
EASTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

PROGRAM YEAR 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

General

The implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) has continued moving forward this year. WIOA's increased focus on partnership development and collaboration; and working creatively across partners has led to many new endeavors and projects over the 2017 program year. The board continued to focus on several ongoing initiatives in addition to some newly-identified opportunities including: implementation of the one stop operator role; WIOA training for center staff, partners and board members; development of cross training with partner staff on partner services, eligibility, and referral processes; identification of underserved populations to establish programs targeted toward them; creative ways to partner and utilize technology to improve services in rural areas; increasing partner engagement and involvement in policy and process development; and functional alignment of staff in the centers to improve customer flow and co-enrollment. All of these were key areas of focus in the implementation and execution of the local plan.

The One stop operator plays a crucial and pivotal role in achieving the EAWDB's goals. The new one stop operator started in July 2017 and has been hugely successful in beginning to move the Job Center system in Eastern New Mexico forward. Through regular partner meetings, he has created a dynamic environment for both center staff and area partners. He has tasked staff in local offices with the coordination of dates, times and logistics of location of these meetings. Staff work with the operator and partners to identify agenda items, training needs including what partner is going to provide cross training in the next meeting. These meetings have been the primary platform for cross training across partner programs which has increased the knowledge of partner staff on what services can be provided and the basic eligibility information necessary to make a preliminary determination on the appropriateness of a referral.

To help align shareholders within the area on the foundational changes in the system, the board contracted with a national consultant to provide an intensive training workshop for the board, its staff, the operator, local center staff and partners on the importance and benefits of partnering and aligning the system. While the training was geared toward the groups mentioned, state staff and other local NM boards were also invited to attend. The training provided opportunities for staff and partners to work with a trained facilitator to look at innovative methods for service delivery and program structure. It also laid a necessary foundation for the procedural changes that will follow over the next several years.

The response to the training was overwhelmingly positive. Some partner staff that were scheduled to attend the first day of training remained for the entire week. One board contracted the same trainer in to work with staff in their area. The local staff in the Eastern area went back to their offices and began to look at ways to re-arrange the resource areas in the centers to make them more welcoming and customer flow oriented. One office actually

re-arranged the resource area the same week. The training has improved the quality of interaction between front line staff and our customers. Based on the overwhelming success of this training, follow-up training is planned for PY 18 as well.

With the operator's inclusion in all the partner meetings and the increased focus on including partners in local training opportunities, the board has received a much higher level of partner engagement in local board meetings. Last year the board began inviting partners such as local adult education directors, TANF program directors, local office Career Technical Education (CTE) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff and other community stakeholders to be part of the board's one stop service delivery committee. The role of the committee is oversight, development of system related policies and strategic planning for process development across the system. This gives core partners an opportunity to work on board policies and local processes for system alignment alongside board members that serve on that committee. The result has been very positive. Most board meetings over the year benefited by attendance and input of at least 6 of the 9 adult education directors, PED and other community stakeholders. Since most of the local board's system driving policies were developed or updated this year, partners had the opportunity to provide direct input into those policies. Also, in the upcoming year many processes and procedures will be established regarding co-enrollment and the establishment of co-enrollment and referral goals. These items will also be worked through that operational group of the committee.

Overall the level of engagement and collaboration with partners has increased significantly to the benefit of the customers we serve. In particular, there has been a significant increase in collaboration and coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Adult Education.

Business Services

The board has prioritized working with WIOA partners to develop a more highly skilled workforce to enhance economic development opportunities and create more diverse and stable local economies. Therefore, local office staff have been working to provide increased services to employers for filling open positions. Local offices have increased the use of social media. The area offices have Linked In, Facebook and Instagram pages. Local jobs have been posted to these pages on behalf of employers to increase the recruiting efforts to fill those positions. This has resulted in increased applicant pools for the employers in several cases and has increased the services available to employers. The number of direct placements being reported in the offices has begun to climb as has the utilization of On the Job Training (OJT) by local employers.

The offices have long made interviewing space available for employers. The marketing of this service has increased over the last year. This has resulted in much higher numbers of employers utilizing the offices for interviewing sessions. Several of the offices has seen a significant increase in targeted hiring events for specific employers.

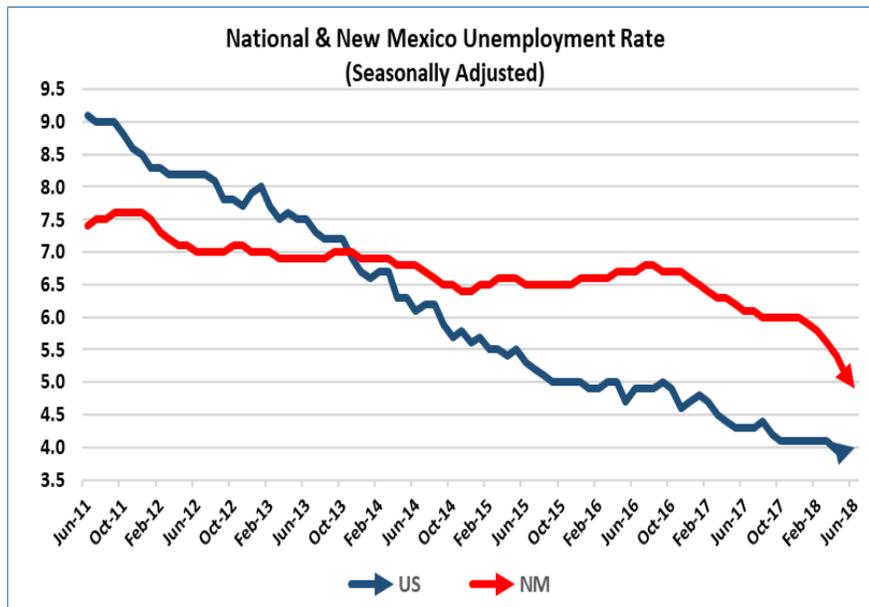
Labor Market

According to NMDWS seasonally unadjusted unemployment figures, unemployment numbers have slowly but steadily declined for New Mexico, however, they remain higher than the national averages as illustrated in the tables below. The Eastern Area has the lowest

unemployment in the state and employers are struggling to find employees. This is largely due to the increase in oil prices. The area has a large concentration of oil and gas related industry. Many of those jobs are high paying jobs that require minimal education and training. The industry increase creates a ripple effect in supporting industries in those communities in the areas of transportation, retail and hospitality creating an overall shortage in qualified candidates.

Healthcare remains the largest employment sector with retail trade as the second largest employment sector. The board envisions utilizing retail jobs to assist individuals with developing strong work readiness skills. By upskilling existing lower skilled workers with solid work history to move into higher positions, their earning potential increases and lower level positions open for those with limited or no engagement in the workforce. This can be utilized to target training areas for career ladders and pathways. Development of strategies to accomplish this will be ongoing over the upcoming years. Health care remains the most targeted area for WIOA post-secondary training services.

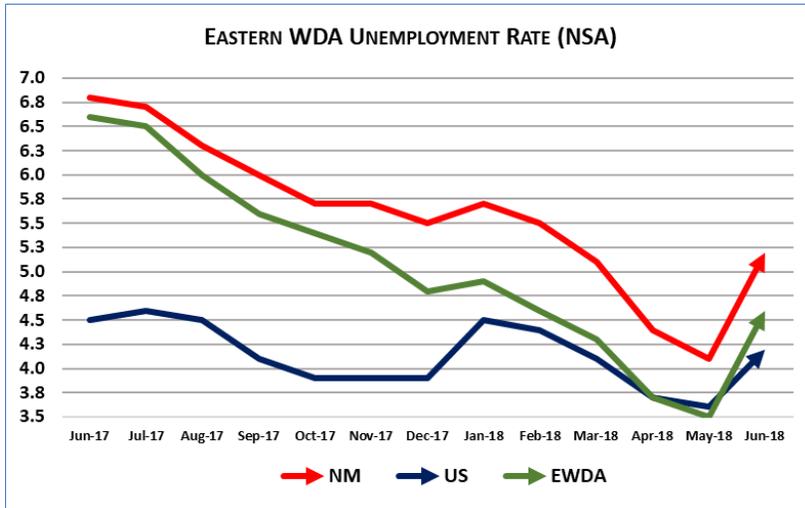
The charts below reflect the employment information for the East as well as the unemployment information for the nation, New Mexico and the Eastern area.



New Mexico's seasonally adjusted (SA) unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in June 2018 down from 5.1 percent in May and 6.1 percent a year ago.

The national unemployment rate (SA) in June was 4.0 percent up from 3.8 in May but down from 4.3 percent in June 2017.

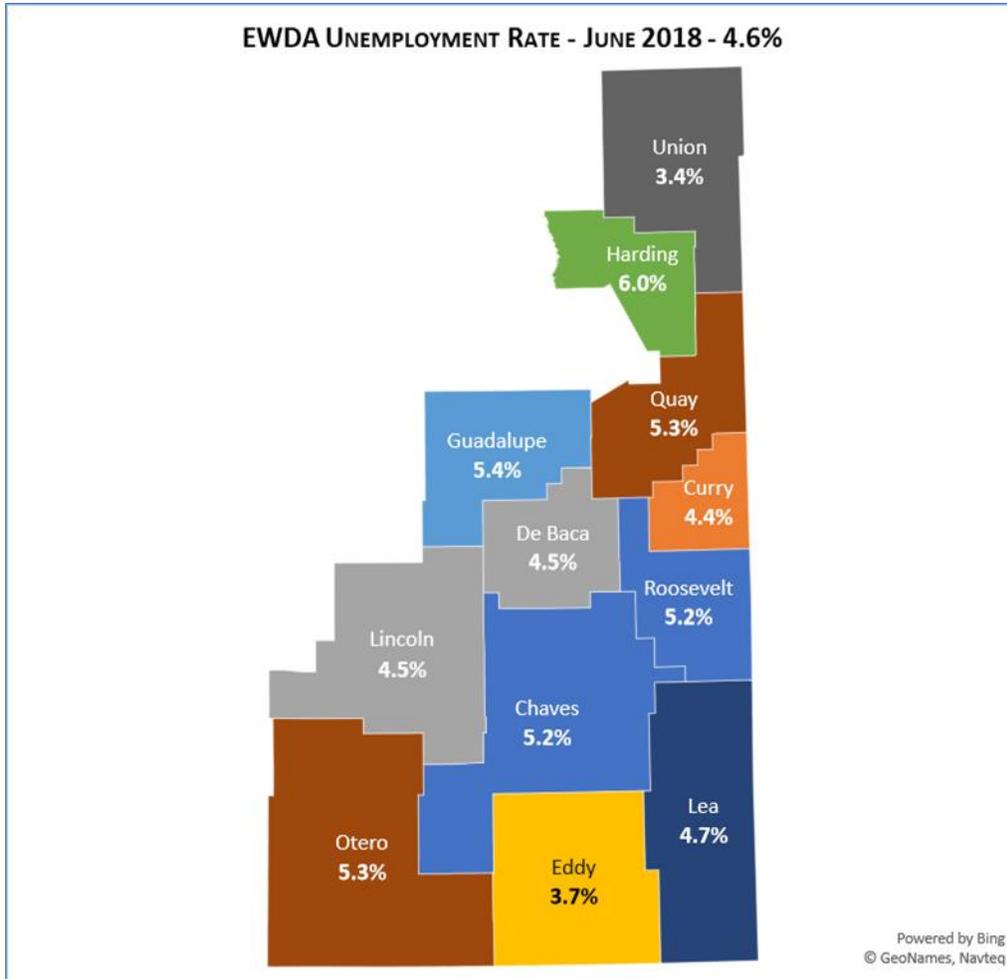
Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)



The Eastern Area's Not seasonally adjusted (NSA) unemployment rate was 4.6 percent in June 2018, up from 3.5 percent in May and down from 6.6 percent a year ago.

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

The information below shows the Unemployment rates by county at the end of PY 17.



Industry Employment Profile for Eastern WDA

The table below shows the industries with the highest number of employees in Eastern WDA for the 4th Quarter, 2017.

Rank	Industry Sector
1	Health Care and Social Assistance
2	Retail Trade (44-45)
3	Mining
4	Educational Services
5	Public Administration
6	Administrative and Waste Services
7	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
8	Other Services, Ex. Public Admin
9	Professional and Technical Services
10	Wholesale Trade

11	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
12	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
13	Utilities
14	Information
*	Accommodation and Food Services
*	Construction
*	Finance and Insurance
*	Management of Companies and Enterprises
*	Manufacturing (31-33)
*	Transportation and Warehousing (48-49)

* Rank is suppressed for confidential data.

Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services and Expenditures

A big focus this year has been continued staff development. There has been an increased effort to provide training geared specifically toward outreach and recruiting as well as customer service. The result in their increased efforts was over a 20% increase in spending. The funds expended for the year are reflected in the table below.

PY 17 expenditures by funding stream

Admin	Youth	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Total
\$198,829	\$593,621	\$1,522,056	\$223,126	\$2,338,803
Youth In/Out of school and Work Experience				
Youth In	\$25,442	Youth Out	\$568,179 (95.7%)	Youth WE % 33%

Youth

As was previously mentioned much focus has been given to increasing the outreach and recruitment of eligible youth. This has resulted in a doubling of enrollment numbers from the previous year. One of the areas of focus after the national trainer was brought in was the creation of grouped services. These are services that are grouped together for delivery and can be provided to an individual or a group of customers. This is something the program has spent time exploring ideas on throughout the end of the year and is hoping to implement in PY 18.

Under WIOA, the youth program has specific expenditure requirements. It requires local programs to meet a minimum of a seventy five percent (75%) out of school and a twenty percent (20%) work activity expenditure level. The youth service provider for the Eastern board completed the year with a ninety five percent (95.7%) out of school expenditure rate with thirty three percent (33%) expended on work activities. The program nearly doubled the participant numbers from PY 16 to PY 17 and another double is targeted for PY 18. The programmatic changes have not been simple to accomplish but the program is consistently improving.

Adult and dislocated workers

In the area of adult/dislocated worker services, as previously mentioned training and outreach were heavily prioritized. Career Coachs (CC) attended a large variety of staff development sessions and through this the East saw an almost thirty three percent (33%) increase in the number of adult and dislocated worker customers served. The increase in participants resulted a significant increase in adult and dislocated worker expenditures. Of this, fifty-two percent (52.3%) of the total funds expended were spent directly on participant training.

Increased employer outreach created more opportunities to utilize On the Job Training (OJT) to assist employers in filling positions and deferring some of the exorbitant costs associated with training. There was a seventy nine percent (79.2%) increase in the number of OJT contracts written.

The PY 18 enrollment numbers are indicating an increase over the same timeframe (1st Quarter) of last year. Overall, participant enrollments are up 170% over the end of the first quarter of last year. The enrollment numbers for adults are up one hundred and seventy two percent (172%), dislocated workers are up one hundred sixty four percent (164%) and youth enrollment is up one hundred eighty eight percent (188%) over the 1st quarter of PY 17.

Stories of renewed hope and success provided through the WIOA program

Heather

Heather was a military spouse whose husband left her and her three children after 15 years of marriage. She had no work history and minimal marketable skills as she was a stay at home mom. She was desperate to find employment to provide for her children. Child support was not enough to provide for their needs and that would run out when they were grown. She knew she needed to further her education. She was able to obtain employment as a health substitute with the Alamogordo Public Schools. She qualified for and received Pell which covered the cost of pre-nursing courses. She was then accepted into the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program at NMSU. The financial aid that she was receiving was no longer going to cover the cost of her education as the tuition and fees were now considerably more. Heather was very stressed about how she would be able to afford the cost of tuition and fees to complete her Nursing Degree while also providing for her children. She came to the New Mexico Workforce Connection Center (NMWCC) in November 2016 seeking assistance for school. She spoke to a title 1 career development specialist that found her to be a prime candidate for the WIOA Program and quickly enrolled her as a displaced homemaker. The WIOA Program was able to assist her with the cost of tuition, fees, and books as well as supportive services for scrubs and supplies etc. This assistance relieved much of the stress and allowed her to focus more on her education. She completed her BSN Degree with honors and as a Crimson Scholar. WIOA was able to pay the costs of testing for her NCLEX. She has already been offered a position as a graduate nurse with Gerald Champion Medical Center in the Intensive Care Unit earning \$24.95 an hour.

Amanda

Amanda was referred to WIOA through the re-employment services and eligibility assessment (RESEA) program. She had been employed as a nuclear medicine technician in a local Cardiologist's office. The local community only had one cardiologist and only two locations that employed that or similar positions. She was unable to find work. The staff reviewed the labor market with her and found that in the entire eastern region it was a very low demand job. During this time her husband was the sole provider for the family. They had one child. She was enrolled in Title I services as a dislocated worker. She decided with the help of the office to pursue nursing. This is a position that continues to be in demand anywhere in the country. Then no matter where her and her husband moved she would not struggle to find a job again. She knew it would be difficult but that she could do it. They just needed help.

She received assistance with career planning, tuition, fees, books and supplies, transportation and housing during clinicals and testing fees. She was referred to apply for supplemental nutritional assistance program (SNAP) services to help while she was in school. They were approved. While she was in school they had another child that was actually born during finals. She has recently graduated and passed her national certification exam and is looking forward to finally realizing her dream.

Andrea

Andrea is a veteran and a single mother of four children. She was receiving public assistance and working as a home health care worker. She was making \$8.75 per hour. She knew she could not support herself and her children on that. She enrolled in school and was awarded financial aid. She worked through pre-requisites and maintained a good GPA and was accepted into the physical therapy assistant (PTA) program. She came into the Workforce Connection Center in her second semester and was enrolled in the Title I adult program. All throughout school she remained positive about her progress. Though it was difficult she was able to complete the program, pass her licensure exams and obtain employment. She is now making \$28.58 per hour almost a twenty dollar per hour increase. She feels she is now able to provide for herself and her children and WIOA helped her to be able to complete her education.

Elizabeth – youth

Elizabeth is a 17 year old out of school youth. She had been home schooled but did not complete the 12th grade and receive her diploma. She had 2 semesters of college credit as she was a dual credit youth. She enrolled in classes through adult education to obtain her high school equivalency (HSE) and was referred to the WIOA youth program for assistance with work preparation activities and HSE testing fees. She was very interested in law enforcement and thought she might want to make a career of it. She was enrolled in the program. She needed assistance with testing, support, guidance, career exploration, employment preparation and coaching. After much hard work she passed her tests and received her HSE. Later, she was asked to be the speaker at her adult education graduation ceremony and she gave an amazing speech.

The program was able to work with the police department to develop a work experience opportunity for her. Her and the career coach felt that was the best way for her to really decide if law enforcement was an area she wanted to pursue in college. The police chief agreed, and the program was able place her in a work experience in the police department. She excelled and blossomed. She was gaining confidence daily. She was able to spend time working and observing in various areas of the police department and the more she learned the more excited she became. She was able to experience so much that her work experience was extended to allow her more opportunity to learn. At the end of the experience she was certain that a career in law enforcement was exactly what she wanted to do.

She enrolled in college pursuing that career. She continues to receive transition services from the program. She has applied for an FBI internship and said she had the most impressive resume of those from her college that applied as a result of all she was able to observe and participate in through her work experience at the police department. She is excited and excelling and in her graduation speech she stated that if it had not been for WIOA where she is right now would look very different.