



CENTRAL REGION

BERNALILLO · SANDOVAL · TORRANCE · VALENCIA

ANNUAL REPORT

PROGRAM YEAR 2022



New Mexico
Workforce Connection

A Proud Partner of the American Job Center Network

DECEMBER 2023

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



John Mierzwa, Chair
Dewey V. Cave, Executive Director

December 6, 2023

Dear Colleagues and Constituents,

I am pleased to share with you the strides the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) staff and partners have made this past year, as well as our vision moving forward. Many New Mexicans and businesses from Bernalillo, Sandoval, Valencia, and Torrance counties have realized meaningful, and often life-changing dividends thanks to the efforts of the WCCNM team. I know I speak for our board when I say our constituents are always top of mind for all WCCNM team members.

Our focus has been on embracing and implementing new technology to enhance our services, an effort that is evident in our significant investments in technical solutions and partner training. These advancements are not only improving our operational efficiency but also increasing customer satisfaction across our diverse range of services.

Building on our social media presence has been another area of significant growth. We have expanded our outreach and engagement through multiple channels, ensuring that our message reaches a wider audience. This initiative aligns with our commitment to effective communication and marketing, as we continue to adapt and thrive in the digital age.

Our commitment to excellent financial stewardship remains a cornerstone of our success. Through prudent management and strategic decision-making, we have effectively utilized our resources to maximize the impact of our programs. This has been possible due to the dedication of our skilled and committed staff and partners, who are the backbone of the WCCNM organization and reach. Their expertise and tireless efforts have been instrumental in driving our success.

Looking ahead, we are focused on growing WCCNM's capacity to provide services to even more individuals and businesses. Our strategies include strengthening partnerships in key sectors, leveraging data-driven approaches to address workforce needs, and expanding our reach to ensure that more members of our community can benefit from our programs.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our board, staff, and partners for their unwavering support and dedication. Together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Mierzwa'.

John Mierzwa
WCCNM Board Chair



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"Equal Opportunity Program"

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CENTRAL REGION

Connecting individuals with career opportunities.
Partnering with employers for workforce success.

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) and the New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia counties remain committed to advancing strategic initiatives that address the evolving needs of priority industries. Our focus is on empowering businesses in these regions to enhance their competitiveness and profitability. Operating within a business-centric framework, we proudly serve as a trusted and proficient resource for businesses and job seekers across the four-county area.

The WCCNM has proactively leveraged opportunities to cultivate strong relationships with mandated partners under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) and community-based organizations. Through these collaborations, we pursue vital objectives and introduce innovative approaches to foster workforce development. These efforts, coupled with diligent support from our board, dedicated staff, and numerous partners, position the Central Region as a leader in supporting the workforce and business community throughout New Mexico. As we continue to move forward, our commitment to excellence remains constant, ensuring that we play a pivotal role in shaping a robust and competitive landscape for both businesses and job seekers in the region.



WORKFORCE CONNECTION OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

Striving to ensure that the workforce-related needs of employers, workers & job seekers in the Central Region are met.



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 four 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 Role of the WCCNM Board

Board members apply their knowledge, experience and expertise to (1) build a strong economic environment in the Central Region that supports growing industries, competitive and profitable businesses, skilled and productive workers and thriving communities and (2) promote private sector involvement in the New Mexico Workforce Centers in order to assist employers in meeting their hiring needs.

In addition, Board members are responsible for planning, selecting one-stop operators, program monitoring and oversight, performance measures, choosing service providers and overseeing and approving the annual budget.

WCCNM PARTNER NETWORK

Strengthening partnerships to provide job seekers with the high-quality career services, education & training, and supportive services they need for sustainable employment, and to help businesses find skilled workers & access other supports, including education & training for their current workforce.

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) works collaboratively with multiple programs and organizations throughout the Central Region to better serve job seekers and employers.

Some of the partnerships are mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014; others have been established to better meet the full scope of job seeker and employer needs.

Many partner programs are co-located in our four New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers in the Central Region, thereby providing a central point of service for employers as well as individuals seeking employment, training, and related services.

More information is available at www.wccnm.org/wccnm-partners

New Mexico
Workforce Connection

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Partners Co-located in

New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers

- WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (WCCNM Contracted Provider – Mid-Region Council of Governments)
- WIOA Title I.B Youth (WCCNM Contracted Provider – YDI)
- WIOA Title III Career Services (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Veteran Services Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- National Farmworker Jobs Program-Employment and Training Grant (MET, Inc.)
- New Mexico Works-Wage Subsidy & CareerLink Programs (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- UNM Valencia Accelerated College & Career Education (ACCE)
- TANF Program - NM Works (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Rapid Response (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)
- Unemployment Insurance (NM Department of Workforce Solutions)

Required External Partners

- WIOA Title II (Albuquerque Adult Learning Center)
- WIOA Title II (Catholic Charities-Adult Basic Education)
- WIOA Title II (CNM SAGE-Adult Basic Education)
- WIOA Title II (UNM Valencia- Adult Basic Education)
- WIOA Title II (Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute)
- WIOA Title II (Adult Education Santa Fe Community College)
- WIOA Title II (Adult Education UNM- Los Alamos)
- WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (NM Division of Vocational Rehabilitation)
- CNM Carl D. Perkins Grant
- Five Sandoval Pueblos Inc. WIOA Program
- National Indian Youth Council WIOA Program
- SCSEP (Goodwill)
- SCSEP (NICOA)
- SCSEP (NM Aging and Long-Term Services Department)
- Help NM-Community Based Service Grant
- TANF Program (NM Human Services Department)
- Isleta Pueblo WIOA Program
- Job Corps
- Santo Domingo Pueblo WIOA Program
- San Felipe Pueblo

Our Community Partners

- HopeWorks LLC
- Gordon Bernell Charter School
- Rio Metro Regional Transit District, New Mexico Job Access Program (Rio Metro Regional Transit District)
- Ticket-to-Work (TTW) (Adelante of NM)
- Bernalillo County
- CNM Workforce & Community Success
- Albuquerque Housing Authority



WIOA TITLE I.B ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM

Assisting individuals in the Central Region to obtain skills & training for high-quality careers and helping employers hire & retain skilled workers.

Overall, 786 individuals received Adult & DW training services in the Central Region.



Individual Training Account (ITA) is a payment agreement established on behalf of a participant with a training provider.

496

clients received Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

Work-Based Learning provides students with opportunities for instruction not only in academics but also in occupational skills, career exploration, and guidance in identifying employment and educational goals.

70

clients participating in apprenticeship programs

180 new On-the-Job Training (OJT) contracts, with hands-on job specific training for 191 individuals in the Central Region

21

Internship Participants Placed

40 Customized Training Agreements were executed & training/retraining of 125 individuals under the Customized Training category

For more information about the WIOA Adult & Dislocated Worker program, visit www.wccnm.org/WIOA or email WIOA@wccnm.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During PY22 the WCCNM Adult and Dislocated Worker (A&DW) accomplished a number of major achievements including, but not limited to, the following:

Exceeding all WIOA Performance Measures

With quality customer service, intensive training, and vigilant data entry review for accuracy; the Central Region exceeded all Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Title I negotiated measures for PY22. We of course, must first recognize the outstanding work of our Job Seeker and Business Units who provided quality service, and a very thorough customer assessment (Job Seeker or Employer). Assessment playing a big role in making the difference between just helping a Title I participant get a job or setting them onto a viable career pathway with longevity and opportunity for upward mobility. Our Team understands that careers should align with the participant's personal goals, including finding a sense of purpose, and their personality.

Updating all WIOA Procedures to Correlate and Comply with Local/State/Federal Policy

This action more clearly enabled our Team to identify and implement the steps required for capturing performance and to aid in the execution of any of the myriad of tasks required in the provision of WIOA service. Additionally, doing so assures a uniform provision of service at any of our WCCNM locations. All WIOA Teams have been trained on new procedures to assure full understanding, compliance, and implementation.

Implementation of DocuSign

With the introduction of DocuSign, we are now able to obtain verified, digital signatures on a timelier basis for all contracts, timesheets and required documentation. The software is easily accessed from any device and has already proven to be an asset in the provision of WIOA service. Additionally, it can enable digital enrollment to WIOA services to assure varied methods of access.

Implementation of Paperless Files in PY22

Throughout the program year, the WIOA Team has worked on form revision, procedure development and staff training to enable a move toward a paperless participant file. While we have been performing data entry and document upload and storage in the WCOS, we continued to maintain a hard copy file. Like many of us, it was comforting to know we always had a “back-up copy”. However, given our current environmental concerns and duplication of effort, it just makes sense to remove the need for a hard copy back-up. With the implementation of DocuSign, as of July 1, 2023, we were able to fully remove the need for hard copies. Within 5 years (required storage of PY22 files for data validation and audit) we will no longer have a need to store and maintain our old hard copy files and forms. This will save staff time, free up storage space in our facilities and will help our environment in a monumental way given the quantity of forms required to participate in WIOA.

Collaboration with City of Albuquerque Waste Management

The City of Albuquerque collaborated with the WCCNM and CNM to find a solution to a significant staffing problem identified within the city’s Waste Management Dept. Prior to the project, there was no internal mechanism to enable upward mobility within the organization for those employed as laborers or landfill attendants. Not only did this identified issue affect staffing of a very important position within this department, but it also affected staff morale. CNM created a series of modules designed to be accessible on-line that would enable obtainment of the CDL Driver Permit. Once the permit was obtained, students were training, hands-on, at the CNM Training Center.

As a result, of this program, the City now has a sustainable, cost-effective process to provide CDL training for its employees; new training opportunities have provided for a measurable increase in employee moral; and, via this program, approximately 18 new CDL trained and licensed drivers will be added to the workforce annually.

Advancing Careers in the Trades

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) works collaboratively with multiple workforce programs, education entities, local public bodies, and other workforce-based organizations throughout the Central Region to provide a more holistic service to our job seekers and employers.

WCCNM has had success in assisting WIOA participants in several work-based learning activities. Listed below are some examples of our PY22 projects:

- Via collaboration with META and Fortis Construction in Los Lunas, we participated in the Kick-off of “Advancing Careers in Trades”, a pre-apprenticeship program sponsored by Meta and Fortis Construction at the Los Lunas Data Center. The Title I Team enrolled a cohort of eight individuals to provide supportive services related to the 8-week pre-apprentice training. The cohort completed their training and have all signed with a construction trade union of choosing and will be working their way to becoming journeymen. Meta and Fortis Construction hope to continue this effort to create the much-needed pipeline of trade personnel to support the construction of the Meta Data Center and future Fortis Construction projects in New Mexico.
- Provided WIOA training services for employed non-union construction trade apprentices through the Associated Builders and Contractors of New Mexico (ABD-NM). This effort is a WIOA business service for employer and supplements the cost of related classroom training.
- WIOA collaborated with the Napa Auto Center Group that consists of 38 local independent dealers who are part of a nationally registered apprenticeship for Automotive Technicians. We successfully collaborated in the provision of WIOA service via on-the-job trainings (OJT) and Internships for job seekers expressing an interest in entering this career pathway and those recent or soon to graduate from automotive training programs in the Central region. We anticipate providing additional support to some of the independent dealers with the many certifications required through NAPA for Automotive technicians to enable increased skill levels and movement toward a more self-sufficient wage.
- The Central Regions Title I program has facilitated opportunities for non-registered apprenticeships through companies such as Abraxas Electric. Abraxas has opted to incorporate unskilled individuals into their workforce who desire to enter into this electrical work and provide them training as apprentices with their company. WIOA has supported these hires with On-the-job training (OJT) funding over the past several years and we have seen substantial growth of Abraxas Electric including their recent expansion into solar power.
- A&DW program is currently collaborating with local construction trade unions to provide WIOA assistance where needed. Our work with the IBEW local 611 enables the offering of CDL training (assistance) to electrical apprentices to expand their skills and career path opportunities such as electric line work that requires a CDL. Our Team made a presentation regarding the various WCCNM services available as well as those specific to the WIOA program to a local Iron Workers Union and are setting up a presentation for the local Carpenters Union. Our hope is to provide the additional support these unions require through WIOA, to grow the pool of workers so desperately needed within these trades.

MAJOR CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

The A&DW Service Provider identified and has addressed the following PY22 challenges and opportunities:

- Monitoring Review revealed a few areas in need of improvement and subsequent adjustments to our practices. One specifically required the use of a digital signature that would enable a timelier turnaround of contracts and required documentation. This assures that we remain in full compliance with all pertaining Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and State Regulations and guidance.
- Service to Returning Citizens remains a challenge. This target population has a greater need for wrap around services to include many of our partner programs. It is also sometimes difficult to reach and collaborate with their assigned Parole Officer due to their own high caseload levels. To enable any form of success, staff must provide a higher level of individualized service to this group to prepare them for interviews and subsequent jobs. The focus must be to basic work skills, i.e., being on time, covering up inappropriate tattoos, removing piercings, refraining from phone usage throughout the day, etc. Staff continue to find new ways to help move these individuals back into the workforce to help reduce recidivism.

NEG-DWG Program

National Emergency Grant - National Dislocated Worker Grants (NEG-DWGs) under WIOA provides resources to states and other eligible applicants to respond to large, unexpected layoff events causing significant job losses. Under the NEG-DWG, the Central Region Adult & Dislocated Worker (DW) program has two projects. The first is the transitional jobs project that strives to enable individuals with a limited work history to experience the opportunity to gain meaningful work skills that lead to gainful employment.

The target population is individuals with nonviolent criminal backgrounds who are currently eligible dislocated worker or long-term unemployed. Transitional jobs participants are placed at worksites with employers across a range of occupations and industries in the four-county region.

The grant was scheduled to complete all training by 12/2022. As of December 31, 2022, 10 participants were placed in transitional work opportunities.



ADULT PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY: ANASTASIA

Anastasia- entered the WIOA program in April 2021. At the time of her application, she was receiving public assistance benefits and qualified to participate in the Adult program. When she came to the program, she was ashamed and embarrassed to request help and didn't want her friends or family knowing. She thought she had to be strong and do everything on her own but was assured that there was nothing to be ashamed of and many of her fellow classmates also participated. Anastasia had previous experience in health care field as a certified nurse assistant working in a nursing facility.

It was always a dream of Anastasia's to become a nurse; one she had been working on for a very long time.

Anastasia enrolled into the Bachelor of Science (BSN) program at Brookline College. She quickly became fascinated with her field again and loved learning about the different specialties within the industry. Anastasia knew the program was a great fit because of the hands-on learning. She especially liked working with patients and providing excellent care.

Anastasia ran into a few obstacles with her personal health and serious personal issues that needed to be addressed but through it all she was determined to graduate and earn her BSN. Every time she fell, she got back up again, dusted herself off and persevered.

After graduating, Anastasia landed full-time employment with UNMH as a trauma nurse. She remains employed full-time with UNMH in the emergency Department making \$32.00 an hour. Anastasia expressed her gratitude for the great opportunity that the WIOA Program has provided her. With the support of her Career Development Specialist, she was able to find her way through an industry with great potential for longevity and room to grow. She now looks forward to embarking on a new career in the Health Care industry as a registered Nurse.



DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY: MARDREA

Mardrea is a 48-year-old married woman with a 5-year-old son. She has always been a very determined woman. Mardrea and her husband have been married for many years. She had always toyed with the idea of becoming a nurse but ended up putting herself through school and earning her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and Health & fitness, an Associate of Science in Social Science, and her CNA certification. She has been in the medical field more than half of her life.

They became parents at a later age and stage in their lives. When she became a mother, she decided that she wanted to contribute more than she could just being a CNA. Because she had so much experience in the medical field, and a huge passion for helping people, she wanted to stay in the health care industry, so, she conducted research into the various available occupations. Mardrea's husband agreed to be a stay-at-home dad to their very young son to enable her to continue her education in pursuit of her dream to become a Nurse.

When Mardrea started the WIOA process, she had just been laid off from ARCA and was not employed. She was receiving unemployment benefits at the time and after eligibility determination and assessment she was enrolled into the WIOA program as a Dislocated Worker (DW) into the Nursing Program at Brookline College.

Mardrea was provided with the following services to support her efforts toward training and skill attainment:

Initial and intensive (Work Keys) assessment to determine service needs and assure meeting of training program/institutional requirements. Intake, eligibility determination, case file development and extensive forms completion. Development of a comprehensive employment plan aligned with all requirements of the Nursing program and ensuing employment goal. The IEP Identified all required steps necessary for Mardrea to achieve the high-level training she was seeking. Monthly contact occurred to provide support and determine progress and identification of any potential barriers that could affect a successful experience and ultimate job placement.

After having a few struggles throughout the program, she overcame all obstacles and completed the program. She graduated from the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program at Brookline College and has received her Nursing License and a Nursing Excellence Award!

Mardrea obtained employment at Lovelace Westside Hospital earning \$37.96 per hour. She is extremely grateful for the assistance she received through the WIOA Program that enabled her to fulfill her dream.

WIOA TITLE I.B YOUTH PROGRAM

Helping young people & our future workforce overcome obstacles to reach their education, employment & career goals.

Overall, 984 youth received services through Central Region Youth Program.



The Youth Program provides education assistance, work experience opportunities, and job placement services to in-school youth and out-of-school youth ages 16-24.

221 new participants enrolled into the Youth Program

763 participants carried over from the previous program year (active caseload and/or in follow-up)

Under WIOA, all classroom training is funded through individual training accounts (ITAs). Programs must be on the state's eligible training provider list to take advantage of potential funding.

72 young adults received ITAs for education & training programs

124 youth participated in work experience activities, planned, structured learning experiences that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time

Supportive services are key assistance beyond career & training services necessary to achieve success such as help with transportation, child care, and uniforms or other appropriate work clothing & tools. Incentives provide a means to recognize & reward a youth's success while participating in WIOA services.

112 participants received supportive services & incentives

287 youth earned incentives for achievements related to education and employment

For more information about the WIOA Youth program, visit www.wccnm.org/Youth or email Youth@wccnm.org

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During PY22, the WCCNM Youth Program enrolled 221 new participants into the program and carried over 763 (active caseload and/or in follow up) youth from the previous year. In PY22, 124 youth participated in work experience activities, 112 youth received supportive services for transportation, uniforms, testing fees, etc., and 287 youth earned incentives for achievements related to education and employment.

PY22 was another big year for the Youth Program for occupational training. The program invested over \$660,000 in training funds to assist 91 youth with Individualized Training Accounts (ITA's) in demand occupations. 48% of the youth in training obtained a certification while 48% were still in training or continuing their education as of PY end. 75% of the youth receiving their certification gained employment.

During PY22 the Youth Program established its first sector partnership. The partnership's agreement promotes a career pathway for participants interested in a career as a Pharmacy Technician in the pharmaceutical industry. Partners include: YDI's Adult Education program, Pima Medical Institute, Walgreens, and the WIOA Youth Program. The agreement allows for referrals from all partners and provides opportunities for High School Equivalency, Pharmacy Technician Certificate, Internship and Long-Term Employment. The Youth Program will utilize this model to expand sector partnership opportunities in other demand and emerging occupations.

The Youth Program exceeded the negotiated rate for all Performance Measures. Performance was exceeded in the following areas:

- Employment Q2 = 104.54%
- Employment Q4 = 110.65%
- Credential Attainment = 124.53%
- Measurable Skills Gains = 112.64%

PY22 also marks the first year the Youth Program has met and exceeded the Measurable Skills Gain negotiated rate. The Youth Program has worked hard over the last two years with measurable skills gains implementing creative strategies and providing continuous support and follow-up for participants to post-test, and complete

work experience and occupational training.

The Youth Program successfully completed 339 participants through four quarters of follow-up resulting in a total caseload carryover into PY23 of 645 participants.

During PY22, Youth Program staff completed a major internal audit in preparations for the Federal Monitoring Session, continued providing ongoing professional development for staff through Quarterly Trainings and monthly Wednesday Wellness sessions, and provided the opportunity for participants to engage in quarterly Developmental Assets Framework trainings to strengthen the qualities and supports youth need to succeed.

MAJOR CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

While overcoming challenges during PY22, the Youth Program has remained focused on providing services, finding solutions to its obstacles, and seeking opportunities for continuous improvement.

Changes in staffing affected the Youth Program in a variety of ways. PY22 welcomed a new Program Manager, Quality Assurance & Training Practitioner, and four Youth Development Practitioners. Positions eliminated from the program were a second Business Practitioner and the WIOA Specialist while the Quality Assurance Practitioner and Trainer positions became a combined role. Staff worked together effectively to adjust to the changes while providing quality services to participants.

While occupational training remained a high interest with youth in PY22, work experience placements were a challenge. The high need for employees in the workforce resulted in youth participants choosing to go straight into employment or businesses preferring to hire rather go through the program. The Youth program was also one among several subsidized employment programs across the Region that also created a challenge.

Other areas the Youth program expects to focus on improving are opportunities to develop a greater number of partnerships to support participants in their career pathways. The Youth Program plans to strengthen current partnerships and the current sector partnership to ensure that referrals, training, and work experience support long-term employment goals.

YOUTH PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY: ARMON

Armon, pictured center in photo at left, is an 18-year-old resident of Los Lunas, NM. As a young child, Armon began overcoming obstacles at a young age, suffering from a head injury that left him disabled. Armon was also adopted into a warm and loving family at a young age.

Armon's most current services for his needs include both Speech and Occupational therapies with an Individualized Education Plan that included employment as a goal. Armon was referred to WIOA Youth Services by a community leader.

At time of enrollment, Armon was a senior with a disability at Canon Academy in Belen, NM. Armon was also the Student Council Secretary having been elected by his classmates. He also volunteers at bible school as a mentor and is active with the Wounded Warrior Project.

After successful completion of BEST Training and tutoring, Armon was placed at the Village of Los Lunas Fire Department as a Firehouse Assistant. He completed work experience there from January 2023 through July 2023. During the course of his 300 hours of training he earned all "excellent evaluation marks" by supervisors and fire chief, John Gabaldon.

"Armon learned how to take care of himself around a fire station. He also learned about self-respect. Armon was trained in safety procedures and was cross trained in several fire station duties and responsibilities." Stated, John Gabaldon, who has been fire chief for the past eight years.

Most recently, Armon was officially hired by the Village of Los Lunas as a Firehouse Assistant. Armon will receive benefits, additional training and become part of the 34-member fire department crew.

"Armon is now our "brother", and we all welcome him into our family. He will be visible in community events and activities. We all look forward to continuing working with Armon. He has an awesome positive attitude" said Gabaldon.

During the course of his time with WIOA, Armon earned his high school diploma, and a Measurable Skills gain also having successfully completed work experience. For graduation, the firehouse visited his school arriving in their fire trucks and uniforms.

His mother, Mary Alice, commented. "Being part of the WIOA program has benefitted Armon in so many ways. He has totally built his character. Now, plans things better. Has really grown up. He has learned how to use a check book and is now saving his money. Armon recently visited Universal Studios in Los Angeles, California with his WIOA earnings. Eventually he wants to become a first responder. He is so happy working at the fire department and considers his co-workers as "brothers" and family. He looks forward to going to work each and every day".



YOUTH PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY: ADAM

Adam is a young male faced with disabilities, including one in which Adam has difficulty walking. Adam lives at home with his mother, stepfather and twin brother. Adam enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program in February of 2020 and expressed interest in participating in Paid Work Experience and possible schooling. Adam was placed at St. Felix Pantry as a stocker for work experience. While participating in his work experience, Adam was able to learn certain skills that advanced him into staying with St. Felix Pantry passed his allotted and success completion of hours for the program. Adam was able to use DVR to get additional hours for work experience through St. Felix Pantry. As a result of his dedication and hard work, Adam was hired on full time with Albertsons as a greeter and cart helper. Adam has been a great example of how the WIOA youth program can make a big difference in one's life if the participant takes things seriously and completes all the steps necessary.

WIOA TITLE III CAREER SERVICES & ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

Guiding people toward jobs, as well as education & training organized around career pathways, through a range of one-on-one assistance & group services.

6,342 individuals were enrolled in Career Services in the Central Region.



Career services information & data reflects services provided by WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser, Business Team, TANF & Veteran Services.

6,529

job seekers registered in the www.jobs.state.nm.us system in the Central Region

2,094

individuals referred to job opportunities by Career Consultants in the Central Region

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program enrolled 2,990 individuals for services. The program is designed to provide greater access to reemployment services while certifying for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

8,857

individuals received career counseling services

870

individuals received resume preparation assistance

Over 2,400 individuals completed assessments, for either a pre-employment requirement or a workforce program requirement.

For more information about the various career services offered in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance & Valencia counties, visit www.wccnm.org or email NMWorkforceConnection@wccnm.org

The Career Services program (WIOA Title III-Wagner-Peyser services), in addition to programs including TANF, Veteran Services, and others, had successful outcomes and highlights throughout the previous program year. The following information and data reflects services provided by the Career Services Team, the Business Team, the TANF New Mexico Works Program, Veterans Services, and more.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program is funded by the US Department of Labor to help Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work faster. There were 2,990 individuals certifying for UI benefits were connected to and enrolled in RESEA services virtually and in-person in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia counties in PY22.

The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) is a U.S. Department of Labor grant offered to states to provide personalized career services for eligible veterans and spouses. Our JVSG **Veteran Services** team is comprised solely of veterans. As veterans serving veterans, the team comes with real world experience of transitioning from the military and entering the civilian workforce, while undergoing extensive training to understand the full array of resources and service available to veterans to succeed in the 21st century workforce.

In PY22, 1,881 veterans received services, including 297 veterans who newly registered for services, totaling 8,492 services provided.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Providing a range of tailored services, including recruitment assistance and training support, to meet businesses' needs & partnering for workforce success.

Business Services in the Central Region - PY22



Under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), a large effort is needed to encompass the broad spectrum of business engagement strategies & activities that are needed for unique business solutions in local & regional communities across the country.

8,700 Business outreach services provided to 2,236 employers

1,562 Job openings that staff assisted with posting in the www.jobs.state.nm.us system

1,556 Total job fair services provided to 468 employers

For more information about the business services in the Central Region, visit www.wccnm.org/employers or email NMWorkforceConnection@wccnm.org

gaining insights into their immediate and future workforce needs, industry culture, and strategic objectives.

The Business Team has established numerous collaborations and partnerships with community-based organizations, chambers of commerce, industry associations, local government, and more. These partnerships are crucial in developing the Central Region's talent pipeline. The team not only connects qualified candidates with employers, but also addresses workforce gaps through training, education opportunities, and skill development strategies.

The monthly outreach efforts reflect the team's dedication to engaging new businesses and recruiting dislocated workers through various methods. They have reached out to a diverse range of businesses across different sectors, including technology, healthcare, construction, and more. Noteworthy is their success in placing candidates through collaborations with organizations like Tau Technology, where interns supported through training programs were praised for their impressive capabilities.

In addition to business outreach, the team actively participates in career fairs, hiring events, and small business resource fairs. Their involvement in programs like "Advancing Careers in Trades" demonstrates a commitment to building a pipeline of skilled workers in collaboration with industry partners.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Business Team at Workforce Connection has achieved success in managing the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) system and the New Mexico Workforce Connection (NMWC) centers in the Central Region. Their primary goal is to address the workforce needs of employers and businesses in the regional economy. The team maintains strong relationships with the business community,

The Business Team's achievements extend to supporting individuals affected by layoffs, facilitating partnerships with trade unions, and successfully enrolling participants in pre-apprenticeship programs. Their efforts in connecting with businesses, promoting WIOA services, and contributing to community initiatives highlight the impact of the Workforce Connection's Business Team on the economic development of the Central Region.

SECTOR STRATEGIES

The WCCNM sector strategies have progressed with the IT/tech and healthcare industries. For IT/tech, the WCCNM and NWMC partners will continue to leverage the employer and industry relationships that have been established with other sector work, including the H1-B Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant granted by the Department of Labor. This grant is a \$2 million, five-year grant to support and fund infrastructure jobs in broadband, transportation, and green energy.

Also, the WCCNM 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 program, and others. 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. The WCCNM Board has convened the Operations Committee that continues to assist in the development of sector strategies efforts in the target industries of healthcare and IT, and the Economic Development committee will continue to support sector strategies efforts by building and strengthening employer partnerships in these sectors. WCCNM Staff continues to monitor labor market data to align tier industries. Other future endeavors include a comprehensive public facing online product for career pathways that is similar to the Colorado Workforce Development board, this planning work will continue in PY23.

workforce to discuss workforce

As a component of Sector Strategy development, the WCCNM Economic Development Committee works to support and engage with county-specific leading and emerging sectors to include the following: Bernalillo County– Healthcare, Technology, Film, Transportation, and Construction/Skilled Trades. Sandoval County–Advanced Manufacturing; Tarrant County–Sustainable Energy; and Valencia County–Manufacturing, and Construction/Skilled Trades. The WCCNM will leverage its Economic Development Committee 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.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE**

The WCCNM Economic Development Committee was established during PY20 and has met monthly since its inception. The mission of the WCCNM Economic Development Committee is to forge alliances with Central Region economic development organizations, businesses, communities, and training providers; identify workforce needs; develop strategies for county level planning; bridge skill gaps; and support economic development initiatives. WCCNM works in collaboration with the City of Albuquerque and economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, local government, and workforce development organizations throughout the Central Region. This committee brings these varied stakeholders together to support both larger sector strategy areas like healthcare, construction, transportation (CDL/truck drivers) and IT, as well as county-specific leading and emerging industries such as advanced manufacturing.

Recent committee discussions have focused on the task of identifying the workforce needs of existing businesses striving to recruit qualified staff to maintain and grow their businesses, as well as addressing the staff knowledge and skills needs of new businesses interested in relocating to or expanding their businesses in the Central Region. The WCCNM Economic Development Subcommittee members continue to express employer's concerns that job seekers are lacking the critical soft skills needed for successful job placement.

Employers look for soft skills because these skills are helpful indicators of how

successful a new hire will be. According to a Leadership IQ study, 89% of new hire failures were a result of poor soft skills, not a lack of technical failures. New hires were more likely to fail because they lacked soft skills like coachability, emotional intelligence, and motivation. Only 11% of new hire failures were a result of technical incompetence.

Meeting employer and job seeker needs by ensuring soft skills training is incorporated into WIOA funded participant and employer training curriculum is an ongoing CQI initiative that receives continual development. Training providers such as CNM and CNM Ingenuity have incorporated soft skills training as a component of their coursework for associate degree programs and bootcamp courses. These soft skills trainings include teamwork, attention to detail, time management, organization, verbal and written communication, leadership, emotional intelligence, adaptability/flexibility, problem-solving/conflict resolution, and interpersonal skills.

WORK-BASED LEARNING

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) works collaboratively with multiple workforce programs, education entities, local public bodies, and other workforce-based organizations throughout the Central Region to better serve job seekers and employers.

WCCNM has had success in assisting WIOA participants in work-based learning activities. Below are some examples of PY22 work-based initiatives:

APPRENTICESHIP

During PY22, the WCCNM provided 104 WIOA training activities to employed non-union construction trade apprentices to support their employer with the cost of the related classroom training for apprenticeship provided through their sponsor Associated Builders and Contractors of New Mexico (ABC-NM).

In addition, WCCNM participated in the Kick-off of “Advancing Careers in Trades” a pre-apprenticeship program sponsored by Meta and Fortis Construction at the Los Lunas Data Center. WIOA enrolled a cohort of eight individuals to provide supportive services related to their 8-week pre-apprentice training. The cohort has recently completed the pre-apprentice program and each participant has signed with a construction trade union of their choosing and are working their way to becoming journeymen.

Meta and Fortis Construction plan on three cohorts per year with up to 15 individuals per cohort to create the much-needed pipeline of trade personnel to support the construction of the Meta Data Center and future Fortis Construction projects in New Mexico. WCCNM also collaborated with NAPA Auto Center Group, which consists of 38 local independent dealers. They have a nationally registered apprenticeship for Automotive Technicians; we are working to provide them with on-the-job trainings (OJT) and Internships for those with interest in entering this career pathway and those recent or soon to be graduates from automotive training programs in the Central Region.

A few participants have been placed in OJTs and internships, and we are anticipating providing support to the independent dealers with participants earning the certifications required through NAPA for Automotive technicians to continue the work they do on a professional and up to date level.

WIOA has provided opportunities for non-registered apprenticeships through companies such as Abraxas Electric. Abraxas has been willing to bring on unskilled individuals with the desire to do electrical work and provide them training as apprentices with their company. WIOA has supported these hires with OJT funding over the past several years and we have seen substantial growth of Abraxas Electric including their recent expansion into solar power.

Partnering with local construction trade unions to provide WIOA assistance where needed is an important task for us. We are working with the IBEW local 611 to offer CDL training to electrical apprentices to expand their skills and career path opportunities such as electric line work that requires a CDL. We recently conducted a WIOA presentation to the local Iron Workers Union and are setting up a presentation for the local Carpenters Union. WCCNM plans to support these unions with WIOA programs to grow the pool of workers in the trades.

INTERNSHIPS

Through the WCCNM, WIOA has been providing internships for recent graduates and those close to graduating from degree and certificate programs for the past several years. This program has been successful, and this type of work-based learning is important to the future of our workforce to allow individuals to gain valuable experience in the field of training.

The Facebook Career Connections Program approached WCCNM to develop a pilot to assist minority owned small businesses by training and providing them with a social media and marketing interns.

Facebook provides the training and WIOA funds provide a wage for the intern during this 12-week program. Without the WIOA program, Facebook Career Connections would have had to rely on the employers to fund the internships, which was a hardship on a small business looking to grow. WCCNM supported this program for 3 years and have some amazing success stories of these interns moving on to related employment with their internship worksite or elsewhere resulting in success stories from employers on the affect these interns had on their businesses.

Tau Technologies was advertising for interns in information technology, we were able to provide them with several student resumes from participants that have completed IT boot camps and some that were recruited from local colleges.

After interviewing these interns, Tau Technologies was so please with the quality of the individuals WCCNM provided they have decided to bring on five interns starting in May 2023. WCCNM through WIOA funding will support these internships at \$25.00 per hour with the opportunity for them to convert to \$40.00 per hour as permanent employees with Tau.

This program year we have placed 20 interns with 16 different businesses. All are thriving; practicing and honing their skills learned in the classroom and are able to apply them to real work through this work-based learning WIOA funded opportunity. Many employers find great candidates through this program as they get to know the individual and observe their soft skills and learning potential.



ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)

OJT provides up to 6 months of training to a newly hired individual by employers to fill the skill gaps they have for the position. This work-based learning program is our most popular program for those who need to refresh and gain new skills but also need to bring in income at the same time. These positions are full-time and one half of the salary for the first months are reimbursed to employers for providing training to these under-skilled, under-experienced individuals.

During PY22 WCCNM's WIOA funding has provided 174 on the job training opportunities for occupations in demand priority industries. There are a myriad of different employers involved with our focus driven by economic development, job data and local economies.

MAJOR CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVMENT

WCCNM Business teams, including staff from Adult & Dislocated Worker, Youth, Career Services, Veterans, and NMDVR, continue to work together in order to avoid duplicate and multiple contacts with the same businesses, associations, etc. by leveraging the communication tools.

As part of the new website that launched in PY20, WCCNM is developing an employer/business services inquiry tool, which will allow businesses to quickly submit their workforce needs to business team representatives with a defined process, workflow, and tracking database on the backend.

The tool uses a UX design so employers can quickly submit their hiring and training needs, and the tool sends the inquiry to the appropriate programs and staff who can assist with those needs. All staff can interact with the inquiry collaboratively in the inquiry tool and receive real-time updates on employer and other staff's contributions to the inquiry, making collaboration more efficient for staff and avoiding a duplication of efforts. The employer inquiry tool is now expected to launch in PY23.

Repeat business continues to present challenges for the Central Region. Although the WCCNM and NMWC partners have been successful within the area of business services, it is important that we pursue business services with collaborative and strategic intent to ensure that we address business needs from a workforce system-wide perspective versus individual partner program goals and performance criteria.

The WCCNM continues to build partner capacity, expertise, and dedication of investments in technology and partner training. Opportunities for improvements are possible by leveraging industry sector strategies and "work and learn" initiatives, and also with significant investments in technical solutions to promote quality business engagement and increased customer satisfaction. During PY22 the WCCNM Board continued planning and expanding its business engagement strategies, which will help support these efforts.

The WCCNM is fortunate to have a variety of service providers, funding streams, additional grant awards, programs, and services; however, there are many programs and funding streams that have their own unique set of eligibility requirements and outcome measurements which can be limiting as well as 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.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 Industries

The Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico has developed Tier 1 and Tier 2 Industries based on NMDWS's research in 1) Occupational Outlook Central Region (Most Job Openings), 2) 2020-2030 Albuquerque MSA/Central Region In-Demand Occupations, and 3) Projected Employment Growth by Major Industry (Central Region).

The following tables illustrate the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Industries in the Central Region and address employer needs in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance and Valencia counties. Based on this data and antecedent factors, first and second tier priority industries have been identified as follows.

***NMDWS Research data indicates that Accommodations/Hospitality & Tourism/Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Retail Trade/Service are currently high growth industries with in-demand occupations in the Central Region. According to NMDWS Research, these two Industry Sectors immediately follow Tier 1 Healthcare & Social Assistance in highest growth/in-demand industries in the Central Region. However, due to the historically low wages paid for most occupations within these two industries, the WCCNM defines them as Tier 2 Industries.**

INDUSTRY SECTORS

Tier 1 Sectors

- Healthcare & Social Assistance
- Professional, Scientific, & Technical
- Construction – All Trades, Commercial and Residential
- Transportation
- Energy
- Broadband

Tier 2 Sectors

- Accommodations/Hospitality & Tourism/Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Retail Trade/Service
- Educational Services
- Government
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- Warehousing, and Distribution



PERFORMANCE

Tracking progress towards strengthening & enhancing the public workforce system in the Central Region.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PY22 performance results for the Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Title III (Wagner-Peyser) are detailed in the following tables and include Employment Q2, Median Wages in Q2, Employment Q4, Credential Attainment Rate, and Measurable Skill Grains Rate. All performance indicator percentages for each WCCNM program show that performance was exceeded in all categories, with the exception of the Dislocated Worker Participation Threshold, which was 72 participant enrollments short of meeting the negotiated threshold of 300 Dislocated Worker participants enrolled and served during PY22. The Participant Threshold outcome measure was first added to the regional

performance outcome indicators beginning in PY22 and will serve as precedence moving forward with NMDWS during annual Central Region performance outcome negotiations.

For the first time in the history of the WCCNM all programs have exceeded the negotiated rate on every PY22 performance outcome measure. This major accomplishment encompasses the ongoing diligence and hard work of the WCCNM service providers to ensure that participants and employers are receiving the case management and follow-up services needed to succeed.

**PERFORMANCE PY2022 – ETA Federal Report 9169
ROLLING FOUR QUARTERS – FINAL**

Adult				
Indicator - Numerator/Denominator	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate: 443/562	78.83%	75.50%	104.41%	Exceeds
Employed in Q4 Rate: 394/491	80.24%	75.5%	106.23%	Exceeds
Median Wages in PY22:	\$9576.50	\$8,000.00	120%	Exceeds
Credential Attainment Rate: 225/296	76.01%	64.00%	118.77%	Exceeds
Measurable Skills Gains Rate: 136/510	83.93%	63.25%	132.7%	Exceeds
Adult Participation Threshold: 914/850	914	850	107.53%	Exceeds

Extracted from WCOS Annual Federal Report: 9169 on 08/18/2023.

Dislocated Worker				
Indicator - Numerator/Denominator	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate: 194/225	76.08%	68.00%	111.90%	Exceeds
Employed in Q4 Rate: 215/293	73.38%	68.50	107.12%	Exceeds
Median Wages in PY22:	\$9513.19	\$7,850.00	121.2%	Exceeds
Credential Attainment Rate: 155/223	69.51%	61.00%	113.9%	Exceeds
Measurable Skills Gains Rate: 170/222	76.58%	61.00%	127.6%	Exceeds
DW Participation Threshold: 228/300	228	300	76%	Failed

Extracted from WCOS Annual Federal Report: 9169 on 8/18/2023.

**PERFORMANCE PY2022 – ETA Federal Report 9169
ROLLING FOUR QUARTERS – FINAL**

Youth				
Indicator - Numerator/Denominator	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate: 173/247	70.04%	67.00%	104.54%	Exceeds
Employed in Q4 Rate: Median Wages in Q2: 176/241	73.03%	66.00%	116.7%	Exceeds
Median Wages in Q2:	\$4723.13	\$3,700.00	127.7%	Exceeds
Credential Attainment Rate: 79/122	64.75%	52.00%	124.52%	Exceeds
Measurable Skills Gains Rate: 201/344	58.43%	51.00%	114.6%	Exceeds
Youth Participation Threshold: 581/525	581	525	110.67	Exceeds

Extracted from WCOS Annual Federal Report: 9169 on 8/18/2023.

Title III - WP				
Indicator - Numerator/Denominator	Actual	Negotiated	% Met	Meet/Exceed/Failed
Employed in Q2 Rate: 2764/4638	59.6%	58.00%	102.7%	Exceeds
Employed in Q4 Rate: 2021/3406	59.34%	58.00%	102.3%	Exceeds
Median Wages in Q2:	\$6800.15	\$5,574.00	122%	Exceeds

Extracted from WCOS Annual Federal Report: 9169 on 8/18/2023.

MAJOR CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

In PY22 the WCCNM service providers demonstrated significant improvements in all aspects of service delivery as reflected in the above performance outcome measures. However, challenges still remain in ensuring best practices continue to evolve to meet changing employer and workforce needs, as well as new USDOL and NMDWS requirements.

PY22 marks the first year that Youth Measurable Skills Gains (MSG) and Dislocated Worker performance measures have met and exceeded negotiated outcomes. During PY22 WCCNM service providers maintained a strong focus on and continued to develop new practices to address these two historically challenging performance outcome measures, which remain an ongoing challenge. During PY23 and beyond WCCNM Service Providers will continue to utilize participant data to drill down into possible data input errors or omissions and closely monitor participant data to ensure every opportunity is made in capturing participant data needed to meet performance goals.

In addition, the WCCNM has developed a new data validation protocol to be implemented during PY23 that will focus on monitoring participant post-exit activity to ensure wage, employment, credential

obtainment and MSG data are properly indicated in WCOS and facilitate accurate Quarterly and Annual reporting. In addition, data validation helps identify any data collection issues or patterns and allows for corrective actions to be taken early.

WCCNM has been attempting to report Performance results for Title IV – DVR, unfortunately DVR is only able to provide Statewide results and are unable to break down data by Region, thus WCCNM is unable to include their reports at this time.

WIOA Performance Measures

As stated in TEGL 10-16, Change 2, PM (Program Memorandum) 17-2, and TAC (Technical Assistance Circular) 17-01, section 116 of WIOA establishes performance accountability indicators and performance reporting requirements to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving positive outcomes for individuals served by the workforce development system's six core programs. These six core programs are:

- **Adult (Administered by DOL)**
- **Dislocated Worker (Administered by DOL)**
- **Youth programs (Administered by DOL)**
- **Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program (Administered by ED)**
- **Employment Service program (Administered by DOL)**
- **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program (Administered by ED)**

WIOA requires all States and direct grantees of the Departments to collect and report information on all the participants described in this TEGL.

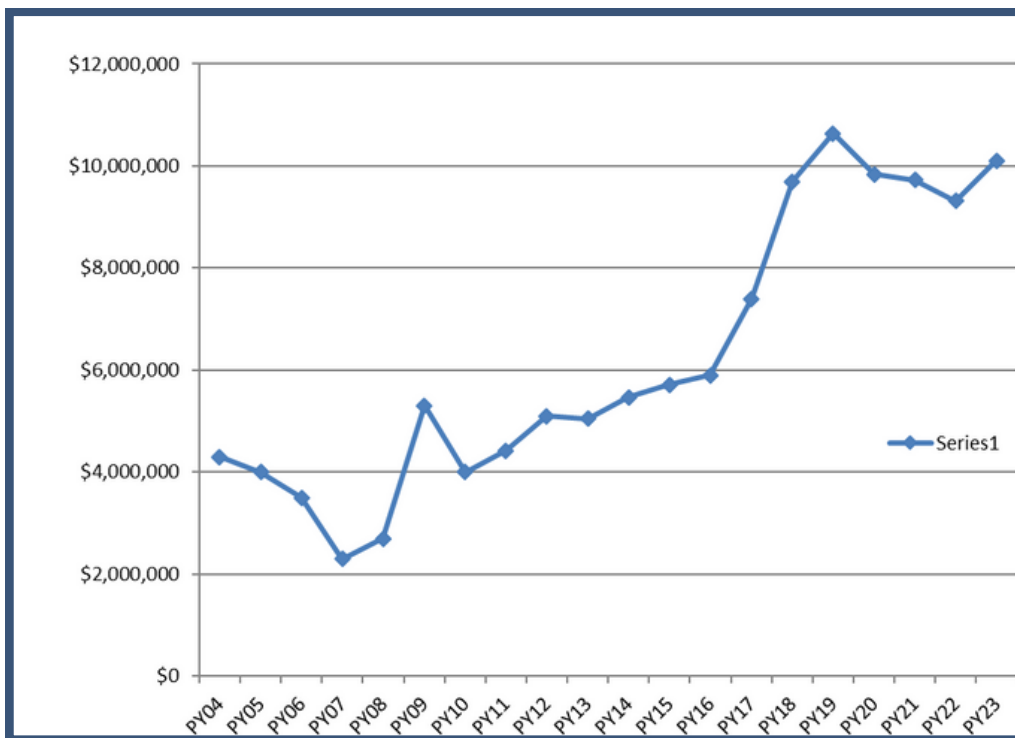


FUNDING

The WCCNM has assumed responsibility for many workforce-related special projects and grant opportunities from the USDOL, USDOC, and the State of NM. These include past successful completions of ARRA American Recovery Reinvestment Act, SESP State Energy Sector Partnership Act, NEG National Emergency Grant(s), NM’s TechHire H1B Grant, as well as new Apprenticeship, USDOL REO Grant, USDOL H1B Infrastructure Grant, and other funding opportunities to be identified through the upcoming establishment of the WCCNM Board’s status as a separate funding entity authorized to compete for additional funding opportunities, and other workforce related initiatives. There have been no forfeitures of granted WIOA or other appropriations and the Central Region has managed to remain in good standing with clean third-party independent audits for over 17 years.

The following graph demonstrates the WCCNM WIOA Title I Formula funding allocation for recent years. The Program Year PY22 (7-1-22 through 06-30-23) the WCCNM was awarded at \$9,310,916, representing \$415,589 decrease overall from the PY21’s \$9,726,505 formula funding, resulting in a 4.27% decrease. PY23’s Funding (7-1-23 to 6-30-24) will be \$10,108,941 up \$798,025 or 8.57% over PY22. WCCNM’s success is very much related to the structure of Central Region’s Board members & Board Officers with active involvement. Additionally, the region’s current and past business leaders, community development partnerships, and competent training institutions are also an important consideration in measuring WCCNM’s success.

One particular success for the Central Region is budget management. The board members do not direct their particular interests to contractors or sub recipients and avoid any appearance or potential for conflict of interest.

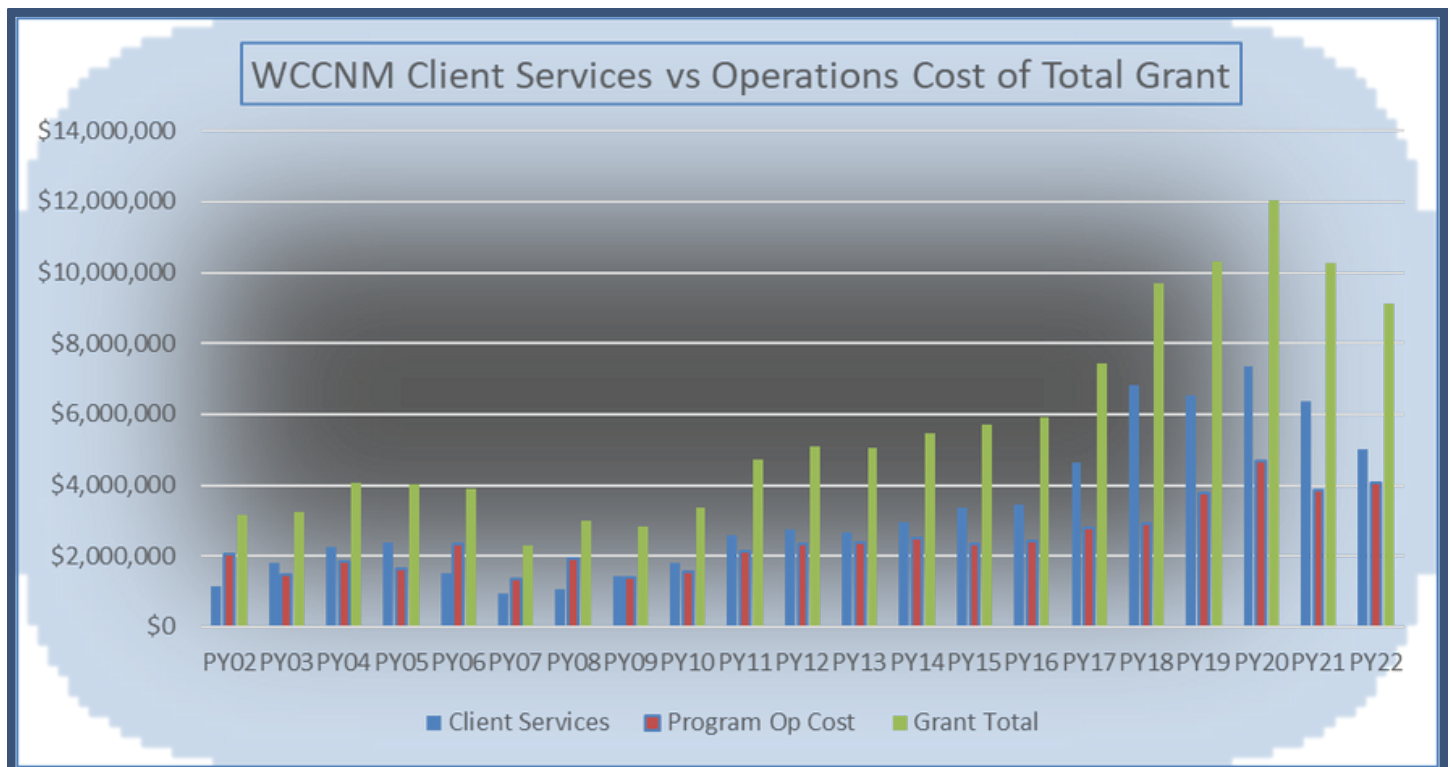


County board representatives work together recognizing the four-county region as one area, serving customers based upon individual needs via the New Mexico Workforce Connection centers without a focus on budget allocations or expenditures to each county. Therefore, the Central Region’s partner activities and direction may be adjusted quickly to address new demands and WIOA initiatives, while maintaining what is best for business leaders as a region versus a siloed approach.

Furthermore, the WCCNM has managed to perform USDOL directives and maintain costs at a reasonable level by sharing of resources and leveraging costs amongst WIOA mandated partners. The WCCNM provides the One-Stop Operator authority to navigate complexities of bureaucracies with a focus on customer service and flexibility in all the Central Region centers,

including the operation of New Mexico’s premier comprehensive jobs center in Albuquerque. In support, the WCCNM provides significant investments for development of a comprehensive communications and internet-based infrastructure that allows for a combination of in-person and virtual services which promotes robust service strategies and an enhanced customer experience.

WCCNM operates under a grant requirement to expend 40% of WIOA monies on client or participant services, with 60% available for infrastructure and administrative costs such as facilities, staff, and other board related expenses. The WCCNM manages to exceed this threshold and has been at least 55% expenditure rate year after year historically for training services. WCCNM attempts to reach 60% and can get there when redistributions by the State NMDWS occur.

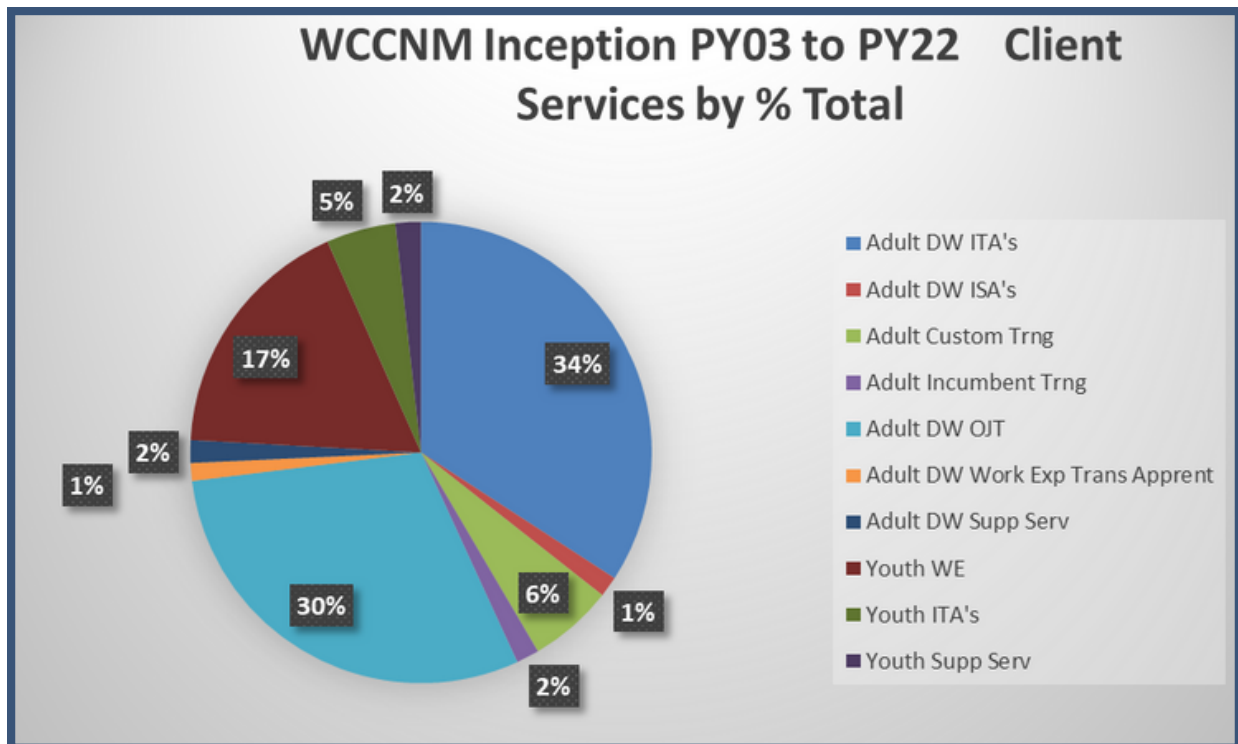


This is because our infrastructure costs and staff remain the same and this additional funding goes straight to participant services.

WCCNM has three subrecipients (One-Stop Operator, Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth service providers) receiving monies for their staff's payroll costs and indirect business expenses. The MRCOG serving as the WCCNM's Fiscal Agent is responsible for all fund draw-downs and management of capital improvement, administrative and operational monies, and the majority of participant fund distributions for payments. The MRCOG's comprehensive internal controls and procedures limits any financial risks and increases the capacity for the WCCNM to function and perform at a high-level.

Please see the charts depicting a breakdown of costs by program year periods to include Program Year 2002 through 6-30-23 or end of PY22.

Adult DW ITA's	\$ 24,517,393
Adult DW ISA's	\$ 1,040,444
Adult Custom Trng	\$ 4,252,971
Adult Incumbent Trng	\$ 1,148,181
Adult DW OJT	\$ 21,433,427
Adult DW Work Exp Tra	\$ 896,947
Adult DW Supp Serv	\$ 1,138,985
Youth WE	\$ 12,555,047
Youth ITA's	\$ 3,488,258
Youth Supp Serv	\$ 1,276,584
	\$ 71,748,235



LABOR MARKET SUMMARY

Using labor market information to guide workforce development strategy & to help customers in the Central Region achieve better employment outcomes.

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. In 2023 Q1 the Albuquerque MSA represents 46.5% for Q1 223 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 table below (Source: Jobs EQ 2023 Q1). The largest employers in the region are the Sandia National Laboratories; The University of New Mexico; Presbyterian Healthcare Services; Kirtland Air Force Base; Intel Corporation; The City of Albuquerque; Lovelace Health System; PNM; Honeywell Aerospace; and Albuquerque Public Schools.

2022 TOP TEN INDUSTRY SECTORS ABQ MSA (JOBS EQ 2023 Q1)

RANK	INDUSTRY SECTOR	NUMBER OF ESTABLISHMENTS	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	5016	72,996
2	Retail Trade	2356	43,963
3	Accommodation and Food Services	1805	41,157
4	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3898	37,906
5	Educational Services	716	31,690
6	Construction	2276	29,555
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1632	27,551
8	Public Administration	353	24,264
9	Manufacturing	832	17,660
10	Transportation and Warehousing	591	17,326

At the end of PY22, the unemployment rate in the Albuquerque MSA was 4.1 percent, 0.4 percent higher than the state’s whole of 3.7 percent. New Mexico grew by 16,600 jobs in total nonfarm employment, representing a gain of 2.0 percent over-the-year change.

The following table shows estimated average wage information for 2023 Q1:

	Number of Employees	Average Hourly Wage	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage
Albuquerque MSA	391,290	\$28.63	\$1,145	\$59,540
New Mexico	841,555	\$27.63	\$1,105	\$57,460

† Assumes a 40-hour week worked the year round.

Source: NMDWS, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program

Over the year, the Albuquerque MSA grew by 9,500 jobs in total nonfarm employment, representing a gain of 2.4 percent. The following private sector industries added jobs: private education and health services, up 3,200 jobs, or 4.8 percent; leisure and hospitality, up 2,300 jobs, or 5.3 percent; mining and construction, up 1,200 jobs, or 4.6 percent; manufacturing, up 800 jobs, or 4.7 percent; financial activities, up 600 jobs, or 3.0 percent; professional and business services up 500 jobs, or 0.8 percent; and miscellaneous other services up 300 jobs, or 2.5 percent. Trade, transportation, and utilities employment was down 1,200 jobs, or 1.8 percent. Information was down 100 jobs, or 1.7 percent. In the public sector, state government was up 800 jobs, or 3.1 percent, and local government was up 600 jobs, or 1.6 percent. Employment in federal government was up 500 jobs, or 3.5 percent. Source: NMDWS, Labor Market Review August 2023, Volume 52 No. 8 Published September 26, 2023.



CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT & PROGRAM ENHANCEMENTS

Measuring the effectiveness of programs & service delivery in the Central Region public workforce system.

In PY21, the WCCNM Board launched a new Board ad hoc subcommittee focused on implementing continuous quality improvements; however, during PY22, at the request of the WCCNM Board, the Continuous Quality Improvement Subcommittee was incorporated into WCCNM's Standing Committees to include Operations, Youth, Finance and Disability Committees, which allowed CQI activities to be streamlined and better coordinated across all program initiatives.

In PY22, primary focus was on the development of formal Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes, which encompassed the creation of templates and planning tools. Specifically, we dedicated efforts to enhance the participant registration process at events hosted by us, aiming for real-time data collection to save time and minimize errors. In addition to the quick form introduced for data collection, QR codes were designed for swift access, further streamlining the process.

To complement these efforts, we conducted a comprehensive review and improvement of the onboarding process. This initiative is crucial to ensure that new staff joining the one-stop system have the necessary tools, clear instructions, and guidance for a seamless transition into their roles.

Given the complexity of the one-stop system, this enhancement is designed to facilitate a smoother onboarding experience, equipping new staff with the resources they need to navigate their responsibilities effectively, maintaining a commitment to have a uniform and high-quality service delivery.

The data collected serves the purpose of providing WCCNM with insights into the demographics and preferences of event attendees. This valuable information enables us to tailor our services and support, ensuring a more effective and targeted approach in future hiring events.



As an affirmation of our commitment to continuous quality improvements, the development and testing of the Business Engagement Tool during Program Year 22 underscore our dedication to enhancing services for businesses. It serves as a collaborative space for our partners, eliminating the need for traditional note-passing and ensuring transparency throughout the request process. Set to launch in Program Year 23, this innovative tool represents a pivotal step in our ongoing efforts to refine and elevate the quality of our services, fortify partnerships, and elevate overall excellence. Through meticulous evaluation, user training, and collaboration with select clients, we aim to ensure that this tool not only streamlines inquiries and fosters collaboration but also aligns seamlessly with our commitment to delivering excellence in all aspects of our service delivery.

SURVEY OUTCOMES

PY22 Surveys for exiting participants were not conducted for Adult & Dislocated Workers, Youth, or Career services until the recent weeks. Looking ahead, we are committed to implementing a more regular and systematic approach to gather valuable insights from those who have completed our programs.

Our plan is to initiate surveys for program participants consistently. To achieve this, we intend to distribute surveys at the conclusion of each quarter. This adjustment in the survey timeline not only ensures a timelier collection of feedback for participants but also guarantees that the information we receive is highly relevant to the program they have just experienced.

By adopting this proactive surveying strategy, our aim is to strengthen our understanding of the needs and perspectives of our program participants. This feedback will be instrumental in refining and improving the quality of our services, ultimately leading to a more effective and responsive experience for those we serve.




CHANGES TO SYSTEM & PROGRAM DELIVERY

The WCCNM is taking proactive steps to enhance its service delivery based on customer feedback gathered through ongoing surveys conducted in each of the New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers. These surveys provide valuable insights into areas requiring improvement, leading to changes in the organization's resource room activities and pre-screening processes. Customer feedback also plays a pivotal role in shaping the content and structure of the new WCCNM and NMWC Central Region website.

In particular, the Youth Program survey is undergoing refinements to improve its effectiveness, including a shift from email to text-based surveys to encourage a higher response rate. This approach aims to ensure that the voices and perspectives of our youth program participants are heard and acted upon.

The Dislocated Worker (DW) Program is committed to continuous quality improvement, focusing on identifying and enrolling participants who may not yet be engaged in a career pathway that aligns with meaningful employment and economic self-sufficiency. This proactive approach underscores our dedication to supporting participants in their journey towards successful careers and financial independence.

These efforts include:

- Continued collaboration with RESEA;
 - Highlight opportunities for dislocated workers
 - Develop additional targeted outreach efforts and products to feature benefits of the DW training program, especially for release on the WCCNM social media platforms;
 - Provide needs related payments for DW clients that exhaust UI benefits to ensure successful completion of approved training; and
 - Conduct a data-driven dislocated worker outreach projects, focused on identifying areas with disproportionately high numbers of dislocated workers and targeting them with outreach.
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PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Creating new opportunities for partnership across 30+ programs to better serve job seekers & employers.

The WCCNM remains committed to exploring innovative approaches that yield lasting enhancements throughout the workforce system. Our commitment lies in delivering cost-effective results for job seekers and businesses, thereby contributing to the local economy. Fundamental to these initiatives are our strategies emphasizing engagement with partnerships and system-wide approaches.

The WCCNM partner network in the Central Region continues to grow, and now includes: WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (WCCNM Contracted Provider – MRCOG); WIOA Title I.B Youth Program (WCCNM Contracted Provider – YDI); WIOA Title III Career Services – Wagner-Peyser Services (NM Department of Workforce Solutions); WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation (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); Veteran Services Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions); MET, Inc.-National Farmworker Jobs Program-Employment and Training Grant; New Mexico Works-Wage Subsidy & CareerLink Programs (NM Department of Workforce Solutions);

Rapid Response (New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions); UNM Valencia Accelerated College & Career Education (ACCE); 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- Adult Basic Education); WIOA Title II (Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute); WIOA Title II (Gordon Bernell Charter School); WIOA Title II (Youth Development, Inc.); WIOA Title II (Adult Education Santa Fe Community College); WIOA Title II (Adult Education UNM- Los Alamos); CNM Carl D. Perkins Grant; Five Sandoval Pueblos Inc. - WIOA Program; SCSEP (Goodwill); SCSEP (NM Aging and Long-Term Services Department); SCSEP (NICOA); Help NM-Community Based Service Grant; New Mexico Works - TANF Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions); Isleta Pueblo - WIOA Program; San Felipe Pueblo WIOA Program; Job Corps; Unemployment Insurance Program (NM Department of Workforce Solutions); Santo Domingo Pueblo WIOA Program; National Indian Youth Council WIOA Program; Rio Metro Regional Transit District, New Mexico Job Access Program (Rio Metro Regional Transit District); Ticket-to-Work (TTW - Adelante of NM); Bernalillo County; CNM Workforce & Community Success ; and HopeWorks LLC.

H-1B Infrastructure Grant

In July 2023, WCCNM successfully submitted the Department of Labor’s Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant. The project titled New Mexico’s Mid-Region Infrastructure Partnership (NM-MIP): Training Central New Mexico for Quality Jobs in Infrastructure, was awarded to WCCNM for \$1,999,976 in October 2023 and will build on a developed sector strategy in IT along with other career pathways. The partnership will include the Workforce Board as the grantee and training providers UNM Valencia Campus, CNM, and CNM Ingenuity. The infrastructure sectors that will be highlighted are IT, Advanced Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical services career pathways and will focus on these areas of job demand: Broadband, Renewable Energy, and Transportation.

Through the help of co-enrollments Title I and, NMDWS Apprentice programs, the focus will be on a worker center strategy that will include prioritizing recruitment, training and retaining the local workforce. The industry partners will include Associated General contractors and NM Manufacturing partnership that will participate in an advisory council to review curriculum, identify and refer employers and participate and help locate work-based learning opportunities. The economic development partnership will include Albuquerque Regional Economic Alliance, City of Albuquerque Economic Development Department, and Five Sandoval Indian Pueblos, Inc.

The employers that WCCNM anticipates working with are: Invenenergy Transmission, Kelly Cable of NM, NM Department of Transportation, Sandia National Laboratory along with local labor unions including JATC within the electrical industry, UA 412 and the Plumbers and Pipefitters Training Center. Overall, WCCNM looks to expand on the work currently underway within the central region and this new allocation of grant funding will help strengthen the central region workforce and training initiatives.



WCCNM Board Separate Entity

Early PY 2022 the WCCNM board expressed interest in creating a separate entity that would serve primarily the central region but with the opportunity to collaborate statewide. This separate entity formation is to address the increasing need to diversify funding streams and address funding gaps related to the unique needs of workforce participants. With the support of the board's chair and vice chair the initiative took shape to convene workforce partners both within the WCCNM board and outside. The Separate Entity working committee includes leaders from the following sectors: economic development sector, immigrant's rights, tribal communities, senior affairs, foundation funding, higher education, youth, justice involved, and workforce development. The committee has met one time this Program Year.

In August of 2023 the small separate entity working group worked to develop a Request for Information to hire a consultant to do research on separate entities across the nation. Innovate Educate, the contracted consultant, has launched a national survey in collaboration with National Association of Workforce Development Boards (NAWB) to ask pointed questions about how separate entity formation has functioned in the participating regions. The next steps for the formation of the WCCNM separate entity is to receive the final report, convene the Separate Entity working committee and move forward with solidifying how the WCCNM will create this entity for our unique workforce needs in the Central region.

NM Department of Transportation, Sandia National Laboratory along with local labor unions including JATC within the electrical industry, UA 412 and the Plumbers and Pipefitters Training Center. Overall, WCCNM looks to expand on the work currently underway within the central region and this new allocation of grant funding will help strengthen the central region workforce and training initiatives.



PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND SYSTEM-WIDE APPROACHES***Intake and Referrals***

In the expansive Central Region partner network, notable progress has been made to address the challenge of diverse reporting requirements and performance measures. Historically, the intricate network, including core partners, operated with distinct case management systems, data entry criteria, and intake paperwork, posing an additional burden for customers and staff. The WCCNM's transformative journey, initiated in PY20, aimed at establishing a common intake process and system, built within the Central Region intranet, resulting in notable progress. Ongoing efforts in PY22 demonstrate a continuous commitment to enhance and expand the system, fostering a more cohesive and user-friendly workforce system. Reflecting on the achievements of PY22, the commitment to collaboration, reducing operational burdens, and improving the overall effectiveness of the workforce system has translated into tangible progress. The journey towards a streamlined and interconnected Central Region partner network persists, driven by the pursuit of excellence in service delivery.

Additionally, the business engagement tool is actively seeking to facilitate partners in referring businesses within the same platform. This collaborative extension further enhances the network's capability to seamlessly connect businesses with the services they require, fostering a holistic and integrated approach to workforce and business engagement.

The ongoing commitment to innovation and collaboration signifies a comprehensive strategy aimed at creating a unified ecosystem that benefits both individuals and businesses within the Central Region.

Quarterly Gatherings

In the past, Quarterly Gatherings have proven to be successful events that brought together all partners in the Central Region, including those who are co-located, core, mandatory, and additional partners. These gatherings served as a valuable platform for sharing information, celebrating achievements, recognizing best practices, and facilitating cross-training and networking opportunities. However, due to the shift towards remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the WCCNM temporarily suspended these Quarterly Gatherings.

We recognize the importance of reinvigorating these collaborative efforts. To that end, we have devised a plan to integrate partner meetings more seamlessly into our routine. During PY23 we intend to initiate smaller, monthly partner meetings where staff and partners can engage in training sessions and presentations about the services and programs they offer. This approach will empower our staff and partners with a deeper understanding of the comprehensive range of services available to our customers, fostering a more unified and effective Workforce Connection Center.

System-wide Training Strategy

The WCCNM and New Mexico Workforce Connection Training Strategy in PY22 remained dedicated to enhancing cross-training opportunities and ensuring consistency in pre-screening and partner referrals. This comprehensive strategy consists of three levels:

- **LEVEL 1** involves training on all "core" WIOA programs, legally required/mandated training;
- **LEVEL 2** covers all "participating" partners' programs and system training, including the NM Workforce Connection online system;
- **LEVEL 3** focuses on professional development and additional partner and program training.

These training sessions are offered within the Central Region intranet.

Although the transition of one-stop operators momentarily interrupted these training sessions, our commitment for program year 2023 is to resume and update these vital trainings.

Bi-Weekly Team Coordination Meetings

During PY22 NMWC centers maintained bi-weekly Team Coordination Meetings, convening managers, supervisors from all Central Region programs, and representatives from comprehensive and affiliate centers. During these sessions, we address upcoming events, outreach opportunities, customer flow challenges, and infrastructure requirements.

A collaborative approach is nurtured as we align ongoing projects, seek feedback on new initiatives, deliberate on operational policies, and share insightful data reports. The collective insight of this diverse group enables informed decision-making, ensuring a cohesive understanding of best practices. This regular engagement not only enhances internal communication but also strengthens our ability to navigate challenges and optimize processes for a more effective and unified approach.

PY23 goals include focusing on customer flow issues, providing easier access to services for participants, addressing common infrastructure needs, improving our Intranet Hub and website for full partner access, and encouraging community partners to attend to broaden effectiveness to fully embrace sector strategies that includes all workforce partner engagement and active participation, we aim to continue to remove program silos. All Partners receive an invite, are provided with an agenda in advance, and are encouraged to bring a guest and discuss current services.

The WCCNM has seen strong outcomes by conducting its bi-monthly Team Coordination Meetings. These meetings assemble managers, supervisors from Central Region programs, and representatives from comprehensive and affiliate centers, creating a vital platform for discussions. They cover a wide range of subjects, encompassing upcoming events, outreach possibilities, staffing dilemmas, customer flow concerns, and infrastructure necessities. Additionally, these gatherings serve as a forum for the approval of operational policies and procedures.

Communication and Marketing Efforts

During PY22, the WCCNM continued its extensive communication and marketing outreach efforts through enhanced online communication and marketing materials between partners by updating documents, branding assets, calendars, and resources on the WCCNM Intranet and new website that launched in 2019 including:

- Improved the navigation, functionality, and user experience on the website.
- Designed staff trainings to empower each location to participate in producing unique marketing materials using Canva, Adobe, and other user-friendly design and marketing platforms.

Streamlined Communication between partners

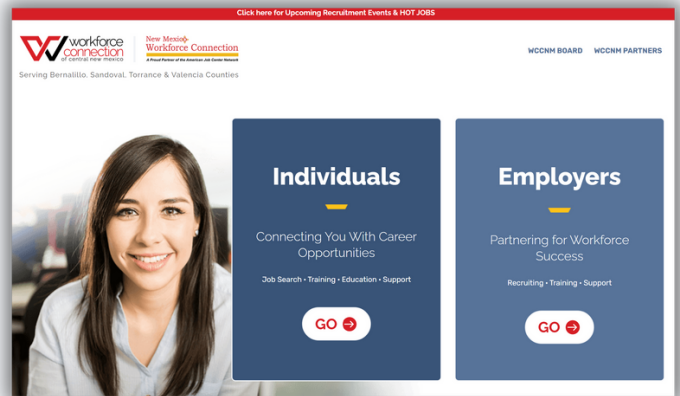
- Collaborated with Operations Team to improve communications workflow to expedite marketing goals among various departments (Welcome Desk, Operations, WIOA Team, etc.).
- Expanded visual communications throughout the building including QR Codes, re-designed flyers, and printed materials at job fairs, at the welcome desk and throughout staff cubicles.
- Introduced the “Special Request for Services for Social Media Services Form on the Intranet with PY23 expectation of increased website and social media content capabilities. Goal for next year: expand awareness among partners and community to use this Form.

Social Media Engagement for all channels

- PY22 Follower engagement metrics increased on both Meta platforms.
- Increased original posts and videos produced to average of 5 days a week for all social channels.
- Milestone: 5% quarterly increase in follower count and reach across all channels.

Email Marketing

- In PY22: Transitioned from Constant Contact to MailChimp for a better price point.
- Plans for PY23: Use data from website submission forms for remarketing purposed to inform users about additional services.



WCCNM & NM Workforce Connection-Central Region Website -> www.wccnm.org

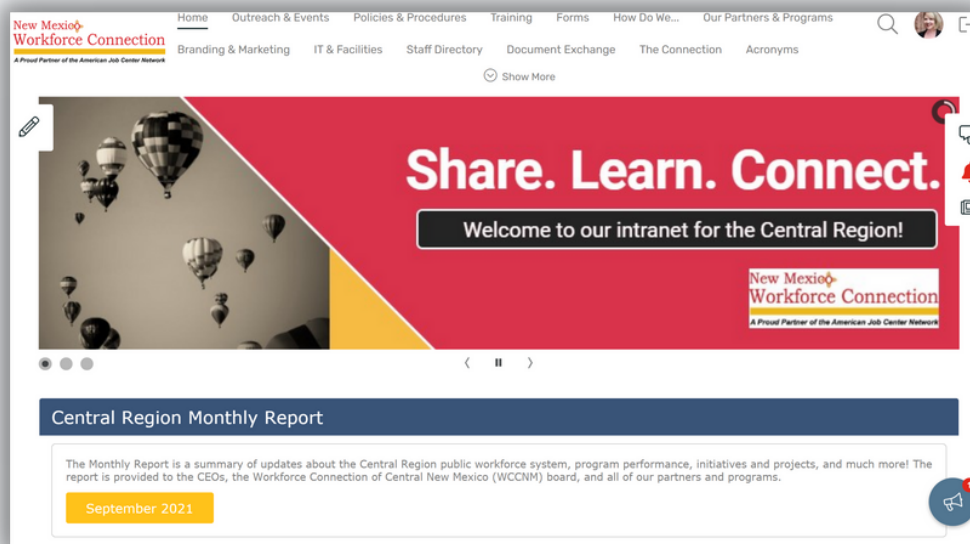


General Outreach

WCCNM's comprehensive approach in PY22 resulted in improved engagement and visibility. The strategies planned for PY23 are poised to further enhance communication and offer value to job seekers and partners.

The WCCNM continues to enhance online communication by recently updating all documents on our Intranet. The intranet provides all staff and partners with easily accessible alerts, a calendar of events, outreach activities, branding and marketing assets, training modules, policies & procedures, staff contact information, IT support requests forms, and more.

Other marketing goals for PY23 will focus on creating an expedited communication pipeline in the form of sharing printed marketing materials between multiple departments (Welcome Desk, Operations, Business Services, WIOA Team, Veterans, etc.) for posting to our website, Computer Resource Room, staff cubicles, and socials for all events and partner initiatives. This workflow will integrate with our Biweekly Partner Meetings and the new Ops Team Admin Bulletin Boards outlining all key events across the entire Central Region.



Central Region Intranet



Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico

Chair

John Mierzwa – Ingenuity Software Labs, Inc

Chair Elect

Krista Kelley – Motiva Corporation

Treasurer

Herb Crosby – Avtec, Inc.

In accordance with §677.205 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulation and WIOA Law Sections 101 and 116, the Workforce Connection of Central New Mexico (WCCNM) submits the Program Year 2022 (PY22) Annual Report to the State of New Mexico, Department of Workforce Solutions, State Administrative Entity (SAE) on October 13, 2023. The report will be incorporated into an expanded annual report for the region that will be available on the WCCNM website at www.wccnm.org.

