

Eastern Area Workforce Development Board

A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

PROGRAM YEAR (PY) 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

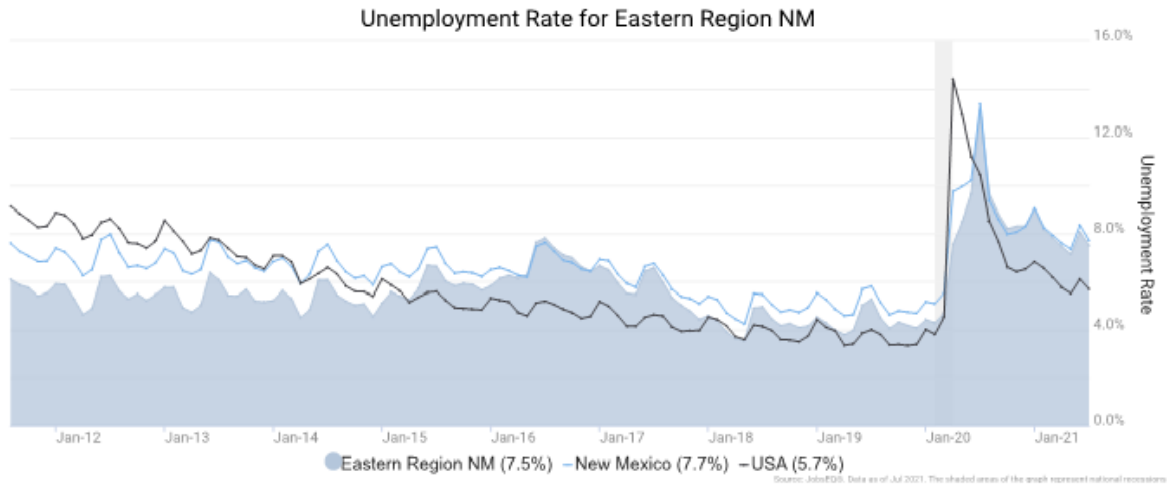
General Overview

Operation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) job centers in Eastern NM in PY 20 has presented many challenges due to the pandemic as it has throughout the country. The area's unemployment rate and numbers of new claims were the highest they have been in over twenty years including during the recession. The effects of the pandemic were compounded by the decline of the oil and gas industry which is responsible for a significant portion of not only the region's economy but the state's revenue as well. The board, one-stop operator (OSO), service providers and offices struggled to find ways to assist employers with retention and hiring during this time while they too were struggling to retain and hire employees.

Despite the many challenges, PY 20 began with the East's workforce system partners working collaboratively to align multiple workforce and education/training efforts. The board continued to focus on several ongoing initiatives in addition to some newly identified opportunities including, but not limited to: the youth entrepreneurial training pilot project; the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) co-enrollment model; development and utilization of a new youth service platform (Career EDGE); the development of a Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) referral and co-enrollment pilot project; identification of new and creative ways to partner and utilize technology to improve services in rural areas; and identifying and developing robust Apprenticeship opportunities in the area.

Labor Market

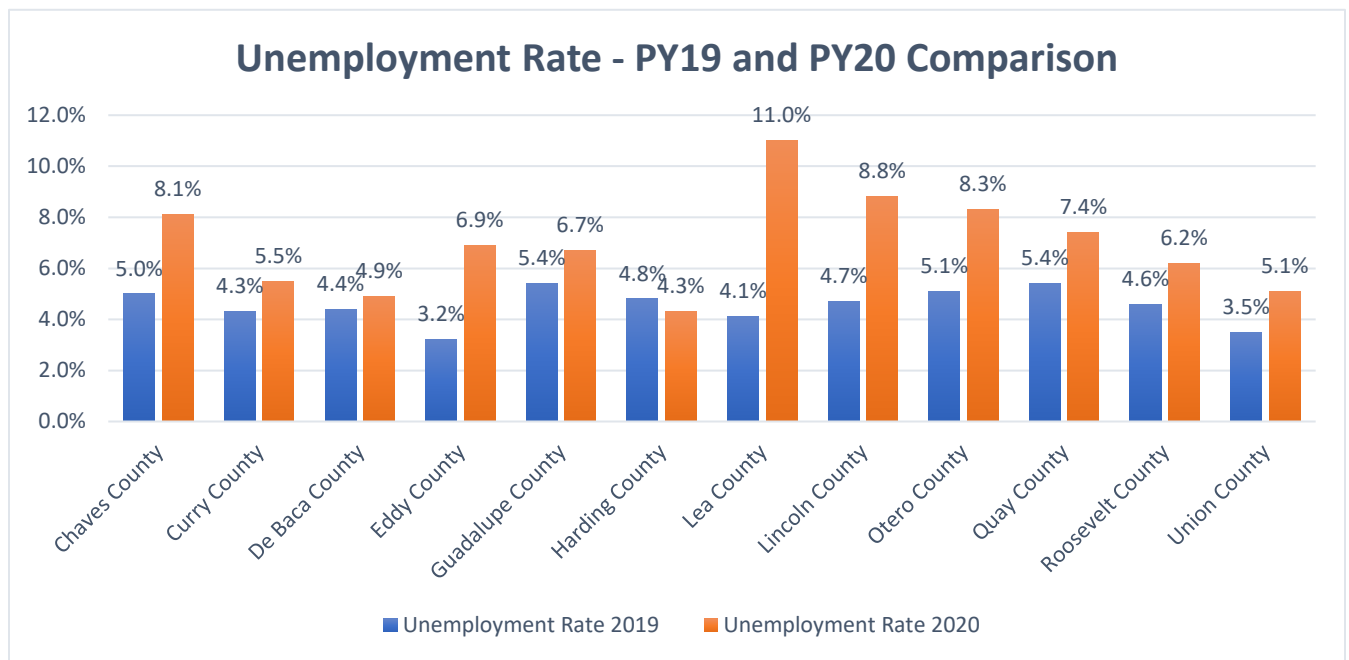
As previously mentioned, the pandemic presented many challenges during PY 20. The unemployment rate at the beginning of the year the unemployment rate had significantly increased due to the pandemic, however, saw a slow decline over the course of the year. The unemployment rate for the Eastern Area was 7.5% as of July 2021. The regional unemployment rate was higher than the national rate of 5.7%. One year earlier, in July 2020, the unemployment rate in the Eastern Region NM was 13.1%.



Unemployment rate data are from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics, provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and updated through July 2021.

Source: JobsEQ

Below is a graph that shows unemployment rate comparisons between the end of PY 19 and the end of PY 20.



Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Output: EconoVue, RegionVue

Sector Strategies

Healthcare

The area worked with employers in the health care industry to identify "new needs" and anticipated future needs in a post-Covid health care environment. Hiring freezes and "slows" resulting from low hospital census numbers changed the immediate needs for local health care positions. However, the industry is reporting a higher number of individuals leaving the industry, particularly in nursing, as a result of the pandemic. Even with challenges brought on by the pandemic, the area still reflects a shortage of healthcare occupations and in response outreach and enrollments for healthcare continued in an effort to move individuals into this priority sector. Training in this sector was impacted due to constraints on clinical affiliations because of the pandemic and risk and deferred completions of semesters or training for several individuals which did have an impact on performance. For PY20 the area had 339 individuals training in healthcare sectors.

Demand Material Change – Healthcare			
Year	Material Change Description	Businesses	Employment
2020	Decrease in Scale	28	1,685
2020	Early Signs of Decay	50	2,182
2020	Organic Growth	37	316
2020	Spend Growth	64	1,286
2020	Stable	893	12,359
2020	Decrease in Demand	38	213
2020	Increase in Borrowing	44	379
2020	Increase in Demand	9	48
2020	Increase in Scale	21	782
2020	Leverage for Growth	16	132

Education

The teacher shortage in the area saw an increase due to many teachers electing to change careers or retire because of the many challenges they faced with virtual learning. In PY 20 the area trained 30 individuals in the education pathway, with some earning their alternative teaching credential. The youth program also worked to engage young people in interest for this career pathway. As part of this, youth participants can be placed in Work Experience in an education, early childhood, and/or tutoring environment pathway.

During PY 20 the board and the one-stop operator began working with communities and local colleges to promote alternative licensure programs for teachers. There was an increase in outreach and enrollment in those programs. Gathering school district officials for strategic planning was difficult due to their being inundated with changes and needs of the districts as a result of the pandemic.

Information Technology

The one-stop operator, board staff and the service provider director began conversations with the training coordinator at ENMU Ruidoso, a cyber security center of excellence, to identify telework opportunities within the area. During PY 20 the school began collaborating as part of a consortium of schools that received a grant to provide Information Technology (IT) training with a direct pathway to employment with several employers including the Department of Defense. Although we didn't see much movement on this, we are anticipating a higher number of individuals training in this sector pathway during PY 21.

Business Services

The board, its one-stop operator and partners have been working to promote services to local businesses to support their needs throughout the pandemic. While in person services were not possible, services via Zoom and other video conferencing software were utilized. While some employers needed support and training to learn new ways of working remotely, required assistance with finding employees. The local offices created Zoom meetings and social media platforms to allow employers to promote their positions and to give job seekers the ability to connect with them virtually.

The local offices began creating a "Hot Jobs" YouTube video each week promoting jobs in each county. The videos were posted on Facebook and each county's open position was posted as a picture for job seekers to easily access the information. Along with the job openings, these videos provided information about services being offered by the Workforce offices to support the employment as well as other services available. Social media platforms were also heavily utilized to promote job openings and hiring events.

The one-stop operator and local offices also worked with the Department of Workforce Solution's (DWS) "All Hands" project. All Hands New Mexico was created as a way for employers to promote job openings they were looking to fill immediately. During an unsure time, this gave employers a place to post jobs they were sure they could hire for rapidly. Jobs were posted in the NMWCOS, promoted on Facebook, and a full New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (NMWCOS) candidate search was completed on the jobs posted.

On-the-job (OJT) training placements continue to be to a focus for the area as OJT's benefit both local employers and job seekers. There was a 10.6% decrease in the overall utilization of OJT's from PY19 to PY20, however, the Roswell and Hobbs offices both had significant increases in the numbers of OJT's provided. The decrease in the other counties is a result of the pandemic and slowed economies. As of the beginning of PY 21 OJT contracts appear to be increasing again and we are hopeful there will be an increase in OJT placements in the coming year.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services

A continuing challenge in the East is service delivery in the more rural areas. This was made even more difficult and important during the pandemic. The one-stop operator, Site Manager, and IT staff worked together to create a “lab-2-go” to help mitigate this issue. The all-in-one lab contains laptops, a printer, and a hot spot that can be taken out in the communities to provide services such as hiring events or job search outside the offices. To date the lab has been utilized for three job fairs where job seekers were able to apply for jobs being promoted by the companies participating in the job fairs as well as update their resumes and search additional open positions. This will be promoted heavily in the upcoming months to reach the more rural areas and assist businesses and job seekers.

Pictured below is the “Lab-2-go” unit and it in use at a hiring event in Roswell, NM:

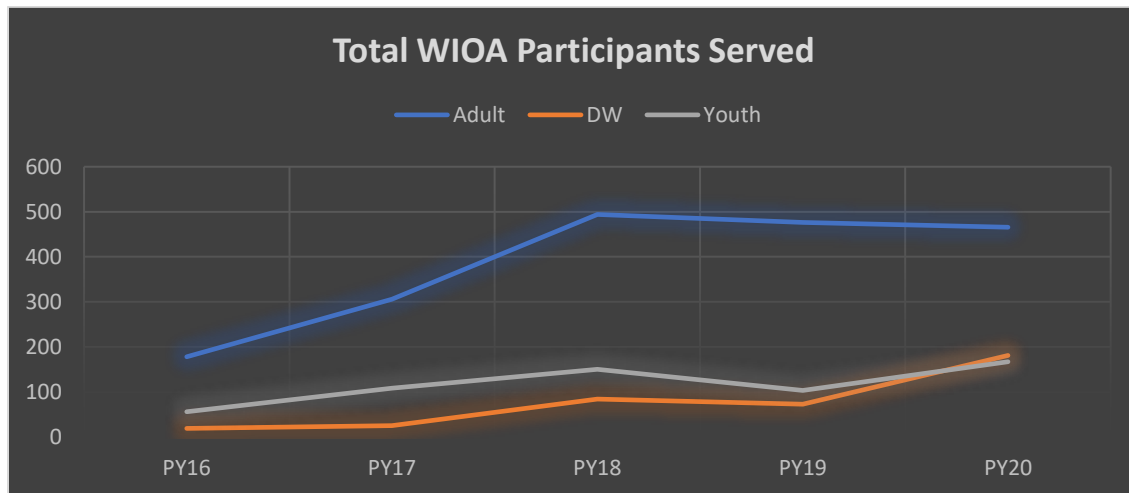


The one-stop operator and WIOA partners worked with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) program to streamline the referral process and increase co-enrollment across Titles I, III and DVR. The project began with DVR transitioning youth and worked to move them from high school to post-secondary education or directly to the workforce. This referral pilot began during the third quarter and has resulted in approximately 20 co-enrolled youth participants. We plan to expand this referral process to include adult participants in the coming months.

In keeping with the Secretary's focus on apprenticeship training, the area has funded apprenticeship training in the areas of automotive, plumbing, solar installation, and metal fabrication in PY 20. The effort to locate businesses interested in using the apprenticeship program greatly increased during the year and despite the pandemic, the number of people in the East participating apprenticeship programs has more than doubled from the previous year. Work in this area is ongoing and expanding and we anticipate good results in PY 21.

Title I staff statewide has struggled with Title I enrollments during the pandemic. This was also true of the East though we only saw a decline numbers of adults served and it was less than other regions in the state. To help support continued enrollment, the area established options to support individuals enrolled or interested in training with Internet connectivity and hardware. This combined with other policy and process modification provides increased access to services more streamlined services for individuals with diminished resources. The team continues to develop new outreach and service delivery methods to improve access and value of services to continue to increase the number of individuals served. Since 2016, there has been a consistent increase in all programs despite the slight 2% decrease in participant's served in the Adult program between PY 19 and PY 20. Specifics on the numbers served in Title I is included below.

Program	PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20
Adult	178	306	494	476	466
DW	19	25	84	73	181
Youth	56	108	150	103	167



The Title I service provider has been able to continue spending momentum in the adult and dislocated worker programs. Although less money has been expended on youth participants, the momentum gained in youth enrollments at the end of the year indicates a likelihood for significant improvement in the current program year.

PY 19 and PY 20 Program Expenditures Comparison

Program	PY19	PY20	Percent Increase
Adult	\$1,554,378.83	\$1,854,514.61	19.30%
DW	\$59,238.51	\$144,320.72	143.62%
Youth	\$416,658.88	\$576,366.54	38.33%

Adult Services

As the COVID-19 Pandemic continued throughout PY 20, employers were frustrated and desperate due to the lack of applicants for their available positions. The area began working on various initiatives across the East to support local businesses and their worker shortages. One of these was increased work with employers and training providers to create new apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathways to give businesses the opportunity to develop their talent and fill vacancies more quickly.

The Apprenticeship Coordinator worked closely with a local contractor and was able to place participants in various trades such as plumbing, welding and sheet metal fabrication and is currently working to place more. Partnerships were developed with an auto dealership and training providers to develop trainings that utilize the apprenticeship model combining hands on and classroom training concurrently. The apprenticeship model was utilized to place an individual on a master mechanic pathway/ladder while other trainings were developed for more positions. This model allows the business to access a wider pool of applicants and afforded the job seeker the opportunity to continually transition to higher wage positions in the pathway as training is completed. Working with this employer has resulted in additional businesses reaching out to the apprenticeship coordinator to develop similar models for their businesses. There are currently 3 additional automotive related training placements and has resulted in additional employers reaching out for similar assistance with training development for their positions.

Performance

Performance of the adult program continued to meet or exceed negotiated goals and increased its impact on the overall state performance for some measures. The adult program met or exceeded all measures for the year with an increase in the number of individuals that were in the denominator.

Measure	PY 20 Adult Performance			
	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	74.57%	79%	94.39%	Met
Employment Q4	80.21%	71%	112.97%	Exceeded
Credential	65.87%	69.20%	95.18%	Met

Skills Gain	70.18%	67%	104.74%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$8728.30	\$8000	109.10%	Exceeded

Dislocated Worker (DW) Services

The RESEA co-enrollment project was rolled out to all offices during the second quarter after an all-staff training took place in the first quarter. There were some initial challenges with staff training and consistency in application of the processes, however the one-stop operator and board staff have been diligent in providing ongoing technical assistance and guidance to the Eastern Area RESEA team. A major challenge when developing this project was pandemic mandates which resulted in local office closures. Office staff were then tasked with providing RESEA services to customers via Zoom Teleconference. This led to more than a 200% increase numbers of dislocated workers enrolled in Title I over PY 19. The area served 20% of the state's dislocated worker (DW) cohort and was 2nd in the state for numbers served behind the Central Region.

Total Dislocated Workers Served - PY 2020				
LWDB	Total Dislocated Workers	Basic Career Service	Individual Career Service	Training Service
Central Area Workforce Development Board	430	2	9	417
Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board	148	1	50	97
Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board	140	4	29	107
Eastern Area Workforce Development Board	181	7	137	37
Total Records:	899	14	225	658

Source: New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System

The RESEA program has had low participation and appointment completions due to pandemic waivers of program requirements, but we expect this to improve as we move into PY 21 and anticipate increases in the numbers of dislocated workers engaged in training. Overall, the results of this project were increased access to and participation in services of individuals that have become dislocated from employment or disengaged from the workforce.

It is expected that the DW numbers will increase as we continue the RESEA co-enrollment model. The board staff, OSO and Title I managers have collaborated on developing short-term training options for DW's. These short-term trainings will give DW's the opportunity to receive training to improve their skills without taking several months; we anticipate these trainings will be 5-6 weeks long. These trainings are in the process of being designed with local community colleges and some online resources to create a coursework catalog sufficient to satisfy the needs of individuals we serve in the East. The

team is hoping that by having these short-term trainings UI recipients will participate in skill-building activities that improve their employability skills.

Performance

The Dislocated Worker (DW) program exceeded two of the negotiated levels of performance but increased the number of DW's served. Although there was an increase of DW's served in the East, this still resulted in low numbers of individuals that were in the denominators which impacted the overall performance. While the RESEA co-enrollment project served as a means to increase the numbers of the DW's served, we were aware that it may have a negative impact on PY 20's performance measures. We anticipate an uptick in the DW measures as results of the project will increase access and participation in services of individuals that have become dislocated from employment.

PY 20 Dislocated Worker Performance				
Measure	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	54.41%	72%	75.57%	Failed
Employment Q4	64.10%	73%	87.81%	Failed
Credential	52.94%	65%	81.45%	Failed
Skills Gain	76.32%	63%	121.14%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$7350	\$5600	131.25%	Exceeded

Youth Services

In early PY 20, the board and Title I youth program partnered with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers to provide entrepreneurial training to Title I youth participants co-enrolled in AEL. The training model was developed through StartUp Generation as a project-based team learning concept that places priority on the development of workforce preparation skills such as working in teams, critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking and presentations, planning, goal setting, and budgeting. Outreach and recruitment of students proved challenging due to the pandemic and the curriculum having to be retooled for delivery in a virtual environment. But though the first cohort was small, the project was an overall success. The training culminates in a business investor “pitch” presentation by the team to a panel of entrepreneurs in the state and the team is required to respond to project questions posed by the panel. Feedback from students, facilitators, the panel and stakeholders has been very enthusiastic. Of the twenty that started the project, fourteen completed, of those six received their HSE and four were making plans to enroll in post-secondary. Those outcome percentages far exceeded those typically seen in the AEL program. At the conclusion of the initial pilot project, best practices were shared between the facilitators and some of the curriculum was reworked in preparation for the fall cohorts that will begin in the first quarter of PY 21.

The youth services platform Career EDGE began testing and debugging in the first quarter. The platform allows youth participants to access a large array of virtual services

from a computer or smart device which gives them the ability to sign and route documents electronically such as timesheets or contracts through a secure environment. This streamlines processes for participants, coaches, employers and training instructors. Career EDGE users have access to 18 self-paced training content modules include but not limited to: time management, on the job success, resume and cover letter branding, preparing for an interview, goal setting, effective communication and networking, and financial literacy. The Title I Youth program staff have worked with their participants to engage in Career EDGE to build skills tied directly to work experiences and work readiness.

At the end of PY 19 and early PY 20, there was almost a complete staff turnover in the youth program due to challenges in service delivery during the pandemic. This slowed the growth of the youth program, but as new staff were hired and trained, youth enrollment numbers began to improve again. The most successful initiative the youth program had during PY 20 was is the Entrepreneurial Training Pilot Program. As previously mentioned, this pilot was developed in collaboration with AEL, and assisted participants in obtaining their High School Equivalency (HSE) and learn valuable entrepreneurial skills. Because of challenges with modifying the program for virtual service delivery only one small cohort was able to participate in the pilot. Because of its success, the pilot will continue, and next cohort is due to being in the first quarter of PY 21.

Another major accomplishment during the year was the launch of the Career EDGE Learning Management System (LMS). Career EDGE LMS includes content that introduces retention-promoting skills such as self-discovery and a transformation of thought patterns and beliefs regarding achievement and success. Each lesson commences with a review of the learning objectives. Career EDGE offers interactive, dynamic activities to inspire excitement and engagement with content in a variety of ways: reading content, listening to audio, and watching videos. After interacting with the material, job seekers apply their knowledge by completing written exercises and contributing to lively discussions. Finally, job seekers culminate each lesson with a variety of activities including quizzes, projects, presentations, and role-plays. As job seekers work their way through modules and tools, they are given points, awarded badges and can achieve different “user levels”. This provides immediate feedback for the job seeker after they accomplish something. This tool has allowed the service provider to assist youth participant’s in improving their soft skills prior to placing them in a full work experience.

Overall, the Provider has shown constant improvement in the provision of services, initiatives, payments, staff retention and increased participants enrollment. With continued support from board staff and the one-stop operator it is expected that this momentum will continue into next year.

Performance

The Youth program met three of the negotiated levels of performance. The provider has been diligent during PY 20 in working to improve the overall youth program design to

ensure that oversight of performance measures. In PY 19 the Youth program were failing all measures but because of the goals set by the provider, they saw a vast improvement in PY 20.

	PY 20 Youth Performance			
Measure	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	66%	67%	98.51%	Met
Employment Q4	60.23%	67%	89.89%	Failed
Credential	32.81%	47%	69.81%	Failed
Skills Gain	46.05	51%	90.30%	Met
Median Earnings	\$3169.80	\$3225	98.29%	Met

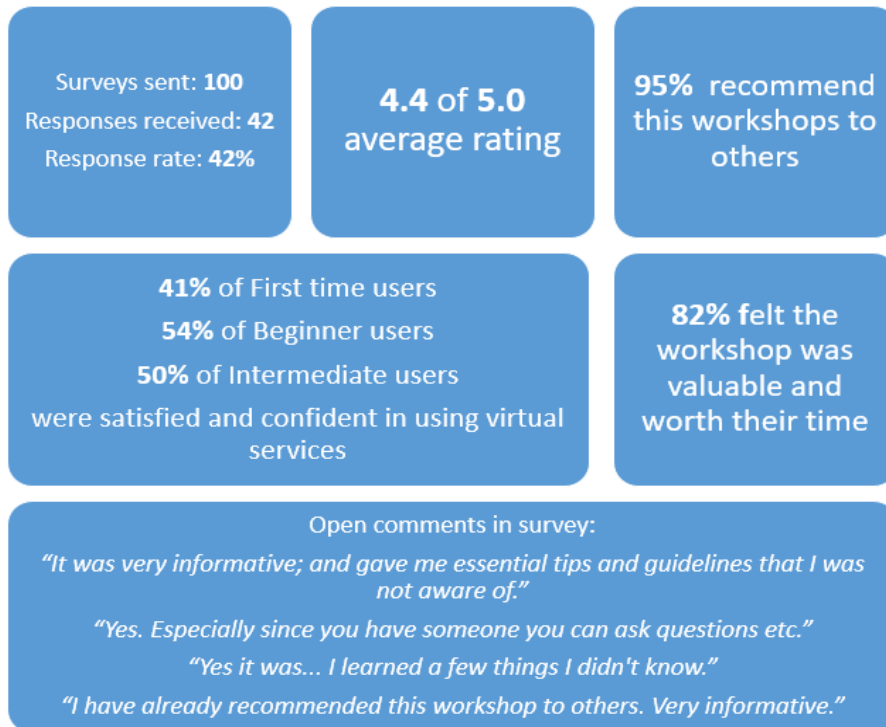
Surveys

To aid in identifying customer needs at the height of the pandemic in PY 19, the board developed customer needs surveys. This initiated the development of virtual workshops and utilizing them through the local area's YouTube channel. Because feedback is extremely important when establishing improved service delivery, in PY 20 more surveys were developed. The surveys the EAWDB used were:

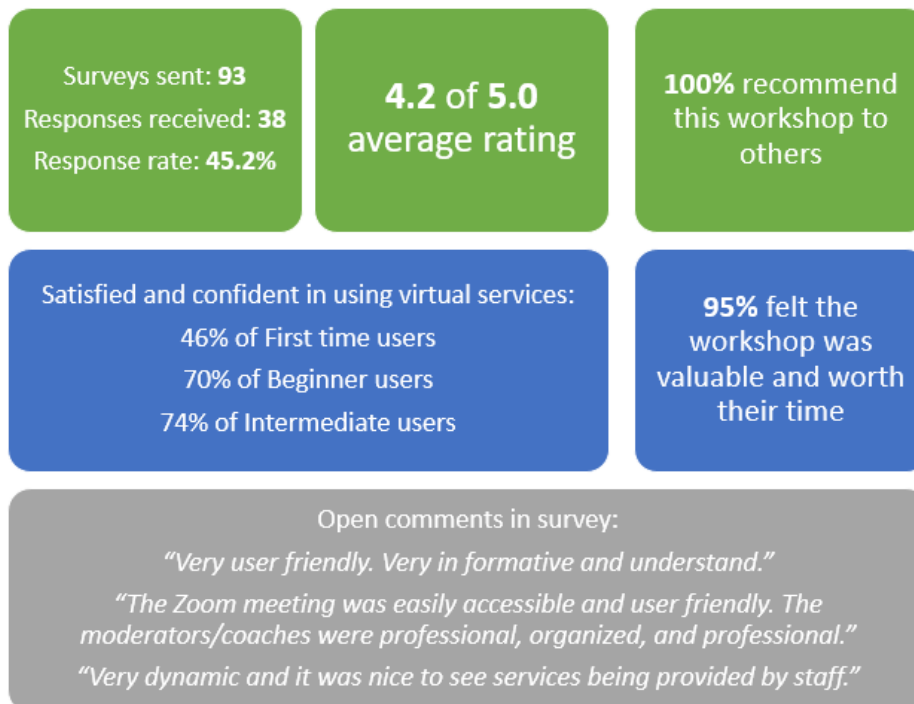
- Resume Virtual Workshops
- Online Interviewing Virtual Workshop
- WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Exit
- WIOA Youth Program Exit
- Entrepreneurial Training
- OJT Employer
- Customer Service Survey

A preview of the results of each survey are highlighted below

Resume Virtual Workshops



Online Interviewing Virtual Workshop



WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Exit Survey

4.1 of 5.0
Quality of service received

Surveys sent: **355**
Responses received: **55**
Response rate: **19%**

4.0 of 5.0
Communication rating between participant and career coach

80% successfully completed training

67% received Supportive Services

"This office made my dreams come true. Being a new mother and in nursing school was very tough. I am so blessed I was able to receive assistance. Thank you for all you do and please do not stop helping my generation. God bless you all."

"The team worked in a timely & professional manner. I would recommend this program to anyone."

"I honestly loved being a part of this program and am so grateful to have been able to participate."

WIOA Youth Program Exit Surveys

4.8 of 5.0
Quality of service received

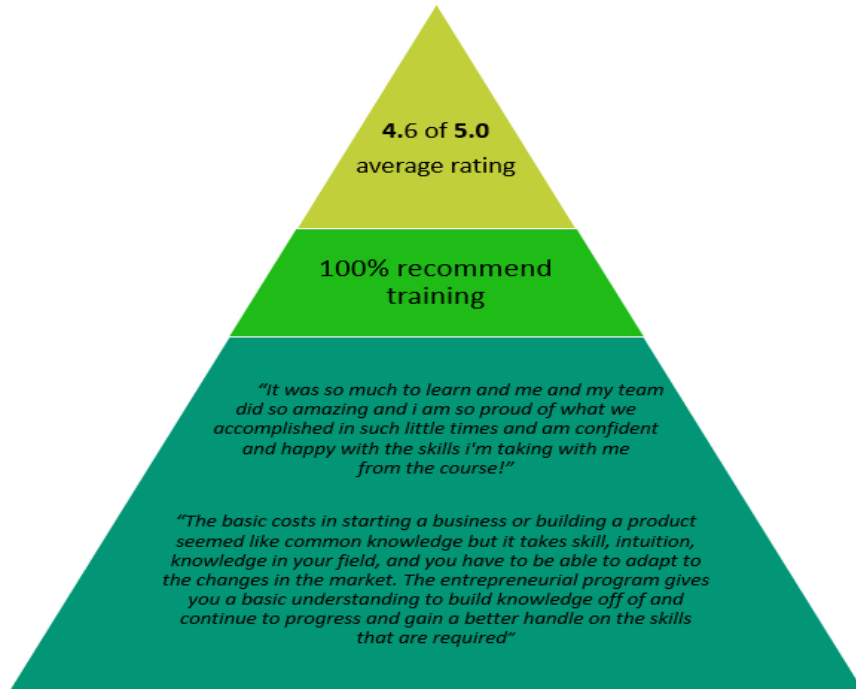
Surveys sent: **62**
Responses received: **3**
Response rate: **4.8%**

4.5 of 5.0
Communication rating between participant and career coach

50% obtained High School Equivalency within WIOA enrollment

75% received Supportive Services

Entrepreneurial Training Survey Results



OJT Employer



Customer Service Survey

Most interested services customers ranked in order

Job searching and job matching
Careers Planning and exploration
Taking online trainings
Unemployment
Submit Online Applications

Top 4 training customers were interested in:

Medical Field
Education
Retail Sales
Production Work

Computer skills identified

6% Non-user
19% Basic User
28% Intermediate User
30% Advance User
17% Expert User

At the time of the pandemic, **71%** of customers were not certain if they would be going back to previous job, with same employer.

63% customers were likely to go online for job search workshops or skill building classes.

Success Stories

Esperanza Chavez (Adult)

Esperanza Chavez came into the Ruidoso office on June 24th, 2019 to inquire about WIOA funding assistance for the Radiology Technician program at Dona Ana Community College. During her initial assessment the career coach found that Esperanza was a 19-year-old high school graduate who resided with her parents and one other sibling. Esperanza's household was low-income, her parents did not have an education and worked low paying jobs giving them a \$20,000 annual family income. Ms. Chavez was so determined to attend college, she decided to look for work and save money for tuition. After weeks of looking Esperanza found a part time job at a seasonal amusement park making \$13.00 an hour. Once she received her first check, she realized that making the amount she aimed for was going to be a difficult task. As time progressed Esperanza felt like giving up as she was disappointed and discouraged, knowing it would take the whole summer just to cover her first semester's tuition, books, and uniforms to become a Radiology Technician.

Esperanza decided to apply for financial aid to see if she could receive some assistance in her pursuit of a better future. Ms. Chavez was awarded the Pell Grant and Leap scholarship which covered a percentage of her costs but not the whole amount. After learning about the WIOA program Ms. Chavez sat down with a career coach in July of 2019 to do her enrollment and see if she qualified for the program. After becoming eligible Esperanza was finally able to start her degree plan.

Feeling she had an opportunity offered to her through WIOA assistance, Esperanza studied diligently every semester and gave it her all. She passed most of her classes with A's and was able to finish all her coursework with 3.90 overall GPA. On May 14th, 2021 Esperanza graduated from New Mexico State University with an Associates of Applied Science. After completing her degree Esperanza stated she was the first in her family to graduate from college making her parents proud of such an accomplishment. Ms. Chavez knows that she now possesses the tools to have a better future and can become an inspiration to other people looking to better themselves.

In June 2021 Esperanza passed her AART (board exams) test officially making her a licensed Radiology Technician. With a degree and license in hand Ms. Chavez was hired at Lincoln County Medical Center starting at \$19.36 an hour. Esperanza was grateful for the WIOA program and her career coaches because they helped her to make her dream of becoming a Radiologic Technician come true.

Rainie Shaw (Youth)

Rainie Shaw is a 20-year-old, single mother that dropped out of high school in her senior year because of bullying. It got so bad that she just could not handle it anymore. Rainie is unemployed but had some experience being a server in a local restaurant. Otherwise, she has no employment experience or skills to assist her in getting a job that will allow her to support her family. For that support, she currently relies on public assistance for her and her beautiful daughter.

Rainie made some poor decisions along the way and ended up on probation. She is very apologetic and feels ashamed of those decisions and has since turned a new leaf. She understood that she needed to get her GED and get on a better path for herself and her child. She enrolled in Adult Education (AE) at New Mexico Junior College (NMJC) and was referred to WIOA by AE director Kathleen Ferrell.

WIOA Youth and New Mexico Junior College AE were gearing up for a pilot cohort for a new Entrepreneurial program with Startup Generation. Her career coach and Kathleen gave her the information for the project and Rainie was very interested and excited to be a part of it. Rainie and her team were very successful in the project and she became a strong leader for her team. She was so vested in the project that her proposal "Rapture" captured the attention of all the investors in the presentation. Her team came up with an indoor/outdoor arena where families could enjoy time together close to home as Hobbs does not have access to an activity center like the one Rapture Team proposed. She

adapted and overcame many challenges after some of her teammates dropped out of the training and led the rest of her team to win the investor pitch competition.

Not only did she successfully complete her entrepreneurial skills training on May 11th, 2021, but she also finished her high school equivalency on May 3rd, 2021. She passed all five exams with flying colors giving her the boost in confidence she needed to pursue post-secondary education. Rainie is currently working on pre-employment training through Career Edge, giving her the soft skills she needed to become more employable. Ms. Shaw would like to pursue a career in the criminal justice field soon, something she and her sibling have been striving for since they were small children. WIOA will continue to assist her in her post-secondary transition and with a potential work experience in the criminal justice field.



Jimmy McCarty (Youth)
ENMU-Ruidoso AEL, Startup Generation Training Program

Jimmy McCarty was 16 years old when he began the Startup Generation program. Months before starting, he would have never guessed he would be learning the skills needed to open a business. Jimmy had been struggling in school since he began High school. Despite many efforts and failed attempts at staying in school, Jimmy and his parents decided to enroll him in the Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso Adult Education Program to attain his High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma. The first time he had heard about the Startup Generation Program was during his orientation. He took the initiative to talk to the course instructors Ashley Prelo and Jessica Ortiz. Jimmy told them that he was interested in being a business owner in the future.

Jimmy developed strong leadership skills, became a great public speaker by speaking to business owners in the community to research and gather information, and was a wonderful team player. He took initiative to encourage other students to strive ahead. The team successfully pitched their business idea and earned third place against five other

teams from across the state's Eastern region. Today, Jimmy is still working toward attaining his HSE. He was promoted to assistant manager at his job and assists in managing his family's businesses.

Laura Price (Dislocated Worker)

Laura Price came to the Roswell office on January 2nd, 2020 to inquire about how WIOA could aid with her post-secondary financial needs. Ms. Price is a 43-year-old single mother who lived with her mom rent free due to harsh economic struggles she recently experienced. She was a stay-at-home mom for several years which had made her skills and experience outdated. After going through a divorce, she started struggling for income as she lacked skills to be employable and her ex-husband stopped paying alimony. Due to the time, she was away from the workforce Ms. Price became eligible as a Displaced Home Maker which allowed her to be considered for WIOA Dislocated Worked funds.

Ms. Price made the decision to attend nursing school as she felt it was a high demand career and the pay would allow her to become financially independent to provide for her child. After enrolling at Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell Laura had access to financial aid and a scholarship but it was not enough to cover all her financial needs. Throughout her post-secondary training Ms. Price was a great student and received good grades.

Laura was enrolled in the Nursing Program, and with great determination, she completed the program on May 4, 2021, with honors. With the assistance of the Dislocated Worker program, Laura can now provide for herself and her family. She is currently working at Lovelace Hospital in the intensive care unit and is making \$27.00 an hour. Ms. Price expressed how grateful she was to her Career Coach and the WIOA program as she has become fully independent and no longer must rely on credit cards to survive.