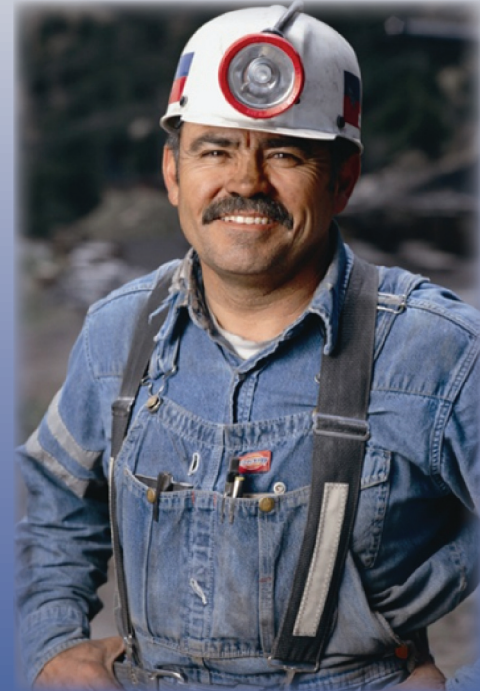




Alaska's Program Year 2009

WIA ANNUAL REPORT



From the Commissioner

STATE OF ALASKA

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

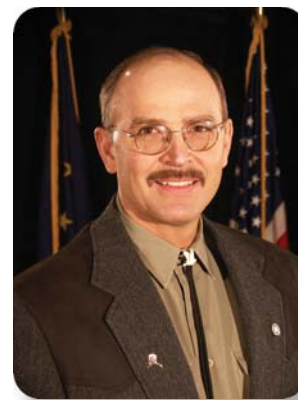
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October 1, 2010

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20210



Dear Madam Secretary,

On behalf of Governor Sean Parnell, I am pleased to submit Alaska's Workforce Investment Act Annual Performance Report for Federal Year (FY) 2009. In addition to the enclosed narrative, the report is supported with requisite performance data separately submitted under the Employment and Training Administration's Enterprise Information Management System.

This report highlights the success of Alaska's workforce development system, attributable to innovative training strategies, most notably those developed with business and industry to focus on high wage, high demand occupations for Alaska's gas line.

Alaska was able to meet or exceed all of the federal performance measures negotiated under the Workforce Investment Act Title 1-B programs, and most significantly, integrate workforce initiatives into the education and economic development delivery system. This partnership will increase Alaska's capacity to respond to a quickly changing economy.

Thank you for your continued consideration and support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clark Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clark Bishop
Commissioner

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Workforce Investment Act Title I-B in Alaska



Mission Statement:

“To provide leadership, recommend policy, direction and accountability standards to get Alaskans into jobs.”

The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) provides oversight for the planning and coordination of the workforce development system. The AWIB, by statute, provides oversight for the planning and coordination of employment related training programs operated by the state or operated under contract with the state. The board identifies priority industries for which it recommends investment of public training funds. In its role as the governor’s workforce advisory board, the AWIB has the responsibility to evaluate and recommend policy to implement the Workforce Investment Act.

The constituencies represented on the board are all stakeholders in the governor’s vision for the Alaska workforce development system. The structure enables the board’s private sector leadership to work hand-in-hand with government decision makers. The AWIB uses board members, who are leaders in their respective areas, to ensure high performance. The board uses data collected from the workforce investment system to evaluate effectiveness and make recommendations to the governor if changes in the system are necessary.

The state is closely aligned with national strategic direction through a focus on Alaska’s high growth, demand driven job training initiative, which mirrors U.S. DOL Employment and Training Administration’s attention to industries that produce good paying, sustainable jobs.

Critical success factors which lie within a strategic framework are based upon two priorities: 1) workforce preparation and employment, and 2) collaboration.

A Note from AWIB Board Member Dave Rees:

I am pleased to participate as a member of the AWIB as both an Alaskan who wants good jobs and careers for our citizens and as a representative of employers and industries who need a strong workforce to underpin Alaska’s economy. The AWIB brings together folks who share a common passion about effective workforce development and are willing to spend the time and effort to guide the funding of priorities. As a long-time supporter and practitioner of education and training, it is great to take part in the planning of development initiatives that produce quality delivery and competent workers, and Alaska is doing a better and better job with that mission. I enjoy working with my colleagues and the state as partners for Alaska’s benefit.



Workforce Investment Act Title I-B in Alaska

Waivers

The state board (AWIB) received a waiver (WIA regulations at 20 CFR 661.300(f)) to allow the board to carry out the roles of a local board. Alaska's decision to establish a single regional planning area was in response to excessive administrative costs, inconsistencies in services and a desire to improve overall performance. In an effort to include local participation and points of view, other local elected officials from Alaska's boroughs and cities are consulted in planning efforts and invited to participate in the Regional Advisory Councils. The single state board has streamlined the process and timeliness of awarding grants by the elimination of multiple layers of administrative entities; established consistent eligibility standards across the state and improved visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs that exist throughout Alaska. The quality of dialogue by the AWIB has been raised with more focus on statewide strategies and their linkage to regional economic and workforce development needs. There are seven other waivers approved for Program Year 2010, July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011:

- **Fund transfer limit between Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs:** Allows the state flexibility to respond to the particular needs of their customers and labor markets by transferring up to 50 percent of a program's funding to the other program. The resources for adult services decreased overall during 2009 and the department faced tough decisions regarding staffing and service levels in the Adult program. The transfer of \$240,000 ARRA Dislocated Worker Program funds to the ARRA Adult Program funded employment and training activities for an additional 66 Adult program participants during 2009. Maximum flexibility with regard to allocation of funds assures that both Dislocated Worker and Adult services are sufficient to meet the needs of Alaska's workforce.
- **The requirement for a 50 percent employer contribution for customized training:** Employer match limits for WIA participants in customized training according to the size of the business: at least 10 percent of the costs for employers with 50 or fewer employees; at least 25 percent of the costs for employers with 51-250 employees; and for employers with more than 250 employees, the current statutory requirement of 50 percent will continue to apply. Due to limited funding for Adult and Dislocated Worker services this waiver was not implemented during 2009.
- **Increase employer reimbursement for on-the-job-training (OJT):** Allows employer reimbursement for WIA participants in OJT according to the total size of the business: up to 90 percent for employers with 50 or fewer employees; up to 75 percent for employers with 51-250 employees; and for employers with more than 250 employees, the current statutory requirement of 50 percent will continue to apply. Due to limited 2009 funding for Adult and Dislocated Worker services this waiver was not implemented. Looking forward, the 2010 waiver will be applied to businesses partnering with the department on the recently awarded \$715,684 ARRA National Emergency Grant (NEG) for the provision of On-the-Job-Training (OJT). This NEG-OJT grant will provide a method to jump start re-employment for dislocated workers experiencing prolonged unemployment by enabling employers to create training and job opportunities for these individuals. This award is not only intended to deliver OJT services to 50 unemployed Alaskans, but also to build the capacity of the AJCN to engage in this critical training model to support Alaska's economic recovery.

Workforce Investment Act Title I-B in Alaska



- **Account for seasonal employment in performance measures:** To address the challenge of serving seasonal workers, Alaska was granted a waiver of the WIA performance measure pertaining to retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment for those communities in the state with high unemployment rates in the off-season. A three month retention performance measure for seasonal workers in locations where unemployment averages greater than eight percent from November through March each year was approved. Application of this waiver during 2009 increased both WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs Employment Retention Rates by 5.8 and 2.6 percentage points respectively and applied to all areas of the state except: Municipality of Anchorage; North Slope Borough; Juneau Borough; Sitka Borough; and Aleutians West Census Area.
- **Extend time limit on the period of initial eligibility for training providers:** Alaska has a relatively small list of eligible training providers, which restricts access to training. Training programs are lost from the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) when they do not have enough participants and/or time to develop a proven track record of performance. Alaska has reciprocal agreements with other states and can send participants outside of Alaska. However, this increases cost and lessens chances for participants to successfully complete training. Application of this waiver favorably increases in-state training capacity by extending the initial eligibility to two years for training providers on the ETPL by allowing the department more time to provide technical assistance to training providers to meet performance standards.
- **Requirement for competitive selection of youth service providers to provide flexibility in selecting providers for summer youth employment opportunities:** The waiver was submitted and approved to increase funding to current WIA grantees providing summer youth services. A competitive Request for Grants was held in 2009 for WIA, Alaska Youth First and Denali Training Fund Youth programs. Companion grants were extended for the ARRA Summer Youth Employment Program to grantees who were awarded a WIA grant for 2009.
- **Use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for youth:** Allows flexibility in provision of training services to youth by waiving prohibition for youth to receive ITAs. A youth ITA allows youth, especially out-of-school youth, who need specialized training to meet career goals.

Although the total numbers of WIA Youth participants in comparison to those completing an Individual Training Account (ITA) are small, the economic impact is significant. All but one of the ITA recipients had wages after exit as evidenced by Unemployment Insurance reports. Not only were participants successful completing the ITAs, but used the credential to secure jobs with good wages. Participants also used the program as a career ladder to establish a self-sufficient wage. Most of the participants who completed an ITA were pursuing training in the health care and construction industries. Nine out of ten new jobs in the next ten years will be in health care. Several of the success stories featured in this report include youth who completed training with an Individual Training Account. Many ITA recipients have moved on to apprenticeship programs that they could not have considered without the additional training. In conclusion, the youth Individual Training Accounts have made a difference in the workforce development system.



Workforce Investment Act Title I-B in Alaska

Status of State Evaluation Activities:

The monitoring evaluation activity took place during the entire program year, from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010. The following questions were addressed:

- Are the WIA and ARRA program and fiscal activities in compliance?
- Identify best practices
- How to incorporate data validation into monitoring
- Identify staff development, training and technical assistance needs
- How the AWIB's vision, strategies and policies are being implemented
- How to improve AWIB participation in reviewing performance to include quarterly and annual reports
- Assess performance against applicable measures and expenditures
- Comparative analysis and feedback from prior years
- Identify and improve fiscal management procedures
- How to leverage all programs and funding sources effectively
- How to highlight the positive feedback and best practices before the concerns or findings
- How to utilize SharePoint as an archive, scheduling and sharing site

Five hundred-seventy-eight program files and 165 financial files were reviewed. SharePoint was used as a control point for scheduling, monitoring guides, creating and storing checklists and assigning tasks (workflows were used for scheduling and assigning tasks). Each draft document had its own unique library and final reports were archived by program. A comparative analysis of program and fiscal monitors ensured administrative concerns and findings were thoroughly reviewed for accountability, technical assistance and/or training needs, documentation, follow-through and appropriate corrective action plans. The division did not want a repeat of concerns or findings. Additionally, other methodologies included a review of participant files, staff interviews, assessments, utilizing MIS data, review of performance measures and improved collaboration with grantees.

Continuous improvement, communication and capacity building with the grantees were the best practices, along with incorporating data validation into the monitor. A data validation spot check or review during a monitoring provides immediate feedback to the grantees.

Division of Business Partnerships

The Business Partnerships' mission is to develop and support workforce development programs designed to meet Alaskan needs.

The Division of Business Partnerships works with business and industry to build a trained and prepared workforce, supporting Alaska hire and promoting economic development through sustainable, leveraged investments in job creation, job training, and career awareness and preparedness. The Division contributes to the mission of the Alaska Department of Labor and core services that support economic development and Alaska hire.

Additional core services include:

- Designing workforce development programs
- Increasing job training resources for gas-line workers
- Directing job training resources to meet industry needs
- Increasing worker supply based upon labor market information
- Supporting Alaska hire



From July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 (program year 2009), job training resources, participants and programs increased significantly. Concurrently, 2009 was the first full year of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), and the additional job training funds have contributed to this increase.

The Division leverages state and federal resources with contributions from employers, and directs outcome driven training in response to business

and industry workforce demand. This past year, the majority of improved training, resources and programs can be directly attributable to the efforts of the Division, the Commissioner of Labor, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, Alaska Job Centers throughout the state, the state legislature, the U.S. Department of Labor, Governor Sean Parnell, and to the effective partnerships established with business and industry.



The number of participants trained in Alaska Workforce Investment Board priority industries continues to exceed the 60% target, coming in at 71.9% for 2009.

The earnings to training costs rate increased to 113.0% last year, attributable to the investment in training for high wage, high demand occupations within the Alaska Workforce Investment Board priority industries.

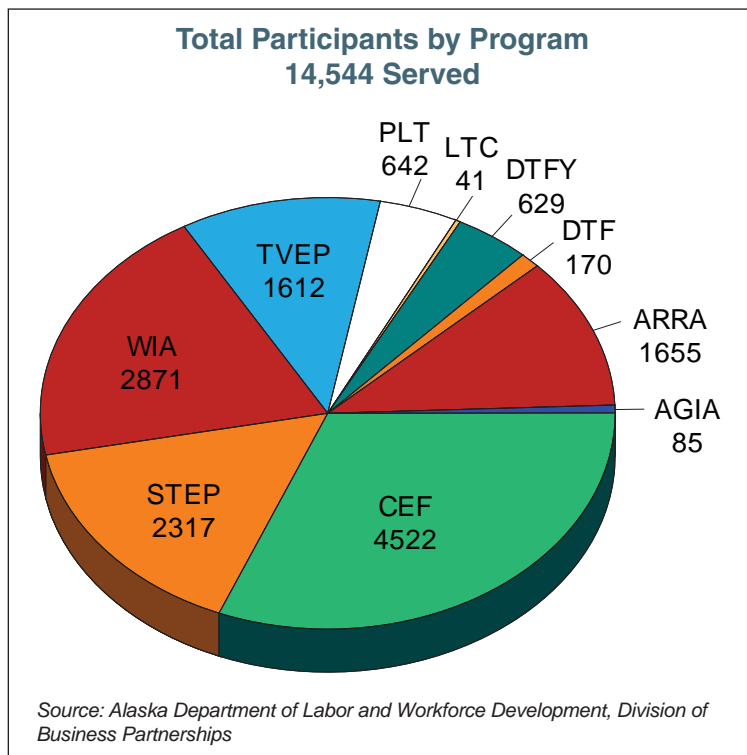
2009 Participants by Program

Construction, transportation and health care remain priority industries. Within the health care industry, registered nurse, nursing assistant, dental, and medical assistant occupations continued as the top four career fields that received job training and support service investments.

Although the combined job training programs taken as a collective with targeted priorities and strategies shift from year to year, improved performance and outcomes are steady.

For this report, the Workforce Investment Act programs include Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The economy in the U.S. was impacted by increased unemployment which directly contributed to more job training opportunities. Alaska experienced an increase of 2,181 participants last year with most of the increase within the Workforce Investment Act programs – accounting for a 60 percent rise.



The customer satisfaction rate remains high and steady. In 2009, 97 percent of job training customers who received training and employment assistance were satisfied with the services received. In 2010, this percentage slightly decreased to 96 percent because of the increase of total responders (job training participants), and yet the Division still maintained a high level of customer satisfaction.

- **AGIA**
Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (Job training funds that support Registered Apprenticeship)
- **AYF**
Alaska Youth First
- **ARRA**
The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- **CEF**
Construction Education Foundation
- **DTF**
Denali Training Fund
- **DTFY**
Denali Training Fund Youth
- **LTC**
Long Term Care
- **PLT**
Pipeline Training Fund
- **STEP**
State Employment and Training Program
- **TVEP**
Technical and Vocational Education Program
- **WIA**
The Workforce Investment Act and includes the Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs

WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

Beginning with the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the state legislature authorizing receipt of these funds, 2009 has been a very busy year for Alaska's WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The significant investment ARRA provided presented an extraordinary opportunity for Alaska's workforce system to accelerate its transformational efforts and demonstrate its ability to innovate and implement effective One-Stop service delivery strategies. The new strategies, as reflected in the WIA State Plan, along with accomplishments, are continually documented as this transformation evolves.

2009 WIA formula and Recovery Act funds were concurrently spent to quickly and effectively increase the availability of WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker program services within Alaska's Job Center Network (AJCN). The employment and training services this funding supports are playing a vital role in Alaska's economic recovery by assisting workers who are facing unprecedented challenges to retool their skills and re-establish themselves in viable career paths. The department determined that service delivery alignment represents an opportunity to streamline and capitalize on the capacity of staff, location, and technology.

Under this approach, seamless career pathways and support services are offered, making it far easier for adults to quickly advance through progressive levels of the education and job training system while gaining workforce skills of demonstrated value at each level. Every level of training affords participants the ability to advance in training or at work, with assessments and nationally recognized certifications linked to the requirements of the next level of education, training, and employment. Adult education, job training, postsecondary education, registered apprenticeship, career advancement, and supportive service activities are fully aligned with economic and community development strategies.

Monitoring, participant file reviews, and in-person technical assistance conducted this past year identified areas of program strength and those needing improvement. This led to timely, individualized and specific staff training and the opportunity to fine tune processes and procedures. Service delivery staff receive real-time labor market information, utilizing the Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys), enabling program participants to make informed career decisions based on wages, the skills, and educational levels required for in-demand occupations.

Additionally, WorkKeys®, KeyTrain®, and Career Ready 101® are tools provided to staff to assess a participant's career readiness skills and match them to jobs at their level of expertise and personal interest. With the addition of these tools, staff accurately identify participant skill areas needing improvement because the fit between skills and the demands of a job has a direct impact on a person's ability to gain and retain employment.

As the full impacts of the national recession reached Alaska during 2009, the state experienced rising unemployment rates and longer job search intervals, negatively impacting WIA program performance. Accordingly, Alaska's adult labor force was in more need of assistance from the workforce investment system. AJCN One-Stops across the state targeted the use of Adult program funds to most efficiently and effectively assist participants impacted by the current economic downturn obtain employment, with priority given to veterans and other covered persons, recipients of public assistance or with disabilities, and low-income individuals. These services include assisting adults to adapt their skills and career goals to the rapidly changing economy and limited employment options.

WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

US DOL considers a performance measurement met if the performance exceeds 80 percent of the annually negotiated goal. Alaska's WIA and ARRA Adult program successfully met all four program performance goals during 2009. During 2009, WIA Adult program participation decreased 3.6 percent to 914. The total WIA adult expenditure was \$3,327,201 or \$3,640 per participant. Adult participants achieving employment earned an average of \$15,862.00 during the second and third quarters after program exit. After leaving the program, 56.8 percent of the participants received a credential, 73.6 percent became employed and 78.8 percent retained their employment for at least six months.

WIA Adult Program Year 2009
July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Program Performance Measure	Negotiated Performance	PY 2009 Actual Performance	80% of Negotiated Performance	PY 2008 Performance
Entered Employment Rate	74.5%	73.6%	59.6%	79.2%
Employment Retention Rate	85.0%	78.8%	68.0%	79.8%
Average Earnings	\$16,250	\$15,862	\$13,000	\$16,756
Employment and Credential Rate	64.0%	56.8%	51.2%	67.4%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

AJCN One-Stops utilize Dislocated Worker program funds to provide the necessary services to dislocated workers to support their reentry into the recovering job market. Case managers consider how assessment and career counseling can be integrated into service strategies to support dislocated workers in successful training and job search activities that align with areas of anticipated job growth.

Alaska's WIA and ARRA Dislocated Worker program exceeded program performance goals on two of the four measurements and successfully met the remaining two. Better yet, year-over-year program comparison shows an increase in two of the four measures: Employment Retention Rate and Average Earnings. With the downturn in the economy, a steady flow of dislocated workers streamed into the AJCN One-Stops. During 2009, Dislocated Worker program participation decreased 2.8 percent to 729. The total expenditure was \$3,885,737 or \$5,330 per participant. Dislocated Worker participants achieving employment earned an average of \$24,785.00 during the second and third quarters after program exit. After leaving the program 62.0 percent of the participants received a credential, 75.1 percent became employed and 87.5 percent retained their employment for at least six months.

WIA Dislocated Worker Program Year 2009
July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Program Performance Measure	Negotiated Performance	PY 2009 Actual Performance	80% of Negotiated Performance	PY 2008 Performance
Entered Employment Rate	81.0%	75.1%	64.8%	80.3%
Employment Retention Rate	88.5%	87.5%	70.8%	80.3%
Average Earnings	\$20,200	\$24,785	\$16,160	\$20,585
Employment and Credential Rate	74.0%	62.0%	59.2%	69.3%

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

During 2009, the department saw a dramatic increase in participant co-enrollments between the WIA and ARRA programs, more employers using the workforce system's services, and a greater number of job seekers seeking services through internet-based points of access. Additional adults received services through other funding sources, including the WIA Dislocated Worker National Response Demonstration Grant for the Alaska Pipeline Worker Training Project and the State Training and Employment Program (STEP).

To address the challenge of serving seasonal workers, Alaska was granted a waiver of the WIA performance measure pertaining to retention in unsubsidized employment six months after entry into employment for those communities in the state with high unemployment rates in the off-season. A three-month retention performance measure for seasonal workers in locations where unemployment averages greater than eight percent from November through March each year was approved. Application of this waiver increased both WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs' Employment Retention Rates by 5.8 and 2.6 percentage points respectively.

Alaska has a relatively small list of eligible training providers, which restricts access to training. Alaska was granted a waiver designed to increase training capacity by extending the initial eligibility to two-years for training providers on the WIA Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). Training programs are lost from the ETPL when they do not have enough participants and/or time to develop a proven track record of performance. Alaska has reciprocal agreements with other states and can send participants outside of Alaska. However, this increases cost and lessens chances for participants to successfully complete training. Alaska expects to have more time to provide technical assistance to training providers to meet performance standards. Alaska was also granted a new waiver, which increases employer reimbursement amounts for participants in on-the-job-training and decreases employer match for customized training based on a sliding scale for business size.

Alaska's WIA annual performance outcomes for 2009 reflect the state's commitment to continuing improvement of its coordinated and comprehensive workforce development system, and the hard work and dedication of department administration and program staff. The department will continue to: solidify its commitments to state, local, and private-sector partners; refine strategies and increase the responsiveness of the system; monitor, provide oversight, and technical assistance activities to address deficiencies; strive for performance excellence and improvement; and make internal systematic changes when program enhancement is required.

WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

WIA Adult Program

Success Story

Lena was a 19 year old single parent of one child when she contacted Career Support and Training Services for assistance. Lena has a high school diploma with no further training and did not have any work experience. She had an interest in working in the office/administrative field in the northwestern region of the state.

Lena felt that she was not able to obtain employment because of a lack of skills and abilities and being able to find good childcare. The Workforce Investment Act Adult Program supported her goal to attend a clerk/receptionist training program offered in rural Alaska and assisted Lena with the cost of meals and referred her to a childcare program. The tuition and other support services were paid by Alaska Native partner programs and other funding sources.

Lena successfully completed and received a clerk/receptionist certificate in May 2009. She now works for the North West Arctic School District as a human resource technician making over \$20 an hour.



WIA Dislocated Worker

Success Story

Mr. Moore was laid off on June 15, 2009 from Schlumberger after 20 years of employment. He was employed as a Field Specialist III, supervising a crew and operating equipment, including cranes, which he learned on the job. Mr.

Moore immediately recognized that he needed to relocate his family from Kenai to Anchorage to access as many job search resources as possible.



His assessment showed that in order to compete for crane operator positions he would need a NCCCO certification, which is an employer requirement. Research showed that training was available at the Tower Crane School in Phoenix, Arizona which provided mobile and tower crane training as well as a rigger/signalperson course. An out of state training exception was requested and approved. Mr. Moore began training on July 20, and completed by early August, successfully obtaining certifications as a mobile and tower crane operator, as well as a rigger and signalperson. In addition to the funding for training, WIA provided funding for housing assistance and COBRA premium reimbursement.

Mr. Moore started applying for jobs upon completion of training, but due to the time of year, there weren't any jobs available, so he went to work as a tow truck driver, part time to get through the winter. In January, he was offered a job in North Dakota with

ITS, an oilfield services company based out of Texas. His starting wage was \$80K per year with a \$150 per day on the job bonus, and the company paid for him and his family to relocate their household to North Dakota.

Youth Programs

Alaska's WIA Youth program provides comprehensive services to youth serving a total of 1,291 eligible at-risk youth in 2009, an increase of 168 from the previous year. The program is a parallel system that focuses on career and technical education. The focus this past year was on increasing the number of youth receiving a high school diploma or equivalent, and the number receiving training needed to enter high paying jobs and apprenticeships.

Most participants are younger out-of-school youth who have dropped out of the traditional education system. This presents special challenges to grantees to provide a wrap-around system that addresses both psycho-social and academic needs. Grantees across the state have developed their own culture within their community that is most effective in meeting the needs of these youth who have left the secondary education system.

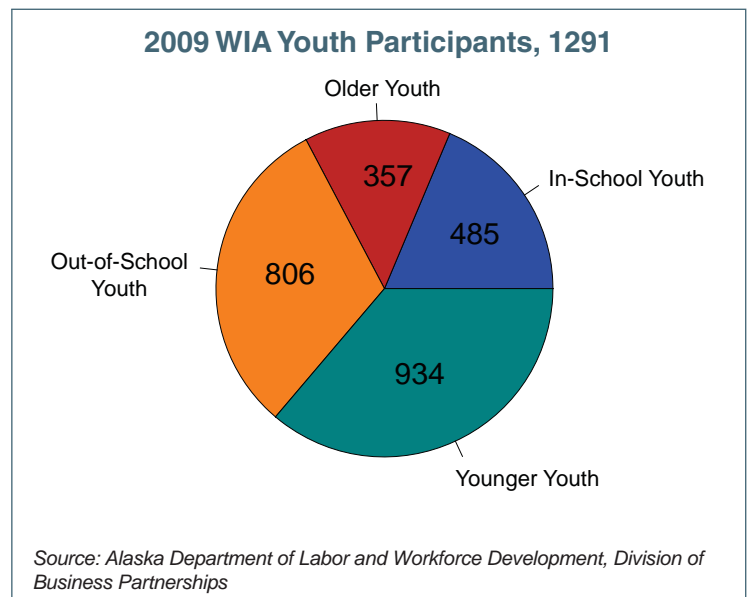
Grantees or training providers not only need to identify academic needs, but come up with creative solutions to improve basic skills outside a formal school setting. Linking youth to resources for housing, transportation, and support services may make the difference if they get and stay in a job. The number one priority of these younger out-of-school youth is to have food to eat that day. Getting a GED provides more options for employment as many employers require a GED to meet their minimum qualifications. A number of grantees have developed special activities that build protective factors for at risk youth that include "community building" activities outside the classroom or training program. Peer mentors have increased in the program in several regions establishing role models from diverse cultures and disciplines.

In 2009, out-of-school youth increased from 54.7 percent to 62.4 percent for a total of 806 out-of-school youth. Only 37.5 percent, or 485, participants were in-school youth.

The enrollment of younger youth ages 14-18 remained significant at 72.4 percent. The program focuses on keeping young people in school and provides options for youth who have dropped out.

The WIA Youth program is a parallel educational system with a focus on career and technical education. Youth seeking support from the WIA Youth program are interested in employment that provides a sustainable wage. Youth grantees focus on encouraging youth to return to a formal education setting if at all possible, but also provide options for high school completion through diploma and GED programs. Connections to alternative schools and cyber-based programs increased this past year. Through the implementation of the Keytrain®, Career Ready 101 program and other meaningful credit recovery opportunities for students who were struggling to stay in school, those passing the Graduation Qualifying Exit Exam increased.

Below is a synopsis of the performance of the youth program.



Youth Programs

Performance

Most of the Youth performance measures were met or exceeded by 80 percent, except for the entered employment rate and six month earnings change. The Common Measures have not been negotiated; however, a local standard is set and included in the signed Grant Agreement. The graduation rate for youth with a diploma or GED for the WIA Youth program was at 84.2 percent.

Performance Table 2009			Not Met / Met / Exceeded /
	2009 Negotiated	2009 Actual	
OLDER YOUTH AGES 19-21			
Entered Employment	74 percent	64.1 percent	Not Met
6 Month Retention in Employment	76 percent	79.1 percent	Exceeded
6 Month Earnings Change	\$4,100	\$3,168	Not Met
Credential Attainment Rate	53.5 percent	43.9	Met (82 percent)
YOUNGER YOUTH 14-18			
Skill Attainment	85.5 percent	93.9 percent	Exceeded
Diplomas or Equivalent Attained	65.5 percent	84.2 percent	Exceeded
Placement and Retention	64.0 percent	59 percent	Met
COMMON MEASURES			
Placement in Employment or Education	N/A	53.8 percent	N/A
Attainment of Degree or Certificate	N/A	64.7 percent	N/A
Literacy and Numeracy Gains	N/A	36.9 percent	N/A

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

The Skill Attainment measure was exceeded at 93.9 percent. This was also an increase from last year. Services to “neediest” youth have increased significantly; over 80 percent of the youth served qualified as “neediest.” Some grantees focus on specific populations. Nine Star has a reputation for serving homeless and runaway youth as does Covenant House, which also focuses on serving youth who are currently or have been in the foster system. ACCESS Alaska serves 100 percent youth experiencing a disability. SERRC serves young people representing all “neediest” groups and works with Juvenile Justice and the Office of Children’s Services serving youth in the foster system.

Youth Programs



Youth Offenders are now receiving services in residential programs for Juvenile Justice in Nome and Juneau. The McLaughlin Youth Center, established for many years, also has a WIA program. This program has contributed to the graduation rate for youth in that facility. Programs for youth in foster care and foster youth alumni have developed with the Office of Children's Services. Both of these populations are the most at-risk for becoming a part of adult corrections. Several grantees specialized in providing a sense of community and developing protective factors with these populations. Alaska Native youth participation increased significantly with an in-house One-Stop providing comprehensive service to youth at Cook Inlet Tribal Council.



Likewise, there is a high participation rate of pregnant or parenting teens. Forty percent of the participants served by one semi-urban grantee are pregnant or parenting. A number of these participants have more than one child. The goal with these participants is to develop a career ladder leading to self-sufficiency. The Kodiak program has integrated a parenting class for pregnant and parenting teens. Many programs provide a financial literacy program.

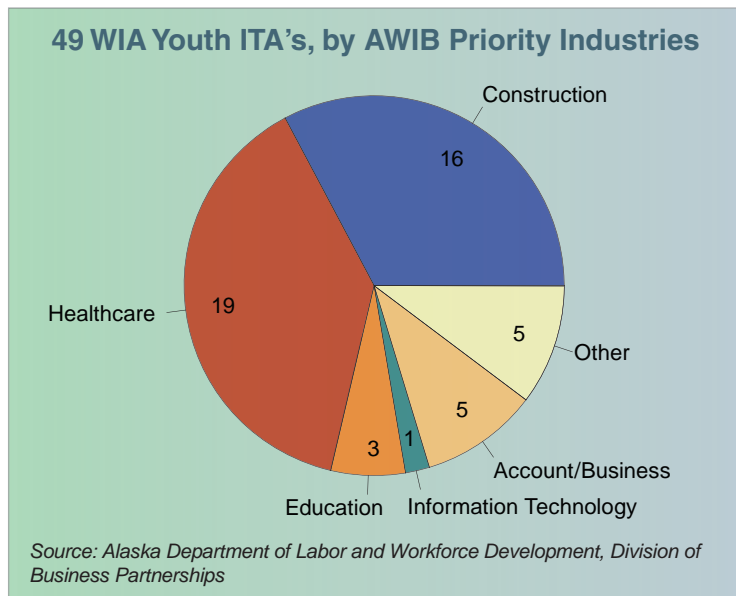


The significant number of homeless and runaway youth in the program has had an effect on the Younger Youth Retention Rate. This measure was met at 59 percent; it is a struggle to meet this measure when youth are so transient. The strategy this year is to stabilize living arrangements so participants can function more effectively in the workplace. It is determined that housing is the number one barrier to job retention. Transportation and access to resources in the remote, rural Alaska villages are also significant barriers. Bandwidth limitations are a constant problem in the remote villages. Some villages are not able to fax information.



WIA Youth, Individual Training Accounts

The waiver for youth to receive ITAs has increased the self-sufficiency of young people through preparation in high demand, high wage jobs. Health care was the number one category for ITAs funded, with construction being ranked second. Nearly all of the ITAs were in priority industries as defined by the Alaska Workforce Investment Board. Below is a chart depicting the number of youth completing an ITA in each industry.



Justin Bernaldo, 18 years old In-School WIA Youth, Juneau, AK

Justin is currently enjoying his new job as a College Intern I with the State of Alaska Division of Retirement and Benefits for Information Technology. Justin expects to complete his Associate's degree in Liberal Arts this Spring in 2011 at University of Alaska Southeast. Justin and his sister were both enrolled in the WIA Youth program at the end of their senior year in high school.

Youth Programs



Rubin's Credentials

*Alaska Commercial Driver License Class A
with Haz Mat and NPT Endorsements
Professional Truck Driver Institute
OSHA 10 hour
Scaffolding and Fall Protection
Basic Carpentry
Basic Welding
First Aide/CPR
GED
State of Alaska Food Worker Card*

WIA Youth *Success Story*

Rubin Castneda

Rubin came to The Learning Connection in the fall of 2009 at the invitation and nudging of a good friend to begin working on his GED. He was a 20-year old single parent that desired to start a career to allow him to provide long term for his son's needs.

Rubin dropped out of school at a young age to work with his parents, immigrants from Mexico. Ruben never returned to school until he was let go at his long term job as a fleet manager for a rental car company. With a reading level of 12.9 + (twelfth grade, nine plus months) Rubin zipped through the GED test process. He enrolled in the Juneau Construction Academy and was placed into the Introduction to Welding class where he impressed his instructors with his hard work ethic.

Rubin is always eager to learn all things new and he completed his WIA credential goal by obtaining not just one, but several credentials. His Commercial Driver's License (CDL) is one of the credentials that let him live his dream job of driving big rigs in Juneau as an employable driver for the stable year round transportation industry.

AAA Moving Company has been his training ground and his employer knows they have found a good employee as they continue to promote and give him more responsibility. Rubin was funded by WIA Youth to obtain his CDL at the Tlingit and Haida Vocational Training and Resource Center (VTRC). He turned 21 in February 2010 and is the first student at the VTRC to finish as quickly as he did.

Youth Employer

Spotlight

Alaska Travel Adventures (ATA) is one of Southeast Alaska's Educational Resource Center's (SERRC) valued Juneau employers providing beneficial work experiences in the tourism industry and employability skills mentoring for SERRC's Youth Grant Programs – Job X and WIA Youth. ATA has hosted over a dozen youth in the past three years including Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) youth, both in-school and out-of-school youth with no or little work experience, and youth with criminal offenses. Sixty percent of these youth have been retained by ATA to continue employment in their seasonal operations at the Gold Creek Salmon Bake, Rafting Trips on the Mendenhall River, Gold Pan Tours, and in their warehouse/maintenance operations, including receptionist and accounting work in the main office.



Guy James, 18 year old WIA Youth and recent high school graduate, in the kitchen as a prep cook at ATA Gold Creek Salmon Bake.



American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Summer Youth Employment Program

Summary

WASHINGTON — A report released by the U.S. Department of Labor found that the 2009 Recovery Act Summer Youth Employment Initiative was largely successful in connecting young workers with employment experiences. “This summer jobs initiative is a triple win: It gives young people real work experience, provides a measure of relief to those working families who are struggling during tough times and allows employers to give back to their communities,” said Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis. “Today’s report shows that summer youth employment can make meaningful work experiences a reality for young people.”



The report was developed by Mathematica Policy Research and funded by the Department of Labor. Titled, “Reinvesting in America’s Youth: Lessons from the 2009 Recovery Act Summer Youth Employment Initiative.”

The findings of the report are compared to Alaska’s data in each bullet description.

Among the report’s findings:

- Nationwide, Youth were placed in summer jobs, with almost 13 percent of enrollees placed in work experiences outside summer months. Sixty-three percent of participants were in school, largely ages 18 or younger.
- **In Alaska, 20 percent of the ARRA Summer Youth participants were hired permanently in jobs or similar jobs in their communities.**
- Nationwide, local areas reported that nearly 75 percent of youths achieved a measurable increase in their work readiness skills while participating.
- **In Alaska, 91.5 percent of the participants achieved a measurable increase in work readiness skills while participating in the ARRA SYEP. They also received valuable skills for completion of secondary and post-secondary education through technical aspects of the job and additional training programs provided by the grantee such as Keytrain®.**
- Available data show a completion rate for summer work of greater than 82 percent.
- **In Alaska, the Employment Completion Rate was 97.4 percent of the total number of participants who finished their employment assignment.**
- Employers interviewed for this study were overwhelmingly positive about the initiative. They reported that the experience of mentoring a new employee was worth the effort and almost unanimously agreed that they would participate again if given the opportunity.
- **This was also true for Alaska employers and many anecdotal comments were submitted by employers.**
- Many youths were enthusiastic about being able to help their families in tough economic times. They also reported that, in the absence of their summer jobs, they would be competing with more experienced adult workers for jobs or doing nothing productive over their summer breaks.
- **In Alaska, there were many participants, especially in remote villages who provided significant support to their families. Unemployment can be as high as 55 percent in rural communities where there are no jobs available.**

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Summer Youth Employment Program

ARRA at Work in Alaska

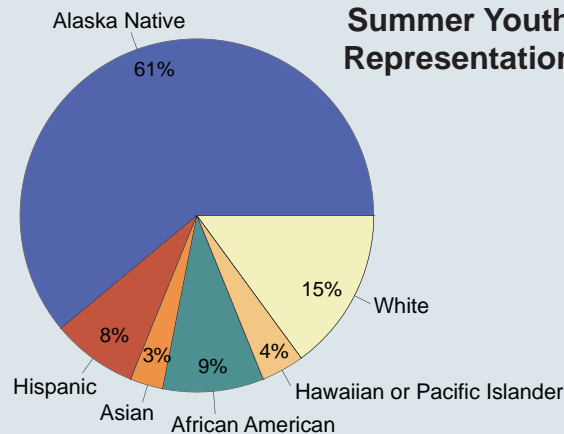
Meaningful work opportunities were provided in Alaska for youth, ages 14 – 24, under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Summer Youth Employment Program (ARRA SYEP). The program operated throughout Alaska provided employment opportunities based on the participating youth's desires, interests, and career goals in addition to their skills and abilities.



ARRA SYEP strengthened local economies and provided vital support for youth. Summer work experiences were combined with employability skill attainment, training, and support. Some youth participated in academic programs and training in addition to employment. Some completed graduation requirements for their high school diploma or prepared for the GED. Host employers at the end of the summer project hired nearly 200 youth and several job opportunities are pending upon completion of GED requirements. Employers throughout the state have contacted grantees about summer youth funds for this year. The program was mutually beneficial to young people and local economies. The employment opportunities were as diverse as the youth participants.

- Funding spent on ARRA SYEP: \$2,283,268
- 964 Youth were employed in the SYEP, 638 of which were rural youth
- 131 Youth participated in ARRA Year Round (Current)
- Programs were operational from Kotzebue to Ketchikan (See Map)
- 85 percent of the participants reported as representing minorities to include Alaska Native Tribes and other races and ethnic groups in the ARRA SYEP
- Some youth participated in academic programs and training in addition to employment and completed graduation requirements for the high school diploma and preparation for the GED in addition to credit recovery programs.
- One interesting observation was that the number of youth experiencing disabilities in the ARRA SYEP nearly tripled from the WIA Youth Program. Almost 200 youth experiencing disabilities were enrolled in ARRA SYEP. Most grantees indicated that taking the pressure off meeting all 11 performance measures, especially Literacy and Numeracy freed the participants to develop the tools to be successful in employment and maximize their skills leading to stable employment.
- 192 youth received permanent full-time jobs as a result of their employment.

**2009
Summer Youth
Representation**



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

SYEP Performance Requirements– Both Measures Exceeded – 90 percent Threshold

- Work Readiness Goal Successfully Completed – 95.5 percent
- Summer Youth Employment Goal Completed – 97.5 percent

Youth Programs



WIA Youth *Success Story*

Katrina Kearney

Kachemak Bay Campus in Homer announced that Katrina Kearney, a pre-nursing major, has been selected as a 2010 Coca-Cola Nationalist Finalist based on scores she earned in the annual All-USA Academic Team competition. As a finalist, she will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. This program is sponsored by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation and administered by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation is one of the most recognized and respected corporate-sponsored scholarships in America.

Katrina earned her CNA license in December of 2007 while attending Homer Flex High School through the campus DOL sponsored WIA Youth Job Training Program. Upon graduation in 2008, Katrina was awarded the UA Scholars scholarship for being in the top ten percent of her class.

While attending KBC, she maintained a 3.87GPA. Katrina has applied to UAA's A.A.S. Registered Nurse program for the fall of 2010. Katrina's goals are to get her Masters of Nursing degree in Public Health and work in rural Alaska.

WIA ARRA Youth *Success Story*

Dylanne Nassuk

Dylanne Nassuk, a young woman from the remote village of Koyuk on the Bering Straits near Nome, worked as an Office Assistant for the EET Division in Nome, and successfully completed her Summer Youth Employment term. Dylanne also graduated this spring from Koyuk High School and will be attending the University of Alaska Anchorage this fall.

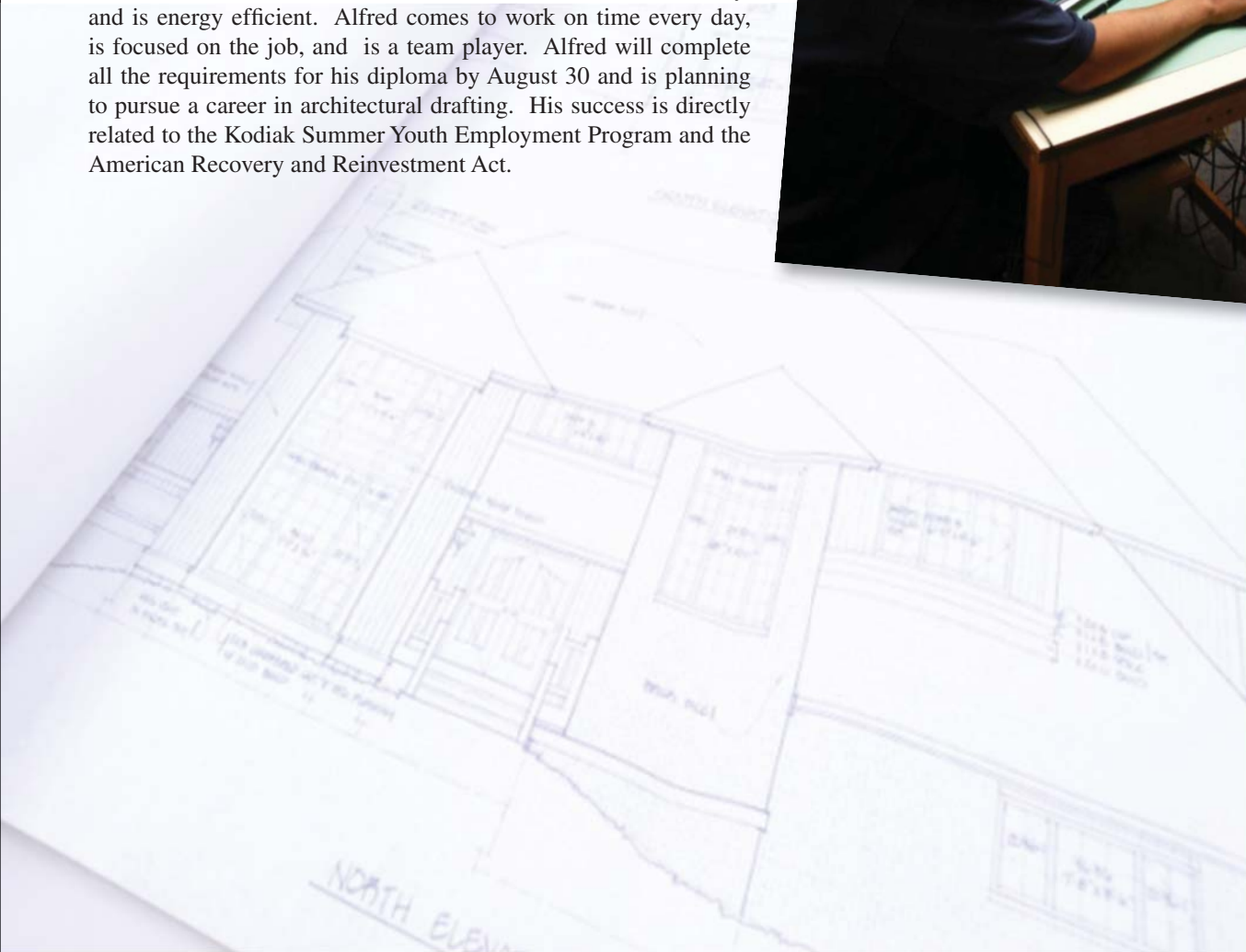


WIA Youth *Success Story*

Alfred Charliaga

Alfred Charliaga is an 18 year old Alaskan Native student in Kodiak, Alaska who did not graduate with his class. Alfred has taken four years of architectural drafting at Kodiak High School and is spending his summer working on an architectural project funded by the Workforce Investment Act and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Alfred was recruited by the Kodiak Learning Café to complete his requirements for a high school diploma and to use his drafting skills to design a 3 dimensional version of the plans for a new high school in Kodiak. Alfred excelled academically by moving to a level 7 (the highest level) on KeyTrain® in Applied Mathematics and Reading for Information. He will earn high school credit for his academic performance.

In addition, he learned how to use sketch up and sketch up pro to take two dimensional architect plans and build them into a 3-dimensional model. He has spent hours researching green design and is building a school that meets the needs of Kodiak students and the community, and is energy efficient. Alfred comes to work on time every day, is focused on the job, and is a team player. Alfred will complete all the requirements for his diploma by August 30 and is planning to pursue a career in architectural drafting. His success is directly related to the Kodiak Summer Youth Employment Program and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.



WIA Statewide Activities

2009 WIA Statewide Activities

Alaska utilized WIA and ARRA Statewide Activities funds during 2009 to leverage other federal, state, local, and private resources in order to: maximize the effectiveness of the combined resources; expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in Alaska's workforce investment system; address the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through analysis of the state's economy and labor market; and track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the Governor's vision for the workforce investment system. In 2009, the AWIB determined the full 15 percent allowed by federal regulation would be reserved for statewide projects (10 percent) and state administration (5 percent).

Expenditures for required activities include: assessing the extent to which activities funded under subtitle B of Title I of WIA formula grants and carried out through the State's One-Stop delivery system are used to provide high-quality, outcome-focused workforce development services in a demand-driven and fully integrated service environment, consistent with the state's WIA Plan; disseminating the Eligible Training Provider List; providing Labor Market Information; Alaska Workforce Investment Board oversight; providing additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible Youth; operating a fiscal and management accountability information system; and assisting in the operation of the One-Stop delivery systems.

Expenditures for allowable activities during 2009 included: State administration of the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth workforce investment activities; development and implementation of activities designed to measure and improve the delivery, effectiveness, and results of the Alaska Job Center Network; staff training, capacity building, and technical assistance activities within the AJCN; Adult Basic Education and GED preparation services; supporting the state's annual apprenticeship conference; and youth services statewide.

WIA & ARRA Statewide Activities Categories	WIA Statewide 2009 Expenditures	ARRA Statewide 2009 Expenditures	Total Statewide Expenditures
One-Stop Delivery, Capacity Building, Staff Development and Technical Assistance	\$299,387.79	\$353,181.10	\$652,568.89
Research and Development	\$94,790.46	\$1,701.41	\$96,491.87
Evaluation	\$177,282.73	0	\$177,282.73
Eligible Training Provider List and Management Information System	\$11,028.00	\$2,646.00	\$13,674.00
Youth Services	\$326,110.04	\$124,598.61	\$450,708.65
TOTAL	\$908,599.02	\$482,127.12	\$1,390,726.14

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

WIA and ARRA Funding

WIA Title 1-B Funding Breakouts	Available	Expended/ Obligated	Percent Expended	Remaining Balance
Adult Program Funds	2,236,147.00	2,041,581.00	91.30%	194,566.00
Adult Carry In Funds	162,555.00	159,682.00	98.23%	2,873.00
Dislocated Worker Program Funds	2,152,646.00	1,306,470.00	60.69%	846,176.00
Dislocated Worker Carry In	1,144,070.00	1,006,782.00	88.00%	137,288.00
Youth Program Funds	2,342,106.00	2,246,357.00	95.91%	95,749.00
Youth Program Carry In Funds	408,425.00	305,607.00	74.83%	102,818.00
Local Administration Funds	747,878.00	152,231.00	20.36%	595,647.00
Local Administration Carry In Funds	436,312.00	409,059.00	93.75%	27,253.00
Rapid Response	491,936.00	224,721.00	45.68%	267,215.00
Rapid Response Carry In Funds	375,453.00	162,302.00	43.23%	213,151.00
Statewide Activities Funds	1,406,596.00	302,817.00	21.53%	1,103,779.00
Statewide Activities Carry In	1,429,961.00	1,260,990.00	88.18%	168,971.00
TOTAL ALL FUND SOURCES 2009	13,334,085.00	9,578,599.00	71.84%	3,755,486.00

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

ARRA 2009 Funding Breakouts	Available	Expended/ Obligated	Percent Expended	Remaining Balance
ARRA Adult Program Funds	1,284,784.00	1,125,937.00	87.64%	158,847.00
ARRA Dislocated Worker Program Funds	2,393,850.00	1,572,485.00	65.69%	821,365.00
ARRA Youth Program Funds	3,011,054.00	2,572,902.00	85.45%	438,152.00
ARRA Local Administration Funds	743,298.00	289,963.00	39.01%	453,335.00
ARRA Rapid Response	354,644.00	277,437.00	78.23%	77,207.00
ARRA Statewide Activities Funds	1,374,287.00	731,407.00	53.22%	642,880.00
TOTAL ALL FUND SOURCES 2008	9,161,917.00	6,570,131.00	71.71%	2,591,786.00

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships

WIA and ARRA Funding

PY 2009 Cost Analysis - WIA Title 1-B Participants

	Participants	Cost	Cost per Participant
Adult	914	\$3,327,201	\$3,640
Dislocated Worker	729	\$3,885,737	\$5,330
Youth	2397	\$5,124,866	\$2,138

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships



In 2009 WIA funding in Alaska declined by nearly 10 percent. The increase in participants, declining federal revenue, and the reduction in carry forward funding is Alaska's perfect storm for workforce investment. Without additional revenue Alaska faced an immediate priority of selection and needed to severely limit the services available. Fortunately, Congress appropriated ARRA funding to increase benefits to eligible WIA participants affected by the declining economy. In Alaska, this investment put off the inevitable crisis of too many people with job training needs and not enough funding to support their training.

Alaska's Adult and Dislocated Worker performance was saved by the investment of ARRA funding in 2009. Between 2006 and 2007 the number of enrolled adults and dislocated workers increased by more than 30 percent while WIA expenditure increased by 25 percent. Between 2007 and 2008 the state experienced minimal increase in participants but continued to increase expenditure by 22 percent. The source for all the increased expenditure was carry forward funding.

One beneficial WIA investment was the reintroduction of the Summer Youth Employment Program. This valuable program assisted more than 950 youth and their families. The success of this program produced a similar, albeit smaller program through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Unfortunately, the TANF program is expected to only serve 100 participants in 2010 and will not be funded in 2011.

To mitigate the problems faced by Alaska's workforce investment system, the state needs a reliable and predictable level of funding that is not at constant risk of rescission and reduction. Re-authorization of WIA or new job training legislation may solve this problem for states with small populations.

Rapid Response

In 2009, the Rapid Response team worked with 87 different companies that laid off 1,884 workers. Layoffs were spread statewide and affected grocery stores, newspapers, barge lines, telephone companies, car dealerships, and the Salvation Army. Large companies such as UPS experienced significant pilot layoffs with over 150 pilots based in the Anchorage hub losing their jobs.

Other companies were directly and indirectly impacted by the moratorium on Outer Continental Shelf drilling imposed early in 2010. For example, Shell Oil's 2010 drilling program was postponed, which meant the loss of 700 to 800 direct and indirect jobs in Alaska. Contractors providing the majority of direct jobs would have benefited financially from the Shell project.

The Rural Outreach Programs for Entrepreneurs (ROPE) www.alaskarope.org was active in both Southeast Alaska and Western Alaska. During its third year in Southeast, 478 individuals attended workshops and the area saw \$2.2 million in capital infusion. During the first year in Western Alaska, 457 individuals attended workshops, 45 new jobs were created, eight new businesses started up and 20 jobs retained with that area benefitting from \$9 million in capital infusion.

2009 was the last year that the Southeast ROPE project will be funded by Rapid Response. The project will now be sustained by the Alaska Small Business Development Center through two full-time business advisor positions in the region who will provide business development services. Notably, the two local business advisor positions are funded in part by federal sources from the Small Business Administration and local sources from the City and Borough of Ketchikan.

The Western ROPE project will be going into its second year and will continue to work with community partners to build on the region's strengths with ongoing workshops in Government Contracting, Small Business Planning, and Marketing. Added workshops included QuickBooks, Financial Planning, Internet and Business (E-Commerce and Marketing Online), Marketing Online for Arts and Crafts, and Retail Management. Outreach activities also include participation with the "Rural Tourism Business" training offered by the State of Alaska Office of Economic Development. One-on-one business counseling is also a focus of ROPE and total cumulative counseling during the program year was 187 hours.

Rapid Response (ROPE)

Success Story

Kanektok River Adventures - Archeological Tourism Business

Kanektok River Adventures (KRA) used the Rural Outreach Program for Entrepreneurs program to start up their business and create jobs for the area. Owner and Operator Warren Jones and other staff members participated in ROPE training workshops entitled “Developing a Business Plan” and “QuickBooks”. In these classes they learned necessary systems to keep a business strong but they also learned about diverse revenue sources to sustain the business for future generations. KRA benefitted from ROPE’s free one-on-one business counseling with Director Deb Kvasnikoff, and has also used market research available through the Small Business Development Center’s National Clearinghouse.



Kanektok River Adventures (KRA) began with a vision for a true Alaska outdoor-adventure eco-cultural tourism business. Warren Jones submitted a successful application to the Alaska Federation of Natives – Alaska Marketplace small business competition in hopes of creating up to 20 jobs for Quinhagak. This year the business has grown to sustain at least 15 and up to 20 local seasonal jobs such as General Manager, Coordinator, Camp Manager, Cook, Guide, and Boat Operator. In addition, high school students help with the digs. This business also supports local Artisans and businesses selling locally made arts and crafts for visitors.



Kanektok River Adventures is based in Quinhagak, Alaska, the only western Alaska village community focusing on excavation of archaeological sites. KRA provides

tourism services to amateur archeologists and young Yupik student archaeologists who are busy gathering, recovering, preserving and storing culture-rich artifacts from the ancient past, some as old as 4,000 to 6,000 years. The company provides their customers with transportation, a base camp to stay in, and a host for all of the village activities. This adventure provides an opportunity for archaeologists to participate in all activities that support and encourage learning opportunities for elders and youth - restoring an ancient cultural landscape and providing a foundation for future preservation of all artifacts. This business creates an economy for the rural Alaskan village and provides a foundation for future preservation of all artifacts and for future tourism in the region.



Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

The Employment Security Division promotes employment, economic stability, and growth by operating a no-fee labor exchange that meets the needs of employers, job seekers, and veterans.

To ensure that job ready workers are available to meet employer needs, the Employment Security Division administers three complementary programs: Employment Services, Unemployment Insurance, and Job Training through a network of Alaska Job Centers throughout the state. Employment Services includes job placement, job matching and referral, vocational counseling, and job search assistance.



Since the online inception on March 10, 2010, of the Reemployment Services Model on ALEXsys, the Alaska Job Center Network has seen an upward participation trend of RES Orientation and Career Tracks viewers, and a noticeable job seeker pattern has emerged. To date, more than 13,500 individuals have viewed reemployment services information either online via ALEXsys or by attending staff-assisted workshops. Some Unemployment Insurance claimants are required to participate in the RES Orientation; however, the majority of job seekers, exceeding twice the number of mandatory viewers, viewed the orientation on a voluntary basis gaining information on available AJCN resources and career choices. Based on statewide numbers extracted from ALEXsys, of the five Career Tracks from which job seekers can explore career paths, the most popular are the New Job track followed by the Training Orientation track. The Apprenticeship Career Track runs a close third place, and has similar numbers to the Training track. This is an indication that Alaska's workforce places the greatest emphasis on rapid reemployment prior to the consideration of occupational training, which is in alignment with the goals and objectives of the Employment Security Division.

The job center resource room staff has worked hard to significantly increase the number of group-oriented workshops as the main method of Wagner-Peyser service delivery. The intent is to serve more job seekers simultaneously, rather than strain limited staff resources by serving each job seeker individually. Two of the most popular workshops are Resume Writing and Interviewing. Staff strongly encourage participation in these two workshops, especially toward the end of a training plan, to ensure successful job placement into an occupation for which the participant is newly trained, credentialed, and job ready.

Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Alaska's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate topped out at 8.6 percent in December 2009, and dropped to 7.9 percent in June 2010. Although the decrease may indicate an optimistic trend, it is notable that the lowest unemployment rate in 2010, 7.9 percent, is still greater than the highest unemployment rate in the past 20 years. The number of job openings posted on ALEXsys was 45,400, representing a sizable decrease from the previous year's number of over 54,000. The rise in unemployment combined with the decline in job openings substantially affected job center traffic. Statewide, the job center resource rooms served 292,752 individuals in 2009, a remarkable increase of almost 35,000 more individuals than in 2008.



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding significantly enhanced Wagner-Peyser and Reemployment Services outreach and education efforts in 2009. Statewide outreach, including radio advertisements, resource room, training facility posters and brochures, and enhanced staff training continues to increase job seeker awareness of the AJCN Wagner-Peyser resources and services.

The opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship occupations and sponsors in Alaska continued to grow in 2009. Two of the many, newly-developed programs include Diesel Mechanics offered by Alaska Teamster-Employer Training Trust, and Power-Plant Operator offered by Alaska Power & Telephone. Another two exciting developments are the addition of Medical Assistant (one of the fastest-growing occupations in the nation) and Wind Turbine Technician (in alignment with the Green Jobs Initiative) to Alaska's list of Registered Apprenticeship occupations. At the end of each apprenticeship, trainees are awarded a Certificate of Completion of Apprenticeship by the U.S. Department of Labor. Benefits to Alaska include a highly skilled and productive workforce, decreased employee turnover, and attraction of high-quality, motivated applicants.

Alaska Career Ready achieved important goals in 2009. Career Ready 101 is now the primary self-assessment tool recommended to Alaska's job seekers by statewide job center staff. Career Ready 101 is preparatory coursework for WorkKeys® and combines all WorkKeys® skills, comprehensive soft skills, and life-literacy skills in one self-contained system. This easily-accessible, self-assessment tool is vital as the resource room usage continues to increase. A great example of how WorkKeys® and Apprenticeship benefited Alaska is its use by the Alaska Operating Engineers Apprenticeship. Job applicants in the trades of Heavy Equipment Operator, Heavy Duty Mechanic, and Service Oiler trades are required to take and achieve a level 4 on their WorkKeys® assessments to be selected for a job interview. Job center staff administer the assessments.



Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Success Story

Michael Jonte

Melissa Cruise, Vocational Counselor/Apprenticeship Specialist, worked with staff at Alaska Ship and Drydock and provided information about apprenticeship opportunities, using WorkKeys® as an effective hiring tool.

At the local job fair, Doug Ward, of AK Ship and Drydock, was approached by high school student, Michael Jonte who expressed his interest in working at the shipyard. He impressed staff at AS&D and they hired him into a summer internship program. Part of the process included his using the pre-assessment tool, Career Ready 101, and associated tutorials.

Career Ready 101 is pre-courseware for WorkKeys®, a nationally-recognized employability skills assessment tool designed to help job seekers develop better workplace skills and match the job seeker's skills with the demands of a particular occupation. The result is a skill-based credential, National Career Ready Certification (NCRC), that enhances career potential.



Michael Jonte passed all three WorkKeys® sections and earned an NCRC at the silver level. He enrolled in welding classes offered at Ketchikan High School and was recognized by the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School Board for obtaining his NCRC.

This is Michael's second summer working with AS&D and he is doing a great job for the company. He shares that he really enjoys all that he is learning, his mentors, and the company support and encouragement, as well as the tremendous opportunity he has been given to develop the skills needed for a successful career in the ship building industry. Doug Ward has been instrumental in incorporating the NCRC in the AS&D internship/training program.

Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Veterans

Alaska's Veterans Program through the Alaska Job Center Network provides veterans, and other covered individuals, with priority of service as provided by the Jobs for Veterans Act. Alaska is home to more than 74,000 veterans, the largest per capita population of veterans in the nation, accounting for 11 percent of Alaska's total population.



Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority for all services when they visit a job center or access the Alaska Labor Exchange System (ALEXsys) online. These individuals are referred directly to one of twelve veterans representatives stationed in offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Kenai, and Matanuska-Susitna Borough.



During 2009, DOLWD veterans' representatives provided services to 324 transitioning service members and 1,723 recently separated veterans. More than 1,200 veterans and eligible persons were given case management services by veterans' representatives and job center staff during the same time period. Job center staff statewide served nearly 14,000 veterans with employment and training services through the Alaska Job Center Network.

Veterans' Representatives, Veterans Affairs – the Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Employment Counselors and Career Support and Training Services staff continue to utilize a team approach when assisting veterans, which leverages resources and provides high quality service. Outreach efforts extend to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as they share many Chapter 31 clients. This is particularly important for disabled veterans who may not know of the many services available to them.

In addition to providing a priority of Alaska employment, training or apprenticeship services to veterans, the program hosts and conducts a series of Transition Assistance Program (TAP) seminars on Eielson AFB, Elmendorf AFB, Fort Wainwright, Fort Richardson, and US Coast Guard Stations in Kodiak, Juneau, Sitka and other locations as needed. These seminars are specifically designed to prepare service members for military-to-civilian transition, prepare for employment, and well provide them information, referrals and access to resources to help them during their transition. There is an increased demand for the TAP seminars due to the number of returning and transitioning service members. During the quarter ending March 2010, 19 seminars were conducted for 790 attendees. This is an increase from 14 seminars conducted during the fall of 2009 for 371 attendees.

The annual Veterans' Job Fair, held at the Muldoon Job Center in Anchorage close to Veterans' Day, was a success with 63 employers and service organizations, and over 800 veterans, active-duty service members and job-seekers in attendance.

Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Veteran

Success Story

Robert Peterson

One of the successful veterans placed with the Veterans Administration Clinic in Anchorage came in to share his success with staff. Mr. Robert Petersen was hired by the Veterans Administration at their new clinic as a Veterans Benefits Specialist, starting as a GS-9. The position requires a Masters degree and a minimum of a 3.0 Grade Point Average. His start date was June 7, 2009.

Mr. Petersen offers his many thanks to the Veterans Unit at the Midtown Job Center, and to Mr. James Harris for his invaluable guidance and support throughout his months of being unemployed. Mr. Petersen's work history shows a high level of education combined with a lack of tenured employment in the last decade in the fields of marketing and graphic design. His jobs over the past decade averaged two years in length.

In October 2009, he filed for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Based on his work history, in late November 2009, Mr. Petersen was selected by UI to participate in Reemployment Services. He began working with Reemployment Services Specialist, James Harris, and Veteran's Representative, Kevin French. Together, the three of them turned out to be a winning reemployment team. James and Kevin referred Mr. Petersen to several job openings while he diligently continued to conduct self-directed job searches on ALEXsys. This job seeker repeatedly commented on how valuable the job search support and reemployment services are at the Midtown Job Center.

Based on his positive experience and in the spirit of "one good deed deserves another," he stated that from his new position at the VA, he will be referring other veterans needing help to the job center, including his brother who served in the U.S. Navy.



From left to right: James Harris, Kevin French, and Robert Peterson

Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Trade Adjustment Assistance

TAA continued to average 35 individuals who are participating in training and only one individual relocated this past year. In addition, there were 27 individuals on training waivers, meaning the requirement to attend training was waived in order for them to receive TAA cash benefits while they continued to seek work. Through assessment, it was determined that they have the skills needed to locate that next job. Of the 35 training participants, 18 are fishermen that qualified under the US Department of Agriculture TAA program during the marketing years 2003 and 2005. Their majors vary from marine management to registered nurse and are scattered throughout the country attending school. One individual did a lot of research to find her niche in the nursing field. Aside from completing the remainder of the RN degree, her training plan includes being fluent in Spanish, enabling her to effectively communicate with clients in her area that are non-English speaking. She is doing a great community service by becoming a specialist in her chosen field. Another TAA participant from Kodiak recently obtained a paralegal degree in order to meet her goal of managing a law office in her hometown. She started her job with a law firm as the office manager in August of 2009. Her former average quarterly wage as a clerk in a law firm prior to her training was \$7,736. She has now more than doubled that wage earning for a quarterly amount of \$17,360.

A big accomplishment for the TAA program this past year was the implementation of a new reporting system that was needed to comply with reporting criteria set forth by the Trade and Globalization Act. Trade Act staff worked hand in hand with programmers to ensure they understood the business rules to effectively complete the programming. The changes were complex and it took both teams working together to ensure a positive outcome. The system was successfully completed and new reporting components launched by June 30, 2010.

Over the years there have been over 10,000 Alaskan workers that were laid off from TAA certified companies and found eligible for TAA benefits. These individuals never lose their entitlement to training if they need it to obtain or sustain suitable employment. In an effort to ensure that WIA participants are also screened for TAA eligibility, increased focus is given to staff training and awareness. WIA staff work closely with TAA, and provide case management and additional funding for support services to TAA participants. To ensure that current WIA participants are not being overlooked for TAA eligible services, all WIA participants are reviewed and screened for TAA eligibility. The goal is to leverage TAA with WIA funds and provide a higher level of service.

Employment Security Division / Alaska's One-Stop Operator - Wagner-Peyser Services

Trade Adjustment Assistance

Success Story

Mr. Tom Kulig

Mr. Tom Kulig was a security guard at the Agrium Kenai Nitrogen Operations plant in Nikiski. He lost his job due to the plant closure. Mr. Kulig was very concerned about what he would do for employment, as security positions were very limited in that area. He was eligible for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Dislocated Worker training funds. Tom pursued his dream to become a trained chef by attending the AVTEC Professional Cooking & Baking Program.

Due to his age, Mr. Kulig was concerned about returning to school and taking on the required daily lessons and testing. He was aware that math skills are heavily used in training for culinary arts and knew he would need to increase his competency in that area. He worked diligently with Key Train to build his skill level and confidence and gained experience with practice lessons. He then pursued his training at AVTEC and successfully completed on December 18, 2009. He is now working as a professional cook for Three Bears Alaska.



Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

The Division advanced major activities and strategies that leveraged all combined resources, programs partnerships and funds in 2009. With respect to project management, the second year of the new Workforce Investment Performance System (WIPS) is currently in the development and production stages. WIPS will combine fiscal, grants management, case management and reporting into one integrated performance and reporting system.

Registered apprenticeship saw a significant increase in its organizational profile when the statewide apprenticeship coordinator responsibilities were aligned with the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act Training Coordinator's responsibilities. New registered apprenticeship standards were established for geophysical core driller and other extraction related occupations. Registered Apprenticeship is now the second most common strategy for job placement assistance through a local job center exceeded only by the traditional classroom training.

The summer of 2009 was a banner season for Workforce Investment Act youth programs. More than 950 youth were employed in temporary jobs aimed at improving their work maturity skills. Pre and post assessment of these skills indicates that actual work experience is an effective strategy to teach the importance of work maturity. Thanks to the success of the summer program, the Division is in negotiations with the leadership of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families agency about a targeted summer youth employment program for youth assisted by the public welfare agency.

Nationally, the workforce industry is focused on efficiency and renewable energy occupations. The State Energy Sector Partnership grant was awarded last year and the Division will lead the way towards developing job training activities that meet the requirements of business and industry, similar to its efforts in support of oil, gas and mining.

The summer of 2009 was a banner season for Workforce Investment Act youth programs.



Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

Alaska State Energy Sector Partnership

The Alaska State Energy Sector Partnership (ASESP) will develop a sustainable strategic workforce plan to increase the supply of workers with energy efficiency skills to meet the demands of renewable energy industries. Through the competitive grant process job skills training projects should target every geographic and economic region of Alaska, particularly rural and remote communities with high energy costs, where jobs will be located.

ASESP will fund projects that include strategies to meet the demand for workers for renewable energy and energy efficiency (RE/EE) projects. RE/EE jobs require upgrading the skills of incumbent workers, teaching new skills to workers in RE/EE technologies, and preparing entry-level workers planning for RE/EE jobs and careers. As an emerging industry, this federal award of \$3.6 million dollars is preparing the work force to respond to the RE/EE sector's need for a skilled workers.

National Emergency Grant for On-the-Job-Training

DBP was recently awarded \$715,684 to fund a two-year, 2010-2011, ARRA National Emergency Grant (NEG) for the provision of On-the-Job-Training (OJT) services to 50 eligible WIA Dislocated Worker program participants affected by layoffs. Additionally, the Division is prepared to match 20 percent of this grant amount or \$143,137 with State Training and Employment Program funds. This NEG-OJT grant will provide a method to jump start re-employment for dislocated workers experiencing prolonged unemployment by enabling employers to create training and job opportunities for these individuals. Participants will be given a chance to “earn and learn,” which means they will develop applicable occupational skills while earning a paycheck. This award is not only intended to deliver OJT services to 50 unemployed Alaskans, but also to build the capacity of the AJCN to engage this critical training model that will aid Alaska's economic recovery.



Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

Alaska Youth First

The Alaska Youth First Program was developed to create career awareness for Alaska's youth ages 14 - 24. By focusing on career awareness and work experience, this program fills the gaps in the workforce system. The Alaska Youth First Program receives a general fund appropriation by the Alaska Legislature to provide Career Guides, Applied Academic Training, and Teacher-Industry Externships.

In 2009, of the 1,374 youth who received work experience statewide, 562 were rural Alaskan youth.



Denali Training Fund

The Division of Business Partnerships is in its tenth year of partnership with the Denali Commission and has a proven track record in building a skilled rural workforce. The Division administers the Denali Training Fund and the Denali Training Fund Youth Program on behalf of the Denali Commission. The Denali Training Fund focuses its training resources on rural infrastructure projects; developing participant skills in the construction and transportation industries and for heavy equipment, health care, and energy development occupations. In 2009, more than 450 adult participants were trained in rural Alaskan communities.

The Denali Training Fund Youth program and the Alaska Youth First program leverage resources to foster relationships among industry, school districts, vocational training providers, and the State's workforce development system to create sustainable programs for youth that lead to apprenticeship, employment, or post-secondary education.

In 2009, the Denali Training Fund Youth program provided training services to 632 rural youth from Prince of Wales Island to St. Paul Island to Nome.

Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

The Alaska Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP)

In 2009, the Division of Business Partnerships provided \$2,739,500 in grant awards under the Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) to six Regional Training Centers throughout the state. These included the Alaska Technical Center in Kotzebue, the Northwest Alaska Career and Technical Center in Nome, Partners for Progress in Delta, the New Frontier Vocational Technical Center in Kenai, the Southwest Alaska Vocational and Education Center in Bristol Bay and Yuut Elitnaurviat in Bethel. Combined, these six organizations provided training and related services to 1,612 rural Alaskans.



Regional Training Centers

Kotzebue Technical Center (ATC, Alaska Technical Center)

Provides residential adult vocational training and employability services through the Northwest Arctic Borough School District

New Frontier Vocational Technical Center (NFVTC)

Provides opportunities for career-related training, education, and employment skills training for individual career interests in South Central Alaska

Northwest Alaska Technical Center (NACTEC)

Provides resources and skills to high school students in the pursuit of employment opportunities and post secondary education

Southwest Alaska Vocational and Education Center (SAVEC)

Provides a variety of occupational courses and programs that lead toward work based certifications and high demand and high-wage employment, as well as being a Rapid Response Center for business and industry

Delta Career Advancement Center

Located in Interior Alaska, Southeast of Fairbanks, Delta Career Advancement Center, provides the most substantial mine training facility in the state, construction trades training and education, and classroom videoconferencing to deliver courses to other locations.

Yuut Elitnaurviat People's Learning Center

Provides a career learning center for adults and high school students, focusing on the main regional industries for people in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Region



Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

Pipeline Training Program (PLT)

The WIA Dislocated Worker National Response Demonstration Grant: "Alaska Pipeline Worker Training Project" served 642 participants during 2009. The purpose of the project, which began in 2007, is to provide career awareness activities and occupational training that will develop the talent with a wide array of skills required for building, operating, and maintaining oil and gas pipelines in Alaska, to include jobs and careers in the associated, sub-sector industries of transportation, construction, power and energy transmission, communications, and logistical support.

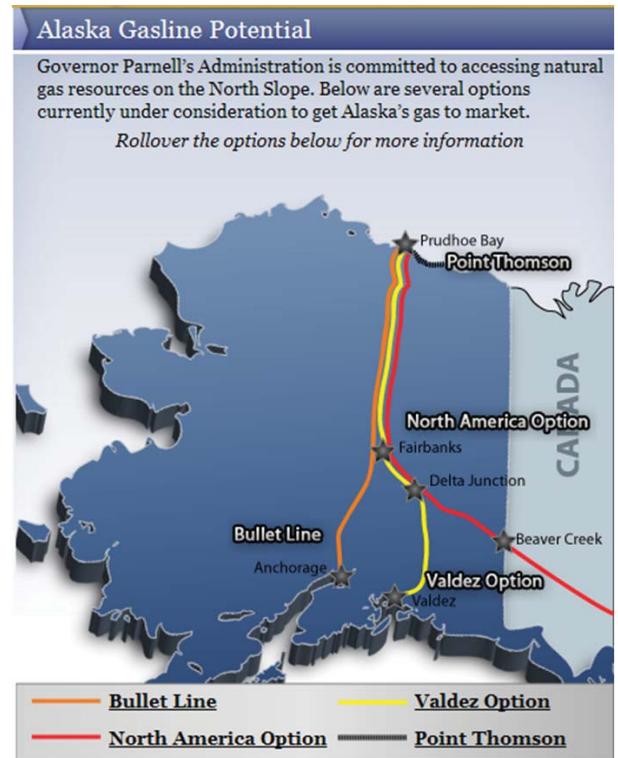
This project focuses on the following general areas: outreach to youth and adults, connecting career path activities, education and training; entry level training helping prepare workers for good jobs; industry



Alaska Department of Labor
Commissioner Click Bishop

As a heavy equipment operator for more than 30 years, I know the value of a good education and solid training. I found myself going back for more training as I advanced in my career. Eventually, I became a trainer. Now as Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, my job is to help you get prepared for a career.

based education and training in partnership with career and technical education and training in Alaska's workforce system (secondary, postsecondary, higher education, and private industry trainers); a spectrum of occupational training for pipeline related occupations and civil construction, transportation (ground and marine), power generation, and communications; and incumbent worker industry certificate training to upgrade the current and new workforce (environmental, health and safety, equipment operations, changing technology) with an emphasis on cross-country pipeline construction training. The outcomes of this project will be to increase the supply of new workers from urban and rural Alaska for jobs identified in the Alaska Gasline Inducement Act (AGIA) Training Strategic Plan, today and in the future, which meet the challenge of: rebuilding aging oil fields; developing new sources of energy (oil and gas); and preparing a workforce for constructing, operating, and maintaining the nation's potential largest energy project, the Alaska gas pipeline.



Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeship offers unique benefits. Apprentices “earn while they learn,” with a paycheck and benefits. As apprentice skill levels increase, by learning a trade in a classroom and on a job site, wages progressively increase. After completing an apprenticeship, journey-level status and certification are nationally recognized. Apprenticeship connects job seekers looking to obtain new skills and employers looking for trained and qualified workers.

Alaska developed new working relationships with postsecondary training providers to provide services using a demand driven model. As a result 37 geophysical core drillers, 11 surveyor technicians, 14 electrical apprentices and more than 100 other apprentices were trained.



Apprenticeship *Success Story*

Kyle Strong, Electrical Apprentice

Making a successful transition from the military into the civilian workforce can be challenging. Veterans have to translate the skills they learned in the military into language that civilian employers can understand. When Kyle Strong joined the military, he had two objectives. One was to serve his country. During his four years in the Army as a combat engineer, he spent one year deployed in Iraq. His unit, from the 101st Airborne Division, was charged with keeping the peace and making sure routes were clear around three villages in the Samarra area, 60 miles north of Baghdad.

Strong's other goal was to earn education benefits so that once he left the military, he could pursue his long-time goal of becoming an electrician. In November 2008, Strong returned to his home state of Alaska and applied for an apprenticeship with the IBEW/NECA. While he waited for an interview, he considered how he could improve his chances at being accepted.

In March, Strong enrolled in Construction Education Foundation's Mat-Su Construction Academy electrical course, taught by an instructor from the IBEW-NECA Apprenticeship program. During the class Strong got a call from IBEW for an interview. "I believe taking that class and having a letter of recommendation from the journeyman instructor helped me get in," Strong said. Strong began his apprenticeship in May and is currently working at Yukon Electric.



Division of Business Partnerships

Notable Highlights

Alaska graduates approximately 7,500 high school students every year and with the demand by the construction industry, almost 15 percent of every graduating class is needed by this high-demand industry.

The Construction Academies, operated through the Construction Education Foundation and funded with a general fund appropriation to the DBP, provide alignment of the WIA Strategic State Plan by preparing high school students through a School-to-Apprenticeship training program and classes for adults who have limited experience and basic skills necessary for work in the high-demand construction industry. Due to the decline in construction related training in the secondary school system, the industry no longer has a ready supply of potential workers.

The Construction Academies work with members of the Home Building Associations and Apprenticeship Programs to ensure participants receive the standard skills necessary for entry into construction occupations.

In 2009, 4,522 participated in the Construction Education Foundation program, compared with 3,904 in 2008.



The State Training and Employment Program (STEP) is administered by the Division of Business Partnerships and funded by a set-aside of employee contributions to Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund. The purpose of STEP is to enhance the quality and make Alaska job training and employment assistance easily available to employers, employees, and future workers.

In 2009, 2,317 participants were trained, compared with 2,002 in the previous year.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Alaska Workforce Investment Board

Sean Parnell, Governor

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October 1, 2010

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Madam Secretary:

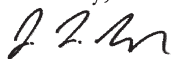
The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) recognizes that Alaska must have a highly educated and skilled workforce for a strong economy, future economic development, and a prosperous future for all Alaskans. The board has built strong partnerships to work towards accomplishing this goal. There are several projects the AWIB will be working on this coming year as a result of partnerships with industry; education and training providers. These projects include the following:

- Alaska State Energy Sector Partnership which is a grant to build an educated and skilled workforce for Renewable Energy/Energy Efficiency (RE/EE) occupations.
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) Plan which incorporates and values the strategies contained in both the Alaska Education and Gasline Training Strategic Plan.
- Health Workforce Training Plan which will be used as a model for training in health care occupations in Alaska. The AWIB will work to assure a coordinated approach in implementing several of the strategies in this plan.
- Alaska Gasline Training Plan which will be used as a model for training for careers in construction, operations, management and other occupations related to natural resource development including a gasline.

There are wonderful education and training opportunities in Alaska. The AWIB will continue its mission "To provide leadership, recommend policy, direction and accountability standards to get Alaskans into jobs."

Thank you for your continued consideration and support.

Sincerely,



Jim Lynch
Chair

cc: Clark Bishop, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development