

Eastern Area Workforce Development Board

A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

PROGRAM YEAR (PY) 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

General Overview

Continued implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in the Eastern Area in PY 2021 has produced many challenges and opportunities throughout the year. In PY 2020 Covid-19 had a significant impact on the numbers of individuals unemployed, the number of job openings in the area, and the ratio of the number of unemployed to the number of job openings advertised online in the Eastern area. During PY 21 we saw very high unemployment rates that were higher than the national rate in the area; in July 2021 the rate was 7.5% regionally where the national rate was 5.7%. In terms of recovery, we have seen an improvement in the ratio of those unemployed to job openings areawide and are hopeful that the trends like this will continue to improve. Also, the current unemployment rate in the Eastern area is 4.3%.

During PY 21 the East worked collaboratively to align numerous workforce and education and training partners. The Board, service provider and the One-Stop Operator (OSO) worked diligently on several ongoing initiatives including, but not limited to: the entrepreneurial training project; the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) co-enrollment model; the partner referral process utilizing the intranet platform MyHub; ongoing efforts tied to the referral processes and co-enrollment with the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR); developing new innovative ways to offer virtual trainings to adapt with a new style of learning by working with potential external partners like ProTrain and Coursera.

Labor Market

The unemployment rate at the beginning of PY 21 was 7.5% regionally. However, as we began to see a recovery from the pandemic this rate dropped to 4.3% by the end of the program year. The table below shows the non-seasonally adjusted labor force, employment, and unemployment rates for the area. In terms of recovery, the current number of unemployed individuals has dropped but the number of individuals working has also dropped. The current ratio of unemployed individuals to openings is .54 individuals per job opening. This represents the

number of individuals receiving unemployment per job opening but is not representative of the disengaged workforce.

Area	Time Period	Unemployed	Job Openings	Number of Unemployed per Job Opening
Eastern Region	June 2022	7,905	14,611	0.54
New Mexico	June 2022	47,229	91,787	0.51

Area Profile for Eastern Region, NM

Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table

The table below shows the monthly not seasonally adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data for Eastern Region, NM in August 2022.

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
Eastern Region	158,544	151,684	6,860	4.3%	Yes
New Mexico	941,908	900,489	41,419	4.4%	Yes
United States	164,971,000	158,714,000	6,256,000	3.8%	No

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

The table below reflects the labor force, employment, and unemployment data for the area, by county, from largest to smallest. As reflected in the table below the area's total labor force as of January 2022 is 157,979, with 8,670 unemployed, or a 4.8% overall unemployment rate for the area. Eddy County represents the largest labor force at 31,976. Harding County is the smallest at 270. Those larger counties of Eddy, Lea, Chaves, Otero, and Curry have a combined civilian labor force of 134,632, 81% of the area's total labor force and unemployment rate of 5.5%. The remaining seven counties contain a combined workforce of 23,347 and unemployment rate of 5.5%-with county workforce numbers ranging from 8,709 in Lincoln to 270 in Harding County. According to this table and the table above, the unemployment rate decreased by 0.5% from January to August 2022.

January 2022 Employment Data				
County	Labor Force	Employed	Unemp.	Unemp. %
Eddy	31,976	30,442	1,534	4.8%
Lea	28,520	26,463	2,057	7.2%
Chaves	27,505	25,877	1,628	5.9%
Otero	24,986	23,677	1,309	5.2%
Curry	21,645	20,781	864	4.0%

Lincoln	8,709	8,180	529	6.1%
Roosevelt	7,491	7,145	346	4.6%
Quay	2,987	2,804	183	6.1%
Guadalupe	1,672	1,553	119	7.1%
Union	1,548	1,489	59	3.8%
De Baca	670	641	29	4.3%
Harding	270	257	13	4.8%
Totals	157,979	149,309	8,670	5.8%

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

Sector Strategies

Healthcare

Much like last year, the area continued to increase outreach for the healthcare sector to move individuals into this priority sector throughout PY 21. Early in the pandemic, training in this sector was impacted due to constraints on clinical affiliations, however this drastically improved in PY 21, and clinical rotations are in full swing again. There were almost 300 participants enrolled in training in this sector during the program year.

Education

Much like the previous program year we saw the affects of the teacher shortage in the area. Alternative licenses for those interested in becoming teachers continues to be promoted and is an ongoing initiative after the Board and OSO began working with local colleges to promote this initiative in PY 20. All subrecipient staff are familiar with the referral processes and continue to refer interested parties to Career Coaches in the local offices to determine WIOA Title I eligibility. Several participants have been enrolled and are receiving assistance from the Title I program.

Information Technology (IT)

The OSO and AE staff worked with CNMI during the program year to outreach through newsletters and social media to dislocated workers to increase enrollment to their IT, Coding, and other boot camps. At the end of the PY the OSO, sub-recipient and Board AE staff initiated conversations with Grow with Google and Coursera and anticipate developing new training opportunities in this sector in the upcoming program year.

At the end of the program year the Board's Executive Director began having conversations with a representative from the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB) about an opportunity to obtain scholarships for trainings through Grow with Google and Coursera. Coursera is an online educational platform that brings educational content from reputable universities from across the United States delivered to individuals in a user-friendly online

environment. We were offered 500 scholarships from NAWB to utilize six training certifications tied to the IT sector. These six programs are:

- Data Analytics
- Project Management
- Google UX Design
- IT Support
- Digital Marketing & E-Commerce
- And IT Automation with Python

We will begin offering these trainings in the upcoming program year and are excited to see the outcomes of said training opportunities.

Business Services

The Board, its OSO, Site Manager, and Partners have been working to provide services to local businesses and support their needs as we began recovery efforts from the pandemic. In-person services resumed both in the Workforce offices and local businesses. A large concern for employers was a need for employees. A worker shortage was felt throughout the area and while in-person services were allowed again, jobseekers were slow to return to both their local Workforce offices and local businesses to look for work.

The Workforce offices continued to create weekly “Hot Jobs” videos promoting jobs from employers hiring workers. These videos were also posted on our areas Facebook and YouTube sites. We identified that posting the “Hot Jobs” Power Point slides from the video on each county’s Facebook page was a best practice and helped promote available positions in each county. This allowed jobseekers to leave comments on the Facebook post requesting information about specific jobs or direct message Workforce staff for more information.

The OSO, Site Manager, and local offices worked with the Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) to promote Ready New Mexico. Ready NM is a partnership between the New Mexico Higher Education Department (HED), the New Mexico DWS, and the New Mexico Workforce Connection whose purpose is to provide easy access for both individuals and employers in New Mexico to the training, education, and employment resources they need. This was an additional website and 800 phone number designed to quickly connect jobseekers with employment opportunities and opportunities to up-skill. This came from the “All Hands” project which was designed to link jobseekers with local businesses that had critical hiring needs. Ready NM was also used to connect employers with business support such as hiring incentives and all appropriate workforce services as needed.

During the program year in-person hiring events began to take place. Area-wide: Chaves County had 6 hiring events with more than 500 participants attending those events, Curry County had 82 hiring events with over 900 participants, Eddy County had 10 hiring events and over 200

participants, Lea County had 3 hiring events with more than 180 participants, Lincoln County had 5 hiring events with more than 170 participants, and Otero County had 3 hiring events with more than 130 participants. These hiring events included large job fairs with 20 employers participating at a time, held in the community in partnership with local Economic Development and City Council, and single employer events held in the Workforce offices.

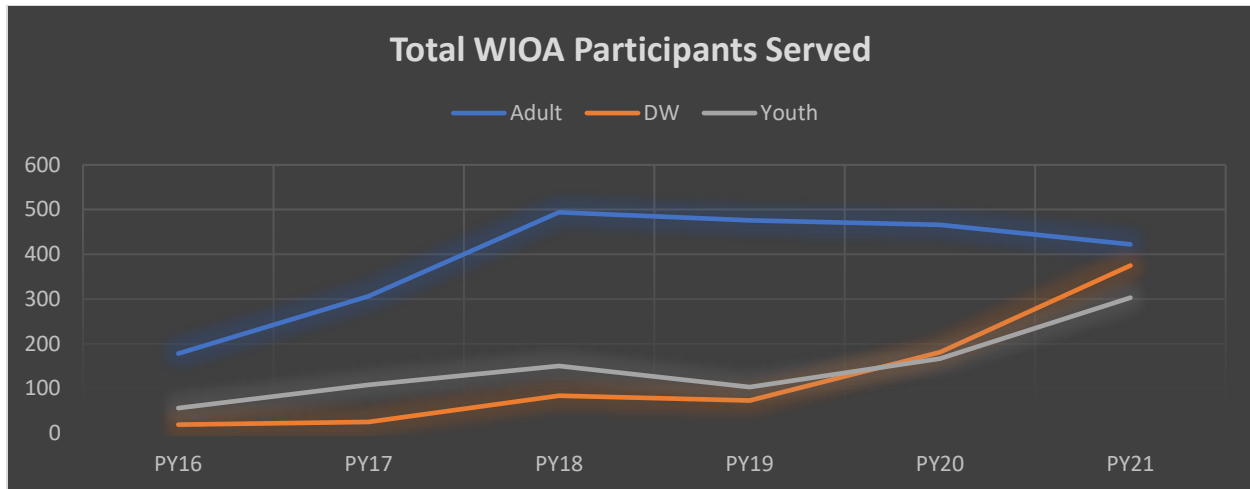
Employers are still in need of workers, but over the course of the year we have seen a decrease in unemployment and an increase in jobseekers looking for services through the Workforce offices to find jobs and up-skill to fill employment needs in their communities. The desire for virtual services declined over the year and employers and jobseekers seem happy to be receiving in-person services again.

On-the-job (OJT) training placements continue to be to a focus for the area as OJT's assist both local employers and jobseekers. There was a 14.8% decrease in the overall utilization of OJT's from PY 20 to PY 21, however, the Roswell office had significant increases in the overall number of OJT's they offered. We have seen a decrease in OJT's over the last two years, however we anticipate that during PY 22 there will be more focus on OJT's and hope to see an increase in placements.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services

The Title I team had an extremely busy year with many new initiatives that have helped the community and economy recover from the pandemic. Thanks to the lessons learned from the pandemic, the team has been able to maintain hybrid enrollments, which creates flexibility for those customers that might not be able to make it to a One-Stop office. In addition, the group continues to develop new outreach and service delivery methods to improve access and value of services and increase the number of individuals served in the East. As shown in the data below, the Youth and Dislocated Worker programs have shown a consistent increase in the past six years. Although the Adult program saw a slight 2.1% decrease between PY 20 and PY 21, we anticipate that number to increase next year.

Program	PY16	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20	PY21
Adult	178	306	494	476	466	422
DW	19	25	84	73	181	375
Youth	56	108	150	103	167	303



The Title I service provider has made considerable improvements to participant expenditures compared to previous years. In addition, the provider has continued spending the budget allocated by the EAWDB on participant services in the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The tables below show the program expenditures comparison over four years.

PY 2021 Expenditures			
	Adult	DW	Youth
Total Allocation	3,374,344.42	1,850,756.85	2,207,922.10
Total Budgeted	2,295,209.03	1,741,426.69	2,008,713.82
Total Expenditures	2,366,344.76	817,361.50	1,695,186.36
Total Admin Expenditures	158,755.85	127,023.32	62,980.35
Total Support Services Expenditures	31,499.17	16,425.92	0.00
Total Training Services Expenditures	1,411,516.97	236,415.00	381,834.25
Individual Training Accounts	936,150.38	197,877.76	0.00
Customized Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
Incumbent Worker Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
On the Job Training	475,366.59	38,537.24	0.00
Work Experience	0.00	0.00	257,802.25
Adult Education & Literacy	0.00	0.00	124,032.00
Total Career Services Expenditures (Calculated)	796,071.94	453,923.18	1,250,371.76
Total Support Services and Training Services	1,443,016.14	252,840.92	381,834.25

PY 2020 Expenditures			
	Adult	DW	Youth
Total Allocation	2,625,281.00	1,262,052.55	1,946,280.00
Total Budgeted	2,667,606.64	1,273,820.76	1,598,075.07
Total Expenditures	2,447,337.39	583,865.26	916,971.71
Total Admin Expenditures	257,307.40	80,612.23	61,462.78
Total Support Services Expenditures	142,415.84	7,712.86	0.00
Total Training Services Expenditures	1,258,886.05	94,393.61	133,854.17
Individual Training Accounts	921,151.93	80,831.48	0.00
Customized Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
Incumbent Worker Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
On the Job Training	337,734.12	13,562.13	0.00
Work Experience	0.00	0.00	0.00
Internship	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adult Education & Literacy	0.00	0.00	133,854.17
Total Career Services Expenditures (Calculated)	931,143.94	408,859.42	721,654.76
Total Support and Training Expenditures	1,401,301.89	102,106.47	133,854.17

PY 2019 Expenditures			
	Adult	DW	Youth
Total Allocation	2,107,813.00	1,823,877.00	1,720,764.00
Total Budgeted	2,636,220.00	795,479.00	904,153.00
Total Expenditures	2,338,542.00	346,755.00	652,236.00
Total Admin Expenditures	246,126.00	38,750.00	69,643.00
Total Support Services Expenditures	146,912.80	8,152.71	0.00
Total Training Services Expenditures	1,393,714.33	51,085.80	113,425.00
Individual Training Accounts	1,058,221.11	39,780.30	0.00
Customized Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
Incumbent Worker Training	2,125.00	0.00	0.00
On the Job Training	333,368.22	11,305.50	0.00
Work Experience	0.00	0.00	113,425.00
Internship	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Career Services Expenditures (Calculated)	698,701.67	256,919.20	469,168.00
Total Support and Training Expenditures	1,540,627.13	59,238.51	113,425.00

PY 2018 Expenditures			
	Adult	DW	Youth
Total Expenditures	2,090,815.70	266,709.17	732,906.10
Total Admin Expenditures	232,165.88	19,748.12	67,682.34
Total Support Services Expenditures	157,203.14	10,613.57	0.00
Total Training Services Expenditures	1,193,986.21	69,213.78	0.00
Intensive Training	4,275.00	275.00	0.00
Individual Training Accounts	893,012.27	56,342.33	0.00
Customized Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
Incumbent Worker Training	0.00	0.00	0.00
On the Job Training	300,973.94	12,871.45	0.00
Work Experience	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adult Education & Literacy	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Career Services Expenditures (Calculated)	664,663.61	177,747.27	665,223.76
Total Support Services and Training Services	1,351,189.35	79,827.35	0.00

Adult Services

During PY 21 the service provider continued working on various initiatives across the East to support local businesses and the worker shortages. It was a goal to maintain current apprenticeships and continue the development of new apprenticeship opportunities and apprenticeship pathways to allow companies to develop their talent and fill vacancies more quickly. In collaboration with the Board, the team worked with Eastern New Mexico to develop short-term training options that would give participants various skills quickly to assist in getting them back to work. At the end of the program year the team began conversations with Coursera, an online based organization that works with several universities and organizations to offer online courses, certificate programs and degrees in a variety of disciplines. We anticipate this partnership to begin in PY 22 and look forward to providing more offerings like this to our customers in the East.

The team has maintained a strong relationship with The Rhoads Company, a residential plumbing and HVAC company, and Krumland Auto Group in developing apprenticeship pathways. These relationships have resulted in successful training and outcomes. Along with these two partnerships the Apprenticeship Coordinator (AC) worked closely with several local businesses to place participants in a variety of occupations such as automotive technicians, electrical technicians, metal workers, welding, and executive assistant trades. The AC began developing an

apprenticeship pathway with RUAN Transportation, a transportation management company to up-skill their pushers into CDL driver positions in partnership with ENMU-Roswell’s CDL training program as a pre-requisite for in-house driver training.

During PY 21, there were over 16 participants placed in an apprenticeship pathway. The provider is confident the success of this initiative will continue as business partnerships are becoming stronger. Overall, through the apprenticeship program 20 participants completed an OJT and 15 completed an ITA successfully.

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.

	PY 21 Adult Performance			
Measure	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	79.12%	79%	100.15%	Exceeded
Employment Q4	77.43%	71%	109.06%	Exceeded
Credential	68.28%	69.20%	98.67%	Met
Skills Gain	69.92%	67%	104.36%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$12,210.68	\$8,000	152.63%	Exceeded

Dislocated Worker (DW) Services

The service provider developed the “Prison Project” in partnership with local businesses, ENMU-Ruidoso, and the Lincoln County Detention Center (LCDC). The projects’ main goal was to enroll incarcerated individuals in the WIOA program and train them in construction trades remotely and obtain an occupational certificate all while they are incarcerated. Upon release they work with a Workforce Center Career Coach for OJT placement assistance. The project started with one question; how we can increase the workforce pool for businesses in need of filling staff vacancies.

The Title I team determined it would be beneficial if incarcerated individuals would get training in those high-demand positions to give them the best opportunity to gain employment once they are released. The hope was to reduce recidivism and increase their hiring potential and providing employers with skilled individuals. Six individuals are currently taking the construction trades coursework. As soon as they are released from LCDC, the team will team them and local employer to find them OJT placements. The provider hopes to provide this training in Roswell and Clovis soon.



The RESEA co-enrollment process saw an increase in the numbers of DW's served in the eastern area. The RESEA process facilitates an increased access to services to individuals that have become dislocated or detached from the workforce. While we haven't seen an increase in the amount of dislocated worker enrolled in training from the RESEA process, we have seen value in partnering with our Title III staff to ensure customers receive wrap-around services. This has also allowed for co-enrollment in other external partner agencies. The Board staff, OSO and the Title I leadership team have collaborated on developing short-term training options for DW's. These trainings give DW's the opportunity to receive training to up-skill without taking several months.

Local offices have also created opportunities for RESEA participants to meet with local employers immediately after their RESEA meeting by inviting local employers that are hiring in their respective offices throughout the east to offer on-site interviews if the participant meets general job requirements. By continuing this co-enrollment process we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of DW's served in the east as we previously anticipated. The east led the state in DW's served for PY 21 as reflected in the chart below. The area served 36% of the states DW participants, up from 20% in PY 20.

Total Dislocated Workers Served - PY 2021				
LWDB	Total Dislocated Workers	Basic Career Service	Individual Career Service	Training Service
Central Area Workforce Development Board	<u>355</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>348</u>
Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board	<u>178</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>112</u>
Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board	<u>121</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>95</u>
Eastern Area Workforce Development Board	<u>370</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>72</u>
Total Records:	<u>1,024</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>375</u>	<u>627</u>

Performance

The DW program exceeded two of the negotiated levels of performance and met one. As mentioned above, the program increased the number of DW's served from previous program years. While there was an overall increase of DW's served in the East, this still caused low numbers of individuals that were in the performance measure denominators which impacted the overall performance.

	PY 21 Dislocated Worker Performance			
Measure	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	65.25%	72%	90.63%	Met
Employment Q4	59.57%	73%	81.61%	Failed
Credential	54.55%	65%	83.92%	Failed
Skills Gain	70.59%	63%	112.04%	Exceeded
Median Earnings	\$7,034.57	\$5,600	125.62%	Exceeded

Youth Services

According to the charts below, during PY 21 Youth Services provided to individuals increased by 81% from PY 20. Also, participant expenditures increased by 154% from PY 20 to PY 21. The service provider has shown dramatic improvement in the provision of services, initiatives, expenditures, and increased participant enrollment. We anticipate that this momentum will continue into next year.

Program	PY20	PY21
Youth	167	303

Program	PY20	PY21
Youth	\$ 576,366.54	\$ 1,466,531.00

The training program developed in partnership with the Board, Service Provider, Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), and StartUp Generation to offer entrepreneurial training has continued to garner success. The number of individuals who participated increased in PY 21 and a new cohort is set to begin in September 2022. In addition, this training has helped our participants get workforce preparation skills such as working in teams, critical thinking, problem-solving, public speaking and presentations, planning, goal setting, and budgeting.

The service provider's most significant achievement in PY 21 was the development the inaugural Unearthing Future Opportunities (UFO) Youth Conference. The idea was to provide young people in the eastern area with a unique experience. With the help of four Youth Program participants, the youth staff brought 30 speakers from different professions and backgrounds to provide

inspiration and guidance to our participants. The event took place in Roswell, New Mexico, and over 100 participants from across Eastern New Mexico attended the 3-day event. This experience helped participants learn about different careers and to see that individuals with similar backgrounds have been able to overcome obstacles and develop successful careers in a wide variety of occupations. The event was such a success that the team will create the Unearthing Future Opportunities event again. Below are a few pictures to highlight this outstanding event.







Performance

The Youth program met two and exceeded two of the negotiated levels of performance. The provider has done an excellent job during PY 21 to improve the program and is working with Board staff to set goals to ensure that the continued improvement to performance continues in coming years.

	PY 21 Youth Performance			
Measure	Actual	Target	% Achieved	Met/Exceeded/Failed
Employment Q2	74.24%	67%	110.81%	Exceeded
Employment Q4	66.07%	67%	98.61%	Met
Credential	32.08%	47%	68.25%	Failed
Skills Gain	49.25%	51%	96.58%	Met
Median Earnings	\$3,873.54	\$3,225	120.11%	Exceeded

Surveys

OJT Employer Survey Results

Employers agree that the candidate for the job was the right fit and the training time allowed was reasonable for the trainee and positions.

On a scale score of 1-10, rated 10 on likelihood to utilize OJT service again

8.0 of 10 rating on Ease of OJT process

Customer Service rating
4.8 of 5.0

100% recommend training service

4.7 of 5.0 Overall rating

WIOA Adult/DW Programs Exit Survey Results

55% received Supportive Services

4.9 of 5.0 Quality of service received

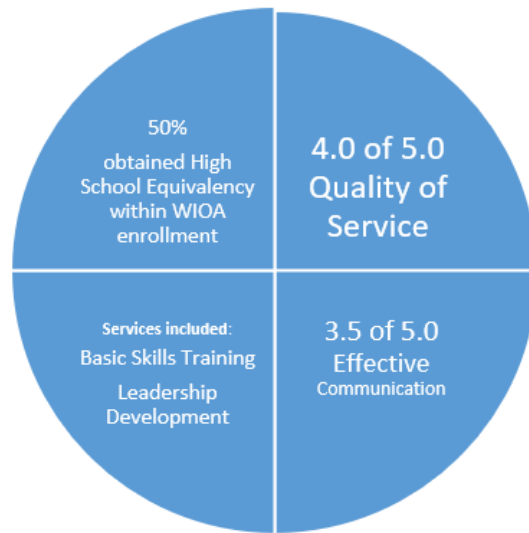
4.9 of 5.0 Effective Communication

91.3% successfully completed training

60% received employment assistance

"I was so blessed to be granted the opportunity afforded me by this program. I am a first generation college student and would not have been able to afford this on my own."

WIOA Youth Program Exit Survey Results



Skill Enhancement Survey Results

Skills needed to attain employment goals

- 61% Computer Skills
- 48% Networking Skills
- 48% Management Skills
- 43% Marketing Skills
- 42% Professionalism Skills
- 36% Teamwork/Collaboration Skills
- 34% Writing Skills

When job searching, considering...

- 45% Job description w/skills have
- 34% Entry level jobs willing to train
- 17% Jobs that require no education
- 5% positions in degree have

94% interested in OJT for career interest

Barriers from starting training

- 46% Expense of education
- 25% Lack of Technology
- 20% Lack of Childcare
- 20% Expense of Transportation
- 19% Reliable Transportation

Timeframe works best for their schedule

- 32% 1-5 days
- 32% 4-6 weeks
- 19% 6-8 months
- 7% 2 yrs +

Preferred Teaching methods

- 61% In Person
- 48% Online w/Instructor
- 39% Hybrid
- 39% Online: Self-led

Success Stories

Jernne Evans - Unearthing Future Opportunities (UFO) – Youth



Jernne Evans was 19 when Adult Education Director at New Mexico Junior College (NMJC), Kathleen Ferrell referred her to the WIOA UFO program. When the career coach reached out to make contact, Jernne's father answered the phone and stated that Jernne was very shy, and nervous about speaking to people she was unfamiliar with. Early on, this was a little concerning for the career coach as it seemed that Ms. Evans might not truly be interested in services or participating in the program. The coach was patient and a few days passed and Jernne reached out to the Workforce office. After conversing with her we learned that she spent a brief time in public schools but had been homeschooled for most of her education. Jernne was assessed and her results showed that she had a little work to do to pass her high school equivalency (HSE) pretest to prepare her to complete the final test to earn her diploma.

Jernne showed active, steady progress throughout her time in Adult Education. She worked very hard to show gains, not only academically but personally as well. Jernne took advantage of the Start Up Generation Entrepreneurial Skills training, a pilot project sponsored by the Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB), while working towards her HSE. Working in a team environment was valuable for her as it allowed her to open up and be more confident. As time progressed it was evident that Ms. Evans was more comfortable and open with people. She was so comfortable that she would spend hours talking to her career coach about her classes, home life and her future. When Jernne needed more support, we were able to provide additional assistance with class time and tutoring to keep her on task to reach her goal.

On December 19, 2021, Jernne successfully tested for her HSE and passed accomplishing one of her major goals. Her experience at NMJC with the assistance of the UFO program was a complete success for Ms. Evans as it gave her the tools necessary for her to be successful in the next part of her life. It has been a wonderful progression of events watching Jernne develop from a shy, timid young woman to the confident, skilled woman she is now. Ms. Evans is so grateful that she has referred her younger brother to the youth program as she feels it's a guaranty of success to have a career coach by your side while going through any challenge life might present.

Jernne is currently enrolled in post-secondary to obtain a degree and has exited the youth program. She began an internship in the Hobbs Workforce office and set a goal to become a career coach so that she can help other students the way she was helped in the program. The program director saw her motivation to serve in her community and after she completed her internship, he created a permanent position as a Youth Growth and Development Ambassador and hired Jernne. She loves her new position and is eager to learn from her co-workers and is setting new career goals as she begins this new endeavor as part of the WIOA UFO Program team.

Norma Aguilar – Dislocated Worker (DW)



Norma Aguilar spent many years working in janitorial services until she was unexpectedly laid off in 2021. When she met with a Career Coach to discuss WIOA services, Norma demonstrated her determination to become a Class A CDL Driver. Norma said she has always been used to working and had a goal to gain employment with a sustainable wage. Norma and her husband experienced a major financial burden because of her layoff, and she was unhappy about not being able to contribute financially to her household. Norma did not have many transferrable skills that would qualify her for higher paying positions, however, she was determined to change her circumstance by obtaining her Class A CDL and increase her employability skills. Norma shared with the Artesia Career Coach that people in her life doubted her motivation to accomplish big things in her life and had been told that she did not have what it takes to become a truck driver. Norma cried while sharing her story and expressed that she knew she could accomplish her goal if she received financial assistance to attend the CDL program.

With the assistance and support of her Career Coach, Norma studied hard and obtained her permit. She registered for an 8-week CDL training at ENMU-Roswell and was ready to start in the Spring of 2022. While attending the CDL program, Ms. Aguilar and her coach reached out to different businesses to see if they would be willing to hire an unexperienced driver after she completed her CDL training. These employer contacts would soon lead to big things for Norma.

Norma's desire to improve her family finances helped her overcome many struggles she faced during her training. Her first challenge was having a malfunctioning semi-truck that prevented her from having more practice hours which led to her failing her first driving exam. After Norma

failed her first exam she was discouraged and felt she was never going to accomplish her goal. Her Career Coach encouraged and showed her unconditional support to motivate Ms. Aguilar to complete her course work and tests. To provide a perfect example of perseverance, her Career Coach invited Norma to meet with Marina (Career Coaches Mother), who is now a retired CDL Truck Driver. Norma and Marina met at the Artesia One-Stop and talked about her experience and struggles of being a female in the truck driving industry and how Norma can become successful in a male-dominated profession. Norma later stated that she felt that Marina was like a mentor to her and felt empowered to keep pursuing her dreams. Shortly after this meeting, Norma successfully passed her driving exam and obtained her Class A CDL.

Norma has gained employment as a truck driver at M&R Trucking, LLC. She will be hauling water tanks after completing her onboarding training. During her onboarding period she was earning \$19 an hour. When she completed onboarding her hourly rate went from \$19 to \$26 per hour. Ms. Aguilar has expressed how happy she is and told her Career Coach how thankful she is for everyone believing in her when no one else did. Norma also thanked her employer for giving her an opportunity to work and is looking forward to strengthening her skills to do her job right while establishing her new career.

Leslie Grooms - Adult



Leslie Grooms is a single mother with a new infant. Her household of 3 had an income of \$36,000 which made it difficult for her to provide a comfortable living for her family. Before joining New Mexico Military Institute, she worked as a convenience store clerk and knew her position was not going to help her achieve her dreams and goals. Ms. Grooms left her clerk position and started working for NMMI as a custodian. Leslie felt that NMMI could be the right place for her to move to a better position if she worked hard. After a year of hard work, NMMI leadership felt she had the potential to do a great job in a new position. Leslie had the desire and work ethic but needed to upgrade her skills to fulfill the new position. Leslie and NMMI reached out to the workforce office and requested assistance through the WIOA Apprenticeship Training Program. After several meetings with the Apprenticeship Coordinator, it was determined that she would need to take an Executive Assistant Training Program.

NMMI leadership felt that the services the Workforce team offered were a perfect match for the needs they had and embraced the concept of the “earn while you learn” model of apprenticeship pathways. Such pathway is a combination of an On-the-Job and classroom training which gives the participant hands on and classroom training at the same time. Such pathway allowed Leslie to get an opportunity to grow into a new position within the Facilities department.

During the development of the Apprenticeship Pathway, NMMI worked closely with Rochelle Lentschke our Apprenticeship Coordinator to locate a training program that met the desired training outcomes for Leslie’s growth. The Career Step online program best suited the need for the desired outcome based on the online programming and self-paced protocol. Such protocol provided the opportunity for Leslie to meet the daily work-based job requirements while fitting in time to complete the training modules as her work and personal schedule would allow. Leslie was also able to immediately put into practice the training she was receiving.

Leslie has successfully improved her skills through the Career Step Executive Assistant training, received consistently high marks during the entire On the Job Training period and has subsequently earned a wage increase from \$12.76 to \$17.13 per hour. She has quickly become a valued asset to the New Mexico Military Institute and an excellent example of how apprenticeship pathway programs can be expanded into all industries as a valued workforce model.