



**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Annual Performance Narrative Report**

State of Oklahoma

Program Year 2017

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Executive Summary

The Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD), the Governor's chosen administrative entity for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Title I, and the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC), administrative entity for multiple federal programs including Title III, work diligently to ensure Oklahomans have the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century workplace. Newer partners under WIOA, the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), the sponsor of the Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program, and the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE), the sponsor of Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program, also work diligently to embed their work in the Oklahoma Works American Job Centers, providing quality services to Oklahomans. This Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative, developed collaboratively by all WIOA Core Partners, includes titles I and III performance, as well as key updates from titles II and IV.

The State of Oklahoma continued yet another program year of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) implementation throughout the state. Progress was made with the distribution of multiple WIOA compliant policies, data to determine baselines for performance measures were gathered, and initial analyses were performed to assist with continuous improvement toward federal and state goals. Together, all WIOA Core Partners, Oklahoma made strides in coordinating services and data.

During this program year, the entire Oklahoma Works system renewed its focus on ensuring individuals with disabilities have equitable access to the services and opportunities offered through the state's public workforce system. Oklahoma also continued to make reforms with its local area spending. One year after implementation of a minimum training expenditure policy, Oklahoma's local areas directed an additional eight percent of funding to training and education to assist the state in meeting our credential attainment goals.

Initiatives also continued through the state's workforce board, the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development. Such initiatives under the Oklahoma Works branding, assist Oklahomans in finding career opportunities. For example, in Program Year 2017 (PY17), thousands of Oklahoma students were given the opportunity to learn about their future as part of the first annual statewide Career Exposure Week. More than fifty events took place statewide that allowed for the exploration of career opportunities. Those events also helped communities experience local opportunities offered by business and industry, empowering those communities to take action for their own successful futures.

Also, Oklahoma Works worked diligently to increase, expand, and diversify "earn and learn" opportunities as the state makes progress towards increasing the number of work-based learning opportunities to 20,000 by the year 2020. As a result of this initiative, in April 2018, Senate Bill 1171 was signed into law this program year establishing a work-based learning program as an official duty of the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development. As the state's WIOA designee, OOWD will develop and maintain the work-based learning program.

These and other exciting outcomes are shared in the following pages of the Program Year 2017 Annual Report.

Oklahoma Waivers

Oklahoma has no waivers.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

Oklahoma elected to pilot all three Effectiveness in Serving Employers approaches established by the Departments as indicated in the Oklahoma State Plan. Data for the measures is collected by each program and collaboratively reported by the Core Partners. This performance indicator is measured as a shared outcome across all six core programs to ensure a holistic approach to serving employers. In the spirit of continual improvement, Oklahoma has developed policy and conducted some preliminary training with frontline staff to help them understand more about the new measure as well as reminding them of the ways in which their day-to-day efforts impact performance overall. Some of the training discussions included: performance measures which apply to an agency's programs, documenting activity so that it is captured for performance, and working with the customer to get good outcomes.

Approach one, Retention with the same Employer, addresses each program's efforts to provide employers with skilled workers. Oklahoma's PY17 Retention with the Same Employer rate was 62.4 percent. Approach two, Repeat Business Customers, addresses each program's efforts to provide quality engagement and services, and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time. Oklahoma expects to have a measurement for Program Year 2019. Approach three, Employer Penetration Rate, addresses each program's efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within the state and local area's economy. Oklahoma's Program Year 2017 Employer Penetration Rate was 3.0 percent.

Research and Evaluation

Completed and Planned Evaluations and Reports

[Statewide Local Area Analysis: Reported Training Dollar Expenditures](#)

Oklahoma has made great advancements with its local area spending. After an analysis showing low expenditures on training for WIOA participants, the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development implemented Oklahoma Workforce Development Issuance (OWDI) #12-2017 Adult and Dislocated Worker 40 percent Minimum Training Expenditure Rate. This policy requires each local area to direct at least 40 percent of their formula-allocated Adult and Dislocated Worker funds in each program year on direct training costs. Such a directive is intended to drive more of the funding received by the state to training and education in order to close the state's skills gap and ensure more Oklahomans have postsecondary degrees and credentials that lead to high-wage careers.

Annually, an [evaluation of expenditures](#) is conducted and reported to the Governor's Council. One year after implementation of the training minimum policy, the majority of Oklahoma's local areas met the minimum of 40 percent of Adult and Dislocated Worker formula funds on training services with a combined total of 38 percent. Partner programs and services have been leveraged to offset many supportive services and other associated costs, to allow for these increased training expenditures. Though the state's goal was not met, the 30 percent represents a successful eight percent increase from Program Year 2016. Oklahoma's Board will continue to review annual training expenditures to ensure positive outcomes with credential attainment, as well as number of individuals served.

Critical Occupations

Biannually, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) produces a [critical occupations list](#) that demonstrates high demand, high wage careers in Oklahoma's top driver industries that align with state priorities of increased postsecondary attainment using a methodology created by the OOWD. This list is utilized by a variety of partners to prioritize career exposure, exploration, and creation of work-based learning programs.

Local Area Workforce Development Briefings

Annually, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development produces [labor market briefings](#) for each local area utilizing secondary and proprietary data sources. The reports cover employment rates, commuting patterns, educational attainment, and demographic trends, among other useful information. The briefings are to be used by local area and economic development organizations in data-driven decision making and strategy setting.

Central Oklahoma Area's Customer-Centered Evaluation

In an effort to improve service delivery to both the business community and the job seekers in their nine county region, the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) conducted an independent study to develop a customer-centered model. Focus groups, interviews, and survey protocols designed to elicit both positive experiences and opportunities for improvement for the Oklahoma Works American Job Centers (AJC) in the Central Oklahoma region were developed for this study.

Individuals and employers were selected to participate in the focus groups, interviews, and surveys from those who have and have not utilized Oklahoma Works (AJC). Of the twenty-nine jobseekers who replied to the survey, twenty-three had utilized a one-stop center. Of the thirty businesses that replied to the survey, fifteen had utilized a one-stop center. Seven community partner organizations that serve a range of targeted populations within the community were interviewed in order to provide valuable feedback for the study. The focus group, interview, and survey responses are not to be generalized to the larger population as it was not feasible to conduct a random sample and respondents represent a small number of individuals who chose to respond.

COWIB used the feedback to inform a human-centered design process for improving customer service in the Oklahoma Works AJC in the Central Oklahoma region. This process resulted in a number of recommendations that will be incorporated in policy and a customer service manual for Center staff training. A structure and process is being developed for ongoing customer feedback and continuous improvement using human-centered design principles.

Oklahoma Works for All Pilot Project

This program year, planning began for the Oklahoma Works for All (OWFA) human-centered pilot initiative. The initiative focuses on 1) working with youth ages 14-24 with an intellectual disability on training, work experience, and customized employment opportunities, and 2) working with families, caregivers and public schools using the Life Course model to ensure each Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for students with intellectual disabilities support their vision for a good life. The pilot is still in the planning stages, but evaluation strategies intend to utilize a cross-agency team to develop the evaluation strategy for reporting in Program Year 2018.

My Reemployment Plan Pilot Project

The My Reemployment Plan (MRP) was developed by National Association of State Workforce Agencies Information Technology Support Center (ITSC) and started out as a paper tool for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants. After many meetings and with substantive feedback from the states, the tool evolved and is now an online set of reemployment modules designed not just for UI claimants, but for any job seeker who may want to re-tool and prepare a plan for returning to work. The MRP starts with a short inventory of 'why you are here or what do you need' statements; each leading the job seeker to learning modules with related activities. The modules cover topics such as: Developing a Plan; Analyzing Your Values and Interests; Assessing Your Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities; Career Exploration; Creating an Effective Resume; Online Job Search and Job Applications; Networking; Acing the Job Interview; Oklahoma Unemployment Information, and Other Available Partner and Community Services. Job seekers can upload resumes, save employer and other professional contacts, record weekly work search efforts for UI, and record notes. In addition, individuals are able to access telephone, address, and website information for each workforce office in Oklahoma as well as other state and community partners. Two of the major advantages of the MRP are: 1) Job seekers can conveniently access their plan, activities and information from ANY computer that is connected to the internet; and 2) Job seekers can share their plan with workforce professionals at any point during their reemployment journey. This means reducing the potential duplications and streamlining the service delivery for Oklahoma's workforce.

Oklahoma is a pilot state for the MRP. OESC's IT department is working closely with ITSC in implementing the tool and making it available for job seekers in Centers across the state. Also in preparation to go live and in partnership with Maher and Maher, OESC held focus groups with end-user customers such as job seekers, mobile users, UI claimants, and frontline staff. OESC recruited participants and handled the logistics while Maher and Maher facilitated the groups. The team gathered feedback from end-user customers related to the following concepts: General utility (in comparison to existing resources, if any); Ease of (intuitive) navigation; User-friendliness of activities; and Integration with existing systems.

Coordination with Core Programs

This program year, the WIOA Core Partners have identified performance and data specialists who are developing joint policy and procedure for coordinated research, evaluation, and development efforts in order to promote, establish, implement, and utilize method for continuously improving core program activities to achieve high-level performance within, and high-level outcomes from the workforce development system. The joint system policy, currently in development, is anticipated for release in Program Year 2018.

Provision of Data for Federal Evaluations

Oklahoma is committed to support all Federal evaluations and will provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits.

Continuous Improvement Strategies

Oklahoma is committed to utilizing data from evaluations to make recommendations to state and local partners on continuous improvement strategies. Once the Research, Development, and Evaluation

policy is completed in Program Year 2018, we anticipate a more formal structure for sharing lessons learned and utilizing evaluation data across local areas and state partners.

Also, the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS) completed a transition to WIOA performance reporting. Beginning with Program Year 2017, OKDRS is collecting and reporting on the new RSA-911 to the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). OKDRS submitted its first WIOA annual report for Program Year 2017 to RSA October 1st, 2018. We look forward to the Statewide Joint Performance/Joint Evaluation process in future reporting years.

Oklahoma Works American Job Center Customer Satisfaction

Oklahoma Works American Job Center Certification

The policy for certification of comprehensive and affiliate centers ([OWDI #07-2017](#)) was released June 30, 2017. This program year, Oklahoma completed the certification process. In total, Oklahoma has 12 certified comprehensive centers and 17 certified affiliate centers. In addition, there are 16 specialized centers.

As part of the center certification process, a number of customer satisfaction elements are required for achieving baseline center certification, and more sophisticated requirements may be met to achieve the “Standard for Excellence.” For example, criteria include the required partners and the one-stop operator must use periodic performance reports and customer satisfaction results to identify goals and tactics for improving outcomes. Also, a system must be in place to assess the satisfaction of both co-located and non-co-located partners with the one-stop center and its services, among other customer satisfaction criteria.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, a center certification task force was established in October 2018 in partnership with the System Oversight Subcommittee of the Workforce System Oversight Committee. The Center Certification Task Force includes partner and local area representation that will be reviewing the center certification policy and making recommendations for alignment with the system certification toolkit, to be reported in the Program Year 2018 annual report.

Customer Satisfaction

Local Area online customer satisfaction surveys are being utilized in all of the Oklahoma Works American Job Centers to collect information in an effort to improve customer service within the system. During PY 2017, all local areas transitioned to an online survey format to conduct individual survey collection. This transition was due to the low response rate on the paper surveys that were being utilized. Each computer available in the resource rooms, across all of the Oklahoma Works American Job Center locations includes a link to the local area’s online survey. Every individual that utilized the center resources has access to and is encouraged to complete a survey.

Center staff members encourage customer participation, and some local areas even have center competitions to increase customer participation in survey responses. For example, the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board has created a “survey monkey Award” which is a stuffed monkey that is awarded quarterly to the center with the highest response rate in order to recognize the center with the highest survey participation. As another example, Workforce Tulsa recognized the top three staff who are positively mentioned in the surveys during their center meetings, which has resulted in an increase in the quality of their customer service.

Continuous Improvement on Improving Customer Satisfaction Measures

State-level data and performance accountability coordinators from each of the WIOA core partners have convened this past program year to discuss the development of a cross-program customer satisfaction survey that will collect and utilize feedback from customers of Oklahoma Works American Job Centers in each of the local areas to assist in improving services to better meet the needs of job seekers. The survey will be used to explore the needs of customers, identify what services are bringing customers in to the centers and to give a better of idea from the state's perspective of gaps in services across the local areas. The data received from customers will be summarized in the annual report and used to improve one-stop performance and service quality.

As each core partner maintains a different case management system and provides services to client populations with particular needs, challenges have included settling on a data collection methodology that will produce findings that are valid, reliable, and generalizable to the customer population. Preliminary questions that are relevant to gauging customer satisfaction have been identified and it is anticipated that the WIOA Core Partner Oklahoma Works American Job Center survey will be in use before the end of Quarter 2 Program Year 2018.

The Oklahoma One-Stop Operators (OSO) have taken a key role in promoting and reviewing customer satisfaction survey information and results. They have provided training with staff regarding the use of the survey, addressed complaints as needed, recognized staff members that have impacted customers, presented results to the center managers and local board staff, utilized the data to improve services, and continue to increase coordination among center partners. For example, the Northeast Workforce Development Board OSO is currently participating in the Department of Labor Customer Service Cohort in order to engage with peers across the Workforce system and ensure individuals with disabilities experience seamless customer service across WIOA programs at the American Job Centers.

Oklahoma's Strategic Vision and Goals Progress

Launch Oklahoma: Increasing Postsecondary Educational Attainment

Since created by [Executive Order 2016-41](#), the Launch Oklahoma initiative has been working to increase the number of Oklahoma workers with education or training beyond high school to 70 percent by 2025. During the summer of 2018, an outreach campaign was launched to promote this goal and connect more Oklahomans with the education and training they need to succeed in the workforce. The Launch Oklahoma campaign features a new website, LaunchOklahoma.org, with the goal of creating a one-stop-shop for information related to certificate, credential and degree programs that lead to Oklahoma's Critical Occupations and Ecosystems. This includes a searchable database with program and occupational information, as well as career exploration resources. A Launch Oklahoma toolkit was also created and is available to partner institutions, including videos, social media graphics, and other media content for outreach.

Key Economic Networks: Engaging Local Area Business Leaders and Education Partners

Oklahoma's Key Economic Network (KEN) Champions have prioritized the goals of increasing internship and apprenticeship opportunities, increasing participation in teacher externship programs, increasing employability skills, and hosting partner engagement events to spearhead efforts to align and connect education and industry to meet regional workforce needs. Through KEN networks, business and industry have: created a new Registered Apprenticeship Program; hosted dozens of teacher externs from

numerous high schools; hired interns, hosted job shadows, and offered bridge to college programs following high school graduation; participated in career exposure and exploration events, including the Oklahoma Educator Industry Partnership (OEIP), 3rd graders go to work, career days, Career Expo Week, and more; collaborated to develop an Education and Business Partnership Toolkit; and, leveraged partnerships to expand career pathways initiatives through the local Career Tech and higher education institutions.

Sector Strategies and Career Pathways

Career Pathways

Oklahoma made great strides in helping establish career pathways for its current and future workforce. The Career Pathways Committee for the Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development continued its work to establish Career Pathways in the state, especially at the local level. Specifically, the committee has focused its efforts on the following:

- The Committee initiated the development of Career Lattices in our state’s labor exchange system as a learning tool for job-seekers to see what a future career path may look like within the state’s critical occupations. The lattices explore an occupation, pathways to higher wage occupations, related credentials, wage information, and labor market demand. The Lattices will
- Local and statewide Career Pathways groups, such as *Dream It Do It*, which works to change the perception of the manufacturing industry and inspire next-generation workers to pursue manufacturing careers, continued organizing meetings and promoting events in areas such as manufacturing.

Also this program year, the Governor’s Council for Workforce and Economic Development released guidance documents to help inform the work of Career Pathways and Work-Based Learning partners. These documents establish common definitions and a shared vision for the creation and sustainability of a statewide career pathways system and work-based learning activities.

Statewide Career Exposure (“Expo”) Week

In November 2017, Oklahoma held the first annual statewide Career Expo Week. This week-long event connected students with businesses to give future talent an opportunity to explore the possibilities that await them in Oklahoma. Events during Career Expo Week also allowed local employers to showcase critical careers in demand industries to inspire and recruit new talent. Nearly 50 events were registered on our website, taking place in communities across the state, allowing students of all ages to tour businesses, shadow professionals from varied industries, and learn about high-demand careers in industries that drive our state’s economy. By growing Career Expo Week, Oklahoma hopes to: introduce people to careers in businesses and industries in Oklahoma’s driver and complementary ecosystems and critical occupations; empower Oklahoma businesses and industries in the state’s ecosystems and KEN regions to engage with educators, students, parents, and others about career opportunities; change misconceptions of Oklahoma’s demand and critical occupations and the businesses and industries in Oklahoma’s driver and complementary ecosystems; draw attention to the roles businesses and industries play in communities across the state; underscore the economic and social significance of demand and critical occupations and businesses and industries in Oklahoma’s ecosystems, and; recognize the important roles apprenticeship, work-based learning, and career exploration play in

developing a highly skilled workforce that meets the needs of Oklahoma's growth and demand industries and occupations.

Sector Strategies Partnership Grants

Two Sector Partnership Grants were awarded to three Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), that make up two workforce regions, to support the establishment, strengthening, and expansion of sector partnerships. Grants were awarded to the Western Planning Region (South Central and Western Oklahoma LWDBs) and the Northeast LWDB. Both areas are focusing on the healthcare and advanced manufacturing industry sectors.

The purpose of these funds are to support LWDBs in planning and executing two or more sector partnerships and/or sector strategies that lead to career pathways development. The partnerships and strategies must be employer-led and focused on the two to three industry sectors, as demonstrated in labor market data, in which the LWDB would like to develop and implement sector partnerships. The strategies align with the 4-year local plan, the 4-year regional plan, the WIOA State Plan, and the Oklahoma Works Strategic Plan.

A two-day kickoff event was held, March 6-7, 2018, at the Francis Tuttle Technology Center Rockwell Campus in Oklahoma City for both areas. Richard Laine, from DFI Consulting, moderated the retreat and provided information about Oklahoma's economy and workforce. Several speakers presented information about the importance of career pathways and sector partnerships for Oklahoma's future. In the months after the kickoff meeting, both areas organized employer listening sessions with healthcare representatives across their respective counties. The results of those meetings are expected in Program Year 2018.

Business Engagement Strategies

Recruitment and talent engagement is a fundamental business service in Oklahoma. In fact, Oklahoma has one of the largest databases of job seekers looking for career opportunities. The electronic labor exchange and job matching system, OKJobMatch, provides an edge in talent development as Oklahoma has the ability to reach an audience of over 45,000. During this year, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) has worked in partnership with economic and workforce development entities across the state. Oklahoma's success depends on a talented pipeline of educated and skilled workers. SYNQ3, Webstaurant, Amazon, CACI International, CMC, and the Census Bureau are just a few of the businesses that sought out the agency's expertise.

For example, faced with the challenge of filling close to 200 job openings in a short window of time, one of these businesses, Webstaurant, partnered with the OESC in recruitment of a skilled workforce. To help fill those jobs openings, OESC sent targeted emails to job seekers in a seven-county area introducing the community to Webstaurant and highlighting the culture of the organization. OESC also hosted four career fairs at the Durant Oklahoma Works America Job Center with a total participation of 450 candidates. Webstaurant was onsite to review resumes of qualified job seekers, provide immediate interviews, and extend conditional offers of hire. OESC and Webstaurant also partnered with targeted messaging through the local office's Facebook.

Yet another example of successful business engagement occurred in the Northeast Workforce Development Area. The Northeast area in Oklahoma has been challenged to assist employers with their

recruitment efforts due to a low unemployment rate. Employers utilize the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) staff at the Pryor Workforce Center by hosting Hiring Events in the Center. Since January 2018, American Castings, Rae Corporation, Unified Brands Dupont, Berry Plastics, Rocklahoma, G4S Security, Anheuser-Bush, Macy's and the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority have interviewed a total of 554 job candidates and hired 194 individuals for their job openings. OESC Staff have gone above and beyond to provide exemplary services while accommodating employers' need to hire qualified job seekers.

Also, in May 2018, MidAmerica Outfitters in Pryor donated a discontinued-style of steel toed boots to the Pryor Workforce Center to distribute to people with job offers that could not afford to buy steel toed boots. Center staff picked up the boots, inventoried them, and advised employers that placed job orders to let a staff person know if they hired someone that could not afford the required boots. The Center staff gave away 40 pairs of boots. That translates to 40 people who may not have been able to accept a job otherwise.

Work-Based Learning

Earn and Learn Oklahoma/Registered Apprenticeships and Internships

Throughout 2018, the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development has continued its efforts to expand and diversify work-based learning opportunities in Oklahoma and make progress towards the state "Earn and Learn Oklahoma" goal. The "Earn and Learn Oklahoma" goal, which was established by Executive Order in 2017 by Governor Mary Fallin, seeks to increase the number of work-based learning opportunities to 20,000 by the year 2020.

In April 2018, Governor Fallin signed Senate Bill (SB) 1171, which establishes the state's work-based learning program as an official duty of the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development. As the state's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) designee, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) will develop and maintain the work-based learning program, effective July 1, 2018.

Department of Rehabilitation Services' New Apprenticeship Program

The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services established a 10- month apprenticeship program in Tulsa to offer clients a chance to work as a receptionist in their local office to gain work experience, practical experience for resume building and build personal skills. To date, all five participants in the program have been successfully employed with businesses in Oklahoma after the completion of the program.

Work Experience for Youth

Oklahoma's local workforce development boards have focused on delivery of the work experience component to the WIOA primary targeted population of out-of-school youth. Under the WIOA expanded work experience focus, local areas are required to specifically identify and report all program costs related to work experience.

After considerable time for adjustment and continued state level technical assistance, the state reached its required aggregate benchmark of 20 percent and subsequently exceeded the targeted percentage with an increase to 21 percent. The process has been an effort that includes host companies, service provider staff, local board staff and fiscal agent collaboration. Such an increased focus on work

experience expenditures should lead to increased measurable skills gain and credential attainment over time, as this valuable on-the-job exposure and experience provides relevancy to the job seeker.

Oklahoma's Performance Accountability System

State Specific Performance Measures

To prepare an educated and skilled workforce, the state must increase the number of Oklahomans with postsecondary education and training. In December 2016, the Governor established the Launch Oklahoma statewide goal of increasing the number of Oklahomans with degrees, certificates, and workforce credentials to 70% by 2025. To meet this goal, the state is targeting returning adults, adults without any previous postsecondary experience, as well as traditional students. Priorities of the initiative include: prioritizing education and training programs that lead to employment in Oklahoma's high-demand industries and occupations; increasing equity in postsecondary education and training attainment, including low-income, rural, veteran, and minority populations; expanding access to work-based learning opportunities, such as internships and registered apprenticeships; and implementing success strategies that help students stay in education and training programs through completion. To track progress toward success, Oklahoma has prioritized [performance measures related to these strategies](#) that include postsecondary enrollment and completion, required remedial coursework, high school equivalency, postsecondary credit for high school students, and work-based learning opportunities.

Oklahoma Works undertook a strategic planning process in 2015, with the goal of increasing postsecondary education and training attainment in mind. The resulting Oklahoma Works Strategic Delivery Plan included the adoption of [outcomes metrics by Oklahoma Works' Agency Workforce System Partners](#). These measures track trends over time and progress toward meeting target goals associated with outcomes like credential attainment, wages, usage of UI, Medicaid, and TANF benefits, and WIOA negotiated performance metrics. The GCWED monitors these metrics annually and makes recommendations for improvements. The state's recent economic downturn has caused improvement in some of the metrics to slow and the Agency Workforce System Partners are currently considering needed changes to targets and metrics due to recent changes in data elements.

Performance Deficiencies on Primary Indicators of Performance

Title I Programs: Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development

Currently, Oklahoma does not have performance deficiency on any primary indicators of performance. Yet, the state recognizes we exhibit significantly lower youth educational attainment levels in comparison to other states and the United States as a whole. With an increased focus on the improvement of the quality of the workforce, reducing the dependency on public benefits, increasing economic opportunity, increasing postsecondary attainment, and enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of the state, we continue to investigate this measure and strive toward continuous improvement to increase the credential attainment rate of youth in the state, including program participants.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants: Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) – administrator of the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JSVG) – failed to meet the Case Management Framework section of the United States Department of Labor Audit Tool. The JSVG Final Audit Report was issued October 12, 2017. The six

items included in the Case Management section are: 1) Is there a Comprehensive Assessment and does the assessment appropriately identify the Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE)? 2) Were the SBEs for the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) eligibility identified? 3) Does the plan address the SBEs identified during the assessment? 4) Considering the SBEs identified, is the career goal(s) appropriate? 5) Are the services documented in the case file appropriate in assisting the veteran to overcome the SBEs? 6) Are the services documented in the case file consistent with the services recorded in the state MIS? OESC failed to meet all six of these case management framework items.

OESC, Veterans' Services Division, overcame all six of these case management framework issues by developing a training program specifically for case management and conducting quarterly training events. The Intensive Services Coordinator/trainer developed a step by step process of how to successfully complete the case management framework. All DVOP's, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER), Center Managers and Senior Staff attended every training event. Kenneth Allen, Director of the Veterans' Employment and Training Service, performed quarterly reviews and updates of the case management framework done by the DVOPs throughout the state and monitored their progress toward meeting the 90 percent approval rate. After the 1st quarter training event there was significant improvement where all six case management framework tasks improved from a 20-30 percent range up to a 60-80 percent range. After the 2nd quarter training event the DVOPs exceeded the 90 percent rating on all six case management framework tasks and were immediately taken off of the corrective action plan effective May 11, 2018.

Oklahoma's Common Exit Policy and Continuous Improvement

Utilizing common exit, a participant must complete services from all programs in which the participant is co-enrolled in order to exit from the system. This common exit requirement applies to participants who are co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services programs, and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs. Co-enrollment of participants is encouraged when the individual will benefit from the services provided from multiple programs and Oklahoma's policy (Oklahoma Workforce Development Issuance #09-2017, Change 1) requires that a common intake process be in place to identify the needs of individuals in order to identify when co-enrollment is beneficial to the participant to provide optimal access and services to the individual participants. Appropriate services must be coordinated across partner programs, thereby optimizing the use of resources and preventing duplication of services, while simultaneously supporting the participants' skill development necessary to obtain employment. Common exit occurs only when all exit criteria are met for each program in which the participant is co-enrolled.

Additionally, the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (ODCTE) worked with Local Workforce Boards for the Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act statewide grant competition. Local Workforce Boards reviewed grants within their workforce areas and provided recommendations to the ODCTE on the selection of providers. The partnership between the Title II programs and local workforce areas continues to strengthen and new initiatives to participate in co-enrollment with Title I programs are currently underway.

Negotiated Performance Levels for Title I and III, Program Years 2016 – 2017

State of Oklahoma	PY16 – PY17 Performance Measures	
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	Adults	61.00%
	Dislocated Worker	75.10%
	Wagner-Peyser	61.00%
	Youth	62.60%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	Adults	61.50%
	Dislocated Worker	73.90%
	Wagner-Peyser	61.50%
	Youth	62.70%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	Adults	\$4,664.00
	Dislocated Worker	\$6,084.00
	Wagner-Peyser	\$4,664.00
	Youth	n/a
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarter after Exit	Adults	60.90%
	Dislocated Worker	56.80%
	Youth	44.50%

Data Validation and Data Integrity

Title I: Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development

Oklahoma conducts annual data element validation to ensure data elements in participant records are accurate in order to maintain system integrity, ensure completeness of data, and to identify and correct specific issues associated with the reporting process. The Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) completes a data element and source documentation validation review of the Title I programs each program year. Oklahoma elected to develop their own data validation review described in the state's Data Validation and Source Documentation policy (Oklahoma Workforce Development Issuance #21-2017, Change 1).

The intent of the data element and source documentation validation process is to ensure the accuracy of data entered into OKJobMatch and subsequently submitted to USDOLETA. During the annual validation, a list of Participant Identification (PID) numbers is generated utilizing random sample procedures to ensure generalizability. A worksheet for each PID is created from the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) file that contains all applicable data elements and documentation reported during the reporting period, to be validated. The State Data Validation Unit then validates the source documentation in the participant's file using the worksheet. Each data element is coded as pass or fail for validation that applies to each participant.

The local area's combined pass/fail ratio must be below a five percent reporting error rate (95 percent confidence interval) to be considered a combined passing report for the area. If the local area's pass/fail

ratio is below the error rate, the local area has 30 days to review and respond with concerns and questions regarding the report. After the 30-day timeframe, OOWD issues a final determination report. If the local area's pass/fail ratio exceeds the reporting error rate, the local area must research, analyze case files, and/or review policy and/or procedure and training plans in an effort to remedy each specified data element within 60 days of receipt of the initial report. After the research effort is complete or at the end of the 60-day timeframe, the local area provides to OOWD an action plan with proposed remedies. Within 30 days, OOWD reviews the Action Plan and issues a final determination report to the Local Area and USDOL.

Title III: Oklahoma Employment Security Commission

The accuracy and reliability of program reports and data element validation are central to Oklahoma's good stewardship of federal funding. Title III (Wagner-Peyser) data validation is submitted by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) annually and consists of a minimal sample of 25 job seekers. The individual record files are reviewed and verified then compared to the state-level MIS data to ensure that the files used to conduct report validation were properly constructed.

Also submitted by OESC, the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program data validation random sample consists of between 100 – 150 participants depending on the number served during the year. Similar to Title I programs, TAA staff review worksheets and documentation according to the appropriate federal guidance and ensure accuracy of all applicable data elements. OESC consistently passes data validation samples for both programs.

Statewide Activities

Governor's Reserve Activities and Impact to Performance

This program year, activities supported by the Governor's Reserve funds included:

- The Oklahoma Works Partners Conference was held in May 2018. More than 300 Oklahoma Works System Partners attended the annual Oklahoma Works Partners Conference in May 2018. The purpose of this conference was to strengthen the Oklahoma workforce development system through innovation, alignment and improvement of employment, training, and education programs in the state, as well as to promote individual and statewide economic growth. The conference brought together a variety of partners for education, professional development and collaboration. Subject matter experts including representatives from different federal agencies offered expertise to improve the knowledge of the individuals working to serve Oklahoma in coordination with Oklahoma Works American Job Centers.
- The Oklahoma Education and Industry Partnership teacher externship program which was held in the summer and included three locations throughout Oklahoma for the first time in the event's history. This event connects Oklahoma's teachers with businesses in Oklahoma's top industries, including aerospace and defense, manufacturing, and energy, to allow them the opportunity to explore careers and share curriculum to bring careers into the classroom.
- The Governor's STEM and Entrepreneurship Summit was held in November 2017. The event brought together business and education leaders to focus on the intersection of entrepreneurship, apprenticeship and STEM education in Oklahoma communities.
- The Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) awarded competitive sector strategy grants to the Western Region (including the South Central and Western Oklahoma areas) and

the Northeast local area. These grants are being used to develop stronger relationships between business and education in the health care and manufacturing sectors that will lead to stronger career pathways for participants.

Rapid Response Activities and Layoff Aversion

The Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development, in coordination with local workforce development boards, and the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission provide rapid response activities and information for companies that file WARNs and those that may not qualify for WARNs, but reach out for information or services. The cross-agency team provides workshops for individuals impacted from a layoff situation. At each workshop, Oklahoma requests feedback from all participants. The average ratings of satisfaction of the workshop by participants for Program Year 2017 was 3.6 out of 4.

In Program Year 2017, 34 closures and layoffs were reported to Oklahoma's State Rapid Response Coordinator. Of the reported closures and layoffs, eight businesses did not disclose the number of employees affected. Therefore, the reported number of affected employees statewide was at minimum 2,432 Oklahomans. Of the 34 closures and layoffs, seven WARN's were received. Statewide rapid response teams conducted 14 events with companies in PY 17.

Rapid Response Conference with Massachusetts

In February 2018, Oklahoma hosted a statewide one-day workshop entitled Business Services Tips and Planning: Lessons Learned from Massachusetts. Utilizing the U.S. Department of Labor's Technical Assistance grant awarded to Massachusetts, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development hosted Ken Messina, Business Services/Rapid Response Manager at the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor, to present best practices and facilitate idea generation for Oklahoma's business leads.

Over fifty individuals attended the workshop, and the individuals represented state and local Chambers of Commerce, Local Area Workforce Development Area Directors and Business Service leads, and regional representatives from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, among others. Workshop topics included: working with businesses/employers; challenges related to business services; business awareness of state and federal resources; partner awareness of state and federal resources; coordination strategies for retention, expansion, layoff aversion and HR issues; and rapid response. The workshop was well-received according to post-event evaluations and, as a result, a follow-up conference focused on business services is planned for Program Year 2018.

Statewide Focus Groups on Business Services and Layoff Aversion

As a result of the Rapid Response Conference with Massachusetts, focus groups were held in six of the seven workforce development areas in the spring of 2018 to learn more about Rapid Response delivery, business services, as well as other workforce issues facing Oklahoma. The focus groups included social service agencies, workforce officials, economic developers, and others assembled by the six local workforce boards and its directors. Focus groups were held in Duncan, Durant, Muskogee, Pryor, and Oklahoma City, as well as a satellite meeting with representatives from the Western Oklahoma Workforce Area.

The focus groups uncovered business services issues such as relationships with local businesses, lack of quality jobs and wages, businesses not understanding how the workforce system works, and potential

employees failing drug tests, among others. From these issues, the following preliminary recommendations were noted across local areas, including: developing an analysis OKJobMatch in terms of how it assists job-seekers and employers; researching wage sustainability in the different regions in Oklahoma; and develop business services assistance to better help local agencies and organizations work better with their employers.

Other information from these focus groups is being further analyzed for follow-up. Once the results are fully analyzed, the State Rapid Response Coordinator will utilize the information to inform the development for the follow-up conference on business services to be held during the next program year.

Rapid Response Handbook and Video Series Release

Although Oklahoma regularly updates its Rapid Response handbook, entitled Tools and Resources for Transitioning to your Next Job, this program year the State redesigned and reconstituted [the handbook](#) to be more user-friendly, visually appealing, and accessible to individuals with disabilities. The handbooks were updated with important resources available by all Oklahoma Works System Partners, and was also [translated into Spanish](#). Also, companion videos were recently designed and updated to accompany the handbook and to be used in workshops. The videos are also available in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

As an active, involved partner in the development of a collaborative and emergent workforce system and as the administrator of several major federal programs including Jobs for Veterans State Grants (Veterans), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA), Wagner-Peyser/Employment Service (ES), and Unemployment Insurance (UI), the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) continues to prioritize service delivery and professional development.

Because OESC is comprised of several federal programs covering various reporting periods, some by program year and others by fiscal or even calendar year, the agency has included a 12-month snapshot of service delivery numbers crossing 2017 and 2018.

Reemployment Services Delivered to Oklahomans

Service Description	Number Served
Staff Assisted Services Provided to Employers	54,200
Services Provided to Veterans	49,332
Job Openings Listed on OKJobMatch (Oklahoma’s Electronic Job Bank)	230,067
Active Resumes Posted on OKJobMatch	47,392
Employer Accounts Posted on OKJobMatch	3,019
UI Claims Filed	71,681
Number of Customers Who Received UI Benefits	36,640

Service Description	Number Served
UI Benefits Infused into the Local Economy	\$217,956,609.00
TAA Clients Served	548
TAA Petitions	53
TAA Clients Attending Occupational Training	443
Received RTAA Subsidies, Job Search, and Job Relocation Assistance	105
TAA Clients Served	548

OESC understands that growth in the service delivery category is the direct result of on-going professional development. The agency has approached service delivery to customers by cross-training agency staff and sometimes Partner staff, on these major Federal programs.

In May and June of 2018, OESC held statewide Quality Resume and Job Seeker Development (QRJSD) trainings for agency staff. These training sessions brought OESC back to its roots and reminded the agency staff their primary focus is the development of a re-skilled, qualified workforce in order to meet the growing needs of employers. Part of jobseeker development is focusing on career services such as networking and job search planning, soft skills workshops, and resume assistance while also assessing the need for upskilling or training opportunities that are available through agency partnerships. Extensive group work was done discussing proper resumes and how staff can help job seekers improve the resume; not just to increase opportunities for the job seeker, but also to fulfill OESC’s responsibility to employers feeding the talent pipeline and displaying qualified candidates in the state labor exchange system, OKJobMatch.

In addition, OESC still has two reemployment services tracks, in part to comply with the requirement to use Wagner–Peyser funds to support UI claimants and also to help unemployed individuals return to work more quickly:

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)

RESEA is an individualized process consisting of an orientation to the Center and all available workforce system resources, a UI eligibility review, an assessment of a claimant’s skills and career goals including any necessary transferable skills discussions, a discussion of job search strategies, establishment of an individual reemployment plan, provision of job referrals, and follow-up appointments. This program addresses the “harder to serve/need intensive” category i.e. those with multiple barriers to employment needing a variety of assistive services to return to work. RESEA claimants have been identified as likely to exhaust UI benefits and unlikely to return to their previous occupation; therefore, they must be scheduled before receiving the 5th week of UI benefits. Additionally, RESEA also serves Unemployment Compensation for ex-service members (UCX) claimants. These reemployment services are provided in an effort to reduce the time a claimant will be paid UI benefits and increase the likelihood the claimant will attain self-sufficient employment.

OESC is in the beginning stages of preparing the RESEA program for FY 18 and beyond. Some of the changes include: adding a UI eligibility assessment or work search review process, the flexibility to

provide services to claimants at locations outside of the AJC, allowing the use of online or self-directed individual reemployment plans, eliminating the AJC orientation presentation and making use of a brochure the claimant can access later, and referring all claimants to the appropriate programs according to their needs.

50 Percent Eligibility Review Interview (ERI)

The 50 percent Eligibility Review Interview (ERI) is delivered in a group process consisting of information on available services, work search review, expansion of work search efforts, and the provision of job referrals. This group is intended to be a triage type, informational session designed to serve the masses; taking far less time than its Reemployment Services counterpart, RESEA. The ERI is conducted with claimants in demand occupations who possess the skills and experience to return to work, often in the same or similar occupation. These claimants are equipped with additional reemployment strategies and tools, and are expected to return to work more quickly.

Unemployment Insurance Meaningful Assistance

At the top of OESC's priority list is also providing meaningful assistance to UI claimants. Because OESC also administers the UI program, it is a natural next step in service delivery. At the previously mentioned QRJSD staff training in May and June of 2018, agency trainers reminded staff that meaningful assistance applies to all claimants, not just those who come to the AJC for a required group. In addition, meaningful assistance applies in every scenario where we communicate with an unemployed individual. The following claimant rights and responsibilities were discussed with staff at the QRJSD training:

- 1) Informing claimants of their right to an Appeal. This may also include showing the claimants where/how to file.
- 2) Providing resume assistance and/or guiding the claimant through their responsibility to register for work – Staff may provide the customer with step-by-step guidance on the OKJobMatch resume builder and/or help the claimant create a resume appropriate for upload. Any resume service should result in one or more soft or hard copy resume options of superior quality.
- 3) Informing claimants of their right to receive (and signing them up for) other reemployment services such as the various job seeker skills development workshops or working with the claimant to create a detailed reemployment plan.
- 4) Giving the customer information about their responsibility to search for work including where to find and how to fill out their work search log and/or advising customers on what constitutes an allowable work search item.
- 5) Informing the customer about their responsibility to keep all scheduled appointments and return all requested documentation.
- 6) Guiding the claimant through LinkedIn registration or other appropriate social media and job search tools that aid them in performing their work search responsibilities. In addition, ensuring claimants take advantage of getting OKJobMatch notifications of available jobs.
- 7) Assistance with the filing of initial or weekly claims. This means sitting down with the customer and walking them through the Online Network Initial Claims (ONIC) online filing tool and pointing out the various self-service information options available to them. 8) Informing the customer about their responsibility to accept offers of suitable work.

Whether online, via telephone, or in-person, Oklahoma continues its support of unemployed individuals by providing trained, knowledgeable, integrated staff members to help the customer through the claims filing process. For those claimants who are Limited English Proficient, the online claims system has a language translator. Center staff can assist the customer in accessing the translator or use language lines to assist such individuals during the claims filing process. OESC is at the beginning stage of translating the telephone claims filing process to Spanish and Vietnamese, the top two languages other than English spoken in Oklahoma. When needed, for those individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, TTY services are also available.

The services available to claimants do not end with the filing of the initial claim. Centers have supports and resources available for all other parts of the claims process: sending documents to UI, speaking with Inquiry or Adjudication, filing for weekly benefits, and participating in Appeals hearings. The rapid reemployment of claimants and job seekers alike remains a focal point and OESC and its partners continue to strategize staff training opportunities and improvements on service delivery.

Oklahoma Technical Assistance Needs

Oklahoma has requested Technical Assistance (TA) from the regional office for human centered design development for service mapping and common intake processes in the Oklahoma Works American Job Centers. The State is waiting for confirmation of the TA. Such TA will assist Oklahoma in delivering seamless services to our customers, regardless of the program serving the job-seeker or business.

Promising Practices, Lessons Learned, and Success Stories

Oklahoma's Accessibility Initiative for the Oklahoma Works System

The Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development (GCWED) is playing a key role as the vehicle to establish the state vision for accessibility for all jobseekers, businesses, workforce and economic development integration. This initiative provides training, consulting, and resources for Oklahoma Works American Job Center partners and employers to ensure individuals with disabilities are intentionally included in efforts to achieve greater household wealth for Oklahomans. The initiative is brought to the Oklahoma Works system through a partnership between the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (Oklahoma's Vocational Rehabilitation Program) and Oklahoma ABLE Tech (Oklahoma's Assistive Technology Act Program).

The accessibility initiative equips each Oklahoma Works American Job Center with the knowledge and resources needed to make it accessible to individuals with disabilities that utilize one-stop system programs in person, on the phone, or through the web. The one-stop system's standards and certification criteria are designed to integrate physical and programmatic accessibility into the benchmark criteria for center certification. Prior to center certification approval, physical and technology accessibility is reviewed at each Oklahoma Works (One-Stop) American Job Center. When issues related to physical and programmatic accessibility are identified, an Equally Effective Alternative Access Plan (EEAAP) is created. These plans are designed to function as corrective action plans, which are designed to be monitored regularly and updated by local Equal Opportunity Officers.

Individuals who are Basic Skills Deficient

The Oklahoma Department of Corrections receives funding under Title II of WIOA (AEFLA). Approximately \$639,000 in funds were provided that supported 18 Department of Corrections

sites. In Program Year 2017, 4,286 inmates were provided 12 or more hours of instruction with a Measurable Skills Gain of 64.8 percent. Discussions and partnerships began between the Oklahoma Department of Corrections and the Local Workforce Boards in providing Title I services for recently released inmates in order to assist them in integrating back into society and become more productive citizens.

Out-of-School Youth Outreach

Oklahoma's seven local workforce development areas have made concentrated efforts over the past program year to increase outreach to out-of-school youth (OSY) as a target population in WIOA. Strategies to increase outreach and participation by OSY include utilizing intermediaries to access the hard to reach population, creating specialized programming and outreach messages that appeal to the needs of the OSY population.

Oklahoma's LWDA's strategically utilize intermediaries to access the OSY population, which is generally difficult to locate, access, and maintain contact. Local areas are increasingly strengthening partnerships with the state's Job Corps programs. Both metro areas, Oklahoma City and Tulsa, are working with housing authorities to identify and refer eligible youth. Areas are also utilizing local non-profits to assist with referrals. For example, the Eastern WDB works with local youth live-in facilities, such as R.I.S.E. in Muskogee and Circles of Care in Tahlequah to connect with this hard to reach population. The Northeast WDB partners with an organization called Light of Hope for outreach. The Northeast, South Central, and Southern WDA's also noted strengthening their partnership with Adult Basic Education providers to reach this population.

Local areas are also developing youth-specific programming. The Eastern WDB partnered with the Bank of Oklahoma to facilitate a financial literacy workshop for youth participants, and the Central WDB partnered with the Oklahoma County Juvenile Bureau to provide work readiness classes. Also, the Western Oklahoma WDB developed fliers that are youth-centered with trendy colors and language to appeal to youth participants.

Veteran Hiring Events

During Program Year 2017 Oklahoma's veterans continued to benefit from attending military hiring events held across the state as part of OKMilitaryConnection, a partnership among the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development, the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, the Oklahoma Department of Career Technology, the Oklahoma National Guard, and the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs. Events this program year were held in Fort Sill, Norman, and Oklahoma City. At each event, job seekers who pre-register are matched with available opportunities listed by the registered employers. This is done as a service to employers to maximize the employer's recruitment efforts, and to better ensure positive outcomes for job seekers.

The first event of the program year was held at Ft. Sill where more than 50 employers and more than 200 job-seekers gathered at the Armed Forces Reserve Center on September 14, 2017. Companies promoted opportunities in law enforcement, energy, construction, and manufacturing, among others.

OKMilitaryConnection held the second hiring event of the program year in Norman at the Armed Forces Reserve Center on December 14, 2017. This event was held in the late afternoon and early evening to better align with underemployed individuals getting off work or for those who work early shifts and who

cannot attend a traditional hiring event. More than 60 employers participated with close to 100 job-seekers.

The third and final hiring event of the program year was hosted in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as part of their Hiring Our Heroes initiative on January 23, 2018. Hiring our Heroes is a nationwide effort to help veterans and military spouses find meaningful employment. The January event was held at the Chesapeake Energy Arena in Oklahoma City, home of the NBA's Oklahoma City Thunder, another sponsor. 83 employers attended as well as 166 job-seekers. Job-seekers were entered in a raffle for free tickets to that night's game and honored during the third quarter of the basketball game for their military service.

Annual Oklahoma Works American Job Center Alumni Celebration

The Alumni Celebration is an annual event to celebrate and recognize the success of customers, both job seekers and businesses, of the Oklahoma workforce system. Many of the honorees recognized have faced situations that seemed insurmountable and must have thought themselves without opportunity to overcome their personal barriers. The success of the honorees is made possible by a workforce system guided by business professionals and a dedicated staff that work directly with its customers on a daily basis. The volunteers that serve on local boards and workforce staff provide the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning and living. The annual event is sponsored by the Oklahoma Workforce Association, of which the local boards and the state board are members. Information about the 2017 Alumni, including their personal stories, can be found in the [Celebration Program Book](#).

National Cohort and Cross-State Academy Participation

Skillful State Network

This program year, Oklahoma was one of 20 founding member states for the State Skillful Network. Skillful, a non-profit initiative of the Markle Foundation with many partners, is working to achieve a skills-based labor market to help millions of Americans overcome barriers to obtaining better-paying jobs in today's digital economy. Skillful helps employers achieve the workforce they need by providing data, tools, and resources that enable the adoption of skills-based hiring and training practices.

Oklahoma participated in the inaugural Skillful State Network in-person convening in August 2018. The Skillful State Network is a collaboration to transform the U.S. labor market at scale to one that is skills-based, in which people can demonstrate or obtain the skills needed for good digital economy jobs. This convening was an opportunity for member states to network and interface to better understand the fast-changing world of work and how a skills-based labor market can ensure everyone has the opportunity to thrive. The meeting provided tangible next steps for states looking to implement skills-based practices and begin building a system that encourages a skills-based labor market.

Northeast Area's Participation in the U.S. Department of Labor's Future of AJCs Cohort

Oklahoma was one of eight states selected to join the U.S. Department of Labor's Future of the American Job Center peer-learning cohort to identify ways to improve services to job-seekers. The Northeast Workforce Development Board, their one-stop operator Odle Management Group, OESC, Adult Basic Education, and the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services participated in this cohort. The peer learning aimed to spur innovation in service delivery and continuous improvement efforts. The Oklahoma team participated in a WorkforceGPS event sharing what was learned through the cohort and responding to questions from other states.

Central Oklahoma Area's Participation in the U.S. Department of Labor's Out-of-School Youth Cohort

On January 12, 2018, the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development was notified its Youth Cohort Challenge Application to the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (U.S. DOL ETA) was accepted. U.S. DOL ETA's Youth Cohort Challenge mission was to research and unpack the issue of out-of-school youth (OSY) engagement and retention and develop an innovative solution that could be presented and disseminated to the field. The application was made in support of the Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board (COWIB) and its selected group of collaborating organizations. Partnering agencies included, Lead Agency COWIB, Dynamic Workforce Solutions, Oklahoma County Juvenile Bureau, Oklahoma City Housing Authority, and the Office of Juvenile Affairs. Teams examined and developed resources in the following areas: Empowering Youth as Active Participants; Using Technology in Innovative Ways through Programming; and Recruitment, Marketing, and Outreach Strategies.

State Team Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to Skills Program

Launched in October of 2015, SNAP to Skills (S2S) is a project of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), operated in partnership with Seattle Jobs Initiative (SJI), to provide States the tools and resources they need to develop job-driven SNAP E&T programs that help SNAP participants find jobs and work toward self-sufficiency. The project seeks to help advance SNAP E&T programs in all States through these tools and resources, Oklahoma was one of the ten states selected to receive enhanced technical assistance. A representative from the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) was a part of this project to help enhance coordination moving forward with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) and our LWDBs. The SNAP to Skills meetings occurred monthly and in May 2018, OOWD participated in the SNAP to Skills site visit to Oklahoma.

National Skills Coalition: Work-Based Learning Academy

In early March, OOWD submitted an application on behalf of our state for acceptance into the 2018-2019 National Skills Coalition Work-Based Learning Academy. Our application sought to increase the participation of low-income adults and out-of-school youth in work-based learning opportunities. Specifically, the Oklahoma team application focused on partnering with intermediaries and leveraging intermediaries' local relationships in order to scale up work-based learning participation for disadvantaged populations.

In April, Oklahoma's application was one of five selected throughout the country. On June 5-6, 2018, an Oklahoma team consisting of a representative from Dell, the Oklahoma City Black Chamber of Commerce, the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies, and OOWD, traveled to Milwaukee to attend the first NSC meeting of the 2018-2019 program year in order to develop strategies for increasing disadvantaged adult and out-of-school youth participation

Promising Practices

Northeast Oklahoma Workforce Development System Partner's Stand-Up Meetings

In efforts to ensure that Job Center staff is provided adequate cross training, as required in TEGL 16-16, the One Stop Operator, in collaboration with the Northeast Workforce Development Board (NEWDB), has implemented weekly training for staff to be exposed to various aspects of the workforce system.

“Stand-up” meetings are held at each local Job Center in the NE area, once weekly. Stand-Up meetings create the opportunity to develop staff in these areas and equip them with the knowledge and confidence to inform customers of all the options available in the NE area. All partners, co-located and those represented via direct linkage, are invited and encouraged to attend. Each attendee has an opportunity to share relevant information with other partners for the purpose of seeking support, resources, referrals, among other topics. Cross training equips staff with the knowledge base to better to service customers.

Eastern Area Strategic Planning and the Four County Partners Group

The Eastern area engaged in strategic planning sessions as an integral component of our WIOA Implementation and Local Plan development process during the program year. This activity facilitated the opportunity to engage in meaningful partner dialogue. An immediate need identified by partners was that streamlined communication is paramount to the successful implementation of our initiatives to reduce duplication and meet the needs of our business and industry. Eastern is fortunate to partner with Cherokee Nation as we have the opportunity to further collaborate to meet the needs of the citizens we serve. As a result, of the strategic planning session, the Four County Partners group was developed. This group further expands the communication and collaboration for the Eastern area.

Central Oklahoma Workforce Development Board Business Services Group

The Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board’s (COWIB’s) Business Services Group provides Human Resource consulting to assist local businesses with their HR needs. Also, as a response to business’s needs of finding appropriate matches for their open positions and company culture, COWIB now makes available a web-based assessment tool that allows businesses to create patterns of the best employees that fit their culture and have the right behaviors and attributes. COWIB recently added a hard skill test to that assessment from another vendor that allows businesses to not only find people who fit their work culture, but also are able to demonstrate they have the technical skills needed for the position as well. It also provides our service provider staff with a truly comprehensive assessment that can guide participants that are unclear on what direction they need to take in improving their lives.

Pay for Performance

Oklahoma currently has no pay for performance contracts.