



Board Report

January 24, 2024

Participant Service Goals for PY'23

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Carry-In Clients PY'22	New in PY'23 (July 1-December 31)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	523	104	228	332	63%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	128	28	93	121	95%
WIOA Out of School Youth	146	17	32	49	34%
WIOA In School Youth	37	18	1	19	51%

During this program year, Region 8 has continued to increase enrollments throughout the region. This is largely due to the increased enrollments of clients from the RESEA and WRG Programs. Our education, training and job placement services have also helped a lot of participants successfully achieve their career goals. Below is one of the successes we have recently seen in the region:

Jaylen came to the Linton WorkOne in search of assistance with finding a career pathway that would be enjoyable as well as provide opportunities for advancement. He was 19 years old and resided with his mother. In 2013, Jaylen's father had passed away unexpectedly and he struggled following his father's death. Jaylen made a few poor choices in his youth, but he was currently on a path to improve his life. He was working two part-time jobs at the time of his co-enrollment into Region 8's WIOA Adult and Youth Programs. Career Advisor Kelly Gambill worked with Jaylen to complete career research. He felt truck driving would be a career he would really enjoy that would also have a lot of job opportunities in the local area. WRG funds were utilized to allow Jaylen to attend truck driver training. Jaylen began his training on 10/2/2023 at Wagler Education and Training Center and he completed training on 10/19/2023. Jaylen sat for his license exam, but did not pass on his first attempt, which was discouraging for him. At the encouragement of his Career Advisor, Jaylen completed remediation at Wagler to increase his proficiency and sat for the exam again on 12/22/2023. This time, Jaylen passed and earned his CDL A License.

Jaylen's work ethic and performance led one of his current employers to offer him a full-time driving position. Jaylen now earns \$21.00 per hour and is well on his way to building a promising future in the transportation industry.

Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	July	August	September	October	November
Brown	3.4%	3.3%	2.3%	2.4%	3.2%
Daviess	2.9%	2.6%	3.8%	3.8%	2.5%
Greene	4.6%	4.3%	3.8%	3.8%	3.9%
Lawrence	4.4%	4.1%	3.6%	3.6%	3.7%
Martin	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%	3.1%
Monroe	4.5%	3.7%	3.1%	3.3%	3.4%
Orange	3.8%	3.6%	3.4%	3.4%	3.6%
Owen	4.0%	3.8%	3.5%	3.5%	3.7%

As of November 2023, Indiana's unemployment rate was 3.7%, which was the same rate as the national average. Most Region 8 counties were equal to or slightly lower than the state average with the exception of Daviess, which was significantly lower. In addition, Indiana's labor force participation rate was 63.3% for November, remaining above the national rate of 62.8%. This rate is the percentage of Hoosiers 16 and older that are either working or actively looking for work. Those not in the labor force include, primarily, students, retirees and other non-working populations, such as individuals unable to work due to a disability or illness, or adults responsible for their family's childcare needs.

Region 8 staff continue to answer basic UI questions and help customers use WorkOne computers to file UI claims as needed. Customers who need additional assistance are required to call or email the UI Contact Center at DWD. Customers at the Bloomington WorkOne location have the option of using a designated phone to speak directly with an Unemployment Specialist at the UI Contact Center. Customers have the option to file by phone if they do not have access to a computer or smart phone to file online.

Staff also continue to assist customers with ID.me, a highly secure identity verification process that was implemented in February 2021 to ensure claimants are able to access their unemployment benefits. This process was adopted due to claimants from several states being victimized by criminals using stolen identities to submit fraudulent unemployment claims. DWD has provided Region 8 with a few smart phones to assist customers in completing this process.

RESEA

The Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program targets unemployed individuals who are most likely to exhaust UI benefits and provides career services designed to help them get back to work more quickly. From July 1 to December 31, 2023, 736 individuals were selected to participate in RESEA services. Of those required to participate, 470 Assessment Interviews were completed with a RESEA Specialist which resulted in a 64% participation rate for the region. Of the remaining claimants, 67 had returned to work and the others declined services due to various reasons. During the same timeframe, 332 participants were selected for SUBRESEA. Of those required to participate, 236 successfully completed their required 1:1 meeting. Of those remaining claimants, 32 returned to work and the rest declined services.

WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

There are no current WARN Notices or Rapid Response Activities.

Performance Highlights and Business Services Updates

From July 1, 2023 to December, 2023 the Business Service Team assisted with the following:

- **Three (3)** customers have participated in **work-based learning (WBL) opportunities** with regional employers.
- **126 WorkKeys assessments** have been administered to individuals throughout the region. Business Services staff continue to promote the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and engage with employers to discuss the utilization of these assessments as part of their hiring process.
- A total of **218 Distinct Employer** contacts were made, representing a **36%** achievement of our annual program goal of 600 contacts.
- A total of **1,248 Business Contacts** were made, representing a **74%** achievement of our annual program goal of 1,680 contacts. During this same time frame, **35** employers searched over **259 resumes** using the ICC resume database to fill job openings.

Ongoing Hiring Events and Job Fairs taking place throughout the region:

- From July-December 2023, WorkOne hosted, sponsored and/or attended **28 events** throughout the region. Several mini-job fairs were also hosted by WorkOne offices for employers during this period. Recent events include the INVETS Lunch & Learn, BEDC Mix, Mingle & Jingle, DWD Regional Apprenticeship Collaboration Forum, Orleans Chamber presentation, Wonder Women Event providing services to Monroe County women and the Daviess County Economic Development Corporation Staff Meet & Greet.
- WorkOne participated in the Orange County "4E Career Fair" with a focus on Employ, Enroll, Enlist and Entrepreneurship opportunities for 8th and 9th grade students from Orleans, Paoli and Springs Valley Junior High Schools. Over 430 students attended and met with 14 employers and each booth offered an activity to all students.
- The Skilled Trades Showcase was held at StoneGate Arts & Education Center on October 5th in Bedford. Over 350 students and parents attended the event with 20 vendors/unions promoting apprenticeship programs and careers in the Indiana union construction industry. Interactive opportunities were provided throughout this event to allow students to experience skills needed in the construction industry.



GRANT UPDATES

WIOA Support Grant PY22- Employer Training Scholarship Fund (ETSF)

The Employer Training Scholarship Fund (ETSF) provides funds for short-term training that leads to certifications for existing workers and new hires of companies located within the region. While the individuals who earn these credentials certainly benefit from their enhanced skills, the primary focus is based on the staffing needs of local employers. Participant eligibility is based on requests from employers rather than the economic status or existing marketable skills of the workers. Although this initiative is funded through Performance Support Grant Funds, staff has co-enrolled the majority of these individuals in WIOA. This initiative increases employer engagement and helps address the needs of businesses while also providing a certification to each individual. Over \$350,000 was granted for tuition assistance and this grant has been fully expended. As of December 31st, Region 8 engaged 58 employers in this initiative. 70 participants received training, 69 completed their training and one (1) dropped out. Along with the 99% class completion rate, 94% received their certification.



Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant

Workforce Ready Grant

For Program Year 2023 (7/1/23 - 6/30/24) - Region 8 received a total of \$700,000 of WRG funding, with \$630,000 allocated for customer tuition assistance and \$70,000 available for administrative costs.

As of 1/8/24, the region has enrolled 125 students into training programs and approximately \$557,000 of grant funds have been obligated. Thus far, 87 students have completed training, 59 have earned a certification and 25 are still attending training.

Employer Training Grant

For Program Year 2022, Region 8 received \$849,000 to reimburse employers for the cost of training new employees and/or upskilling incumbent workers. Almost \$800,000 of that funding was obligated prior to 6/30/23 and thus far approximately \$320,000 of reimbursement payments have been made to businesses. To ensure all of the PY 22 grant funds are expended, DWD announced in December that this contract will be extended through September 30, 2024, which means remaining grant funds must be obligated no later than March 31, 2024 to ensure the six month retention date can be met.

In addition to these funds, Region 8 also received an initial ETG allocation of \$250,000 for Program Year 2023. In January, Region 8 received an additional \$750,000 in funding to support Region 8 employers which brought the contract total for PY 23 to \$1,000,000. These funds will need to be obligated by 6/30/24. Businesses who would like more information about how to apply for these funds should contact Robin Branch (rbranch@vinu.edu) or Earl Isom (eisom@dwd.in.gov).

Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant

In April 2023, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board received \$547,000 through a DOL sponsored grant acquired by the DWD Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) funding is intended to expand the number of programs and apprentices; diversify the industries that utilize Registered Apprenticeship (RAP); and increasing access to, and completion of, RAPs for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. The goal for these participants will be a nationally recognized credential. The grant period is effective from July 1, 2022 through May 15, 2026.

Target sectors for this grant include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- IT and Business Service
- Building and Construction
- Growth or Emerging Industry
- Health and Life Sciences
- Transportation and Logistics
- Agriculture

The following activities may be funded for RAP and certified Pre-Apprenticeship participants: Related Technical Instruction (RTI), On-the-Job Learning (OJL) and Supportive Services (SS). The Regional Apprenticeship Coordinator met with numerous employers during the last several months and has identified promising opportunities to assist with existing apprenticeships as well as the establishment of new programs. Region 8 has currently funded 13 pre-apprentices and 5 apprentices and has the potential to assist a large number of pre-apprentices and apprentices during the next six months.

Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Grant

In July 2022, Indiana applied for the Department of Labor's Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Grant. This National Dislocated Worker grant enables individuals who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic inequities that the pandemic exacerbated, to enter, return to, or advance in high-quality jobs in growth industries including infrastructure, environment and climate, and the care economy. The Department of Workforce Development has piloted this program in three regions throughout the state and was seeking to allocate this funding to additional regions. This month, Region 8 received funding in the amount of \$269,500 to assist eligible individuals with employment and training activities.

REGIONAL UPDATE

Social Media- Facebook

Region 8 recently created a Facebook page to increase opportunities to share information about our services, highlight upcoming events and spotlight resources throughout our region. The link can be accessed at: <http://www.facebook.com/WorkOneSouthCentral>. Make sure to give it a like and follow!

JAG Manager Update

Region 8 bids farewell to two individuals who have been the heart and soul of our JAG Indiana family. After a decade of dedication, our Regional Manager, Jennifer Robinson, and our Outreach Coordinator, Derek Morgan, are embarking on new journeys as they transition into new roles with the JAG Indiana team. Though we're sad to see them go, we're grateful for their significant contributions and wish them success in their new roles within JAG Indiana. While Region 8 interviews candidates for the JAG Manager and JAG Assistant Manager positions, Jennifer and Derek are still supporting Region 8 to ensure a successful transition to new JAG leadership staff.



JAG Expansion Update

Region 8 recently had an opportunity to expand our JAG programs to additional schools. Two new programs were started at Bloomfield and Linton-Stockton High Schools for the Spring 2024 semester. On December 13th, DWD announced that funding would potentially be provided to any school that wishes to have a JAG presence. JAG leadership will continue to work with schools throughout the region to establish additional programs.



Washington JAG- Employer Tour

Our Washington Community Schools JAG students recently toured the Toyota Indiana manufacturing plant in Princeton, Indiana. Students learned the history of the factory, found out about Toyota's high school internship program, and saw firsthand the assembly process of Toyota vehicles.

**Save
the
Date!**

The JAG Regional Career Development Conference (CDC) is scheduled for 02/02/2024 at the French Lick Resort Events Center beginning at 9:30 a.m. Please join us if you have the opportunity!