



**INNOVATE**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**January 26, 2021**  
**10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Arkansas Division of Workforce  
Services

*VIA Zoom (Webinar/Teleconference)*  
*SOCIAL DISTANCING – COVID-19*

# Arkansas Workforce Development Board

## Full Board Meeting



# AGENDA

January 26, 2021

## ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD FULL BOARD MEETING

10:00 a.m.

*Estimated Time: 2 hours*

Call to Order & Roll Call (3 min) ..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Board Director (2 mins) ..... Arnell Willis, Board Director

Report of Chairperson (5 mins)..... Tom Anderson, Chair

Report of Director (5 mins)..... Dr. Charisse Childers, Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Report of Staff (5 mins)..... Kris Jones, Employment Assistance - Assistant Director  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

### **Agenda Item 1: ACTION**

Minutes of October 20, 2020 Full Board Meeting (2 min) ..... Tom Anderson, Chair

### **Agenda Item 2: ACTION**

Council Resolution 2021-1: Board Member Stipend (2 mins) ..... Tom Anderson, Chair

### **Agenda Item 3: INFORMATIONAL**

Administrative Forms – New Year (5 mins) ..... Rebecca Edwards, Regional Advisor  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

### **Agenda Item 4: INFORMATIONAL**

PY19 WIOA Program Annual Report Updates (40 mins) ..... Kris Jones, Employment Assistance  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Dr. Trenia Miles, Director  
Adult Education Section – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Christy Lamas, Deputy Commissioner  
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services– Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Cassandra Williams-Stokes, Director  
Arkansas State Services for the Blind – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 5: INFORMATIONAL**

Reimagine Arkansas Workforce (RAW)

Grant Update (10 mins) ..... Eduardo Lemm, Targeted Populations Advisor  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 6: INFORMATIONAL**

Workforce System Evaluation Project Update (10 mins) ..... Kris Jones, Employment Assistance  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 7: INFORMATIONAL**

Arkansas Workforce Development

Board Codes of Conduct (10 mins) ..... Dr. Claudia Griffin, Policy Specialist  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

**Agenda Item 8: INFORMATIONAL**

USDOL Governance TAT Project Updates (10 mins)..... Beverly Lovett, Employment Assistance  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Board Open Discussion (5 mins)

Public Opportunity to Address the Board (3 mins)

Announcements (3 mins)

Adjournment

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACTION:** Minutes of the October 20, 2020, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve the minutes of the October 20, 2020, Arkansas Workforce Development Board meeting.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Minutes of the meetings are attached.

UNOFFICIAL

**MINUTES  
ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
October 20, 2020**

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board convened the Full Board meeting through electronic means on October 20, 2020, beginning at 10:05 a.m. The meeting was conducted remotely utilizing Zoom and teleconference. Chair Tom Anderson presided with the following members voicing their presence: Mr. Joseph Baxter, Mr. Len Blaylock III, Ms. Karen Breashears, Mr. Scott Bull, Dr. Charisse Childers, Mr. Jeff Griffin, Mr. Randy Henderson, Ms. Abby Houseworth, Mr. Charles Johnson, Mr. Johnny Key, Ms. Candice Lawrence, Ms. Holley Little, Mr. Brian Marsh, Dr. Trenia Miles, Dr. Julie Roberson, Dr. Cassondra Williams-Stokes, Mr. Robert Thorne, and Dr. Diana Wright. Board members Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Randy Finegan, Mayor James Sanders, and Mr. Kelley Sharp joined after roll. Board members Dr. Maria Markham and Secretary Mike Preston were heard by staff as voicing their presence on the public line.

Mr. Lindsay Brown, Ms. Chanda Chacon, Ms. Melissa Hanesworth, Mr. Alan Hughes, Ms. Rebecca Ives, and Mr. George “Gan” Nunnally, were unable to attend.

Chairman’s Opening Comments: Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. upon seeing a quorum. Chair Anderson introduced three new Board members followed by reappointments: New Members - Mr. Joseph Baxter, Ms. Candice Lawrence, and Mr. Charles Johnson; and Reappointments - Judge Brandon Ellison, Mr. Alan Hughes, Mr. Gan Nunnally, Dr. Julie Roberson, and Mr. Robert Thorne. Additionally, Chair Anderson stated for the record that, the One-Stop Certification Document was tabled previously in April and July due to COVID-19 delays and will continue to be tabled with the hope to revisit this item in the January 2021 Full Board meeting.

Report of Board Director: Chair Tom Anderson recognized the Arkansas Workforce Development Board Director, Arnell Willis. Mr. Willis provided an update to Board Members and attendees on Governor Asa Hutchison’s Executive Order No. 20-10 of March 26, 2020, amending “Executive Order No.20-03 2020, regarding the Public Health Emergency Concerning COVID-19 for the purpose of restricting gatherings to prevent the Spread of COVID-19.” This executive order was replaced with “Executive Order 20-37 2020, to renew the Disaster and Public Health Emergency to mitigate the spread and impact of COVID” that is set to expire December 11, 2020.

He acknowledged the Local Workforce Development Boards who followed the lead of the State Board by convening their meetings through electronic means in order to continue their efforts in serving Arkansans through innovative means under the guidance of the governor.

**Agenda Item 1 – ACTION – Minutes of the July 21, 2020, Full Board Meeting and the minutes of the August 21, 2020, Executive Committee Meeting:** Chair Tom Anderson asked if there were any additional corrections or revisions to the July 21, 2020, Full Board meeting minutes.

**Hearing none, a motion to accept the July 21, 2020, Full Board meeting minutes with no corrections or revisions was made by Ms. Karen Breashears followed by Dr. Trenia Miles making the second motion. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

The following votes recorded and voiced by Board Members on a roll vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain for no vote: Mr. Joseph Baxter – Approve, Mr. Len Blaylock III – Approve, Ms. Karen Breashears – Approve, Mr. Lindsay Brown – Absent, Mr. Scott Bull – Approve, Ms. Chanda Chacon – Absent, Dr. Charisse Childers – Approve, Judge Brandon Ellison – Approve, Mr. Randy Finegan – Approve, Mr. Jeff Griffin – Approve, Ms. Melissa Hanesworth – Absent, Mr. Randy Henderson – Approve, Ms. Abby Houseworth – Approve, Mr. Alan Hughes – Absent, Ms. Rebecca Ives – Absent, Mr. Charles Johnson – Approve, Mr. Johnny Key – Approve, Ms. Candice Lawrence – Approve, Ms. Holley Little – Approve, Dr. Maria Markham – No Vote Voiced, Mr. Brian Marsh – Approve, Dr. Trenia Miles – Approve, Mr. George Nunnally – Absent, Secretary Mike Preston – No Vote Voiced, Dr. Julie Roberson – Approve, Mayor James Sanders – No Vote Voiced, Mr. Kelley Sharp – No Vote Voiced, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes – Approve, Mr. Robert Thorne – Approve, and Dr. Diana Wright – Approve.

Next, Chair Anderson asked for any corrections or revisions to the August 20, 2020, Executive Committee meeting before ratification by the Full Board.

**Hearing none, a motion to accept the August 20, 2020, Executive Committee meeting minutes with no corrections or revisions for ratification by the Full Board was made by Mr. Robert Thorne and seconded by Ms. Abby Houseworth. The motion carried unanimously with none opposed.**

The following votes recorded and voiced by Board Members on a roll vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain for no vote: Mr. Joseph Baxter – Approve, Mr. Len Blaylock III – Approve, Ms. Karen Breashears – Approve, Mr. Lindsay Brown – Absent, Mr. Scott Bull – No Vote Voiced, Ms. Chanda Chacon – Absent, Dr. Charisse Childers – Approve, Judge Brandon Ellison – Approve, Mr. Randy Finegan – Approve, Mr. Jeff Griffin – Approve, Ms. Melissa Hanesworth – Absent, Mr. Randy Henderson – Approve, Ms. Abby Houseworth - Approve, Mr. Alan Hughes – Absent, Ms. Rebecca Ives – Absent, Mr. Charles Johnson – Approve, Mr. Johnny Key – No Vote Voiced, Ms. Candice Lawrence – Approve, Ms. Holley Little - Approve, Dr. Maria Markham – Approve, Mr. Brian Marsh – Approve, Dr. Trenia Miles – Approve, Mr. George Nunnally – Absent, Secretary Mike Preston – Absent, Dr. Julie Roberson – Approve, Mayor James Sanders – Approve, Mr. Kelly Sharp – Approve, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes – Approve, Mr. Robert Thorne – Approve, and Dr. Diana Wright – Approve.

Report of Chairperson: Chair Anderson informed Board Members that he has been monitoring the Local Workforce Development Boards across the state. Most of the meetings have been remote with the Eastern Local Workforce Development Board being the exception. Chair Anderson proceeded with informing Board Members about information distributed by the National Governors Association (NGA). The information provides Board Chairs the various approaches and initiatives each state has regarding the unemployment rate, creativity with jobs, and the continuation of business on a remote basis. Chair Anderson noted for the record the One-Stop Certification document was tabled in April and will be tabled again with the hope of revisiting in the January meeting.

Report of Director: Chair Tom Anderson recognized Board Member and Director of Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) Dr. Charisse Childers to address the Full Board. Dr. Childers encouraged Board Members and guests to visit the ADWS website for the news release on unemployment before she provided a brief overview. Dr. Childers stated the unemployment rate decreased to 7.3% in September 2020 from the 7.4% in August 2020. Meanwhile, across the State, Arkansas Workforce Centers are operating one-on-one with individuals, while the monitoring of Centers' performance is required for provision of services, assistance with job search, and the administration of training to make sure they're being accomplished in a very safe and careful manner. These services are provided by WIOA Core partners

and stakeholders. ADWS has seen a significant decrease in UI claims and to lesser extent in PUA claims for the week ending October 17, 2020. Additionally, the UI extended benefits are expiring, and that assistance will be moved to PUA. Dr. Childers reported Arkansas Division of Workforce Services' legacy budget along with the programs included under ADWS before government transformation will meet with the Arkansas Legislative Council on Wednesday, October 21, 2020 to discuss their budget for the fiscal year.

Report of Staff: Chair Anderson recognized Board Staff Mr. Kris Jones. Mr. Jones spoke on the comments of Director Arnell Willis regarding performance. Mr. Jones reported the Department of Labor has not made any adjustments but will look at possible adjustments after a complete analysis has been made on the impact of COVID-19 performance data.

Mr. Kris Jones reported the Employment Assistance Unit is close to rolling out virtual job fair platform to implement across the state while some Local Workforce Development Areas are already providing curbside job fairs.

He reported the directors for the local workforce development areas are still receiving technical assistance from ADWS through the continuation of bi-weekly meetings via Microsoft Teams. These meetings provide the local workforce development areas the opportunity to continue to share best practices with the State for their innovations and adjustment to COVID.

Lastly, Mr. Jones informed Board Members how the Local Workforce Development Boards assisted individuals who did not qualify for the \$300 Federal Program through the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Program during this quarter. This assisted in closing the gap and provided TANF services to help those families in need.

Report of Committees:

The meetings of the Strategic Planning, TANF Oversight, and Program and Performance Evaluation committees of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board have been canceled indefinitely. Committee meetings have not convened since the first quarter of 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

**Agenda Item 2 – INFORMATIONAL – 2019 Annual Report:** Chair Anderson recognized WIOA Roundtable members who represent the WIOA Core Programs to provide updates regarding activities during PY 2019. WIOA Core Partners presenting today were Mr. Kris Jones, Employment Assistance of Arkansas Division of Workforce Services; Dr. Trena Miles, Director of Adult Education Section; Ms. Christy Lamas, Deputy Commissioner of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services; and Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes, Director of Arkansas State Services for the Blind. One of the functions of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to assist the Governor in the preparation of the annual reports as described in WIOA Section 116(d) paragraphs (1) and (2) of WIOA Sec. 116(d). Mr. Kris Jones listed and discussed the major components of the narrative report while both he and Mr. Elroy Willoughby reported on WIOA Title I and III performance.

Board Members then heard updates on WIOA Title II from the Director of Adult Education Services, Dr. Trena Miles. Dr. Miles presented a Power-point presentation of the population most impacted by COVID-19 and reported a total of 18,499 individuals came into the program with 47% meeting the Measurable Skills Gain. Benchmarks for the State were met at 47% with others experiencing a challenge such as only nine of the 12 areas meeting the benchmark. Out of 3,430 employable individuals, 36% made an outcome. When COVID-19 really hit in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year, 29% made an outcome, while 25% of TANF, runaway youths, and displaced homemakers are making an outcome. With the help of WIOA, barriers to connecting individuals with employment are being addressed.

Next, Board Members heard updates on WIOA Title IV from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Deputy Commissioner, Christy Lamas, who presented a summary report of performance measures to the Board. AR Rehabilitation Services serve mostly young adults between the ages of 16-24 who want a college degree and modest salary. Of 12,159 individuals receiving rehabilitation services, there were 3,482 successful exiters during the period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. The employment rate in the second quarter after exit was 57.6%; the rate for the fourth quarter after exit was 39.4%, with median earnings of \$4,835.57, and a credential rate of 7.0%. ARS' Measurable Skill rate was 45.5% for last year. The target for Measurable Skills Gain is 24% for Program Year 2020.

Lastly, Board Members heard from the Director of Arkansas State Services for the Blind, Dr. Cassondra Williams-Stokes. Dr. Williams-Stokes provided a brief overview on the new combined relationship with the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for 2020 to meet the 24% threshold as a State. For the Program Year 2018, (Arkansas State Services for the Blind) submitted a 54% rate for Measurable Skills Gain; and for Program Year 2019, a 95.6% Measurable Skills Gain rate. Median earnings report for second quarter in 2018 -- \$6,623; 2019 second quarter exit -- \$5,892; a decrease of \$731 due to COVID-19.

**Agenda Item 3 – Action – Administrative Forms – New Year:** Chair Anderson recognized Board Staff Ms. Rebecca Edwards. Ms. Edwards reviewed the Administrative forms for the Board to update their information for the new year in the database system.

**Agenda Item 4 – Informational – Reimagine Arkansas Workforce (RAW) Grant:** Chair Anderson recognized Mr. Mike Harris, Coordinator of the Entrepreneurial Studies Program at Shorter College and Ms. Tara J. Dryer, Director of Training-Corporate Development & Academics at the University of Arkansas to address the Board about the creation, implementation, and replication of short-term educational programs and training courses to help displaced workers return to employment and help new workers enter jobs in in-demand industry sectors or occupations. Arkansas was one of eight states to receive this funding opportunity.

**Agenda Item 5 – Informational – Western Arkansas Workforce Development Board:** Chair Anderson recognized the Western Arkansas Planning & Development District (WAPDD) WIOA Director Mr. Dennis Williamson for insight on his area's implementation of efforts to assist clients during COVID-19. Western Arkansas Workforce Development purchased an electronic signature- capture device which is compatible with mobile devices, allowing field reps to reach out to rural areas. Additionally, the WAPDD acquired virtual meeting platform called Webex and Adobe Acrobat.

**Agenda Item 6 – Informational – Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board:** Chair Anderson recognized the Workforce Development Director Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, Mr. Eddie Thomas for insight his area's implementation of events to assist clients during COVID-19. Mr. Thomas reported the Southeast Local Workforce Development Area increased outreach through social media outlets and community efforts. In Dumas, the General Adult Program held an Innovation Day with services provided by Food Banks, WIOA Title One, and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services. A total of 97 individuals had signed up for the provided services. Southeast brought in part-time certified teachers to help with career readiness within the Youth Program. Under the Business Services, an online resource guide was created to help and guide local businesses in obtaining small business loans and other resources.



Board Open Discussion: Chair Anderson asked board members for any additional items for discussion. Hearing none, Chair Anderson opened the floor to allow the public the opportunity to speak before the Full Board.

Public Speaking Opportunity: Chair Anderson addressed members of the public attending the meeting through electronic means and extended the opportunity to speak before the Full Board. After opening the floor for the public and a brief silence with the telephone lines unmuted and hearing no public comments, Chair Anderson moved into the announcements.

Announcements: Chair Anderson announced the committee meetings of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board will convene “as needed” due to the COVID-19 pandemic and out of respect of Board Member’s schedules. He added the next Full Board meeting is set for January 26, 2021. Board Staff will keep everyone aware of any changes to the schedule or the type of meeting, whether virtual or in-person, as the State progresses through COVID-19 under the guidance of Governor Asa Hutchinson.

Adjourn: Chair Tom Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:08 p.m., **on a motion made by Mayor James Sanders, seconded by Dr. Diana Wright, and carried unanimously with none opposed.**

The following votes recorded and voiced by Board Members on a roll vote to Approve, Disapprove, or Abstain for no vote: Mr. Joseph Baxter – Approve, Mr. Len Blaylock III – Approve, Ms. Karen Breashears – No Vote Voiced, Mr. Lindsay Brown – Absent, Mr. Scott Bull – Approve, Ms. Chanda Chacon – Absent, Dr. Charisse Childers – Approve, Judge Brandon Ellison – Approve, Mr. Randy Finegan – Approve, Mr. Jeff Griffin – Approve, Ms. Melissa Hanesworth – Absent, Mr. Randy Henderson – Approve, Ms. Abby Houseworth – Approve, Mr. Alan Hughes – Absent, Mr. Charles Johnson – Approve, Ms. Rebecca Ives – Absent, Mr. Johnny Key – No Vote Voiced, Ms. Candice Lawrence – Approve, Ms. Holley Little - Approve, Dr. Maria Markham – Approve, Mr. Brian Marsh – No vote, had to leave early, Dr. Trenia Miles – Approved, Mr. George Nunnally – Absent, Secretary Mike Preston – No Vote Voiced, Dr. Julie Roberson – Approve, Mayor James Sanders – Approve, Mr. Kelley Sharp – Approve, Dr. Cassandra Williams-Stokes – Approve, Mr. Robert Thorne – Approve, and Dr. Diana Wright - Approve.

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Tom Anderson, Board Chair  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board

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Arnell Willis, Director Workforce Development  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

*Minutes recorded by Monica Humphrey and Rebecca Edwards  
Arkansas Division of Workforce Services Staff*

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 2 – ACTION:** Council Resolution 2021-1: Board Member Stipend

**RECOMMENDATION:** It is recommended that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board approve Council Resolution 2021-1 allowing board members to accept a stipend for reimbursement of expenses to attend meetings of the board.

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** Arkansas Code Annotated § 15-4-3704 allows the Arkansas Workforce Development Board by a majority vote of the total membership of the board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the board may authorize payment to its members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended. The board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments as provided in § 25-16-902.

A draft council resolution is attached for consideration by the board.

**ARKANSAS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
COUNCIL RESOLUTION NUMBER 2021 – 1**

**WHEREAS**, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board (AWDB) conducts its matters as an entity prescribed by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); and

**WHEREAS**, the AWDB serves the Governor of the State of Arkansas as a policy advisory entity in accordance with WIOA law; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been determined that the AWDB and its activities are encompassed by A.C.A. §15-4-3706; and

**WHEREAS**, A.C.A. §15-4-3704 (h)(1) and (2) states, “By a majority vote of the total membership of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board cast during its first regularly scheduled meeting of each calendar year, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board may authorize payment to the appointed members of a stipend not to exceed one hundred ten dollars (\$110) per meeting attended of the full Arkansas Workforce Development Board or its committees, and the Arkansas Workforce Development Board members shall receive no other compensation, expense reimbursement, or in-lieu-of payments except as provided by A.C.A. §25-16-902.” and “The stipend shall be paid from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funding awarded to the state and authorized for Arkansas Workforce Development Board activities.”

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Arkansas Workforce Development Board adopts as its official and stated policy the reimbursement of expenditures to its members in accordance with A.C.A. §15-4-3704 for the entire calendar year of 2021.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – INFORMATION:** Administrative Forms – New Year

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** With the onset of the new calendar year, the members of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board must complete a new Statement of Financial Interest as well as a new Board Member Personal Data Form.

Staff will provide direction and assistance in the completion of these forms.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 4 – INFORMATION:** PY19 WIOA Program Annual Report Narrative Updates

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) required States to submit their WIOA Program Annual Report Narrative on or before December 1 of each year. In accordance with this requirement, the State of Arkansas' Workforce System Partners compiled and transmitted the Program Year 2019 report to the USDOL on November 25, 2020.

The WIOA Core Program Partners will provide updates regarding the information included in this report for their respective programs.

ARKANSAS WORKFORCE  
INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY  
ACT (WIOA) TITLE I AND TITLE III  
ANNUAL STATEWIDE  
PERFORMANCE REPORT  
PROGRAM YEAR 2019

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

## **From the Director**

As the Director of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS), I have the honor of presenting our Program Year 2019 annual report. It is designed to give readers a closer look at our programs, highlight the year's accomplishments, and demonstrate two of the agency's core values: transparency and results.

The focus of the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services is to provide individuals the tools they need to enhance and sustain their employability. And, through the education and skills training offered to jobseekers, employers are reducing hidden costs associated with lost production time and turnover rates by hiring qualified workers.

Arkansas, with leadership from the Governor and the State Workforce Board, is motivated to build strong partnerships among the state's workforce system stakeholders, job seekers and employers. This involves creating meaningful linkages between the education and workforce systems, aligning data so that metrics can be better defined and more easily measured; and helping people of all backgrounds gain employment and prosper in a rapidly changing economy.

Education and workforce development opportunities are critical to a strong economy. To aid in meeting these demands, ADWS will continue to collaborate with its partners and work closely with employers and job seekers to develop initiatives and offer effective programs and services to enrich the economic growth of Arkansas.

Together we are preparing today's workforce for tomorrow's careers.

Sincerely,



Charisse Childers  
Ph.D. Director

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Last year, 114,768 Arkansas residents accessed the state's workforce system for assistance in acquiring or retaining employment. They came from a wide array of demographics, characteristics, backgrounds and experiences: low-income, single parents, migrant and seasonal workers, single parents struggling to support themselves, workers displaced by a changing economy and veterans returning from active duty. Many needed assistance in connecting to unemployment benefits and assistance in determining next career steps. Others needed more basic, individualized or training services to overcome barriers to meaningful employment.

Two of the primary funding sources for these basic, individualized services are the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I and Wagner-Peyser Title III programs. This report provides an in-depth look at the impact those funds have had in Arkansas in Program Year 2019, July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020.

### A. Overview of Arkansas' Workforce Development System

Arkansas' workforce development system is a coordinated and collaborative network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state's workforce. In order to meet the challenge of the 21st century global economy, the public workforce system works in partnership with businesses, educators, organized labor and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities in regional economies. This network further helps potential job candidates, particularly low-income youth, adults and displaced workers, overcome obstacles to successful employment. These services are coordinated through Arkansas Workforce Centers, the state's one-stop delivery system.

Primary funding for Arkansas Workforce Center operations and many of the basic and individualized services is provided by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933. Other formula-based and competitive federal, state and local resources and services that support our workforce system include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), veteran services, USDOL National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG), Trade Adjustment Assistance, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Assistance and other partner program funds.

At the heart of the public workforce system, these Arkansas Workforce Centers are made up of one-stop career centers, affiliate, and connection sites. Arkansas Workforce Centers are the primary access point to qualified workers, as well as to a multitude of resources for businesses and job seekers. These Centers serve thousands of individuals who are seeking employment, changing jobs, reentering the workforce or learning new skills. This makes them the ideal venue for workforce solutions for job seekers and businesses alike.

At our Workforce Centers throughout the state, individuals can open a claim for unemployment insurance, find job openings, receive other job search assistance and attend workshops that can improve employability. Qualified individuals can find assistance with specific training in high demand occupations. Businesses can get help with workforce needs including recruitment, screening, employee training, layoff aversion, and employee retention.

## **B. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services**

In 2019, Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson signed the Transformation and Efficiencies Act of 2019 into law, cutting the number of cabinet-level agencies from 42 to 15. This piece of state legislation went into effect on July 1, 2019 and reflects a reorganization of the workforce partner agencies in Arkansas. Specifically, the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services became the Division of Workforce Services and incorporated the former Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, Division of Services for the Blind, and Adult Education Services. This report incorporates these changes and includes the following new acronyms:

- ADWS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services
- DSB – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Division of Services for the Blind
- ARS – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
- AES – Arkansas Division of Workforce Services – Adult Education Services

## **C. Coordination Among All WIOA Titles**

In an effort to ensure coordination among all the WIOA core partner programs in the development of this narrative report, the requirements for this report was shared among all core partners. The narrative report components were presented in an insertable grid format to allow each partner to provide narrative ideas in specific sections of this report. The completed narrative grid was then shared among the core partners for review and comment.

Throughout this report, we have broken out specific activities, by specific WIOA Titles, not to display individuality but rather to articulate how each program is aligned with the overall WIOA Program goals and strategies.

The major evidence of our enhanced coordination is the activities of the WIOA Roundtable. The WIOA Roundtable in the leadership group of the State's workforce system and includes members from ADWS, DSB, ARS and AES. The WIOA Roundtable meets regularly and hosts bi-annual statewide WIOA Partners Meetings in Central Arkansas. The attendees of these statewide meetings include representatives of core, non-core and ancillary workforce system partners. The agendas are developed jointly by ADWS, DSB, ARS and AES, provide an opportunity to share specific program information via plenary sessions as well as break-out sessions that provided opportunities to share idea, best practices and service delivery strategies.

## **D. State and Local Roles**

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board (State Board) assists the Governor in overseeing the state's workforce development system. The core business of the State Board is to coordinate state policy and state strategic planning for the workforce development system, evaluating results and facilitating demonstration projects that test innovations and ideas. ADWS serves as the state's WIOA Title I grant recipient. These WIOA responsibilities include stewardship of the funds, oversight and monitoring activities, issuing statewide policy, management of grants and contracts and allocation of the WIOA Title I funds to the local area Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards) for the delivery of services within an integrated service delivery system. ADWS also fulfills an operational role within the workforce system through providing services funded under the Wagner-Peyser, Trade

Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Family (TANF) programs.

The Local Boards are the local conveners and managers of the workforce system through which WIOA programs are accessed. They are the strategic visionaries for local implementation of WIOA funds. There are ten (10) Local Boards in Arkansas and each is private industry led and locally focused. Local Board members are appointed by Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) and certified by the Governor. CEOs are the local area WIOA Title I grant recipients. CEOs direct their Local Boards' staff to administer the funds and oversee the area's Workforce Centers to most effectively respond to the local economy and needs of local citizens. Local Boards convene with regional partners and stakeholders to assess skill gaps, identify emerging and future employment possibilities and collaborate with economic developers and other partners to develop the region's workforce development plan.

## **E. WIOA Programs**

### **WIOA Title I Youth Program**

**Who is served:** Youth must be between 14 and 24 years old, low income (WIOA allows for a 5% exclusion) and meet other criteria described in the WIOA, such as a need for additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

**Program description:** The program prepares low-income youth ages 14 through 24 for success in school and the world of work. Eligible youth may receive counseling, tutoring, job training, mentoring or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study skills training and instruction in obtaining a GED or equivalent.

### **WIOA Title I Adult Program**

**Who is served:** Basic services are available to all adults with minimal eligibility requirements. Basic, individualized or training services are authorized for unemployed individuals unable to find jobs. In some cases, these services are available to employed workers who need more help to reach self-sufficiency.

**Program description:** The program prepares individuals 18 years and older for participation in the labor force by providing basic services and access to job training and other services. Services are coordinated through the state's workforce center system. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information; consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training. Priority is given to veterans and eligible spouses as well as those individuals with barriers to employment.

### **WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program**

**Who is served:** Dislocated workers are people who lost jobs due to plant closures, company downsizing or some other significant change in market conditions. In most cases, eligible workers are unlikely to return to their occupations because those jobs are no longer economically viable, and they must be eligible for (or have exhausted) unemployment compensation. Other conditions can lead to eligibility for services, such as separating military

service members and eligible spouses of military service members, being self-employed but not working as a result of general economic conditions or being a displaced home maker.

**Program description:** The program tailors employment and training services to meet dislocated workers' needs, establishes early intervention for workers and firms facing substantial layoffs and fosters labor, management and community partnerships with government to address worker dislocation. Dislocated workers are also eligible for basic services including skill assessment, labor market information, training program consumer reports and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences and occupational skills training.

### **WIOA Title II Adult Education Program**

**Who is served:** There are hundreds of Arkansas adults who lack high school diplomas and the skills and knowledge to succeed in the twenty-first century workforce. This impacts every community in Arkansas. It's devastating to the adults who want to fulfill the American dream of a better life for themselves and their families.

**Program description:** The program is designed to provide adult learners with the tools to improve and refine their academic skills, attain the General Educational Development® Credential, and the life skills that prepare the citizen for self-sufficiency and improvement in the quality of life. Adult learners can access Adult Basic Education (ABE), English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Workplace Education, Correctional/Institutional Education (C&I), Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy TM (WAGE), Learning Disabilities Screening, GED Testing Services, the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center (AALRC) and Family Literacy.

### **WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program**

**Who is served:** Career services are available to anyone who is legally entitled to work in the United States no matter one's age or employment status. Through Title III, basic and individualized career services are offered. A veteran or his or her eligible spouse has a priority to receive such services.

**Program description:** The Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933 established a nationwide system of public employment offices, known as the Employment Service. The Employment Service seeks to improve the functioning of the nation's labor markets by bringing together individuals seeking employment with employers seeking workers.

Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information; consumer reports on training programs and job search and placement assistance. Individualized services include career and vocational counseling.

### **WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Services Program**

In Arkansas, the WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Services Program is accomplished via two (2) distinct units, *Arkansas Rehabilitation Services* and the *Division of Services for the Blind*.

**Who is served:** *Arkansas Rehabilitation Services* increases opportunities for individuals with

disabilities to engage in competitive integrated employment and to live more independently.

The *Division of Services for the Blind* is dedicated to the independence of Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired.

**Program description:** *Arkansas Rehabilitation's* Field Services include career and technical education and training, transition from school to work or postsecondary education, on-the-job training, and ancillary support services that clients may need for successful employment. *Arkansas Rehabilitation's* Business Relations Services assist businesses in achieving a competitive advantage by offering qualified job candidates who are trained in a wide variety of skills and have the good work habits that employers value.

The *Division of Services for the Blind* provides a variety of services that are focused upon:

- a. Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests;
- b. Rehabilitation Teaching - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living; and
- c. Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.

## **F. Arkansas Workforce Centers**

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are the gateways to job services and workforce development programs in our state.

With 30 Arkansas Workforce Centers located strategically throughout the state, representatives are available to help employers and job seekers find the best resources and services to meet their needs.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers represent Arkansas' version of the American Job Centers. They are designed to provide universal access to an integrated array of services so that workers, job seekers, and businesses can find the services they need in one stop, and frequently under one roof.

All Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a consistent line of resources for employers and job seekers. However, the full menu of services may vary from center to center, as each site can tailor the additional services it offers to meet the specific needs of employers and job seekers in their community.

At the Arkansas Workforce Centers, customers receive services on three levels:

1. Self-service in the resource rooms
2. Intensive services and career counseling
3. Training and skill-building for those who qualify

Customers can search and apply for jobs online in the AWC resource rooms. These rooms are equipped with computer stations, Internet, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, and

staff to assist as needed. With an Arkansas JobLink account, job seekers can search for employment opportunities, apply for jobs, and post their resume, skills, and other credentials to a profile viewable by employers.

## II. SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), economic development entities are partners in the workforce system. While economic development efforts are centered on recruiting new businesses and helping existing ones expand in a region, workforce development partners assist with the expansion and retention activities of existing businesses.

This entails sector strategies for training, skill upgrading, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), on-the-job training, work experience, incumbent worker training, and customized training.

Our Adult Education Local Providers have utilized local in-demand industries to develop instruction aligned with the corresponding career pathways; incorporate basic employability skills and specific workforce preparation activities; develop integrated education trainings aligned with local needs; partner with core partners' programs, such as Out of School Youth; and conduct workplace classes (on and off site) for local employers.

### A. Sector Strategies and Industry Initiatives

Industry focus groups and sector initiatives (also called sector partnerships or sector strategies) are regional, employer-driven partnerships of industry leaders, education and training consortia, and other stakeholders that focus on the workforce needs of key industries in a regional labor market.

ADWS has previously released guidance and funding availability opportunities to Local Workforce Development Boards to encourage the development and implementation of sector strategies planning efforts on a regional basis. To date, these previous efforts have achieved limited successes. Therefore, ADWS is currently evaluating "best practice" models (e.g., Colorado), technical assistance resources, and various other strategies to incentivize broad-based adoption of sector strategies planning efforts on an ongoing basis across all Local Workforce Development Boards.

### B. Career Pathway Strategies

ADWS, in collaboration with Arkansas Research Center, has developed a Career Pathways report to demonstrate demand within occupations based on Job Posting data (source- EMSI) to wages based on LMI. The reports are grouped by the Career Cluster and Career Pathway associated with each occupation and presented per Local Area. This information will be provided to Local Areas and updated at least annually.

### C. Business Engagement Strategies

During the Program Year, Arkansas continued its efforts in expanding the services available

to the State's businesses through the Workforce Center System. These efforts included further solidifying the roles and responsibilities of Local Workforce Development Area Business Services Teams as well as engagement with WIOA core partners. Several of the LWDA's are in the early stages of their business services development, implementation and outreach efforts. ADWS has taken the lead in establishing and convening the WIOA Roundtable – Business Engagement Committee that includes representation across partner programs. This Committee has conducted a statewide business services workshop to communicate the menu of services that are offered through the various partner programs. This workshop provided attendees with an overall awareness of available programs in order to better serve clients.

Additionally, the committee members (including a broader group of WIOA core partner representatives) have been active in the development and implementation of Salesforce. Salesforce is a customer relations management tool that will assist business services teams to track and report business engagement activities across partner programs. The Salesforce system will allow business services staff to begin recording actual business engagement activity leading to improved tracking and reporting. A long-term goal for Salesforce is to integrate the sharing and usage of data within the system with economic development and other state agency partners.

#### **Re-Employment Systems Integration**

Arkansas strives to promote and support a talent development system that offers employers, individuals, and communities the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity. This project's purpose is to build on the relationship between the ADWS and its WIOA Partners in the design & development of a secure, integrated common intake & case management system that is a citizen-focused service delivery model that enhances the access to programs & services for all of our customers.

ADWS and our WIOA partners have implemented a Business Service Teams Solution in Arkansas's workforce centers, that will enable us to coordinate, manage, and record the services being provided to business' to meet the spirit of the WIOA law, to avoid multiple contacts to business by leveraging the communication tools available in Salesforce, and to establish additional data for reporting the new business metrics. The RSI grant ended December 31, 2019.

#### **D. Work-based Learning (including Apprenticeships)**

Since 2010, ADWS has been awarded over \$42 million in discretionary grants funding for workforce development training and national disaster dislocated worker grant recovery efforts. Discretionary grants provide economic support for workforce development initiatives and relief funds for temporary employment, clean-up efforts, and infrastructure repairs when natural disasters strike.

During the Program Year, efforts have been focused on building partnerships with stakeholders and employers across the state to expand and diversify registered apprenticeship programs (and the number of apprentices) in Arkansas. These efforts are making a positive impact. Arkansas has grown from a reported 4,489 active registered apprentices in 2016 to approximately 6,500 currently. This represents a 45 percent increase in the number of active registered apprentices in four years. A contributing factor to the



growth in registered apprenticeship is due in part to dedicated efforts to increase awareness among employers and workforce development partners to consider RA as a workforce development option.

As an example, ADWS has initiated a series of *Employers Growing Talent Through Apprenticeship – Employer Forums*. These *Employer Forums* (pre-COVID) were held on-site across the State in partnership with regional Local Workforce Development Boards, Chambers of Commerce, the Lieutenant Governors' Office, the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship, the Office of Skills Development and the State Office of Apprenticeship and partnering employers.

During the pandemic, the *Employer Forums* are shifting to a virtual platform targeting specific audiences and employers. RA expansion in recent years has been facilitated through the following grants: Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathways Initiative (AAPI), and Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship (AREA).

### **Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathways Initiative**

Registered apprenticeship offers a career pathway for job seekers to learn a skill and earn good wages while earning a marketable credential from the U.S. Department of Labor. Apprentices are considered employees from day one of the program; they receive paid training and progressive increases in wage as they demonstrate skills gain.

The AAPI grant is expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities in the traditional registered apprenticeship construction trades, as well as in the non-traditional registered apprenticeship industry sectors, such as information technology and advanced manufacturing.

Collaborative work efforts under the AAPI grant has pioneered non-traditional (i.e., outside the construction trades) registered apprenticeship programs in Arkansas, introducing software developer and cybersecurity apprenticeships working with the Arkansas Center for Data Sciences and partnering employers as well as industrial maintenance, culinary, and nursing related apprenticeships. Due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on training activities, ADWS requested and received approval from USDOL for a six-month period of performance extension. The AAPI grant is scheduled to end March 30, 2021.

### **Arkansas Expands Apprenticeship**

The AREA grant was the last of the USDOL Apprenticeship USA Initiative Grants awarded to ADWS. This grant award is offering the opportunity to leverage funding to expand Arkansas' capacity to collaborate with employers and start new apprenticeship programs across diverse industries and communities. AREA registered apprenticeship training programs are available across all industry sectors where employer demand drives the expansion of existing programs or the development of new programs. Due to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on training activities, ADWS requested and received approval from USDOL for a six-month period of performance extension. The AREA grant is scheduled to end April 30, 2021.

### III. WAIVERS

In PY2019, we sought the following WIOA Title I waivers:

1. Waiver of the obligation of eligible training providers to collect performance data on all students in a training program. WIOA Sections 116(d)(4)(A) and 122, and 20 CFR 677.230(a)(4) and (5) and 20 CFR 680.
2. Waiver to allow the State to lower the local area and statewide reserve out-of-school youth expenditure requirement to 50 percent. WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410 and Waiver to allow the State to calculate the out-of-school youth requirement at the State level only. WIOA Section 129(a)(4) and 20 CFR 681.410.
3. Waiver to increase on-the-job-training reimbursement up to 90 percent for businesses with 50 or fewer employees. WIOA Section 134(c) (3)(H)(i) and 20 CFR 680.720 (b).
4. Waiver to allow flexibility in the use of funds reserved by the Governor to provide disaster relief as permitted under Dislocated Worker Grants for disaster relief, including temporary work. WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(A), WIOA Section 134(a)(2)(B) and WIOA Section 134(a)(3).

### IV. EVALUATIONS

In PY2019, Arkansas entered a contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville to complete a workforce system evaluation. This contract went into effect on January 1, 2020 and will result in an evaluation that will employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate.

Unfortunately, the onset of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 altered our plans considerably and we are attempting to re-calibrate our previous milestones and deadlines.

We have included the details of this evaluation plan below:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
- B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps
- C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above.

- D. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, we planned to conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.
- E. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, evaluation status reports were to be provided on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports were scheduled to be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.
- F. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, a preliminary evaluation report was scheduled to be produced by August 15, 2020.
- G. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations was to be presented to the State Workforce Development Board by September 30, 2020.

In PY 2019, Adult Education (WIOA Title II) conducted on site monitoring visits to all local providers. The monitoring visits included compliance checks, financial record keeping, data collection, recruitment/retention strategies, and partnerships. A select group of local providers had an additional intensive on-site monitoring visit that also included a review of finances, ADA compliance, and program-related policies.

## V. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION APPROACH

As part of the above referenced contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville, we will conduct customer satisfaction surveys with WIOA Title I and III program participant exiters as well as customer service surveys for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III. Each of these surveys will be conducted with participants and businesses that received services during the most recent 12-month period.

The results of both surveys will be included in the final report to the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. These results will be evaluated by the Board and used to modify existing policies or develop new policies on both the state and local level. Additionally, these survey protocols will become a permanent part of the WIOA System’s ongoing evaluation efforts for all core programs.

In our WIOA Title II, each of the 36 Local Providers conducted an annual self-study that included identifying strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats to the local program. Through these studies, local programs were able to identify areas where partnerships with other agencies, employers, and training providers would be possible. State staff reviews these self-studies during annual monitoring visits.

## VI. STATE’S STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

### A. Vision and Goals

In Arkansas, the Arkansas Workforce Development Board is responsible for ensuring that the vision and goals for the state’s workforce development system are being met.

Consequently, the Board has assigned this duty to its Strategic Planning Committee. Upon its inception, the Strategic Planning Committee developed a Strategic Action Plan grid that contained the ongoing strategic goals for the State, complete with milestones and completion dates.

At each of its quarterly meetings, the Strategic Planning Committee reviews an updated Action Plan that provides a “report card” towards achieving these goals. Some of this Committee’s strategic goals and progress made towards achieving them are listed below:

### **Strategic Planning Committee Action Plan Results**

- The development, implementation, and modification of the state workforce development plan. *PY2016-2019 Completed. PY2020-2023 Ongoing.*
- The review of statewide policies, of statewide programs, and of recommendations on actions that should be taken by the state to align workforce development programs in the state in a manner that supports a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the state, including the review and provision of comments on the state plan, if applicable, for programs and activities of one-stop partners that are not core programs. *Continuous.*
- The development and continuous improvement of the workforce development system in the state, including the identification of barriers and means for removing barriers to better coordinate, align, and avoid duplication among the programs and activities carried out through the system. *Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.*
- The development of strategies to support the use of career pathways for the purpose of providing individuals, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with barriers to employment (including individuals with disabilities), with workforce investment activities, education, and supportive services to enter or retain employment. *Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.*
- The development of strategies for providing effective outreach to and improved access for individuals and employers who could benefit from services provided through the workforce development system. *Continuous and Update provided at each Committee Meeting.*
- The development and expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of employers, workers, and jobseekers, particularly through industry or sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations. *Continuous and updates provided at each Committee Meeting.*
- The identification of regions, including planning regions, after consultation with local boards and chief elected officials. *Completed.*
- The development of strategies to support staff training and awareness across programs supported under the workforce development system. *Continuous via bi-annual Statewide WIOA Partner Meeting;*
- The development and review of statewide policies affecting the coordinated provision of services through the state’s one-stop delivery system. *Initial policy manual developed, but ongoing review and identification of new policy needs ongoing.*
- The development of strategies for technological improvements to facilitate access to, and improve the quality of, services and activities provided through the one-stop delivery system. *Initial project approved and ongoing, with quarterly progress reports.*
- Strengthen the professional development of providers and workforce professionals;

- and Ensure such technology is accessible to individuals with disabilities and individuals residing in remote areas. Ongoing.
- The development of allocation formulas for the distribution of funds for employment and training activities for adults, and youth workforce investment activities, to local areas. Approved, but reviewed annually.

## **B. Arkansas Labor Market**

ADWS is responsible for disseminating Arkansas Labor Market Information and making it available to the general public. Arkansas LMI can be accessed online through the *Discover Arkansas* LMI Portal at: [www.discover.arkansas.gov](http://www.discover.arkansas.gov). This web portal helps job seekers make informed, data-driven career decisions and allows employers, economic developers, and researchers to promote stable employment and economic growth across Arkansas.

On Discover Arkansas, users can search by industry, wage, occupation, employment, and education, as well as browse helpful career resources and publications. The portal can be used to view current employment statistics, in-demand industries and occupations, two- and ten-year job projections, and wage information from the only wage survey done in Arkansas. Discover Arkansas is also the first place monthly unemployment rates are posted for public view.

The 2020 Arkansas Labor Market and Economic Report, released in Summer 2020, projected information for industry and occupational trends covering the years 2019 to 2021.

Arkansas increased in population in 2019 by 3,979 from 2018; and added a total of 39,397 new residents from 2015 to 2019. Of Arkansas's 10 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), Central Arkansas surprisingly experienced the largest increase in population, adding 1,458 in 2019. Previously, the Northwest Arkansas LWDA had exhibited a pattern of the most growth. However, in 2019, Northwest Arkansas joined Eastern, North Central, Southeast, and Southwest Arkansas LWDAs that experienced decreasing populations in 2019.

Between 2018 and 2019 the state's labor force increased by 11,146 and employment increased by 12,831, after experiencing small decreases in the previous year. Labor force and employment were mixed across LWDAs. The State's unemployment rate dropped to 3.5% in 2019, a drop of one and five-tenths percentage points since 2015. The unemployment rate fluctuated in 2020, ending the month of July at 7.1%. The unemployment rate fluctuated across all LWDAs in 2020 and through July 2020. The Northwest Arkansas LWDA unemployment rate fell below state levels through July 2020.

Short-term employment projections for 2019-2021 continue to see an increase in the Arkansas job market with 11,050 jobs, equivalent to a 0.92% rise in employment. Good-producing Industries are estimated to see a net gain of 2,197 jobs, down from 9,066 jobs the previous year. Services-Producing Industries are forecast to increase employment by 23,825, down from 26,480. Arkansas's self-employed ranks are estimated to experience a net gain of 1,051, an increase of 0.83%.

Jobs requiring a high school diploma or equivalent are estimated to add more jobs than any

other education level with 9,484 jobs between 2019 and 2021, down from 5,511 jobs between 2018 and 2020. Occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree are expected to grow by 6,320, down from 7,851 previously.

## VII. ACTIVITIES PROVIDED BY STATEWIDE FUNDS

### A. Obligations

In PY19, statewide funding was obligated towards the following activities:

- Contracting with the University of Arkansas to complete an evaluation of the Workforce System- emphasis on business services and asset mapping
- Eligible Training Provider Reporting System conversation from the Arkansas Consumer Reporting System (ACRS) to America's Job Link Association's Provider Link for purposes of ETP reporting improvement. Complete system conversion is expected by September 2021
- Regional Planning and Sector Strategies subawards to Local Workforce Development Boards
- Additional local funding to Local Areas with High Concentrations of Eligible Youth
- Ex-offender focused RV visits to Correctional Facilities
- Business-focused services including: State-funded Work Based Learning Activities, Career Readiness Certificate programs, and piloting a state administered Virtual Job Fair platform and
- Other required activities such as monitoring and technical assistance

#### **Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-30**

(Storms occurring between May 21, 2019, and continuing)

In June of 2019, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the Little Rock and West Central regions as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$1,803,765 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-30 has an end date of December 31, 2020.

#### **Disaster National Dislocated Worker Grant– AR-31**

(Severe storms, straight-line winds, tornadoes, and flooding)

In September of 2019, the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency declared storm impacted counties within the Northwest region as federal disaster areas. ADWS received a total award of \$467,540 to fund temporary employment and recovery assistance for storm debris removal and repairs. Disaster NDWG AR-31 has an end date of March 31, 2021.

### B. WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Adult Education Section provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE), and English Second Language (ESL) services to all eligible adult education and literacy programs in Arkansas. Using the thirteen considerations, sub awardees were determined eligible for funding in the 2020-2024 Request for Proposal, as stated in "Distribution of Funds for Core Programs" using the

previously stated competitive processes.

Eligible provider's activities include reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider and are based on the best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice. In addition, adult education and literacy providers work collaboratively with other agencies to enhance services.

For example, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services use federal funding to provide services to Adult Education participants with disabilities. The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services provide funds to those individuals seeking to enter or retain employment or receive specialized training after completing basic skills acquisition through Arkansas Adult Education.

All providers receiving state and/or federal funding from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, Adult Education Section will be required to provide adult education and literacy services in year one, which include: English language acquisition, integrated English literacy and civics education, workplace education, workforce preparation activities or integrated education and training. Details of these activities are provided in each program's proposal.

### **C. WIOA Title IV – Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)**

The Designated State Agency for General Vocational Rehabilitation in Arkansas is the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS). Title IV of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Similarly, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Division of Services for the Blind is the designated State Agency to provide services for rehabilitation and social services to blind and severely visually impaired persons age 14 and above in Arkansas.

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services - Arkansas Rehabilitation Services provides vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTC[1]) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities.

The Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a key partner with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) in the administration of the State's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program. The Arkansas SRC is a citizen advisory council, appointed by the Governor, to provide guidance to ARS to help individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to obtain, maintain and regain competitive integrated employment, promote full inclusion and integration into society, and to maximize independence and economic self-sufficiency. Its membership helps ARS to develop and operationalize the VR State Plan, develop and operationalize ARS' state goals and priorities, shape and review policy, engage in strategic planning, evaluate the effectiveness of the VR Program, analyze consumer satisfaction and provide guidance, including development and review of cooperative agreements.

#### **D. Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)**

Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. ARS in partnership with the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge for providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

The DSB Director and the senior leadership of DSB provide oversight and coordination within the constraints of state and federal laws to fulfill its mission through the following goals:

- Employment - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to secure or maintain employment and consistent with their skills, abilities, and interests.
- Rehabilitation - To assist Arkansans who are blind or visually impaired to live as independently as possible through the development of skills, accommodations, or adaptations that are necessary to perform all activities of daily living.
- Prevention of Blindness - To assist in preventing blindness stabilizing vision, and, where possible, restoring vision.
- Field Services personnel provide the local level coordination and facilitation of all general vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with blind or visual impairment issues. This includes, but is not limited to, vocational rehabilitation counseling, vocational case management, eligibility determination, individual employment plan development, transition services, and job placement.
- Business and Technology personnel help educate consumers to develop management and business ownership within the Vending Facility Program (VFP). The Vending Facility Program Services are available to eligible blind persons who are interested in and have the necessary skills to manage snack bars

Through the Governor's Executive Order 10-17, DSB coordinates with other state agencies to increase employment of Arkansans with disabilities. The order also aims to focus consumer services first toward the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

#### **E. Rapid Response/Layoff Aversion**

The Dislocated Worker program is designed to help workers get back to work as quickly as possible and overcome barriers to employment. When individuals become dislocated workers as a result of job loss, mass layoffs, global trade dynamics, or transitions in economic sectors, the Dislocated Worker program provides services to assist them in re-entering the workforce.

One such service is Rapid Response. Rapid Response is a pro-active, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed to respond to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating



services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. Our Rapid Response team works with employers and any employees to quickly maximize public and private resources to minimize disruptions associated with job loss. Rapid Response can provide customized services on-site at an affected company, accommodate any work schedules, and assist companies and workers through the painful transitions associated with job loss.

Rapid Response is conducted in partnership with the Arkansas Workforce Centers (AWCs). Rapid Response for Laid-Off Workers provides access to a comprehensive range of direct services, benefits, training opportunities, and income support. Assistance may include drafting résumés and letters of application, interview skills workshops, career counseling, job search assistance, skills upgrading, and job training. Rapid Response also provides multiple benefits to Employers including information about a variety of layoff aversion options which may be available. Rapid Response may also facilitate access to incumbent worker training programs and to skilled job seekers.

Our Dislocated Worker program manages a fleet of Mobile Workforce Centers. Each Mobile Workforce Center has full internet connectivity and is equipped with computers, printers, copiers and fax machines. All the Mobile Workforce Centers include a computer with access to Jobs Application with Speech (JAWS) software, and most mobile units are handicapped accessible. Mobile Workforce Centers may be transported to supplement local resources, as needed.

## **F. Promising Practices**

During the program year, we identified several promising practices, which include:

- Work-Based Learning Project - WIOA Title I funded a work-based learning program via a partnership with the *Our House*. *Our House* empowers homeless and near-homeless families and individuals to succeed in the workforce, in school, and in life through hard work, wise decision-making, and active participation in the community.
- Virtual Job Fairs - Arkansas Workforce Centers began conducting Virtual Job Fairs to aid job seekers and businesses that were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ACT Work Ready Communities (WRC) Initiative - This partnership empowered Arkansas and its counties with process, data and tools deployed in a common workforce development framework to drive economic growth by certifying counties as work ready communities when established goals are attained.
- Certified Career Development Facilitator/Career Service Provider - Adult Education experienced success in requiring local providers to have a certified Career Development Facilitator/Career Service Provider on staff in order to assist participants in developing and acting on education and career goals. This ensures that each program has staff trained to assist participants in identifying resources to overcome barriers to employment.

## VIII. EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

WIOA implemented a pilot performance measure to determine the effectiveness in serving employers. States were requested to select two of the three DOL pilot measures and could include additional state-defined employer measures. The state of Arkansas has chosen for the pilot period to report on the following for the *Effectiveness in Serving Employer* performance indicator:

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration.

The first chart details the specific services provider to Employers, by service type, during the program year.

<b>Effectiveness in Serving Employers</b>	
<b>Employer Services</b>	<b>Establishment Count Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020</b>
<b>Employer Information and Support Services</b>	<b>1,796</b>
<b>Workforce Recruitment Assistance</b>	<b>3,800</b>
<b>Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Accessing Untapped Labor Pools</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>Training Services</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Incumbent Work Training Services</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Rapid Response/Business Downsizing Assistance</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Planning Layoff Response</b>	<b>1</b>

The chart below details the actual achieved performance for the two pilot measures, Retention with the Same Employer and Employer Penetration, during the program year.

<b>Pilot Measures</b>	<b>Numerator/Denominator*</b>	<b>Rate</b> <b>Cohort Period:</b> <b>7/1/2019-6/30/2020</b>
<b>Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters After Exit Rate</b>	<b>43,538/66,552</b>	<b>65.4%</b>
<b>Employer Penetration Rate</b>	<b>5,586/106,155</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Repeat Business Customers Rate</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>State Established Measure</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## IX. STATE'S PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

### A. Common Exit Policy

Arkansas has a Common Exit policy mandating common date of exit for participants across the WIOA Title I, WIOA Title III, and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs. Consistent with ETA guidance, participants enrolled or co-enrolled in one or more of the foregoing ETA programs remain as participants in all programs in which there is a common period of participation until the participant has not received a service in any Common Exit program for ninety days. After ninety days elapse without receipt of a service in any of the Common Exit programs, the participant will exit all programs, retroactive to the date of the last service received in any enrolled or co-enrolled program.

### B. Performance Table Narrative

The following data tables make up the final portion of Arkansas's *WIOA Title I and Title III Annual Report*.

Additionally, in the Appendix of this report contains performance data tables for WIOA Title II and Title IV performance data tables.

As the charts indicate, Arkansas met or exceeded the 90% threshold in all performance measures in each of its' WIOA programs.

In PY19, Arkansas continued its increase emphasis upon increasing services to those participants who have been identified as having Barriers to Employment, as defined by WIOA.

Between Program Year 2018 and Program Year 2019, Arkansas the following increases:

- In the WIOA Adult Program, Low Income participants increased from 737 to 1,114.
- In the WIOA Adult Program, Single Parent participants increased from 173 to 556.
- In the WIOA Adult Program, Participants Exhausting TANF within 2 years experienced earnings increases from \$2,477.42 to \$6,412.47.
- In the WIOA Adult Program Long-term Unemployed participants experienced earnings increases from \$5,498.37 to \$5,889.50. Similarly, in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, Long-Term Unemployed participants experienced earnings increases from \$6,205.50 to \$7,600.00.
- In the WIOA Adult Program, Single Parent participants experience earnings increases from \$5,499.71 to \$6,207.56. Similarly, in the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, Single Parent participants experienced earnings increases from \$5,776.25 to \$6,789.41.
- In the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, we experienced modest increases in the number of English Language Learner, Ex-Offender and Single Parent Learner participants.
- In the WIOA Title II - Adult Education program, participants experienced percentage increases in their measurable skills gains for the Entering Educational Functioning Levels ABE Levels 1, 2,3,4 and 5 since last program year.
- In the WIOA Title II - Adult Education program, participants with these barriers to employment experienced percentage increases in their measurable skills gains: Displace Homemakers, Ex-Offenders and Youth in Foster Care.
- In the WIOA Title IV – Rehabilitation Services and Division of Services for the Blind programs,

- participants experience modest increases in the Employment Q2 rates.
- In the WIOA Title IV – Rehabilitation Services and Division of Services for the Blind programs, the percentage of participants who attained measurable skills gains increased from 27.20% to 45.50%.

The actual performance tables for WIOA Titles I & III are listed on the next page.

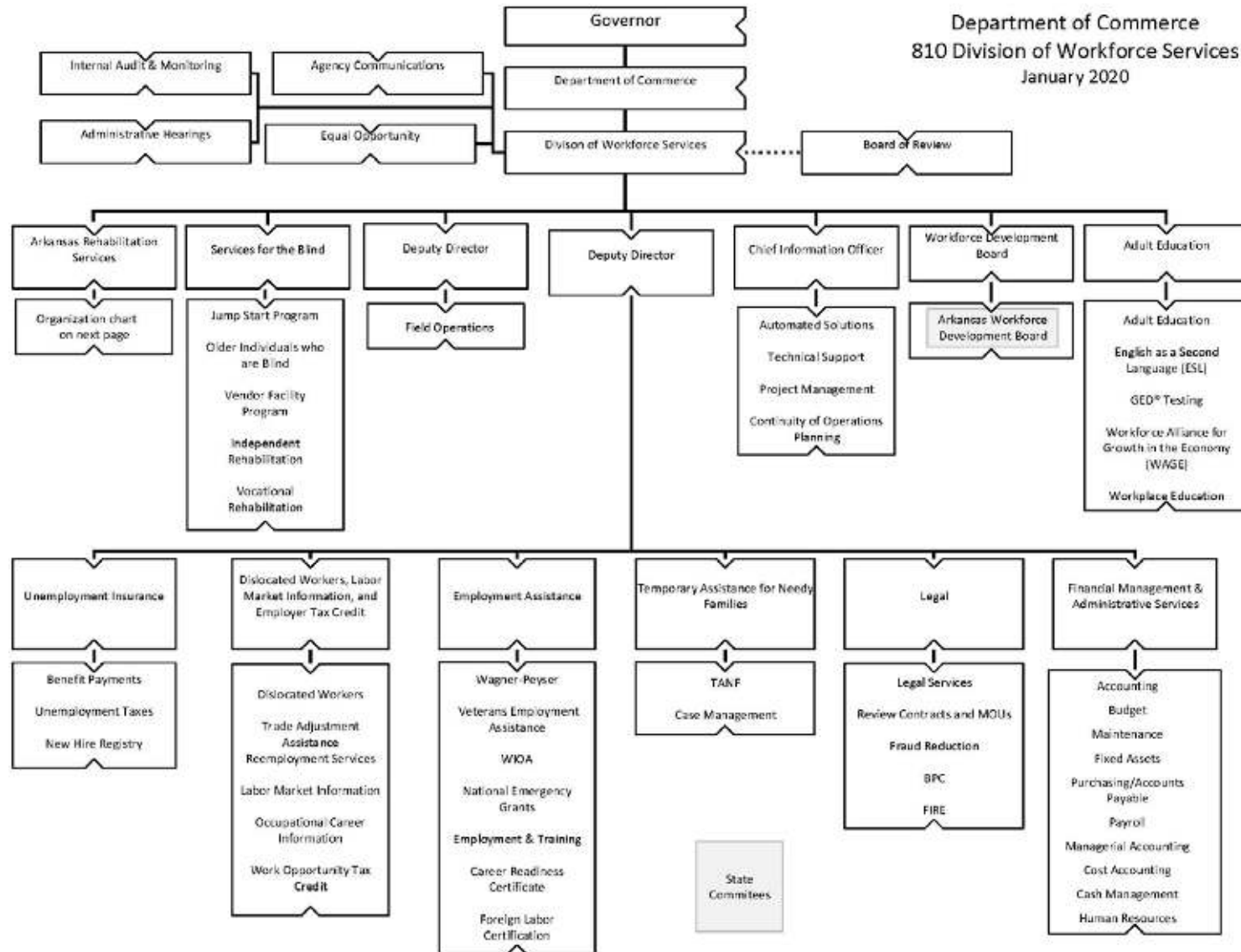
ADULTS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2019 - 03/31/2020)	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2019)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2019)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)		
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate	
Total Statewide	1238	874	Target		91.10%	85.80%	\$6,281.00		74.20%		NA	
			Actual	Num.	702	675		616		679		
	Denom.	826		85.00%	802	84.20%	\$6,859.00	735	83.80%	875	77.60%	

DISLOCATED WORKERS												
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2019 - 03/31/2020)	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)		
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate	
Total Statewide	320	220	Target		91.00%	85.50%	\$7,000.00		76.10%		NA	
			Actual	Numerator	191	215		165		151		
	Denominator	213		89.70%	242	88.84%	\$7,087.25	202	81.70%	209	72.25%	

YOUTH											
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2019 - 03/31/2020)	Placement Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Placement Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
			Target	75.00%	78.10%	NA	75.00%	NA			
Total Statewide	797	526	Actual	Numerator	482	498	\$3,220.00	268	387	256	62.90%
				Denominator	604	618		79.80%		80.60%	

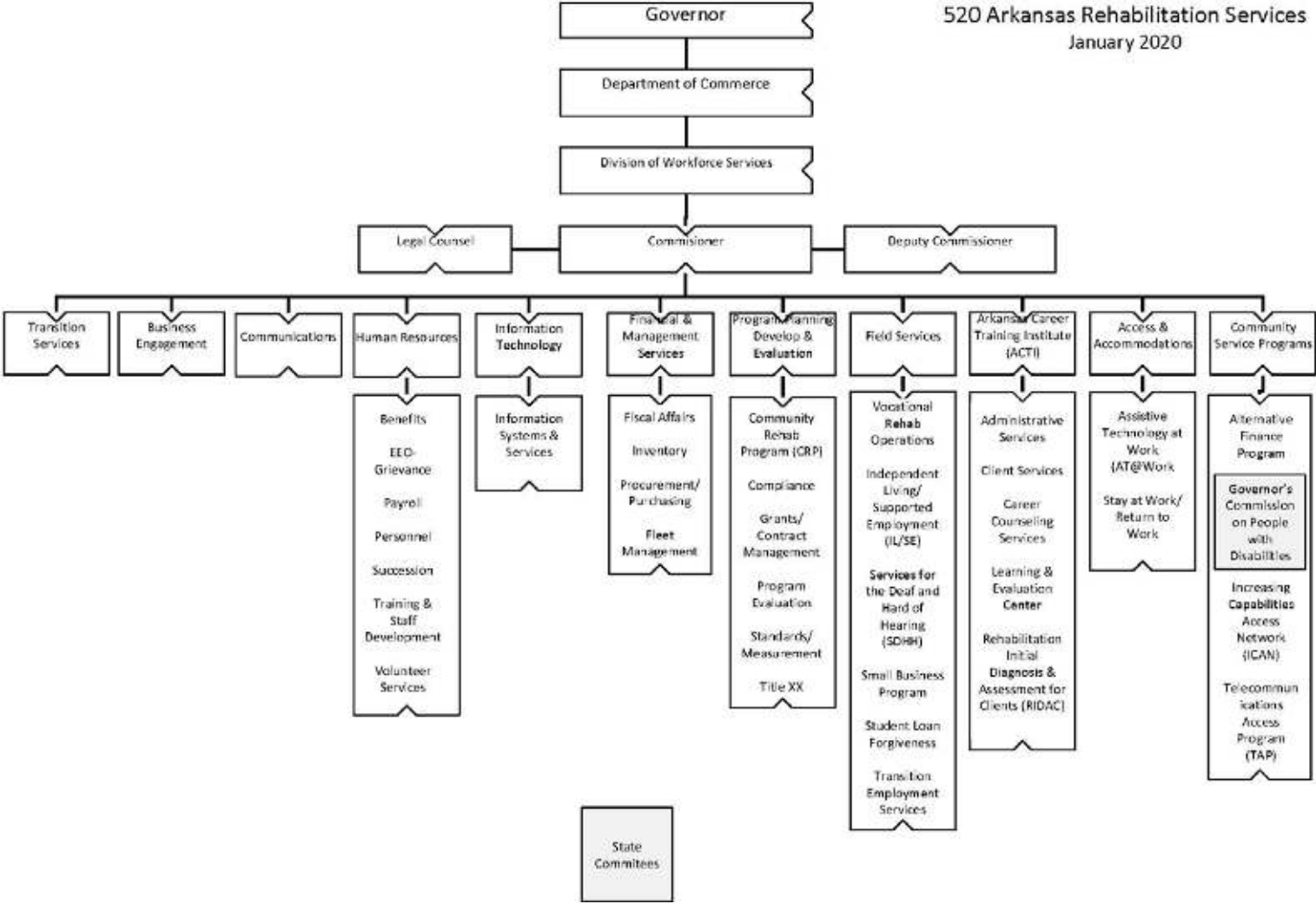
WAGNER-PEYSER											
	Total Participants Served (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	Total Participants Exited (Cohort Period: 04/01/2019 - 03/31/2020)	Employment Rate (Q2) (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)		Employment Rate (Q4) (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Median Earnings (Cohort Period: 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019)	Credential Rate (Cohort Period: 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018)		Measurable Skill Gains (Cohort Period: 07/01/2019 - 06/30/2020)	
				Rate		Rate	Earnings		Rate		Rate
			Target	73.40%	74.50%	\$4,750.00	NA	NA			
Total Statewide	104,791	105,753	Actual	Numerator	72,630	72,665	\$5,388.29	NA	NA	NA	NA
				Denominator	101,511	102,388		71.55%		70.97%	

## X. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





Department of Commerce  
 520 Arkansas Rehabilitation Services  
 January 2020



**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**XI. APPENDIX**

**Title II Adult Education PY19-20 Performance**

***2019-20 Performance***

***Measurable Skill Gains***

<b>Entering Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants*</b>	<b>Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Target</b>	<b>Percentage of Measurable Skill Gains Achieved</b>
<b>ABE Level 1</b>	326	53%	43.40%
<b>ABE Level 2</b>	2,431	48%	36.60%
<b>ABE Level 3</b>	2,908	47%	45.90%
<b>ABE Level 4</b>	1,662	48%	56.60%
<b>ABE Level 5</b>	400	52%	56.40%
<b>ABE Level 6</b>	47	N/A	40.40%
<b>ESL Level 1</b>	1,261	36%	43.10%
<b>ESL Level 2</b>	633	43%	52.00%
<b>ESL Level 3</b>	428	50%	54.10%
<b>ESL Level 4</b>	238	43%	53.90%
<b>ESL Level 5</b>	134	43%	50.40%
<b>ESL Level 6</b>	26	24%	38.50%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,494</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>47.00%</b>

*\*Participant in Adult Education between July 1, 2019- June 30, 2020*

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Measurable Skill Gains by Barriers to Employment**

	<b>Measurable Skill Gains (07/01/19 - 06/30/20)</b>	
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>	57	47.00%
<b>English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers</b>	4,982	47.00%
<b>Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)</b>	5	25.00%
<b>Ex-offenders</b>	880	48.10%
<b>Homeless Individuals / runaway youth</b>	104	38.00%
<b>Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)</b>	292	46.90%
<b>Low-Income Individuals</b>	1,577	43.40%
<b>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers</b>	13	38.20%
<b>Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)</b>	237	39.40%
<b>Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)</b>	292	35.90%
<b>Youth in foster care or aged out of system</b>	19	47.50%

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Follow-up Measures**

<b>Primary Indicators of Performance</b>	<b>Number of Participants who Exited</b>	<b>Total POPs</b>	<b>Total Number of POPs Participants Achieved Outcome or Median Earnings Value for All POPs</b>	<b>Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Target</b>	<b>Percentage of Participants in All POPs Achieving Outcome Achieved</b>
<b>Employment Second Quarter after exit* (All Exited Participants excluding Corrections)</b>	9,879	9,967	4,241	N/A	42.55%
<b>Employment Fourth Quarter after exit** (All Exited Participants excluding Corrections)</b>	4,057	4,059	1,902	N/A	46.85%
<b>Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit*</b>	4,241	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A	-----
<b>Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit** (Entry at ASE)</b>	1,662	1,663	198	N/A	11.90%
<b>Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit** (Entry at ASE)</b>	1,662	1,663	633	N/A	38.06%
<b>Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit** (Dual Enrollment)</b>	4	4	0	N/A	0.00%
<b>Attained any credential (unduplicated)**</b>	1,665	1,666	804	N/A	48.25%

\*Exited 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019

\*\* Exited 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Follow-up Measures by Barriers to Employment**

	<b>Employment Rate (Q2) (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)</b>		<b>Employment Rate (Q4) (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)</b>		<b>Median Earnings (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)</b>	<b>Credential Rate (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)</b>	
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>	48	44.43%	22	46.79%	\$2,597.00	81	4.87%
<b>English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers</b>	4,241	42.55%	1,902	46.85%	\$3,955.71	804	48.36%
<b>Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)</b>	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	\$0.00	2	0.24%
<b>Ex-offenders</b>	626	45.49%	279	46.89%	\$4,208.00	123	7.40%
<b>Homeless Individuals / runaway youth</b>	76	44.70%	34	46.57%	\$4,575.00	15	0.90%
<b>Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)</b>	160	47.05%	69	46.93%	\$1,640.00	36	2.16%
<b>Low-Income Individuals</b>	1,046	45.15%	469	46.85%	\$3,101.00	210	12.63%
<b>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers</b>	14	45.15%	6	46.14%	\$1,684.00	2	0.12%
<b>Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)</b>	168	45.15%	75	46.58%	\$2,114.00	37	2.22%
<b>Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)</b>	366	45.18%	164	46.85%	\$4,339.00	60	3.61%
<b>Youth in foster care or aged out of system</b>	19	44.17%	8	42.10%	\$3,191.00	5	0.30%

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**2019-20 Table 4**

<b>Entering Educational Functioning Level</b>	<b>Total Number of Participants</b>	<b>Total Attendance Hours for all participants</b>	<b>Total number of POPs in which Participants achieved at least one EFL gain</b>	<b>Total number of POPs in which an SSD was attained</b>	<b>Percentage of POPs with Measurable Skill Gains</b>
ABE Level 1	326	26,870	142	0	43.40%
ABE Level 2	2,431	190,128	887	82	39.60%
ABE Level 3	2,908	197,777	774	569	45.90%
ABE Level 4	1,662	99,895	331	661	56.60%
ABE Level 5	400	22,001	84	143	56.40%
ABE Level 6	47	3,117	7	12	40.40%
<b>ABE Total</b>	<b>7,774</b>	<b>539,790</b>	<b>2,225</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>46.60%</b>
ESL Level 1	1,261	88,485	547	1	43.10%
ESL Level 2	633	56,481	329	3	52.00%
ESL Level 3	428	41,658	233	2	54.10%
ESL Level 4	238	22,839	12	2	53.90%
ESL Level 5	134	13,617	67	2	50.40%
ESL Level 6	26	2,696	10	0	38.50%
<b>ESL Total</b>	<b>2,720</b>	<b>225,777</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48.20%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>10,494</b>	<b>765,567</b>	<b>3,540</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>47.00%</b>

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**2019-20 Table 5**

Primary Indicators of Performance	Number of Participants who Exited	Number of Participants who Exited Achieving Outcome or Median Earnings Value	Percentage of Participants Achieving Outcome	Total Periods of Participation	Total Number of Periods of Participation in which Participants Achieved Outcome or Median Earnings Value for All Periods of Participation	Percentage of Participants in All Periods of Participation Achieving Outcome
Employment Second Quarter after exit	9,879	4,241	42.92%	9,967	4,241	42.55%
Employment Fourth Quarter after exit	4,057	1,902	46.88%	4,059	1,902	46.85%
Median Earnings Second Quarter after exit	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A	4,241	\$3,955.71	N/A
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit	1,662	198	11.91%	1,663	198	11.90%
Attained a Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit	1,662	633	38.08%	1,663	633	38.06%
Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit	4	0	0.00%	4	0	0.00%
Attained any credential (unduplicated)	1,665	804	48.28%	1,666	804	48.25%

\*Exited 07/01/2018 - 06/30/2019

\*\* Exited 01/01/2018 - 12/31/2018

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Follow-up Measures for Barriers to Employment (in progress)**

	Total Participants (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	Total Participants Exited (04/01/18- 03/31/19)	Employment Rate (Q2) (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)		Employment Rate (Q4) (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)		Median Earnings (07/01/17 - 06/30/18)	Credential Rate (01/01/17 - 12/31/17)		Measurable Skill Gains (07/01/18 - 06/30/19)	
<b>Displaced Homemakers</b>	165	108	48	44.43%	22	46.79%	\$2,597.00	81	4.87%	65	39.39 %
<b>English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers</b>	12,629	9,383	4,241	42.55%	1,902	46.85%	\$3,955.71	804	48.36%	6,084	48.20 %
<b>Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)</b>	24	13	0	0.00%	2	40.00%	\$0.00	2	0.24%	6	25.00 %
<b>Ex-offenders</b>	1,937	1,376	626	45.49%	279	46.89%	\$4,208.00	123	7.40%	764	39.39 %
<b>Homeless Individuals / runaway youth</b>	238	170	76	44.70%	34	46.57%	\$4,575.00	15	0.90%	97	40.80 %
<b>Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)</b>	572	340	160	47.05%	69	46.93%	\$1,640.00	36	2.16%	274	47.90 %
<b>Low-Income Individuals</b>	3,312	2,316	1,046	45.15%	469	46.85%	\$3,101.00	210	12.63%	1,568	47.30 %
<b>Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers</b>	36	31	14	45.15%	6	46.14%	\$1,684.00	2	0.12%	18	50.00 %
<b>Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)</b>	589	372	168	45.15%	75	46.58%	\$2,114.00	37	2.22%	260	44.10 %
<b>Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)</b>	946	810	366	45.18%	164	46.85%	\$4,339.00	60	3.61%	403	42.60 %
<b>Youth in foster care or aged out of system</b>	54	43	19	44.17%	8	42.10%	\$3,191.00	5	0.30%	20	37.00 %



**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Reporting Time Frames**

**Program Year 2019 (PY19) Annual Report July 1, 2019 -Jun 30, 2020**

<i>Report Due Date</i>	<i>October 1, 2020</i>
Number Served (Participant)	7/01/19 to 6/30/20
Number Exited (Participant)	4/1/19 to 3/31/20
Employment Rate Second Quarter After Exit	7/01/18 to 6/30/19
Employment Rate Fourth Quarter After Exit	1/01/18 to 12/31/18
Median Earnings Second Quarter After Exit	7/01/18 to 6/30/19
Credential Attainment Rate	1/01/18 to 12/31/18
Measurable Skill Gains	7/01/19 to 6/30/20

**Appendix  
WIOA Title II and IV Performance  
PY19-20**

**Title IV Total Performance Measures (Rehabilitation Services including Services for the Blind)**

**Program and Summary Information**

	<b>Career Services</b>	<b>Training Services</b>
Participants Served	10,889	6,450
Participants Exited	3,478	1,841
Funds Expended	\$1,934,714	\$9,191,897
Cost Per Participant Served	\$177.88	\$1,542

**Other Summary Information**

Percent Admin Expended	N/A
Percent enrolled in more than one core program	0.0
Percent training-related employment	N/A

**Appendix I**  
**WIOA Title II and IV Performance**  
**PY19-20**

**By Participant Characteristics Total**

**Statewide**

Total Participants Served	12,159
Total Participants Exited	3,482

	Target	Actual
Employment (Q2) Number		2,037
Employment (Q2) Rate		57.60%
Employment (Q4) Number		1,429
Employment (Q4) Rate		39.40%
Median Earnings		\$4,835.57
Credential Number		5
Credential Rate		0.70%
Measurable Skill Gains Number		2,431
Measurable Skill Gains Rate		45.50%

**By Sex**

	Female	Male
Total Participants Served	6,847	5,310
Total Participants Exited	1,877	1,605
Employment (Q2) Number	1,115	921
Employment (Q2) Rate	58.0%	57.20%
Employment (Q4) Number	756	673
Employment (Q4) Rate	39.40%	39.07%
Median Earnings	\$4,620.00	\$5,168.05
Credential Number	3	2
Credential Rate	0.50%	0.40%
Measurable Skill Gains number	1,500	931
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	46.80%	43.50%

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 5 – INFORMATION:** Reimagine Arkansas Workforce (RAW) Grant Update

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The Department of Education Issued a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for the FY 2020 Education Stabilization Fund – *Reimagine Workforce Preparation Grants* program under the CARES Act, making available \$127.5 million.

The Arkansas Workforce Development Board was one of eight State Workforce Boards awarded this funding opportunity open to all states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.

The partners in this grant are the Arkansas Workforce Development Board, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services, University of Arkansas Global Campus, Shorter College and iDatafy LLC.

Staff will provide an update regarding the implementation of this grant.



Michael Preston  
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE  
Charisse Childers, Ph.D.  
DIRECTOR  
DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

## **Arkansas Reimagine Workforce Preparation Grant Program**

*Awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education*

### **Award Amount: \$13,579,455.83**

The purpose of the Education Stabilization Fund – Reimagine Workforce Preparation (ESF-RWP) Grant Program is to help States with the highest coronavirus burden:

- Create or expand short-term education and training opportunities and/or or career pathways programs that help citizens return to work, become entrepreneurs, or expand their small businesses; or,
- To enable States to create or expand small business incubators that offer education and training, mentorship, as well as shared facilities and resources that will help small businesses recover and grow and new entrepreneurs thrive.

### **Role of the Arkansas Workforce Development Board and Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS)**

- As the primary applicant and grantee, the Workforce Development Board and ADWS will have primary responsibility for project management and reporting.
- ADWS will contribute to the achievement of the project goals and objectives by helping to recruit participants, facilitating communications with industry partners in order to develop new online courses, and providing career counseling and other Workforce Services participants, as applicable.

### **Role of the University of Arkansas Global Campus- \$10,088,551 (\$10M)**

- ADWS will contract with UA Global Campus to develop and deliver short-term online training programs.
- The role of the instructional designer is crucial in building out new online programming as they are a key communicator with the subject matter expert.
- The Global Campus team works together to make sure objectives and outcomes align and that activities throughout training are engaging to the learner.
- Once the content is built the Global Campus team will take the lead in registration and enrollment of students all the way through the completion of the program and awarding of certificates.

### **Role of Shorter College-\$3,164,793 (\$3M)**

- Shorter College will partner with the University of Arkansas to ensure Arkansans will be able to receive resources, training, and programs.
- Shorter College is invested in ensuring its students will be able to utilize distance education as a key component to continuing their education at the University of Arkansas and assist in all endeavors to assist those TANF eligible, Re-entry population, and dislocated workers.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 6 – INFORMATIONAL:** Workforce System Evaluation Project Update

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** As required by 20 CFR § 682.200(d), States must use funds reserved by the Governor for statewide activities to conduct evaluations of activities under the WIOA title I core programs in order to promote continuous improvement, research and test innovative services and strategies, and achieve high levels of performance and outcomes.

ADWS, following input from the AWDB during the July 16, 2019, entered a contract for an evaluation with the University of Arkansas.

Staff will provide a status report on this project.

# Workforce System Evaluation Request

## PURPOSE

The following evaluations using *designs that employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups* (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate:

- A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas. This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.
  1. Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I and Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas-to determine if, based on the participants information in the Case File, the participant might have been eligible to receive services under the required partners listed in 20 CFR § 678.400.
  2. For each local area selected, interview leadership to identify partner programs and non-profits that collaborate with the Workforce Centers beyond the list of required partners above. For all partners, required in number 1 and other partners identified in 2, report whether there exists:
    - Memorandums of Understanding between the programs/entities
    - Referral Procedures
    - Training for partners regarding the services provided or alternative print materials to assist in collaboration OR
    - An alternative method to refer clients between the partners effectively
  3. Identify and report entities in the selected local areas that provide services to the following targeted populations:
    - Displaced Homemaker
    - Low Income
    - Limited English Proficiency
    - Migrant Worker
    - Disabled
    - Veteran
    - Older Worker
    - Out of School Youth
    - Foster Youth
    - Basic Skill Deficient
    - Ex-Offender

## Workforce System Evaluation Request

- Single Parent
- TANF Recipient
- SNAP Recipient
- SSDI Recipient
- UI Claimant
- Long-Term Unemployed

4. For all programs and services identified in steps 1, 2, and 3, report whether sampled participants were: referred to or co-enrolled in other programs or services.

B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

Interview staff for examples of:

- i. Skills-gap identification on either the occupation level, based on demand, or the skill-level based on interaction with an employer.
- ii. Determine the services that were provided to address the skills-gap
- iii. Provide an assessment of the effectiveness of the services provided in closing the skills-gap, if possible.

C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be located in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above

D. Conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.

E. Provide evaluation status reports on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports will be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.

F. Provide a preliminary evaluation report by August 15, 2020.

G. Provide a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations by September 30, 2020.



## **Arkansas Workforce System Evaluation Project Update January 26, 2021**

In PY2019, Arkansas entered a contract with the University of Arkansas – Fayetteville to complete a workforce system evaluation. This contract went into effect on January 1, 2020 and will result in an evaluation that will employ the most rigorous analytical and statistical methods that are reasonably feasible, such as the use of control groups (20 CFR § 682.220) as appropriate.

Unfortunately, the onset of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 altered our plans considerably and we are attempting to re-calibrate our previous milestones and deadlines.

We have included the details of this evaluation plan below:

A. Local Integration Study- Sample Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title I or Title III participants for 3 Local Workforce Development Areas.

This part of the evaluation will focus on two primary areas: 1. Co-enrollment and Co-funding of REQUIRED WIOA Partners and 2. Leveraging of Local Resources available in the Local Workforce Development Area.

B. In the Comprehensive Centers for the 3 Local Areas selected for sampling, report case studies on effectiveness of identifying and closing Skill-Gaps

C. Review a sample of Arkansas Workforce Centers against the State's certification policy and applicable laws/regulations for four comprehensive centers and two affiliate centers. Each of the six centers selected should be in different Local Workforce Development Areas and may be selected from Local Workforce Development Areas that overlap the 3 selected above.

D. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, we planned to conduct a statewide customer service survey for business customers of WIOA Title I and Title III receiving services over the most recent 12 months available.

E. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, evaluation status reports were to be provided on a monthly basis on overall project goals. These reports were scheduled to be issued at the end of February, March, April, May, June, and July of 2020.

F. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, a preliminary evaluation report was scheduled to be produced by August 15, 2020.

G. *Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic*, a final evaluation, with results, best practices, and recommendations was to be presented to the State Workforce Development Board by September 30, 2020.

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 7 – INFORMATIONAL:** Arkansas Workforce Development Board Codes of Conduct

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** The Arkansas Workforce Development Board is committed to maintaining the highest of standards of ethical conduct.

These standards include conducting board business in an open manner to ensure that the public has access to meetings as well as and guarding against problems arising from real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

Under Federal and State laws and regulations, State Workforce Boards and its members must conduct official business within certain parameters which results in the highest level of confidence in the Board by the general public.

Staff will provide information designed to remind Board Members of the requirements related to the WIOA Sunshine Provision, Conflicts of Interest and the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

**For Consideration of the  
Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

**January 26, 2021**

**AGENDA ITEM 8 – INFORMATIONAL:** USDOL Governance TAT Project Updates

**INFORMATION/RATIONALE:** In August 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) – Dallas Regional Office offered an opportunity for State Governance training for Arkansas’ State Workforce Development Board, Local Area Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), Local Workforce Development Board members and other Local Workforce Area program stakeholders.

Staff has been working with the USDOL contractor, Maher & Maher, to finalize the planning for this training.

Staff will provide an update on this project.

## State of Arkansas USDOL Governance Training Project

### **Day 1: All Stakeholder Groups**

- Use Slido for questions to be submitted in advance of this session
- 1.5 hours/90 minutes
- All stakeholder groups
- Overview of WIOA governance framework, responsibilities and limitations across all roles, how different roles connect/interact, local conflict of interest concerns
- Present “ideal” scenario/example for local governance structure/roles
- Include Q&A
- Identify additional training needs for the Regional Office and state leadership team

### **Day 2: Breakouts for Individual Stakeholder Groups**

The approach outlined below reflects our ideal approach for conducting 90-minute individual training breakouts with the three primary stakeholder groups. Taking this approach would mean a maximum of three hours of training for each stakeholder group between their participation in the main Day 1 session and the relevant Day 2 breakout session.

- Use Slido to get questions in advance for these sessions
- 3 non-concurrent “deep dive” breakouts on roles, responsibilities, conflict of interest, ideal governance structures, etc.; 1.5 hours/90 minutes each
  - Group 1: Local CEOs
  - Group 2: State Board members
  - Group 3: Local Board members
- Include Q&A
- Identify additional training needs for the Regional Office and state leadership team