

**One-Stop Operator Report  
Alaska Job Center Network**

Alaska Workforce Investment Board Meeting  
October 25 and 26, 2011



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Employment and Training Services Data  
July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011**

**Labor Exchange Program**

Job Seeker Visits to the Job Center Resource Rooms .....	225,837
Active Registered Participants.....	132,629
Veterans and Transitional Service Member Participants .....	17,323
Youth Participants .....	3,541
Participants who Entered Employment .....	36,932
Participants who Retained Employment at Six Months .....	46,893
Job Openings Received from Employers .....	50,908

**Career Support and Training Services Participants  
Workforce Investment Act**

	Adult	Dislocated Worker
Program Participants .....	3,374	409
Percentage of Program Exiters who, in the First Quarter after Exit		
Entered Employment .....	67.6%	72.9%
Received a Credential and Entered Employment.....	62.0%	59.9%
Retained Employment for another Six Months .....	81.3%	83.7%
Six-month Average Earnings of those who Retained Employment .....	\$18,200	\$24,160

**State Training and Employment Program**

Participants.....	699
Exiters .....	341

**Pipeline Training**

Participants.....	120
Exiters .....	63

Source: Alaska Job Center Performance Data, DOLWD

## **Employment Security Division (ESD) Director's Message**

During our first strategic planning meeting last April, our management team accurately identified ESD's core values (highlighted below). I witness staff adhering to these core values every day.

Our staff is committed to **Excellence**, and, as such, deliver service above and beyond. Since last May's AWIB meeting, two of our staff have received national recognition for outstanding performance.

Staff work and communicate with **Respect**, providing outstanding **Customer Service** while recognizing that customers may be the public or each other. Our **Teamwork** when solving problems and issues has continued to demonstrate our collaboration skills and **Creativity**.

Having the discipline to do what is right is crucial to the decision making process and I have been continuously impressed by the **Integrity** that each and every one in ESD demonstrates daily.

It is no coincidence that **Communication** is physically located at the bottom of our Core Values posters. Communication serves as the foundation of an organization's ability to excel in their mission. Through good communication, staff come to value each other's perspectives and have the courage to stand up and speak but also sit down and listen.

Our strongest asset is our staff. I strongly support staff development through **Training** and commend every effort that is made to enhance and improve our staff's ability to serve and perform their duties.

Staff are encouraged to keep Core Values personal sized cards visible and use it as a compass in actions taken at work – and in their personal life.

Paul Dick, Director

## **Veterans**

### ***Veterans' Career Fair***

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development will host an annual veterans' career fair on Wednesday, November 2, 2011, at the University Center in Anchorage. This year's fair will be unique in that the department has partnered with other organizations, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service, that has launched a national "Hiring Our Heroes" campaign this fall. This year's "Hiring Our Heroes Veterans Job Fair" is for veterans, transitioning service members, National Guard, reserve, and military spouses. We anticipate a record number of participants, exceeding last year's more than 1,000 participants.

Morris Communications will provide advertising for the career fair, and pay for the cost of inserting approximately 22,000 program copies in their publications statewide. Morris Communications will also sponsor a virtual component for the career fair allowing veterans and employers statewide to connect to the job fair without being on site. All Alaska DOLWD job centers statewide will coordinate activities during the event to allow veterans to use job center resource room computers to connect virtually with participating employers.

### ***Staffing Changes***

Most veterans and eligible persons in Alaska reside in Central and Northern Regions. To better serve Alaska's veterans, ESD restructured its veterans program staff that serve veterans to be located in these two regions effective October 1, 2011.

To ensure statewide coverage, each job center that does not have a veterans' program specialist on staff will have a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program or Local Veterans' Employment Representative assigned as a functional advisor to provide program guidance. Veterans can also access employment services online through ALEXsys and other ESD websites.

### ***Transition Assistant Program (TAP)***

Nationally, USDOL has engaged contractors to facilitate TAP workshops. Effective October 1, USDOL has contracted TAP workshop services in Alaska to contractors. Previously, ESD provided primary facilitation of TAP workshops. ESD will continue to partake in TAP workshops to provide information about the employment and training resources offered via our job centers.

Eliminating the primary facilitation duties will give veterans representatives and other job center staff more time to focus on the needs of veterans and increase outreach to employers and partner agencies.

### ***Apprenticeship/Pipeline Training***

The priority of the Employment & Training Services Apprenticeship program is to strengthen Alaska's economic climate for both employers and workers by developing and matching apprenticeable occupations to the state's labor force. According to the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship, Alaska had 2,150 active apprentices, 329 program sponsors (including union and non-union single- and multi-employer programs), and about 550 businesses that employ apprentices as of September 2011.

The expansion of apprenticeships into Alaska's high growth and emerging industries, combined with new partnerships and early apprenticeship education, is expected to increase overall apprenticeship numbers. Apprenticeships have expanded into the high-growth and emerging industries including oil, gas, construction, mining, health, and transportation.

New partnerships include coordinated services in job centers, employment and training programs, community organizations, high schools, postsecondary education providers, Alaska Job Corps, and other agencies. New connections between Veterans' Program Organizations and business and industry consortiums are expected to have a positive influence on apprenticeship numbers and veteran employment in Alaska.

Of the 49 new apprenticeship programs registered in Alaska this state fiscal year, 26 were developed by ESD's Apprenticeship Specialists. Occupations include diesel and automobile mechanic, non-destructive technician, medical assistant, graphic designer, able seaman, electrician, direct support specialist, residential wireman, residential carpenter, and surgical technologist.

ESD established an Employment Security Specialist Apprenticeship lead position located in the Anchorage Midtown Job Center, Business Connection office in September 2011. Each region has

trained apprenticeship specialists who assist employers with the process of registering apprenticeships.

### **Rapid Response**

Rapid Response activity has been steady over the past six months. The largest event was the unexpected closure of the Lowe's store in Kenai which resulted in the loss of 79 jobs.

A rapid response event for Lowe's employees was held at the Challenger Learning Center in Kenai on August 22, 2011. Information on unemployment insurance, employment services, and job training was presented. A formerly dislocated worker from the Agrium layoff also spoke and gave an overview of how some of the Agrium workers navigated through the layoff process and gave examples of what some chose as new careers. Hearing from a local resident who had been through a large layoff helped the workers understand their options and gave hope to those still reeling from the shock.

After the presentations, a mini job fair was held specifically for the Lowe's employees. Various employers came in to talk one-on-one with the workers, and accept applications and resumes. Employers included Home Depot, Walmart, AlaskaUSA, Safeway, Fred Meyer, ResCare, and the Department of Corrections. As a result of this job fair, many of the employees were able to gain employment with these employers.

### **Work Services**

The DOLWD Work Services program, which explicitly serves Alaska Temporary Assistance Program (ATAP) clients, continues to see its performance increase in both the overall and two-parent participation categories. Work Services has had low performance rates for several years due to a variety of issues including serving a high percentage of at-risk and rural clients, and the inability to find work activities in areas with few employment opportunities.

In January 2011, Work Services temporarily restructured staffing to thoroughly analyze possible improvements to ATAP client case management and job development. The singularly-defined focus of this effort proved to be a very successful performance improvement project. In January 2011, statewide performance measures were at 23% for overall participation and 28% for two-parent participation. Since then, performance has increased to 30% and 51%, respectively. In some offices, Work Services has doubled performance in the two-parent category, which was a major focus for FY11.

Work Services supervisors and staff continue to evaluate and implement innovative methods of serving clients who seek self-sufficiency and are encouraged by recent positive developments in performance.

### **Foster Youth Project**

ESD entered into an agreement with the Office of Children's Services Independent Living Program to assist unemployed or underemployed older foster youth transitioning out of foster care with careers, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities. ESD will provide career awareness through career fairs, career exploration workshops, and career exploration through work experience that will provide the youth with the knowledge to make informed decisions on career choices.

## **National Association of State Workforce Agencies**

### **James F. Walls Award Recipient**

ESD employment specialist, Sheila Baker, was recognized for outstanding dedication to customers and colleagues, and extraordinary service to the local community. Ms. Baker began working as a job center trainee in the Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASST) program. The program helps workers re-enter the workforce. She has significantly helped contribute to the success of “Bridge to Success” for inmates at Alaska’s all-female Hiland Correctional Center who are within six months of being released. Baker worked with the Alaska Department of Corrections to also provide testing for the ACT WorkKeys/National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) to inmates. In just 18 months, 134 inmates obtained an NCRC prior to being released. The Bridge to Success has resulted in a high percentage of job placements and recidivism rates that are significantly lower than state and national rates.

Baker is also the on-site supervisor for MASST trainees placed at the Eagle River Job Center. She helped develop a formal training curriculum for all MASST trainees, and assisted in 18 MASST enrollments which resulted in a 75 percent placement rate for unsubsidized employment.



**Sheila Baker, Eagle River Job Center Employment Security Specialist, center, is presented the National Association of State Workforce Agency's James F. Walls Award on September 28, 2011, in Anchorage.**

From left are ESD Director Paul Dick, Labor Commissioner Click Bishop, ESD Assistant Director James Harvey, award recipient Sheila Baker, Labor Deputy Commissioner Tom Nelson, Corrections Deputy Commissioner Carmen Gutierrez and ESD Central Region Manager Brad Gillespie.