

LWIA One Annual Report and Commitment to Excellence Review

During the 2007-2008 year, the Northeast Tennessee Workforce Investment Board led initiatives designed to address key strategic priorities focused on promoting regionalism and economic development, quality youth programming, highlighting employer services and commitments to training, and building relationships with other key stakeholders.

FOCUS ON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZATION CHALLENGE

- ❖ The NETWIB understands that globalization has become an increasingly critical element in the viability of local business and industry. The issue of the global marketplace also exerts significant pressures on school systems and institutions which are accountable for ensuring the availability of a well trained workforce which could compete and excel in the new global environment. Conducting a series of three (3) regional forums, the NETWIB was able to bring in international experts in skill requirements and training approaches who were able to engage the K-12 and post secondary educational systems in a dialogue focused on producing high growth, high wage jobs for the future of Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia. These sessions were



attended by more than 300 individuals from all employment and community service sectors of our regional economy. The conversation continues with local school systems to determine how WIA and the Career Center system can support this vital mission of preparing our citizens to meet international challenges.

- ❖ In addition, Northeast State Technical Community College is collaborating with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, AB&T and the NETWIB to leverage funds to ensure a pipeline of trained workers for advanced manufacturing jobs designed to address the anticipated retirements of large numbers of long term skilled workers from the critical manufacturing base in the region. A key result of this initiative will be the Regional Center for Advanced Manufacturing. Using grants in excess of \$18,000,000, including leveraged funds and direct grants from the State of Tennessee and the United States Department of Labor, this Center will serve as the benchmark for state of the art advanced manufacturing training and employment resources for the region's critical manufacturing sector.

- ❖ Finally, the return on the investment of WIA and other partner resources throughout the region has revealed that for every \$1.00 invested in WIA training and employment funds, more than \$3.25 is returned in taxes paid and other community investments.

FOCUS ON EMPLOYER SERVICES AND THE CAREER CENTER SYSTEM

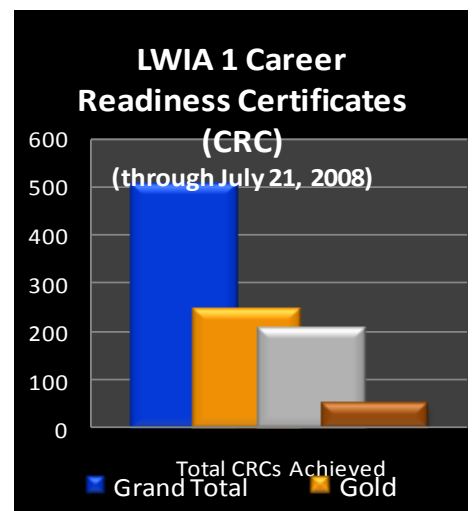
- ❖ By deploying more than \$260,000 of State Incumbent Worker and Apprenticeship grant funds, seven employers trained approximately 240 individuals in high wage careers, such as Chemical Process Operator, Network Engineering, Cad Cam/Design systems, laboratory analysis; Lean Manufacturing and deployment of Toyota Production System Quality Processes, etc., Funds were made available to both large and small businesses.



- ❖ Two Japanese firms, Koyo and Nakatetsu, new international automotive supplier companies who recently went “online” and fully operational in the region have experienced initial shipments. These facilities have brought 320 new jobs to the area.

❖ LWIA 1 Career Readiness Certificates (CRC)/WorkKeys

In coordination with TDOLWD, LWIA 1 is providing business and industry with a real-time, job-skills assessment that measures portable real-world skills through the use of the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). Job seekers who master the WorkKeys’ assessments are awarded a Career Readiness Certificate that is recognized nationally. This CRC provides a “common metric of communication” among job seekers, employers, and educators. It allows the local workforce investment area to remain responsive to workplace realities and helps to address the assessment and training needs of current, transitional, and emerging workforces in the Northeast Tennessee region.



All total in LWIA 1, over 500 CRCs have been issued. Nearly half have achieved the highest level certificate – Gold. These CRCs are a culmination of multiple local initiatives which include Eastman, Northeast State Technical Community College, Tennessee Technology Center at Elizabethton, and the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Workforce Investment Act programs and Job Service.

- ❖ Domtar Paper Company and Eastman Chemical Company, both global enterprises, have been able to access and utilize approximately \$67,000 of Incumbent Worker or Apprenticeship funds for the training of high tech, high wage apprentices in the use and maintenance of robotic production systems.
- ❖ WIA/AB&T & Career Center System – More than 92% of WIA participants received external training to enhance skill competencies. As a result of this focus on training and support of the Career Center system infrastructure, LWIA 1 has consistently performed in the top tier in achievement of its Common Measure metrics during the last reporting period.
- ❖ Governor’s Fast Track Support – LWIA 1 served as a critical partner in the distribution of these economic development fund sources to three (3) new businesses in the area.
- ❖ Career Center partners plan to implement quarterly partnership meetings to ensure excellence in communication and service to our customers. This approach promotes “ownership” of each partner (Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development; WIA/AB&T; Vocational Rehabilitation; Senior Community Service Employment Programs; Job Corps; Adult Education; Trade Adjustment Assistance, and other Ad Hoc groups). These partners also participate in semi-annual in-service training sessions to equip all staff with the latest information and tools to perform their jobs to the best of their abilities.

FOCUS ON YOUTH

- ❖ Capitalizing on the award of federal Youthbuild grant funds, LWIA 1 has implemented a capstone program in youth services targeting attainment of a GED while learning applied math and technology skills by constructing energy efficient homes for deserving families in LWIA 1. The first two (2) houses have been completed in Carter County; an additional four (4) homes will be constructed in Sullivan County, and one (1) home is under roof in



Washington County. Upon completion in 2009, more than 100 youth will have been served through the investment of \$1,100,000 in funding received through HUD. In addition, 52 youth will have received their GED, and 7 LWIA 1 deserving families will be living with pride in their own homes.

- ❖ Northeast State Technical Community College, in partnership with LWIA 1, has created a Career Fast Track (high school to college) program that ensures an ongoing pipeline of high school graduates who received college credit while still in the secondary school system. As a result of this collaboration, many students begin their careers at the Community College with two semesters of college credit already completed. This approach shortens their training time and promotes rapid employment with major regional high tech industries while saving funds which would otherwise be necessary to pay college tuition. Thus, costs of attaining advanced degrees are reduced. and employers have the assurance that these new employees have the ability to succeed in their companies, again resulting in significant impact on the corporate “bottom line.”

Partner & Other Liaison Activities: Sponsored by Mountain States Health Alliance and led by the private sector chair of the Workforce Board, the LWIA 1 Tennessee Legislative delegation participated in an in-depth work session to ensure their understanding how the work of the WIA and the Career Centers impacts the economic well being of their



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workforce development and educational accountability programs in the nation.

region and the successful employment of their constituents. In addition, several members of the WIA system had the opportunity to hear a presentation Gov. Jeb Bush as he outlined the future vision of



❖ **Disability Program Navigator**



Layla Wright, LWIA 1 DPN partnered with John Piver, VR Counselor for deaf and hard of hearing, to facilitate a job club at the Northeast Tennessee Career Center to accommodate job seeker's who are deaf or hearing impaired. The job club meets weekly for a total of five weeks. There were twelve job seekers in attendance at the first job club. The purpose of these job clubs is to increase awareness on accommodations for job seeker's that are deaf or hearing impaired through networking and assistance to these job seekers in obtaining employment through job readiness workshops. Mike Rowe, Community Work Incentive Coordinator also provided information on Benefits to Work and Ticket to Work incentives. The workshop is open to anyone who has an interest in the topics presented.