agency services to the 3,200 members of the 39th Infantry Brigade upon their return from deployment to Iraq.

Dislocated Worker Task Force

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force assisted thousands of people who lost their jobs because of layoffs or closures.

DWS serves as the lead agency for the task force and partners with the Arkansas AFL-CIO to provide services to help dislocated workers transition back into the workforce.

In addition to meeting with company officials, the task force coordinated multiple workshops and opportunity fairs in 2008 that provided information to affected employees about unemployment insurance benefits, retirement, insurance and employment services, such as resume preparation, interviewing skills training, how to start a small business and educational opportunities.

Companies reporting layoffs or closures: 133
Number of workers affected: 10,570

Practical Nursing Program

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force partnered with Arkansas Tech University - Ozark and area hospitals to offer the Practical Nursing Program again in 2008 for dislocated workers.

To be eligible, dislocated workers must qualify for Trade Adjustment Assistance as a result of a layoff or closure due to foreign competition.

Upon completing the one-year program, participants receive their practical nursing certification. As part of the partnership, area hospitals consider the graduates for employment.

2008 Graduates: 16
2007 Graduates: 18

Camden Workforce Partnership

DWS joined economic, educational and business entities in Camden to form the Camden Workforce Partnership.

The primary goal of the organization, which also includes the Ouachita Partnership for Economic Development, Southern Arkansas University Tech and the Calhoun-Ouachita County Business and Industry Training Council, is to promote area workforce opportunities and training programs and to provide incentives designed to increase the number of job seekers who have Arkansas Career Readiness Certificates, associate degrees, certificates of proficiency and technical certificates.

Many employers in the area are participating, and incentives ranging from $25 to $250 are available to clients who complete various agency training programs.

Agency Stats

- A total of 177,649 individuals received employment services.
- $353,197,120 was paid in regular unemployment insurance benefits and $8,319,364 in federal UI benefits.
- Employers filed 38,409 quarterly wage reports through the online UI tax filing, wage reporting and payment site.
- The New Hire Registry reported 806,697 new hires.
- 16,104 people were certified for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, resulting in potential tax credits of $40,533,000 for Arkansas employers.
- 645 Career Pathways Initiative participants received certificates of proficiency, 608 received technical certificates and 477 received associate degrees.
- DWS maintains several Web sites to assist job seekers with their job search and provide labor market information for economic developers, researchers and the general public: **www.arjoblink.arkansas.gov, www.ArkansasAtWork.org, www.discover.arkansas.gov, www.real-life.arkansas.gov, www.careerwatch.org** and **www.arkoscar.org**.

Financial Statement

Funds Received

Grants	FY 2008-2009
Personnel Services	$40,995,102
Maintenance & General Operations	$35,949,929
Unemployment Insurance Benefits	$620,000,001
Special Fund	$11,856,743
Workforce Investment Act	$58,000,000
UI Trust Fund Loan Interest	$3,000,001
New Hire Registry	$509,901
Community Investment Initiative	$3,500,000
Disaster Relief Payments	$2,000,000
Training Allowances & Payments	$15,000,000
Reed Act	$77,000,000
Transitional Employment Assistance	$68,290,650
Training Trust Fund	$2,500,000
UI Administration Fund	$2,500,000
Total Funding:	**$941,102,327**

Financial Statement

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund
December 31, 2008

Balance, Beginning of Year	$142,835,025
Revenues	
UI Contributions	$267,057,247
Reimbursement From Other States	$19,046,253
Reed Act Distributions	$0
Interest Income	$7,070,607
Total Revenues:	**$293,174,107**
Expenditures	
Unemployment Benefit Payments	$353,197,120
Reed Act Withdrawals	$323,782
Total Expenditures:	**$353,520,902**
Balance, End of Year	**$82,488,230**

Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

P.O. Box 2981
Little Rock, AR 72203
(501) 682-2121
www.dws.arkansas.gov

"Equal Opportunity Employer/Program"
"Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities."
Voice 1-800-285-1121
TDD 1-800-285-1131