

Central Region

Bernalillo • Sandoval • Torrance • Valencia

Annual Report Program Year

2019



New Mexico
Workforce Connection

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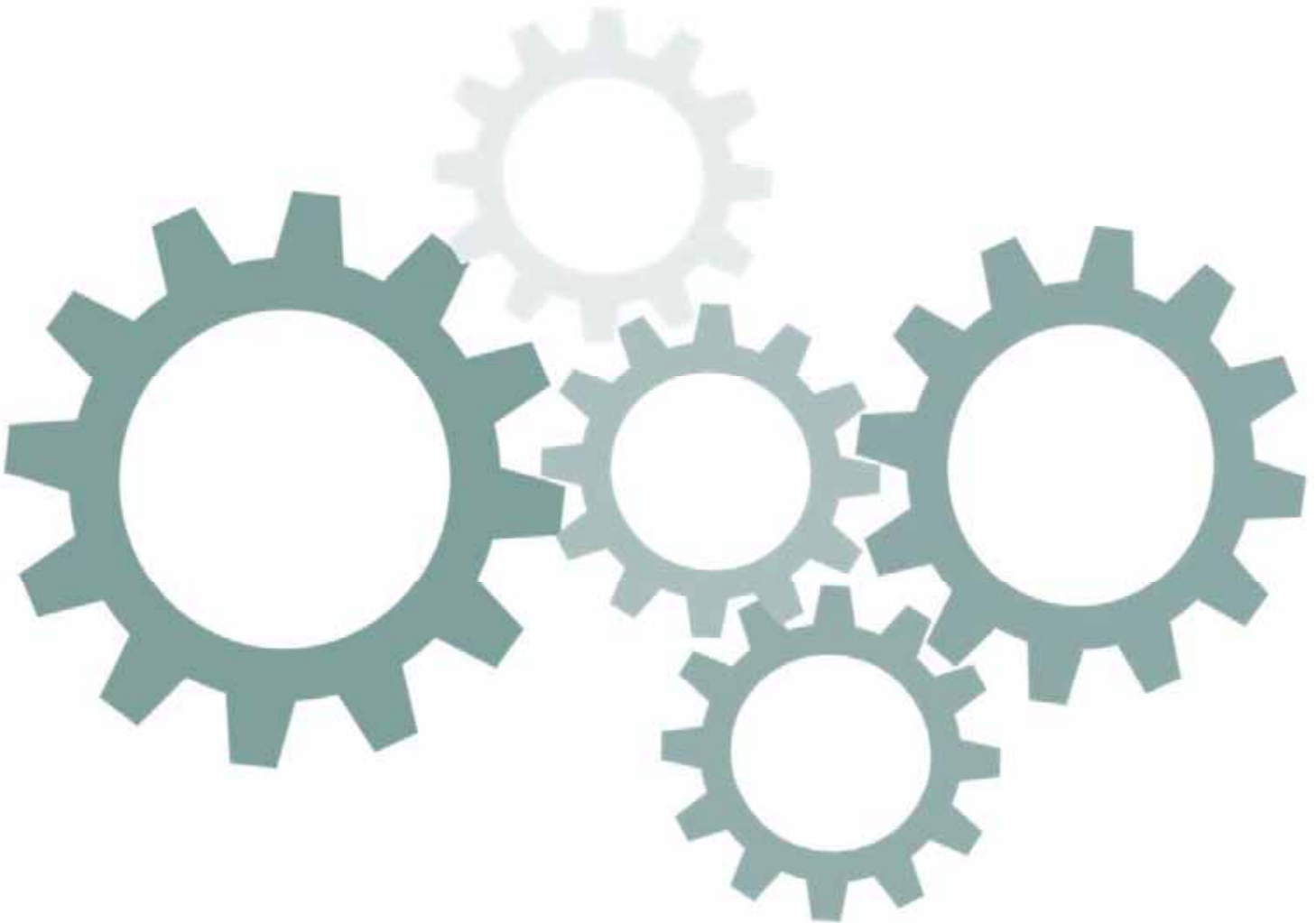
December 2020

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



Jerry Schalow, Chair
Dewey V. Cave, Executive Director

February 2, 2021

To WCCNM Board Members, Partners and Colleagues,

On behalf of the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM), I am honored to present the WCCNM's Program Year 2019 Annual Report. This year, in addition to completing all normal required activities in compliance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the WCCNM Administrative, Fiscal Agent, Operations, and workforce system's partner staff were tasked with adapting to the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the workforce system. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to record unemployment, rapidly shifting work environments, and an urgency to reevaluate workforce development strategies going forward. WCCNM has quickly adapted to changes in the employment landscape and shifted to virtual service delivery to ensure that the needs of job seekers and the business community, which are more urgent than ever, are met.

During the past year and through challenges with COVID-19, the WCCNM has continued to enhance services to job seekers and the business community through the many resources offered through the New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers. In addition to implementing a virtual service delivery model, the WCCNM and NMWC partners continued to pursue region-wide and county-specific sector strategies – targeting the fastest-growing industries with the greatest potential for job seekers to earn a self-sufficiency wage – by collaborating with local governments, education, economic development and community-based entities. These partnerships with community-based organizations, employers, chambers of commerce, industry associations, local government, and more have proved to be even more valuable during the challenging times of COVID-19. The result of this collaboration will be a robust talent pipeline for local businesses and strong career pathways that will offer job seekers a self-sufficiency wage. In light of the pandemic and its impact on the business and employment landscape, this is more important now than ever.

These efforts, along with enduring support from the board, staff, and our many community partners, allow the Central Region to be a leader for the New Mexico workforce and business community. This year, the WCCNM continues to be the highest performing region in the state. We owe thanks to all of our WCCNM board members for all of their effort and engagement with the WCCNM Local Workforce Development Board this year. We owe our success, in large part, to you! Thank you for all that you do.

Thank you,

Jerry Schalow

Jerry Schalow
WCCNM Board Chair



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"Equal Opportunity Program"

INTRODUCTION

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) and the New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia counties continue to move forward with strategic approaches to meet the needs of priority industries and assist businesses to become competitive and profitable. Our region's business-driven system allows us to be a qualified and valued resource for businesses and job seekers in the four-county region.

The COVID-19 crisis has led to rapidly changing working patterns, sharp increases in unemployment, and an urgency to reevaluate workforce development strategies and approaches going forward. The WCCNM is committed to supporting and adapting services to the rapidly shifting economics in the local communities across the four counties. To connect unemployed and underemployed individuals to gainful employment as the state reopens over the next year, there will be an increased need for training and upskilling opportunities, and WCCNM will be a key partner in the long-term collaborative strategies with industry representatives, economic development, post-secondary education, and community-based services.

During the past year, the WCCNM has continued to quickly adapt and enhance services to job seekers as well as the business community through the many resources offered through the NMWC centers. Additionally, the WCCNM and workforce partners are pursuing region-wide and county-specific sector strategies in consideration of changes that will come about in a post-pandemic economy by collaborating with education and economic development entities in support of a robust talent pipeline and career pathways. The WCCNM has leveraged opportunities to foster relationships with both WIOA mandated partners and community-based organizations to pursue important objectives and innovative approaches for workforce development. With these efforts and diligent support from the board, staff and our many partners, the Central Region continues to be a leader for the New Mexico workforce and business community.



The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) board oversees the workforce partner network and federally funded employment and training programs and services in the four-county region including Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia counties. The WCCNM directs the planning, oversight, policy guidance, and design of services in five New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers located across the region. The programs and services help job seekers gain sustainable employment and connect businesses with a qualified and accessible workforce. The WCCNM is one of four workforce development boards in the State of New Mexico and is the largest region with over 40% of the state's population residing in the region and Albuquerque Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

The WCCNM is composed of approximately 35 members appointed by the Central Region's Chief Elected Officials Board. The WCCNM is business-led with a majority of the members coming from and representing the private sector. Other board members represent labor and community-based organizations, education, workforce partners, economic development organizations, and state agencies.

The WCCNM Partner Network

Below is also a list of all partners within Central Region's NM Workforce Connection system pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014.

Co-located partners in our centers across the four-counties

- WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (WCCNM Contracted Service Provider-SER Jobs for Progress)
- WIOA Title I.B Youth (WCCNM Contracted Service Provider-Youth Development, Inc.)
- WIOA Title III (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- WIOA Title IV (NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Veterans' Services Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- TechHire New Mexico (Mid-Region Council of Governments)
- Graduate! ABQ (United Way)
- UNM Valencia Accelerated College & Career Education (ACCE program)

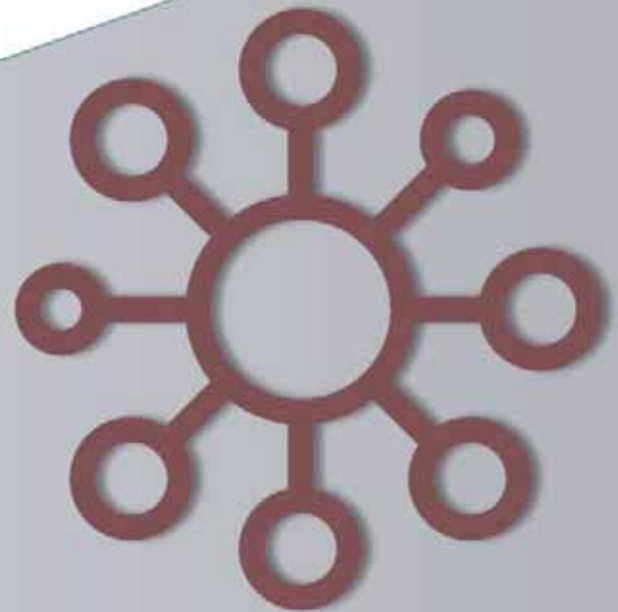


Required External Partners

- WIOA Title II (Albuquerque Adult Learning Center)
- WIOA Title II (Catholic Charities)
- WIOA Title II (CNM Adult Basic Education Program)
- WIOA Title II (UNM Valencia)
- CNM Carl D. Perkins Grant
- Five Sandoval Pueblos Inc. WIOA Program
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) - Goodwill
- Help NM-Community Based Service Grant
- Help NM - HELP NM-National Farmworker Jobs Program-Employment and Training Grant
- TANF Program (NM Human Services Department)
- Isleta Pueblo WIOA Program
- Job Corps
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – National Indian Council on Aging, Inc. (NICOA)
- NM Aging and Long-Term Services Department
- Unemployment Insurance Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Santo Domingo Pueblo WIOA Program
- Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
- National Indian Youth Council WIOA Program

Additional external community partners

- Innovate+Educate
- NMCAN
- HopeWorks LLC



COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

In March 2020, as a precautionary measure to mitigate the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the WCCNM suspended all in-person services in the New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers across the four-county region. The region continues to deliver services virtually and is developing a re-opening plan.

The New Mexico Workforce Connection partners work together to brainstorm and improve ways in which services can be delivered effectively in a remote and virtual mode. WCCNM is incorporating all available technologies and tools, in addition to investing significant funding and developing much needed tech upgrades including:

- a cloud-based communications system for phone, text, and video conferencing;
- a new WCCNM website with a UX design that provides robust information about all services and programs available in the New Mexico Workforce Connection centers in the Central Region (launch date 1/2021);
- an online partner referral system that is embedded in the WCCNM intranet; and
- an employer/business services inquiry tool on the new website that allows businesses to quickly submit their workforce needs to business team representatives with a defined process, workflow, and tracking database on the backend.



Video conferencing via new cloud-based communications system

Virtual services highlights include:

- Program orientations for Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker program and TAA program, labor market information sessions, one-on-one career counseling appointments, youth program intakes, and other services performed over the phone, through video recordings, via video conference, and through email.
- Virtual recruitment events recorded and streamed in-house at the New Mexico Workforce Connection in Albuquerque (APD, US Forest Service, AnchorBuilt, National Roofing, Route 66 Casino, NMDWS UI Operations Center, Tempur-Pedic, NM Corrections Department, and more).
- Weekly “Hot Jobs” announcement on IGTV and other WCCNM social media sites that highlights employers actively and quickly hiring for multiple openings.
- All program teams are working on developing improved electronic fillable PDF forms for customers to use. The Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker team finalized new labor market information and WIOA application forms that have had a very positive response from participants.
- Resume, interview, and soft skills webinar workshops have been heavily promoted in the Central Region via e-blasts and social media posts/story highlights.



- WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker program, TechHire, and other programs are working to better support students through digital learning challenges.
- All staff throughout the region help answer general Unemployment Insurance questions and help direct individuals to information that individuals can find in their online accounts, updates from NMDWS website, and the Unemployment Insurance Operations Center. The Operations Team also provides direct assistance to all individual calling about unemployment through the 505-843-1900 number. The Operations Team have been invited to be a part of the “Toolbox Talks” on Fridays, and this has been a great source of information and updates for them to help better serve individuals looking for unemployment assistance. They have directly assisted and resolved close to 6,000 unemployment inquires in the referral system.

There is a marketing emphasis on promoting available services for unemployed individuals/dislocated workers to prepare now for re-employment with better opportunities by:

- building their skills;
- engaging in career prep activities such as resume writing and interview skills;
- exploring short-term training programs that lead to in-demand careers;
- considering all types of training opportunities include apprenticeship and apprenticeship pathway programs; and
- taking advantage of New Mexico Workforce Connection virtual webinars, workshops, and videos that they can attend from anywhere and view on their phone, tablet, or PC.

As the WCCNM has adapted the marketing and outreach strategy to the COVID-19 crisis, e-blasts and social media have been invaluable modes of communication, with social media presence growing an average of close to 1,000 page views every 30 days, and an average of 12,000 people who saw content from posts, news feeds, and stories over a 30-day period. WCCNM will continue increase social media activity while also continuing to use traditional modes like email marketing to ensure that we are reaching all of our target audiences in a variety of ways.

In addition to the service delivery changes that have been made during the pandemic, the WCCNM and NMWC partners continue to pursue region-wide and county-specific sector strategies by collaborating with education and economic development entities in support of a robust talent pipeline and career pathways. The WCCNM has leveraged opportunities to foster relationships with both WIOA mandated partners and community-based organizations to pursue important objectives and innovative approaches for workforce development. With these efforts and diligent support from the board, staff and our many partners, the Central Region continues to be a leader for the New Mexico workforce and business community.

SUMMARY OF PY19 PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- **25,406** customers came into one of the five New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers in the four-county region in Program Year 19 (PY19) prior to the suspension of in-person services in March 2020.
- **23,138** customers used the resource rooms in the centers prior to the suspension of in-person services in March 2020.
- **4,589** job seekers and program applicants took assessments, including WorkKeys, through the New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers in the Central Region.
- **3,919** individuals seeking employment and education/training opportunities received assistance with labor market information.

INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN PY19

- **1,357** individuals received Title I.B services
- **162** new On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts
- **467** received training via OJT opportunities
- **154** participated in apprenticeships and **50** in work experience or internships
- **637** people received Individual Training Accounts (ITA)
- **292** adults received supportive services



SUMMARY OF THE WIOA TITLE I.B ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM

Major Accomplishments

The Title I. B Adult & Dislocated Worker Program was very successful in PY19 as they developed 162 new On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts, with hands-on job specific training for 467 individuals in the Central Region. In addition, 96 Customized Training Agreements were executed, and 296 individuals were trained or retrained (47 under the Customized Training category and 296 under the Incumbent Workers category). 154 clients participated in apprenticeship programs, and 50 participated in work experience or internships. Furthermore, 637 people received Individual Training Accounts (ITA) and 292 adults received supportive services, which helped to increase job seekers' credential attainment, occupational skills, and overall employability. Overall, 1,357 individuals received Title I.B training services in the Central Region.

The Adult & Dislocated Worker Program piloted the Facebook Career Connections Fellowship Program, a 10-week internship where interns provided social media marketing to local businesses, in PY19. Facebook provided training for both employers and interns. The team completed all eligibility and business agreements during the last week of May 2020 and placed a total of 56 interns (48 paid interns and 8 unpaid interns) with 56 local employers. Santa Fe was also able to enroll and place 4 interns for the program, for a New Mexico total of 60 interns. The Adult & Dislocated Worker program was successfully able to convert 19 of those interns into permanent full-time employees. OJT contacts are in place for hires at wages ranging from \$13.30 to \$16.00 per hour. The team plans to collaborate with Facebook again to continue the program next summer.

Rapid Enrollment Events

The WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Program implemented “Rapid Enrollment Events” that have been successful over the last program year. Working closely with the training programs, staff reached out to participants/students to attend a Rapid Enrollment Event, where they brought all required documentation and completed the eligibility and enrollment processes by the end of the event.

In May and July 2019, the Adult & Dislocated Worker team in Albuquerque had Rapid Enrollment Events for nearly 40 students pursuing alternative licensure through CNM and UNM. The goal of the program is that students will ultimately go on to teach at APS and fill a

Rapid Enrollment Events helped enroll 66 students in alternative teacher licensure and 20 in electric line worker programs in PY19.

serious need for teachers, particularly special education teachers, in the district. These students completed coursework during the summer, with the goal to start co-teaching the following fall and spring. Thirty-three enrolled into WIOA for UNM Program, with 12 requiring new semester funding in January, and all but one completed the program. Thirty-three enrolled into WIOA for the CNM Program, 22 of whom required new semester funding in January, and all but three students completed the program. All alternative teacher licensure training has continued virtually during the pandemic. CNM is planning to host a new cohort of approximately 15 students in the Fall 2020 semester that they would like to apply for WIOA funding.

Students in the Electric Line Worker Pre-Apprenticeship Program through CNM Ingenuity also attended Rapid Enrollment Events in July, and these graduates will help to fill a growing workforce gap as existing line workers begin to retire around the state. WCCNM enrolled 20 electrical line worker pre-apprentice students through CNM for PY18 and PY19, with only two program dropouts.

Apprenticeship

The Adult & Dislocated Worker Program continued to assist the construction industry with funding for apprenticeship training. Staff collaborated with Associated Builders and Contractors of New Mexico to provide members with Title I.B funds to offset some of the costs of the classroom training expense that is required for their apprentices. In PY19, the program contracted for 101 apprentices and hopes to continue to grow enrollment each semester.



WIOA Dislocated Worker Strategies

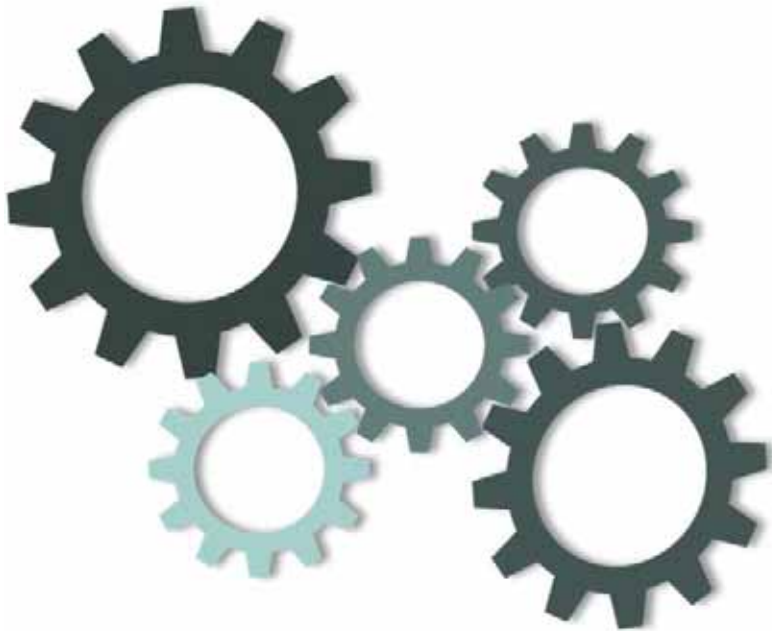
In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker Program had to cancel in-person outreach events in spring 2020. The team switched to virtual outreach, reaching out to potential participants via Zoom to offer orientation and LMI information (as well as recorded sessions on YouTube), and connecting with institutions and businesses via telephone, email, and Zoom to continue with new enrollments and business services. Staff continued to collect data on active participants and business contracts to determine how the pandemic is affecting program operations.

Using the Unemployment Insurance “Reemployment Bridge Report,” the Adult & Dislocated Worker program began a telephone and email campaign to reach out to individuals filing and claiming benefits directly, providing information about the Title I.B program and other additional New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) services. In particular, they targeted individuals from occupations (i.e. the service industry) that may



Online program orientations provided during COVID-19

not return to work and thus could use short term training to change career paths, as well as those with potential to enter the healthcare and information technology fields, where high demand for employees is likely to continue. The Title I.B Adult & DW program has creatively utilized technology to reach out to potential dislocated worker participants, holding Zoom information sessions and phone orientations for those without access to technology, and adapting their enrollment process to ensure seamless service continuation. They also developed informational flyers listing short-term training and on-the-job training opportunities available to dislocated workers.

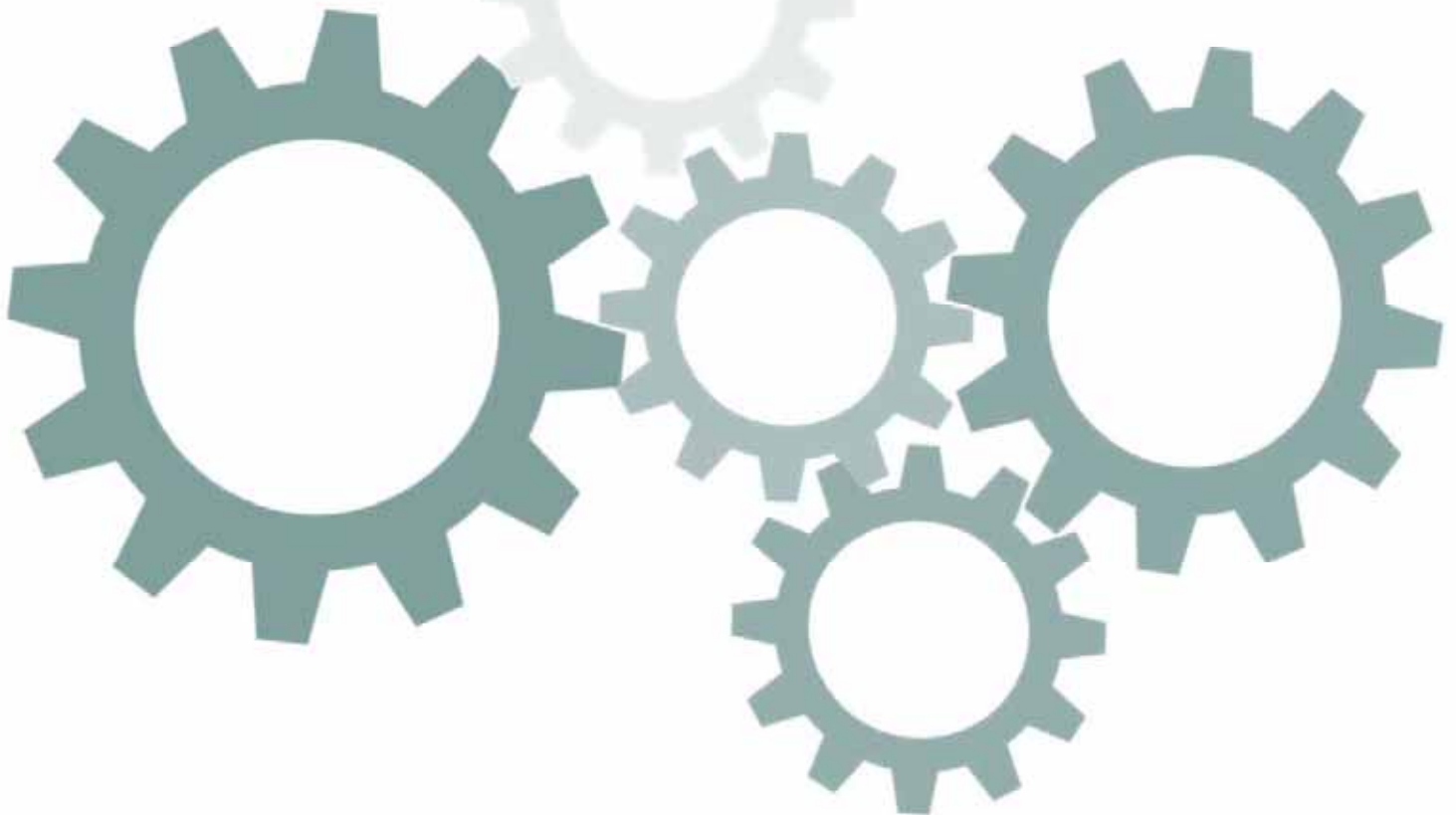


The Adult & Dislocated Worker Program has also conducted outreach to home healthcare workers who have filed for unemployment benefits to offer paid Certified Nursing Assistant training. This will assist them in moving up in the healthcare career pathway, provide the opportunity to earn a better wage, and help the state to meet its demand for CNAs. Universal Home Health Agency is currently open for business with limited size classes and offers part-time day or evening options that can be completed in 4 weeks.

Major Challenges & Opportunities for Improvement

The COVID-19 pandemic posed challenges to the Adult & Dislocated Worker Program's operations during the second half of PY19. The program experienced a significant loss of business that was active or planned but, due to the pandemic, has not moved forward, is on hold, or was cancelled. When conducting outreach, the team was unable to contact every UI applicant on the Bridge Report due to an incredibly high volume of individuals filing for benefits, although they devised a sorting method based on occupation and last employer to manage the workload. Virtual outreach was challenging due to multiple factors: individuals may not be receptive to answering phone calls or emails due to threats of spam; individuals want to discuss UI benefits rather training; individuals feared losing their UI benefits that were very generous due to the extra pandemic relief; and individuals hope that they are returning to their previous employment in the near future so are not interested in changing careers.

The expansion of regional and local sector strategies and an apprenticeship model will be a significant opportunity for the Adult & Dislocated Worker Program during the next program year. Identifying ways in which to better align career and training services through the Adult & Dislocated Worker Program, along with funding to address skills gaps in in-demand industries, will be critical, particularly in the healthcare and IT/tech industries. The Adult & Dislocated Worker Program will continue to collaborate with various employers and industries to promote paid work experience/internships, transitional jobs, and OJT to create a continuum of services designed to allow participants to work and learn.



INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN PY19

- **645** young adults received Title I.B Youth Program services throughout the program year
- **316** individuals enrolled with the Title I.B Youth Program
- **171** young adults participated in work experience opportunities
- **83** new participants received ITAs
- Program participants received **335** supportive services

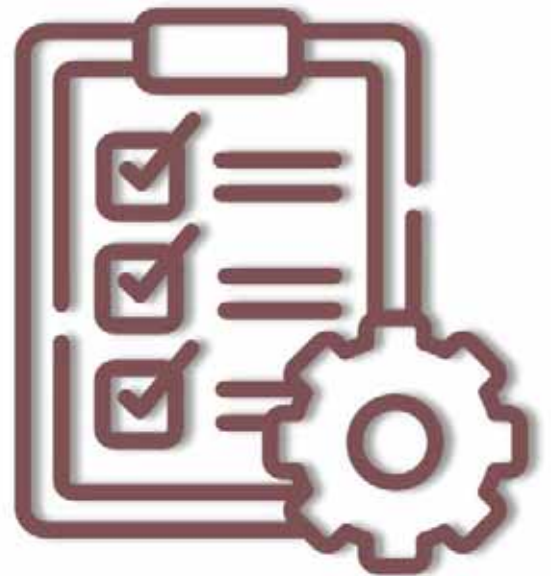
SUMMARY OF THE WIOA TITLE I.B YOUTH PROGRAM

Major Accomplishments

The Youth Program enrolled over 316 new young adults into the program. In PY19, 171 youth participated in work experience activities and 83 new participants received ITAs. In addition, participants received a total of 335 supportive services and incentives. Overall, 645 youth received WIOA Title I.B Youth services throughout the PY19 year.

The Youth Program utilizes a “Positive Youth Development Framework” to access each participant’s strength in order to tackle areas of growth. With this methodology in place, participants are required to develop an educational and employment goal that will guide them to a future career. This methodology encourages and motivates young adults to stay focused on their future career choice.

The Youth Program utilized CoreScore to determine youth participants’ skill level, and integrated Career Solutions and Why I Work into program delivery to better gauge career interests. The Youth staff developed an Individualized Service Strategy (Education and Employment Goal) and implemented Basic Employability Skills Training (BEST) and SMART (Strategic, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely) goals strategy for work placement.



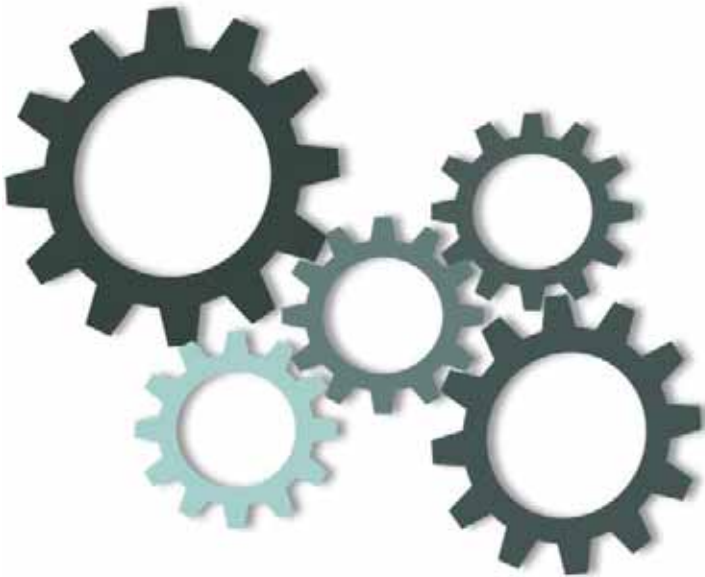
Outreach and Recruitment

Recruitment efforts were successful in PY19 by developing stronger partnerships and increasing outreach efforts in conjunction with all WCCNM partners throughout the year. WCCNM partnerships have been critical including participation in efforts such as NMCAN's Community Connections, a multi-agency team of youth-serving organizations that works together to ensure programming has a youth voice, expand communications across organizations, and aligns services to eliminated ineffective referrals to programs across the region.

Major Challenges & Opportunities for Improvement

Continuing normal programming during the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging for the Youth Program. As of March 31, 2020, all participants active in work experience and additional placements were placed on temporary hold due to COVID-19. In July, 24 of these participants were placed back to work to complete their remaining hours. Worksite attestations were obtained from all worksites agreeing to comply with CDC and State of New Mexico public health orders. Business closures or operations at 25% capacity still remain a challenge for the program in regard to placements. Online tutoring continues for participants who have not been able to resume or start work experience. On the last payroll, 29 participants were engaged in and paid stipends for online training.

Pre- and post-TABE testing has also been a challenge due to previously used paper format. The Youth program is working with DRC to determine steps and costs to certify some staff in remote proctoring of the TABE for new enrollments and post-tests.



Other challenges related to COVID include the inability to conduct face-to-face meetings/services and varied engagement of youth. The Youth program is currently conducting virtual services through computer or phone and engaging/encouraging youth to work through their IEP and participate in referred services. Occasional face-to-face meetings are held one-on-one outside of the workforce center when needed with all safety precautions being adhered to. The WCCNM workforce board approved the "Service Delivery Plan-Fall 2020," and limited in-person appointments will be a possibility for the Youth Program in the current program year.

The expansion of regional and local sector strategies will be a significant opportunity for the Youth Program during the next program year. The WCCNM and the Youth Program will work closely with stakeholders to develop pathways that align with the workforce needs of target industry sectors and provide career advancement opportunities for young adults.

WIOA TITLE I.B PERFORMANCE

Major Accomplishments

PY19 performance results for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program are detailed in the corresponding table for Employment Q2, Median Wages in Q2, Q4, Credential Attainment Rate, and Measurable Skill Gains Rate. All performance indicators percentage indicate that performance was met and/or exceeded in all five categories, with an exception of the Youth Credential Attainment Rate.

In late PY 2018, the WCCNM board approved a change to the OJT policy in an effort to positively impact the Median Wage indicator. The change included a minimum of OJT reimbursable training cost in the amount of \$13.30 for participating businesses in the city Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. This change in policy appears to have met its objective during the PY19 fiscal year by enabling the Adult / Dislocated Worker Provider in reaching this indicator.

Performance – 4th Quarter (Rolling Four Quarters)

Adult				
	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate:	82.9%	82.50%	100.48%	Exceed
Median Wages in Q2:	\$7,997.51	\$8,580.00	93.21%	Meet
Employed in Q4 Rate:	81.1%	77.00%	105.32%	Exceed
Credential Attainment Rate:	77.0%	65.00%	118.46%	Exceed
Measurable Skills Gains Rate:	74.5%	0%	NA	NA
Extracted from WCOS on 9/13/2020				

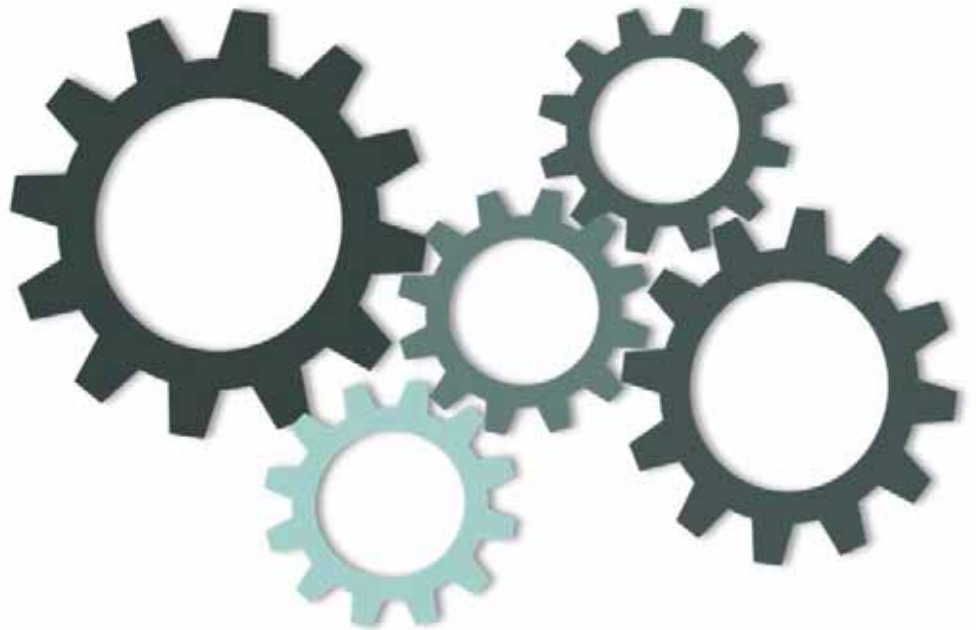
Dislocated Worker				
	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate:	78.9%	77.00%	102.46%	Exceed
Median Wages in Q2:	\$8,519.06	\$8,300.00	102.63%	Exceed
Employed in Q4 Rate:	72.6%	69.00%	105.21%	Exceed
Credential Attainment Rate:	75.3%	60.00%	125.50%	Exceed
Measurable Skills Gains Rate:	65.6%	0%	NA	NA
Extracted from WCOS on 9/13/2020				

Youth

	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate:	68.6%	72.50%	94.62%	Meet
Median Wages in Q2:	\$3,947.97	0%	NA	NA
Employed in Q4 Rate:	74.4%	71.00%	104.78%	Exceed
Credential Attainment Rate:	52.1%	58.30%	89.36%	Failed
Measurable Skills Gains Rate:	32.6%	0%	NA	NA
Extracted from WCOS on 9/13/2020				

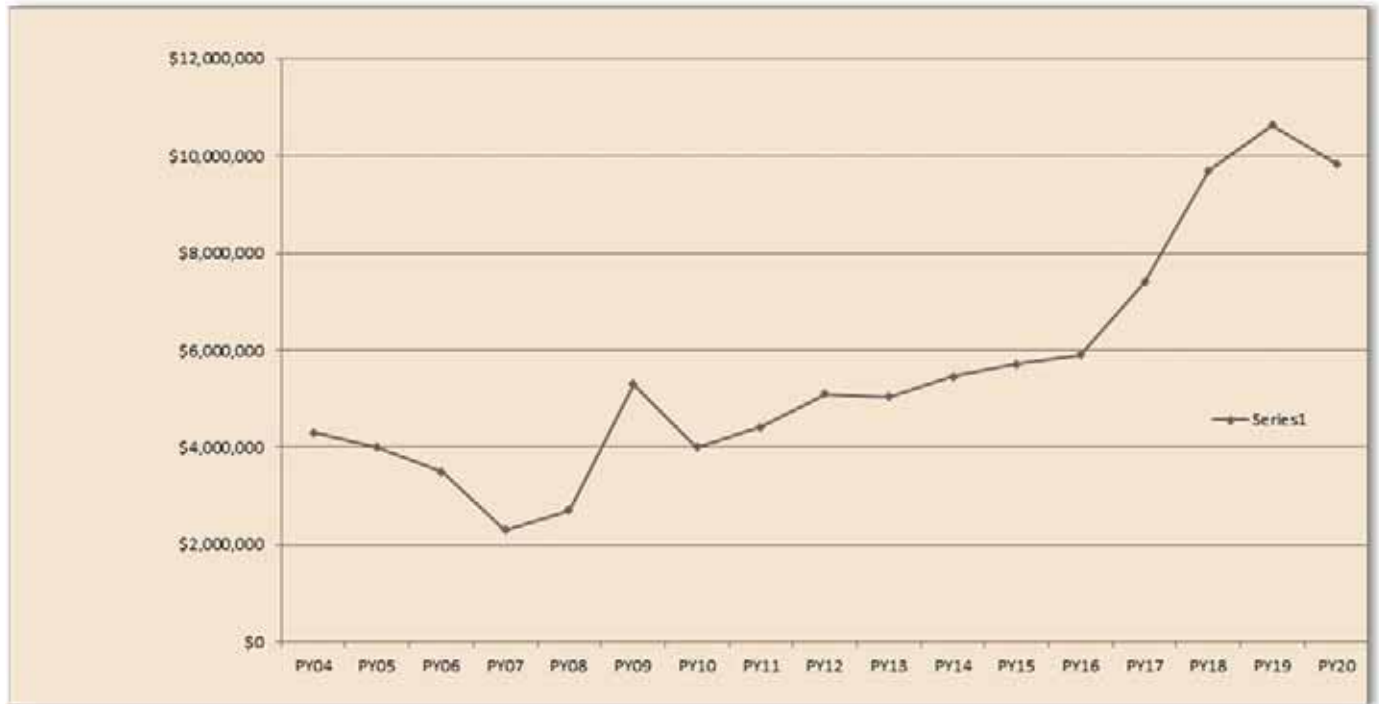
Major Challenges & Opportunities for Improvement

The Youth credential indicator was not reached by a 0.64% margin and resulting in 89.36% achievement. WCCNM has met with the Youth Program though out the year and has provided technical assistance on achieving this metric goal. Gains and improvement in this area are evident with the efforts to drill down into the applicable participant cohort by the Youth Program staff and capturing missed follow-up data and/or by determining errors in data entry when students obtain their credentials.



WIOA TITLE I FUNDING

The following graph demonstrates how the WCCNM funding has fared in recent years. In PY04, the funding level was \$4,360,370 and continued to decline until PY09 when stimulus funds began to be awarded. The upcoming PY20 year is awarded at \$9,836,490, representing a \$797,765 or 7.5% decrease overall from the current PY19's \$10,634,255 formula funding.



Expenditures

In PY19 for year-end (6-30-20), the PY19/FY20 formula dollars available of \$10,634,255 plus the 2nd year carried-in unspent monies of the PY18 year of \$1,014,318 totaled \$11,648,573. Of this, \$9,132,675 was expended resulting in an overall 78% expenditure rate.

The breakdown of expenditure amounts and rates of expenditures is as follows after the allowable transfer of \$2,597,757 (60%) of Dislocated Workers original allocation of \$4,359,558 to Adult:

Funding Stream	Available Funding	Expenditures	Rate of Expenditure
Adult	\$5,436,699	\$4,450,960	82%
Dislocated Worker	\$2,077,011	\$1,771,377	85%
Youth	\$2,804,239	\$1,891,163	67%
Administrative	\$1,864,106	\$1,019,175	55%
Adult Administrative	\$982,228	\$559,106	57%
Dislocated Worker Administrative	\$375,246	\$222,511	59%
Youth Administrative	\$506,632	\$237,558	47%

SUMMARY OF THE WIOA TITLE III CAREER SERVICES PROGRAM

- **2,565** customers received services and assistance through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program.
- **4,617** customers received one-on-one career counseling.
- **3,982** job seekers received assistance with developing their resume and individual employment plans.
- **1,547** individuals were employed with direct assistance from staff or by connecting to job postings in the New Mexico Workforce Connection online system.
- **3,082** individuals seeking employment opportunities received follow-up services.



TECHHIRE NEW MEXICO

TechHire New Mexico, the four-year, four million-dollar USDOL Employment and Training grant awarded to WCCNM, is designed to provide innovative Information Technology (IT) job training and placement for residents in the Central Region and is now in its fourth and final grant year, including a six-month extension.

TechHire New Mexico began serving participants and IT employers in December 2016 by providing paid IT occupational training opportunities for individuals ages 17-29 who experience barriers to training and employment. The grant also focuses on identifying and mitigating IT-related staffing challenges by developing and enhancing a more effective IT talent pipeline for future growth.

Over the past four years, the TechHire New Mexico program has experienced many successes, including more than 429 individual and incumbent worker enrollments, and IT job placement assistance for each participant as they complete their training. All TechHire

Over 429 individuals served under the TechHire New Mexico program over the last four years.

New Mexico participants receive paid IT related training leading to a nationally recognized certificate or credential and have benefited from the program's exceptional training partners: CNM, CNM Ingenuity (nationally recognized Tech/IT training bootcamps), UNM Continuing Education, UNM Valencia Campus, Cultivating Coders, Diverse IT, and many more.



The partnership with the Central New Mexico (CNM) Community College, CNM Ingenuity, Inc., and other training providers and education opportunities have been critical for connecting participants with employers by creating market-responsive training pipelines. An example of the successful education partnerships has been with the CNM Ingenuity, Inc. Deep Dive Coding Bootcamps that provide flexible options for individuals to attend the short-term, accelerated trainings full or part-time while at the same time also provide a trained workforce based on the IT industry demand.

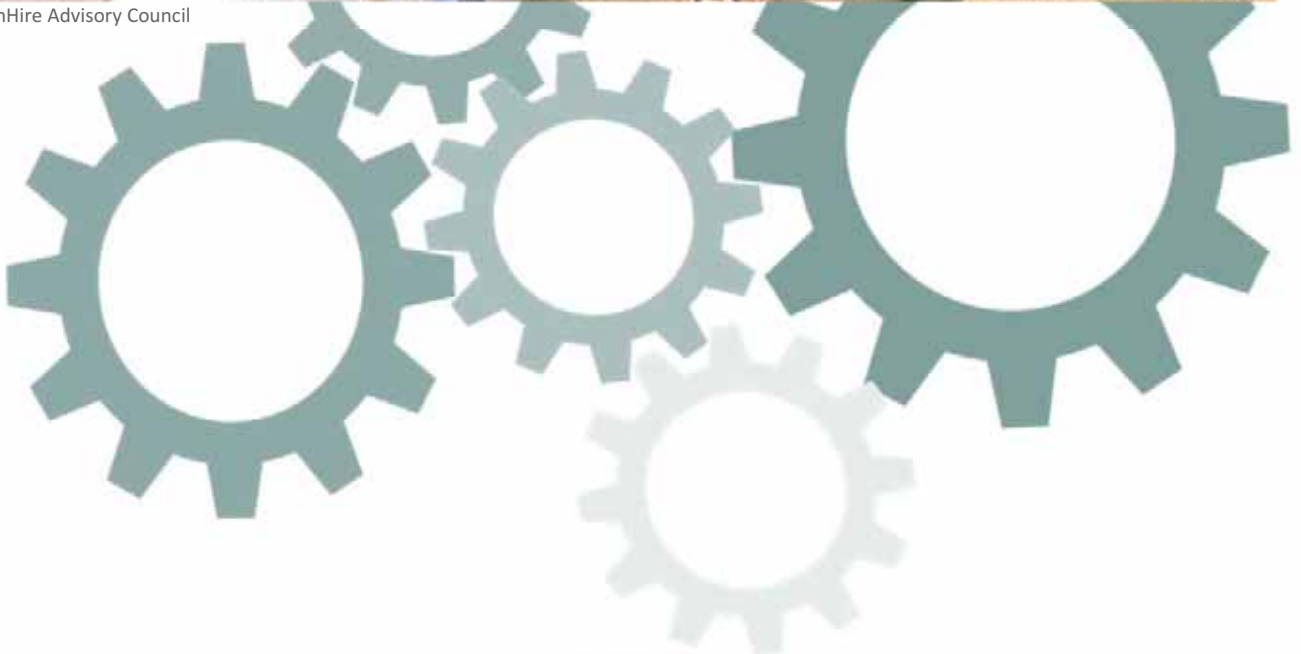
Through the TechHire New Mexico program, the WCCNM and the New Mexico Workforce Connection have been developing an IT/tech sector strategy that brings together employers, economic development, the public workforce system, and community colleges to meet the workforce needs and the business demand in the region.



A key component of the IT sector strategy has been the TechHire New Mexico Advisory Committee which is composed of accomplished education, business, and IT experts who offer innovative advice and dynamic perspectives on employer needs to guide the TechHire New Mexico program and provide guidance on IT curriculum development and training to support employer and participant needs. The TechHire New Mexico Advisory Committee meets every quarter, and the committee will expand the scope in PY20. The IT/tech sector strategy will not only leverage the resources and program elements of TechHire New Mexico, but also will incorporate all paid training opportunities for IT/tech careers and job placement/recruitment strategies from the entire partner network within the New Mexico Workforce Connection in the Central Region.



TechHire Advisory Council



VETERAN SERVICES

- Over **2,500** individuals served by the Veteran Services program during PY19.
- Approximately **270** veterans received one-on-one counseling services and assistance with developing their resume and/or employment plans.
- **489** veterans were referred to posted job opportunities;
- **274** veterans were referred to internally posted positions;
- **215** were referred to externally posted positions; and
- **129** job seekers were placed, with staff assistance, into employment opportunities.



BUSINESS SERVICES

Major Accomplishments

WCCNM has experienced tremendous success with the management of the WIOA system and the NMWC centers in the Central Region with the goal of delivering upon the needs of the employers and the businesses in our regional economy. The WCCNM's Business Team is continually engaged with our employer and business customer base to better understand their immediate and future workforce needs and gain a snapshot of their industry and organization's culture and strategic business objectives.

The WCCNM has many long-standing and newly developed collaborations and partnerships with community-based organizations, employers, chambers of commerce, industry associations, local government, and more that have proved to be even more valuable during the challenging times of COVID-19. This has allowed the

WCCNM to explore and pursue additional funding and program opportunities, leverage additional programs, and increase capacity to improve services, including virtual services, for individuals and employers.

These partnerships are critical in growing the Central Region's talent pipeline, and the WCCNM plays a role in not only recruiting and connecting qualified candidates to the employers and businesses but in helping to respond to the workforce gaps with linkages to training, education opportunities, and skill development strategies.

Sector Strategies

The WCCNM sector strategies have progressed with the IT/tech and healthcare industries. For IT/tech, the WCCNM and NMWC partners will continue to leverage the employer and industry relationships that have been established with other sector work, including the TechHire Advisory Council, formed under the TechHire New Mexico program, a \$4 million, four-year grant to support and fund IT/tech training opportunities in the region. Also, the NMWC partners will coordinate with other existing IT/tech efforts that are currently going on in the region that are also engaging key industry representatives including programs such as NMITAP, the City of Albuquerque Job Training Assistance, etc. For healthcare subsectors, an inventory and assessment of existing healthcare-related business and community relationship will be used to facilitate meetings and strategy sessions based on feedback from employers, associations, educational institutions, economic development, and other stakeholders.

Recruitment Events

84	Number of job/career fairs hosted
526	Number of participating employers
5,320	Number of job seekers attending



As part of future discussions and meetings within both of these key industry sectors, there will be a focus on various activities including strategic plans establishing industry-driven workforce goals and career pathways to make it easier for individuals to access the opportunities in healthcare and IT/tech in the Central Region. The WCCNM will review board policy to determine what can further promote a focused strategy for the two primary industries identified.

Additionally, the WCCNM will explore ways to support and engage with county-specific leading & emerging sectors to include: Bernalillo - Film; Sandoval - Advanced Manufacturing; Torrance - Sustainable energy; and Valencia - Manufacturing/Construction. The WCCNM will facilitate county-level advisory meetings in PY20 to bring together employers, industry representatives, education/training providers, and workforce to discuss workforce development challenges, workforce supply training/education needs, and how to maximize career technical education to better prepare our workforce for current and future careers.

Work-Based Learning

The WCCNM has increased the number of work-based learning opportunities available through the public workforce system in the Central Region. The WCCNM passed multiple policies to increase internships, transitional jobs, and work experiences in the region. Projects such as the Facebook Career Connections program have resulted in successful internships, and in many cases, full-time permanent employment with some on-the-job training opportunities. Opportunities afforded via the Transitional Jobs policy will help support individuals with significant barriers to employment, such as formerly incarcerated individuals and long-term unemployed, and will help to reduce recidivism and poverty within the Central Region.



There has been increased support for apprenticeship in the Central Region as the WCCNM promotes the “earn and learn” approach, which helps workers start new careers and helps businesses recruit and retain a highly-skilled workforce. The Adult & Dislocated Worker Program and the Youth Program will continue to work with trade associations and apprenticeship programs to use WIOA funds in a variety of ways to help individuals prepare for, enter, and complete apprenticeship programs. Additionally, in partnership with the NMDWS State Apprenticeship Office, the NMWC Central Region Apprenticeship Coordinators work closely with employer/sponsors to review and prepare their program standards for submission and approval of formal registered apprenticeship programs.

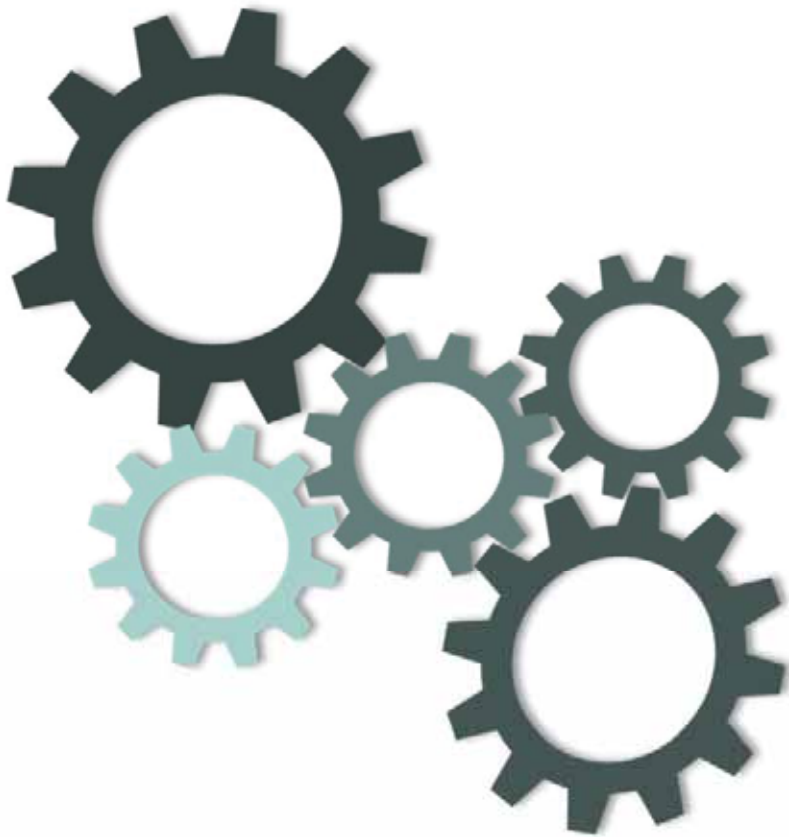
Outreach to employers will continue, with the goal of identifying needs that fall into the apprenticeship or apprenticeship pathway arena. As outreach to employers, current apprentices, and prospective apprentices increases, the WCCNM will leverage a new referral and inquiry tracking system to capture the ROI of various outreach methods, contact information, program referrals, and many other data elements. The referral and inquiry tracking system is built into the WCCNM intranet that is available to all Central Region partners, both co-located and non-co-located.

Major Challenges & Opportunities for Improvement

WCCNM Business teams, including staff from Adult & Dislocated Worker, Youth, Career Services, Veterans, and NMDVR, continue to work together in order to avoid multiple contacts with same businesses, associations, etc. by leveraging the communication tools. During PY19, the WCCNM began creating updated professional business material as well as developing a new WCCNM website, which will provide improved information to the entire customer base, including the business community. As part of the new website, which will launch in January 2021, there is an employer/business services inquiry tool under development that allows businesses to quickly submit their workforce needs to business team representatives with a defined process, workflow, and tracking database on the backend.

Repeat business may be a significant challenge for the Central Region. While the WCCNM and NMWC partners have been successful with business services, going forward we will focus even more on pursuing business services with strategic intent, to ensure that we address business needs from a workforce system-wide perspective, as opposed to individual partner program goals and performance criteria.

The WCCNM is building additional capacity and expertise in, and is dedicating significant investments to, technology and partner training. To continue to improve in this realm, we will focus on leveraging industry sector strategies and “work and learn” initiatives, and will make significant investments in technical solutions to promote quality business engagement and increased customer satisfaction.



The WCCNM is fortunate to have a variety of service providers, funding streams, grant opportunities, and programs and services. However, this means that many programs and funding streams have their own unique set of eligibility requirements and outcome measures, which can be limiting and can create confusion for the customer, including the business community. The WCCNM will continue to promote an operational approach in the NMWC Centers that promotes collaboration, strengthens programs, and encourages innovation in the delivery of services to individuals and employers in the Central Region.

GRADUATE! ABQ

Graduate! ABQ launched in 2017 as a partnership between United Way of Central New Mexico, WCCNM, NMDWS, CNM, the University of New Mexico, Youth Development, Inc., and the City of Albuquerque. Housed at the New Mexico Workforce Connection in Albuquerque, Graduate! ABQ has served more than 275 adult clients since its inception.

Services include 1:1 individualized coaching and assistance with:

- Career exploration
- Labor market information -- understanding the high demand jobs in our area, the pay, and educational requirements
- Selection of a program of study
- Selection of a post-secondary school
- Application and enrollment
- Completing a Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Scholarship information
- Ways to get out of student loan default
- How to look up the amount of student loans
- Introduction to an academic advisor or coach at post-secondary schools

The WCCNM submitted a proposal in PY18 to the NMDWS Administrative Entity to expand the Graduate! ABQ program by supporting the hiring or contracting of a full-time, 18-month term Graduate! ABQ coach to work directly with the Graduate! ABQ Coordinator and the New Mexico Workforce Connection Operations Manager. The full-time position allowed the program to be incorporated within the daily operations of the New Mexico Workforce Connection Center, expanded across the four-county region, and contributed to the professional development training of all staff across the partner organizations who work in a career-counseling role. The Graduate! ABQ position through the WCCNM ended in PY19, but the program highlighted programmatic gaps in the workforce system and opportunities to expand the range of counseling services to individuals seeking education and training options.



SUCCESS STORIES

WIOA Title I.B Adult Program

Briana had always been interested in the medical field and wanted to be a registered nurse. Briana completed registration for her freshman year at UNM and planned to spend the summer with family and her boyfriend before she started school. As the summer came to a close, Briana found out that she was going to be a mom. Her world was turned upside down. She was happy but also worried about her future and now having a baby. She felt like now she had the weight of the world on her shoulders. As school was getting closer to start, Briana had a long talk with her mom, and they both decided that she needed to put off school. Briana was crushed but at the same time, just because UNM was not going to work out, she was not going to give up on her future.



When her daughter was old enough to go to day care, Briana and her husband decided that she was going to go back to school, and over time, she also considered different career options. She did a lot of research and fell in love with Respiratory Therapy. She also did her research about schools and found PIMA Medical Institute. Briana toured the school and felt right at home. She was so excited to start, but money was a bit of an issue. She was low income and receiving SNAP benefits, and she was worried that it was costly to go to PIMA. Briana went back to PIMA to register, and as she was enrolling, PIMA informed her of the WIOA program. She wasted no time and started the WIOA eligibility process. Briana has now completed the Respiratory Therapy program and was hired at Kindred Specialty Hospital as a Registered Respiratory Therapist making \$29.50 an hour. She is truly grateful to WIOA and feels like she is living her best life!

WIOA Title I.B Dislocated Worker Program



Michael was laid off from a nonprofit organization where he was responsible for outreach and community education. He has over twelve years' experience working for nonprofit organizations and was unfortunately laid off from three of the four positions. Although he loves the work that he performed for each position, the pay was low and turnover was high, and there was always the possibility of his position being eliminated at any moment. With age and experience in the field, he has found the nonprofit industry to be very tiresome.

Michael has two bachelor's degrees one in Spanish and another in Environmental Science, earned back in 2000. Michael needed to upgrade his current skills to find employment in a career pathway and leads to self-sufficiency. While he was receiving unemployment benefits, he was required to attend a reemployment appointment known as RESEA, where he was made aware of an opportunity to return to school with assistance from the WIOA grant. Michael met with a Career Development Specialist and started the process of seeking eligibility into the program as a Dislocated Worker.

Through his research, he has found that there is growth within the central region of New Mexico for Geographic Information Technology (GIS). He has always had a knack for the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) field, and would like to narrow his expertise in mapping, surveying, and drafting which is an area of study that fascinates him. Michael was accepted into the GIS program at Central New Mexico Community College, where he successfully completed his Associates of Applied Science in Geographic Info Technology.

During Michael's training program, he began networking with his GIS professors, and was able to obtain employment as an Environmental Technician in January 2020 with NV5, which is an environmental consulting firm, earning \$24.00 an hour. Michael enjoyed working with his CDS and is grateful for her support throughout his program. With WIOA's assistance, Michael was able to get his career plans on track and he looks forward to a successful and captivating future in the GIS field.

WIOA Title I.B Youth Program

Antonio Mendoza came to the Youth Program as a walk-in. He is a 21-year-old high school graduate who wanted to explore his career options. He was interested in the health field and wanted to return to school. Antonio showed a lot of initiative to better himself and grow in a career. He completed the LMI packet and enrolled in Medical Assistant Program at PIMA Medical Institute. Antonio was a model student, and he finished his Medical Assistant Program with straight A's and perfect attendance.

He then went on to participant in externship/paid work experience at Presbyterian Hospital. Antonio finished externship right as the COVID-19 pandemic was starting. The pandemic stalled his opportunity to get hired on with Presbyterian as they laid off non-essential services. Antonio begin to participate in the online tutoring stipend as he studied for his certifications and looked for work. In June, Antonio was hired at UNM Hospital as a medical assistant in the cardiac ICU department. He was able to meet his goals of enrolling in his training program, working in the medical field, and finding employment at a major hospital with assistance from the Youth Program and the support from his Youth Development Practitioner.



TechHire New Mexico


Jennifer Nevares-Diaz was introduced to TechHire New Mexico through her participation AmeriCorps Vista program and CNM Ingenuity. Prior to enrolling in the TechHire New Mexico program, she had been working two to three jobs at a time while experimenting with technology. Jennifer completed the Java and Android bootcamp in September 2019. "I went through 12 weeks of an intense bootcamp and was able to acquire knowledge that was cross platform and provided the foundations given to us about programming, which really allowed me to push further in the type of art I make. Additionally, I secured a full time job as an IT Administrator



for the Bernalillo County District Attorney after meeting the CIO at our employer roundtables.” During the bootcamp, Jennifer focused on the UI/UX app development and is now working with our programmers creating designs for them. ‘I don't think I ever would of even thought to apply for this position before doing this bootcamp. Deep Dive Coding and TechHire New Mexico helped me push forward and get to a place I really was itching to be in life for quite some time.’

Business Testimonials


Thompson Construction is an Albuquerque based general contractor specializing in the construction of education facilities, established in 1985 by the Shumate and Thompson families. TCI has managed over 100-landmark construction projects for Albuquerque Public Schools, the University of New Mexico, and Bernalillo County. TCI has been utilizing the WIOA employed worker training for the Apprenticeship program at Associated Builders and Contractors of NM.



“TCI HAS BEEN ABLE TO MEET ITS TRAINING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. OUR EMPLOYEES HAVE GAINED PORTABLE SKILLS THAT COULD BE APPLIED TO ANY COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION SITES. THE TRAINING HAS LED TO ADVANCING SKILLS IN CARPENTRY AND CONSTRUCTION WORK, WHICH IMPROVED THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM VIABILITY OF THE COMPANY BY IMPROVING THE SKILL SET OF THE EMPLOYEES WHO SUPPORT OUR PROJECTS. OUR CARPENTER APPRENTICES LEARNED HOW TO COMPLETE FORMWORK FOR CONCRETE POURS. THIS SKILLSET WAS UTILIZED DURING A RECENT PROJECT THAT INVOLVED SIGNIFICANT FORMWORK. THESE EMPLOYEES IMPROVED TCI’S CAPACITY TO COMPLETE THE WORK AND THE QUALITY IN WHICH IT WAS PERFORMED. THIS TRAINING ASSISTED A VETERAN AND MINORITIES. WITH COMPLETION OF THIS TERM OF THE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM, OUR EMPLOYEES GAINED NEW SKILLS AND AN UNDERSTANDING THAT IMPROVED THEIR PERFORMANCES, WHICH SUPPORT TCI’S OVERALL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS. THE APPRENTICESHIP INVOLVEMENT IS AN EVALUATION FACTOR IN ANNUAL CONSTRUCTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS AND TCI RECEIVED THE TOP AWARD IN BOTH CATEGORIES WE ENTERED. OUR FOUR APPRENTICES ARE LEARNING BEST PRACTICES IN THE CONSTRUCTION TRADE, WHICH IMPROVES THEIR EFFICIENCY, QUALITY AND EVENTUAL SELF-PERFORMANCE OF TASKS. FOR THESE REASONS, THE ABC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM IS INCREASING THE PROFITABILITY OF OUR COMPANY.

THE ABC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM PROVIDES STRONG AND CONSISTENT TRAINING AT HOURS CONVENIENT TO OUR EMPLOYEES. OUR EMPLOYEES ARE PROUD OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ABC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM. THEY CAN APPLY THEIR LESSONS IN THE FIELD AT TCI JOBSITES. THE WIOA PROGRAM PROVIDES TCI WITH EXPANDED CAPACITY TO OFFER OUR EMPLOYEES THESE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES. COLLECTIVELY WE BENEFIT FROM A WORKFORCE WITH SPECIALIZED TRAINING TO PERFORM THEIR JOBS WITH INCREASED ACCURACY, IMPROVED QUALITY, AND ADVANCED EFFICIENCY. THIS IN TURN, CREATES A SKILLED WORKFORCE THAT MAKES ROOM FOR MENTORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF CARPENTRY APPRENTICES.”

TechNuts is a local Business Informational Technology support company in Rio Rancho, NM. They specialize in business IT solutions and managed IT services. These services include everything from full maintenance contract support of businesses' internal LAN and servers to pre-paid or hourly support for when computer issues arise. Recently, TechNuts moved to a larger location due to their continued success and growth, and they recently celebrated their fifth anniversary with a ribbon cutting with the Rio Rancho Regional Chamber of Commerce. The WIOA program recently had the opportunity to assist them with their success and growth through an On-the-Job Training Skill Upgrade for their newest employee, Rafael Saavedra. Rafael was working with TechNuts part-time as a Shop Tech and through the WIOA program has not only received promotion to Tier I Tech and an increase in wages, but he was also able to increase his hours per week and become an integral part of the company. As Rafael states "Thanks to WIOA/NM Workforce Connection and their On-the-Job Training program I was able to be promoted from a Shop Tech to a Tier I Tech. Now I'm able to learn the skills I need to further my ambitions here at TechNuts and help the company grow."



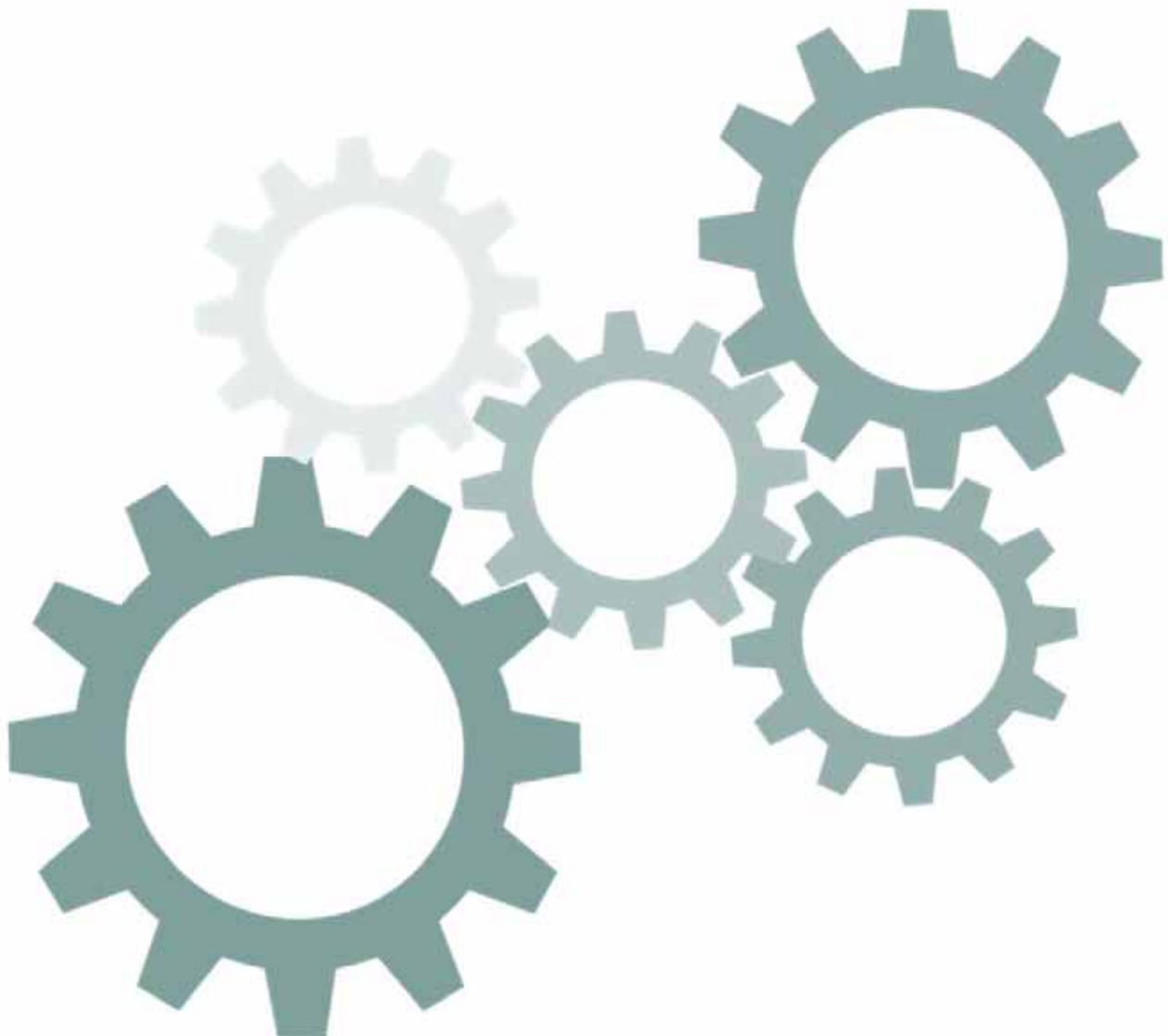
OVERALL, THE WIOA ON-THE-JOB TRAINING PROGRAM HAS BEEN A SUCCESS FOR TECHNUTS. AS OFFICE MANAGER FALICITY BEYER STATES, THIS PROGRAM "HAS BEEN VITAL IN AIDING OUR GROWTH AS WE HAVE SWITCHED FROM RESIDENTIAL TO STRICTLY BUSINESS IT. WITH THIS ADDITIONAL HELP, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FREE UP OUR MORE EXPERIENCED EMPLOYEES TO SEEK NEW CLIENTS. THANKS TO THIS EXPANSION WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GROW OUR LOCATION AS WELL AND MOVE INTO A NEW OFFICE WITH DOUBLE THE PREVIOUS SPACE."

Veteran Services

Jay Houston, a veteran of the Air Force, relocated from Los Lunas to Albuquerque in February 2020. At that time, Jay was still in search of both stable employment and a stable residence. He also had strict income requirements; because he receives social security disability benefits, he is only permitted to make a marginal amount of supplemental income. Jay worked with a Veterans Services counselor to figure out his employment plan and work toward his goals of finding a permanent residence in Albuquerque as well as permanent employment. With the help of his counselor, Jay was able to find gainful employment with a private security company in Albuquerque, where he is still working today. He has also found a stable residence, accomplishing both of his goals for the year. Jay is grateful and pleased with all the community resources that the Veterans Services program provided for him to help him get back on his feet quickly.



Ms. Sharon Trotter began working with the Veterans Services program in February 2020. She and her counselor initially met to discuss a career progression program to obtain employment as an Executive Administrative Assistant within the Federal sector; Sharon was currently employed in this work but wanted to change positions to expand her pay grade to a GS-09. Sharon kept in frequent touch with her counselor, participating in resume workshops and recruitment events online during the COVID-19 pandemic. She submitted federal resumes to three direct hire announcements, but unfortunately, none of the positions offered her desired pay band. Despite this, along with the lack of opportunities for several months after the COVID-19 pandemic began, Ms. Trotter continued to work hard and remained determined to obtain her desired position. Finally, in September, Ms. Trotter was offered a position with the US Fish and Wildlife Department as an Executive Administrative Assistant, with the pay grade of GS-09. She will start her new job in November. Ms. Trotter's consistent collaboration with her Veterans' Services counselor and her persistence through setbacks helped her successfully achieve her goal!



LABOR MARKET SUMMARY

The Central Region and Albuquerque MSA, comprising Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia counties, surrounds the Sandia Mountains and includes the cities of Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Most of the state's major technological industries and businesses are located in this region, which is the state's most populous but geographically smallest region. The income in the Albuquerque MSA represents 45.1% of the state's income per the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, as well as 45.9% of the employees in the state, per current QCEW data.

The demand for a qualified workforce in the Central Region and the alignment of WCCNM sector strategies and priority industries is reflected in labor market information and economic data. The top ten industry sectors in the region are represented in the corresponding table (Source: NMDWS, QCEW 1Q 2020). The largest employers in the region are the Presbyterian Healthcare Services, University of New Mexico, Lovelace Health System, Ardent Health Services, and Sandia National Laboratories.

At the end of PY19, in June 2019, the unemployment rate for the Albuquerque MSA was 8.9 percent, a not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate slightly below the state's rate of 9.0 percent. The Albuquerque MSA shed 24,600 jobs in total nonfarm employment, representing an over the-year loss of 6.2 percent.

Rank	Industry Sector	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	4,747	71,735
2	Accommodation and Food Services	1,813	42,797
3	Retail Trade (44-45)	2,402	40,800
4	Professional and Technical Services	3,422	33,819
5	Construction	2,208	24,985
6	Public Administration	354	24,170
7	Manufacturing (31-33)	884	16,555
8	Finance and Insurance	1,285	13,015
9	Transportation and Warehousing (48-49)	559	11,586
10	Wholesale Trade	1,231	11,409

The following private sector industry lost jobs: leisure and hospitality (down 24.6 percent or 11,200 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (down 4.1 percent or 2600 jobs); professional and business services (down 3.3 percent or 2,100 jobs); education and health services (down 3.1 percent or 2,000 jobs); miscellaneous other services (down 12.0 percent or 1,500 jobs); manufacturing (down 7.2 percent or 1,200 jobs); financial activities (down 4.7 percent or 900 jobs); information (down 10.0 percent or 600 jobs); and mining and construction (down 1.6 percent or 400 jobs).

Within the public sector, state government was down 1,500 jobs (5.7 percent) and local government was down 1,100 jobs (2.7 percent), while federal government gained 500 jobs (3.5 percent). Source: NMDWS, Labor Market Review, Vol. 49 No. 6 Published July 24, 2020.

CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITIES

Survey Outcomes

The WCCNM conducted customer and business surveys across multiple core WIOA programs for PY19 to capture service delivery feedback and opportunities for improvement for the upcoming year.

- For the Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker Program, 693 surveys were sent to participants, and 150 responses were received (21.6% response rate).
 - 83.9% of participants were satisfied with the program's services.
 - 83.8% of participants felt that the services met their needs very well or extremely well.
 - 86.6% of participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism and accessibility of staff.
 - 89.9% of participants responded that the program either met or exceeded their expectations.
- For the Title I.B Youth Program, 134 surveys were sent to participants, and 7 responses were received (5.2% response rate).
 - 85.7% were satisfied or very satisfied with the program's services.
 - 71.4% of participants felt that the services met their needs very well or extremely well, and 14.3% reported that the services met their needs somewhat well.
 - 85.7% of participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism and accessibility of staff.
 - 85.7% of participants responded that the program either met or exceeded their expectations.
- For Title III Career Services, 3,918 surveys were sent to participants, and 459 responses were received (11.7% response rate).
 - 60.8% of participants felt that the services met their needs very well or extremely well, and 22.5% reported that the services met their needs somewhat well.
 - 78.5% of participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism and accessibility of staff.
 - 83.7% of participants responded that the program either met or exceeded their expectations.
- Businesses completed 29 surveys in the Central Region in PY19. The WCCNM will be sending a new survey to businesses regarding COVID-19 workforce needs and virtual services in PY20 Q2.
 - 95% reported that employment events met their needs.
 - Nearly 50% of business responding to the survey requested information on additional services and programs available at the New Mexico Workforce Connection.
 - Respondents reported that staff were knowledgeable, friendly, and helpful.

Changes to System & Program Delivery

The WCCNM uses the customer survey results to identify areas for improvement in each of the service delivery areas across all New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers. There are many changes that will be made to the flow of resource room activities and pre-screening efforts based on the feedback from customers and the frequency that they reported needing these services. The surveys are also instrumental in determining the content and flow of the new WCCNM and NMWC Central Region website. There will also be improvement to the survey process itself, particularly for the Youth Program survey, and the WCCNM will send surveys via text rather than email to encourage a higher response rate.

Dislocated Worker (DW) Program Continuous Quality Improvements promotes efforts to identify and enroll participants that are not engaged in a career pathway consistent with acquiring meaningful employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency. These efforts include:

Continuing collaboration with RESEA;

- Developing additional targeted outreach efforts and products to showcase the benefits of the DW training program, especially for release on the WCCNM social media platforms;
- Promoting short-term training and credential programs for in-demand occupations such as IT Bootcamps, Apprenticeships, Fast-track Associate Degree Programs, etc.;
- Providing needs related payments for DW clients that exhaust UI benefits to ensure successful completion of approved training.

Partnership Engagement Strategies

The WCCNM continues to pursue innovative approaches that produce long-term improvements across workforce system and to provide cost-effective outcomes for job seekers and businesses while supporting the local economy. Partnership engagement strategies and system-wide approaches have been at the center of these efforts.

The WCCNM partner network in the Central Region continues to grow, and now includes: WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (SER Jobs for Progress); WIOA Title I.B Youth (YDI); WIOA Title III (NMDWS); WIOA Title IV (NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation); Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program (NMDWS); Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) Program (NMDWS); UNM Valencia Accelerated College & Career Education-Adult Education Program); Veterans' Services Program (NMDWS); TechHire New Mexico (Mid-Region Council of Governments); Graduate! ABQ (United Way); WIOA Title II (Albuquerque Adult Learning Center, UNM Valencia, Catholic Charities, and CNM Adult Basic Education Program); CNM Carl D. Perkins Grant; Five Sandoval Pueblos Inc. WIOA Program; SCSEP (Goodwill); Help NM-Community Based Service Grant; Help NM - HELP NM-National Farmworker Jobs Program-Employment and Training Grant; TANF Program (NM Human Services Department); Isleta Pueblo WIOA Program; Job Corps; SCSEP (NICOA); NM Aging and Long-Term Services Department; Unemployment Insurance Program (NMDWS); Santo Domingo Pueblo WIOA Program; Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute; National Indian Youth Council WIOA Program; Innovate+Educate; NMCAN; and HopeWorks LLC.

Benefits and Work Incentives Practitioner

Individuals with disabilities who are living in disadvantaged communities often face numerous barriers in preparing for entrance into the labor market and in maintaining employment. During the provision of training and technical assistance in the targeted community within Albuquerque, NM, staff of Project E3 identified that misperceptions around work and maintaining Social Security benefits can be a major barrier for individuals with disabilities living in poverty to obtain and retain a job. The fear of the loss of Social Security benefits (SSI//SSDI) and their associated medical benefits (Medicaid/Medicare) are one of the most cited reasons for individuals with disabilities not working. The capacity to dispel these misperceptions takes a concerted effort by not only the State VR Agency in New Mexico, and the WIPA programs in the state, but the ability of additional community-based organizations to provide sound, fact-based advice to individuals with disabilities so that they can make informed decisions about seeking employment.

Through the partnership with Project E3, the WCCNM is building capacity to address the needs of individuals with disabilities. The goal is to provide individuals with disabilities sound, fact-based information regarding SSA benefits and work incentives through the creation of a Benefits and Work Incentives Practitioner position at the NMWC Center in Albuquerque. The Benefits and Work Incentives Practitioner is currently completing the required training program at Cornell and will begin to provide services in PY20 Q2.

Community Supports Team

The WCCNM is currently working on a funding/grant opportunity with Bernalillo County to create a new Community Supports Team that will be based out of the NMWC Center in Albuquerque. The team will be comprised of one supervisor (Section 1.b) and three paraprofessionals: a Certified Peer Support Worker (CPSW), Family Peer Support Worker (FPSW), and Community Health Worker (CHW). The staff members will be required to hold one of these types of paraprofessional certificates through their respective credentialing agency. These program and licensure requirements are funded and coordinated through Human Services Department Behavioral Health Division, Children Youth and Families Department Behavioral Health Division, Department of Health, and the New Mexico Behavioral Health Credentialing Board.

The overarching goal of this proposed team aligns with WIOA and provides a better, and much needed, bridge between behavioral health services and the public workforce system. The Community Supports Team, as part of the NMWC Center, will rely on the behavioral health providers in the community who provide the clinical observations, assessments, and diagnosis to refer clients for employment and career-related services. The team's central role will be to increase and coordinate referrals from behavioral health providers, organizations within the peer support network, other community-based organizations, and those who self-navigate to the workforce system to then educate, connect, and coordinate resources for individuals with mental health and substance use issues who need employment/career services, resources, and supports.

Intensive case management from both a peer support perspective and a workforce development perspective makes this Community Supports Team unique in public workforce system. It will be creating a much-needed link between the providers and organizations that identify and assess the behavioral health needs of the target population with the Community Supports Team members. The Community Supports Team will be certified peer support professionals knowledgeable about

the behavioral health services realm but also fully integrated and incorporated as a partner and program within the workforce system.

The Community Supports Team will pre-screen and assess individuals for the variety of workforce services that will best meet their needs and with the goal to build resiliency while promoting positive development and self-sufficiency. The target population is specific to adults (18+) and emerging adults (14-24), impacted by Serious Mental Illness (SMI), Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED), Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and co-occurring diagnosis.

Partnership Engagement and System-Wide Approaches

Intake and Referrals

Many of the programs and services in the large Central Region partner network have their own set of reporting requirements and performance measures. Each program, including some core partners, has a unique case management system, different data entry requirements, and intake paperwork. The lack of a common intake, referral and data system across the workforce system creates an additional burden for both the customer and staff. The WCCNM will explore a common intake process and system in PY20 and has several referral system pilots underway, including with the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NMDVR). The referral and inquiry tracking system is built into the WCCNM intranet that is available to all Central Region partners, both co-located and non-co-located.



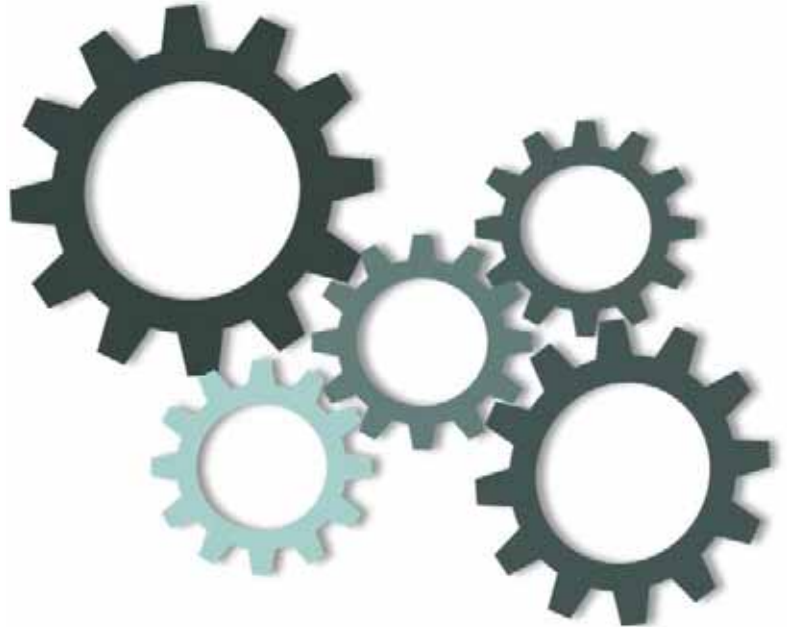
Quarterly Gatherings

Quarterly Gatherings are very successful half-day to full-day sessions that bring together all partners (co-located, core, mandatory, and additional) in the Central Region to share information, celebrate achievements, recognize best practices, and allow for cross-training and networking. Two Quarterly Gatherings were held in PY19 before COVID-19, and each event had a tailored agenda depending on current training needs, new approaches, and upcoming initiatives/strategies. Training and guest speaker presentations included sessions on each of the WIOA core programs, additional programs such as TechHire and Grad! ABQ, core partner performance measures, Carl D. Perkins funding, sector strategies, EEO and ADA process, Unemployment Insurance meaningful assistance, and guidelines and best practices for serving individuals with disabilities. The events also provide an opportunity to meet with program directors and leaders to discuss infrastructure funding agreements and operating budgets. The Quarterly Gatherings are held offsite, often hosted by partner

organizations and educational institutions such as CNM, and have 80-100 attendees. The WCCNM is exploring virtual options for the Quarterly Gatherings and looks forward to in-person events post-COVID.

System-wide Training Strategy

The WCCNM and New Mexico Workforce Connection Training Strategy launched at the beginning of PY18 to bolster cross-training opportunities and to ensure more consistency in pre-screening and partner referrals. The strategy includes three levels: LEVEL 1 (Training covering all “core” WIOA programs and legally-required/mandated training); LEVEL 2 (Training covering all “participating” partners programs and system training such as the NM Workforce Connection online system); and LEVEL 3 (Professional development, additional partner and program training). Trainings are provided at the Quarterly Gatherings, as requested, and online. The Operations Manager maintains a training database to record all completed training for all Central Region staff. WCCNM also is receiving funding for an initial investment to integrate the Graduate! ABQ curriculum (developed based on the work of the full-time coach) along with a nationally recognized career counselor/workforce development professional certification into the current training strategy to build the overall capacity of staff working in counseling roles across the four-county region.



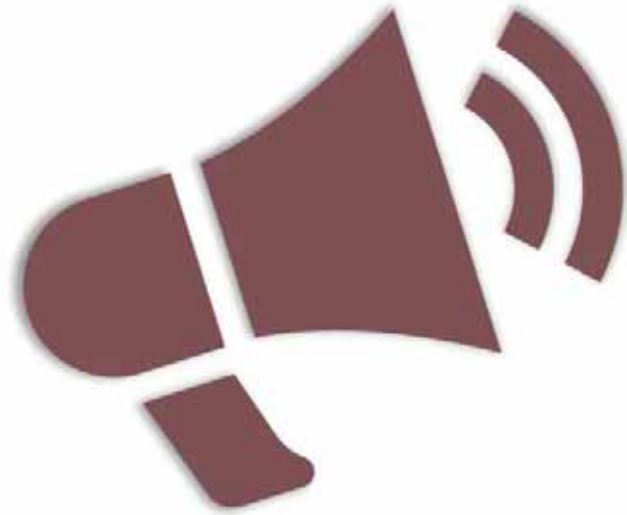
Bi-Weekly Team Coordination Meetings

The WCCNM has had great success with Team Coordination Meetings, which are held regularly with managers and supervisors of all Central Region programs and include representation from the comprehensive and affiliate centers. The group comes together to discuss upcoming events and outreach opportunities, staffing challenges, customer flow issues, and infrastructure needs. The Team Coordination attendees also approve all operational policies and procedures.

Communication and Marketing Efforts

The WCCNM implemented several new approaches in PY19 to strengthen communication and marketing efforts with all partners in the Central Region. To communicate the system-wide activities on a routine basis, the Monthly Report is provided to WCCNM board members and CEOs, and includes the program status and performance of all partners. Also, the “Weekly Connection” is a regular e-newsletter for all partner staff to share information, new partnership opportunities, upcoming events, ideas and best practices, important dates, and much more.

As an effort to better coordinate outreach events and leverage these opportunities as much as possible for all of the programs, partners are required to check out an official “event kit” with the Operations Manager that includes marketing collateral for all partner programs in the Central Region. This has maximized the exposure of all of the New Mexico Workforce Connection services, increased brand consistency, and has encouraged partners to embrace cross-training opportunities so that they can represent all services at a high-level to various audiences.



The WCCNM is enhancing online communication via a new intranet that was launched in September 2019. The intranet provides all partners with easily accessible alerts, calendar of events and outreach activities, training modules, policies & procedures, contact information, IT work tickets, event kit requests, and room reservations. The WCCNM will also be launching a new website in order to tailor information for our various customer bases, better reach job seekers and businesses, improve our ranking in search engines, provide consistent and updated program information, announce events, integrate our social media, measure the interest in the programs across our network, and highlight our achievements and successes.

