

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DIVISION
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Sean Parnell, Governor

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February 9, 2012

Jeff Selvey
Executive Director
Alaska Workforce Investment Board
1016 West 6th Avenue, Suite 105
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Executive Director Selvey,

I am pleased to submit the Employment Security Division's (ESD) One-Stop Operator report in conjunction with the upcoming Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) board meeting to be held February 22 and 23 in Juneau. This report includes accomplishments and information related to programs administered by ESD since our last report in October 2011.

I would like to highlight the completion of the division's first annual report, under the cover of Resource Book, which summarizes data for programs administered by ESD for state fiscal year 2011. Of particular interest to the board will be information related to programs under our Employment and Training Services component. The report provides information about job training funding and numbers of participants who engaged in job training programs in fiscal year 2011. The report is available online at labor.alaska.gov/esd.

ESD remains committed to ensuring that priorities and initiatives developed by the AWIB are met and to provide continued support to the Board.

I look forward to attending the upcoming meeting and giving our presentation to the Board.

Sincerely,



Paul E. Dick
Director, Employment Security Division

Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Employment Security Division Report to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board February 2012

Introduction

This report highlights activities and accomplishments of the Employment Security Division (ESD) subsequent to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) meeting held in October 2011.

Annual Report

ESD published its first annual report summarizing employment and training programs and initiatives under the purview of the AWIB for state fiscal year 2011. The report, under the cover of Resource Book, provides data related to program funding, staffing and participation. I would like to take this opportunity to highlight participant data related to the various job training funding streams and the 27 registered apprenticeship programs reported in the report on page 28. The report is available online at labor.alaska.gov/esd.

Veterans' Career Fair

ESD held its largest job fair yet in November with the "Hiring our Heroes Veterans and Military Spouses Job Fair". ESD partnered with 130 federal and private employers to host the event which was held last November at the University Center in Anchorage. Partners included the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service and Morris Communications. Morris Communications provided free advertising and sponsored an online component of the fair that allowed individuals across the state access to this job fair from a computer. ESD's job centers provided computer access and equipment necessary for individuals to connect online to the job fair.

Over 1,500 veterans and their family members attended the event. Based on data from surveys completed by employers, 50 hires and approximately 1,100 leads to employment were reported. Not all employers responded to the survey and we believe the number of hires and leads to employment are actually higher.

Pipeline Workers Training

ESD is winding down the Alaska Pipeline Workers Training project which expires June 30. Since the project's inception in 2008, ESD staff have facilitated the creation of 27 new registered apprenticeship programs and placement of 49 apprentices. Of the 27 new programs, 16 were in occupations connected to building a gas pipeline.

ESD is leveraging the knowledge gained from the program to create new registered apprenticeship programs using other funding streams, such as federal WIA and state STEP funds, to enter into On-the-Job Training (OJT) agreements with employers and use the OJTs to demonstrate the value of registered apprenticeship programs.

ESD recognizes the 113 occupations related to constructing a gas pipeline as priority occupations and supports those occupations through Individual Training Accounts (ITA) when job seekers qualify for training related to the occupations.

Career Exploration for Youth with Disabilities

ESD partnered with other state and nonprofit agencies to host a Career Exploration event to match students with disabilities with local employers. The event was held February 2 at the Anchorage Midtown Job Center. This event provided an excellent opportunity for students with disabilities to connect with employers and allowed employers the opportunity to become aware the students' talents as they consider these students for employment.

Disability Employment Initiative

Many ESD job center employees completed Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) training to recognize disabilities and learn of services that can be made available to individuals with disabilities at a job center before referral to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as was past practice. Last year, 35 employees enrolled in DRC level 1 training and 22 of them completed the training. Of those who completed level 1 training, 8 are continuing training and enrolled in DRC level 2 training.

Ticket-to-Work

In conjunction with the Disability Employment Initiative grant awarded October 1, 2010 to ESD, the division implemented the federal Ticket-to-Work program which encourages qualified Social Security recipients to get a job by providing them more choices for receiving employment services. Eligible beneficiaries are issued tickets to obtain employment services, vocational rehabilitation services, or other support services necessary to achieve an employment goal. ESD piloted the program in its Juneau Job Center last fall. The Juneau Job Center is now able to accept tickets on an ongoing basis.

In an effort to identify Social Security beneficiaries who qualify for the program and connect them to employers, Juneau Job Center staff held a Work Incentives Seminar last November which was attended by service providers, job center staff, and Social Security beneficiaries. The Juneau Job Center is now actively serving three ticket holders under the Ticket-to-Work program, one of whom has already gained employment.

ESD plans to expand the Ticket-to-Work program this year to regional hubs in Fairbanks, Wasilla, Anchorage and Kenai.

National Career Readiness Certificate

Through continued efforts of ESD staff promoting the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) program, 1,359 job seekers earned an NCRC last fiscal year, a 135% increase from the prior fiscal year. The NCRC is a program that credentials individuals with certification that the individual has successfully tested in fundamental skills required by employer such as reading and mathematics.

ESD anticipates the growth trend will continue for job seekers earning an NCRC this year.