

## WORKFORCE FLORIDA ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Workforce Florida Board is charged by the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 to establish three Councils for the purpose of addressing specific workforce populations and issues. The local Regional Workforce Boards must establish corresponding committees for the same purpose. Through initiatives funded by the state councils and the corresponding local committees, innovative approaches to improving Florida's workforce and increasing the competitiveness of Florida businesses can be demonstrated.

Since the establishment of the state level councils in 2000, Workforce Florida established the Office of Business Outreach in 2002. This office administers the three councils, Workforce Florida's employer-specific training programs and liaison's with the business and economic development communities in the state to foster economic growth.

The Workforce Florida Board may create, as needed, special committees and task forces to address challenges and issues. In fiscal year 2002-2003 there were two such task forces which have continued in to the 2003-2004 fiscal year – the One-Stop Task Force and the Nursing Task Force.

The following section provides highlights of the business outreach, council, and task force activities and accomplishments for fiscal year 2002-2003. Challenges, barriers and future strategies are also discussed. The section is closed with a summary of awards and recognition of Florida's workforce system.

## OFFICE OF BUSINESS OUTREACH

**Purpose:** The Office of Business Outreach was established in August 2002 with two primary objectives: to help Florida business gain better access to the services of the public employment system (both state and local) and to increase the capacity of the system to serve businesses' current and future workforce needs. Florida business and workers need to know about the workforce system and what it can do for them. With surveys indicating that 75 percent of Florida employers either don't know or don't use our system, this initiative is critical. Placed under this office are Florida's two popular employer-specific training programs—Quick Response Training and Incumbent Worker Training—as well as the three policy councils of the Workforce Florida Board—First Jobs/First Wages, Better Jobs/Better Wages and High Skills/High Wages—that help identify and implement state-level workforce strategies that strengthen the ties between workforce and the state's economic development activities.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

#### ***Workforce Florida Policy Council Training Outcomes***

The Workforce Florida Board of Directors annually allocates each of its three policy Councils state-level funds to implement training initiatives that build on policy objectives outlined in the strategic plan. These initiatives take the workforce system to the next level by changing behavior and emphasizing demand-driven services. During 2002-03, each Council received a \$5 million allocation to accomplish these strategic objectives. Additionally, Workforce Florida's employer-specific training program, Quick Response Training (annual allocation of \$6 million) and Incumbent Worker Training (annual allocation of \$2 million) are included in the High Skills/High Wages Council's activities. All together, a total of \$27.8 million was competitively awarded for targeted training throughout the state. These funds leveraged another \$154.3 million—netting nearly \$6 to every \$1 invested by Workforce Florida. A total of 33,342 persons received training for approximately \$835 per person. Additional details on each of the Council training initiatives and the employer-specific training programs are covered in their respective sections of this report.

#### ***Business Roundtables Hosted by Lieutenant Governor Toni Jennings***

Workforce Florida's first chairman, Toni Jennings, hosted three business roundtables with business leaders in three regions of Florida – Central (Orlando), Northeast (Jacksonville) and the Panhandle (Panama City). The purpose of these business roundtables was to give regional business leaders an opportunity to provide direct input about Florida's public employment system and to offer private sector solutions to the workforce/education issues raised through discussions. The focus was on their assessment of our system; how it can better meet the needs of the business community; exploring how they can most effectively provide feedback regarding its effectiveness, value and quality of services; what they anticipate their workforce needs to be in the next six months to a year; and what is the best way for Florida's workforce to keep up with technological changes.

The most common issues that were raised included:

- Business innovation and entrepreneurship
- Skills upgrade training
- Worker preparedness
- Strengthening alliances between education, economic development and workforce partners
- Finding workers
- Introducing youth to career opportunities

The Lieutenant Governor plans to host additional business roundtables, at least quarterly in the upcoming year, to continue to build private sector knowledge and access to the public employment system.

***Supporting Entrepreneurship / Business Innovation - the Disney/SBA National Entrepreneur Center (NEC)***

With the downturn in the national—and Florida’s—economy, there exists even a greater emphasis on retaining the state’s existing businesses and jobs, and growing businesses and jobs through fostering business innovation activities. At recent statewide strategic planning meetings several recommendations came forward about the need to support more entrepreneurial activities throughout the state as a way of achieving economic diversification. Federal workforce law allows us to expend federal workforce funds on entrepreneurial training, but no coordinated effort to accomplish this objective was in place.

Through Workforce Florida’s chair, Raymond Gilley, Workforce Florida was invited last August to join in a fledgling initiative to create a national entrepreneurial center in Florida and to figure out a niche role for the public employment system. This center would be the second only such center in the country, following the first created in San Jose, California. Primary partners in the effort included Walt Disney World, University of Central Florida, Orange County Government and the Small Business Administration. The center opened its doors in June 2002 and was officially named the Disney/SBA National Entrepreneur Center, or NEC. The NEC’s mission is to provide training, educational resources, and funding assistance to Florida entrepreneurs.

Since there were providers of services already involved (SBA, SBDC, SCORE, others) in the initiative, Workforce Florida put out for competitive bid the development of an add-on training component that would help us identify who was doing what, help us determine where the public employment system niche might be and to address perceived gaps in providing entrepreneurial training and assistance to targeted groups, specifically mature workers, dislocated workers, youth and speakers of other languages).

There are many programs currently available within Florida, ranging from university-based to nonprofit organizations that specialize in entrepreneurial training. What is not readily available, however, is a way to navigate through the many offerings to find the most appropriate training opportunities. Workforce Florida helping to centralize information and establish linkages about available training programs and business development assistance through the Florida NEC by supporting the development of a statewide training provider matrix, the recently developed web site ([www.floridanec.org](http://www.floridanec.org)) and an on line training portal. Eventually, this directory of service providers and “map” all of the resources for entrepreneurs will be expanded and made available through the web-based training portal.



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***Supporting Economic Development Activities***

As the fourth largest state in the nation and with a business climate ranked in the top five in the country, Florida is often considered by site selection consultants for significant prospective business locations or expansions. Enterprise Florida, Inc., the state’s economic development organization, usually coordinates responses to these job-creation projects on behalf of Florida as well as any specific sites within the state in which the prospective business may be interested in locating. Since workforce-related questions regarding availability of skilled workers and training assistance figure foremost in these site selection decisions, Workforce Florida is contacted to coordinate and present responses on both the state-level training assistance (e.g., Quick Response Training, Incumbent Worker Training) and regional workforce board (or local-level) assistance. The site selection process typically involves distinct phases of work, with each building upon the previous phase. A prospective business’ efforts to select the “right” location can be a long and complex process, but can reward the selected community with jobs and capital investment.

***Strengthening Regional Board Business Services***

The USDOL Regional Administrators and Business Relations Group collaborated in a joint initiative to build capacity in the workforce system by linking high-performing regional workforce boards with strong performance and notable business service strategies to conduct peer-to-peer coaching for regional workforce boards desiring to improve their relationships and services to business. The goal of this initiative is to improve the workforce system’s overall performance in local areas through effective engagement of business as customer, as strategic partner and as the workforce system leader. Florida, like other states, was invited to submit two sets of recommendations: Group A consisted of regional workforce boards that are considered to be high-performing, strong business engagement operations (mentors). Group B consisted of regional workforce boards that are considered to have lower business engagement and performance but have the structure in place to become high business performers (protégés). Through both analytical (e.g., short term performance measures relating to business activities) and behavioral/testimonial assessments (e.g., employed worker training activity, chamber/economic development organization engagement), Workforce

Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation identified five Group A regional workforce boards and two Group B regional workforce boards. Although no Florida mentors were selected, two of only 27 national protégé sites were selected from Florida: the Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance and the Pasco-Hernando Counties Regional Workforce Board. Each protégé will be matched up with a mentor who will provide technical assistance to the protégé sites. From these matches, the initiative will reap information on promising business practices, approaches to improved service delivery, and the impacts such practices can have on overall system performance. This information will be made available next year to the entire workforce system so all can benefit from the lessons learned.

***Addressing Targeted Industry Sector & Critical Worker Shortage Areas***

Further diversification of Florida's economy is one of the Governor's chief goals that will help ensure Florida's residents have access to high-paying, stable jobs and provide increases in per capita income. Toward that end, and in partnership with Enterprise Florida, Inc., several statewide training initiatives were initiated this past year that support skilled workforce development for those industries targeted by Florida's economic development organization for growth and development. These efforts include the Florida Aviation Aerospace Industry Assessment, the Modeling, Simulation and Training Consortium, and the Film Industry Consortium. Additionally, to address the shortage of qualified teachers particularly in high growth areas of the state, a special initiative aimed at transitioning dislocated workers with a bachelors degree into certified teachers was implemented.

***The Florida Aviation Aerospace (FAAA) Industry Assessment***

The Florida Aviation Aerospace (FAAA) Industry Assessment was undertaken to help determine the current and future needs of the industry, with an emphasis on workforce. The industry accounts for almost 1,600 companies employing 90,000 workers with average wages exceeding \$46,000. However, several major events have taken place that have greatly affected the industry: namely, the events of September 11, 2001 and the general downturn in the national economy. Additionally, the February 1, 2003 Columbia Space Shuttle tragedy exacerbated the situation. The foundation of the assessment was a 57-question survey that collected data relative to the industry's demographics, and more importantly, education and training, capital and regulatory needs for continued and future success.

***Modeling, Simulation and Training Consortium***

Florida is home to one of the largest clusters of the Modeling, Simulation and Training (MST) industries in the nation with more than 160 companies employing 25,000 workers making an average salary in excess of \$71,000 a year. There are an additional 25,000 jobs in related industries created by this industry cluster. The MST sector has an economic impact to Florida of nearly \$1.85 billion, including the payment of more than \$52 million in local and state taxes.

The industry cluster has formed around a core of military and government modeling, simulation and training efforts. For more than 50 years, the Army and Navy efforts in this area have been co-located for the development of training devices and technology. Central Florida is now the home for not only the Army and Navy, but also the Marine Corps, Air

Force, Coast Guard, Department of Justice and NASA as they share resources and skills sets to improve training in services critical to the maintenance of this nation's freedom.

An industry has grown around this core, exporting military technology to the private sector. In recent years, this industry has seen greater and greater linkage with the entertainment industry in Central Florida. The rides in Florida's amusement parks and the simulation training stations increasingly are relying on related technology and workforces with compatible skill sets. The crossover of these skill sets can be illustrated by the common goal to decrease the cost in teaching pilots how to fly. Military simulators for helicopter pilots were built at the cost of more than \$1 million per simulator. Cooperating with the entertainment industry has now driven the costs of such simulators down to about \$40,000.

In addition to the government, MST industry sector, and the entertainment industry, Florida is also home to some of the most advanced academic training available to these industries. Cooperating as part of Florida's Simulation Center, UCF, USF, three community colleges and Embry Riddle Aeronautical University form an education core to assist in sustaining this high-tech, high-wage growth industry in Florida.

It has been well established that modern work environments are placing unprecedented demands on the workforce. Increasingly, workers are required to make decisions, function independently, work on self-directed teams and engage in life-long learning. These situations demand that entry-level employees possess a host of non-task specific competencies before entering and/or being successful in the workplace. These competencies include communications skills, decision-making skills, interpersonal skills, and lifelong learning skills.

Additionally, many of the entry-level jobs in this industry require a Baccalaureate degree or higher and RWBs generally focus on shorter-term training. For this reason, RWBs are well suited to assist in upgrading the skills of existing workers in this industry as well as assisting dislocated workers from other industries (e.g., manufacturing, telecommunications) transition over to this industry.

In coordination with the National Center for Simulation in Orlando, and the Digital Media Alliance of Florida, an assessment of the training/workforce needs of the industry in Florida will be accomplished through one-on-one meetings with company representatives. Existing training programs will be inventoried (Universities, Community Colleges, Private vendors) to determine their ability to match the existing needs of the industry. Based on training needs identified and existing training program availability, new/existing workers in the industry will be trained in relevant, timely areas. The estimated number of trainees and types of training will be determined after the assessment process.

### ***Workforce Florida Teacher Shortage Project***

To help meet Florida's critical need for teachers as a result of the state's recently implemented class size amendment, a joint short-term pilot program between Workforce Florida and the state's Board of Education was created to identify those areas of the state with the most critical teacher shortage needs due to population growth to: a) identify

candidates (e.g., dislocated workers) that can become teachers through the alternative teacher certification process; and b) expedite the transition of these dislocated workers into a teaching career. Particular emphasis was placed on candidates with bachelors' degrees in math/science disciplines to transition into math/science teachers, since there is a particular shortage of these teachers and to ensure the focus on high skills/high wages economic diversification. The Board of Education committed funding (\$1,000,000) as did Workforce Florida (\$250,000).

Information received from the Florida Board of Education (BOE) identified the number of teachers needed by fall 2003, by county. The five counties with highest need included Dade (2,928), Broward (2,385), Hillsborough (1,724), Palm Beach (1,563) and Orange (1,475). Lead contacts at each of these school districts responsible for the alternative teacher certification process were identified and shared with the appropriate regional workforce board contact. Additionally, the BOE released a Request for Proposal seeking competitive proposals from training providers, non-profits, and others to help meet the need for teachers this fall. Among other things, the RFP envisioned a partnership arrangement to rapidly train persons, including those dislocated from other careers, as teachers for fall 2003 placement. To ensure that the process was successful, the RFP required that the school district be an active partner in the process and that the district *commit to hire* any individual that is trained through the initiative. The RFP made available a total of \$1,000,000 for this purpose. Florida's regional workforce boards with the greatest need for teachers were alerted to this RFP opportunity. State-level dislocated worker funds, if requested by a RWB, can be used to: a) partner on this initiative, or b) assist any dislocated worker with a non-education bachelors' degree interested in becoming a math or science teacher through the alternative teacher certification process. Three regional workforce boards were awarded funds. Regrettably, only one of the three regions was able to encourage dislocated workers to pursue teaching careers.

### ***Strengthening the Relationship between Local Workforce System / Economic Development Organizations***

The chair from one of Florida's regional workforce boards, the Palm Beach Workforce Alliance, spearheaded an effort to bring together the state's six largest regional boards to discuss workforce/economic development strategies which have proven successful in the state's larger workforce regions with an eye toward improving outcomes for the state as a whole. The group identified common areas of success as well as concerns as a group. Common areas of success included relationships developed internal and external to the local board, exemplary performance, oversight and accountability and marketing. Common areas of concern included services to business and the community, system operational issues and One-Stop operations, and public relations.

These meetings resulted in the state's largest workforce boards in the south partnering together on local training initiatives, hosting joint board committee meetings, and focusing on regional approaches to workforce development. As a result, other areas of the state are pursuing a more regional approach to workforce system development and alignment with economic development regions.

### ***Establishing Uniformity for Businesses with a Statewide Presence***

Workforce Florida was approached by one of the largest employee-owned supermarket chains in the United States to assist the company in finding qualified, entry-level applicants for its retail supermarket stores, distribution centers and manufacturing facilities statewide. This company, headquartered in Florida, desires that a standard agreement be developed to facilitate the company's access to services through the public employment system, and enable personal relationships be developed in areas of the state depending on the unique workforce needs demanded by individual stores, distribution centers and manufacturing facilities. A draft memorandum of agreement (MOA) was developed, with comment and modification by Florida's 24 regional workforce boards, for the company's consideration. The agreement provides standardization for assisting in entry-level recruitment, providing an entrée into other workforce services available through the public employment system, as needed, and establishing an ongoing effective level of cooperation. The effort is currently on hold pending the company's resolution of internal company realignment. Once this realignment is concluded, the company's plans to re-open discussions with Workforce Florida and its 24 regional workforce boards on the draft MOA. If successfully implemented, this memorandum of agreement can serve as a model for developing other working agreements with companies that operate statewide.

### ***Work Readiness Certification***

Florida and several other states have joined a project to develop a national, portable work readiness credential that will signal to employers that individuals have the knowledge, skills and abilities to be ready to work. The other national partners are National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), National Skill Standards Board (NSSB), National Retail Federation (NRF), National Association of Manufacturers' Center for the Workforce (NAMCFW), and Center for Workforce Development of the Institutional Educational Leadership (CWD). Technical work will be carried out by research firms that are leaders in the area of adult learning, assessment, and technology: SRI International; Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee; Human Resource Research Organization (HumRRO); and WestED. Additional states have expressed interest to NIFL to join the work readiness credential project – a move which is highly supported by Florida and the other original state partners.

Workforce Florida selected this national project based on the following elements:

- Any certification Workforce Florida would support/endorse should be a program that could be implemented consistently in all participating regions. If a client were "certified" as work ready it would mean the same thing in all 24 (or participating) regions. This is a critical element to ensure the workforce system communicates a consistent message to all Florida businesses.
- To ensure consistent implementation - critical assessment, evaluation/testing, learning and tracking components must be automated/computerized. "Paper/pencil" testing and assessment is too subjective and dependent on the quality and delivery of the instructor. [Note: Paper/pencil training, testing and assessment is also too costly to deliver, quality control/quality analysis and maintain.]

- Because of the importance associated with the concept of "certification" - it is critical that each phase of the development of a certification process be validated with a statistically significant sample as well as a sample from the appropriate representative population. Also, it would be essential that all validation processes be recognized as accepted standard operating procedures. This would best be done by nationally recognized experts.
- According to national surveys more than 40 percent of job applicants lack the basic and employability skills necessary to do the work. One important source of this skills gap is that there is no agreement between business and education and training on what it means to be work ready. A common national standard for work readiness will make it easier for education and training programs to target the skills and knowledge that are critical to workforce.
- Recent discussions regarding new federal common measures require "allowable/countable" certifications to be nationally validated. RWB or State developed certifications would not be accepted.

Five regional workforce boards (2, 12, 17, 18, and 21) have agreed to participate in this project and the first phase was recently completed. Nearly 100 Florida supervisors of entry-level workers from small, medium and large companies (as well as similar workers from other states) – across a variety of industry sectors – have participated in an on-line assessment providing information on what the most important skills, knowledge and abilities are necessary for entry-level work success – the beginning of a Work Readiness Skills Profile. To further validate the profile, two structured feedback sessions were held in Florida (September 30, 2003 in Orlando and October 1, 2003 in Destin) as well as in other participating states with entry-level workers and supervisors of entry-level workers. These sessions gained the additional input from nearly 50 Florida workers/supervisors. Altogether, nearly 450 persons from the participating states have provided critical information on what skills, knowledge and abilities are needed for entry-level work success. The current draft of the profile reflects importance ratings provided by these supervisors.

NIFL project staff has analyzed the revisions to the skills profile from all structured feedback sessions held across the states to identify patterns of congruence and divergence and to develop recommendations regarding a final Work Readiness Skills Profile. Recommendations were shared with members of the pilot's Policy Oversight Council (POC), of which Florida is a member, on October 30<sup>th</sup> in Washington, D.C. As a result of that meeting, state representatives suggested that project staff make special efforts to include workers/management from industries that were under-represented in both the on-line assessment and the structured feedback sessions. Those sectors include Retail, Hospitality, Telecommunications, Business & Administrative Services and Finance & Insurance. Additionally, since there was a lack of responses from small businesses (nationally and in Florida), NIFL/SRI will hold one national feedback session to include this sector drawing from associations who represent small businesses for input. According to NIFL/SRI a small business is one with less than 25 employees.

Validating and refining the Work Readiness Skills Profile is essential so that it can be used as the basis for a nationally portable certification of an adult's work readiness skills. The profile describes the tasks that are central to entry-level employment across industries and identifies the skills and knowledge that are most important in carrying out those tasks. Once the profile is refined through another round of feedback from additional groups as outlined above, the profile will provide the definition for what is assessed and certified in the work readiness credential.

As critical as it is to assess workforce readiness, equally important is the need to develop a strategy for providing necessary remediation for deficiencies identified in the certification procedure. For this reason, Workforce Florida has engaged in a project with the University of Central Florida and the National Center for Simulation to demonstrate the viability of developing technology-enabled learning approaches (i.e., simulation) that will remediate the soft skill deficiencies identified through the certification process. The project will demonstrate and validate a series of training modules that employ new and emerging technology-based solutions that have been proven to be effective alternatives to more traditional approaches. Groundwork will be laid for deployment of "virtual training rooms" that can be housed at local One Stop Centers around the state.

## Challenges/Barriers

### ***Joint Workforce/Economic Development Summit***

For three years—1999 through 2002—Workforce Florida has hosted a workforce/economic development summit held in conjunction with the Florida Economic Development Council's annual meeting. The purpose of this joint summit was to continue to build relationships between workforce and economic development, showcasing best practices throughout Florida of effective and productive working relationships. The majority of attendees at these summits were economic developers from across the state and few workforce development professionals. Meanwhile, workforce professionals held their own annual workforce summit—since 1999—and have added an increasing number of workshops focusing on economic development and business outreach themes. The annual workforce summit has significantly more attendees and although these attendees are primarily workforce professionals, more business and economic developers are now attending.

It would make prudent use of both workforce and economic development professionals' time and funds to attend a true joint workforce/economic development summit with specific tracks that would attract and serve the interests of both groups. However, there still exists some reluctance by each group to give up a measure of its autonomy and core focus.

## Future Goals/Strategies

### ***Future Business Roundtables***

Workforce Florida's first chairman, Lieutenant Governor Toni Jennings, is committed to host additional business roundtables with business leaders in regions statewide, at least one per quarter. The purpose of these business roundtables is to give these regional leaders an opportunity to provide direct input about Florida's public employment system and to offer

private sector solutions to the workforce/education issues raised at the strategic plan meetings. The focus will be on their assessment of the system; how it can better meet the needs of the business community; exploring how they can most effectively provide feedback regarding its effectiveness, value and quality of services; what they anticipate their workforce needs to be in the next six months to a year; and what is the best way for Florida's workforce to keep up with technological changes. These efforts will ensure that the public employment system in Florida continues to hear the "voice of business" and structures its services to be responsive.

### ***Strategic Plan Aligning Economic Development and Workforce***

Florida's business and community leaders will play a major role in shaping the state's economic future. Governor Jeb Bush has designated Agency for Workforce Innovation Director Susan Pareigis, Enterprise Florida President & CEO Darrell Kelley and Secretary of State Glenda Hood to work with Dr. Pamela Dana, Director of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development, to develop a strategic plan to chart Florida's economic future. The strategic plan process included a series of nine regional meetings.

Each meeting's agenda included a prioritization of issues, making recommendations and suggesting innovative solutions regarding economic diversification and job creation, workforce development, and infrastructure and livable communities. "When we diversify our economy, we strengthen our competitive position and become more resilient to national and global economic fluctuations," said Governor Bush, who created the task force earlier this year. "And in a strong economy, Florida businesses continue to thrive, grow and create more high-value jobs for our citizens." Governor Bush is expected to publicly unveil the unified strategic plan on January 31, 2004.

### ***Targeted Industry Profiles—Identifying Florida Workforce Issues***

For a number of years, Enterprise Florida has developed profiles of the state's targeted industries which include aviation/aerospace, biotechnology, information technology, plastics, manufacturing, business & financial services. These profiles describe the industry, employment, average wages, and areas of the state where the industry is present. In other words, the profiles provide an excellent snapshot of the industry as it exists in Florida.

Workforce Florida plans to build upon this targeted industry framework by translating their unique workforce needs to the public workforce system so that as a system, we can respond effectively to business and industry needs for a skilled workforce in high value-added industries. These workforce focused industry profiles will provide additional information on the types of occupations in the industry currently and prospects for job growth in the future, training/education/skill sets requirements (and where an individual might receive such training in the state), and best practices of school-to-work or industry-relevant examples.

### ***Film Industry Consortium***

Florida currently has nearly 10,000 workers statewide that comprise the state's film industry. Over half of these workers reside in the South Florida area. These workers are engaged in such occupations as script supervisors, film editors, and camera operators/technicians. Many

of these workers are contractual and provide needed services to a wide variety of film related projects statewide.

The industry is in the midst of a significant restructuring transitioning existing film technology to that of cutting edge technology--digital, high definition, pixel. Without retooling the skills of Florida's existing workers in this industry, Florida will be at a competitive disadvantage. Many prized film development opportunities will simply go to our competitor states (New York, California, Texas, New Mexico) and abroad.

The Film Industry Consortium will provide short-term digital technology training to workers in Florida's film industry through an industry consortium approach. Appropriate companies and trainees will be identified through the Governors' Office of Film and Entertainment in partnership with the statewide industry association, Film Florida, as well as preferred vendors (public and/or private) of digital technology training. Specific "Digital technology training" is to be identified and defined by the Governors' Office of Film and Entertainment in partnership with the statewide industry association, Film Florida. Such training can be provided at a common site (e.g., Universal, MGM Studios, training institutions, company site) or through interactive, web-based mediums. Training may occur concurrently at different locations statewide or sequentially (i.e., North Florida area to be followed by South Florida area).

#### ***Florida Manufacturing Advisory Council***

With manufacturing employment declining nationally (estimated at 1.6 million jobs since 2001) and in Florida (estimated at 35,200 jobs over the same time frame), it is important that the state prioritize and act on issues that affect our state's manufacturers' ability to compete globally for market share in an increasingly competitive environment. Enterprise Florida, as the state's economic development organization, chaired by Governor Jeb Bush and with a board comprised of top business leaders throughout the state, has taken the lead on the formation of a Florida Manufacturers Advisory Council.

Workforce Florida was contacted by its sister agency to help identify and nominate Florida manufacturers to participate in this initiative. Each of our 24 regional workforce boards was contacted to obtain their respective nominees as well as those manufacturers currently serving on our Board of Directors. Enterprise Florida also contacted each of the state's primary county and regional economic development organizations for their nominees. A total of 87 nominees for the Council have been identified through these collective efforts.

The first organizational meeting of the Florida Manufacturers Advisory Council is to be held on December 2, 2003. Enterprise Florida recently sent a survey out to each of the nominees to identify priority issues prior to the December 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. The survey is expected to uncover a variety of business climate issues, including those related to workforce development and education. Workforce Florida staff will attend this first meeting and will provide support, as needed, on any subcommittee efforts that unfold relating to workforce/training issues uncovered through the survey and Council discussions.

***Expansion of the NEC***

Shortly after the Disney/SBA NEC effort was well underway, US DOL announced Project GATE—Growing America Through Entrepreneurship. USDOL made available \$9 million for five years to various sites around the country for business formation activities in cooperation with US SBA. Florida thought that it would be able to compete for these funds but found that sites had been pre-selected. We were invited by Emily DeRocco to apply for federal funds for the Florida NEC operation. We submitted our grant request of \$3 million over a three-year period in early July. The majority of these funds would go into individualized training accounts for any persons statewide that wish to pursue entrepreneurial training and enable us to expand the reach of the NEC into a true statewide initiative with strong linkages to our regional workforce board system.

***Employer-Specific Training Programs – Further Outreach***

As noted in the Challenges/Barriers sections of the Quick Response Training and Incumbent Worker Training programs, more outreach efforts are planned. These outreach efforts will be targeted to those areas of the state where these programs are currently underutilized (rural, urban distress) as well as focused on investing all annual funds for these programs into training despite the slowdown in job-creating business expansions and relocations. Specifically, a provision in the Quick Response Training program that provides for retraining *existing* workers to meet changing skill requirements caused by new technology or new product lines *to retain jobs* and to prevent potential layoffs. To put this investment strategy into play to assist Florida companies increase overall productivity, technical assistance will be provided to Florida’s economic development organizations and other partners.

***Aggressively Pursuing Other Non-Federal/State Funds***

Changing economic realities require that we become more aggressive in our pursuit of other funding sources to further leverage our limited federal/state workforce dollars and thereby expand our reach of services to the state’s citizens and businesses. The Office of Business Outreach and Workforce Florida’s policy councils plan to work even more closely with Workforce Florida’s grant coordinator to identify and pursue all available funding sources. This renewed focus on an aggressive investment strategy will ensure that Florida continues to compete well for funds that assist us in meeting current and future workforce challenges.

## HIGH SKILLS/HIGH WAGES COUNCIL

**Purpose:** To develop strategies which align Florida's education and training programs with high-paying, high-demand occupations that advance individuals' careers, build a more skilled workforce and enhance the state's efforts to attract and expand job-creating businesses.

The High Skills/High Wages (HS/HW) Council continues its emphasis on promoting skills upgrade training for existing employees in order to "build a more skilled workforce and enhance the state's efforts to attract and expand job-creating businesses." Experience gained from the first year's training Challenge grant and last year's Targeted Industry Training Challenge provided useful tools to help refine and update funding priorities, strategies and FY 02/03 initiatives.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

#### ***Skills Upgrade Training***

The Council voted to allocate \$4,275,000 (WIA 15%) to provide short-term, skills upgrade training to incumbent workers in Florida's targeted industries. These industries have been identified by Enterprise Florida, Inc., the state's economic development entity, and the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development as having the greatest potential for growth and overall economic impact to the state. A competitive RFP was issued with the overall goal of training a minimum of 5,700 existing employees statewide. The RFP also stressed the development of partnerships and the strengthening of relationships between local economic development organizations, Regional Workforce Boards, training providers and targeted industry businesses. Seven Regional Workforce Boards and two statewide industry consortium projects were awarded to retrain/reskill 5,785 existing workers. The results of this challenge generated a total of 5,398 incumbent workers (93% of the goal) receiving training. The state's average investment per trainee was \$730.

#### ***Employed Worker Training Initiative***

In the fall of 2002, Regional Workforce Boards were required to modify their five-year plans to include an element for an Employed Worker Training Program. In their modifications, the boards were required to: 1) specify methods for upgrading the skills of existing workers in their respective region; 2) address how additional funds could be leveraged; 3) how partnerships could be developed to accomplish this 4) to identify lead contacts. To assist the Boards in establishing and utilizing this program as specified in their five year plans, funds in the amount of \$550,000 (WIA 15%) were offered through a request for proposal process. Twenty-two regions participated and used their funding for direct skills upgrade training and start up funding for implementation of an EWT Program. This effort resulted in 639 employees receiving training at an average investment per trainee of \$755.

### ***Teacher Training Initiative***

The purpose of this initiative was to provide assistance to dislocated workers, particularly those with bachelors' degrees, to transition to teaching careers (emphasis in math/science). Funds in the amount of \$250,000 (WIA 15%) for 100 trainees were awarded to three regional boards with critical need for teachers – Regions 12, 21, and 23. The project will end December 31, 2003.

## Policy Initiatives

### ***Priority Industry***

A comprehensive research paper on the biotech industry in Florida was completed and presented by Council staff. It was decided that the Council's selection of a priority industry would be the biotechnology sector in an effort to elevate Florida's ability to attract, retain, and grow this sector in the state.

### ***Employed Worker Training Start-up funding***

A continuing common theme is the need for skills-upgrade training. The demand for training assistance from the statewide Incumbent Worker Training program was evidenced by requests totaling in excess of \$ 7.1 million for the limited \$2 million allocation. To this extent, each Regional Workforce Board submitted modifications to their five-year plans which specified methods for upgrading the skills of existing workers in its region, how additional funds would be leveraged, how partnerships would be developed to accomplish this objective and to identify lead contacts. All plan modifications were approved and \$25,000 each in start-up funding was awarded to 22 regions to implement employed worker training activities.

### ***Workforce/Economic Development Summit***

In conjunction with the Florida Economic Development Council's annual conference, this Summit was held in October in Panama City. The mission of the summit was to strengthen linkages between Florida's workforce and economic development systems, generate discussion on workforce issues and create a vision of where the system needs to go to improve our economy.

## Challenges/Barriers

Leveraging limited state level incumbent worker training funds by implementing employed worker training initiatives at the regional level continues to be a tremendous challenge. Updated Employed Worker Training (EWT) guidance papers as well as the addition of the EWT performance measures in the red and green report have laid the foundation for making progress in this area. Improved communication and linkages between the state High Skills/High Wages Council and local board High Skills/High Wages committees are also needed to maximize and enhance the state's mission of attracting and expanding job-creating businesses. A High Skills/High Wages State Forum is scheduled in the fall of 2003 to provide an opportunity for regional HS/HW committees to identify common issues and solutions and showcase best practices.

## Future Goals/Strategies

The Council has identified the following goals and strategies for the 2003-2004 program year:

- **Biotechnology sector training** – issuance of an RFP to conduct focus groups, perform needs assessment, design, develop and deliver a modular, short-term, web-based, interactive, industry validated training program.
- **Employed Worker Training** – provide competitive funding to Regional Workforce Boards to continue implementation of employed worker training activities as specified in the five-year plan modifications. Awards will be based on EWT activities/performances to date, needs and number of currently employed workers in targeted industries and projected outcomes for FY 03/04 as approved by the Regional High Skills/High Wages committees and primary economic development organizations.
- **Statewide training/technical assistance workshop for regional High Skills /High Wages committees** – Provide a forum for sharing best practices and identifying common issues and solutions; linking regional committees with the state council; strengthening communication and advancing the strategic plan objectives; and increasing the involvement of business sector members.
- **Labor Market Information Services** – provide funding to Regional Workforce Boards to expand and customize products and services offered by the Agency for Workforce Innovation (i.e. industry cluster analysis; employment demographics, profiles by industry and occupation, special employer surveys) to enable employers, job seekers and economic development organizations to have relevant information to make good business and career decisions.
- **Teacher Initiative** – continue to monitor the progress of the partnership established with the Department of Education to transition dislocated workers from Florida's high tech industries into teaching careers with an emphasis on math and science.

## Quick Response Training

Florida and its communities must compete aggressively to attract new businesses and support expansion of existing enterprise. Investments in economic development create higher paying jobs, and in turn, build desirable living environments. Started in July of 1993 within the Florida Department of Commerce, Division of Economic Development, the Quick Response Training (QRT) Program was the state's first attempt to link workforce development with economic development. It enabled Florida to compete with other states that typically have customized training budgets three to four times greater than Florida's resources for this critical location and retention incentive.

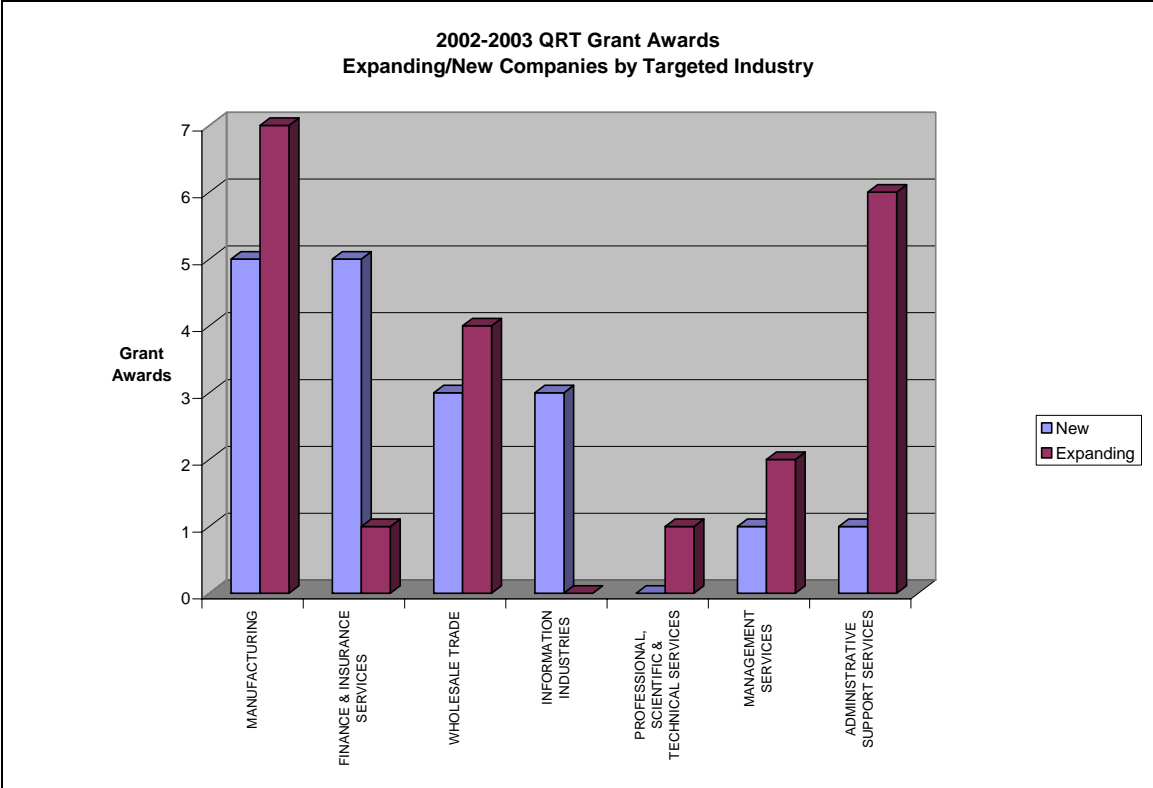
Today, QRT continues to be a vital component of Florida's economic development efforts, providing customized training for new and expanding targeted businesses across the state. In less than ten years' time, this employer-specific, customized training program has played a key role in the location or expansion decisions of over 300 competitive economic development projects. These projects have directly created over 85,000 new jobs in Florida.

The QRT program partners with Enterprise Florida, economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, community colleges, technical schools and universities as well as Regional Workforce Boards to support local economic development and workforce development strategies. Grant funds are provided for customized, entry-level skills training not available at the local level. Companies receiving the grant funds gained skilled employees for their operations reported increased profitability from enhanced employee productivity and faster implementation of startup and expansion. In addition, Florida residents hired for these new high skill/high wage jobs earned a salary while learning new skills that increased their employability now and in the future.

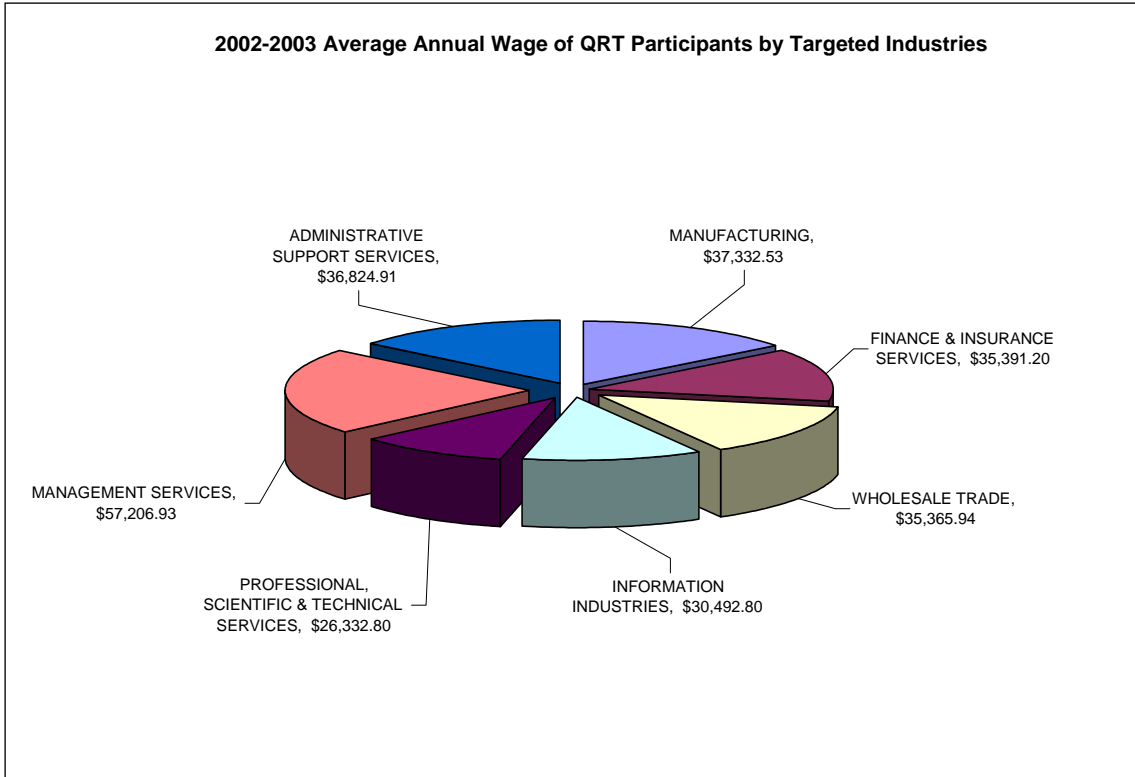
### 2002-2003 Highlights

Grant funds were awarded to 39 quality economic development projects totaling \$7,822,434 to provide training for 9,382 new employees. Table 1 presents 2002/2003 QRT grant awards by targeted industry and new or expanding companies. Twenty one of the 39 grants will benefit the expansion of existing Florida businesses, and eighteen will reimburse training costs and reduce up-front expenses for businesses new to the state.

The greatest number of trainees (33%) was in the manufacturing sector (see chart below). This industry sector is composed of machining manufacturing, pharmaceutical manufacturing, transportation equipment manufacturing and metal manufacturing.



The average annual wage for the new jobs created with QRT assistance ranged from \$26,332 for the Professional, Scientific & Technical Services industry category to \$57,206 for the Management Services industry category substantiating that these new jobs present high wage opportunities for Floridians (see chart below).



All QRT training grants are performance based. Companies must create the high skill/high wage jobs and hire and train new employees before any training costs are reimbursed. Training costs eligible for reimbursement include instructors/trainers salaries, manuals/textbooks and curriculum development. Through the companies' in-kind-matches to the training programs, Workforce Florida augmented the state's investment of \$6 million with an additional \$115.5 million in private sector contributions. This resulted in Florida workers receiving a total of \$14.77 in training benefits for every \$1.00 the state invested with program costs being contained to an average of \$714 per person.

### Challenges/Barriers

Throughout Florida, the economic downturn and the lingering effects of 9/11 caused many businesses who were preparing to expand to change their hiring timelines. Consequently, funds originally committed to these specific training projects were recouped to the program for potential redistribution. Given the modest growth in job-creating projects, a significant amount of funds remained uncommitted in addition to the annual state appropriation. Florida, like many other states, was faced with economic budget realities. As a result, the 2003 Legislature reduced the amount of QRT's annual program allocation by \$1 million or 20%.

The rapidly changing economic climate requires that we continue to assess how this important economic development tool can best meet the needs of today's businesses many of which are struggling to maintain competitiveness and retain the jobs they currently have. Florida is the only state in the nation to maintain a record of positive job growth over the last

20 months. However, most of this job growth is in industries that provide service-related occupations that pay wages *below* the 115% of statewide average wage required for this training incentive program. For this reason, more outreach efforts need to be made to reach businesses that are retooling or adding new product lines to maintain competitiveness and to avoid layoffs. Additionally, outreach efforts need to be made to key areas of the state where the QRT program is currently underutilized: rural areas, enterprise zones, and critical areas of economic concern. For example, during the fiscal year 2002/03 QRT used only 14% of its funds for projects in the state's enterprise zones, only seven percent in rural areas and only three percent in distressed inner cities. All together, just over \$1.8 million was used for training in these targeted areas. WFI will increase its marketing efforts to reach out to economic development partners and businesses in these areas of critical need, as well as to those businesses seeking to retool to maintain competitiveness and retain jobs, by providing "hands-on" technical assistance to help invest these training funds to benefit the state's businesses and their workers.

### Future Goals/Strategies

In order to future increase the nexus between economic and workforce development, Workforce Florida plans to implement a new strategy that requires project companies receiving QRT program funds to list the company's job openings in the local One-Stop Career Centers in their area of location. This strategy is based upon a local economic/workforce development best practice implemented in Brevard County by the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast and the Brevard Workforce Development Board. Among other things, this strategy will greatly increase the awareness of the public employment system services available to businesses, particularly those creating high wage, value-added jobs within the community.

WFI worked with its many marketing partners in business, labor and government. Training funds were targeted towards businesses and industries with the greatest potential impact on Florida's economy including biomedical and aerospace. Formal marketing for the Quick Response Training Program has not taken place since its inception in 1993. During the 2002/03 fiscal year, WFI staff visited several sites throughout Florida to showcase the QRT program, and during the upcoming year, plans to schedule additional site visits with the goal of strategically investing all of the state's allocation for this important program.

## Incumbent Worker Training

The Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program provides expense reimbursement grant funding for training the incumbent workforce of existing businesses. It was created in an effort to be proactive in maintaining worker skills and assisting Florida companies to remain competitive through upgrade skills training for existing workforce. This advanced skills training not only benefits the employee, but the employer and the state. If an employee faces a lay-off situation, these skills will assist them with reemployment. As an economic development tool, it produces highly skilled and knowledgeable workers which positions Florida to attract new businesses to the state or to provide expansion opportunities for existing employers. The program is administered by Workforce Florida and is funded from the state's 15% discretionary funds provided by Florida's allocation of Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dollars. Since inception of the program in 1999, the IWT Program has provided training funds for over 29,589 existing employees for more than 405 businesses.

To be eligible to receive an IWT grant award, businesses must have been in Florida for a minimum of one year, have at least one employee, and certify that the business is current on all state tax obligations. The business may use public, private, or its own in-house training provider based on the nature of the training.

*"Training is directed toward a higher skill level. New, junior level technicians are now trained from the first to be team leaders and advanced skilled technicians. Training is not just learning by rote. For example, the theory behind EPA test methods is taught so that the technicians may become decision makers in the field."*

*Joseph L. Cooksey, President  
Ambient Air Services, Inc. (AASI)  
Stark*

Funding priority is given to:

- Businesses with 25 or fewer employees
- Businesses located in rural, enterprise zone, Brownfield and inner-city areas
- Businesses in a qualified targeted industry.

All training grants awarded to companies are performance-based, expense reimbursement contracts, with companies only being reimbursed for approved and documented training expenses associated with a specific number of incumbent workers completing training during the contract period.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

In the third full year of program implementation, following a pilot in FY99/00, the Legislature allocated \$2,000,000 to the state IWT Program for FY02/03. The demand for incumbent worker training assistance was evidenced by requests totaling \$7,170,170 from 110 companies. Grant awards totaling \$2,633,661 were made to 3 consortium projects and 74 individual companies in 26 counties. By June 30, 2003, the 56 companies and 2 of the consortium projects had trained 8,809 incumbent workers.

*Based on these awards, the actual state investment per trainee was \$213 for fiscal year 2002/03 funds. The employers' contributions for these funds totaled \$1,145 per trainee.*

The types of skills training funded by the IWT grants were very diverse. Examples include: industry-specific technical skills, lean manufacturing, quality assurance and compliance (including ISO 9001 and other industry-specific skills), computer application skills (both general and industry or company-specific), customer service and supervisory/leadership skills.

### Funding Priorities Performance

Florida Statute directs the IWT program to give funding priority to projects in several areas that strategically assist with strengthening Florida's economy.

These include:

**Businesses with 25 or fewer employees.**

Forty-one businesses with 25 or fewer employees applied for IWT grant awards. Sixty percent of these (25 businesses) were awarded training grants representing 33% of all IWT Program training grants awarded in FY02/03.

*"Goals and objectives exceeded expectations. The highlight was the motivation and teamwork exhibited.*

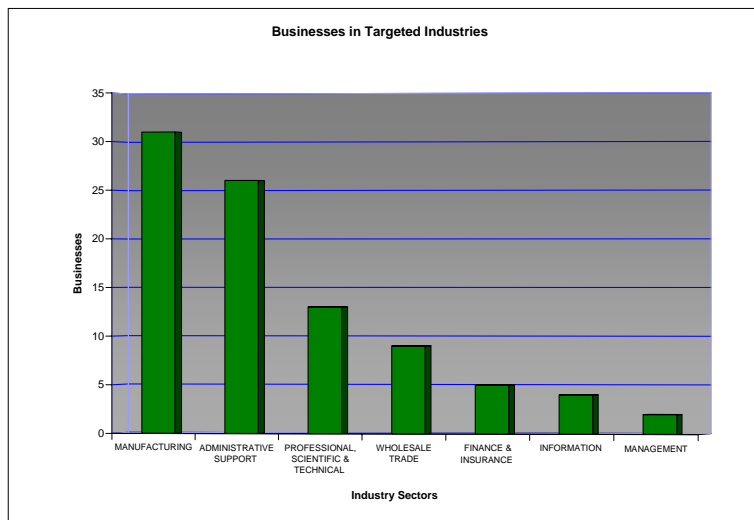
*Dennis Battistella, Plant Manager  
G.A. Braun - Ft. Lauderdale*

The IWT Program also measures performance by the number of grants provided to companies with 100 or fewer employees. Fifty-seven applications were received from businesses with 100 or fewer employees. Fifty seven percent of the small businesses in this category (33 businesses) were awarded state IWT Program training grants. This represents 44% of all IWT Program training grants awarded in FY02/03.

**Businesses located in rural and inner city areas.** Ninety percent of the businesses located in rural, distressed inner city areas, and/or enterprise zones that submitted IWT grant applications (10 businesses), received grant awards. This represents 31% of the total number of training grants awarded in FY02/03

**Businesses in a qualified targeted industry.**

Sixty five of the businesses receiving IWT grant awards represented all 7 of the major industry categories on the Qualified Target Industry list identified by the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED) in consultation with Enterprise Florida, Inc. This represents



92% of all the grants awarded.

## Challenges/Barriers

Funding requests continue to remain at a constant level - hovering around the \$7 million mark per year for the past three years. With a statute-limited appropriation of \$2 million each year, most grants are awarded within the first quarter to six months of the fiscal year. Companies seeking funding after this point are often not able to receive awards as the funds have already been committed. Many interested companies pre-screen the availability of funding and do not go forward with an application as they are aware of the unavailability of funds. Likewise, any company seeking training assistance in the second half of the fiscal year is also at a disadvantage due to the same reason. Although it is not entirely clear as to why funding requests remain at a constant level, the statutory cap on program funding likely figures prominently in the lack of growth in requests.

Given the statutory cap on state-level incumbent worker training funds, a continuing challenge remains to effectively leverage these funds with local-level funds designated for employed worker training initiatives. Steps have been taken to make progress in this area with a revised Employed Worker Training policy guidance paper, which highlight differences between the state-level program and local-level programs; adding a measure to track this performance on the “red and green” report; and providing additional state-level WIA funds to further bolster for regional training awards patterned after the state program.

In the past consortium-type projects have proven to be a good vehicle for training, especially for smaller companies, and because of the economies of scale associated with such efforts. Depending on the type of training required, it is sometimes difficult to coordinate this type of initiative unless without strong industry sector leadership. Other issues include scheduling the training at times convenient to participating companies and selecting an accessible location for participating companies.

## Future Goals and Strategies

Several areas/regions of the state have had little or no participation in the IWT program. Plans are to make a more concerted effort to outreach to these areas with special focus on Brownfield, enterprise zones, areas of critical concern and rural areas. By developing and implementing a plan, technical assistance and guidance can be delivered to the various regions to assist them with their incumbent worker and employed worker training efforts.

Increased funding for the Incumbent Worker Training program is much needed as evidenced by the demand. Other states are ramping up their efforts and are funding their programs at levels that are as three times or greater than Florida’s (e.g., Oregon recently set aside \$6 million in its state-level WIA allocation for incumbent worker training). Florida should evaluate whether its existing annual allocation should be increased in order to provide more training dollars to provide further skills upgrade training as a business retention tool and to assist Florida companies maintain their competitive edge.

## BETTER JOBS/BETTER WAGES COUNCIL

**Purpose:** To assist families transitioning from welfare to work, former welfare recipients working in low-wage jobs with limited mobility, and the larger population of underemployed adults move toward self-sufficiency by employing prevention, diversion, pre-employment and post-employment strategies that focus on engaging employers and facilitating non-traditional training/education programs.

The Better Jobs/Better Wages Council defines the overarching goal and objectives for Welfare Transition Program clients, Welfare-to-Work Program clients, and underemployed adult workers. To accomplish its goal and objectives, the Better Jobs/Better Wages Council partners with the 24 Regional Workforce Boards and other organizations that have an interest in improving Florida's workforce to better meet the needs of the state's businesses. The Welfare Transition clients and the underemployed adult workers are funded with a federal grant, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from Health and Human Services (HHS). The Welfare-to-Work Program clients, which include hard-to-employ welfare recipients and eligible non-custodial parents, are funded through a federal grant from the United States Department of Labor (USDOL). Please refer to Appendices for short-term and longitudinal outcome measures specific to the Welfare Transition and Welfare-to-Work Programs.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the Chairman of the Workforce Florida Board of Directors in consultation with Better Jobs/Better Wages Council members identified specific Council responsibilities/priorities that guided all Council funding and policy initiatives for fiscal year 2002-2003. These responsibilities/priorities are:

- Partner with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and RWBs to develop a plan to address all elements of TANF Reauthorization.
- Develop a plan to maximize the use of state resources and benefits of state investments (Maximize the ROI).
- Develop a plan for going forward without specific funding.

The Council determined that all Council funded grants would be limited to initiatives that specifically included the following: a description of how the employer community needs would be addressed; a description of an effort to obtain maximum leveraging of other funds (federal, RWB, private funds, etc.); a description of a process for replication; a defined plan for sustainability; and attestation that the program was non-duplicative of existing projects/programs. Further, funding would be limited to initiatives that target programs for employed workers and training strategies that target occupations on the 2002-2003 regional Targeted Occupations Lists (TOLs).

### 2002-2003 Highlights

#### ***Career Advancement and Retention Challenge (CARC) II.***

The current year CARC II project focused only on post-employment/employed worker training. A \$3.9 million dollar grant solicitation was issued. The grant sought innovative,

employed worker training programs for current and former welfare recipients and working needy poor families at risk of welfare dependency. Respondents to the solicitation were required to describe strategies to address customer outreach, employer engagement, retention services, coordination of post-employment services and training provider outreach/engagement. As a result of the competitive process, fourteen regional workforce board projects were funded.

CARC II was very successful. Actual enrollments and completions were 122% of the planned target numbers. Target numbers for achieving an earnings gain, obtaining an upgraded position and successfully achieving certification, diploma or degree have already been exceeded and final outcome numbers are not due until December 31, 2003. The quantitative outcomes for CARC II attest to the success of focusing the state funded demonstration projects on post-employment/employed worker skills upgrade training. The qualitative outcomes of CARC II have validated premises garnered from previous national and state demonstration projects. Those premises include the following:

- Career advancement and retention are critical to employed Welfare Transition clients moving along the continuum towards self-reliance and ultimately self-sufficiency;
- Skills upgrade training (job related and other postsecondary education) is required to ensure the client's success in achieving career advancement and retention;
- Welfare Transition clients need assistance/mentoring in balancing work and family responsibilities in order to access training/education opportunities;
- The first challenge is to identify and market the opportunity to the client;
- Employer engagement and cooperation is absolutely critical to the success of employed worker training initiatives;
- Employers will participate as soon as they understand the benefit to their bottom line;
- RWBs must encourage training providers to offer non-traditional flexible programs;
- RWBs must facilitate the collaboration of the worker, employer and training provider.

Regional Workforce Boards solicited feedback from workers, employers, training providers and mentors participating in the CARC II demonstration project – a sample of the comments is provided below.

- ***Hillsborough County Businesses***

*“Some of my employees that received training were on the verge of being let go but now I can say they are rated amongst the best.”*

*“We are anxious to continue offering additional training programs.”*

*“Students showed an improved skill level and are asking higher level questions of the supervisory level technicians.”*

*“The employers’ board, at its business meeting, officially recognized the students for their participation and completion of the program. In addition, the board recognized the program for providing the advancement of their employees’ skills.”*

*“I’m very pleased they were offered flexible scheduling for training so they could continue to offer maintenance to the residents, even with a reduced work force.”*

*“Since we’ve experienced a reduced budget this year, additional skills training for each student allow us to improve their productivity.”*

*“One of my Hispanic employees also enrolled in additional ESOL courses to assist with his maintenance training, and now he performs better.”*

- **Alachua County Businesses**

*“Your assistance with students in the correctional program was greatly appreciated. The assistance provided by your organization allowed the students to complete and enter a professional field.”*

*“This was well planned and implemented. The portable computer lab was a plus. We plan to use this service many more times in the future.”*

*“The planning, preparation and execution of classes was great.”*

- **Brevard County Businesses**

*“Job Link’s contribution to our training really helped us meet a critical need! Thank you.” Ola Moseley, A Country Place, Titusville*

*“Your program is such a wonderful and needed program. Your ability to offer training to the most in need like single moms makes it a vital resource to our community. Also your other services like job postings are such a benefit to employers. You always seem to visit when I need you most and help me get done what I don’t have time to do with all the demands on my schedule. I am personally impressed with the professionalism of the Job Link representatives who visit my facility!” Carolyn Sheppard, Executive Administrator of Sand Point Assisted Living and Senior Center*

- **Alachua County Workers**

*“This is a great service and is a great opportunity for many people.”*

*“Although we are not using MSOL 2000 program in my job, it was very useful to know. I really enjoyed the classes. After I was able to show what I had learned I was promoted from Data Entry Clerk (\$7.95/hr) to Sr. Adjustment Clerk (\$10.00/hr).”*

*“Everything was great, I wouldn’t change a thing.”*

*“The whole class was valuable learning experience to me. I just wish we had more time.”*

*“The class struck an interest in me to become a medical coder. I have been accepted into the Medical Coding Program at Santa Fe Community College this fall.”*

- **Brevard County Workers**

*“What I received from this program is very educational and rewarding to me. Overall, the guidance I received from my Career Coach was very supporting for me to continue and go to a higher standard.” Terri P.*

*“Because of this program I am maintaining my current employment while focusing on the how-to’s to accomplish my long-term goal.” LaDonna B.*

*“I love what I do working in Dietary at Vista Manor - especially the residents. Being able to take the Dietary Management course by correspondence will give me a promotion to Dietary Assistant manager. I could not have done this without mentoring help and Target Success Program!” Neisha S...*

*“Thanks for the opportunity to take the Dietary correspondence course. Not only is my employer behind me 100% but our head nurse has agreed to be my mentor.” Suzanne G.*

- **Alachua County Training Provider:**

*“Enjoyed the opportunity to assist workers to advance.”*

*“Funding enabled assistance that would otherwise not be available & created jobs.”*

- **Brevard County Mentors:**

*“I would like to feel that my performance as a mentor provided a motivational inspiration for the mentees. I think I was most useful to my mentees through encouragement. Through encouraging words I instituted the importance of discipline such as, to always perform to the best of their abilities through good study habits, and strive for excellence. If I was involved in a similar program next year, I would not change a thing.” Chris W.*

*“I want to take a moment to thank you for allowing me to be a participant in program! I believe that Thursday, March 13th was a day that I will never forget! I had hoped that I could provide “something” to help my mentee and had not considered what my mentee could provide to me. She finds hope in my life experiences, a chance to side step mistakes and capitalize on accomplishments. My*

*past no longer carries with it painful memories, but the promise of hope for someone else.” Sarah M.*

***Passport to Economic Progress Pilot Demonstration***

This demonstration project (Hillsborough and Manatee Counties) was designed to increase family income levels and provide services to assist families in achieving and maintaining economic self-sufficiency through the provision of extended transitional services and wage supplementation up to 100% of federal poverty guidelines. The final report submitted to the Governor and members of the Florida House and Senate made the following recommendation:

- The Wage Supplementation element should be replaced with a strong performance based program that defines specific incentives and bonuses for achieving benchmarks in the self-sufficiency plan while the client is working full time.
- To facilitate consistency and coordination of programs throughout the service area, the Suncoast Workforce Development Board requests that the demonstration include both Manatee and Sarasota counties.
- The redesign of the Passport to Economic Progress Demonstration Program should include an element that allows for outreach to employers/businesses and incentives for retention, facilitating skills upgrade training tied to opportunities for career advancement and/or earnings gain.

The recommendations were incorporated into the new project design and the next report is due in January 2005.

***TANF Planning and Business Outreach Grant***

Regional Workforce Boards were invited to request FY 2002-2003 TANF funds. There were \$700,000 dollars available and these funds had to be utilized by June 30, 2003. Funds were awarded to RWBs to fund outreach to primary county economic development organizations, businesses/employers, non profit community groups and local training providers. The focus of the outreach included the following:

- develop a plan of action with local partners to identify, address and minimize the negative impact of the war/terrorism (for example; increased unemployment and lack of job opportunities for the TANF population) on the community;
- develop a plan of action with local partners to identify specific local workforce needs in the post-war/terrorism period, including those workforce needs related to business retention/expansion and increased placement opportunities for TANF clients;
- identify post-war/terrorism retention strategies for TANF eligible employed workers;
- identify/fund short-term training needs to prepare both the TANF eligible employed worker and job seeker for post-war/terrorism jobs.

All requests were evaluated to determine demonstrated need, ability to use such funds, and availability of local formula funds. Those requests that demonstrated creative, innovative and timely responses to meet the challenge, including leveraging of other sources of funds, specifically demonstrating private sector business demand, and providing evidence of collaborative partnerships with industry consortiums, business associations, economic

development organizations and training providers received priority consideration. Ten RWBs were funded. Project descriptions are included in the following table.

<b>RWB</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
2	Participate in on-going project (Business Community Pilot) with local partners to conduct workshops at the One-Stops to communicate to small businesses owners the menu of services/referrals available at the local One-Stops to help reduce the economic impact of situations like war. Will also take the opportunity to inform the businesses about the on-going resources available through the One-Stops including not only entry level job seekers, but also opportunities such as CARC for eligible employees who need skills upgrade training, based on the employers needs.
5	Partner with EDC, educational organizations to conduct workshops, design/deliver survey to focus on critical strategies to address job creation/placement/advancement and strategies for targeted training to meet immediate business needs – specifically entry-level manufacturing jobs and other opportunities for TANF eligible population (either entry level placement or skills upgrade training for employed workers-CAR II).
8	Partner with regional EDC to conduct workshops, one-on-one meetings, develop/design/conduct survey to identify small business needs as it relates to contingency planning and recovery to contribute to a more disaster resilient business community that can keep workers employed. Small businesses employ more than 50% of private sector workers in this region. This is particularly important as it relates to entry level TANF clients who were impacted with post 9/11 lay offs. Retention strategies that include the value of transitional services and skills upgrade training for TANF eligible workers will be implemented.
10	Partner with local EDC, Small Business Development Center, community college and regional manufacturing association to conduct outreach and identify solutions to critical issues resulting from post-war events. RWB will specifically focus on needs that relate to impending closures, emergency staffing issues as well as skills upgrade training to facilitate retention and potential advancement /earnings gain for entry-level workers.
12	Partner with various groups to develop 5 projects designed to identify impacts, assess immediate workforce needs, develop specific employment strategies for the high TANF population Orlando Parramore Neighborhood and deliver appropriate short-term training to meet targeted TANF eligible and employed and unemployed worker needs in the post war job market.
15	<p>RWB will sponsor a broad based and collaborative forum between Tampa Bay Workforce Alliance and key economic development organizations. (Tampa Bay has been impacted by the large number of troops from Mac Dill AFB, Local National Guard and Reserve Units that were deployed to Iraq).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The focus of the collaboration is to jointly identify local industry segments and/or customers (businesses and job seekers) impacted by the current, military situation.</li> <li>• Conduct focus groups to assess employer recommended tactics to address immediate workforce needs as well as “new” workforce needs created by post-emergency opportunities - (connecting job seekers with employers to fill vacancies due to troop deployment as well as longer term plans to identify “next” placement opportunities for clients that fill vacancies which resulted from the deployment; and maximizing transitional services as a retention strategy to better meet the needs of both the employer and the newly employed TANF eligible worker).</li> <li>• Use information from outreach and focus groups to carefully match all training efforts to identified opportunities and maximally leverage training resources.</li> </ul>
17	Develop enhanced capacity to conduct accurate planning. Create a current, comprehensive, searchable data base to be used in the planning process. Factors to be considered throughout the planning process will include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of the impact of 9/11 (specifically on entry level employees) in relation to potential future impact.</li> <li>• Analysis of both the industries and occupations that are currently affected, as well as those potentially affected, by the war. Identify immediate opportunities to match job seekers with open positions as well as plan for shifting those workers to permanent jobs when military personnel return home.</li> <li>• The number of jobs likely to be impacted, as well as the skills of residents in those jobs. This will be analyzed in relation to jobs that will continue to grow so that partners can develop “skills gap” training plans for both the first time job seeker as well as employed worker.</li> </ul> <p>An analysis of where former TANF recipients have gained employment over the past two years as a means to determine how many are likely to be affected by further economic downturn.</p>
21	<p>RWB will partner with local EDC, businesses, non-profit community groups and training providers to create a focused recovery plan. Strategies will include preparing, distributing and analyzing a survey; conducting a countywide business event – including County Enterprise Zones and rural areas; preparing informational materials for businesses and job seekers. Resultant recovery plan will be available and applicable for varying situations that could negatively impact the local economy and business community. Plan will also define a process for quickly accessing appropriate community groups/businesses to accurately identify job openings, promotion opportunities and incumbent worker needs so the One-Stop can place and assist in retention/advancement for entry-level job-seekers.</p>
22	<p>The purpose of this request is to seek funds to conduct a Broward County Business Outreach Program comprised of the following goals: (1) Develop a plan of action to identify, address, and minimize the negative impact of war and/or terrorism on Broward County involving key stakeholders and workforce development partners in the process (2) Educate Broward County businesses about the wide range of services and support programs available to assist them, (3) Assist businesses with assessing, devising and implementing strategies that will enable them to maintain operations in the event of a terrorist attack or an economic downturn associated with war.</p> <p>RWB will provide detailed information on specific strategies; filling temporary positions to transition until the military returns; preparing those temporary employees for potential reassignment at same company or placement in another business; identifying short term training to ensure new/modified post-war businesses have trained workforce; working with businesses to provide transitional services to facilitate retention and possible job upgrades for entry level workers; bringing to the table training providers to partner with businesses and RWB to provide training programs that are responsive to the immediate and near future needs of the businesses and TANF eligible employed workers.</p>
23	<p>RWB will partner with the regional EDC (The Beacon Council). The Beacon Council has an existing program (a Welfare to Work Taskforce) to reach the TANF population and will build upon that successful program. The RWB and Council can address the needs of the TANF population and of local businesses by working together. The plan is to reach out to the local business community and other community groups to educate organizations on ways to utilize the services of the 23 One-Stop Career Centers as part of post war/economic downturn recovery; to promote the synergies between the One-Stops and staffing agencies to drive additional job orders; to facilitate the employers and employees benefit from skills upgrade training especially as it relates to job retention for both the worker and employer.</p>

**Step-Up Challenge Grant:**

In August 2000 The Better Jobs/Better Wages Council was challenged by then Chairman of the Board, Toni Jennings, to develop a plan to effectively utilize idle Welfare-to-Work resources. At that time less than 30% of the approximately \$84,000,000 W-t-W local allocation and less than 10% of the state set-aside total of approximately \$15,000,000 W-t-W dollars had been expended to provide services to the eligible population.

WFI/AWI/RWBs addressed the barriers to utilizing the W-t-W funds associated with match funds and the changes in defining eligibility issues. For FY 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, RWBs were encouraged to utilize W-t-W funds. The RWB TANF allocation formula was partially calculated on how much W-t-W funding the RWB still had available. As of 8/31/03, approximately 100% of the local W-t-W funds expiring September 2003 have been expended. Approximately 43% of the local W-t-W funds expiring September 2004 have been expended. The RWBs are on target to effectively utilize the balance of \$14,407,516 by September 2004.

To address the state set-aside funds, WFI has issued three Step-Up Challenge Grants and one Step-Up Challenge Scholarship Grant and as of 8/31/03 approximately 90% of the state set-aside funds have been expended/obligated. The remaining funds expire September 2004.

- Step-Up Challenge I was issued in September 2000 in the amount of \$1,266,385. The contracts have expired and \$687,895 was unspent and used to fund Step-Up Challenge II.
- Step-Up Challenge Scholarship Grant was issued in May 2001 in the amount of \$3,997,531. Those contracts have expired and \$913,436 was unspent and used to fund Step-Up Challenge II.
- Step-Up Challenge II was issued in January 2001 in the amount of \$1,022,443. The contracts have expired and \$747,897 was unspent and used to fund Step-Up Challenge III.
- Step-Up Challenge III, was issued July 2002 in the amount of \$4,680,900. Those contracts will expire September 30, 2003. As of 8/31/03, \$4,111,034 had been spent and the balance obligated. All projects are on track to effectively utilize the remaining funds.

### ***Welfare Collaborative Capacity Building Study***

The project included a study of welfare client characteristics (new, returning, and continuing) and the link with services provided and outcomes. The final paper describes each Regional Workforce Board's capacity to connect assessment, services, and monitoring with the achievement of desired outcomes. The final report develops and identifies logic models, promising practices and other tools for building or improving the capacity of the Regional Workforce Boards (and service providers) to screen and assess clients, design services, and achieve outcomes. A specific outcome of this project deals with addressing learning disabilities. It was identified that few regions are adequately screening and referring WTP clients for learning disabilities, yet clients with specific learning disabilities will most likely return to the caseload or remain on the caseload until their needs are addressed. The outcomes and logic models of this report will be used as background information as Florida develops the Florida TANF Implementation Plan to address the projected changes in the new Federal TANF Reauthorization legislation due in 2004.

### **Policy Initiatives**

***Relocation Assistance, Cash Assistance Severance Benefit, Hardship Exemption to Time Limitations, Up-Front Diversion and Individual Development Accounts.***

As directed by state statute, during the first three years, the Better Jobs/Better Wages Council recommended to the full WFI Board approval of five guidance papers/policy documents. These documents have been updated to address implementation issues.

### ***TANF Reauthorization***

Federal legislation, The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA), was passed and became Public Law 104-193 in October 1996. The Federal Act gave the states the legislative foundation to transform the welfare program from an entitlement program to a work program focused on assisting families in attaining self-sufficiency and transitioning from welfare to work. PRWORA was enacted with an expiration date of September 30, 2002. The renewal process of the PRWORA is titled “TANF Reauthorization.” The 107<sup>th</sup> Congress began, but did not complete, the process of renewing (“re-authorizing”) TANF. In order to keep the program funded and operational while reauthorization efforts move forward in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress, resolutions were passed that funded TANF through March 31, 2004 at Fiscal Year 2002 levels.

The State of Florida began the process of developing a work program with the Work and Gain Economic Self-sufficiency Act (WAGES) in 1996. In 2000, Florida developed the Welfare Transition (WT) program with the application of the Florida Workforce Innovation Act, Senate Bill 2050.

WFI (specifically the Better Jobs/Better Wages Council) in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families and the Agency for Workforce Innovation has monitored the progress of the TANF Reauthorization legislation throughout FY 2002-2003. Florida has worked with the appropriate organizations and committees to provide information and identify issues to address the technical elements of both the House and Senate proposals. (Please see section – Future Goals/Strategies...Projects in Progress.)

## Challenges/Barriers

### ***Meeting the Needs of the Employer Community***

Florida businesses cite their biggest problem with the public employment system is the referral of non-qualified applicants. Florida must focus on the importance of increasing the skills of Welfare Transition clients before job placement to address educational deficiencies that might significantly limit their work or earnings capacity. Only about 40 percent of cash assistance recipients in Florida have a high school diploma/GED equivalency. This must be addressed if clients are to ever achieve the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency.

WFI is participating in a national Work Readiness Credential project that will provide important profile, assessment and curricula to address the skills of the client during the pre-employment phase. The objective of this project is to address the issues of Florida businesses so that referred job-seekers will be qualified. Similarly, through post-employment efforts – like CARC – we can address the training and educational needs of employed workers and employers by including the Work Readiness curricula as part of the skills upgrade training.

### ***Achieving Self-Sufficiency***

Underemployed incumbent workers (who have never received public assistance) with limited skills need access to career advancement and job retention programs that will assist them in moving to self-sufficiency. Although the welfare caseload has been dramatically reduced (84%), quantitative and qualitative studies indicate that approximately 40% of the clients who have left for employment are earning \$7.00 to \$9.99 per hour. This would annualize to \$14,560 – \$20,779. For a family of three, the Federal Poverty income guideline is \$15,260 . Florida defines needy as a family whose income is less than 200% of the Federal Poverty income guideline.

Welfare Reform was implemented in 1996 during unprecedented economic expansion and there were more jobs than there were job seekers. As demonstrated during 2001, 2002 and early 2003, an economic downturn impacts our ability to place job seekers and requires us to focus on employer outreach to find the placement opportunities and to address the employer concerns as described above. Also we must focus on skills upgrade training to ensure our clients retain their jobs and achieve career advancement and earnings gain.

Clients transitioning from welfare are extremely vulnerable to the challenges of managing work, family, childcare and transportation. To encourage these clients to also include skills upgrade training/education is both extremely critical and difficult. Florida must continue to address the post-employment needs of those Welfare Transition clients who have found employment and other incumbent workers with limited skills and earnings who have never been on welfare. It is critical that the working needy poor obtain the skills and training necessary to achieve career advancement and increased earnings.

*We have succeeded in putting our clients into the workplace; we have not fully addressed the issue of poverty and moving toward self-sufficiency.*

### **Local Challenges**

- **Pre-employment services address the needs of temporary cash assistance clients (TCA) and better prepare them for work.** We still serve the “typical caseload” clients new to welfare; however, a larger percentage of our caseload clients have multiple barriers and present with challenges that must be met in order to provide them every opportunity to find employment. Pre-employment welfare transition efforts must continue to focus on getting people to work while ensuring that the client is “work-ready”.
- **Post-employment services address the needs of the recently employed transitional clients (former TCA clients) and the working needy poor clients (clients who have never received TCA, but are at risk of welfare dependency).** A larger percentage of our active client list are transitional clients who have recently become employed but will benefit from employed worker training to upgrade skills, retain employment, obtain job advancement and increased earnings. Upgrading the skills of these transitional clients (already employed and no longer receiving TCA) will benefit both the employee customer and the employer customer. Upgrading the skills of these transitional clients will improve job retention and reduce recidivism in the state of Florida. We must serve the working needy poor earning less than 200% of

poverty who have never received welfare but will also benefit from employed worker training to upgrade skills, obtain job advancement and increased earnings and move them along the continuum toward self-sufficiency.

- **Prevention services address the needs of the Florida's youth and working needy poor who are at risk of welfare dependency.** As noted in the post-employment strategy, by offering post-employment services to the working needy poor, moving them along the continuum toward self-sufficiency Florida is implementing a valuable prevention strategy for Florida families. Other critical target group for prevention strategies includes Florida's children and youth. Programs to address the full spectrum beginning with childcare and school readiness, literacy, drop-out prevention, teen pregnancy prevention and mentoring are essential to ensure we have implemented programs to fully address preventing welfare dependency.

## Future Goals/Strategies

Welfare Reform today has a different "face" than it did in 1996. Today approximately 60% of the Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) caseload clients have less than a high school education – in 1996 the percentage was 50%. Today approximately 50% have no work history – in 1996 the percentage was 38%. These are our job seekers. We are also more aware of the needs of Florida's businesses. Florida employers voice concern about the basic skills and soft skills of job applicants and employees with high school degrees. Employers from all industry sectors indicate a need for improved basic skills: communication, reading comprehension, problem solving, basic math and teamwork skills. The workforce system must develop new service delivery models to address the changing customer profiles.

### *2003-2004 Council Funded Grants*

- **Career Advancement and Retention Challenge III Grant Solicitation (TANF Grant)** - The current year project focuses only on post-employment/employed worker training. A \$3.98 million dollar grant solicitation was issued to regional boards. The intent of this solicitation is to fund innovative approaches to achieving career advancement and job retention for TANF-eligible, *employed workers*. It is also the intent of this solicitation that projects will involve a partnership or collaboration between local employers, training providers and the Regional Workforce Boards. The regional workforce board will serve as fiscal and administrative agent for this funding. It is also the intent of this solicitation to provide a "win/win" for both employer and employee. Through the implementation of employed worker training, not only will the process assist workers to move into upgraded positions – toward a new level of economic self-sufficiency, but it will also provide more opportunity for the "unemployed" worker to move into the system. Employers will be offered skills upgrade training that meet the needs of the employer to address productivity and related bottom line issues. Twelve RWBs projects were funded.

The grant solicitation/evaluation and award process for CARC III has built on the successes and lessons learned with CARC I and II. Notably the cost per participant

decreased 7.6% from that of CARC II and this is calculated on the projected cost. Last year the final cost per participant was 22% less than the initial projected number. We project an additional 10% decrease in the cost per participant by the end of the project. The CARC II grant was for \$3.9 million dollars and had approximately \$1.3 million leveraged dollars. The CARC III grant was for \$3.98 million dollars and has approximately \$2.8million leveraged dollars. Respondents were able to identify more cost effective service delivery models and market the program to employers and training providers to increase private investment in the project.

***Projects in Progress***

- **Step-Up Challenge III (Welfare-to-Work Grant)** - The current Step-Up III grant (\$4.68 million) focuses on projects that assist the targeted hard-to-serve population obtain or enhance work skills leading to placement, advancement and retention. Final financial and participant data will be reported 6/04. Outcomes will be evaluated and best practices shared with all RWBs for incorporation into replicated projects.
- **Passport to Economic Progress Pilot Demonstration** - The service delivery model/program design elements will be reviewed, including the program eligibility, customer outreach, self-sufficiency plan, coordination of post-employment services, employer engagement, retention/transitional services to be delivered by the employer and RWB and the training provider outreach and engagement.

Recommendations will be incorporated into the next report that is due in January 2005. Interim best practices and outcomes will be evaluated to determine if the service delivery model should be considered for use in meeting the performance requirements in the new TANF Reauthorization legislation due in 2004.

- **Work Readiness Credential**  
Better Job/Better Wages Council reserved \$100,000 to support a cross-council initiative - Work Readiness Credential. This initiative addresses several of the concerns described by the employers and will provide job seekers and incumbent workers with certification of job-ready skills that will facilitate career advancement and job retention.

Florida and four other states (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Washington) have joined a project to develop a national, portable work readiness credential that will signal to employers that individuals have the knowledge, skills and abilities to be ready to work. The other national partners are National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), National Skill Standards Board (NSSB), National Retail Federation (NRF), National Association of Manufacturers' Center for the Workforce (NAMCFW), and Center for Workforce Development of the Institutional Educational Leadership (CWD). Technical work will be carried out by research firms that are leaders in the area of adult learning, assessment, and

technology: SRI International; Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee; Human Resource Research Organization (HumRRO); and WestED.

The Work Readiness Credential is being developed through a national consensus-building process that includes business, unions, education and training professionals, and state workforce investment boards. A National Business Leadership Council is also being formed to assure that the credential meets business needs and priorities and to help build business demand for the credential as a tool for building and assuring a literate, job-ready workforce.

Technical work will be carried out by research firms that are leaders in the area of adult learning, assessment, and technology: SRI International; Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee; Human Resource Research Organization (HumRRO); and WestED.

In the first phase of the work on the EFF Work Readiness Credential (December 2002 – July 2003), project staff will be collecting (with help from state partners) and analyzing data on knowledge, skills, and abilities to include in the EFF Work Readiness Profile. In the second phase of work on the credential (July 2003 – April 2004), we will be developing assessment instruments for the credential. In the third and fourth phases of work on the credential (April 2004 – June 2005), we will field test and validate the credentialing assessments and develop the system for issuing the credential.

When completed, the credential assessment will be designed to assess both English-speaking and non-English-speaking individuals. The credential design will include a computer-delivered assessment, with on-line portfolio to document personal and professional development; and a modular design, to make it easy to use and customize to local conditions.

The credential delivery system will be in place by June 2005. Key products and dates include:

Work Readiness Profile validated:	July 2003
Work Readiness Assessments developed:	May 2004
Assessments validated:	June 2005
Credentialing System field tested:	June 2005

- **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Reauthorization Workshop.**

The TANF federal block grant that funds Welfare Transition efforts is due for reauthorization. Florida has an integrated service delivery model and is developing an integrated TANF Reauthorization Implementation Plan. The Better Jobs/Better Wages Council is partnering with the appropriate agencies/organizations to develop Florida's TANF Implementation Plan that will include strategies to ensure the effective and successful implementation of TANF Reauthorization changes. Successfully implementing the new legislation in

Florida means achieving three objectives: meet all performance requirements to ensure no penalties are assessed; identify and pursue all additional grant opportunities; and, identify, pursue and achieve all high performance bonus opportunities.

***Policies/Guidance/Direction***

- Council will review final reports from state funded projects to determine next steps that could include the need for policy/guidance/direction.
- Council will develop best practice manual from state funded projects to facilitate improving future state funded grant solicitations.
- Council will assess the effectiveness of the Relocation Assistance, Cash Assistance Severance Benefit, Hardship Exemption to time Limitations, Up-Front Diversion and Individual Development Accounts guidance documents and local programs to determine if the programs service delivery model should be modified or if there are models that should be replicated throughout the state.

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***Strategic Plan Update***

The Council continues to review/revise/update the strategic plan including an assessment of existing methods of communication/coordination/cooperation with all partners.

## FIRST JOBS/FIRST WAGES COUNCIL

**Purpose:** To promote successful entry of youth into the workforce through education and job experience, including school-to-work initiatives that enlist business and community support to ensure that students have the educational and occupational skills required to succeed in the workforce. This council also addresses adults entering the workforce for the first time and youth programs related to welfare reform.

The First Jobs/First Wages (FJ/FW) Council continues to link first-time workers to available training and education programs through its strategic initiatives and projects. First-time workers may include students, displaced homemakers, older Americans, veterans, persons with disability and/or welfare recipients as well as youth who are no longer enrolled in schools. The components of the Council's strategy include efforts that enlist business, education and community support for students to achieve long-term career goals, ensuring that young people and adults entering the workplace for the first time have the academic and occupational skills required to succeed in the workplace.

In October 2002, Workforce Florida Chairman Ray Gilley convened a meeting of the state council and committee chairpersons, council and leadership staff of both Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss key issues to be addressed in workforce development in the near future. The following responsibilities and challenges were identified as relevant to the First Jobs/First Wages Council and became a guide to the council's program of work during the year.

- Establish an on-going forum for discussion with the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Re-Examine the First Jobs/First Wages Council priorities so that we can provide the most value-added services to the overall workforce development system.
- Create an identifiable mission for youth workforce development programs, and if needed, establish state policy for the parameters of the program.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

#### ***Skills Training for Youth***

This project provided training and job experiences through internships, tutoring, mentoring, and job placement to youth that will provide them with skills to enter, retain or advance their employment opportunities, particularly in high growth sectors and critical job shortage areas. Additionally, an intended by-product was a positive impact on school attendance and achievement. Services were provided through partnerships between local workforce boards and business/industry associations or economic development organizations. Nine Regional Workforce Boards and two chambers of commerce were allocated \$2,311,753 and served 1,390 youth with the cost per trainee being \$1,663.

The ***Juvenile Offender Re-Entry Project*** was funded for \$ 2.5 million to help youthful offenders released from the Department of Juvenile Justice facilities to become employed

through the provision of vocational training, on-the-job training, mentoring, and support services. Seven local workforce boards were allocated \$1,838,819 to provide services to 540 youth successfully placing 267 in jobs. The cost per served was \$3,405. This project was also intended to create or strengthen partnerships between agencies serving youth and the juvenile justice system.

The *Special Youth Short-term Projects* gave the Regional Workforce Boards the opportunity to enhance existing, successful youth programs. A total of \$458,783 was made available to nine Regional Workforce Boards to provide training and services including: training in computer related careers, construction, pregnancy prevention, employability skills, a job fair, one week participation at Junior Achievement's Exchange City, work experience, and a "boot-camp" operated by the sheriff's department as a conduit to return to school. A total of 1,959 youth were served in this region specific program to assist with diverse needs and programming strategies.

"*Beyond High School*" is a web-based interactive tool that provides a mechanism to educate youth, their parents and youth counselors about high growth/impact sectors and the skills necessary for these jobs. The idea originated from the publication of "*Giving Children Hope and Skills in the 21<sup>ST</sup> Century*", published by the Agency for Workforce Innovation. The Brevard Workforce Development Board was funded to develop this tool as a value-added project that can be accessed by all youth visiting the newly established **Employ Florida** website as well as the Agency for Workforce Innovation websites.

The *Strengthening Youth Partnerships in Florida* was the first meeting of key state organizations that were invited by the First Jobs/First Wages Council to attend a two day workshop to discuss the benefits of a sustained dialogue between key state organizations. The purpose of the sustained dialogue is to enhance communication, coordination, and planning among key organizations that play a role in developing Florida's youth, particularly in the area of workforce skill attainment. There was a unanimous decision by attendees to continue meeting periodically to identify gaps and overlaps in programs and the key issues facing all participating organizations. Four additional meetings are planned before June 30, 2004.

A *Youth Technical Assistance Workshop* was held in conjunction with a USDOL Conference held in Jacksonville, Florida. The First Jobs/First Wages Council contacted USDOL and congressmen for help in getting Jacksonville named as the host site for the Southeast Regional WIA Learning Exchange for Youth and committed to sponsoring a Florida workshop in conjunction with the USDOL sponsored conference. The Youth Technical Assistance Workshop showcased best practices in Florida with an emphasis on serving out-of-school youth, strengthening youth partnerships, marketing services, and basic skills credentialing. The workshop also provided training for correctly determining youth eligibility, younger youth goal attainments

"Due to recent changes and more changes to come, workshops are needed, especially for the exchange of practices, possible problem solving, and up-dating information of state and federal requirements."  
Meeting Attendee

and the implementation of the Sampling Methodology for WIA Youth Eligibility Determination Policy.

## Cross Council Projects

The *Worker Readiness Certification Initiative* was funded by all three Councils for the purpose of addressing the most prominent problem facing business statewide – lack of work readiness skills among new job applicants. The First Jobs/First Wages Council places a high priority on youth graduating from high school being ready and able to enter the labor market and/or pursue post secondary education. The state’s economy is dependent on youth and first time workers having the entry-skills skills to fill the jobs being vacated by the surge of “baby-boomers” leaving the workforce. The Council contributed \$150,000 to this initiative.

## Policy Initiatives

### ***Alternate Method of Documentation of Youth Eligibility***

The First Jobs/First Wages Council was receptive to the request from several regions that the state provide further guidance that would streamline the WIA youth eligibility determination process because the needs of many eligible youth were not being met due to problems acquiring eligibility documentation. After several meetings, representatives from the regions, Workforce Florida, Inc. and the Agency for Workforce Innovation recommended that the state issue a guidance paper allowing the use of a random sampling methodology such as the one currently approved for use by the Job Corp program. This policy has reduced the time necessary to certify eligibility, thereby freeing up staff to provide initial counseling on youth program options.

### ***Guidance on After-School Care Requirements for Youth***

The intent of the Guidance Paper of After-School Care Requirements for Youth was to provide clarification on Section 445.004(10)(a) of the Florida Statutes so that the regions were reporting data uniformly on this requirement. The policy draft was approved by representatives from the regions, Workforce Florida, Inc. and the Agency for Workforce Innovation prior to being issued for comment to the Regional Workforce Boards. The policy speaks to the requirement that regions spend 15% of their youth funds on after-school youth programs by giving community-based and faith-based organizations an equal opportunity to provide services.

## Youth Outreach

### Florida Trend’s NEXT Magazine

Florida’s high school students are the workforce of the future. High school students are not only faced with academic preparation for graduation, most are also beginning to shape their direction for future employment and careers. Career awareness, skills assessment, mentoring programs, internships, as well as, GED classes, teen pregnancy prevention and other services to ensure successful entry into the workforce are available through Florida’s workforce system.

To promote these services to the teen audience, Workforce Florida continued its participation in Florida Trend's highly successful *NEXT* magazine. *Florida Trend's NEXT* magazine is written by and for high school students. Workforce Florida obtained a two page full color layout in the 2002/03 issue promoting all of the services available to youth through the One-Stop Career Centers. The ad incorporated the new **Employ Florida** linking brand as a way to locate Florida's network of 100+ One-Stops via the website at [www.employflorida.net](http://www.employflorida.net) and the toll free phone number, 1-877-FLA-2345.



In addition to providing a copy of the magazine to 750,000 Florida youth, grades 9-12, *Florida Trend's NEXT Magazine* also provides a Teacher's Guide with suggestions on how to incorporate the magazine into lesson plans and classroom activities. The magazine also has a companion website at [www.FloridaNext.com](http://www.FloridaNext.com) with additional expanded information, links, activities, surveys and more.

### Employ Florida Ad Campaign

In concert with the *NEXT* magazine ad and the new **Employ Florida** linking brand, a 13 week in-cinema ad campaign was launched, in late summer 2003, in 40 theaters (314 screens) located in all of the major markets. The ad targets youth and directs them to the **Employ Florida** website and toll free number to locate a member of the **Employ Florida** network of one-stop centers.



**Youth Zone on Employ Florida's Website**  
Visitors to the new Youth Zone on the **Employ Florida** website can access web links to resources that

provide the latest information about high-growth, high-demand occupations along with the skills and education needed to attain those jobs, interactive tools that help youth discover their career interests, write a career plan or resume, or explore the many occupations that are available that may match their interests.



## Challenges/Barriers Encountered and Creative Resolutions

### **Younger Youth Skill Attainment Measures**

Federal law requires that goals be set for youth, ages 14-18, in three areas: basic skills, work readiness and occupational skills. Last year there was a great deal of concern at the state level that these goals were interpreted in different ways across the state and resulting in lack of consistency in reporting these youth services and outcomes. A working group assembled in 2002 to clarify these youth skill attainment goals and to ensure services to youth result in meaningful outcomes, and training was provided the regions at the Youth Technical Assistance Workshop held in January of 2003.

***Policy on Alternative Out-of-School Youth Eligibility***

The First Jobs/First Wages Council heard testimony from the Regional Workforce Boards that the difficulty associated with documenting youth eligibility was encumbering their efforts to serve out-of-school youth. In response to this challenge, a working group was formed and recommended modeling the Job Corp methodology that uses a random sampling technique based on social security numbers that allows up to 95% of the applicants to provide self-certification on selected eligibility items. After a two week period of review and comments by the regions the policy was adopted by the working group.

***Coordination with High School Guidance Counselors***

The First Jobs/First Wages Council is concerned that there is a disconnect between the providers of youth services in the regions and the school counselors. To facilitate the sharing of information on career and workforce opportunities and resources through the Regional Workforce Boards, best practices are being collected and disseminated. Additionally, a youth page with recommended hotlinks to related websites has been added to the **Employ Florida** website for both youth and youth workforce professionals. These sites provide the latest labor market information including the fastest growing jobs and the training that is required to fill them.

**Goals and Strategies for the Future**

Future areas of focus for the First Jobs/First Wages Council include: improving services to out-of-school youth; strengthening partnerships with other organizations that serve youth such as education organizations, community and faith-based organizations, and state agencies; supporting initiatives and activities that stress the correlation between education and prosperity, and expanding youth outreach through additional year-round activities associated with the 2002/2003 Edition of Florida Trend's NEXT Magazine.

***Better Serving Out-of-School Youth***

The changing demographics of our country is increasing the demand in health care services, social and financial services, real estate, travel and leisure activities, etc. To meet these needs in the changing economy it is critical that all youth and first-time job entrants be well-educated, prepared for work and able to integrate successfully into society. Recruiting out-of-school youth who have dropped out of school or failed to gain the skills needed in the workplace is a priority to meet the increasing demands for an educated and skilled workforce. Given the recommendations being considered by the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress in the WIA Reauthorization process, it is appears that the focus of WIA youth funding will target youth who are disconnected from school or work, thereby elevating the importance of identifying and effectively meeting the needs of out-of-school youth.

### High School Graduation Rate

"One third to one half of high school students are undereducated or mis-educated, but high tech jobs have tripled since 1950; unskilled jobs have declined by a factor of three. Job growth is in high-end service jobs that require people skills, problem-solving skills, and interest in life-long learning."

The Forum for Youth Investment

The First Jobs/First Wages Council's highest priority in its strategic plan is increasing the number of high school graduates as well as completers. The workforce development system is just one of many organizations concerned and involved in raising the bar on Florida's performance on this crucial social and economic indicator. The Council funded a current year initiative, 'Education: Pathway to Independence', to promote *basic skills* in reading, math, written and verbal communication,

comprehension; *thinking skills* in creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, visualization; *personal development skills* in self-esteem, accepting responsibility, social skills, initiative and personal integrity to assist regions serving in-school youth or drop-out retrieval programs.

### Increase the Number of Youth in High Wage Jobs

'Skills Training for Youth and First Time Job Entrants', a current year funding initiative, targets business services and health services occupations or an occupational cluster in a region that is gaining the most new jobs that pay a living wage. High school diplomas are no longer enough in this evolving economy. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 1996, college graduates earned nearly 75% more than high school graduates.

"Florida high school graduates entering the labor force earned just under \$16,100 per year in fiscal year 1999-2000. This figure is about 80% more than the poverty level for a single individual under the age of 65, and less than 150 percent of the poverty level for a family of two, placing them among the working poor. The salary nearly doubles for completers of baccalaureate programs, and nearly triples for completers of masters' programs – and these gaps only widen over time."

Florida Chamber's Cornerstone Report, 2002

### Strengthening Partnerships with those that Serve Youth

"The Board of Education should work with Workforce Florida, CEPRE, the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Children and Families, the Florida Chamber, the World Class Schools Foundation, and other partners to develop a multi-pronged program for increasing the high school graduation rate and graduate preparedness."

Florida Chamber's Cornerstone Report, 2002

Building partnerships is central to the role of Workforce Florida. The foundation of the approach is due in large part to the Workforce Investment Act and Florida's Workforce Innovation Act that marries welfare reform, workforce development, and economic development strategies to develop Florida's workforce and economic well being. It is only natural for this agency to initiate a process for linking key partners and resources in the business of youth job preparation and

participation. During a time of diminishing resources we can't afford to be unnecessarily duplicating services. We must clearly define or redefine our roles to contribute the most value-added services. We plan to nurture, promote, and expand these partnerships and

sustain a dialogue with state agencies and organizations involved in youth job preparation and participation.

## ONE-STOP TASK FORCE

**Purpose:** The One-Stop Task Force of the Workforce Florida Board was originally established to develop a state-wide workforce brand for the one-stop system and design an initial marketing campaign. Additional areas of focus were added to include one-stop minimum standards, credentialing, best practices awards and, electronic access to one-stop services. The Task Force is chaired by Bill Mayville, WFI board member. Members of the Task Force include: WFI Board members Allen Brown, Bill Maloy, Sallie Parks and Mike Nilsson. Regional workforce board and local partner staff also contribute to Task Force.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

#### *Employ Florida Affiliate Brand Links One-Stops*

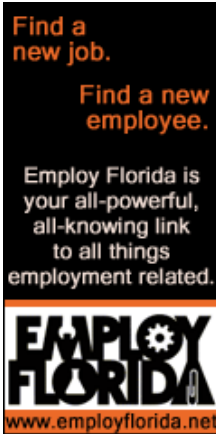
Following more than a year of research, collaboration and brand laboratories, the Workforce Florida Board adopted the state-wide affiliate brand **Employ Florida** for Florida's One-Stop Career Center system. **Employ Florida** will link employers and job seekers to workforce services throughout the state.



**Employ Florida** was created in response to the widespread confusion among employers, jobseekers, and even board members and service providers, about Florida's workforce system identity. Employers who recruit in more than one region expressed concern about having to deal with multiple board and one-stop names/brands, with no link between them (see illustration below).



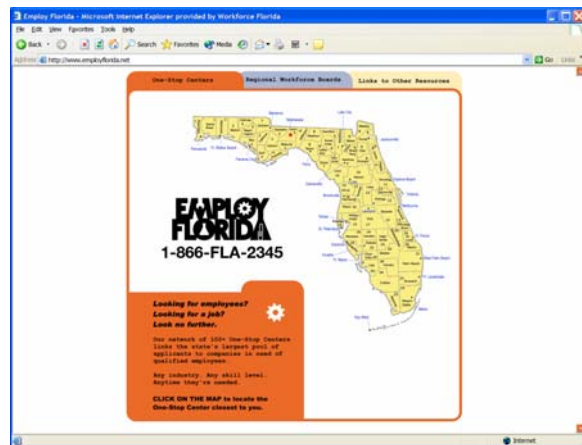
The very successful affiliate model created by FTD, the world's largest floral services organization, is a good example of how a linking brand can add value to many already existing independent brands. Independent florists establish FTD affiliations that allow them to maintain their autonomy and also participate with other members in a reciprocal agreement that provides a nationwide floral delivery network. In addition, FTD also provides members with advertising support and other services. As a result, the FTD brand represents quality to customers and increased business for member florists. **Employ Florida** will use a similar approach to allow Regional Workforce Boards to maintain their own regional identity while also benefiting from their affiliation with the system as a whole.



Regional Workforce Boards in the summer of 2003 began affiliating with **Employ Florida** by displaying the “Member: Employ Florida” logo on their websites, street signage and marketing materials. Some regions are also including the new identifier in their radio spots and television ad campaigns.

In late summer 2003 a comprehensive statewide marketing campaign was launched starting with thirteen weeks of in-cinema advertising on 314 screens in Florida’s major media markets and seven weeks of radio spots aired in all 67 counties. This has been followed by ads in several issues of Florida Trend as well as various local campaigns that incorporate the new **Employ Florida** logo.

A portal website, [www.employflorida.net](http://www.employflorida.net) and a toll-free number, 1-866-FLA-2345, have also been created to link customers to Florida’s workforce services and resources. The website will continue to be expanded in 2003-2004 to include additional resources as well as job-matching capability.



**One-Stop Credentials/Minimum Standards**

The One-Stop Credentials/Minimum Standards sub-group, headed by Bill Maloy, with strong volunteer participation of several RWBs, approved the check list for minimum One-Stop features, approved training/testing requirements for front-line staff, approved continued education requirements, continues to consider training/testing requirements for supervisors and specialized staff, focused on ADA compliance requirements and noted deficiencies, and advocated linkages with other programs/organizations serving individuals with disabilities (note that Bill Maloy also serves on the State Board for Blind Services). This group is currently monitoring federal WIA Reauthorization regarding potential state-board responsibility/authority on certifying/credentialing One-Stops.

***One-Stop Best Practices – Annual Workforce Excellence Awards***

Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation recently recognized Florida's workforce development boards for leading the nation in innovative services to job seekers, employers, partners and communities during Fiscal Year 2002-2003. The winners of the 2nd Annual Workforce Excellence Awards, sponsored by Workforce Florida, were announced and presented engraved awards at a special breakfast during Florida's annual Workforce Summit held in Orlando in early October.

This was the second year of the awards program, however, it was the first year for the new George G. Kirkpatrick, Jr. Workforce Innovation Award. Only one region is selected for this prestigious award named in honor of this early champion of the workforce system. First place award and two honorable mention awards are presented in each of three categories: Employer Services; Customer Service/Satisfaction; and, Maximizing Resources.

Regional Workforce Boards may submit one nomination in each of the four categories. Each nomination is required to meet specific criteria including documentation for: outstanding achievement; measurable or qualitative results including, but not limited to, relative "Red and Green" measures; problem solving with maximum efficiency of time, resources or savings, and replicability. The winners of these awards are included in the Awards and Recognition section of this annual report.

## WORKFORCE FLORIDA NURSING TASKFORCE

**Purpose:** The Nursing Task Force has been charged by the Workforce Florida Board to examine the issue of the nursing shortage in Florida. The Task Force is chaired by William Mayville and has consisted of the chair and three board members. One of the first tasks has been to define the shortage in Florida.

Florida community colleges have committed to a nursing student growth rate of 26% over a two year period; universities have committed to a 32.6% increase by 2005-2006. This could mean about seven or eight thousand new nurses coming into the health care system in Florida. One of the major employers of nurses, hospitals, reported in a survey conducted by the Florida Hospital Association, that there were 8,600 vacant nursing positions that would be filled if the nurses could be found. This type of vacant position does not show up in standard labor market statistics. If growth and normal attrition is added to the mix, the need for nurses is greatly exceeding the predictable supply in the state of Florida.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

The Task Force joined in a partnership with the Florida Nursing Association, to sponsor a one day symposium on the nursing shortage in Florida. Participants reflected the health care industry through out the state; employers were represented by an array of health related associations; nurses were represented by various groups and associations. Several presentations were made and discussed by entities that have been dealing with workforce statistics.

The Nursing Task Force worked with the Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) to track certified nurses in Florida and their current employment status. The first attempt revealed some interesting results but additional tracking needs to be completed to produce reliable data. The potential does exist.

Career ladders and career bridges in the nursing and related health occupations can be a part of the overall solution to the nursing shortage. Presently the Task Force is in the early formation of establishing a career ladder proposal that, if successful, could present to health workers a viable and realistic approach for health industry employees to reach the nurse level. The Task Force should have a recommendation ready for the February 2004 Workforce Florida Board meeting relating to career ladders and the nursing occupation.

## OTHER INITIATIVES

### Workforce Florida Grant Research and Writing Assistance

Workforce Florida has hired a full-time grant researcher and writer to identify and pursue potential sources of additional funding relevant to Florida's workforce system. Workforce Florida works with the 24 Regional Workforce Boards and the State of Florida in seeking and applying for federal, state and private funding to support workforce initiatives within the state.

Several activities have been initiated to help coordinate these efforts:

- **Grant Updates.** A weekly Grant Updates posted on the Workforce Florida website. The Grant Updates provide information on new state, federal and foundation / organization grants as well as financial awards such as scholarships for youth, performance awards and donation of goods and services lists on its website to keep RWBs abreast of new funding opportunities. Workforce partners are alerted to the new listings through an abbreviated list of the funding opportunities included in the Workforce Weekly Update – a weekly email newsletter.
- **Grants Log.** The Grants Log, updated quarterly by WFI, Agency for Workforce Florida, Regional Workforce Boards and Regional Workforce Board Councils is used for tracking grant activity. The log is an ongoing comprehensive list of new and redistributed dollars both into the state and into the regions for the fiscal years of 2002-2005 and distinguishes which funds have a net increase/gain over formula funds at the local or state level. The Grants Log is an important informational tool for Regional Workforce Boards and WFI/AWI to keep track of grant activity within the state and in the regions, helping to identify and pinpoint additional avenues for funding as well as for the development of future potential partnerships and grant applications among regions which face similar workforce issues.
- **Ongoing Communications.** Workforce Florida maintains contact with Regional Workforce Boards and other partner grant development personnel in order to locate and pursue new grant opportunities and assists in grant development by locating resources, information, workforce data, or contacts. Email grant notifications are forwarded daily to RWB grant staff as well as other information and reports on various workforce topics that may be of future assistance for grant development.

### 2002-2003 Highlights

- WFI submitted an economic/workforce development proposal for \$3 million grant to fund self-employment and entrepreneurial initiatives throughout the state of Florida through the National Entrepreneurial Center and Regional Workforce Boards. This application is still pending review.

- WFI also submitted and was awarded a \$ 10,000 USDOL grant for Technical Assistance to facilitate meetings for state unified strategic plan for economic development, workforce and community and educational initiatives.
- WFI initially applied for a Robert Woods Foundation grant of \$5 million to support workforce and employer supported career ladder initiatives for healthcare workers within long term care and nursing home facilities and supported Polk County Workforce Board initiative for this grant. WFI is continuing this initiative for a USDOL grant with its Better/Better Council and our partners.

***Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation Joint Grant Submissions.***

- USDOL 2-year Nurses Now grant was awarded in January 2003 for \$2 million to addresses workforce shortages in the nursing field by supporting training for LPNs, RNs, and Advanced Degree Nurses with a focus on moving nurses up the career ladder.
- USDOL awarded \$1,261,997 to address workforce healthcare shortages that provided HCA matching funds to train health care professionals for current staffing needs of HCA facilities.
- USDOL Faith Based/Community Based Grant for Region 22 for \$1,046,316 to fund State level program funds for model activities to provide access to One Stop resources via Kiosks in community based locations.
- USDOL WIA Performance Incentive Grant of \$3 million to be used by AWI and the Florida Department of Education to provide FCAT, GED or English Proficiency training to students who did not receive a diploma because of FCAT and to develop training for existing workers in the simulation industry.
- USDOL awarded \$9,702,272 in National Emergency Grants (NEG) funding to aid in training of dislocated workers due to the World Trade Center Disaster of September 11th and an additional \$288,000 in Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Infrastructure NEG Grants to assist in the development of systems for health insurance coverage assistance for trade-impacted workers; a total of \$10,090,272 in funding for fiscal year 2002-2003.
- WFI supported and coordinated an application, submitted by a coalition of Orlando-area workforce, homelessness, and other community-based organizations, for a \$6+ million USDOL/HUD/VETS grant to provide integrated housing and workforce services to chronic homeless. Although the application was not funded, the coalition, which formed to design the grant, is carrying through with greater integration of existing services, and systematic pursuit of similar grants.

Through WFI/AWI efforts the state of Florida received \$20,753,585 in additional federal funding through awarded grants for fiscal year 2002-2003.

### ***Partnerships and Memorandum of Understanding Agreements***

Workforce Florida is pro-actively developing partnerships with other state agencies and divisions in its efforts to develop strong working relationships to better serve all Floridians in their search for employment, education and workforce support at the region and state levels. These agreements also strengthen working relationships in the pursuit of grant opportunities.

Signed partnership agreements between Workforce Florida and the Homelessness Council and the Florida Department of Corrections have been secured. Partnership agreements currently under development include the Division of Blind Services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, the Department of Juvenile Justice and Department of Veteran Affairs.

### **Faith-based Initiatives**

Workforce Florida, Inc. and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, with Broward County as the lead, have been awarded a grant from the US Department of Labor specifically designed to connect faith-based and grassroots community organizations to the nation's One-Stop Career System. In addition to the state-level grant award of \$1,046,316, grants were also awarded to the United Way of Brevard County, Cocoa (\$500,00) and the Dominican American National Foundation, Miami (\$24,860).

"Faith-based and community organizations can be powerful catalysts in transforming people's lives. They should not be discriminated against when applying for government grants," said U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. "The Department of Labor is proud to award \$17.5 million to faith-based and community organizations to support the President's Faith-based and Community Initiative. These resources will help these organizations to carry out their mission of bringing hope and opportunity to individuals and improve our communities."

The grants are the first group to be awarded by any federal department and are a central component of President George W. Bush's effort to ensure federal policy and programs are accessible for all qualified organizations to compete for government funds.

"The grants the Department of Labor announces today mark an important step in furthering the partnership between faith-based and community groups and the federal government in delivering social services to those in need," said Jim Towey, director of the White House Office on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. "This innovative program will help small, grassroots groups develop the capacity they need to build stronger and better workforces in the communities they serve."

*"There is a tremendous energy and commitment in grassroots and faith-based organizations that allows them to be a driving force for improving our social fabric," said Governor Jeb Bush. "We are going to enlist their help in a critical partnership between all levels of government and those grassroots and faith-based organizations who live in the hearts of their neighborhoods."*

**CBO/FBO Gateway**

Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation established a new web-accessible Information Clearinghouse/Gateway designed to improve communications and collaboration among the workforce services community, Community-Based Organizations and Faith-Based Organizations (CBOs & FBOs).

The site was designed by Workforce Florida staff in consultation with several state-level organizations, notably the Florida Catholic Conference and the Florida Coalition for the Homeless. The primary purpose of the site is to serve as an information and communications conduit to and among the state-level "umbrella" organizations with the expectation that they will use their existing communications channels to pass relevant information and encouragement on to their local affiliates.



The Information Clearinghouse/Gateway is created in conjunction with President Bush's Faith-Based and Community Initiative. Through this initiative, the administration is working to remove barriers that prevent faith-based organizations from receiving federal funding and create a "level playing field" between faith-based and community organizations and other groups that use federal funds to deliver services. The site can be accessed through: <http://www.workforceflorida.com/>.

## AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

### ***Workforce Investment Act Performance Incentive Awards***

Florida is one of twelve states to receive USDOL incentive awards for the performance of their Workforce Investment Act (WIA), vocational education, and adult education programs during the program year that ended June 30, 2001. By interagency agreement, \$2 million is to be routed through the Florida Department of Education for some recommended literacy/adult education projects and the remaining \$1 million through Workforce Florida for Performance Improvement Plans and other projects at the discretion of the Workforce Florida Board/Councils.

### ***Florida Earns \$38 Million in Bonus HHS Awards for Leadership in Welfare Reform***

The State of Florida sets the national pace in welfare reform with an innovative program that requires and rewards work and emphasizes local flexibility and accountability. Florida also sets the pace when it comes to high performance bonuses. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy G. Thompson announced in September the awarding of \$200 million in

*"Florida's leadership in welfare transition is getting the attention it deserves," said Governor Jeb Bush. "I applaud Florida's workforce system and especially the Regional Workforce Boards for their hard work and success. Not only are former welfare clients finding work, we are also seeing their wages at the time of job placement steadily increase."*

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) bonuses to 41 states and the District of Columbia for success in employment and other program achievements during fiscal year 2001. Florida's award for FY 2001—\$28.1 million—is the highest given to any state for that fiscal year.

On the heels of the 2001 TANF bonus announcement Governor Jeb Bush announced that Florida received an additional \$9.9 million bonus from HHS for success in Welfare to Work programs during the 2002 program year.

As a national leader in welfare caseload reduction, Florida has seen the number of families subject to welfare time limits in Florida decline by 83 percent since Florida's welfare reform program was started, from 152,426 families in September 1996 to less than 26,263 in September 2003.

Florida's latest annual report card on key workforce performance outcomes shows the wages at placement for former welfare clients have increased by 10.3 percent during the past three years. The same report shows, in spite of the economic downturn following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the state's welfare return rate has stayed well below trends in the state's general unemployment.

*"We responded quickly and aggressively following the September 11 terrorist attacks, and those efforts are paying dividends," said Ray Gilley, Chair of Workforce Florida. "Not only is Florida leading the nation in total job growth, we are also a proven leader in assisting former welfare clients enter and remain in the workforce. Our workforce boards are rightly being recognized for their high performance."*

***Regional Workforce Boards Recognized for Excellence***

Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation recently recognized Florida's workforce development boards for leading the nation in innovative services to job seekers, employers, partners and communities during Fiscal Year 2002-2003. The winners of the 2nd Annual Workforce Excellence Awards, sponsored by Workforce Florida, were announced and presented engraved awards at a special breakfast during Florida's annual Workforce Summit held in Orlando in early October.

This was the second year of this awards program, however, it was the first year for the new George G. Kirkpatrick, Jr. Workforce Innovation Award. Only one region is selected for this prestigious award named in honor of an early champion of the workforce system. One first place award and two honorable mention awards are presented in each of three categories: Employer Services; Customer Service/Satisfaction; and, Maximizing Resources.

Regional Workforce Boards may submit one nomination in each of the four categories. Each nomination is required to meet specific criteria including documentation for: outstanding achievement; measurable or qualitative results including, but not limited to, relative "Red and Green" measures, problem solving with maximum efficiency of time, resources or savings, and replicability.

Workforce Florida is proud to announce the 2002-2003 Workforce Excellence award winners:

**THE GEORGE G. KIRKPATRICK, JR. WORKFORCE INNOVATION AWARD**

First Place - \$50,000

The Brevard Workforce Development Board, Region 13

Michael Butchko, Chair

Linda South, Executive Director

The George Kirkpatrick award recognizes the regional board that has provided services or activities that best exemplify the creative spirit of Florida Senator George G. Kirkpatrick, Jr., one of Florida's most dynamic and energetic authors and leaders of Florida's remarkable workforce system. The Brevard Workforce Development Board (Region 13) holds the distinction of being the first region to receive this prestigious award. The Board received the award for its innovative programs like participation in a faith-based partnership, development of a scholarship unit to maximize training funds, creation of a corporate plan, and, professional development opportunities provided through Dynamic Works Institute. Linda South, Executive Director, Brevard Workforce Development Board, accepted the award and an

*"Earning this award is a true honor, and more importantly a fantastic opportunity for job seekers and businesses in the Brevard community," said Linda South. "By receiving this prestigious recognition and the associated cash award, Brevard Workforce Development Board and Dynamic Works Institute can continue developing and providing innovative programs and services. That's very good news for our customers."*

accompanying \$50,000 cash prize at Florida's Workforce 2003, the state's annual workforce summit.

**EMPLOYER SERVICES AWARD**

First Place - \$15,000 award  
Workforce Alliance, Region 21  
J. Max Davis, Chair  
Ken Montgomery, President and CEO

This award acknowledges the positive outcomes and methods by which a workforce board provided services to employers which resulted in improvements to the region's Red and Green performance measures. The Board partnered with three major healthcare employers: JFK Medical Center, Palms West and Columbia Hospitals to develop and implement an extended, part-time Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program to address the critical nursing shortage in the area. Palm Beach Community College provided the training on-site at JFK Medical Center to eligible hospital employees, TANF related recipients and persons recruited through the Workforce Alliance One-Stops. The employers have offered two year employment contracts for each program participant upon successful completion of the program.

**Honorable Mentions - \$5,000 award each**

Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast, Region 20  
Dr. William Dannahower, Chair  
Gwenda Thompson, President/CEO

South Florida Workforce Board,  
Region 23  
Willie Ivory, Chair  
Harriet Spivak, Executive Director

**CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AWARD**

First Place - \$15,000 award  
Broward Workforce Development Board, Region 22  
Michael Carn, Chair  
Mason Jackson, President/CEO

This award acknowledges the customer focused practice(s)/activities implemented by a workforce board that resulted in improved customer satisfaction, including the impact to the Red and Green customer satisfaction indicators. The "Hearing the Voice of the Customer" is a customer satisfaction program created by Workforce One to provide a systematic framework that fosters excellent customer service, encourages employees to better address customer needs, and ultimately serves to positively impact customer satisfaction indicators. This program is comprised of four key components: a customer service reviewer who spearheads the process; a customer satisfaction team that monitors customer satisfaction on

an ongoing basis; quarterly surveys using the Opinion Meter; and periodic case studies that offer continuous customer service training opportunities.

**Honorable Mention - \$5,000 award**  
Workforce Alliance, Region 21  
J. Max Davis, Chair  
Ken Montgomery, President and CEO

**MAXIMIZING RESOURCES AWARD**  
**First Place - \$15,000 award**  
Polk Works, Region 17  
Neal A. Branch, Chair  
Nancy Thompson, Executive Director

This award acknowledges how a workforce board provided improved or enhanced services to customers by creatively leveraging available resources. “If you want to earn more, you have to learn more” is a common catch phrase around Polk County since Polk Works undertook its workforce analysis and education program in August of 2002. The Board adopted a strategic planning objective to increase the percentage of the workforce with a high school diploma. As a result: adult education and GED capacity increased by 16 locations and by 29.5%; a county-wide literacy coalition was formed and funding secured; and a grant resource center was established and funded. The Polk Works expenditure of \$183,000 leveraged an additional \$135,000.

**Honorable Mentions - \$5,000 award each**  
Brevard Workforce Development Board, Region 13  
Michael Butchko, Chair  
Linda South, Executive Director

Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast, Reg. 20  
Dr. William Dannahower, Chair  
Gwenda Thompson, President/CEO

***Short Term Incentive Performance Awards to Regional Workforce Boards***

Florida has long engaged in extensive program evaluation activities with a particular emphasis on results, outcomes and longitudinal information. In the workforce realm, much of that evaluation activity has been based on many of the key elements now mandated by the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), including use of many of the same or similar measures, similar definitions and heavy reliance on use of Unemployment Insurance wage records to verify initial job placement, job retention, and initial and long-term earnings over time.

A few years ago a “regional outcome matrix” was prepared to display key program outcomes statewide and for each workforce region. This report was designed as a first indicator of

program performance to work in conjunction with other administrative short-term reports and longitudinal reports required by state and federal law. Key measures were selected from exit data available through the State’s administrative reporting systems. With the implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), this report was revised to reflect the new WIA measures and the Act’s emphasis on program integration through the one-stop system. The revisions and the adoption of new short-term measures were based on the extensive solicitation of input from all parties and the recommendations of two working groups appointed by the Board which represented state and local agencies, the Regional Workforce Boards, and other interested parties.

The “regional outcome matrix,” often referred to as the “Red and Green Report” addresses outcomes for the three major one-stop partner programs in Florida: WIA programs, Wagner-Peyser programs, and the State’s TANF/Welfare Transition Program. All short-term measures outline performance outcomes that can be typically reported within one calendar quarter through the various programs’ management information systems. Results from the measures are compiled regionally and compared against other regions and statewide outcomes.

The WFI Board earmarked a total of approximately \$1.8 million in WIA State-Level 15% funds for incentive payments to high performing regions for performance in the 2002-2003 Fiscal Year, also setting aside commensurate amounts of Welfare Transition (TANF) and Wagner-Peyser funds for similar incentives. There are separate sets of awards for both short-term and long-term measures, with the total WIA funds equally divided between the two sets. The short term-measures are derived from the “Red and Green” annual report, using the comparative Entered Employment Rates for WIA Adults and Dislocated Workers, along with Customer Satisfaction scores for Individuals and Employers. The long-term measures for WIA incentive payments are derived from the 17 federal WIA measures. Both short-term and long-term award calculations reward both achievement of negotiated goals and performance in the top quartile among the 24 regions. In late October eighteen of Florida’s 24 Regional Workforce Boards were awarded incentive funds for their high performances for short term measures in WIA, Wagner-Peyser, and the State’s TANF/Welfare Transition Programs. The table to the right provides the total short term performance incentive awards by region.

<b>Region/RWB</b>	<b>Award Totals</b>
<b>1</b>	\$165,000.00
<b>2</b>	\$85,500.00
<b>3</b>	\$168,531.25
<b>4</b>	\$148,781.25
<b>5</b>	\$157,500.00
<b>7</b>	\$99,625.00
<b>8</b>	\$91,875.00
<b>10</b>	\$189,843.75
<b>11</b>	\$27,187.50
<b>13</b>	\$69,375.00
<b>14</b>	\$14,062.50
<b>15</b>	\$29,312.50
<b>16</b>	\$40,562.50
<b>17</b>	\$108,062.50
<b>20</b>	\$88,937.50
<b>22</b>	\$64,406.25
<b>23</b>	\$138,937.50
<b>24</b>	\$112,500.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,800,000.00</b>

***Regions with Highest “Red and Green” Performance Recognized***

Each year awards are given at the annual Workforce Summit to recognize the state’s highest performing regions. Regions must have at least five measures rated “green” and no more than three measures rated “red” on the Red and Green Report. This year the criteria were modified slightly - the award winners had four measures rated green and no measures rated red. In addition to the Red and Green criteria, the region must meet the State Statute of 90% expenditures for direct client services for the major workforce programs and 50% ITA spending requirement , and the Federal Statute of 30% expenditure for out-of-school youth.

**The 2002-2003 High Performers are:**

Region 2, Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties  
Robert Dobson, Chair  
Mary Lou Reed, Executive Director

Region 17, Polk County Workforce Development Board, Inc.  
Neal A. Branch, Chair  
Nancy Thompson, Executive Director

Region 20, Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast  
Dr. William Dannahower, Chair  
Gwenda Thompson, Executive Director

***Champion of the Workforce System Award***

This newly created award honors those who have demonstrated exceptional support and participation in advancing Florida’s workforce system.

***James W. Apthorp***, Senior Fellow  
Collins Center

Workforce contributions include:

- Recommendations to the Florida Chamber’s planning group that produced the seminal “Cornerstone” report urging total redesign of Florida’s economic development approach to engage greater public/private governance, and link economic development to workforce development and a more responsive education system.
- Service on the initial board of Enterprise Florida which formed the Jobs and Education Partnership (JEP) that initiated the re-design of workforce systems and innovation such as Performance-Based Incentive Funding for the post-secondary education system.
- Chairmanship of the reconstituted Workforce Development Board under Enterprise Florida, succeeding Fred Schultz.
- Championing the development of extensive and nationally admired accountability systems, including the short-term “Red and Green” report and a system of financial rewards for high performing regions, and corrective interventions for persistently low-performing regions.

- Led the decision to have Florida volunteer for early implementation of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Only 4 states did so.
- Guided the development of the initial 5-Year WIA plan that still serves as Florida's basic structure, providing a strong emphasis on serving employer needs, offering incumbent workers training, consolidating/integrating services and funding streams, maximum flexibility allowed to Regional Board, within accountability controls, greater emphasis on outcomes over process, creative ties/supports for economic development, 3 strong policy/design Councils, and systematic pursuit of federal waivers to allow for greater state and local flexibility to respond more effectively to Florida's workforce needs.
- Continued service as Chairman of the WFI Finance Committee, Chairman of the ad Hoc "Red and Green" task group, and WFI representative to the K-20 Performance Accountability Task Force.

Leadership roles in multiple civic, business and economic development bodies, to include the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Florida, Tampa Bay Partnership, Tampa Committee of 100, Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Historical Association of South Florida, Florida Council of 100, and the FSU Foundation

*Rebecca Rust*, Process Manager

AWI Labor Market Statistics

Workforce contributions include:

- Initiated an extensive array of labor market services and products specifically for workforce and economic development. Some of the popular services are: GIS (geo-coding) maps for location analysis; job vacancy surveys for planning training and job placement programs; skills-matching analyses for identifying transferable jobs; economic and natural disaster impact analysis; targeted industry analysis and industry cluster analysis for economic development; labor supply studies for business recruitment; Internet delivery systems including *Frequently Asked Questions*; customized presentations for understanding local labor market conditions; customized monthly press releases; customer satisfaction surveys for improved service delivery; designed and conducted training for workforce, economic development, and educational managers; and produced award-winning publications.
- Represents the state of Florida on various national workgroups; through her involvement on these national workgroups, Florida stays on the forefront of new products and services in the realm of workforce and economic development.
- An elected member, representing Region 4 of the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, on the Workforce Information Council (WIC), created by the Workforce Investment Act. Council members work together to plan, guide, and oversee the nationwide workforce information system.
- Honored nationally in 2000 with The Vladimir Chavrid Memorial Award that recognizes excellence in the field of labor market information and workforce agency operations research.

*Harriet Spivak*, Executive Director  
South Florida Workforce Board

Workforce contributions include:

- Together with the agency's Board of Directors, has charge of developing and overseeing workforce programs in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.
- Has responsibilities for planning and policy functions, developing program designs, policy initiatives, service provider procurements, funding recommendations, oversight and evaluation functions.
- Prior to assuming the role of the South Florida Workforce Board Executive Director, Spivak served as Board Staff Director. Working her way up from Chief of the Policy Development and Review Unit to Assistant Director, and now to Executive Director of the Board, Spivak has planned and implemented workforce development initiatives for the past two decades.

*Mike Stedem*, Owner  
Stedem Ford

Workforce contributions include:

- Involved with workforce service for the past 8 years.
- One of the founding members of the Polk County Workforce Development Board, Inc.; served as chairman of the workforce board, chairman of the first WAGES committee and current chairman of the New Business Development committee and active board member.
- Developed a successful program known as "Citrus Cars" that buys and leases inexpensive vehicles to people working their way off of welfare. Contributed to the legwork in establishing the program and operating its day-to-day activities. Donated thousands of hours of time, expertise and space at his dealership to house the program. Program has expanded to Hillsborough County.
- Through his vision and initiative almost 400 people in Polk County benefitted from inexpensive transportation so they could work or continue to work
- Brought together a group of automobile dealers from throughout the county to develop an apprenticeship program for dealership office support occupations

*Charlie Hallatt*, Master Electrician and Owner  
Hallat Electrical Services

Workforce contributions include:

- Has contributed countless hours away from his Lee County business to be involved in workforce activities.
- Instrumental in the success of the workforce board's First Jobs/First Wages Careers-on-Wheels project, a mobile classroom designed to expose high school students to alternative careers in the Specialty Contractors industry
- Believes in strong educational and business partnerships and donates his time to numerous civic activities in Southwest Florida.

**Dan Shorter, General Manager**  
**The Palm Beach Post**

Workforce contributions include:

- Formed a partnership with the Palm Beach County Workforce Alliance, Inc to help better connect job seekers and employers and to educate both groups about its many and varied services.
- The partnership is based on the Palm Beach Post sharing innovative technology and over \$1 million in marketing with Region 21 including cable and broadcast TV spots, email, billboards, event space and print promotions ranging from pizza box tops to 150,000 maps at the county fair.
- After 10 months, Region 21 has increased its market share of local employers 48% and more than 300 people a day are clicking from the Palm Beach Post website to learn more about workforce services.

***Strengthening Families Award***

This award honors those whose efforts have been directed toward supporting the Governor's initiatives designed to strengthen families.

**Scott H. Hackmyer, Principal**  
**Marion County's Howard Middle School**

Contributions include:

- A pioneer in developing extensive after school programming that has enriched the learning opportunities of thousands of children; his program acknowledged by the Ocala Police Department as being critical in reducing juvenile crime in the West Ocala Weed and Seed and Front Porch Community
- A visionary in supporting the development of the Marion County Children's Alliance, keeping community leaders focused on children and families who need assistance.
- Coordinated with the CLM Workforce Connection office and organized a summer program to reduce youth violence in West Ocala.
- Serves on the Governor's West Ocala Revitalization Council

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