

EASTERN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

PROGRAM YEAR (PY) 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

General Overview

Continued implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in Eastern NM in PY 19 has presented many challenges and opportunities as it has throughout the country. The board was transitioning to a new youth provider that was working to overhaul and redesign the youth program to make it more innovative and structured than the previous provider. Labor and employment markets for PY 19 began in much the same way as PY 18 with low unemployment, increased competition for workers, and expectations for continued growth of the oil and gas industry that would inevitably drive growth and demand in other industries and sectors throughout the region. July to December 2019 affirmed the continued decreases in unemployment, increases in construction and food service industries, and increases in hotels and lodging. New Mexico's unemployment remained higher than the national levels and the Eastern area consistently reported the lowest unemployment in the state, aligning closer to national levels. Then, toward the end of December things began to shift. Decreased crude oil prices resulted in a downturn in production in the Permian Basin oil fields which includes three of the area's counties, Lea, Eddy and Chaves. The area began experiencing an increase in unemployment claims of oil related industries that continued from December into early March. Then the country was hit by the Covid 19 Pandemic.

The crisis pushed the workforce to respond to the needs of tens of thousands of individuals overnight while facing closure of the offices. The increased stressors the pandemic placed on the workforce system shined a light on the fractures and weak points of the system that shined across partners and services. Successfully responding to the needs of system customers necessitated a shift in board priorities, new approaches to service delivery, and new ways of thinking about workforce development and employer services. The crisis created opportunity and the perfect environment to foster innovation, increased partnership and system growth. In fact, successfully serving our communities required it.

The primary goal of the workforce system in its simplest form is to upskill the workforce. The system, through its partners, offers a wide array of services to do that. Partners were challenged to find solutions for making those services available through online, virtual or telephonic means. Most partners developed a variety of solutions to provide access to those services in a virtual or telephonic format through a variety of means with varying degrees of success. The Workforce Connection Centers WCCs were no different. The Board, its staff and the One Stop Operator (OSO) worked to identify system needs and priorities for staff, help

identify partner needs and resources, and establish methods to increase collaboration across the system and to share knowledge and lessons learned in the wake of school and community closures. It was concluded that increasing the quality and availability of virtual services had to be at the core of system goals and preparing center and partner staff to operate in this environment.

The retooling of center workshops and services to make them suitable for online and social media delivery had already begun with implementation/deployment planned for mid PY 21. This became an immediate need. Therefore, other programmatic initiatives were postponed, and online/virtual services became the top priority. The OSO worked with partner and AE staff to generate and review workshop materials, make them available to system customers and find solutions for communicating with customers, partners and communities to create awareness of services available.

Workshops are being offered in live on-line events with recorded versions available for access by individuals that were not able to attend the virtual event available in the newly created YouTube channel. Some of the virtual group service offerings include:

- General orientation;
- Effective job search techniques;
- Interviewing - Live and virtual;
- Networking-Social media and job seeking; and
- On-line applications.

Online access to workshops also includes the ability for customers access individualized services through zoom breakout rooms to allow staff and customers the opportunity to engage one-on-one and face-to-face, for assistance with system registration, needs assessment, completion/review of digital resume's or other needs that may be identified. Once the workshop materials were developed and being deployed the next priority was training of center and partner staff to prepare for the changed workforce system in a Covid and Post Covid New Mexico. The OSO will work with partners over PY 20 to develop materials with information about services available in the core programs to be utilized by all partners as part of coordinated and aligned orientation processes.

To help offer the virtual services in a manner that would meet customer needs, satisfaction surveys were developed and triggered at the end of the virtual workshop. Approximately 60% of customers did complete the survey and customers. This feedback was the driving force behind recording the workshops and allowing them to be accessed individually through the YouTube channel.

To help ease the transition for workforce connection and partner staff to move into new virtual models of service delivery and prepare for potential office re-openings, on-line training was purchased through Larryrobbin.com to help equip staff and partners to serve customers in an

ever-changing environment evolving needs. The trainings were made available to partners throughout the area. Some partners even included staff from other local board regions. The trainings were also recorded for access by staff and partners that were unable to attend the live sessions. Training topics included:

- Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques;
- Are you speaking like employers think? Getting employers to utilize your services;
- Delivering personalized high-quality customer services virtually; and
- Caseload management - serving more people in less time.

There are plans to purchase a series of trainings next year to start creating a resource library of training materials to be use for onboarding of new staff and cross training of partners when appropriate. This will strengthen the workforce system's knowledge base, alignment, collaboration and coordination, as well as serve to deepen the partner relationship in a unified/uniform fashion.

Prior to June, offices scheduled workshops and zoom meetings around a master schedule to avoid meeting conflicts. To provide tools that would help WCC offices successfully provide high quality services virtually including case management and career coaching, the board upgraded area zoom subscriptions to allow the OSO to create and assign accounts to all offices. This prevents any scheduling conflicts in the office or the area.

The OSO and board began utilizing constant contact to reach out to individuals and employers via email campaigns to provide information on services and schedules. A master list of claimants was compiled that included various demographic data sets such as education level and veteran status to develop specific email campaigns regarding services that might be most appropriate to that population. This is being leveraged to assist partner programs in making the information available to potential customers about services available with the current limitations of face-to-face contact. For example, claimants that reported an educational completion level of less that 12th grade were targeted for information on the availability of services through the adult education partner program. Discussions are underway to develop something similar for the veteran's program.

A RESEA pilot was tested in PY 18 to identify policy needs, service gaps and process structure gaps. Based on the results of that soft test a new model with processes procedures and policy alignment across partners was created and an array of services developed to be made available to the UI customers. The program was developed specifically to increase co-enrollment and services provided to individuals receiving unemployment. It was also being used to lay the foundation establishment of a customer flow model that maximizes co-enrollment, streamlines processes, and better aligns staff resources to eliminate duplication. This pilot builds on the premise that workforce development is fundamentally about skills building. Individuals enrolled in the RESEA program are initially screened for Title I eligibility, co-enrolled and provided a list of skill building activities to choose from. They are required to complete three

activities in a designated amount of time prior to scheduling a RESEA II meeting. Participation in these activities is mandatory and counts toward the work search requirements mandated under the UI program regulations. The full deployment of the new model was scheduled for April 1, 2020. Covid 19 resulted in a closure of the offices and a stoppage of RESEA program activities in response to the pandemic. This necessitated the model to be re-tooled to allow for online and virtual completion as well as virtual completion of title I eligibility signing of documents. Therefore, the training and launch was rescheduled for the fall based on NMDWS tentative timeframes for re-starting the RESEA program. Virtual RESEA began in September 2020 for the first office and others scheduled to follow as NMDWS staff are released from the UI system and returned to local service delivery.

Staff development continued to be a focus in PY 19. In fact, it became more critical with shifts in service delivery created in response to the pandemic. Staff had to quickly learn new tools and skills to provide services in a new manner. Where virtual platforms had been used to hold meetings and training for the staff it had not been utilized for service delivery. Now there was no alternative. Groups of staff were assigned to work on exploring and leaning various tools available in the virtual environment and then train other staff on how to use those features.

Online testing for the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and virtual proctoring became available and allowable as a result of Covid 19 closures. So, part of the new service delivery model included youth staff all becoming certified to proctor the TABE. The youth staff were able to assist the AEL partner with proctoring and pre-testing of incoming AEL students that were potential Title I and II co-enrollments. Because of all the effort put into maximizing the usage of the Zoom tools and resources, youth coaches and administrative staff were able to provide training for AEL staff on the use of zoom breakout rooms to increase the numbers of individuals that could be tested at a time and streamline staff efficiency and partnership.

In March the youth provider was working to launch a virtual services platform that included provisions for document workflows to allow for remote access to applications, document submission and signatures but it was not operational when the offices closed. Deployment was postponed due to increased demands on staff time in the centers to cope with the virtual and telephonic coordination of workforce activities and to allow staff to establish processes to maintain current caseloads in a virtual environment. This is anticipated to launch in the fall of 2020.

Labor Market

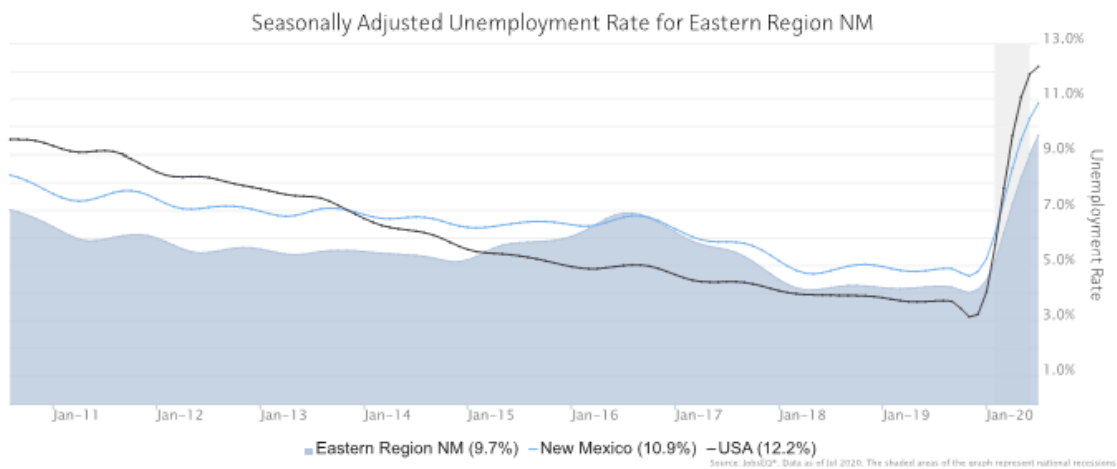
As previously mentioned, unemployment in New Mexico at the beginning of the year was declining but remained higher than the national average at around 5 percent. The labor force participation rates and numbers of employed individuals were increasing, continued indications of strong growth in PY 19. The oil industry continued to drive and dominate the labor market and economies of much of the Eastern area either directly or in supporting industries such as

material moving and construction. July 2020 unemployment figures reflect Lea county as having the 3rd highest unemployment rates in the state at 16.5% when it has historically been among the lowest counties in the state. This is due to a combination of Covid and oil prices. New Mexico Oil and Gas Association is predicting a slight uptick in oil production in October 2020 which will help bring this number down if it proves accurate. The more rural Harding, De Baca, and Union counties in July were all in the area of 7% with the remainder of the area ranging from 10% to 13%. Many of the rural counties in the northern part of the area have remained stable in employment due to the transportation and material moving along the I-40 corridor.

The tables below show unemployment rates over a ten-year period.

Unemployment Rate

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Eastern Region NM was 9.7% as of July 2020. The regional unemployment rate was lower than the national rate of 12.2%. One year earlier, in July 2019, the unemployment rate in the Eastern Region NM was 4.2%.



Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through July 2020.

The table below shows a breakdown of unemployment rates during PY 18 and PY 19 by month.

Unemployment Rate for EAWDB

Month/Year	Unemployment Rate
July 2018	4.9%
August 2018	4.4%
September 2018	4.2%
October 2018	4.2%
November 2018	4.1%
December 2018	3.9%

January 2019	4.3%
February 2019	4.2%
March 2019	3.9%
April 2019	3.7%
May 2019	3.8%
June 2019	4.9%
July 2019	5.0%
August 2019	4.3%
September 2019	4.1%
October 2019	4.2%
November 2019	4.1%
December 2019	3.9%
January 2020	4.3%
February 2020	4.3%
March 2020	5.3%
April 2020	8.6%
May 2020	7.2%
June 2020	8.3%
July 2020	12.6%
August 2020	11.6%
September 2020	9.5%

Source: JobsEQ Data

The tables below reflect information for PY 19 employment profile, top 10 occupational projections, the occupations in the area with the highest number of job openings for the year.

Employment Profile for the Eastern Workforce Development Area

Rank	Occupation	Annual Openings
1	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	907
2	Cashiers	801
3	Personal Care Aides	670
4	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	584
5	Waiters and Waitresses	557
6	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	530
7	Retail Salespersons	519

8	Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	511
9	Construction Laborers	469
10	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	353

Long-term employment projections for the top 10 occupations in the Eastern Area 2018-2028.

Occupation Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2028 Projected Employment
Construction and Extraction	18,063	20,337
Office and Administrative Support	19,528	18,904
Food Preparation and Serving Related	14,063	15,584
Sales and Related	12,849	12,865
Transportation and Material Moving	10,669	11,325
Management	10,504	10,880
Education, Training, and Library	8,752	9,212
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	7,680	8,085
Personal Care and Service	5,601	7,156
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	5,975	6,611

Below are the Eastern area occupations with the highest number of job openings Advertised online in October 2019 and the numbers of potential candidates.

Rank	Occupation	Job Openings	Potential Candidates
1	Registered Nurses	398	100
2	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	135	3
3	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	123	28
4	Retail Salespersons	110	151
5	Physical Therapists	92	0
6	Occupational Therapists	80	0
7	Customer Service Representatives	77	401
8	General and Operations Managers	77	80
9	Cashiers	73	458
10	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	71	90

Covid 19 projections from JobsEQ project a slow recovery over the next three years with the retail, agriculture and entertainment being the largest occupational areas still in a status of negative growth. With tin mind the local board and OSO are working to target the occupations most severely impacted by Covid with the slowest recovery projections to tar

Eastern New Mexico nonmetropolitan area - COVID, 2020Q1¹

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Occupation	Current							5-Year History		1-Year Forecast				
	Empl	Avg Ann Wages ²	LQ	Unempl	Unempl Rate	Online Job Ads ³	Empl Change	Ann %	Total Demand	Exits	Transfers	Empl Growth	Ann % Growth	
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	20,261	\$35,300	0.88	782	3.8%	603	-578	-0.6%	1,059	932	1,257	-1,130	-5.6%	
Construction and Extraction Occupations	19,607	\$46,600	2.34	1,131	5.5%	156	877	0.9%	1,853	623	1,757	-528	-2.7%	
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	16,969	\$22,100	1.09	1,422	7.7%	943	982	1.2%	-1,391	1,013	1,479	-3,883	-22.9%	
Sales and Related Occupations	16,534	\$34,000	0.94	1,040	6.0%	1,376	-52	-0.1%	1,330	932	1,360	-962	-5.8%	
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	15,200	\$37,700	1.02	883	5.5%	712	344	0.5%	1,165	663	1,159	-657	-4.3%	
Management Occupations	12,192	\$86,800	1.05	200	1.7%	504	489	0.8%	489	407	614	-532	-4.4%	
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	11,317	\$45,700	1.11	427	3.8%	326	-202	-0.4%	237	434	515	-711	-6.3%	
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	8,783	\$48,700	1.27	280	3.1%	482	229	0.5%	422	267	558	-403	-4.6%	
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	8,166	\$81,900	0.79	151	1.9%	1,974	749	1.9%	161	208	247	-295	-3.6%	
Healthcare Support Occupations	7,587	\$25,700	0.96	374	4.7%	490	627	1.7%	534	462	495	-422	-5.6%	
Production Occupations	7,020	\$46,300	0.66	352	4.7%	114	-66	-0.2%	524	257	531	-264	-3.8%	
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	6,874	\$63,100	0.69	192	3.0%	313	574	1.8%	431	185	454	-209	-3.0%	
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	5,551	\$26,100	0.90	408	6.8%	239	-113	-0.4%	91	294	372	-576	-10.4%	
Protective Service Occupations	4,202	\$44,200	1.07	143	3.5%	177	132	0.6%	178	173	235	-230	-5.5%	
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	4,185	\$25,300	3.66	610	13.2%	4	-101	-0.5%	551	159	490	-97	-2.3%	
Personal Care and Service Occupations	3,875	\$26,300	0.75	197	5.2%	115	85	0.4%	-42	230	299	-571	-14.7%	
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	3,312	\$80,200	1.08	74	2.5%	71	448	2.9%	213	81	188	-56	-1.7%	
Community and Social Service Occupations	2,823	\$46,900	0.92	64	2.4%	266	-120	-0.8%	168	100	199	-131	-4.6%	
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1,949	\$70,000	0.36	47	2.7%	334	99	1.0%	97	33	110	-46	-2.4%	
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,932	\$68,800	1.24	44	2.6%	144	109	1.2%	130	39	137	-46	-2.4%	
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	1,786	\$47,800	0.54	59	4.1%	155	13	0.1%	33	68	116	-151	-8.5%	
Legal Occupations	1,021	\$72,500	0.67	16	1.6%	11	-2	0.0%	48	25	40	-17	-1.7%	
Total - All Occupations	181,147	\$44,900	1.00	8,897	4.8%	9,509	4,524	0.5%	8,327	7,586	12,612	-11,871	-6.6%	

Source JobsEQ

Business Services

The board, its operator and partners continue working to improve the level of customer service and the quality of services available to employers. Office staff have been provided training on quality outreach to employers and employer customer service. Over the course of the year the offices have conducted and/or participated in several job fairs and recruiting/hiring events. Events conducted in the last quarter shifted those events to virtual models with varying levels of success. The area attempted to conduct the virtual recruiting through the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) to save staff and customer time recording services and signing up for events. This was not effective and ended up creating more work and duplicated efforts for staff rather than streamlining processes. Moving forward, the OSO will shift the virtual job fair processes to processes like those utilized by the Central board to save time and effort for staff.

One of the virtual recruiting events being utilized is the “hot jobs” list. The OSO worked with offices to develop a “hot jobs video” that is updated regularly by local staff for each office and posted on the social media pages. The feedback from this has been increasingly positive.

The board, Title III partner, and OSO are also focused on establishing strategies to help employers in the area recover from the impact of the pandemic. As a part of this UI claimants are being grouped by occupations and those with the slowest recovery projections are being

targeted for skills upgrading to move them into occupations that are showing faster recovery and career pathways that provide for future growth through upskilling. We are working to help build a model for hotels to share employees across various brands e.g. Holiday Inn Express and Days Inn to all them to fill positions that currently are not able to support full time employment but where a shared employee could achieve full times status through sharing hours across hotels. We are also working to determine which positions and individuals would be good candidates for transitional jobs to help unemployed individuals make the transition back to employment in a new industry. The RESEA program will have a focus on filling the jobs of recovering industries as quickly as possible.

On the job training continues to be an area of focus for the Title I providers as an “Earn and learn” model that benefits both job seekers and employers. The board did show an increase in the numbers of OJT of 3.7% which was negatively impacted the employment market post Covid. The provider was on target to meet at 10-15% increase but very few OJTs were written in the 4th quarter.

Surveys were conducted for participants of OJT services, both businesses and job seekers. An area of concern reflected was the lack of OJT development in several communities. Most OJT contracts written are taking place in Otero County or Alamogordo more specifically. This information has already been discussed with the Title I provider as a priority to address. This is a valuable tool for both employers and job seekers that is not being promoted as broadly as it should be. This was determined to be in part due to staff turnover as well as slowed employment markets. The board will work with the OSO over the upcoming year to establish goals for the offices to increase the utilization of OJT area-wide throughout the year.

PY 18 to PY 19 OJT utilization comparison

PY 18			PY 19			% Change
New	Carry over	Total Active	New	Carry over	Total Active	
65	17	82	51	34	85	+ 3.7

An area of need identified in the technical assistance session provided by Maher and Maher was the alignment of business services across partner programs. This will be a focus in PY 20. Board members and staff are in discussion to work with the career centers at the colleges to align outreach and targeting of specific employer categories for placement based on sector requirements for employment e.g. occupations that require a college degree, license or certificate such as teaching or nursing. The plan is in the beginning stages but will be developed further as other partners are engaged.

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Services

Ongoing staff development efforts around customer service, outreach, functional alignment and co-enrollment processes this year were yielding positive results. PY 19 1st quarter data reflected higher enrollment numbers than the same time frame for the previous year. PY 18 Q1 Title I active enrollment count was 362. The count for the same period for PY 19 was 456. This indicated the EAWDB service provider to be on target for continued improvement in enrollment numbers and expenditures for PY 19 as well. The adult and dislocated worker programs were able to finish the year with an increase in expenditures however the youth program showed a decrease. This was due in part to the provider change. The low unemployment in the area and high wages made the filling of career coach positions for the contract transition a lengthy process. The second factor was the Covid 19 slowdown. Many of the wrap around services youth were receiving slowed or were postponed all together, work experiences were slowed or stopped, and college campuses were temporarily closed and there was a delay in bringing up the online classes and tools.

To continue utilizing customer feedback for continuous quality improvement, Title I exit surveys were developed and issued to all recipients of Title I adult and dislocated worker services. Results indicated that 80.3% of the participants that took the survey successfully completed training while enrolled in the WIOA program. The satisfaction of the customers was mostly positive, but some respondents stated that communication between them and their respective career coaches could have been better. The provider has been working with staff to ensure that communication efforts improve by providing trainings and TA to staff and identify opportunities for increased access to career coaches through virtual service delivery.

A youth services survey was created, however early results showed that the survey was not being completed by participants and the number of respondents was insufficient to utilize for changes in program service delivery. Technical assistance is being provided by the board and OSO to all service providers on when and how to issue surveys.

Information expenditures is reflected below with the youth program having a decrease of 18% in spending and the adult and dislocated worker programs showing increases of 2% and 18% respectively.

PY 19 Program Expenditures

Youth	Percent Increase	Adult	Percent Increase	Dislocated Worker	Percent Increase	Total
\$652,236	-18%	\$2,338,542	2%	\$346,755	18%	\$3,337,533

Title I program coordinators and the OSO are working together to set enrollment goals for staff and offices in a primarily virtual environment. With the co-enrollment processes being rolled

out to the offices it is projected that the Eastern area will serve close to 1200 participants in PY 20. This is a significant increase over PY 19 numbers served and should result in increases in direct participant expenditures as well.

The board worked with staff and experts to create new workshop materials that were being utilized from January to March. Then when the offices closed the OSO worked with staff to re-tool those for delivery in a virtual environment. The General Assessment and Orientation (GAO) workshop is being offered virtually every week and is also available through the YouTube channel. The feedback received from customers following that workshop has been very positive. Attendees feel the information is very relevant and valuable. The difficulty has been in generating interest with claimants. Many claimants contacted state they are not comfortable returning to work due to fear of Covid or cannot return to work until school resumes. Many do not feel they are good candidates for work from home opportunities due to a lack of a designated office space in their homes. The next two years will provide a unique opportunity for new models and best practices to emerge across the country. The EAWDB looks forward to capitalizing on good ideas from around the country.

Adult Services

Much of the focus in the adult program revolved around increasing the number served and increasing alignment of training with the sector strategies identified by the board in June 2019. The sectors targeted were healthcare, including paraprofessionals and support staff, education, and energy. The energy sector both green and oil and gas production have large impacts on employment projections and economic health of the area as well as the state. There are new green jobs emerging in the region in both the solar and wind energy sectors. The board and offices are working with employers and training providers to meet the needs for skilled workers in both areas.

As shown below the number of customers trained in the health care industry was 253, well over half of the number of individuals trained. The increased outreach for the education industry has resulted in 17 new training enrollments for that sector. That is expected to more than double in PY 20 as schools reopen classrooms.

The breakdown of training for adults and dislocated workers by occupation is reflected below.

Total Trained	417
Management Occupations	11
Business and Financial Occupations	2
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	1
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	4
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	2
Community and Social Services Occupations	9

Legal Occupations	1
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	17
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	5
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	225
Healthcare Support Occupations	28
Protective Service Occupations	1
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	3
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance Occupations	4
Personal Care and Service Occupations	2
Sales and Related Occupations	2
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	8
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	21
Production Occupations	11
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	7

Performance

Performance of the adult program continued to meet or exceed negotiated goals and increased its impact on the overall state performance for some of the measures. For example, the area made up 20% of the credential denominator as compared to 15% of the funding. The PY 19 data has been used as a baseline and goals are being established to increase the local area's impact on the overall state performance.

The adult program met or exceeded all measures for the year with increased numbers of individuals in the denominators. We expect the actual performance levels to show gradual decreases as the increased co-enrollments with Title III programs and a focus on engaging customers in short skill building activities for the job seeker not interested in higher education-based training services.

PY 19 Adult Performance

Measure	Actual	LWDB Plan	% LWDB Achieved
Employment Q2 Adult	77.6%	80.0%	97.0%
Employment Q4 Adult	64.2%	60.0%	107.1%
Credential Adult	69.2%	66.0%	104.8%
Skill Gains Adult	71.7%		

Dislocated Worker Services

Board staff and Title I service providers have been working together to identify ways to increase outreach and enrollment of dislocated workers into Title I. As previously discussed, this will be accomplished utilizing the RESEA co-enrollment of dislocated workers. This model provides opportunities for all RESEA involved customers to upskill resulting in higher levels of performance and potentially increased earning potential. With recent changes to unemployment policies the model has become a seamless model for customers. In the PY 18 test models it was required that Title III staff perform certain functions with the customer within the RESEA process then be passed on to the Title I staff for the remainder of the process. This is no longer necessary. All staff can perform the entire RESEA process for each customer. The only siloed function is the certification of WIOA title I eligibility which must be performed by Title I staff. The board will work with partner programs to identify opportunities for staff with braided funding to streamline this process as well. When the model is fully incorporated and embraced in each of the offices the customer flow process will be written to incorporate this model as the standard for all job seekers identified to need skill building activities to provide them opportunities for advancement in their chosen careers.

With the high numbers of unemployed and low numbers of staff, maximizing the number of people that can be served in one session will be an essential component of serving as many customers as possible. The RESEA pilot includes plans to group candidates by occupation at layoff. This will allow staff to prepare list of services and job openings for the group, maximizing the efficient and effective use of staff time and hopefully shorten the amount of time it takes to help customers re-enter employment.

The RESEA workgroup continues to meet twice per week to communicate and continue to improve the process into as seamless a model as possible for both staff and customers. Changes to the model are based on staff and customer feedback. Continuous improvement will be utilized to establish the most effective processes to create a value-added model in a currently struggling workforce system. This will be a model with sufficient documentation to allow for easy replication if the state elects to do so.

Email campaigns are being targeted to specific populations in an effort to engage them in workforce system activities. Outreach to individuals over the age of 25 with no diploma or equivalent will be emailed information on services available within the Title III AEL program and individual claimants that disclosed vet status will be targeted, vet status verified and referred to the appropriate veteran staff. These groups will also be targeted for co-enrollment opportunities in the Title I program to ensure individuals have the wrap around support necessary to increase the likelihood for success.

Performance

The Dislocated Worker (DW) program met or exceeded two out of negotiated levels of performance but increased the number of DWs served in Title I by 200% over PY 18. This still resulted in small cohorts for the individual performance denominators impacting the overall

performance. The rollout of the co-enrollment model was slower than anticipated to allow for proper process development for all the programs and to incorporate changes in state and federal policies.

PY 19 Dislocated Worker Performance

Measure	Actual	LWDB Plan	% LWDB Achieved
Employment Q2 DW	66.7%	75.0%	88.9%
Employment Q4 DW	69.2%	73.1%	94.7%
Credential DW	71.4%	50.0%	142.9%
Skill Gains DW	55.2%		

Youth Services

The youth services provider was struggling with staffing shortages. The new provider began providing services on July 1 but the previous provider worked to create an environment that prevented existing staff from applying to the new program. This caused an unnecessarily difficult program transition and a great disservice to the youth of the area. The new provider has focused heavily on improving staff training plans and improving the quality of case management and establishment effective service delivery models. The provider worked with Board staff to establish an incentive program to highlight and encourage successful achievement of program milestones and work experience completion.

The provider is also working to bring up a virtual platform through CareerEdge that would allow a wide array of virtual services to be made available in the rural communities utilizing technological solutions. This platform also provides an effective venue to recruit employers as worksites in the communities and allows for electronic process of contracts and time and attendance records. It is expected that this platform will not only increase the level of engagement of youth in the program but increase the number of youth served in areas that do not have a WCC office. The launch was originally planned for July 1, 2020, however, shifts in staffing and services as a result of Covid delayed the rollout to the 2nd quarter of PY 21. This will be something closely monitored by the board and assistance provided as needed during the year.

The board and has also entered into agreements with the AEL providers to provide entrepreneurial training to eligible co-enrolled youth. This is intended to increase access to this program element, improve the critical thinking and soft skills, and the overall employability of the youth. Board staff is working with providers and the operator to identify effective methods of measuring the success of the training. The recruitment for the program will begin in November and December for January enrollment. This is expected to also increase the number of individuals served and expenditure rate of the youth program.

The youth program failed all measures for the year but based on the PY 20 goals would be meeting or exceeding performance goals. However, the new provider who is also the adult, DW service provider has been hiring new staff and has a new program design that provides better oversight of the program and services. Youth falling into this year’s program performance are youth exits from the previous provider. The board is expecting gradual increases in performance throughout the year as the staff are better trained and supported.

PY 19 Youth Performance

Measure	Actual	LWDB Plan	% LWDB Achieved
Employment Q2 Youth	57.3%	70.0%	81.8%
Employment Q4 Youth	67.1%	80.0%	83.8%
Credential Youth	45.3%	58.3%	77.8%
Skill Gains Youth	47.3%		

Stories of renewed hope and success provided through the WIOA program

Youth

Michelle –

Michelle was on a good track when she first began her journey in the WIOA program. Despite being in foster care, she was enrolled in post-secondary education at ENMU-Ruidoso, studying Criminal Justice, and about to begin a Work Experience with the local police department. Unfortunately, she found herself in trouble and had a big run in with the law. This legal situation led to Michelle being held in Juvenile Detention to await her court hearing. During the court hearing, the judge determined that the best course of action was to send Michelle to an Equine Therapy facility in Santa Fe, however due to COVID-19 the facility would not open until the pandemic business closures were lifted by the state government.

Fast forward two months; Michelle was still under house arrest at her temporary foster home awaiting a decision from the judge. Because the therapy facility decided not to re-open due to the pandemic, the court was trying to determine another course of action for Michelle. The judge wanted to find other options for her, rather than have her spend more time in juvenile detention.

The court determined that she would still need to be under close supervision, but the judge would allow her to attend cosmetology school in Las Cruces as a condition of her probation. Michelle took this opportunity and ran with it. She applied immediately and was granted a full

scholarship to the school and has also filed for financial aid to help pay for additional expenses. She is very excited to start school and has a great support group around her to include WIOA staff, probation officers and her foster family. She will remain in the WIOA Youth program to see her through school and assist with any additional needs should they arise. Everyone is so proud of the way Michelle has handled her second chance and looks forward to seeing what she accomplishes in the future.

Elicia –

Elicia was a 22-year-old mother of two small children with another one on the way when she first came into her local one-stop seeking assistance from the WIOA youth program. In high school, she was a very successful student but had to drop out due to her first pregnancy. She found it extremely difficult to complete high school while pregnant but knew she wanted to find alternative ways to be successful. Over the course of several years after dropping out of high school she became pregnant twice more and decided during her third pregnancy that she needed to take initiative and reach out to community resources to find avenues to obtain her GED and gain skills in order to better provide for her family.

During her time in the WIOA Youth program and the Adult Basic Education program, Elicia completed her High School Equivalency with flying colors. Early in the program Elicia set a goal to become a dental assistant after participating in several career exploration activities with her career coach. Once a training plan was created, she began and successfully completed a work experience at a local dental office. During her work experience she was given the opportunity to take the dental assistant exams through the DANB (Dental Assisting National Board). She passed the boards and earned two certifications. Elicia's work experience worksite was so pleased by how hard she worked during her time there that they hired her full-time at Kids Kare Dental Clinic. Elicia loves her job and can now provider for her family; something she never thought she could accomplish.

Adult/DW

Carey –

Carey is a single mother of a 7-year-old child. She resides in Alamogordo, alone with her daughter and was a recipient of SNAP Benefits to help mitigate her low wages. Carey was employed part-time as a barista with Albertsons Market earning \$10.35 an hour. Her work history had been primarily in customer service occupations earning low wages. To provide a better life for her and her daughter, Carey made the decision to return to school. Carey received her Associates Degree in Engineering from NMSU-Alamogordo and had also completed one semester at NMSU-Las Cruces to complete her bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering. She did receive a FAFSA financial aid package, however it was not enough to cover the expenses of her tuition, books and living expenses.

Carey realized that she might not be able to continue with her education since it had been very costly for her to drive back and forth to Las Cruces to attend classes. The local Career Coach explained that the WIOA program could potentially assist her with tuition and fees, but she might also be eligible to receive supportive services given she met all the program requirements. This could assist her with her transportation needs.

When Carey first came into the one-stop office to seek services and assistance the WIOA program was unable to assist her as the training program she was seeking a degree for was not listed on the WIOA Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) as an approved training program. The program staff worked diligently with the Southwest board staff and the Department of Engineering at NMSU to ensure the program was included on the ETPL to be able to assist Carey with training funding. Staff wanted to be sure to do what they could for Carey because they saw how motivated she was to change her situation.

Carey was overwhelmed with emotion when she understood how much the WIOA program could help her. She was able to complete her bachelor's degree and was offered a position with Oncor Electric as a Transmission Line Design Engineer. She will be earning \$36.34 an hour as a starting pay with the potential for upward mobility within the company. Carey no longer depends on Public Assistance and was extremely grateful for all the assistance the WIOA program provided.

Isaiah –

Isaiah was single with no children and lived at home with his parents. The household did not receive any public assistance as their annual income was approximately \$63,000. He had some experience working as a teaching assistant for Head Start Early Childhood but was paid very low wages and he had very little other occupational skills. During personal career exploration he realized that he was not interested in seeking a degree in the education field but knew he needed to train in a field that would afford him the ability to take care of himself, without relying on his parents.

Isaiah began taking pre-requisite classes at Clovis Community College in hopes to one day pursue a nursing degree. Isaiah received financial aid in the form of a Pell grant, however his semester expenses were far greater than what he received. When all his pre-requisites were successfully completed, he applied for the nursing program and was accepted. He was entering his second semester when he reached out to WIOA for assistance after hearing about the program from a friend. He was just getting started as a funded participant with WIOA when he and family lost their family home to a fire and everything in it including all his schoolbooks and supplies.

Isaiah was desperate and found himself needing financial assistance as he and his family struggled to keep moving forward to rebuild. The career coach assisted Isaiah in referring him

to community resources and ensuring that all schoolbooks and supplies were replaced through supportive services. The fire would not deter him from his educational goals of becoming a nurse and he was as motivated as ever to complete the program. He earned his degree, graduating in the fall of 2019. After graduation, he passed the Nursing Board Exams (NCLEX) and was offered the position of Registered Nurse in the surgical unit at Plains Regional Medical Center earning \$30 an hour. He no longer relies on his family for financial support and now has a goal of purchasing his own home one day.

Suzanna (DW) –

In 2018, Suzanna was going through a divorce and found herself having to provide for herself and one of her two children as her husband was their only source of income. She had been a homemaker for the last 30 plus years with an occasional part-time, low-wage, low skill job and relied solely on her husband's income during the marriage. This situation was the motivation she needed pursue a degree since she would no longer have that financial support and was on SNAP assistance. She also had to apply for housing assistance through HUD to see that her and her child had a place to live following the divorce.

In order to successfully pursue her goal of a degree in Radiologic Technology at Clovis Community College she came to WIOA for assistance after hearing about the program from a friend. After meeting with a career coach, she was deemed eligible for assistance to include supportive services. Ms. Nope took the Work Keys Assessment and scores showed her to be basic skills deficient. She realized that she was going to need to provide for herself and her daughter and decided to apply for the Radiology Technology program at CCC after discussing goals with her career coach. Despite her basic skills deficiency she was able to maintain a good GPA and was accepted and started her first semester in the Fall of 2018. She completed a FAFSA and was eligible for financial aid, but even with financial aid package her semester expenses were much greater than she could afford on her own. With help from WIOA, Suzanna would get the training and experience needed to get a self-sufficient job and provide for her family without any help from her now ex-husband.

With the divorce and a domestic order behind her, she focused on her studies. When she first began the radiology program, she was overwhelmed with the coursework but completed her first semester successfully giving her much needed confidence to move through the program. As the semesters came and went, she found herself doing better and really enjoyed school much more than she expected.

On May 15, 2020, Suzanna graduated from the RADT Program at CCC and is so grateful for WIOA, especially the supportive services for temporary housing during her time completing her clinical rotation. Without that assistance she feels she would have had too a large financial burden to overcome and hates to think what would have happened had she not had the help of the program. She is so grateful to have developed the confidence she now has in knowing she is

employable in a job well above the income she once had. On 9/7/2020 she took the registry exam and passed it with an 89%. Her last step is to send in her payment for her NM Licensure. WIOA will be assisting with all testing fees as well and Suzanna could not be happier for that. Ms. Nope is excited about having job opportunities throughout New Mexico and once she receives her license she is hoping to relocate to Roswell, NM to pursue several of the employment prospects she has found there.