



NORTHWEST TENNESSEE  
WORKFORCE BOARD  
ANNUAL REPORT 2006

# WHO WE HELP

► Unemployed or underemployed adults seeking self-sufficient employment. ► Unemployed or underemployed adults in need of training to improve marketable skills. ► Dislocated workers due to a plant closure or mass layoff that were in search of employment or training. ► Incumbent workers needing skill upgrades to stay competitive in the marketplace. ► Employers seeking prescreened employees without the training expense through WIA On-the-Job training contracts.



*Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board is a nonprofit organization that connects job seekers with employers through partnerships with training providers and the Tennessee Career Center System. Our strategic partnerships with business, economic development agencies, civic and community organizations, educational institutions, and labor and industrial boards create a workforce development network that rapidly responds to the needs of local employers. The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board is preparing today's workforce for tomorrow's jobs.*

- ▶ Employers awarded Incumbent Worker Training Grants to upgrade employee skill sets and increase overall productivity.
- ▶ Out-of-school youth ages 18-21 who are unemployed or underemployed and in need of training, career exploration, soft skills, GED test preparation, basic skills, or employment.
- ▶ High school students needing tutoring, Gateway test preparation, career exploration, work readiness skills, drop out prevention, or a mentor.

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND DIRECTOR

JIMMY WILLIAMSON, CHAIRMAN  
HENRY LEWIS, DIRECTOR  
*The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board*

**This report tells the story of *Progress* throughout 2005-2006 made possible through the Workforce Investment Act programs administered by the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board.**

Northwest Tennessee faces many of the same challenges as other rural areas across the nation: low educational attainment rates, limited job openings and slow industrial growth, high unemployment, and fewer transportation, child care, and personal development programs as compared to metropolitan areas.

However, northwest Tennessee has advantages that employer and jobseeker communities alike are beginning to seize. The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Study identified four very important local perceived strengths which include: a strong work ethic, an excellent quality of life, honest people, and an abundance of technical and post-secondary training providers, and that's naming only a few of the vast strengths and resources that job seekers and employers are beginning to tap.

The geographically central location of Local Workforce Investment Area 12 is also beginning to serve as an advantage for the northwest Tennessee region. LWIA 12 borders the Mississippi River, making it easy to ship goods by water. Vendors preferring to ship goods by

truck will find Interstate 155 a good way to do it with all seven counties in LWIA 12 within a day's drive of 76% of the country's major markets.

Another great advantage that should be realized over the next ten years is LWIA 12's proximity to the designated route of the future Interstate 69 corridor which will serve as an important trade route that will

eventually connect Canada and Mexico.

As workforce skill sets and geographic advantages blossom to fruition and the plummeting economy of recent years begins to plane out, it appears that fewer plant closures are in our immediate future. However, the demand for training and job placement assistance remained consistently strong throughout the 2005-2006 program year and is not expected to decline in the near future.

While some economists have predicted that northwest Tennessee has turned the corner and will continue the slow recovery process, we still have many workforce development challenges before us.

The most critical challenge is to help our local workforce prepare for the changing mixture of business sectors moving into the area and to likewise, assist those new industry sectors find and employ a skillful pool of employees.

According to research compiled by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the major industries currently in northwest Tennessee include manufacturing with about 24,100 in employment; education and health services with 12,800; trade, utilities, and transportation with 12,600; government with 6,400; and professional and business services with 4,000.

The industry types that currently employ a large majority of the workforce will continue to remain important players in the employment arena. However, as the region develops and grows, the in-demand occupations must also transform to keep pace with the demands of the environment.

Projections of the fastest growing industry sectors from 2004-2014 indicated by their annual percentage growth rate include: Agricultural Equipment Operators (4.0%), Preschool Teachers (3.5%), Firefighters (3.5%), Nurses (2.8%), Elementary School Teachers (2.6%), and Truck Drivers (1.4%).

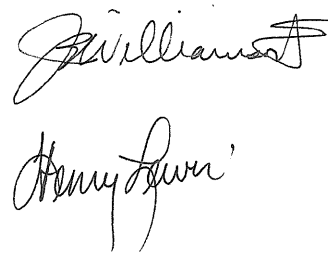
As service providers to jobseekers and employers alike, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board and the Tennessee Career Centers have teamed up to stay abreast of the ever changing labor market. Consequently, as you will find within the following pages of the Annual Report the Workforce Board and the Career Center System are making proactive steps to be ahead of the projected labor market

changes.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board completed the Healthcare Sector Analysis with the assistance of Middle Tennessee State University and the valuable members of the Healthcare Consortium. The Consortium will continue to disseminate the findings and statistics to the community and the future workforce.

Building on the success of the Healthcare Consortium, another consortium was born. The Consortium for Advancement of Commercial Motor Vehicle Occupations.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board is continuously making strides to be the best and most efficient and effective partner possible to the jobseeker and employer communities in northwest Tennessee. Therefore, it is with great pride that we present our 2005-2006 accomplishments and performance to the communities in which we serve.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature appears to be 'William' and the bottom signature appears to be 'Henry'.

## SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

JIMMY WILLIAMSON, CHAIRMAN

JOHN SNEAD, VICE CHAIRMAN

DR. KAREN BOWYER, SECRETARY

*A Northwest Tennessee Workforce Investment Board of Directors Initiative*

### Preparing Today's Workforce for Tomorrow's Jobs

The NWTNWB Board of Directors serves as the Local Workforce Investment Board for Local Workforce Investment Area 12 (LWIA 12) which includes the counties of Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, and Tipton. NWTNWB's Board of Directors sets policy and is responsible for providing strategic direction and oversight for the area's workforce development system.

The 45-member Board includes representatives from business, education, state agencies, economic development, labor, and community based organizations. The majority of seats are

filled by members of the private-sector business community that serve as managers and decision makers in their organizations. In addition to the diverse Board, seven local elected officials representing each county serve as honorary board members.

Workforce Board members possess an in-depth understanding of business, the economy, training programs, and legislative process and policies. They are vocal advocates for a workforce system that meets the needs of employers, jobseekers, and the emerging workforce.



### VISION:

To deliver a workforce development system that generates opportunities, to illustrate to the private sector the value added through partnerships, and to promote Tennessee as a place where people choose to live and work.

### MISSION:

Create a Workforce Development System that fully utilizes the experience and innovative resources of the public sector in an efficient, responsible, integrated system that provides services to jobseekers and employers of northwest Tennessee, which fosters a competitive economic environment and a high quality of life.

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## BUILDING ON BEST PRACTICES TO THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

**The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board has worked diligently throughout the year to build on existing best practices, create model programs, join efforts to help unexpected populations in need, and to reach out to the communities we serve.**

### Rapid Response Teams

Rapid Response teams are not a new creation, but rather one that Local Workforce Investment Area 12 has worked to refine and to best assist dislocated workers with all their training and employment needs.

When a company plans a major layoff or closure, they sometimes turn to a firm offering outplacement services to aid their employees during the transition. With the creation of the Rapid Response Team—a partnership between employers, TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Northwest TN Workforce Board (WIA), TN Department of Economic and Community Development, Adult Basic Education, TN Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, and any other faith-based or community organization that chooses to get involved—these companies can now obtain extensive outplacement services for their employees at no cost to either party.

Rapid Response Mass Meetings are held as an efficient way to distribute information and services to a large group of dislocated workers who are dislocated from one employer. Mass Meetings are held at the employer's place of business.

The goal of this program is to pull together all appropriate state and local resources at the site of the layoff or plant closure to address the needs of the affected workers and employer, therefore minimizing the negative impact of dislocation on both.

To accomplish this goal, the Rapid Response Team custom tailors activities and key services to the needs of the affected company. Services include:

- Career counseling
  - Job search assistance
  - Resume preparation assistance
  - Interviewing skills workshops
  - Labor market information
  - Unemployment insurance
  - Education and training opportunities
  - Health benefits and pensions
- and more.

Dislocated workers and employers served through Rapid Response Mass Meeting during program year 2005-2006 include:

- Kroger
- Bekaert Corporation
- Kellwood Company
- Homestead ACE Hardware
- USA Fleece
- Tower Automotive
- NCR Systemedia Division

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board is glad to report that the number of employers needing Rapid Response Mass Meetings dropped by fifty percent from program year 2004-2005 to program year 2005-2006. The decline indicates fewer companies are leaving the area or dislocating workers, a positive sign for northwest Tennessee.

## Adult Training Providers

During the 2005-2006 program year, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board invested nearly \$1.3 million in Workforce Investment Act formula funds for Adult jobseekers. The funds support training programs with proven track records of moving adults into self-sufficiency wage jobs as well as programs that offer new, innovative training modules to ensure that jobseekers are accessing the best training in the field.

Local Workforce Investment Board 12 has as its goal to increase employment, job retention, and earnings in northwest Tennessee by building a competitive and highly skilled workforce. Adult training providers include:

- Dyersburg State Community College
- Heartland Truck Driving Institute
- TN Technology Center at Covington
- TN Technology Center at Newbern
- TN Technology Center at Ripley
- West Kentucky Community and Technical College
- Concorde Career College
- Jackson State Community College
- Bethel College
- Union University
- Supplemental Services, Inc.
- TN Technology Center at Jackson
- TN Technology Center at Paris
- West Tennessee Business College
- Southwest Tennessee Community College
- University of Tennessee at Martin
- Drive Train Truck Driving Institute
- SWIFT Driving Academy
- TN Technology Center at Memphis
- University of Memphis
- Volunteer Training Center
- Milan Express Driving Academy
- and others as training needs arise.



Adult Training Providers are essential for the success of dislocated workers, unemployed or underemployed adults, and young adults that have not yet entered the workforce.

In order for northwest Tennessee to remain competitive in attracting new industry to the area, the population must possess the skills employers are seeking.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board maintains strong partnerships with all area training providers to help secure LWIA 12 a competitive edge.

## One-Stop Tennessee Career Centers

One-Stop Tennessee Career Centers provide single points-of-entry for adults and dislocated workers to a network of employment, training, and educational programs in the local community. The primary funding source for these centers is the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Workforce Investment Act.

Each year these centers help tens of thousands of jobseekers across the state access the tools they need to manage their careers and find living-wage jobs. By offering high-quality services, referrals, and training, the centers bridge the gap between employer and jobseeker by connecting qualified applicants with job openings.

Services fall into two categories: Universal Services and Enrolled Services.

**Universal Services** are accessed through a staffed resource room with multiple computer terminals. The majority of universal services are intended to be self-directed with assistance available as needed. Information is offered about job vacancies, career options, student financial aid, and relevant labor market data, and assistance is available to help jobseekers with conducting job search, writing a resume, and how best to interview with an employer. Services provided through Universal Services are open to any member of the public.



**Enrolled Services** are more extensive than Universal Services and involve development of a personalized employment plan outlining the most effective course of action for finding meaningful career employment for an individual jobseeker.

Services include career mapping, basic education, preparation to attain a GED credential, classroom occupational skills training, on-the-job training, and customized training. Adults must fulfill requirements under the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Workforce Investment Act to be classified as either an Adult Job Seeker or Dislocated Worker to be eligible to receive Enrolled Services through the Tennessee Career Center System.

### Career Center Locations

Tennessee Career Centers in Local Workforce Investment Area 12 are dispersed throughout the seven county region to offer services close to where area residents live and work.

Tennessee Career Center at Alamo  
334 South Bells Street, Alamo, TN 38001

Tennessee Career Center at Covington  
724 East Lucky Plaza, Covington, TN 38019

Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg  
439 McGaughey, Dyersburg, TN 38024

Tennessee Career Center at Humboldt  
1481 Mullins Street, Humboldt, TN 38343

Tennessee Career Center at Ripley  
301-C Lake Drive, Ripley, TN 38063

Tennessee Career Center at Tiptonville  
217 Church Street, Tiptonville, TN 38079

Tennessee Career Center at Union City  
126 East Main Street, Union City, TN 38261



## Model Programs

To adapt to the area's changing needs and to stay abreast of industry trends, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board funds programs that focus on developing skilled workers in specific high-demand occupations. Below is a sample of three innovative training models that have achieved success.

### \* Career Preparation Workshops

Jobseekers who utilized the universal access services via the resource room were frequently seeking assistance with job search and resume writing. In addition to jobseekers requesting assistance, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board found through a recent community audit that employers felt interviewees most needed improvement in the similar areas of soft skills, interviewing, and job preparation.

The Workforce Board joined forces with area Tennessee Career Centers to provide the job seekers and employers alike what they were both requesting.

Career Preparation Workshops began in all seven counties, free to the public, and offered on a weekly basis. The 4 workshops included:

- Resume Writing
- Successful Job Hunting
- Effective Interviewing
- Career Exploration: Finding the Right Job Right Now

### \* LPN to RN Fast-Track

On May 5, 2006 the second class of the LPN to RN Fast-Track program graduated from Dyersburg State Community College adding 16 additional Registered Nurses to the labor pool in northwest Tennessee.

LWIA 12 coordinates a Special Skills Shortage Grant between the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Dyersburg State Community College. The grant was awarded due to the high demand

for registered nurses coupled with the low and shrinking supply. Currently, the healthcare industry employs the third largest number of employees by industry in northwest Tennessee. The demand is growing and expected to continue to grow rapidly over the next few years.

The Healthcare Consortium developed in 2005 is also helping to educate the public about the opportunities in the healthcare industry. The public awareness will aid in our efforts to grow the supply of healthcare professionals.

### \* TTC Biomedical

The Tennessee Technology Center (TTC) at McKenzie had been receiving requests from the employer community to institute a training program for Biomedical Technicians. The TTC approached Local Workforce Investment Area 11 about funding the in-demand training program.

In January 2006, LWIA 11 began the coordination of a Special Skills Shortage Grant between the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Tennessee Technology Center at McKenzie and hence, the 18-month Biomedical program began.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board also joined forces with the TTC McKenzie and LWIA 11 to train jobseekers from LWIA 12 who were interested in joining the medical field.

Many different types of complex electronic medical equipment are found in every hospital and clinic. All of the equipment must be kept in perfect working order at all times because lives depend on the equipment functioning. Biomedical equipment technicians inspect, maintain, and repair equipment and teach hospital staff how to use it.

Once the students complete the intensive classroom training and gain lab experience, they will have accumulated 1,944 hours of credit at TTC McKenzie and will graduate earning a Diploma in Biomedical Instrumentation Technician and reenter the workforce meeting the employer demand.

## Mobile Information Centers

Following the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many evacuees were either relocating or temporarily relocating to northwest Tennessee. Many of the evacuees were seeking information regarding employment in the area.

The Tennessee Career Centers in Dyersburg, Covington, and Alamo were on site at the Hurricane Katrina Mobile Information Centers to offer assistance.

Information regarding job vacancies, training providers, and Workforce Investment Act programs were distributed.



In total, 52 employers, partners, and older workers joined together at the Tennessee Career Center in Dyersburg to honor and celebrate the talent and energy older workers have used to strengthen northwest Tennessee's families and communities.

"When we help the Baby Boomer generation with employment, the needs of employers are also benefited. Baby Boomers offer employers a more mature and flexible workforce."

~ Commissioner James Neeley

## Employ Older Workers Initiative

Governor Bredesen proclaimed September 18-24, 2005 Employ Older Workers Week in Tennessee. The Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg was one of many career centers across the state to host an Older Workers Open House.

The Open House served as a vehicle to launch the new Boomers Careers Website designed by the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The website was created as a self-service tool to disseminate vital information in an easily accessible format. Hence, workers and job seekers 40 and beyond were encouraged to attend the Open House and received their first online visit to the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's new Boomers Careers Website.

In addition to the launch of the Boomers Careers Website, attendees toured the Career Center and learned valuable information pertaining to the services available.



## Hire VETS First Initiative

The Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg joined forces with Tennessee Career Centers across the state to honor veterans with the first annual Hire Vets First Week held November 7-11, 2005.

Tennessee's veterans population is approximately one-half million. Every year the Tennessee Career Center system provides employment services to more than 31,000 veterans.

Tennessee's veterans' program is the best in the southeast United States and one of the best in the country.

The Tennessee Career Centers in LWIA 12 offer a one-on-one approach in matching employer needs with veterans to make the transition from military to civilian work a little easier.

The Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg held Hire Vets First Week Open House to honor veterans for their dedication to our country and to showcase their talents to the employer community.



# GENERAL ADVANCE MENT

## DEVELOPING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW TODAY

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board recognizes employers need an emerging workforce that has specific academic, occupational, and personal skills and competencies. Through a network of employers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions, we provide **young adults** with the opportunities and tools to succeed in the workplace.

### Youth Overview

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board's youth program is designed to create local youth networks that are closely tied to the labor market and provide youth with a set of year round, comprehensive development strategies based on each individual youth's needs.

Services are targeted to at-risk youth, ages 14 to 21, who face challenges to high school graduation or successful workforce entry.

As research and experience affirm, career development requires a broad spectrum that entails more than just information, guidance, academic preparation, and work-readiness skills. Youth also need life skills that enable them to become healthy, productive citizens.

To that end, the Workforce Investment Act places emphasis on youth development and encourages the workforce development system to service youth as young adults who ultimately are developing into the workforce of tomorrow.

Local Workforce Investment Area I2 works to blend personal development elements with traditional employment and training activities to ensure the success of young adults in north-west Tennessee.

### Youth Council

The Youth Council, a committee of the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board (NWTNWB) members which serves as the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB), provides strategic planning, program oversight, coordination of resources, and selection of youth service providers. Its mission is to build systems, maximize resources and create opportunities for the education, employment and empowerment of the regional youth.



## Model Programs

The Employment and Training Administration's strategic vision defines youth most in need, as youth out of school, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farm worker youth.

In order to ensure that the critical service needs of this vulnerable population are met, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board staff and Youth Council members have teamed up and developed new, innovative programs to reach specific target populations.

## Tutors Benefit the Masses

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board and Dyersburg State Community College are implementing a new, innovative Peer Tutoring Work Experience Program in area high schools throughout northwest Tennessee.

The program is designed to employ senior level students from ten area high schools in the counties of Crockett, Gibson, Lake, Lauderdale, Obion, and Tipton to work as tutors and help advance their peers who are struggling to succeed in a variety of subjects. The senior level Peer Tutors are supervised by a high school teacher from their school who serves as a Master Tutor.

The primary goal of the Peer Tutoring Work Experience Program is to provide Workforce Investment Act eligible high school seniors, who have excelled in academic coursework, the opportunity to explore a career in teaching, earn a wage, provide community service, and prepare for enrollment in post-secondary education.

The Workforce Board staff members along with the Youth Coordinator feel the Peer Tutoring Work Experience Program is an excellent opportunity to reward seniors for their dedication to academic coursework and to help ensure that other students that excel in areas aside from academia do not fall behind.

The program's vision was explained to all area high schools in Local Workforce Investment Area 12 in the form of a Request for Proposal. The Workforce Board allowed the schools applying for the grant to determine the number of peer tutors that were needed for their school.

The proposed program was well received and the following schools submitted proposals and are currently tutoring students:

- Gibson County High School
- Halls High School
- Crockett County High School
- Lake County High School
- Brighton High School
- Covington High School
- South Fulton Middle/High School
- Obion County Central High School
- Ripley High School
- Munford High School

The Workforce Board is excited about measuring the success of the model program and hopes to expand it to all area high schools in 2007.



## 8-Week Work Experience

The out-of-school youth program addresses the same critical needs as the in-school youth program, but is tailored for the young adult population who have either dropped out of high school, earned a high school diploma or GED, desire to enroll in training, or want to enter the workforce, but lack the necessary skills or resources.

Hence, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board assists young adults in ultimately achieving their educational and career goals.

Program year 2005-2006 concludes the second year of the 8-Week Work Experience Program. The 8-Week Work Experience Program is a partnership between the Workforce Board and local nonprofit organizations who are willing to supervise and mentor the young adults that are seeking employment and opportunity.

The Work Experience project benefits both the nonprofit organizations and the participating work-experience employees. Nonprofit organizations gain the addition of young adults in the workplace to complete job duties without resulting in payroll expense.

The Work Experience program is a year round project introducing new participants each 8-week cycle. By rotating in new participants, the nonprofit organizations will consistently have the extra staff person or persons needed and interested youth have the chance to gain valuable work experience.

Encouraging young adults to get involved in a nonprofit organization also instills lessons of giving back to the community and an urgency to help those less fortunate.

Not only do work-experience participants have the opportunity to give back to the communities that have given so much to them, but also the opportunity to learn job skills applicable to their future career paths, earn up to \$1,600 while obtaining practical work experience, and build their resumes while gaining knowledge and earning an income.

Upon completion of the 8-Week Work Experience Program, the WIA Career Center Case Manager counsels the young adult regarding his/her future plans. If the young adult makes the decision to enroll in post-secondary education or vocational training, or rather decides to join the workforce, the WIA Case Manager assists the youth every step of the way by means of financial assistance or job search.



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## MEETING EMPLOYER NEEDS BUILDING LABOR SUPPLY TO MEET EMPLOYER DEMAND

The Workforce Investment Act-funded system has been highly effective in meeting the needs of business. Over the last year, we helped businesses stay competitive through access to **qualified employees** and targeted worker training programs, including specific training programs geared to particular **industry sectors**. Our goal is to help the region's economy grow by expanding the skill base of its workers.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board and the Tennessee Career Centers in Local Workforce Investment Area 12 truly value our business partners in the private sector. We understand that a functioning job marketplace requires both, a supply of qualified workers and the demand by employers for their skills.

To that end, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board works to develop the skill sets of the workforce, support employer efforts to manage human resource activities, to keep northwest Tennessee competitive in the global marketplace, and to hire employees from the local community.

Our goal as a workforce development organization is to increase the availability of all skill levels of jobs in northwest Tennessee by means of improving the educational attainment rate in our region, expanding the skill sets our workers possess, better matching employer needs with the skill level of jobseekers, and finally by working with our partners in the economic arena to attract new industry to the area.

### Career Center Employer Benefits

The Tennessee Career Center System was designed with valuable input from businesses and private industry statewide. The result is a system able to provide maximum workforce results from one convenient location.

Whether a corporate manager who cannot find enough workers or a small business owner who only needs assistance finding a few, the answer is the career center and its friendly and helpful staff.

Employers:

- Are you searching for qualified workers?
- Do you need help recruiting or screening new applicants?
- Are you looking for the latest wage and labor information?
- Are you expanding your current operation or starting a new venture?

...if so, the Tennessee One-Stop Career Centers have the answer!

Workforce Investment Act services are delivered through the Tennessee Career Center system and the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board would like to encourage employers seeking services to use the Career Center in their area for assistance.

## Incumbent Worker Training Grants

Governor Phil Bredesen and Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development Commissioner James Neeley awarded over \$187,000 in Incumbent Worker Training Grants to companies in Local Workforce Investment Area 12 during program year 2005-2006.

In short, the Incumbent Worker Training program provides grant funding for customized training for existing businesses. Through this customer-driven program, Tennessee is able to effectively retain and keep businesses competitive through upgrading the skills of existing full-time employees.

The program is structured with flexibility to allow each individual business to design and meet its particular training objectives. Training may include industry or company specific skills, computer and technical skills, and “soft skills” such as leadership, teamwork, and management skills.

Awarded businesses may use private, public, or its own in-house training provider based on the nature of the training. Program instructors can be full or part-time educators, vendors or subject matter experts or professional trainers employed by the business.

Program requirements:

- Existing TN business must have been in operation for at least one year prior to application date
- Must have at least five full-time employees
- Must demonstrate financial viability
- Must be current on all state tax obligations

Funding Priority given to businesses whose proposal represents:

- A significant layoff avoidance
- A significant upgrade in employee skills

Reimbursable Training Expenses:

- Instructor’s and/or trainer’s salaries
- Curriculum development
- Textbooks and instruction manuals
- Materials and supplies

Five companies in northwest Tennessee were awarded Incumbent Worker Training Grants during the 2005-2006 program year. Over \$187,000 was awarded to upgrade the skill sets of 1,918 employees.

Companies awarded include:

- Heckethorn Manufacturing Co., Inc., Dyersburg
- ConAgra Foods, Humboldt
- Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, Union City
- Colonial DPP, LLC., Dyersburg
- Dana Corporation, Humboldt

Training included various activities such as Assessment of QMS, OSHA Regulatory Training, Goodman Equipment Certification, New Position Qualification, Situational Leadership, AutoCAD Essentials, Lean Manufacturing, Value Stream Mapping, Project Management, and Motion and Time Studies to name only a few.

“The Incumbent Worker Training Grants are essential to help Tennessee’s workers look to the future with job growth and stability. These grants will help keep northwest Tennessee companies competitive and increase the skills of their talented employees.”

## On-the-Job Training

When an employer identifies the need to fill a vacant position for their company or small business, he/she has a choice of hiring a skilled worker or one who needs additional training. If the employer is willing to hire an individual who does not have prior experience in the vacant position, an on-the-job training contract may be developed.



Under this agreement, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board can pay up to 50 percent of the trainees wages during the specified training period. Eligible candidates can be selected from any of the Workforce Investment Act programs: Dislocated Workers, Underemployed or Unemployed Adults, or Older Youth.

Benefits to employers include:

- Candidates are selected from a prescreened pool of applicants
- Employers training costs are reduced by up to half of the new employees' wages
- Employers receive quality workers who benefit from hands-on training
- Employers may be eligible for tax credits
- There is minimal paperwork involved

Two local employers were awarded a total of over \$78,700 to hire and train 61 employees. Colonial DPP, LLC. of Dyersburg hired sixty employees and saved over \$77,940 in training wages costs and Lennox Hearth Products in Union City added one additional employee and saved over \$785 in training wages.

## Sector Initiative

### \* Healthcare Consortium

The Healthcare Consortium developed in February 2004 and set goals to first, identify workforce needs in a broad range of healthcare occupations, secondly, to establish clear career paths by means of a regional Healthcare Career Ladder, and thirdly, to create awareness of the challenging preparation needed in middle- and high schools to adequately train for healthcare occupations.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board is proud to announce the Business and Economic Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University released *A Study of Healthcare Occupations in Northwest Tennessee: Workforce Needs, Career Ladder, Awareness Programs, and Financial Sources for Training* in March 2006.

## Performance Excellence

The staff and partners of the Tennessee Career Centers in Local Workforce Investment Area 12 are on a quest for excellence to bring an advantage to employers and jobseekers in northwest Tennessee. The Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg was recognized for their tireless efforts at the 13th Annual Awards Banquet hosted by the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence.

The Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence announced in February 2006 that the Tennessee Career Center at Dyersburg had earned the Interest Level Recognition in its annual award program.

The Center, through its annual evaluation and assessment process, recognizes organizations that have achieved the highest standard in their operations and results. The program uses the Criteria for Performance Excellence established by the Baldrige National Quality Program as the evaluation tool.

Since the Center's creation in 1993, more than 1,000 organizations have progressed through one or more levels of achievement. A Board of Examiners made up of over 100 experts in business, education, healthcare, and government assessed the 2005 applicants in seven categories: leadership, strategic planning, customer & market focus, measurement, analysis & knowledge management, human resource focus, process management, and results.

"Excellence means striving for the highest possible standards. The 2005 award winners represent the best and have done a great service by setting high standards for others to follow. I applaud their accomplishments."

~Katie Rawls,  
President of the  
TN Center for  
Performance



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## PREPARING STAFF DEVELOPING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE

A knowledgeable, well-trained staff is an invaluable asset.  
To that end, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board staff participated in various training from customer service to technology geared to embracing a second language, all to **improve** service delivery and program **performance**.

### NAWB Conference

Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board senior level staff and board members traveled to Washington, D.C. in February 2006 to attend the National Association of Workforce Boards 2006 Forum.

The National Association of Workforce Boards represents the interests of the nation's over 600 state and local Workforce Investment Boards.

This years Forum theme, *Think Local, Act Global*, focused energy on the impact global trends will continue to have on Americas economy, and how our industry can address the challenges that result.

This years Forum included 10 knowledge packed pre-conference sessions, 3 off-site sessions, 3 high-impact keynote speakers, more than 40 informative workshops, 3 Issues Forums focused on the latest challenges facing the workforce system, a Policy Forum, ten discussion roundtables that provided attendees an opportunity to learn from experts and peers about key issues and innovative solutions, a partners gallery, outstanding sponsors and exhibitors, and an advocacy effort that truly made an impact on the industry.

### Hurricane Katrina Reintegration

Local Workforce Investment Area 12 worked closely with our partners in Local Workforce Investment Areas 8, 11, and 13 following Hurricane Katrina.

Areas 8, 11, and 13 hired Reintegration Counselors following the hurricane due to the large influx of evacuees seeking services in their respective areas throughout Tennessee.

Although area 12 was not serving the large number if evacuees some of our partners were. LWIA 12 hosted a interactive meeting in December 2005 and received an overview of what the Reintegration Counselors tasks were. They supplied a brief history of the number of people they had enrolled and spoken with to date, what they were seeing from the evacuees, and the level of services that the coordination process required.

The session enabled the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board field staff to better serve the evacuees they would begin to see in the future.

LWIA 12 did serve Hurricane Katrina evacuees and found the knowledge acquired from the informative session was very valuable.



## Economic Expedition

Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board staff attended the *Economic Expedition: Reaching the Summit* held in October of each year and sponsored by Local Workforce Investment Area II, the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce, Jackson State Community College, and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The Summit brings together Presidents and Chief Operating Officers from the professional services industry, senior level managers from the manufacturing industry, food and agricultural farmers, and local, state, and federal agencies to discuss the future of the workforce and economy of west Tennessee.

The keynote speaker for 2005 was Dr. Mark Drabenstott, a seasoned observer of the agricultural and rural economies who has gained national and international recognition for his economic analysis and policy insights.

He now directs the Center for the Study of Rural America, the focal point in the Federal Reserve System for research on rural agricultural issues and serves on the U.S. delegation to an OECD committee that tracks global trends in rural issues. He is also a director of the National Bureau of Economic Research.

Dr. Drabenstott brought current, pressing issues regarding rural west Tennessee to the discussion panel and encouraged open discussion about finding solutions to the challenges our workforce and employers will have to overcome in the near future.

The Summit brought forth employer needs and projected skill needs and the higher education institutions and workforce development organizations agreed to answer those needs through training and innovative programs.



## Making Case Management Work

As a means of further improving customer service and fulfill our commitment to continuous improvement, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board partnered with LWIA II and I3 to offer training to field staff/case managers.

The 3 west Tennessee LWIAs partnered with ASM Associates, a training and consulting firm that specializes in staff training for human services professionals.

Dr. Beverly Ford, President for ASM, has conducted training in Case Management, Welfare Reform, and Client Empowerment for over 75,000 people in 35 states.

Dr. Ford brought a series of informal, interactive sessions that encouraged participant involvement and fostered learning. She focused on practical concepts and strategies that the field staff could easily transfer into their everyday work with clients. The workshops were entitled: *Training that Envisions Change* and *Empowering People for Change*. The key topics included:

- What is Case Management?
- Motivation and Change
- Assessments
- Planning
- Arranging Resources
- Follow Up
- Recording

Field staff also had the opportunity to work through sample case studies and interact with other case managers and assist one another with overcoming client barriers and challenges.

The training sessions were an excellent opportunity to collaborate with partnering LWIAs and to discuss and share best practices and ex-



## GCDF

Eleven members of the staff of the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board achieved a nationally recognized credential by completing the Global Career Development Facilitator training. These graduates join a rapidly growing group of professionals specifically trained to provide career and workforce development services in public and private agencies.

The National Career Development Association (NCDA), the National Employment Counseling Association, and the National Association of Workforce Professionals have endorsed the intensive, 120-hour course. The classes were held for a 10-month period concluding with the graduation in November 2005.

The curriculum is approved by the Center for Credentialing Education for certification of Global Career Development Facilitators (GCDF). Some of the topics covered include:

- Labor Market Information and Resources
- Working with Diverse Populations
- Ethical and Legal Issues
- Employability Skills
- Technology and Career Development and much more.

Staff awarded certification include: Phillip Warwick, Ellen Cash, Wanda Adams, Melissa Bane, Don Dugger, Delores Hayes, Miranda Miller, Joyce Hudson, June Robison, Mike Whitson, and Ty Sirmans.

## Discoverer

Administrative staff attended Discoverer training to increase Local Workforce Investment Area 12's access to valuable reports. Discoverer is a reporting tool that empowers key staff to immediately access information from Tennessee's electronic Case Management and Tracking System (eCMATS).

Following training, staff has found the software to be invaluable and it has allowed staff to retrieve information and data that will positively affect performance in the future.

## Performance & Common Measures

Dan Holton of the Tennessee Department of Labor & Workforce Development delivered an exceptional one day workshop for LWIAs 11, 12, and 13 entitled *Performance and the Common Measures*.

The meeting was informative and prepared staff for February 2006 when all Local Workforce Investment Areas in Tennessee fell under both Common and Core performance measure during the transition process.

Case Managers along with Performance Coordinators for the three LWIAs were able to ask questions and voice concerns. The session provided essential information and better equip LWIA 12 to project future performance.

## Conversational Spanish

The Workforce Investment Act, as a federally funded program, is charged with upholding Title VI of the Civil Right Act prohibiting national origin discrimination affecting Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The Tennessee Career Center System in northwest Tennessee maintains a contract with Language Line services to assist Limited English Proficient individuals. However, the Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board staff in its pursuit of excellence found an opportunity to proactively address the language barrier in LWIA 12.

With the rapidly growing Hispanic population, the entire Workforce Board staff enrolled in a Continuing Education course offered at Dyersburg State Community College entitled: *Conversational Spanish*.

The class instructed by Martha Schott focused on teaching staff how to ask pertinent Workforce Investment Act client interview questions and also reviewed a myriad of possible responses all in Spanish.



ACCOUNTABILITY

FINANCIAL AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY  
FINANCES AND PERFORMANCE

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board remained within **budgeted allocations** during program year 2004-2005. As a federally funded grant program, Workforce Board members and staff as well as our Administrative Entity, Dyersburg State Community College, work to ensure funds are **utilized efficiently**.

### Participants Served 2005-2006

	Participants Served	Grant Expenditures
Adults	657	\$1,296,607.94
Incumbent Workers	677	\$128,794.79
Dislocated Workers	449	\$612,618.47
In-School Youth	243	\$1,025,252.41
Out-of-School Youth	221	

### Expenditures 2005-2006

	Available 2005-06	Expenditures	Percent Expended	Available Balance
Administration	\$344,813.15	\$252,930.38	73%	\$91,882.77
Adult	\$1,286,243.76	\$1,296,607.94	94%	\$89,635.82
Youth	\$1,498,333.29	\$1,025,252.41	68%	\$473,080.88
Dislocated Worker	\$892,682.06	\$612,618.47	69%	\$280,063.59
Incumbent Worker	\$187,000.00	\$128,794.79	69%	\$58,205.21*
Incentive	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	100%	\$0.00
LPN to RN	\$119,927.60	\$119,927.60	100%	\$0.00
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$4,440,999.86</b>	<b>\$3,448,131.59</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>\$992,868.27</b>

Funds received year-end for closeout/carryover:

Adult \$150,000.00

Dislocated Worker \$202,500.00

\*Cannot carryover

## Performance Standards

	Goal	Actual
Younger Youth Diploma	66.0%	66.1%

	Goal	Actual
Younger Youth Skill Attainment	87.0%	100.0%

	Goal	Actual
Entered Employment Rate		
<i>Adult</i>	81.0%	89.6%
<i>Dislocated Worker</i>	85.0%	93.2%
<i>Older Youth</i>	71.0%	96.0%

	Goal	Actual
Employment and Credential Rate		
<i>Adult</i>	74.0%	85.0%
<i>Dislocated Worker</i>	74.0%	75.0%
<i>Older Youth</i>	55.0%	30.0%

	Goal	Actual
Six Months Retention Rate		
<i>Adult</i>	84.0%	85.0%
<i>Dislocated Worker</i>	91.5%	93.0%
<i>Older Youth</i>	82.5%	71.0%
<i>Younger Youth</i>	63.0%	63.0%

	Goal	Actual
Six Months Earnings Change		
<i>Adult</i>	\$3,300	\$5,263
<i>Dislocated Worker</i>	-\$2,000	-\$1,000
<i>Older Youth</i>	\$3,000	\$2,828

The outcomes presented herein are based on the most recent State Quarterly Report generated September, 2006, with amendments for discrepancies as discovered through October 31, 2006. The final program year 2005-06 Performance Reports will not be available until February, 2007.

## Core vs. Common Measures

Activities included in the Performance Measures are those that involve the enrollment of individuals eligible to receive Workforce Investment Act Title I-B services.

As stated in the 2004-2005 Annual Report, all Local Workforce Investment Areas across the state are now being monitored under portions of two sets of Performance Measures, Core and Common Measures.

Although Common Measure goals were not established for Program Year 2005-2006, the State implemented tracking procedures that captured data for Common Measures so that Program Year 2005-2006 can be utilized as the baseline year for negotiating future goals.

Current characteristics that will change with the full implementation of Common Measures includes:

- Different core performance measures
- Divided methods of data collection
- Separate maintenance of eCMATS records
- Split-up reporting formats

Common Measures will result in the following improvements:

- Common performance measures
- Consistent methods of entry and collection
- Regular maintenance of eCMATS records
- Combined reporting methods in EMILE
- Complete information on jobseekers and employers

The Common Measures will fully replace the Core Measures by approximately Program Year 2007-2008.

## 2005-2006 Performance Review

It appears all Performance Measures have been met with the exception of the Older Youth (OY) Employment and Credential, OY Six Months Retention and OY Six Months Earnings Change. The Older Youth population is the most challenging sector to recruit and serve nationally, not only in LWIA 12.

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board has made adjustments within our program operation which should positively affect this hard to serve population. The contract with the OY provider during the period under review terminated in May, 2006 and was not renewed.

The Workforce Board is currently operating under a State waiver to provide these Youth services in-house. However, due to the timing delay of Performance Outcomes, the positive effects of this change will not be realized until Program Year 2006-2007.

## Incentive Award

The State of Tennessee offers an incentive program that places emphasis on both percent of attainment of goals, as required by the Federal government, and on numbers of individuals served which is unique to Tennessee. In order to qualify for the incentive, the following criteria must be met:

- The award is based on only the measures where actual performance is at or above 100 percent of the set goal for each measure.
- In addition, the area must not fall below 90 percent of the set goal on any of the other measures.
- For customer satisfaction measures, the response rate must be at or above 72 percent to be considered for an award for customer satisfaction measure.

Local Workforce Investment Area 12 was awarded a \$14,000 incentive in June 2006 for the percent attainment and number of successful completers during program year 2004-2005.

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OUR GREATEST ASSET  
PEOPLE

The Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board staff would like to thank  
our Board Members, Youth Council, Local Elected Officials,  
Job Service Employer Committee Representatives, Career Center  
Managers, and our Administrative Entity for making the Workforce  
Investment Act programs a **success** in 2005-2006.

**Board Members**

**Tonja Anderson**

Obion County Industrial  
Development Corporation

**Thorne Barbour**

West Tennessee Healthcare

**Quincy Barlow**

Delta Human Resource Agency

**Alonzo Beard**

Alonzo Beard Insurance and  
Investment

**Minnie Bommer**

Children and Family Services

**Dr. Karen Bowyer**

Dyersburg State Community  
College

**Don Bradshaw**

USWA Local 878

**Charlie Brown**

Tennessee Department of  
Labor and Workforce  
Development

**John Bucy**

Northwest Tennessee  
Development District

**Brian Collins**

Tennessee Technology Center

**Peggy Davis**

Trenton Special School  
District

**Sherry Fowler**

Tennessee Opportunities  
Program

**Melinda Goode**

Northwest Tennessee Human  
Resource Agency

**Ronnie Gunnels**

Tennessee Department of  
Labor and Workforce  
Development

**Allen Hester**

Dyersburg/Dyer County  
Chamber of Commerce

**Dianne Homra**

Lake County Board of  
Education

**Linda Jones**

DESI Job Corps

**Barry Ladd**

First Citizens National Bank

**Paula Ledford**

Dyersburg Housing

**James Little**

USWA Local 878

**Cathie Locher**

Royal Guard Vinyl

**Alma Ruth Michael**

Department of Vocational  
Rehabilitation

**Diana Riley**

Merle Norman Cosmetics

**Linda Satchwill**

Décor Direct

**John Snead**

Snead Properties

**David Taylor**

Forcum Lannom Contractors

**Annette Tyler**

Tennessee Department of  
Human Services

**Cathy Vestal**

ERMCO

**Catherine Via**

Crockett County Adult Basic  
Education

**Jerry Ward**

Terry Petty Chevrolet

**Wendell West**

Colonial DPP

**Steve Williams**

Johnson Funeral Home

**Jimmy Williamson**

Dyersburg Electric System

## Administrative Entity

### Dyersburg State Community College

Dr. Karen Bowyer  
President

## Local Elected Officials

### Rozelle Criner

Lauderdale County Mayor

### Larry Griffin

Crockett County Mayor

### Richard Hill

Dyer County Mayor

### Jeff Huffman

Tipton County Mayor

### Gaylon Long

Obion County Mayor

### Ronnie Riley

Gibson County Mayor

### Macie Roberson

Lake County Mayor

## Youth Council

### Fred Ashwill

AFL-CIO

### Perry Barfield

Union City Police Department

### Beth Bell

Dyer County Extension

### Minnie Bommer

Children and Family Services

### Dr. Karen Bowyer

Dyersburg State Community  
College

### Don Bradshaw

USWA Local 878

### Peggy Davis

Trenton Special School  
District

### Mandy Drewry

Dyer County Extension

### Sherry Fowler

Tennessee Opportunities  
Program

### Mary Jane Chapman

Dyersburg State Community  
College

### Ronnie Gunnels

Tennessee Department  
of Labor and Workforce  
Development

### Lisa Hankins

Lauderdale County Chamber  
of Commerce

### Dianne Homra

Lake County Board of  
Education

### Bob Jones

Dyersburg State Community  
College

### Linda Jones

DESI Job Corps

### Paula Ledford

Dyersburg Housing

### Alma Ruth Michael

Department of Vocational  
Rehabilitation

### Sam Nailling

Obion County Juvenile Court

### John Snead

Snead Properties

### Sue Toles

Lauderdale County Schools

### Catherine Via

Crockett County Adult Ed-  
ucation

### Linda Wilkerson

Department of Human Services

## Workforce Employment Outreach Committee Representatives

### Rita Alexander

Gibson Electric Membership

### Jerry Ray

ERMCO

## Career Center Managers

### Charlie Brown

District Manager

### Ronnie Gunnels

Dyer County

### Ed Joyner

Gibson County

### Sandy Spurgeon

Tipton County

### Mary Yarbrough

Lauderdale County

### Denise Reynolds

Obion County

## WIA Staff

### Henry Lewis

Director

### Margaret Prater

Assistant Director of  
Administrative Services

### Phillip Warwick

Assistance Director of  
Field Operations

### Donna Mealer

Performance Coordinator

### Laura Speer

Monitor

### Faye Perkins

Accountant

### Dennis Anderson

IT Systems Administrator

### Ellen Cash

Youth Coordinator

### Kandace Jackson

Business Services Coordinator

### Ginger Hardin

Public Relations Coordinator/  
Planner/EO Officer

### Ann Pennell

Secretary III

### Melissa Bane

Case Manager

### June Robison

Case Manager

### Miranda Miller

Case Manager

### Mike Whitson

Case Manager

### Wanda Adams

Case Manager

### Ty Sirmans

Case Manager

### Joyce Hudson

Case Manager

### Don Dugger

Case Manager

### Delores Hayes

Case Manager

### Tangela Midegtt

Case Manager

### Derrick Quinn

Case Manager

