



William F. Demidovich Jr., Deputy Director

January – March 2006 Quarterly Newsletter

## Ohio's Workforce Investment Act Annual Report

The report showcases some of the state's unique programs, strategies, and accomplishments from July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005 and provides a comprehensive look at Ohio's Workforce Development System. Ohio met or exceeded all of the U.S. Department of Labor's performance standards during the reporting period, earning national recognition. Over 38,000 Ohioans received job readiness training, skill upgrade training to advance in the workforce, or employment assistance through the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. The WIA Program is administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services with services delivered locally through Ohio's One-Stop System that consists of 30 full service centers and 60 satellite offices. A variety of employer and job seeker services are accessible in the community. Last year, over 9,438 employers and 536,284 job seekers used the state's job matching system in order to fill job vacancies. The public's return on investment includes placing over 8,499 people into jobs.

Ohio has the seventh largest state economy. In 2004, personal income in the state grew at a rate of 4.2 percent and per capita income rose to \$31,135.

Please click on the [2004 Annual Report](#) link to view the complete report. If you would like additional information or have any questions about the report, please contact us at [workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us).

I would like to thank the Office of Workforce Development staff for their continued hard work in assisting our partners throughout the state in providing needed services to employers and job seekers, and I look forward to the growth of our Workforce 411 approach in representing Integrated Workforce Solutions for Ohioans. - Bill

### Speaking of Numbers

**15.1** The average number of weeks a person collects unemployment in Ohio. (OJI – February 2006)

**23.3%** Proportion of Ohioans with a Bachelor's Degree or higher. (2004 American Community Survey)

**39** Ohio's national ranking out of 50 states in percent of population with a Bachelor's Degree or higher. (2004 American Community Survey)

**70%** Proportion of job openings in Ohio due to replacement needs, primarily caused by retirements. (Ohio Job Outlook 2002-2012)

**\$5.15** Federal minimum wage.

**\$2.41** Buying power in 2006. What you could buy for \$1.00 in 1980, now costs \$2.41. (CPI – Inflation Calculator)

**21.9** Average number of minutes Ohioans travel to work. (US Census Bureau - American Fact Finder)

## Governor's Ohio Workforce Policy Board Approves State Apprenticeship Council Funding

The Governor's Ohio Workforce Policy Board authorized \$835,667 in order to maintain and operate the State Apprenticeship Council through fiscal year, 2007. The funding will be used to fill four vacancies as a result of the retirement of federal staff. The four fulltime equivalent positions will be filled by hiring eight intermittent staff to manage the increased workload that resulted due to the retirements. In order to sustain long-term funding of the State Apprenticeship Council a request for funding will be presented to the General Assembly.

The Apprenticeship Program combines practical work with structured training and gives apprentices nationally recognized qualifications and experience for a quality career. Last year staff registered 84 new programs and 5,134 new apprentices; graduated 2,793 apprentices that are earning over \$5.8M through the Construction, Manufacturing, Public Administration, Automotive, Energy and Social Service industries. The Apprenticeship Program, commonly known as "The Other 4-year degree" is another gateway to employment and is a first-class program, administered by the Office of Workforce Development.

If you would like additional information about the State Apprenticeship Council or have any questions about the Apprenticeship Program please contact us at [workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us).

## Department of Labor Audit

As part of the national Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) audit, Shirley Burnett, DOL representative, visited Ohio, March 22-23. The WOTC Program gives employers a credit against their federal tax liability for hiring disadvantaged job seekers. Burnett's audit was part of an ongoing IRS study. No discrepancies were found. In 2005, the WOTC Program saved Ohio employers a potential total of \$103.5 million.

## Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Plans

Did you know that Planning Grants in the amount of \$10,000 are now available to all local boards? The funds may be used in the following ways:

- Identification of Employer Training Needs
- Development of Local Procedures
- Outreach and Marketing Materials (limited use)
- Defining Performance Objectives
- Hiring Consultants



The training is to develop and implement incumbent worker strategies and programs throughout Ohio's Workforce Development System. Those funds are to be used to plan in the local area how IWT could be implemented. The local workforce investment boards will be involved with IWT.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact us at [wiaqna@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:wiaqna@odjfs.state.oh.us).

## WIA Director's Meeting

The 19 Local Area Directors recently formed a group that meets monthly to discuss Workforce Investment Act program related issues. The primary focus of the meetings is to share information and to communicate at the Executive Director level about the WIA program. Staff from the Office of Workforce Development attend the monthly meetings and address items related to the administration of the WIA program at the state level.

It is an informal group that is committed to workforce development. A joint meeting of WIA Directors and the Executive Leadership Council is scheduled to convene during the Ohio Job and Family Services Director's Association Conference, May 8-10 in Columbus.

## OWD New Location

Effective in May, the Office of Workforce Development is scheduled to relocate permanently to the Air Center, 4020 E. Fifth Avenue in Columbus. The exact date of the move is pending. The Central Office at 145 S. Front Street in Columbus is closing for renovation. During the transition to the new location, services to the citizens of Ohio will be uninterrupted and seamless. The new location has more conference room space, free parking, and all OWD will be located together. Contact telephone numbers to our offices will change, but email addresses will stay the same. In the coming weeks, when the new telephone numbers are available, our contact information on the website and phone lists will be updated for your convenience.

## Navigating the World of Workforce Information

Erich Hetzel, Labor Market Analyst and Kimberly Rice, Customer Service Representative presented "*Capacity Building through Customer Focused Partnerships: Workshops for Business*," on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor's Chicago Regional Office. The online presentation, commonly known as a webinar (seminar on the web), consisted of an overview about the employer workshop, "Navigating the World of Workforce Information," its purpose, project management, statistics and evaluations from businesses. The webinar was held on March 21, and viewed by 10 Midwest states (Ohio, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Kansas and Missouri). Based on popular demand, all 50 access sites were completely booked. A total of 108 people across the Midwest viewed the presentation. After the presentation, staff responded to a few questions including email requests for additional information from the states of Wisconsin and Nebraska. The presentation was very effective. Based upon feedback, other states may model what Ohio is doing with labor market information and their own online employment system to build relationships with their employer base. Please go to <http://dol.breezcentral.com/p69162826/> to view the presentation.

## Eligible Training Provider On-Line (ETPO) System

Over the past few years, training providers have been submitting paper copy applications to OWD. Staff has been diligently working on automating the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and process and rolled out the ETPO system in October of 2005. Based on feedback from users, the ETPO system was taken offline in order to make additional enhancements. The major enhancements are complete.

All training providers have the capability of establishing an account, adding program information, and electronically submitting programs to local workforce investment boards for approval. Training providers are automatically notified by email regarding the status of their applications.

The new ETPO system and process is more streamlined, user-friendly, and cost effective. Last month, letters were sent to training providers to inform them about the transition from a paper driven system to an automated system and provided additional guidance.

To expedite automation training providers can access <https://scoti.ohio.gov/etpo/> to update and enter program information into the ETPO system.

If you have any questions about the ETPO system or would like additional information please contact us at [wiaqna@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:wiaqna@odjfs.state.oh.us)



On February 15-16 at the Columbus Hyatt Regency, OWD hosted the inaugural One-Stop System Conference titled *“Workforce 411--Building Ohio’s Integrated Workforce System.”* Rochelle Daniels, a nationally known and well respected expert on workforce development, and Scott Ginsberg, an author and expert on public speaking, were guest speakers. Over 600 people attended the conference, exceeding the initial estimate of 500.



Daniels focused on the history of the Workforce Investment Act and its current application toward integration of services among the partners, and provided key insights.



A panel presentation by senior executives of the state level One-Stop System partners representing the Departments of Job and Family Services, Aging, Education, Rehabilitation Services Commission, Board of Regents, and a national Veteran’s Programs representative.

Each state partner presented at a separate workshop to further expound on their visions of integration of services and One-Stop System services. This complemented an array of workshops that featured many local area best practices.



The success of the conference was due to enormous local support through volunteering, conducting workshops, and promoting their systems through local area exhibits throughout the conference halls. Two examples of local support included Area 8’s helping to manage the registration table and Area 15’s supporting the facilitation of many of the workshops with over a dozen staff.



Comments included, “Best session so far. Very informative and useful information. I feel that I can go back and apply this information to my county.”

Michael Taggart of the Board of Regents probably summed up the conference best in his panel presentation remarks when he noted that, “. . . [the conference] felt like a ‘reunion’ of workforce development professionals. The collegial and positive atmosphere of the conference bodes well for the coming year.”

**Great teamwork!**

## Ohio Training Tax Credit Lottery

The Office of Workforce Development launched the \$20 million Ohio Training Tax Credit (OTTC) lottery on March 27, 2006.

In the Spring of 2005, the Ohio General Assembly approved a major legislative change to the OTTC Program. A lottery system was implemented in order to determine the distribution of the \$20 million dollars of available training tax credits for employers. With the implementation of the lottery system, more small companies were able to access valuable tax credits to train their incumbent workforce. Previously, a first-come, first-served model was used.

The software used in the lottery process is an "off the shelf", industry approved, random number generator utility, developed by Microsoft. Witnesses observe the process. Under the lottery selection process policy, ODJFS will rank applicants based on their lottery numbers, and the application which "draws", or is assigned, the lowest lottery number will be reviewed and funded first. These randomly selected applications will be assigned preliminary estimated tax credit amounts until the \$20 million dollar tax credit allocation for 2006 is exhausted.

Below is the distribution for each program year and projections for 2005:

Tax Year	Applications Received	Credits Issued	Employees Trained	Total
2000	6	5	1,926	\$332,944.50
2001	440	323	111,652	\$19,999,999.27
2004	723	301	113,514	\$19,999,999.99
2005	901	366	99,877	\$20,000,000
Total:	2,070	995	326,969	\$60,332,944

Note: Funding for the program was not authorized from 2002-2003.

In late December of 2005, Governor Taft signed legislation extending the Ohio Training Tax Credit Program for one year (calendar year 2006, tax year 2007).

To learn more about the OTTC Program, please go to: <https://ottc.odjfs.state.oh.us/info/index.asp>.

## SHARE Network is Coming

Sharing How Awareness of Resources Empowers! Ohio was chosen as one of only nine initial states to participate in this initiative. The new partnership among the U.S. Department of Labor, Governor's Office of Workforce Training and the Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives is a unique opportunity to network resources to help customers become self-sufficient. It is a network like no other. It brings together:

- Workforce Development System Partners
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Community Organizations
- Businesses
- Government Agencies

Share Network Ohio will be created by a team from local One-Stop Centers, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and other partners. The goal is to fully utilize the network throughout the One-Stop System and allow non-profits, service providers, and government agencies to fully SHARE. If you have any questions about SHARE or would like additional information, please contact us at [workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us](mailto:workforce@odjfs.state.oh.us).

## Veterans Rapid Response (VR<sup>2</sup>) Program

The VR<sup>2</sup> program provides long-term training opportunities with no limitation on the total training expenditures for the veteran customer (including on-the-job and customized training). Under the program, supportive service cost(s) limits are increased from \$500 to not more than \$3,000 plus medical insurance premiums (during training and for 60 days after completion of the training), if applicable. The program is a hybrid of the Veterans Short-term Training Program (VSTP) but offers additional flexibility. Guidance about the VR<sup>2</sup> program was sent to the local areas for implementation.

Innovative ideas just keep on coming from OWD. Way to go!

## Retirements



**Gayle Edinger** retired on April 1, 2006, after 33 years of public service. She worked in the private sector for 15 years. Her state government career began in 1970 at the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) District Office. She later transferred to ODOT's Central Office in Columbus. After four years of service at ODOT, she transferred to the Ohio Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), Office of Manpower Development, which was subsequently moved to the Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS). She worked for DAS about three years, then accepted a position with the City of Cleveland. She returned to Columbus in the eighties to work for the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, now the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). She has approximately 23 years of service at ODJFS primarily in Employment Services and transitioned to the Office of Workforce Development in 2001. Her career highlights include working with employers to expand the employer base and assisting with the development of the Ohio Job Net system that was transitioned to the Sharing Career Opportunities and Training Information (SCOTT) system that is used in Ohio today.

When asked to look back on her career and forward, Gayle said, "I've worked with a lot of wonderful and skilled people. I look forward to working with the church ministry at my church." It has been a lot of fun for Gayle. Thank you for your commitment to public service. You will be missed!

**Doug Higginbotham** retired on April 1, 2006, after 32-plus years of public service. His state government career began in 1974 as an intermittent at the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, now Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. In a short period of time, he was hired fulltime to work in Staff Development, now known as the Training Office. He worked in training for approximately three years, then transitioned to a Claims Examiner position. He has worked in several local offices including locations at the Great Western Shopping Center and the former Main and Broad Street locations in Columbus. In the mid-eighties, he worked as a payment processor under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). CETA predates the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). He has approximately 15 years of experience in the Employment Service. Additionally, he has worked in the WIA Policy Section in the Office of Workforce Development, and prior to his retirement he worked in the Sharing Career Opportunities and Training Information (SCOTT) Section. His career highlights include being stranded in Cleveland for a few days after all state offices and several businesses were shut down during the Blizzard of 1978. Doug not only finished his work, but also assisted hotel staff in coordinating logistics during the blizzard in order to accommodate several stranded citizens.

When asked to look back on his career and forward, Doug said, "It's been a pretty good ride. I met some good people and enjoyed traveling across the state visiting and training at the local offices. I look forward to traveling, visiting family and enjoying life."

Thank you for your commitment to public service. You will be missed!



## Upcoming Events



- April 11-13    Building Better Opportunities for  
Ohio's Youth Conference  
Hilton Columbus Easton
- April 19-20    Statewide Veterans Training  
Conference  
Columbus, Ohio
- May 8-10      OJFSDA Director's Conference  
Hyatt Regency, Convention Center  
Columbus, Ohio



### Contact Information

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### SCOTI

[https://scoti.ohio.gov/scoti\\_lexs/](https://scoti.ohio.gov/scoti_lexs/)

### Workforce Website

[www.ohioworkforce.org](http://www.ohioworkforce.org)

### Office of Workforce Development

<http://jfs.ohio.gov/owd/>