

November 28, 2016

Mark Giovanelli, Chairperson
Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board
100 Ridge Avenue
Washington, PA 15301

Dear Mr. Giovanelli,

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (Department) has approved the Southwest Region Program Year (PY) 2016 Transitional Regional Plan. Per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), this approval extends to the local plans associated with the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region. Such approval is effective through the end of PY 2016 (i.e., June 30, 2017). The Southwest planning region is composed of the following local workforce development areas:

- Allegheny County Workforce Development Area (Three Rivers Workforce Development Board)
- Pittsburgh City Workforce Development Area (Three Rivers Workforce Development Board)
- Southwest Corner Workforce Development Area
- Tri-County Workforce Development Area
- Westmoreland/Fayette Workforce Development Area

Approval of this plan does not constitute approval of any practice that conflicts with federal and state statutes, regulations or policies, nor does approval preclude the commonwealth from, at its discretion, readdressing any part of the plan if the content is found to conflict with such statutes, regulations or policies.

Please note that each planning region, through collaboration with its local workforce development area boards and partners, must submit a "multi-year" (i.e., PY17-PY19) regional plan, to include multi-year local plans. Each plan must be complete; consistent with the Department's forthcoming planning guidance and the Pennsylvania's WIOA Combined State Plan; and compliant with applicable federal, state, and local statute, guidance, policy and procedure.

Please direct specific questions regarding the PY 2016 transitional plans and/or the upcoming multi-year plans and planning processes to Michael White at (717) 214-7173 or michwhite@pa.gov.

Sincerely,



Eileen Cipriani
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Tony Amadio, Southwest Corner Chief Executive
Ms. Ami Gatts, Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board Director

Southwest Planning Region Program Year 16-17 Transitional Regional Plan

- 1.1 Provide the following:
- A. A reference name for the planning region;
 - B. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region;
 - C. Identification of the county(s) each local workforce development area serves;
 - D. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan;
 - E. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with; and
 - F. A list of key planning region committee meeting date(s). [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)]

A. The planning region will be called “the Southwest Planning Region.”

B. The Southwest Region is made up of five local workforce development areas:

- Allegheny County Workforce Development Area (SW005)
- City of Pittsburgh Workforce Development Area (SW095)
- Southwest Corner Workforce Development Area (SW165)
- Tri-County Workforce Development Area(SW110)
- Westmoreland Fayette Workforce Development Area(SW045)

Four local workforce development boards oversee these local areas:

- Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (SW Corner)
- Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (3RWIB)
 - Allegheny County Workforce Development Area
 - City of Pittsburgh Workforce Development Area
- Tri-County Workforce Development Board (TCWIB)
- Westmoreland/Fayette Workforce Development Board (Westmoreland-Fayette)

C. The region serves nine counties:

- SW Corner – Beaver, Greene, and Washington Counties
- 3RWIB – City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County
- Tri-County – Armstrong, Butler, and Indiana Counties
- Westmoreland-Fayette – Fayette and Westmoreland Counties

D and E. The regional planning committee responsible for drafting the regional plan included:

Name	Organizational Affiliation
Bill Thompson	Westmoreland-Fayette WDB
Ami Gatts	SW Corner
Fred Fornataro	TCWIB
Stefani Pashman	3RWIB

F.

January 28, 2016—Kickoff Meeting

March 16, 2016—Draft discussion (via e-mail)

March 29,2016—Draft finalization discussion (via e-mail)

May 16, 2016—Conference call to discuss comment incorporation into final plan

- 1.2 Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region. This regional analysis must include:
- A. The economic conditions;
 - B. Labor force employment and unemployment data;
 - C. Information on labor market trends;
 - D. Workforce development activities;
 - E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers; and
 - F. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

Indicate the sources of regional labor market and economic data. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Regional Overview

The region is home to nearly 2,500,000 residents, which represents, about 20.0% of Pennsylvania's population. Almost half (49.5%) of the region's population resides in Allegheny County, followed by Westmoreland (14.6%), Washington (8.4%), Butler (7.4%), and Beaver (6.8%) Counties.

Regional Population by County, 2014		
County	Population	Share of regional population
Allegheny	1,229,172	49.5%
Westmoreland	362,587	14.6%
Washington	208,157	8.4%
Butler	185,034	7.4%
Beaver	170,124	6.8%
Fayette	135,376	5.4%
Indiana	88,301	3.6%
Armstrong	68,343	2.7%
Greene	38,171	1.5%
Total Regional Population	2,485,265	100%

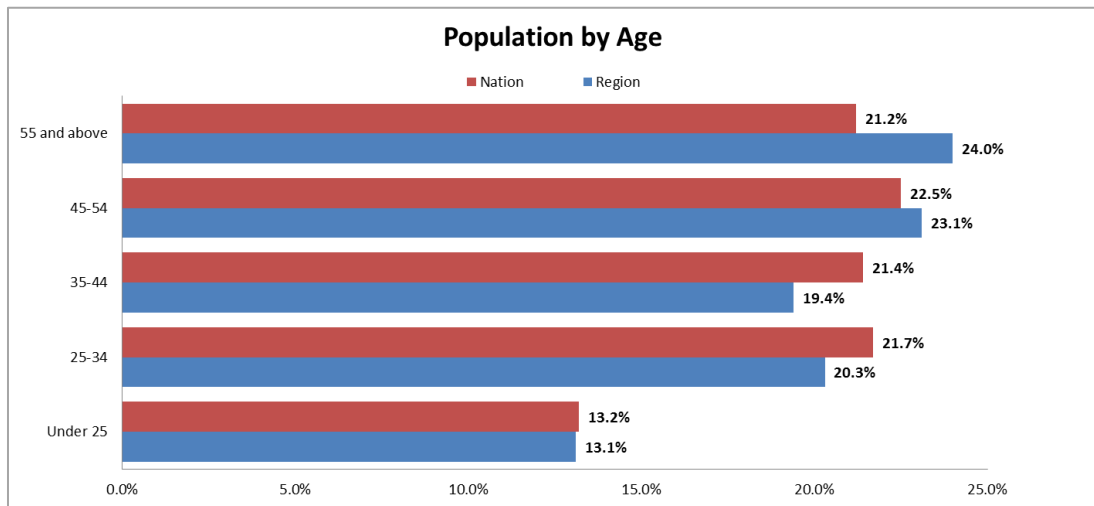
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014

The region is an economic driver for the commonwealth: one-fifth (20%) of Pennsylvania's labor force resides in the region. Since 2012, the region's labor force participation experienced moderate growth, while the state's rate slightly decreased. Both the region and the state experienced decreasing unemployment rates since 2012, though the state experienced a slightly larger decrease. Increased employment and labor force participation indicate slow, but steady regional recovery from the fallout of the 2007-2009 recession.

	Region		State	
Economic Indicator	2012	2014	2012	2014
Unemployment Rate	7.7%	5.9%	7.9%	5.8%
No. of Employed Individuals	1,197,451	1,199,841	5,957,326	6,015,668
Labor Force Participation Rate	63.3%	63.4%	64.40%	64.1%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and United States Census Bureau, 2012 & 2014

While labor force participation and employment rates have grown slightly, the regional workforce is aging. Nearly one quarter (24%) of the region's workforce is 55 or older, and will likely retire in the next 15 years. As older workers retire over the next decade, employers will need to turn to younger workers to fill skilled positions. The age of the region's workforce, coupled with a low net in-migration (less than 1% from 2010-2014), means that growth of the labor force must come from up-skilling current residents rather than attracting new talent.



Source: Economic Modeling Specialist International, 2015

Industries

The region experienced 4% job growth from 2010-2015, the same percent growth as the state, representing a net increase of 49,745 jobs. Both goods producing and service industries are well represented within the region. The industries comprising the largest proportions of jobs in the region are: Health Care (196,444 jobs, 16.9% of jobs), Retail Trade (134,275 jobs; 11.5% of jobs), Government (123,051 jobs, 10.6% of jobs), Accommodation and Food Services (101,721 jobs, 8.7% of jobs), and Manufacturing (90,779 jobs, 7.8% of jobs).

Industries that represent opportunity for the region include those above and Mining, Quarrying, Oil, and Gas Extraction (location quotient: 2.8) and Management of Companies (location quotient: 2.1), both of which represent a higher concentration of industries in the region than in the nation as a whole.¹

Industries with the greatest expected growth in the region include: Health Care (25,757 new jobs, 16.7% increase), Professional Services (25,757 new jobs, 13.1% increase), Construction, Mining, Oil, and Natural Gas Extraction, (6,387 new jobs, 36.5% increase) and Management of Companies (5,655 new jobs, 14.3% increase). The region also recognizes that Manufacturing is an opportunity industry due to a significant portion of manufacturing workers (28%) being over the age of 55 and therefore approaching retirement.

¹ The location quotient measures how heavily concentrated an industry is in a region compared to the nation as whole. Any location quotient value greater than one indicates that an industry is more concentrated in the region than the nation. A value less than one indicates an industry is comparatively less concentrated in the region. Industries are vital to the region's economy if they: (1) have higher location quotient values and (2) constitute a significant portion of jobs.

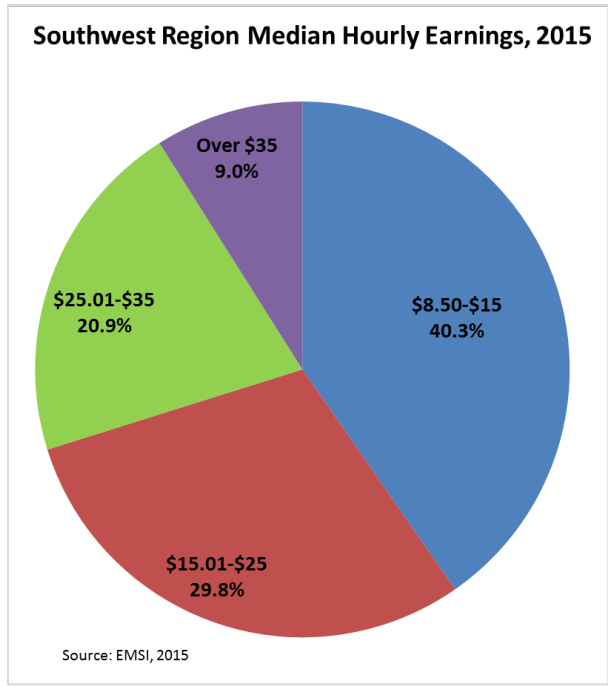
Industry	2015 Jobs	% of 2015 Jobs	2015 - 2025 Change	% Change	2015 Location Quotient
Health Care and Social Assistance	196,444	16.9%	25,757	13.1%	1.3
Retail Trade	134,275	11.5%	150	0.1%	1.0
Government	123,051	10.6%	-4,296	-3.5%	0.7
Accommodation and Food Services	101,721	8.7%	4,735	4.7%	0.9
Manufacturing	90,779	7.8%	-2,871	-3.2%	0.9
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	79,434	6.8%	10,620	13.4%	1.1
Finance and Insurance	56,074	4.8%	1,152	2.1%	1.2
Construction	55,117	4.7%	8,950	16.2%	1.0
Administrative & Support Services	49,575	4.3%	4,820	9.7%	0.7
Wholesale Trade	41,895	3.6%	1,501	3.6%	0.8
Other Services (except Public Administration)	40,295	3.5%	2,123	5.3%	1.1
Management of Companies and Enterprises	39,624	3.4%	5,655	14.3%	2.1
Educational Services	39,228	3.4%	1,726	4.4%	1.7
Transportation and Warehousing	38,186	3.3%	2,586	6.8%	1.0
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	22,090	1.9%	2,824	12.8%	1.2
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	17,516	1.5%	6,387	36.5%	2.8
Information	17,416	1.5%	-974	-5.6%	0.8
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	15,222	1.3%	1,195	7.9%	0.9
Utilities	6,630	0.6%	46	0.7%	1.4
Crop and Animal Production	1,255	0.1%	-118	-9.4%	0.1
Total	1,165,827	100%	71,968	6.2%	

Source: Economic Modeling Specialist International, 2015

Each local area has a slightly different industry mix, which mandates additional local autonomy in program development. 3RWIB has a larger share of jobs in Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8.8%) and Educational Service (4.9%) than the other local areas (the next highest is SW Corner with 4.4% and 1.3%, respectively). Tri County, SW Corner, and Westmoreland-Fayette have significantly larger shares of jobs in Manufacturing (12.1%, 10.4%, and 12.2%, respectively) than 3RWIB (5.2%).

Wages

The region's jobs are concentrated in occupations that pay between \$8.50 and \$15 an hour. About 40% pay below \$15, while 9% pay over \$35 an hour. Nearly 30% of jobs overall, representing opportunities in the high growth industries previously described: HealthCare, Construction, Energy, and Information Technology, pay \$15.01-\$25/hr., which represents the self-sufficient wage held by each of the four local areas.



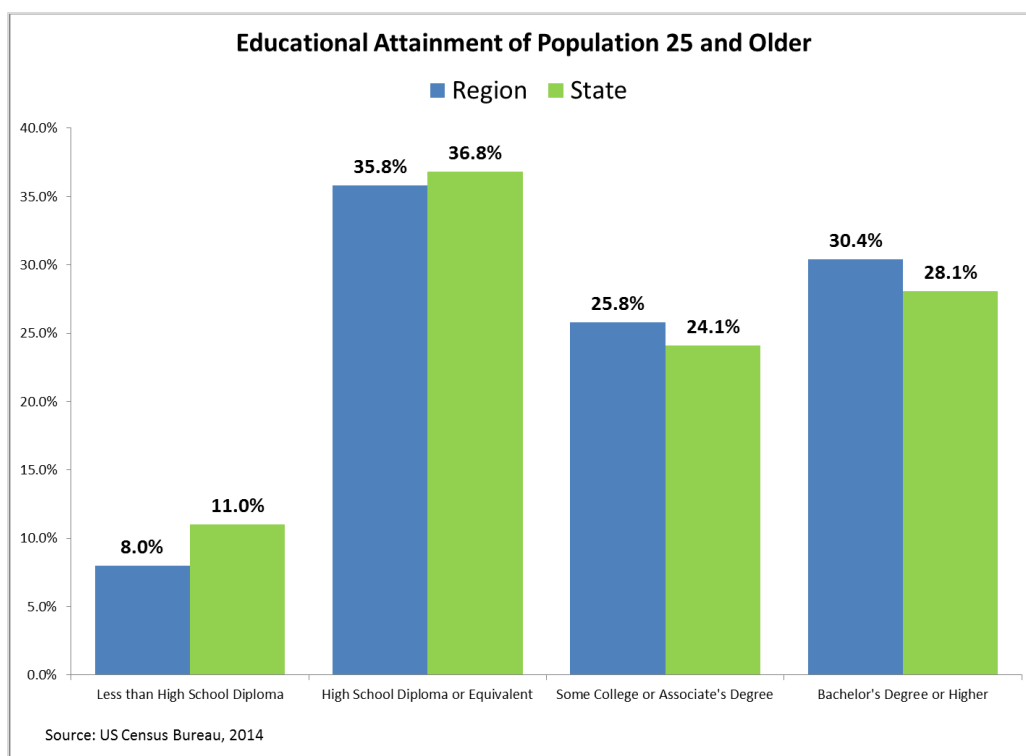
Workforce Development Activities

Each local workforce board in the SW Planning Region provides career services to Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth participants through the local PA CareerLink® system and a network of affiliated providers.

The four local workforce boards which make up the SW Planning Region are collaborating on strategic initiatives to align workforce development activities across the region, including: sectoral strategies, services to regional businesses, the connection with economic development, and improving opportunities for youth. Each of these activities is described in further detail below.

Workforce Skill Levels

The percent of the region’s residents with less than a high school diploma (8.0%) is slightly lower than that of the state (11.0%). In addition, the region has slightly higher percentages of residents with some college or associate’s degree (25.8%) and bachelor’s degree or higher (30.4%) than the state (24.1% and 28.1%, respectively). Almost half of the region’s population has education beyond the high school level.



There is variation in educational attainment within the region. The population served by 3RWIB has the highest level of educational attainment, 36.9% of the population over 25 possessing a Bachelor's degree or higher and the lowest percentage with less than a high school diploma (6.7%). Each local area has between 24.7%-26.2% of its population with some college or an Associate's degree, representing a significant opportunity in the region to upskill workers who already have a high school diploma. Larger shares of the populations served by TCWDB (40.5%), SW Corner (40.3%), and Westmoreland-Fayette (41.9%) have their high school diploma as the highest level of educational attainment than that served by 3RWIB (30.5%).

Educational Attainment by Local Area for the Population Age 25 and Above					
Education Level	3RWIB	Tri-County	Southwest Corner	Westmoreland-Fayette	Region
Less than High School Diploma	6.7%	8.8%	9.4%	9.4%	8.0%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	30.5%	40.5%	40.3%	41.9%	35.8%
Some College or Associate's Degree	25.9%	24.7%	26.2%	25.9%	25.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	36.9%	26.0%	24.1%	22.9%	30.4%

Source: United States Census Bureau, 2014

- 1.3 Based upon the regional labor market and economic condition analysis as described in Appendix A's element 1.2 and *Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Plan (PY 2016 – PY 2019)*, describe the planning region's economic and workforce development oriented vision and strategic goals.
[WIOA Sec. 106(c) and Sec. 107(d)]

The Southwest Planning Region shares the Governor's vision of serving Pennsylvania's businesses through the creation of a skilled workforce. We embrace the Governor's focus on promoting high-quality jobs and connecting job seekers with the training necessary to build the skills needed for viable, long-term, and family-

sustaining jobs. Strategic alignment at the regional level will lead to a stronger, more nimble workforce development system that concurrently and effectively serves both job seekers and business.

The Southwest Planning Region recognizes the importance of a coordinated and innovative regional workforce development system. We strive to create a workforce system that presents a seamless face of public workforce throughout southwestern Pennsylvania but preserves local boards' flexibility to innovate in serving local workforce needs. The region agrees wholeheartedly with the Governor's conviction that an effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. We have developed the following three regional goals, in alignment with the Governor's five state goals:

1. Enhance coordination between local boards

Regional collaboration must begin on the foundation of solid communication. While the Southwest Planning Region has begun to work together on several key initiatives, described below, growing our regional strengths and collaborations will require strengthening the coordination between our local areas. The Southwest Planning Region recognizes that a united workforce system leads to a more efficient system. We will seek opportunities to align services for employers and job seekers in the region and leverage diverse funding streams.

Improved regional coordination increases the opportunity to pursue competitive funding and pilot programs that can be brought to scale if effective. We have begun the process of breaking down the silos that separate workforce programs in the Southwest Planning Region through pilots of several regional projects that leverage diverse funding. The first model, the Veterans Value Initiative (VVI), shows promising practices for pooling capacity and funding to capitalize on economies of scale. In the second model, SW Corner and Westmoreland-Fayette WDB, will utilize National Dislocated Worker Grant funding (USDOL POWER grant) to reengage dislocated workers from the coal industry in the labor market through the USDOL POWER program. SW Corner, Westmoreland-Fayette WDB, and TCWIB are recipients of a SW Regional Energy Sector Strategic Partnership Project Grant. The partnership is working to develop and coordinate a continuum of programs and partnerships that connect the region's dislocated workforce, impacted by the coal industry decline, and transition into careers that offer self-sustaining wages and growth potential in the Energy Sector.

The VVI is a regional approach designed to increase veterans' access to career services and work-based training programs, and to increase employer use of work-based training programs as incentives to hire veterans. Through this initiative, promising practices for employer engagement, serving priority populations, and developing career pathways for high demand positions will be identified and replicated. VVI represents an ongoing regional collaboration between 3RWIB, TCWIB, and Westmoreland-Fayette WDB.

With the USDOL POWER Grant, SW Corner, Westmoreland-Fayette, and Southern Alleghenies WDBs will serve the nearly 1,100 workers in southwestern Pennsylvania affected by layoffs in the coal industry. This program seeks to develop effective best practices for retraining workers and aligning the skills of the workforce with those needed by employers today.

Utilizing the SW Regional Energy Sector Strategic Partnership Project Grant, SW Corner, TCWIB, and Westmoreland Fayette WDB will identify and implement best practices in training efforts for individuals in the Energy sector. The project will plan, identify, and align key partners, building a system of services to assist job seekers.

2. Streamline talent delivery and business services

Over half (56.9%) of the employed residents of Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, and Westmoreland counties leave their county of residence to work. Nearly 20% of Allegheny County employed residents (19.0%) leave Allegheny County to work. Regional residents cross county lines for employment and regional employers draw their workforce from all the counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. These regional labor market trends mean that the same employers may interface with multiple local boards. While each board has developed the policies and procedures that best meet the needs of the businesses and job seekers they serve, opportunities for coordination to reduce the administrative burden may exist. The Southwest Planning Region will explore these opportunities.

Each local board faces some of the same issues in their areas, including the need for orientation for job seekers to the system, how to best align services in the PA CareerLink® system, how to serve individuals with barriers to employment, and how to engage businesses in the system. We will examine ways to develop and share best practices for program delivery across our local areas and seek out innovations to consolidate messaging and amplify our impact. Recognizing that some job seekers cross county lines to access PA CareerLink® services, the local areas will work with PA CareerLink® site administrators as appropriate to discuss customer flow and how to best meet customer needs. The Southwest Planning Region will ask for guidance from the Department of Labor and Industry to determine a method of sharing resources and reporting.

3. Increase work related opportunities for youth and improve youth talent pipeline

Given the region's aging workforce and the potential of area youth, investing in the future talent pipeline is a key area of focus for the planning region. The Southwest Planning Region believes that youth must be exposed to a range of available careers in order to start on a career path to a sustainable future.

In accordance with the new requirements under WIOA, local boards in the Southwest Planning Region have prioritized services to out-of-school youth. We will share best practices in key areas, including techniques for identifying, recruiting and engaging disaffected youth and the design and delivery of effective work experiences and internships for OSY.

The development of career pathways and sector strategies for youth are promising areas for collaboration between local boards. Each of the local boards in the Southwest Planning Region is working to engage youth in career exploration. Westmoreland-Fayette WDB has implemented a college and career pathways model with Westmoreland County Community College (WCCC) to connect youth with education and the workforce. Tri County and SW Corner have implemented career fairs and work-based learning opportunities. 3RWIB is building the capacity of local providers through STEM programs and career exploration. The Southwest Planning Region will build on these and other efforts to cultivate employers in youth sector strategies and increase the awareness of high-growth occupations among area youth.

The Southwest Planning Region will actively examine other emerging opportunities for cooperation in serving employers. Through a Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant, WFWDB and 3RWIB are working with Westmoreland County Community College and Community College of Allegheny County, respectively, on developing microcredentials along key career pathways. These pilots are designed to eventually be scalable for other community college partners. The smaller time commitment of microcredentials, along with their clear

alignment with employer needs, make them useful tools for engaging OSY and individuals with barriers to employment.

Collaboration with higher education represents an opportunity to help prepare the region's workforce for the needs of employers. While each local board is partnering with representatives of higher education in their respective local areas, the Southwest Planning Region will explore ways to partner with higher education as a collective group in the coming year.

1.4 Describe regional strategies used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the regional workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The regional strategy is based on a strong relationship with local employers. The Business Service Teams (BST) across each local area provide PA CareerLink® services through personal visits and ongoing Job Gateway/CWDS support. They connect with the local Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development agencies to keep pace with developments within the region. These BSTs regularly meet and communicate with each other to build relationships across the region. The Southwest Region recognizes the importance of small businesses in the region and focuses particular attention on connecting them with the services offered through PA CareerLink® and sectoral strategies.

PA CareerLink® Site Administrators, Supervisors of the Business Services Teams and Specialists will work to identify regional employer relationships that will prove critical to the success of the BSTs. These relationships will then be cultivated through individualized attention from PA CareerLink® staff, invitations to attend open houses and symposiums or events hosted by the PA CareerLink® Centers, and a menu of services available for business engagement, including training funds.

The region uses the generic term, "PA CareerLink® Specialist" to identify individuals who provide PA CareerLink® services to employers both large and small, and are members of their respective business service teams (BST). The PA CareerLink® Specialists are employed by the local Title I provider or Workforce Development Board depending on local board policy decisions, utilizing WIOA Title I funds. Additionally, each respective area has Commonwealth of PA, Bureau of Workforce Partnership employees performing this function depending on classification. These individuals are supported by Wagner-Peyser funds. PA CareerLink® Specialists from across funding streams work together to build relationships with businesses in the communities.

The PA CareerLink® Specialist will make personal visits to employers in his/her territory, and the employer will be working individually with their personalized PA CareerLink® Specialist. Each employer will be given an employer packet. This packet explains all of the services that the PA CareerLink® can provide including but not limited to; contact information, an OJT informational flier, labor market information, tax credit information, Unemployment Compensation Workshops and current job fairs, trainings, presentations, etc.

Employers will be able to complete Job Gateway registration on their own or contact the PA CareerLink® for assistance from a staff member. Job orders can then be placed on the PA CareerLink® website once the employer has been approved, where it will be viewed by thousands of interested job-seekers. Recruitment assistance will be offered to employers in terms of promoting their recruitment events through advertisement at the PA CareerLink®, and resumes can be collected on their behalf. Recruitments and screening interviews can also be held on site at the PA CareerLink®. Additionally, labor market information will be available to employers

including wage data, Equal Employment Opportunity compliance, industry and occupation projections, and new hire reporting guidelines. Employers can also receive information regarding the local and regional high priority occupations; receive information on State and Federal tax credits, or guidance concerning Federal Bonding.

Local areas within the region have implemented additional data tracking measures beyond those required by the law to understand in real time whether the system is adding value to local businesses. The success of the PA CareerLink® system in working with employers is measured in some areas by the number of job orders, placements, work-based training, and any job fairs that can be set up for the employer. Local areas also consider the provision of additional business services to be key factors for the employers with which they work. This can include but not be limited to programs that provide cohort training for employers at a reduced cost, information on low interest non-traditional business micro- loans, grant research, technical assistance, and Government Procurement opportunities.

Sector strategies represent an additional opportunity for business engagement in the region. Each local board in the region pursues sector strategies in manufacturing, healthcare, energy, and construction. Observing the overlap in these sectors, the Southwest Planning Region will explore opportunities to align local efforts into a region-wide effort.

One such regional effort is the Greater Pittsburgh Metals Manufacturing Community (GPMMC), a region-wide partnership that pursues sector strategies in manufacturing. The designation, recently acquired through an Economic Development Administration *Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership Grant*, spans a twenty-county area including parts of PA and West Virginia and is anchored by the nine counties in our region. GPMMC responds to a mismatch between the skills that manufacturing employers need and the regional workforce's skills. In spite of the fact that the region is home to many educational institutions and workforce development organizations, regional industry employers continue to identify a number of workforce skills gaps. These include:

- Aging workforce with inadequate number of replacement workers: the manufacturing sector has a high average age (28% of workers are age 55 and above) compared to other sectors in our region's economy
- Lack of connections to and awareness of manufacturing within the K-12 system
- Misperceptions about manufacturing occupations among students and parents
- Inadequate links among career/tech education, universities, and continuing education
- Integration of new technological knowledge for workers at all levels
- Need for underrepresented populations, veterans, persons with disabilities to have opportunities for well-paying jobs in manufacturing

To remedy these skills gaps, the region will facilitate industry-led development of a common curriculum for middle-skilled occupations as the foundation for new training programs, promote awareness of employment opportunities and shift perceptions among students and parents, and expand apprenticeships, internships and community college offerings for high-skills, high-wage metal jobs.

In addition to region-wide sector strategies, local boards have developed sector strategies in line with their labor markets. In addition to the shared regional priorities of advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and energy, TCWIB has sector strategies in information technology (IT) and transportation and logistics. 3RWIB also focuses on information technology (IT). Westmoreland-Fayette focuses on hospitality and tourism, logistics, and

transportation. SW Corner gives special attention to metals. As we explore regional collaboration, we will work to build on existing successes rather than creating programs from scratch.

The Southwest Region works with the Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD) to connect workforce and economic development efforts. We are currently exploring ways to align efforts regarding higher education initiatives, increased demand for skilled labor driven by the cracker plant in the region, and work being done through the TechHire initiative. Further, our collaborative work includes working through the Southwest Region PREP Network. All local WDB's are non-funded members. This membership includes interaction, sharing, referral for services and working on regional initiative, such as the POWER Grant and the Greater Pittsburgh Metal Manufacturing Community.

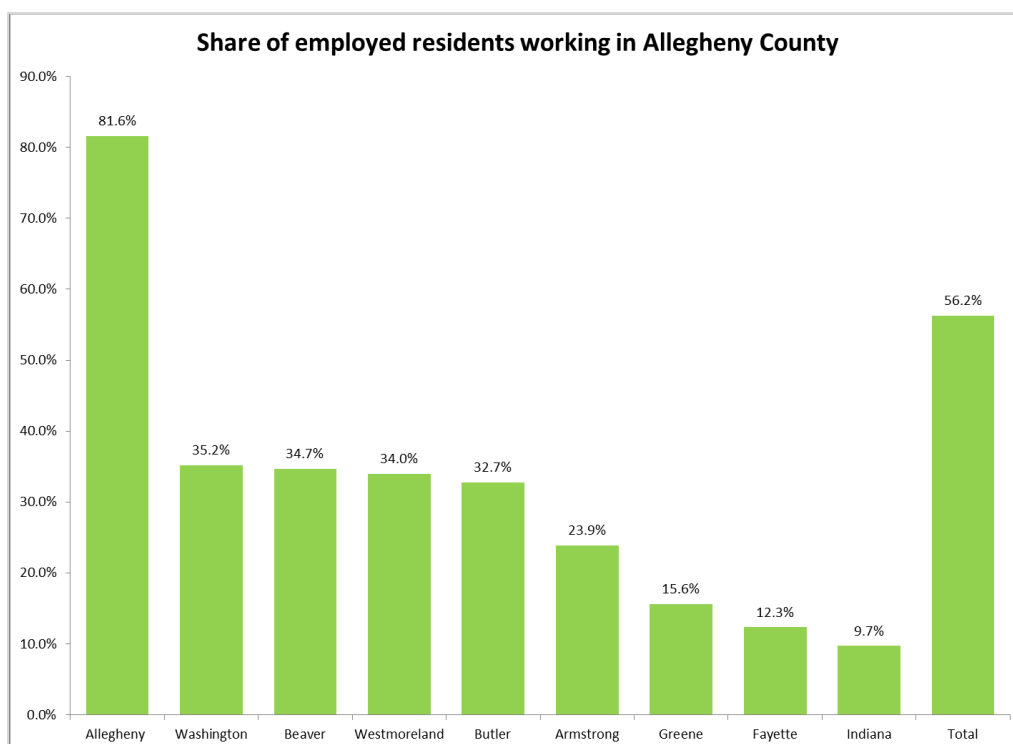
1.6 Describe how the planning region will define and establish administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

We will explore opportunities to define and establish administrative cost arrangements regionally in the next year. We have established several partnerships that are exploring opportunities to share costs on region-wide initiatives through the Veterans' Value Initiative (VVI), the USDOL POWER grant, and the SW Regional Energy Sector Strategic Partnership Project Grant. These programs to serve individuals in need of employment and training services and are implemented with an eye toward creating impact at a regional level and sharing administrative costs where possible. The Southwest Planning Region will continue to pursue diverse funding streams and explore innovations in cost-sharing with both formula and competitive funding where appropriate.

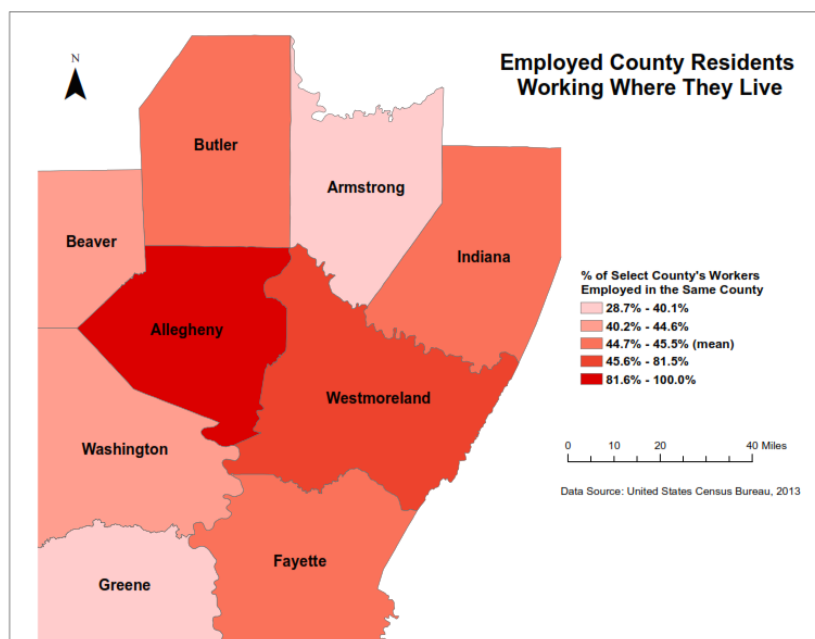
1.8 Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region will address needs identified. Include a description and/or map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The Southwest Planning Region has a diverse geographic landscape, from rural, sparsely-populated areas like Greene and Indiana Counties, to suburban, moderately-populated areas like Westmoreland and Butler Counties, to the urban, densely populated City of Pittsburgh. Each county has unique transportation needs and varying levels of public transportation systems.

Commuting patterns and business density also vary widely throughout the region. The economic influence of Allegheny County often draws residents of neighboring counties into Allegheny County for work. Allegheny County was home to nearly 60% of the jobs in the Southwest Planning Region in 2015. More than half (56.2%) of the region's employed residents work within Allegheny County. Lack of strong public transportation infrastructure between Allegheny and some outlying counties and within the outlying counties mean that workers frequently must rely on cars and ridesharing to commute to work. Indeed, 13.8% of Allegheny County residents employed outside of the home took public transportation or walked to work in 2015, compared with 3.9% of residents employed outside of their homes in the outlying counties. Due to these variations in local transportation options, each local board determines the best method to provide transportation assistance.



Eight out of ten Allegheny county residents both live and work within Allegheny County. None of the other eight counties in the region retain more than half of their employed workforce within their county at jobs within the county. In the other eight counties, the percentage of residents who both live and work within their own county ranges between a low of 29% (Armstrong County) and a high of 45% (Westmoreland, Fayette, Butler, and Indiana Counties).



Lack of reliable public transportation across the region remains an issue that affects both job seekers and businesses, but is beyond the scope of local workforce boards to address systemically. To that end, the local

boards that make up the Southwest Planning Region will work to inform regional discussions about transportation with ways transportation issues affect the labor force. These efforts will include working with the Allegheny Conference on Community Development (ACCD), which recently unveiled the Regional Transportation Alliance of Southwestern Pennsylvania, a public-private initiative that will develop a ten-county transportation plan for the region.

1.9 Describe strategies and services the planning region will employ to coordinate workforce development programs/services with regional economic development services and providers. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Southwestern PA Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) consists of the economic development partners of the nine-county Southwestern PA region working together to organize and achieve economic results for our region. The PA DCED funding has been used for the four economic development programs that have been serving the SWPA community for approximately twenty years: the Local Development District; the Industrial Resource Center; the Industrial Development Corporations (county-based) and the Small Business Development Centers (university based). In addition, the PREP funded partners have involved the four local workforce development boards to continue efficient and effective coordination of workforce and economic development. This new strategy will:

- Strengthen the collaboration and coordination of economic and workforce development services;
- Further engage regional employers via employer collaboration groups; and
- Train incumbent and future workers to prepare them for family sustaining middle skills and high skilled jobs.

The process employed to meet these objectives will include:

- Asset Mapping and Partnership Development – The core purpose of the collaboration will be to functionally establish a more formal information exchange between the region’s workforce development delivery system, the region’s economic development delivery system and the employer community.
- Business Outreach and Assessment - The analysis will include employment workforce training needs, hiring plans and needs, and also employer willingness to offer workplace learning opportunities to students.
- Employer Engagement, Training, and Hiring needs - Engage the employers in the healthcare, advanced manufacturing and energy sector and identify training needs to remediate skill gaps in the workplace to improve productivity and competitiveness.
- Common Training Programs - Training incumbent and unemployed workers in a critical part of this initiative, and resources are allocated to support employer training and hiring needs. Partners will be cross trained in resources available to employers and leverage existing training programs to meet employer needs.

1.10 Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Department on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Note: The Department, the local board and the CEO reach agreement on local targets and levels based on the negotiation process before the start of each program year. While the CEO remains ultimately responsible for ensuring the local area meets or exceeds such local targets and levels, performance negotiations must be coordinated regionally, requiring each planning region to establish an agreement describing how the region will collectively negotiate performance goals with the Department. [proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]

The negotiated levels of performance for the Southwest Planning Region have many implications for individuals and employers accessing workforce development services. The region is committed to assisting all of its job seekers to find success in their careers while driving the workforce development system to meet performance outcomes. Each local board in the region will negotiate performance measures with the Department for this initial transition year for its local area. Moving forward, we will identify a process for the collective negotiation of regional measures for performance. During the initial transition year into WIOA outcome measures, each local board will report on negotiation of performance measures and subsequent performance to the other locals. Local boards will discuss any concerns which may arise in regards to the local levels and we will provide supports to each other when needed.

1.13 Describe how the planning region will connect any regionally targeted populations to occupational demands, especially individuals with barriers to employment. [proposed 20 CFR 679.540(b)]

Local boards within the Southwest Planning Region seek to serve individuals with barriers to employment, including: veterans, low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and out-of-school youth. Through the PA CareerLink® offices, the Southwest Planning Region aligns programming to meet the State and Federal requirements for Priority of Service; more than 51% of those served will be individuals with barriers to employment. Additionally, we have identified and implemented several promising practices for serving targeted populations outlined below: the Veterans Value Initiative and Veterans services through PA CareerLink®, services to low income individuals, microcredentialling and career pathway opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment, including out-of-school youth, and the collective impact model. The Southwest Planning Region will discuss possibilities for regionalizing or expanding these models.

Veterans

Veterans receive priority of service at PA CareerLink® offices, meaning that a veteran or qualified spouse receives priority access to services and training opportunities. Additionally, Title I staff within the PA CareerLink® system work closely with Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) in each local area. The LVER provide services geared specifically towards veterans, including intensive job development activities, the initiation of referrals to social services, and regular follow-up to ensure that the veteran receives the support needed. Additionally, the LVER coordinates with local veterans service providers, provides information about and referral to veterans programs, and reviews and analyzes veterans program to ensure compliance with veteran standards.

As previously described, the Southwest Planning Region has also undertaken an initiative to support workforce development for vets with competitive funding. The Veterans Value Initiative (VVI) is a regional approach

designed to increase veterans' access to career services and work-based training programs, and to increase employer use of work-based training programs as incentives to hire veterans. Through the initiative, promising practices for "veteran friendly" employers and career pathways for high demand positions will be identified and replicated. The Southwest Planning Region considers VVI a promising model of serving priority populations.

Low income individuals and recipients of public assistance

Low income individuals and recipients of public assistance are identified at the point of entry at local PA CareerLink® offices and informed of their entitlement to priority of service. In order to better serve this population, local boards within the Southwest Planning Region will explore opportunities to strengthen the partnerships between Title I WIOA services and EARN providers. Assistance from the commonwealth on integrating these data systems would help reach more priority of service populations and avoid duplication of services.

Individuals with disabilities

Eligible individuals who self-identify as having a disability are referred to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) staff at PA CareerLink® for additional services. Eligible OVR customers can receive vocational counseling and guidance, vocational education, restoration, training, job placement and individualized supportive services.

Job seekers with a disability are also served through Title I staff at the PA CareerLink®. This dual enrollment would be more effective and would better serve job seekers and employers with increased data sharing from OVR and enhanced program alignment. The Southwest Planning Region will look to OVR to suggest additional opportunities for partnership moving forward.

As a core partner, OVR has the ability to collaborate with the local Workforce Development Board to serve individuals with disabilities. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple, individualized services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement. Under WIOA, OVR has the ability to provide both eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities with pre-employment transition services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities

Educational opportunities for groups with barriers

Individuals with basic skills deficiencies who enroll in Title I services through PA CareerLink® will be co-enrolled with Title II Adult Basic Education where appropriate. PA CareerLink® staff identify individuals who are basic skills deficient through an intake process, then refer these customers to appropriate literacy programs, including GED review classes, ESL, and math and English remediation courses.

Across the region as a whole, 28,205 youths between age 16 and 24 are neither enrolled in education nor employed. This represents nearly ten percent of the youth in the Southwest Planning Region. To help reengage this population with the workforce system, we are working on career pathways and implementing innovative program models.

One such innovation is being piloted through a Workforce Innovation Fund grant by Westmoreland-Fayette WDB in partnership with Westmoreland County Community College (WCCC) and 3RWIB with Community College

of Allegheny County (CCAC). These partners are working to develop stackable microcredentials in key career pathway, high priority occupations to reduce barriers to entry in high quality jobs. Westmoreland-Fayette and WCCC are building microcredentials in manufacturing. 3RWIB and CCAC are focusing on cyber security and health care. The best practices identified through the project will be shared across the region.

Collective impact

To connect regional populations to occupational demands across all targeted populations, the Southwest Planning Region has taken steps to build a collective impact system, which leverages the expertise and capacity of community-based organizations to increase the capacity of the public system. This model has been successfully piloted by 3RWIB in the Pittsburgh Works initiative. Regional partners will work together to explore the potential for implementation of this model in the area.

In 2012, 3RWIB launched the Pittsburgh Works initiative to address system fragmentation, reduce inefficient use of workforce development resources, and provide greater access to job placement services within the community. This innovative and nationally-lauded collaboration of more than 80 workforce development partners provides the framework needed to raise the quality of services provided to job seekers, respond to employer demand, and path more people into in-demand careers at family-sustaining wages. The Pittsburgh Works combination of tools and process provides an ideal platform to help our region identify regionally targeted populations and connect them to occupational demand. Westmoreland-Fayette and TCWIB are exploring ways to leverage the best practices learned through the collective impact model in their local areas.



SOUTHWEST CORNER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

TRANSITIONAL LOCAL PLAN

PY 2016-2017

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Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

1.1 Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

Population

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (SWC WDB) serves the following counties: Beaver, Greene, and Washington. The total population of the combined region is 475,422¹. The region's population represents 3.7% of Pennsylvania's total population.

Labor Force

The 2014 annual average Labor Force for the SWC WDB area was made up of 210,286 workers including 197,700 employed and 12,586 unemployed individuals. The region's unemployment rate for the same time period was 6.0%². In comparison, the state's Labor Force was made up of 6,391,000 workers including 6,016,000 employed and 376,000 individuals unemployed. The state unemployment rate was 5.9%³. The region's workers represent approximately 3.3% of the state's Labor Force.

The table below summarizes the region's (and state's) most recent unemployment data available.

SWC WDA – 12 Month Change in Unemployment Rates from February 2015 to February 2016 (Not Seasonally Adjusted)			
County	February 2015	February 2016	12-Month Net
Beaver	6.6%	6.3%	-0.3%
Greene	5.5%	7.4%	1.9%
Washington	6.0%	6.3%	0.3%
Pennsylvania	5.7%	5.3%	- 0.4%

Source: U.S. DOL Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Map, 12-month change in unemployment rates by State (and County), not seasonally adjusted

From February 2015 to February 2016 the region's number of unemployed workers decreased by 0.3% in Beaver County, while the number of unemployed workers increased in Greene and Washington Counties by 1.9% and 0.3% respectively. The chart above illustrates the comparison of the region's unemployment rates to that of the state's unemployment rate. The increase in the region's unemployment rate directly correlates with the unemployed workers who were recently impacted by the decline of the coal industry and coal-fired power plants.

Wage Information

The SWC WDB area's top 20 industries by employment account for 60,999 workers in the region's Labor Force. The region's top five industries by employment are: **Restaurants and Other Eating Places** (10,110 average annual employment), **Elementary and Secondary Schools** (9,497 average annual employment), **Executive, Legislative, and Gen Government** (3,917 average annual employment), **Support Activities For Mining** (3,401 average annual employment), and **Individual and Family Services** (3,379 average annual employment). The top five industries account for 30,304 workers of the region's labor force. One of the top

¹ Source: U.S. Census - 2014 Pop. Estimates (Tables: PEPAGESEX & PEPSR6H)

² Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Produced by the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 12/30/2015

Five Industries paid less than \$8.00 per hour (average hourly wage). One Industry paid between \$8.01 to \$13.00 per hour (average hourly wage). One Industry paid between \$13.01 to \$18.00 per hour (average hourly wage). One Industry paid between \$18.01 to \$25.00 per hour (average hourly wage). One Industry paid more than \$25.01 per hour (average hourly wage).

When considering all of the employment and wage opportunities available by means of the SWC WDB area's top 20 Industries by employment, the breakdown of the region's Labor Force wage scale is:

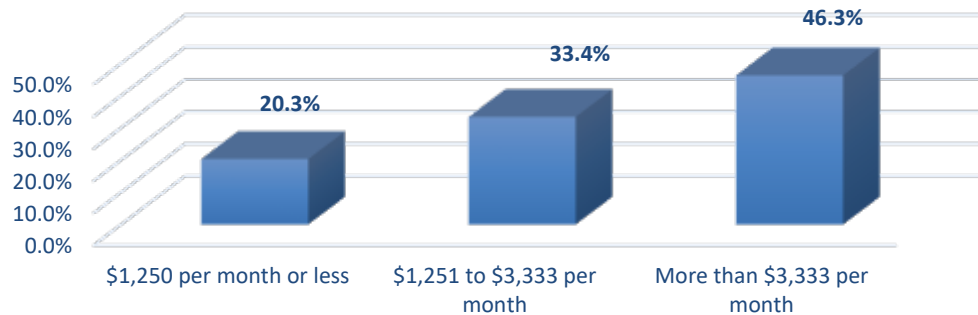
- 2 Industries paid less than \$ 8.00 per hour on average
- 2 Industries paid \$ 8.01 to \$12.50 per hour on average
- 5 Industries paid \$12.51 to \$18.00 per hour on average
- 2 Industries paid \$18.01 to \$23.00 per hour on average
- 2 Industries paid \$23.01 to \$27.00 per hour on average
- 1 Industries paid \$27.01 to \$30.00 per hour on average
- 2 Industries paid \$30.01 to \$36.00 per hour on average
- 1 Industries paid \$36.01 to \$40.00 per hour on average
- 3 Industries paid more than \$40.01 per hour on average

***The per hour wage is based on the assumption of a 40-hour work week

The Region's top 20 industries by employment are:

4 Digit NAICS Southwest Corner County, All Ownerships, Second Quarter of 2015, Preliminary					
NAICS Title	NAICS	Establishments	Average Employment	Total Wage	Average Weekly Wage
Total, All Industries					
Restaurants and Other Eating Places (new 2012)	7225	569	10,110	\$33,870,100	\$258
Elementary and Secondary Schools	6111	161	9497	\$110,331,812	\$894
Executive, Legislative, & Gen Government	9211	154	3917	\$36,336,885	\$714
Support Activities for Mining	2131	97	3,401	\$63,497,807	\$1,436
Individual and Family Services	6241	514	3,379	\$21,111,928	\$481
Grocery Stores	4451	107	3,166	\$15,291,013	\$372
Nursing Care Facilities	6231	31	2,997	\$25,471,412	\$654
Offices of Physicians	6211	283	2,843	\$60,994,313	\$1,650
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	2389	170	2,344	\$29,188,179	\$958
Building Equipment Contractors	2382	197	2,052	\$29,177,302	\$1,094
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	5617	275	2,048	\$13,207,938	\$496
Automobile Dealers	4411	74	1,970	\$24,391,067	\$953
Machinery & Supply Merchant Wholesalers	4238	94	1,960	\$36,370,556	\$1,427
Architectural and Engineering Services	5413	144	1,906	\$39,988,036	\$1,614
Power Generation and Supply	2211	13	1,733	\$46,186,378	\$2,050
Offices of Other Health Practitioners	6213	221	1,627	\$14,642,879	\$692
Health and Personal Care Stores	4461	146	1,570	\$13,170,908	\$645
Machinery & Equipment Rental & Leasing	5324	32	1,511	\$29,045,404	\$1,479
Other Amusement & Recreation Industries	7139	93	1,511	\$6,197,979	\$316
Depository Credit Intermediation	5221	168	1,457	\$15,746,310	\$831
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages					

Southwest Corner WDB - Labor Force Monthly Medium Earnings 2014



Source: U.S Census Bureau, On The Map (Generation date 4/26/2016)

In the Southwest Corner region, the largest share of workers (46.3%) received earnings of more than \$3,333 per month. One third (33.4%) of the region's workers earn monthly wages between \$1,251 and \$3,333 per month. Less than one quarter of the region's workforce earns less than \$1,250 per month.

The table below compares the region's workforce monthly earnings to the state's average workforce earnings.

Average Monthly Earnings of the Southwest Corner WDB's Workforce		
	Southwest Corner WDB	State
\$1,250 per month or less	20.3%	20.3%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	33.4%	34.1%
More than \$3,333 per month	46.3%	45.7%

Source: U.S Census Bureau, On The Map (Generation date 4/26/2016)

Age Demographics

An analysis of data produced by the US Census Bureau reveals that 25.5 percent of the region's workers are 55 years of age or older and will likely retire in the next 15 years. More than half (53.0%) of the region's workforce range from 30-54 years of age. Employers will need to turn to younger workers age 29 and under (21.5%) to fill the skilled positions vacated by aging workers. The table below compares the average ages of the region's labor force to the state's labor forces. The age demographics of the region and state are statistically similar.

Southwest Corner WDB - Percentage of Labor Force by Age		
Age	Southwest Corner WDB	Pennsylvania
Age 29 and Under	21.5%	22.00%
Age 30 to 54	53.0%	53.50%
Age 55 and Above	25.5%	24.50%

Source: U.S Census Bureau, On The Map (Generation date 4/18/2016)

In-Demand Industries

Based on recent Center for Information and Analysis labor market employment reports, the Service-Providing Industry provides the largest share of employment opportunities in the SWC WDB region, accounting for nearly 123,540 jobs (71% of all jobs). The region's current top five industry sectors by

employment volume are: **Education & Health Services** (37,110 workers, or 21.3%), **Trade, Transportation & Utilities** (33,010 workers, or 19.0%), **Manufacturing** (16,930 workers, or 9.7%), **Leisure & Hospitality** (14,950 workers, or 8.6%), **Professional and Business Services** (14,190, or 8.2%).

Long-Term Industry Projections for Southwest Corner WDB (2012-22)				
			Employment Change (2012-2022)	
Industry	Employment (2012)	Projected Employment (2022)	Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	174,100	186,310	12,210	7.0%
Goods Producing Industries	28,170	29,810	1,640	5.8%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	11,240	13,080	1,840	16.4%
Manufacturing	16,930	16,730	-200	-1.2%
Services-Providing	123,540	134,070	10,530	8.5%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	33,010	34,290	1,280	3.9%
Information	1,490	1,490	0	0.0%
Financial Activities	5,420	5,740	320	5.9%
Professional & Business Services	14,190	16,620	2,430	17.1%
Education & Health Services	37,110	41,490	4,380	11.8%
Leisure & Hospitality	14,950	16,590	1,640	11.0%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	8,430	8,980	550	6.5%
Federal, State & Local Government	8,940	8,870	-70	-0.8%
Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2012-22)				

Opportunity Industries

Opportunity Industries are projected to have high job growth (due to new job creations or significant job openings) over a ten-year period of time. The table above prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis projects that the region will experience the creation of 12,210 new jobs between 2012 and 2022. This represents a 7.0% job growth for the region. The table below identifies the fastest growing industries (by volume) in the region. When considering the projected 7.0 % job growth and that nearly one quarter of the region's workforce is 55 years of age or older and likely to retire in the next 10 – 15 years, the SWC WDB area will need to cultivate and support a comprehensive workforce development strategy to help meet the employers' needs to fill the newly created positions, and the positions vacated by retiring workers.

Fastest Growing Industries in the Southwest Corner WDB Area (Projected 2012-2022)	
Industry Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	900
Individual & Family Services	860
Offices of Other Health Practitioners	690
Utility System Construction	610
Architectural, Engineering & Related Services	520
Offices of Physicians	420

Specialized Freight Trucking	390
General Freight Trucking	330
Other Specialty Trade Contractors	330
Child Day Care Services	260
Services to Buildings & Dwellings	230
Support Activities for Mining	200
Management of Companies & Enterprises	190
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	180
Self-Employed Workers	170
Warehousing & Storage	170
Local Government	160
Colleges, Universities & Professional Schools	150
Commercial Machinery Repair/Maintenance	130
Other Amusement & Recreation Ind.	130

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2012-22), Prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

In-Demand Occupations

According to the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, the ***Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service*** occupations have the largest share by volume (29,510 workers, or 17%) of the region's labor force. Rounding off the top five in-demand occupations are: ***Office & Administrative Support*** (23,990 workers, or 13.8%), ***Sales & Related*** (17,090 workers, or 9.8%), ***Education, Legal, Social Service, Arts & Media*** (16,860 workers, or 9.7%), and ***Construction & Extraction*** (15,800 workers, or 9.1%). The region's in-demand occupations are diverse as are the skill, certifications and advanced education requirements needed for the jobs.

Long-term Occupational Projections for Southwest Corner WDB Area (2012 through 2022)					
Occupational Title	Employment (2012)	Projected Employment (2022)	Employment Change		Total Openings
			Volume	Percent	
Total, All Occupations	174,100	186,310	12,210	7.0%	5,528
Management, Business & Finance	12,930	13,740	810	6.3%	365
Computer, Engineering & Science	5,480	6,250	770	14.1%	201
Education, Legal, Social Service, Arts & Media	16,860	17,840	980	5.8%	478
Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support	14,820	17,080	2,260	15.2%	526
Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service	29,510	32,560	3,050	10.3%	1,168
Sales & Related	17,090	17,430	340	2.0%	583
Office & Administrative Support	23,990	24,740	750	3.1%	642
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2,940	2,870	-70	-2.4%	90
Construction & Extraction	15,880	17,400	1,520	9.6%	461
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	8,840	9,480	640	7.2%	282
Production	13,060	13,260	200	1.5%	332
Transportation & Material Moving	12,710	13,660	950	7.5%	402

Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2012-22), Prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis.

Opportunity Occupations

The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis projects that by 2022, the Southwest Corner WDB area will experience a 7% job growth due to employer demands for 12,210 new jobs in the region. The table

below identifies where the present occupational critical needs for new workers are: **Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** (580 projected new jobs) top the list of fastest growing jobs in the region. Other growing occupations in the top five are: **Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers** (570 projected new jobs), **Personal Care Aides** (480 projected new jobs), **Registered Nurses** (460 projected new jobs), and **Home Health Aides** (440 projected new jobs).

Fastest Growing Occupations in the Southwest Corner WDB Area (Projection 2012 through 2022)	
Occupational Title	Employment Change by Volume
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	580
Combined Food Prep/Serving Workers	570
Personal Care Aides	480
Registered Nurses	460
Home Health Aides	440
Construction Laborers	410
Secretaries	390
Carpenters	330
Janitors & Cleaners	270
Civil Engineers	240
Medical Assistants	230
Retail Salespersons	230
Security Guards	230
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	220
Bookkeeping & Accounting Clerks	190
Operating Engineers	190
Waiters & Waitresses	170
Construction/Extraction Supervisors	160
Accountants & Auditors	150
Childcare Workers	140

Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2012-22), Prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Workforce and Economic Development in the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board Area

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (SWC WDB) analyzes the latest labor market data available to understand the workforce development needs of the region's employers, job seekers and incumbent workers. The SWC WDB also closely monitors their PA CareerLink® Center's Business Service Team's interactions with the region's employers. The SWC WDB makes use of the information to determine the type training delivery appropriate to meet the needs of region's employers and job seekers. In many cases, workforce development needs only require short term On-the-Job training. All training support targets High Priority Occupations (HPO).

The SWC WDB has meaningful relationships with its neighboring Local Workforce Development Boards, local economic development organizations, training providers and community and faith-based organizations to form a community of practice to improve their understanding of the region's training needs. The Southwest Corner WDB recognizes that the growth and success of the regional economy relies and benefits greatly from the communication and collaboration with the above-mentioned organizations.

The SWC WDB and our PA CareerLink® Centers strategically utilize available WIOA funded training resources including Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and On-the-Job Training (OJTs) funds to support the region's workforce development needs.

The SWC WDB has identified five (5) in-demand industry sectors, including health care, advanced manufacturing, transportation and logistics, building and construction that require immediate attention to help meet the workforce development needs of our region's most in-demand industries.

Our Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) has been proactive and successful in securing Industry Partnership awards for our targeted high priority industries in PY 2015 including: Advanced Manufacturing and Building and Construction. The Southwest Corner WDB also maintains sustainability funds to support industry partnership activities in Transportation and Logistics, Building and Construction and Energy.

Our LWDB is assessing the need to form a Healthcare Industry Partnership. We have begun outreach meetings with local employers to gauge the skills and training needed to train and hire.

IPs can support a large portion of the employers' investment costs of training incumbent workers. This training leads to the development of the employer's workforce, while often offering promotions and wage gains opportunities for their employees. Training and promotion of incumbent workers often leads to the availability of entry level jobs for less skilled workers and growth opportunities for employers.

The SWC WDB conducted an analysis to identify the critical industries and workforce development issues important to the region. SWC WDB plans to address issues of an aging workforce by ensuring that our labor pool possesses the necessary skills to meet industry and employer demand. This will require strong career pathways and engagement of the target population. To address this SWC WDB plans to expand industry partnership activities in the region to prepare incumbent workers with the skills needed to replace those workers exiting the workforce.

Marcellus and Utica Shale (Energy Industry) continues to offer job growth opportunities to the region. The construction of a proposed "Cracker" manufacturing facility could possibly add thousands of long-term temporary Building and Construction jobs over the next ten-year period and several hundred permanent manufacturing jobs when the construction of the Cracker Plant is complete. The SWC WDB analyzed many studies that define our changing work environment. The Allegheny Conference supported a study conducted by Pennsylvania Economy League of Greater Pittsburgh "Regional Economic Impact Analysis of Proposed Petrochemical Facility." The SWCWDB is working to connect our local PA CareerLink® centers with regional Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC) to create and ensure a pipeline of skilled workers, in the various building trades, to meet the projected needs of this industry.

If the Cracker Plant becomes a reality, there will be a need of approximately 7400 various jobs within the building trades industry. The SWC WDB plans to implement a pre-apprenticeship training program in conjunction with the trade JATC's that serve our counties, to help foster increased enrollment in the trades. This training will include at a minimum the following: good oral and written communication skills, an understanding of time management, and an understanding of financial planning, strong math skills (algebra and geometry), reading comprehension, interview skills, an ability to work in teams and to think independently, business ethics, and a basic understanding of safety in the workplace. In addition, the training will offer some entry-level credentials, including but not limited to safety and equipment operating, that can be used to help the participants gain entry into the workforce.

1.2 Provide an analysis of knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Knowledge and Skill Requirements for In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

According to data made available by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, the **Service-Providing** industry offers the region's largest share of employment opportunities, accounting for 123,540 jobs (71% share of all jobs). Many of the occupations in this industry will rely heavily on Proof of Experience, Short-Term On-the-Job training and/or State Licensing, Post-Secondary Degrees, and Industry Credentials as job requirements.

The **Education and Health Services** industry employs 37,110 (21.3% share) workers in the region. The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis projects there will be a net job growth of 4,380 new positions this industry by 2022. Many of the new positions will require job seekers to possess a post-secondary degree and/or state licensing. In the case of Nursing Care Facilities, many workers (aides) are required to complete an in-house training program and pass a test within a few months of employment.

The **Trade, Transportation & Utilities** industry includes Building and Construction workers, Utility Workers and Truck Drivers. This industry employs more than 33,010 workers in the region. The industry is projected to add a 3.9% (1,280 new jobs) net job growth to the region by 2022. Apprenticeship training programs applied to college credits and Career and Technical training are usually required for Building and Construction Workers. Short-Term Training and State Licensing is required for Heavy and Tractor Trailer Truck Drivers. Utility worker jobs range from customer service representatives to meter readers, heavy equipment operators and skilled trades' people (i.e. welders, electricians, plumbers, boiler makers, steam fitters...). Training requirements are as diverse as the job duties ranging from On-the-Job training to Vo-tech and apprenticeship programs and post-secondary educations.

Advanced Manufacturing accounts for more nearly 17,000 job opportunities in the region. To be competent in these positions workers will need to possess a combination of math, computer, mechanical engineering and diagnostics skills. Many of the area's local training providers offer Mechatronics type courses to meet the employers' needs. The SWC WDB was awarded an Advanced Manufacturing Industry Partnership (IP) for the 20015-2016 Program Year. IPs can support a large portion of the employers' investment costs of training incumbent workers. This training leads to the development of the employer's workforce, while often offering promotions and wage gain opportunities for their employees. Upward mobility of incumbent workers often leads to the availability of entry level jobs for less skilled workers and growth opportunities for employers.

The SWC WDB area has a growing **Hospitality, Leisure, and Entertainment (HLE)** Industry. The HLE industry employs more than 14,950 workers in the region. Long-Term employment projections for HLE predict an 8.6% (1,640 new jobs) net job growth by 2022. Many of the HLE jobs will only require a High School Diploma or equivalent and Short-Term On-the-Job training. HLE also includes jobs that require more advanced skills such as: Chefs and Head Cooks, Lodging Managers, Food Service Managers, Human Resource Managers and Supervisors. Proof of Experience, Vocational Training, Long-Term On-the-Job Training, and Post-Secondary Education are often requirements for these types of positions.

The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis identifies the following top ten knowledge areas and projected needs from 2012 to 2022 for the Southwest Corner WDA region:

Top 10 Knowledge Areas	
1. English Language	6. Education and Training

2. Customer and Personal Service	7. Computers and Electronics
3. Administration and Management	8. Clerical
4. Mathematics	9. Psychology
5. Public Safety and Security	10. Production and Processing

The same data also recognizes the following top ten work activities and projected needs from 2012 to 2022:

Top 10 Work Activities	
1. Getting Information	6. Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events
2. Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates	7. Documenting/Recording Information
3. Performing for or Working Directly with the Public	8. Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work
4. Making Decisions and Solving Problems	9. Updating and Using Relevant Knowledge
5. Interacting With Computers	10. Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships

This data suggests that technical and non-technical skills are essential to the sustainability of all industries and occupations in the region.

1.3 Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board Labor Force Employment Data

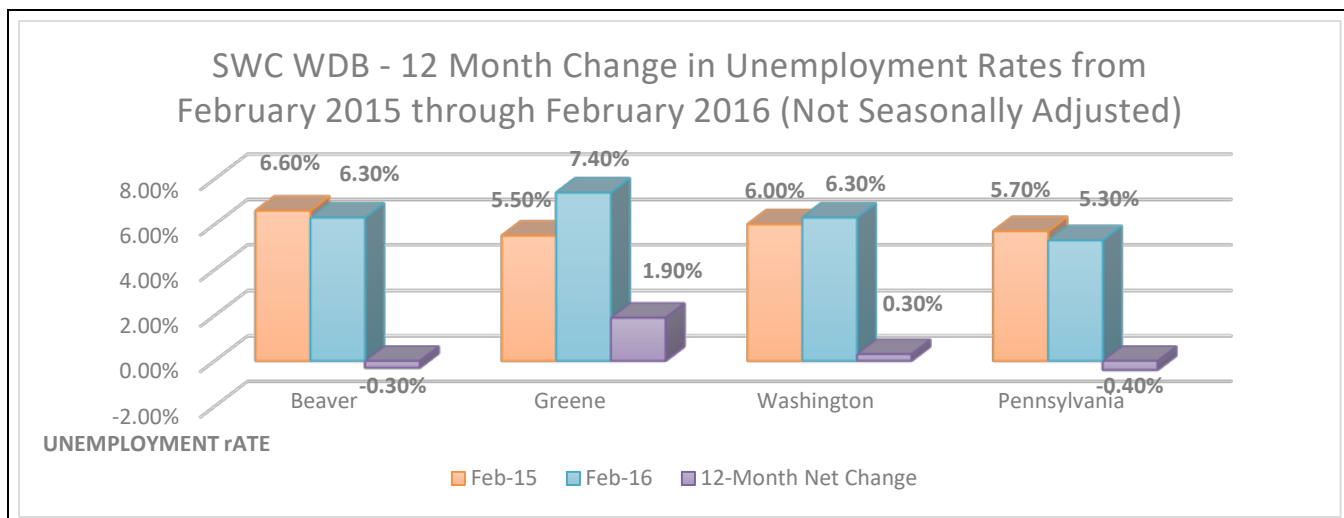
The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (SWC WDB) area's labor force was made up of 210,286 workers including 197,700 employed and 12,586 unemployed individuals. The region's unemployment rate for the same time period was 6.0%¹. In comparison, the state's Labor Force was made up of 6,391,000 workers including 6,016,000 employed and 376,000 individuals unemployed. The state unemployment rate was 5.9%². The region's workers represent approximately 3.3% of the state's Labor Force.

Based on more recent U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics data, the region's number of unemployed workers decreased by 0.3% in Beaver County, while the number of unemployed workers increased in Greene and Washington Counties by 1.9% and 0.3% respectively from February 2015 to February 2016. The increases in the region's unemployment rate directly correlates with the unemployed workers who

¹ Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Produced by the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 12/30/2015

² Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Produced by the Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 12/30/2015

were recently impacted by the decline of the coal industry and coal-fired power plants. This information demonstrates that while the region's unemployment rate is higher than the state's, and with the exception of the Coal and Coal Fired Power plant Industries decline, the SWC WDB area is recovering from the 2007-2009 recession at a similar rate to the state's recovery.

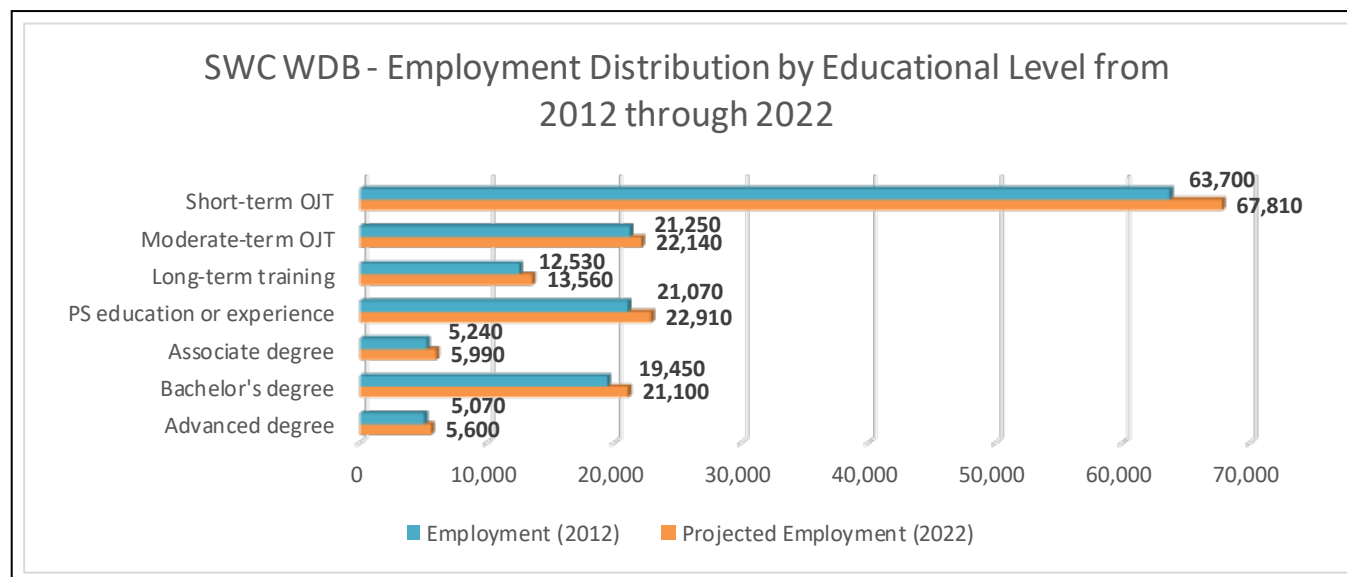


Source: U.S. DOL Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Map, 12-month change in unemployment rates by State (and County), (not seasonally adjusted)

Labor Force Educational Attainment

The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis data projects that the region's employers' educational attainment rate needs across Educational Groupings will stay consistent (by share) through 2022. Short-Term On-the-Job-Training will satisfy employer needs for 54% of the region's job positions. The table below compares the projected education attainment level needs from 2012 through 2022.

The chart below illustrates the region's projected Employment Distribution by Education Level needs by employee volume from 2012 to 2022.



Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2012-22), Prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

The table below illustrates the region's projected Employment Distribution by Education Level needs by employee share (percentage) from 2012 to 2022.

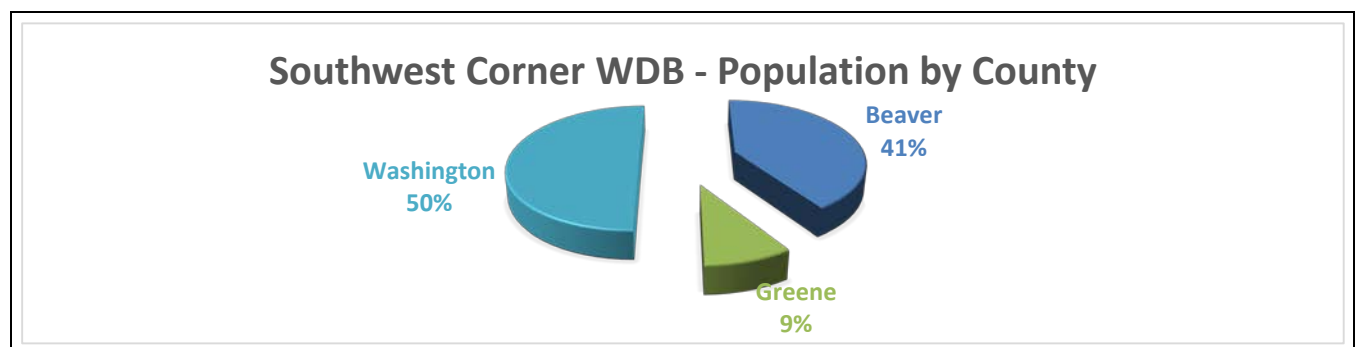
SWC WDB - Projected Educational Attainment Level Needs by Share from 2012-2022		
Educational Grouping	2012	2022
Advanced degree	3%	3%

Bachelor's degree	13%	13%
Associate degree	4%	4%
PS education or experience	14%	14%
Long-term training	9%	9%
Moderate-term OJT	14%	14%
Short-term OJT	54%	54%

Source: Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2012-22), Prepared by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Population of the Southwest Corner Workforce Investment Board Area

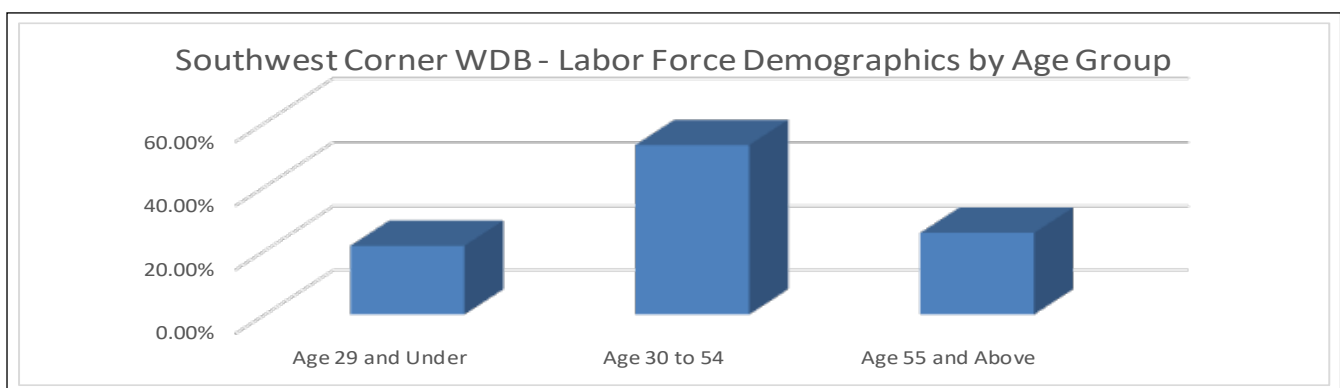
The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board (SWC WDB) serves the following counties: Beaver, Greene and Washington. The total population of the combined region is 415,422. The region's population represents 3.7% of Pennsylvania's total population. The chart below identifies the county distribution of the region's population by share.



Source: U.S. Census - 2014 Pop. Estimates (Tables: PEAGESEX & PEPSR6H)

Age Demographics of the Labor Force in the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board Area

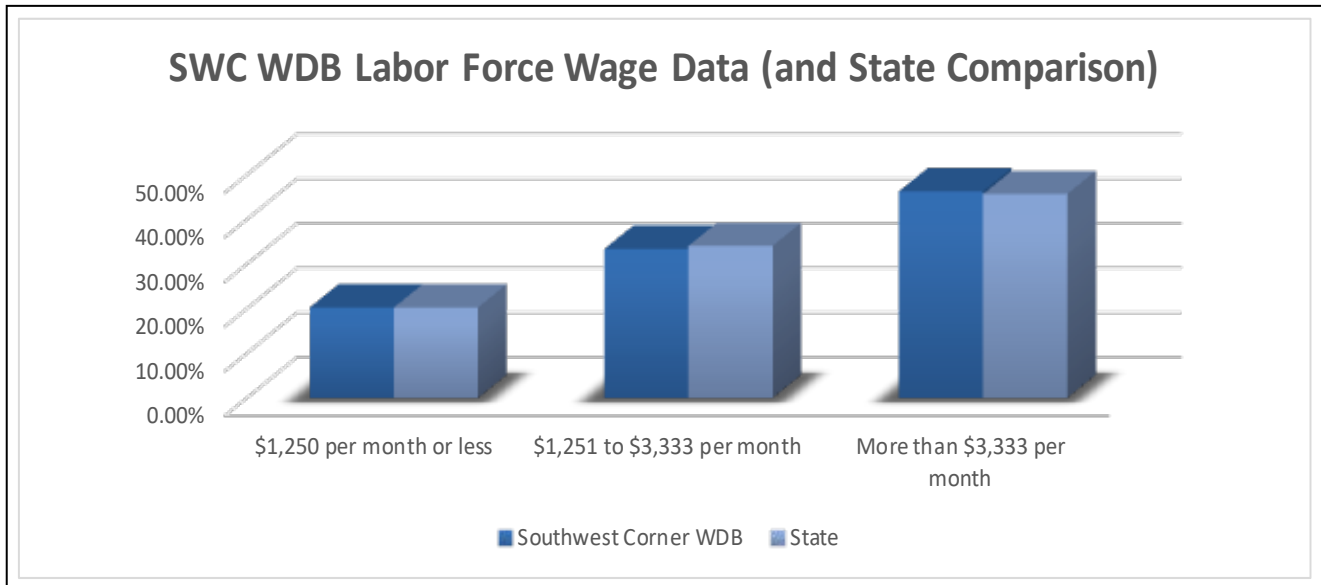
An analysis of data produced by the US Census Bureau reveals that 25.5% percent of the region's workers are 55 years of age or older and will likely retire in the next 15 years. More than half (53.0%) of the region's workforce range from 30-54 years of age. Employers will need to turn to younger workers age 29 and under (21.5%) to fill the skilled positions vacated by aging workers.



Source: U.S Census Bureau, On The Map (Generation date 4/26/2016)

Wage Information

The region's the largest share of workers (46.3%) receive earnings of more than \$3,333 per month. One third (33.4%) of the region's workers earn monthly wages between \$1,251 and \$3,333 per month. Less than one quarter of the region' workforce earns less than \$1,250 per month. The chart below compares the region's average monthly workforce earnings to the state's average monthly workforce earnings.



Source: U.S Census Bureau, On The Map (Generation date 4/26/2016)

Unemployment Challenges for Individuals with Barrier to Employment

Individuals Living Below the Poverty Level

Of the region's 332,257 population who are 16+ years of age, 34,401⁴ (or 10.4%) individuals live below the poverty level. Of those living below the poverty level, 8,930 (or 26%) are employed, 3,943 (or 11.5%) are unemployed, and 21,528 (or 62.6%) are not in the labor force. It is a challenge and a priority for the SWC WDB to help these individuals who seek employment find jobs that pay family sustaining wages.

Citizenship and Language Proficiency

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that there are 2,908⁵ individuals living in the region who are not U.S. Citizens. Similarly the U.S. Census Bureau reports that there are 3,647⁶ individuals in the region who speak English less than "Very Well". The SWC WDB notes that lack of English proficiency doesn't necessarily prevent immigrant workers from obtaining employment, but those who are proficient boast higher income at all levels of educational attainment.

Disabilities

Nearly 62,000⁷ individuals in the region are living with disabilities according to the U.S Census Bureau. The SWC WDB utilizes Title IV - WIOA programs to provide services to persons with disabilities.

⁴ Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table B17005, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

⁵ Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table B05001, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

⁶ Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table B16001, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

⁷ Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table S1811, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

Veterans

The region is proud that 35,974 U.S. Veterans call the SWC WDA home. The table below was created with data produced by the U.S. Census Bureau and reported by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis. Veterans are treated as a priority when receiving any services in the region's PA CareerLink® centers.

PC WDA – Veteran Unemployment Rate			
County	Region's Population	Veteran Population	Veteran Unemployment Rate
Beaver	169,392	15,100	8.8%
Greene	37,843	3,399	5.1%
Washington	208,187	17,475	7.4%
Pennsylvania	12,787,209	906,304	8.1%

Source: U.S. Census 2010-2014, American Community Survey -5 Year Estimates

1.4 Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Area has a full-complement of workforce services to offer to both businesses and individuals in the region. The services available to individuals include a wide array of career services, including the on-line job search/job matching system, GED/Remediation services, training, pre-vocational training, career exploration, career resources, academic/vocational assessments, employability skills workshops, networking opportunities and onsite recruitment events, etc. The PA CareerLink® centers provide universal career resource room access.

Our system's relationship with key education providers including community colleges, universities, technical schools, local school districts, career & technology centers and other training providers provide us with opportunities to explore opportunities to bridge learning and skills gaps that exist between job seekers and our key industry partners. Several post-secondary schools and career & technology centers are partners within our PA CareerLink® system.

The Southwest Corner PA CareerLink® centers have co-located partners that are responsible for the delivery of the services listed above including partners funded through:

- WIOA Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker, National Emergency Grant (JD-NEG), Rapid Response
- WIOA Title I: Youth (In-school and Out-of-School youth ages 14-24) and TANF Youth
- WIOA Title II: Adult Basic Literacy Education
- WIOA Title III: Wagner Peyser; Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA); Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA)
- WIOA Title IV: Office of Vocational Rehabilitation – Services to persons with disabilities

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation assists Pennsylvanians with disabilities to secure and maintain employment and independence under Title IV-Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement, individualized support services; and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

- US DOL Veterans
- Community Development Block Grant programs

- WIOA Title V: Senior Employment Services

Skills needs break down into basically two levels. Almost regardless of the Career Pathway, people need a higher level of **basic skills**, which are oriented to the workplace. Reading, Math, understanding instructions and use of basic information technology form the basis of the literacy involved at this level.

Soft skills such as attendance, punctuality, planning for emergencies, handling difficult people, working in teams, problem-solving, and getting along with others complement basic literacy and make work better for people. At a higher level, people need technical skills that can range from welding and fabricating to information technology.

WIOA authorizes "career services" for adults and dislocated workers. There are three types of "career services" available: basic career services, individualized career services, and training services. These services will be provided in any order and in no required sequence providing staff the flexibility to target services to the needs of the customer.

Basic Career Services

Basic career services are made available to all individuals seeking services through the PA CareerLink® centers. These services will include:

- Eligibility determination to receive assistance from the adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs.
- Outreach, intake and orientation to resources/services available through the one-stop delivery system. The strength is the collaboration among all partners to promote and provide basic services to all customers in a concerted effort to become more cost efficient and to reduce the duplication of effort.
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services. As part of the initial assessment, individuals meet one-on-one with staff members and are provided with information including a PA CareerLink® resource directory which is tailored to each office, detailing partners, partners' services, and community resources.
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs; Employability Plans (Plans of Action) are completed with every first time user.
- On-site employer recruitments
- Provision of employment related workshops through various partnerships and community resources. Including:
 - Computer Literacy;
 - Resumes, Cover Letters;
 - Interviewing;
 - Reentry Workshops;
 - Financial Literacy;
 - How to Work a Job Fair;
 - Veterans Workshops;
 - Civil Services;
 - Work Readiness Workshops;
 - Industry Specific/Career Planning Workshops
 - Education and Training Related Workshops
- Labor exchange services, including:
 - Job search and placement assistance,

- Provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- Provision of information on nontraditional employment;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services;
- Provision of labor market employment statistics information;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers;
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under UI programs

Individualized Career Services

If PA CareerLink® staff determine that individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment; these services will be made available to the individual. These services include:

- *Comprehensive assessments* of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers;
- *Development of an individual employment plan*, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals.
- *Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring*: The primary strength of group services is the ability to assist large numbers of job seekers through workshops. The limitation of these services is the inability to be more individualized with each job seeker and to allocate the amount of time needed to serve the volume of job seekers in ways they would appreciate.
- *Intensive Job Search Assistance*: The primary strength of this service is a customized Individual Employment Plan (IEP)/Individualized Service Strategy (ISS) developed in partnership with each participant. The participant's IEP/ISS considers important life factors (resources, challenges, special needs, etc.) that may affect a job search and the type of employment that the customer secures. Through an IEP/ISS, staffs work with participants to create career pathway ideas through assessments, counseling, and case management services.

The major drawback of the Intensive Job Search Assistance service is that it is time/labor intensive for the case manager and the participant. For best results, the case manager/participant must meet on a regular basis in order to continually adjust and refine the job search strategy.

- *Short-term pre-vocational services*, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

As part of our Energy Sector initiatives we plan to establish a pre-apprenticeship training program in conjunction with the trade Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees (JATC) that serve our counties, to help foster increased enrollment in the trades. This training will include at a minimum, good oral and written communication skills, an understanding of time management, an understanding of financial planning, strong math skills (algebra and geometry), reading comprehension, interview skills, an ability to work in teams and to think independently, business ethics, health and wellness and a basic understanding of safety in the workplace. Along with these it will offer some entry level credentials, including skills that transfer to other industries which can be used to help the participants gain entry into the workforce.

- *Work experiences* that are linked to careers;
- *Workforce preparation activities* that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, or training, or employment;
- *Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance*;

- *English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.* As permissible under the WIOA guidelines, we refer individuals in need of English as a Second Language (ESL) services to our WIOA Title II partnering agencies.

Training Services

- *Work-Based Learning:* Work-based learning services build opportunities for placement in a career, making the experience applicable to their employment and training goals. The strength is the actual real-life work experiences. A drawback can be the limited availability of employer worksites for participants with very specific skill development needs and/or a lack of funding to meet employer interest.
 - *Work Experiences:* For individuals with limited transferrable skills and or lack of work history work experiences that are targeted in HPO occupations.
 - *On-The-Job Training (OJTs):* We plan to follow the *Governor's Minimum Wage Initiative* by targeting OJT opportunities that pay a minimum of \$10.15 per hour.
 - *Customized Job Training (CJTs):* We will continue to work with employers to identify and develop customized training opportunity needs to ensure a pipeline of skilled workers.
 - *Registered Apprenticeship (RAs):* The Southwest Corner WDB is encouraging the RA programs to apply for inclusion on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), allowing WIOA funds to support participants with interest in RA programs.

The Southwest Corner WDB and PA CareerLink® Staff facilitate meetings with manufacturing employers to promote and discuss the benefits of developing and registering apprenticeship programs as a key workforce development strategy. Employers are aligned with existing funding resources and organizations that support and assist the employers' efforts to develop and register an apprenticeship program that provides their workers with the knowledge and competencies needed in the advanced manufacturing environment.

- Southwest Corner WDB staff has been meeting with the Building Trades JATCs and the Builder's Guild of Western PA to reestablish our commitment to support RA programs and to develop additional ways to inform our job seeking community regarding these opportunities. JATC members have been attending PA CareerLink® staff meetings to provide presentations about their programs. Each PA CareerLink® center has mandatory postings of Apprenticeship opportunities.
- *Individual Training Accounts (ITA's):* Participants in the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs may be awarded up to \$8,000 in tuition assistance. ITAs are only written for programs that listed and approved on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Employer Services

The Southwest Corner WDB has employer representation from each of our High Priority Industries. These employers help to define and develop our service delivery strategy. Each of our PA CareerLink® Business Services Teams (BSTs) provide several programs/services to engage employers and identify their workforce needs.

- Services that increase employer engagement include:
 - *Career/Job fairs (general and industry specific);*
 - *Labor Market Information;*
 - *Job Postings;*

- *Recruitment/Screening of applicants/Pre-employment Assessments and staff assistance;*
- *Employer Informational Sessions;*
- *Employer Advisory Committees;*
- *Layoff Aversion Resources*

To assist with meeting local employer needs, we have identified five (5) in-demand industry sectors, including health care, advanced manufacturing, transportation and logistics; building and construction and energy.

Our Local Workforce Development Board has been proactive and successful in securing Industry Partnership awards for our targeted high priority industries in PY 2015 including: Advanced Manufacturing and Building and Construction. The Southwest Corner WDB also maintains sustainability funds to support industry partnership activities in: Transportation and Logistics, Building and Construction and Energy.

The Southwest Corner WDB is assessing the need to form a Healthcare Industry Partnership. We have begun outreach meetings with local employers to gauge the skills and training needed to train and hire.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

2.1 Describe local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board's strategic vision is to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency through a comprehensive youth, adult, and dislocated worker service delivery system that effectively addresses the employment barriers and skills gaps of our job seekers, and equips them with the necessary skills and credentials to obtain or regain self-sufficient employment in a high priority occupation offering an established career pathway.

To accomplish this vision, we have established the following goals and initiatives:

- Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board has established a minimum wage rate goal of \$10.00 per hour for OJT opportunities.
- We continue to partner with our local community colleges and career and technology centers to develop short-term training programs resulting in industry recognized credentials which enable job seekers to quickly enter or reenter self-sufficient employment.
- We successfully submitted proposals and were awarded industry partnership funds for both the Building and Construction and Advanced Manufacturing industries. The training opportunities provided under these partnerships increase the competitiveness of the employer partners while creating new career pathways for employees.

- We partner with our local school districts to educate youth about high demand employment and post-secondary training opportunities leading to an industry recognized credential which will enable them to begin their journey along a career pathway leading to economic self-sufficiency.
- For the past several years, we have been successful in submitting proposals for numerous job training National Emergency Grants (NEG) targeting long-term unemployed dislocated workers and veterans.
- SWCWDB is utilizing its Industry Partnership in Building and Construction, along with leveraged funds provided by the State to institute a pre-apprenticeship program. Staff has partnered with local employers, labor organizations and State oversight employees to set this goal into motion. This pre-apprenticeship program will prepare individuals, including adults, dislocated workers, and youth, to enroll and succeed in apprenticeship programs. At the conclusion of the program, if the individual chooses not to enter apprenticeship, he/she will still be prepared to enter the workforce with technical and soft skills that are recognized in the workplace.

We envision a job ready regional labor pool that possesses the skills and aptitudes necessary to meet current employer expectations that will help to attract new employers to the region and will encourage the retention of highly valued employers who offer family sustaining wages, benefits and opportunities for advancement. Our Investment guides the following:

- Development of an on-going objective understanding of employer and jobseeker needs
 - By using labor market data;
 - Through Business Service Team and Industry Partnership feedback;
 - As a result of objective skills assessment of jobseekers conducted by Title I providers.
- Gap Analysis
 - We will take the objective data and determine resource gaps
 - We will then work with employers, PA CareerLink® and WIOA staff, service providers, and education and training providers to close the gap through the linkage to existing activities or the development of new ones.
- We will use performance evaluation and oversight of past and current practices for the implementation of best practices.

Central to this objective is collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders including business, labor, education, social services, charitable organizations and community-based agencies. Translating this vision into a Plan that can be set in motion will require that stakeholders work together to identify the workforce needs of businesses in local priority sectors and to develop career pathway approaches to address gaps in the skills of the local workforce.

This Plan describes the Board's commitment to building and maintaining a comprehensive workforce development system for our area that is sector-focused, business-responsive and fosters the development and delivery of training and services along career pathways that bridge the gap between skills currently available in the workforce and the needs of growing and emerging sectors of the local economy.

2.2 Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the governor's vision and goals for the commonwealth's workforce development system. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The mission of Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board is to develop policies, oversee public funds, and procure services that will help employers and job seekers throughout Beaver, Greene and

Washington counties. Job placement assistance, education, training and counseling will be offered in order to achieve a skilled workforce and economic development throughout the region.

The SWC WDB envisions a regional labor pool that possesses the skills and attitudes to attract and retain employers who offer sufficient wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement. The SWC WDB's efforts are to continue to remain and grow as a demand-driven workforce development system which aligns and supports the Governor's vision and goals for Pennsylvania's workforce development system.

We will focus on the following:

- The elimination of duplication of effort, services and costs within the system
- The continued support and development of our employer-led Industry Partnerships for Advanced Diversified Manufacturing and Building & Construction Trades;
- The development of affordable, effective and flexible training programs designed to produce skill sets in high priority occupations while providing opportunities for career pathways that are responsive to the needs of local employers;
- The enhancement of an employer outreach strategy which partners with economic development entities designed to listen and respond to current business needs, as well as plan for future investments.

Our efforts to align with the Governor's vision and goals are:

Goal 1: Providing knowledgeable, engaged, employer-focused leadership that promotes and advocates for business and industry to address the critical workforce challenges of the region.

The Southwest Corner Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) have appointed members to the LWDB, ensuring a majority of private sector business representation and that they represent High Priority Industries in the Southwest Corner. This representation of employers is engaged in our delivery of service and assists us in defining the critical skills that are needed for our workforce to meet the needs of employers in the region.

We will also continue to participate with our local economic development entities and local chambers of commerce as part of our efforts to remain up-to-date on emerging industries, emerging jobs and the workforce needed to fill new and future jobs. These entities have provided the SWC WDB and our Title I providers with an employment network and industry resources needed to address the region's training and workforce needs.

Our LWDB will place special emphasis on the development, implementation and/or expansion of strategies for meeting the needs of local employers, workers and job seekers through sector partnerships related to in-demand industry sectors and occupations

We will build on our successful industry partnership that incorporates the needs of employers in the advanced manufacturing logistics and transportation, energy and building and construction sectors and have begun to research and develop a health care industry partnership.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board has always stressed the importance of education in our workforce system. The Board engages employers and educational resources within the area by prioritizing funding directed to business services activities, on the job training and incumbent worker training to employers offering high quality jobs. An important element of this task is the utilization of our Industry Partnerships within the three counties.

Goal 2: A commitment to continuous improvement throughout the complete workforce development network to meet the expectations of both the public and the employers in this region.

The SWC WDB has oversight and monitoring practices that follow the standards set forth by the Department of Labor & Industry. These monitoring and oversight reports will objectively assess each county's PA CareerLink® strengths and weaknesses, so that they may be addressed by the SWC WDB quarterly.

The Southwest Corner will also continue the development of an on-going objective understanding of employer and jobseeker needs by using labor market data and through our Business Service Teams and Industry Partnerships feedback. We will offer objective skills assessment of jobseekers conducted by Title I Providers and take that objective data and determine resource gaps. We will then work with employers, PA CareerLink® and WIOA staff, service providers, and education and training providers to close the gap through the linkage to existing activities or the development of new ones. We will use performance evaluation and oversight of past and current practices for the implementation of Best Practices. SWC WDB will find ways to best utilize Job Gateway™ and other job matching tools to increase placements.

SWC WDB will promote sharing of best practices on usage and implementation of innovative job seeker and employer services throughout the system and region. SWC WDB will respond to the state's refinement of the High Priority Occupation list and use it to guide local training enrollments. We will track placement for veterans, older workers, the disabled, and ex-offenders and the SWC WDB staff, PA CareerLink® and Title I Contractors will track these services and report to the WDB. Reports and tracking will be done with existing tools.

Our PA CareerLink® centers also utilize both Job Seeker and Employer surveys to allow for feedback regarding their expectations and experiences of service provision. These surveys are brought back to weekly PA CareerLink® staff meetings for discussion of both positive and negative feedback and to develop corrective actions if necessary. Site Administrators track feedback for continued improvement purposes.

Goal 3: Promoting career pathways and tangible opportunities for youth.

The SWC WDB will promote career pathways and other career focused activities through our Title I Providers and our PA CareerLink® partnering agencies. Initiatives include:

- Job Shadowing opportunities;
- Industry Related Career Camps in HPOs;
- Industry Tours;
- Career and College Fairs;
- PA CareerLink® orientations and tours;
- Work experience opportunities;
- Internships; etc.

Our providers work closely with local schools, county welfare offices, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, housing authorities, job corps centers, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and community and faith based organizations to recruit participants, deliver services tailored to their needs, address potential barriers to program participation, retention or completion, and facilitate successful transitions from the program to employment or additional training. The SCWIB has been involved with the development of Career and Industry specific studies and documents that can help youth become better acquainted with the job market and economic outlook of our area.

Specifically, the 2012 Industry Cluster analysis contains detailed information on growing and positive career outlooks through 2022. SWC WDB has also been included in preparation and distribution of materials pertaining to the Marcellus Shale Gas industry. Career Directories were prepared that contain breakdowns of industry job descriptions, skills and education levels required, and career pathways to obtain these jobs. SWC WDB will continue to market, distribute the materials both electronically and

physically and program participation, retention or completion, and facilitate successful transitions from the program to employment or additional training.

Goal 4: In partnership with the CLEOs, providing oversight and leadership that complies with all requirements of the current federal legislation, as well as state and local policies and regulations.

The Southwest Corner is comprised of Washington, Greene and Beaver counties in southwestern Pennsylvania. An equal partnership exists between their respective units of government. Our local elected officials (LEOs) have executed an agreement to organize and implement activities pursuant to the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act that was passed in July 2014, and was approved by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. According to this agreement, the CLEOs share responsibility for appointing members of the board and youth standing committee, providing input on our local plan, and overseeing activities. The CLEOs are consulted on an as needed basis and are invited to participate in full board and committee meetings.

The Chief Local Elected Officials have appointed a 29-member workforce development board that meets quarterly and along with CLEO board conducts oversight of our local programs. The SWC WDB was the first workforce area to have created a fiscal committee comprised of seven (7) members, three (3) CLEO members (*one from each county*), three (3) Workforce Development Board members (*one from each county*), and one fiscal agent member. This committee meets and discusses all financial-related issues and activities and the reports to both the CLEO and the Workforce Boards for approval.

The Boards of Commissioners of Beaver, Washington and Greene counties entered into a mutual agreement to establish the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board and designate the Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc., a 501(c) 3, as the fiscal agent, grant recipient, and staff to the Southwest Corner WDB. Its duties include administrative and fiscal capacities, contracting and disbursement of funds, and reporting. As staff to the WDB, the Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc. also assumes leadership roles for WDB related activities.

The staff to the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board has recently been completely restructured and works very closely with our Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO's) to ensure that the management oversight and the overall stewardship is given more than due diligence for the public funds that we receive.

The Southwest Corner WDB has two WIOA Title I contractors, which have been designated by the Southwest Corner WDB CLEO agreement: Southwest Training Services, Inc., serving Washington and Greene counties; and Job Training for Beaver County, Inc., serving Beaver County. This designation was done by agreement and was established when the SWC WDB was created. Our competitive request for proposal (RFP) process for youth contractors, has been conducted every year by our Youth Council and is designed to ensure that out-of-school and in-school youth, at-risk youth, including those who are economically disadvantaged, pregnant or parenting, learning disabled, physically disabled, homeless, offenders, and/or in foster care or aging out of foster care, are served by reputable agencies equipped to provide participants with opportunities to develop and achieve career goals through education and workforce training. Meanwhile, partnerships with various systems in which youth are involved (e.g., schools, welfare, juvenile justice, public housing, health and community services) yield opportunities to prevent youth from dropping out of school.

Goal 5: Aligning program services and resources to incorporate successful outcomes that lead job seekers, educators, and training and support services to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

The SWC WDB will strategically align its workforce development programs to ensure that employment and training services provided by the core programs identified in the WIOA (WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational

Rehabilitation and Adult Education) are coordinated so that job seekers acquire skills and credentials that meet employers' needs.

The SWC WDB will continue to reinforce connections with registered apprenticeship programs as these programs are proven models that provide workers with career pathways and opportunities to earn while they learn. Two (2) JATC representatives are members of our SWC Workforce Development Board and provide valuable input regarding RAs.

We are currently exploring the implementation of pre-apprenticeship training modules to prepare individuals for apprenticeship opportunities. We will also incorporate remediation/basic skill classes to properly prepare for apprenticeship entry testing.

Goal 6: Ensuring that all vehicles of communication provide full transparency of the program services and resources for the SWC Workforce Development Area, utilizing state of the art technology to reach all sectors of our target audience.

The Board will utilize data provided by the Commonwealth and locally generated data to allow for continuous program improvements. Relative data will allow for informed customer choice in considering programs. Additional pertinent data from state agencies, especially the Pennsylvania Department of Education data, will be welcomed by the Board. SWC WDB will increase engagement efforts with the entire workforce system. Updating and enhancing SWC WDB website and expanding social media usage will allow for further penetration of WDB efforts into the workforce community. SWC WDB will continue to emphasize and encourage invitations and attendance to all WDB meetings and functions. SWC WDB will also widely distribute WIOA publications and information electronically.

2.4 Describe how the local board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]:

We will identify strategies that align with the Federal Performance Accountability Measures. Our Workforce Development Board goals are in direct alignment with the Federal Common Performance Measures.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board has and will continue to meet and/or exceed both federal and state performance measures. The interaction of workforce development, economic development and education at the Board level, sets the agenda for developing a skill ready workforce; identifying necessary training pathways and listing in-demand employment opportunities to meet required performance indicators. All SWCWDB actions and goals are instituted to exceed performance measures and provide high-quality services for job seekers and employers in the region.

SWCWDB programs will use the federal performance measures for WIOA as performance goals for programs and sub-recipients. The measures will be reviewed at quarterly WDB meetings and monitored by the Oversight Coordinator. Persistent attention to the levels throughout the year will allow Board, CLEO, and Staff to adjust strategies in the event of an unmet level. These measures include employment, median earnings, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness is serving employers.

- SWCWDB staff and sub-recipients will target high priority occupation and industries for job development in WIOA programs to meet and exceed employment and earning performance levels. Continuation of services and retention strategies to assist in keeping employment will be vital to succeed, for both the participant and program.
- Credential attainment will be met through using nationally and stated recognized credentialing programs. Sub-recipients have had much success with these programs, and participants have expressed satisfaction with the programs.

- Skill gains and effectively serving employers are paramount to success in services. SWCWDB plans to institute tools to measure success in these areas. Proposed strategies include, but are not limited to:
 - Employer and participant surveys;
 - Increase vs decrease of employer job orders to gauge satisfaction; and
 - Pre- and post-training inventories to measure occupation skill gains for employer

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

3.1 Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:

A. A descriptive overview of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another.

The Boards of Commissioners of Beaver, Washington and Greene counties are the grant recipients for WIOA Title I funds. The Southwest Corner Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs) appoint members to the LWDB, ensuring a majority of private sector business representation and they represent High Priority Occupations in the Southwest Corner. The Chief Local Elected Officials work in cooperation with the LWDB to develop and approve the Local Plan, as well as the budget.

The Southwest Corner Local Elected Officials have designated the Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc., (a 501(c) 3), as the fiscal agent and staff to the Southwest Corner WDB. Its duties include administrative and fiscal responsibilities of accounting, budgeting, financial and cash management functions, procurement and purchasing functions, property management functions, monitoring, contracting and audit functions and reporting. As staff to the WDB, the Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc. also assumes leadership roles for WDB related activities.

The Southwest Corner Local Workforce Development Board is made up of twenty-nine (29) members. The LWDB has seven (7) standing committees including:

- **Executive Committee:** The Executive Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to carry on the routine business of the WDB and shall have the authority to act on behalf of the WDB when time does not permit the full WDB to meet. The term of the Executive Committee will coincide with terms mentioned in *Article III, Section 4* of the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board by-laws.
- **Fiscal Committee:** This is a seven-person bipartisan committee which is comprised of representatives from the CLEOs (3), the WDB (3), and the Fiscal Agent (1). The WDB Chair appoints a WDB representative from each county to serve on this committee. The WDB chair may appoint him/herself and/or any other WDB Officer to serve on this committee. This committee is a fiscal oversight and review committee and will also have budget recommendation responsibilities.
- **Youth Council Committee:** This committee will support and advise the WDB in the establishment and delivery of youth services, as well as promote career pathways and tangible opportunities for youth.

- **Communications Committee:** This committee assists the WDB in improving public understanding of the workforce community issues, increasing employer interest and participation in the PA CareerLink® system, as well as enhancing and updating the website to provide the public with full transparency of programs and services.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Committee:** This committee provides oversight of the PA CareerLink® performance, system-wide monitoring, reviews regional performance and outcomes and provides recommendations to the WDB.
- **Governance Committee (A/K/A Nominating Committee):** This committee is focused on best practices for board development, compliance to WDB bylaws, recommending committee member appointments and removals, committee structure, assists in the review, updating and development of policies as needed.
- **System Design and Implementation Committee:** This committee assists the WDB with analyzing and distributing labor market information, managing the High Priority Occupation list, as well as ensuring that training providers are providing training to meet demand occupations. It is also responsible for developing opportunities for career pathways and incorporating industry partnerships in all system designs.

The Southwest Corner CLEOs and the WDB have two designated **WIOA Title I contractors**:

- Southwest Training Services, Inc., serving Washington and Greene Counties
- Job Training for Beaver County, Inc., serving Beaver County

They receive Adult and Dislocated Worker funds by designated formula. They carry out policies and procedures established by our board, report back to the board on a regular basis, respond to questions and concerns about performance, and recommend programmatic improvements, as appropriate. They also act as the point of contact for the Operator's Consortium operating each of the four PA CareerLink® centers in the Southwest Corner. The respective corporate boards of each oversee the entity to ensure that WIOA and LWDB requirements are being met and reported.

We competitively procure youth services through an annual Request for Proposal process. Currently, our contracted **WIOA youth providers** include:

- Southwest Training Services, Inc. serving Washington and Greene Counties
- Job Training for Beaver County, Inc., serving Beaver County

These contracted entities provide comprehensive WIOA youth programs and collaborate with various other agencies and youth serving providers throughout the counties to ensure a seamless delivery of service provision as well as quality programming. Referral processes have been developed and we take pride in the cohesiveness of our local area in the provision of youth programming and the impact it has made to connect our area's youth to high quality and relevant training and employment opportunities.

Our WDB Director, Title I Providers and PA CareerLink® Site Administrators are members of our area's Career & Technology Centers' advisory boards, as well as, our Youth Providers being members of county(s) transition councils and closely involved in Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings. These relationships have provided for open communication and awareness of the needs of our area's youth. Our workforce area also has strong working relationships with partnering youth providers serving our out of school population.

The **Operator Consortia**s for the four (4) PA CareerLink® offices in the Southwest Corner are:

Site Name	Operator Consortium
PA CareerLink® - Beaver County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Literacy Action – Penn State • Beaver County Department of Human Services • Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations • Job Training for Beaver County, Inc.*
PA CareerLink® - Greene County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations • Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Southwest Training Services, Inc. *
PA CareerLink® Mon Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations • Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Southwest Training Services, Inc. *
PA CareerLink® - Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations • Office of Vocational Rehabilitation • Southwest Training Services, Inc. *

* indicates Operator Consortium Point of Contact

The PA CareerLink® Operator Consortia are charged with oversight of the site administrators, development of cost allocation and resource sharing agreements along with the fiscal agent, conducting collaborative meetings and engaging in other initiatives to align the various partners. In addition, the operator consortium is responsible for providing direction to the delivery system and assisting the PA CareerLink® sites with the implementation of the LWDB's strategic objectives.

The **PA CareerLink® Site Administrators** serve as functional supervisors who direct and coordinate all on-site functions and operations in coordination with the State's Workforce Development Board's strategic plan and the local Workforce Development Board plan. The PA CareerLink® Administrators manage all of the day-to-day operations of their respective sites including (*but not limited to*): building issues, oversight of the Career Resource Center, staff development, the integration of services, reporting and compliance, and customer satisfaction.

A vital component of our PA CareerLink® centers has been the co-location and collaboration of WIOA Title I, II, III, IV and V programs as well as the other mandated partners. We have developed a streamlined approach that reduces duplication of services across programs. Program operations for the partners are managed through their established channels and union agreements.

The **Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)** has the ability to collaborate with the local Workforce Development Board to serve individuals with disabilities based on the program's authorizing statute. Under WIOA OVR has the ability to provide pre-vocational services (PETS) to eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities to better prepare them for the workforce. Additionally, OVR provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

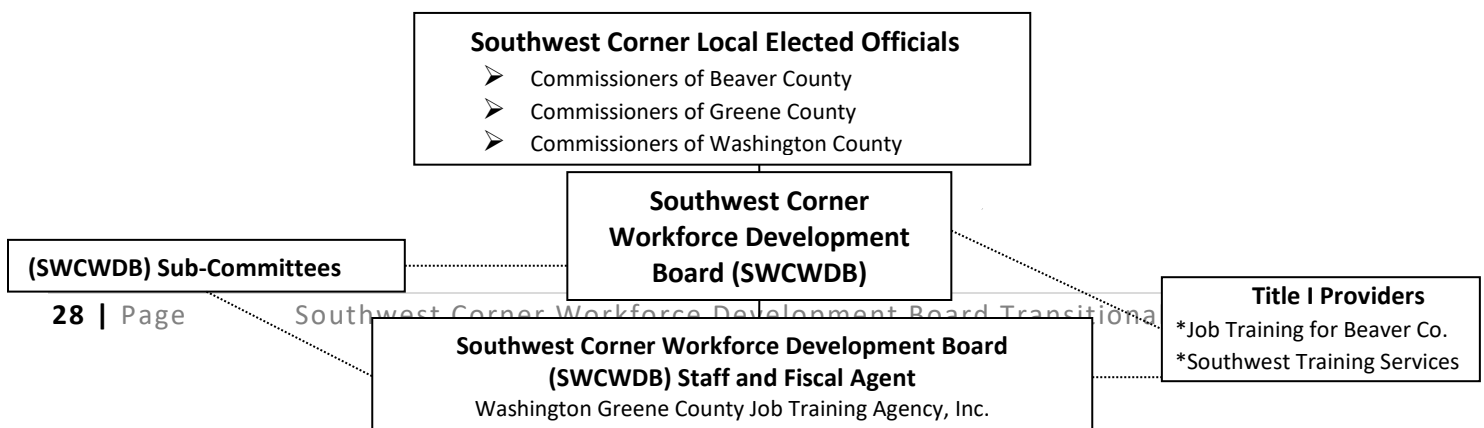
B. A list of all local area PA CareerLink® centers; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation;

Site Name	Site Type – Hours of Operation	Location	Management
PA CareerLink® - Beaver County	Full Service M/W/Th/F: 8:30AM - 4:00PM T: 10:00AM - 4:00PM <i>(late opening due to weekly</i>	285 Beaver Valley Mall Route 18 Monaca, PA 15061 (724) 728-4860 dfunkhouser@washingtongreene.org	Site Administrator: Dianne Funkhouser

	<i>staff meetings)</i>		
PA CareerLink® - Greene County	Full Service T/W/Th/F: 8:30AM - 4:30PM M: 10:00AM - 4:30PM <i>(late opening due to weekly staff meetings)</i>	4 West High Street Waynesburg, PA 15370 (724) 852-2900 ttaylor@washingtongreene.org bacole@swtraining.org	Site Administrator: Terri Taylor Office Manager: Barbara Cole
PA CareerLink® - Washington County	Full Service M/T/Th/F: 8:30AM - 4:30PM; W: 10:00AM - 4:30PM <i>(late opening due to weekly staff meetings)</i>	90 West Chestnut Street Suite 150 Lower Level Washington, PA 15301 (724) 223-4500 tbrickner@swtraining.org	Site Administrator: Patricia Brickner
PA CareerLink® - Mon Valley	Full Service M/W/Th/F: 8:30AM - 4:30 PM T: 10:00AM - 4:30 PM <i>(late opening due to weekly staff meetings)</i>	570 Galiffa Drive Donora, PA 15033 (724) 379-4750 tbrickner@swtraining.org	Site Administrator: Patricia Brickner

C. An attached organization chart that depicts a clear separation of duties between the local board and programmatic/service delivery entities.

Organizational Structure: SOUTHWEST CORNER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA



3.2 Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

Note: The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board aligns regional resources and works to promote partnerships among businesses, non-profit agencies, economic development providers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers. Through working together, stakeholders enhance the skills needed for workforce inclusion, employability, and educational and training levels of the

current and future workforce. To accomplish this vision, all resources and programs are utilized in accordance with federal and state regulations

The primary focus of our PA CareerLink® centers is to provide comprehensive workforce development services, be accessible to employers, job seekers and incumbent workers, and have success resulting in economic self-sufficiency and a workforce trained to employer qualifications. Workforce development services are funded by combinations of WIOA funds and other grant funds that are applied for by the LWDB. The service delivery network includes PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium and PA CareerLink® partners (both mandated and voluntary). These partners are invested in the PA CareerLink® system to enrich services provided to job seekers and employers.

The PA CareerLink® offices also work closely with off-site community partners including: Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development, Washington Drug and Alcohol Commission(s) and County(s) Drug & Alcohol entities; Behavioral/Mental Health entities; Industry Associations, local school districts, Local and State Correctional Facilities, CTCs, and post-secondary training providers.

Universal access is granted to all customers entering the PA CareerLink® offices and in need of basic services. Services are tracked in the Commonwealth Workforce Development System or CWDS. An initial assessment, plan of action (*individual employment plan - IEP*) and recommendations are made for customers in need of career and/or training services (Based on the initial assessment of knowledge, skills and abilities). If a customer cannot obtain employment through basic services, they are evaluated for training services. Training services may include skill training or on-the-job training. The customer is exited upon securing suitable employment or choosing to no longer participate in PA CareerLink® services, at which time, follow-up services are conducted for no less than twelve months.

Our PA CareerLink® staff members are also trained to assist employer customers with employment needs such as recruitment assistance, assessment and testing and labor market information. A Business Services Team exists in each PA CareerLink® office location. Services and trainings include:

- Adult education and literacy activities
 - Customized training
 - Entrepreneurial training
 - Job readiness training
 - Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment
 - On-the-Job Training Programs
 - Skill upgrading and retraining
-
- Training programs operated by the private sector
 - Training services that are developed and implemented by a partner agency

Through policy and partnership cooperation, a comprehensive plan to deliver services has been established. A referral method for customers exists between the PA CareerLink® Operators and the PA CareerLink® Partners. The primary principle of the referral system is the provision of a seamless delivery of service to both job seekers and employers.

WIOA Adult: The WIOA Adult providers in the Southwest Corner are Job Training for Beaver County, Inc. and Southwest Training Services, Inc. Authorized under WIOA, the Adult program is one (1) of the WIOA Title I core programs designed to assist participants in obtaining employment. Priority of service is given to participants deemed to be recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Additionally, if the participant is also found to be an eligible Veteran or spouse of a Veteran, priority of service is also extended to the covered person. Through the Adult program

two types of services are made available. The first type of services is known jointly as career services, and the second is training services. A participant who, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and career planning, is determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment which leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, may be in need of training services. However, to participate in a training program, the participant must have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected training program and be otherwise eligible in accordance with the priority of service system.

WIOA Dislocated Worker: The WIOA Dislocated Worker providers in the Southwest Corner are Job Training for Beaver County, Inc. and Southwest Training Services, Inc. Dislocated Worker programs assist workers before or after layoff by identifying individual need, and identification of those needs through basic skills training, on-the-job or customized training programs and apprenticeship opportunities to help facilitate rapid reemployment. Dislocated workers are triaged at the point of entry to identify potential program eligibility. This initial intake and triage allows for the development of a streamlined service strategy that maximizes the funding of all entities in carrying out core reemployment activities. Individuals that are deemed Trade eligible are co-enrolled under WIOA Dislocated Worker for case management and support services.

WIOA Youth: Currently, through a competitive bidding process, Job Training for Beaver County, Inc. and Southwest Training Services, Inc. were chosen as the WIOA Youth providers in the Southwest Corner. Youth programming is designed to serve eligible youth, ages 14-24, through a variety of services including the 14 WIOA elements (*listed in section 4.4*). The ultimate goal for youth participants is to enter into post-secondary education, enter the military, or obtain employment with a family-sustaining or self-sustaining wage. Youth program services are prioritized for out-of-school youth (OOSY) and youth with significant barriers to success, such as a disability, being a pregnant or parenting youth, or being subject to the juvenile/adult justice system. Partnership with various systems, including training providers, welfare, adult probation, community services, literacy, housing, health, and community-based organizations, offers the opportunity to streamline services and offer a full range of services and support that lead to academic and employment success.

Wagner Peyser: Wagner Peyser services are provided by the PA Department of Labor's Bureau of Workforce Development & Partnerships (BWPO). Wagner-Peyser staffs are co-located in the PA CareerLink® centers and provide employment services to job seekers and employers. Services to job seekers include, but are not limited to: needs/ interest assessments; job search and job placement assistance; career counseling; workshops; development of an individual employment plan; and case management.

Services to employers include, but are not limited to, assistance in utilizing the JobGateway™ system, along with developing and posting job orders. In addition, referral of qualified job seekers to job openings and coordinating job fairs.

Adult Education and Literacy: Adult Education and Literacy programs in the Southwest Corner are provided by the following entities:

- *PA CareerLink® Beaver County Provider:* Adult Literacy Action – Penn State
- *PA CareerLink® Greene County Provider(s):* Community Action Southwest & Intermediate Unit #1
- *PA CareerLink® Mon Valley Provider(s):* Community Action Southwest & Intermediate Unit #1
- *PA CareerLink® Washington County Provider(s):* Community Action Southwest & Intermediate Unit #1

With two (2) Title II providers onsite at a PA CareerLink® center, program services are provided on alternate days and are not in conflict with each other. This collaborative programming decision is cost effective for the providers while having a full complement of service provision throughout the week.

For adults who are deficient in basic skills, adult basic education is a critical partner in establishing career pathways. Funded programs provide a full range of adult basic education services from beginning level literacy through high adult secondary and transition activities to support college and career readiness, and where needed including English language acquisition activities. Programs provide basic skills instruction in the context of work readiness and incorporate workplace preparation activities and career awareness and planning in instruction and services.

Programs provide case management services to their students in two key areas: 1) helping students address barriers to participation in adult basic education programming, and 2) helping students use employment and/or postsecondary education/training to prepare and plan for entry onto a career pathway. Case managers connect students with social services to address needs such as child care, transportation, housing, health care and others. They also provide information on employment and postsecondary education/training opportunities and assist students in completing the necessary steps to take advantage of those opportunities.

Vocational Rehabilitation: The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides services to individuals with disabilities to help them secure and maintain employment and independence. These services are designed to ensure individuals with disabilities become qualified trained members of the workforce, increasing regional workforce diversity and the overall number of skilled workers available to business in the region. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple, individualized services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement.

Under WIOA, OVR has the ability to provide both eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities with pre-employment transition services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. PETS services may include but not be limited to; paid work experiences, job shadowing, workplace readiness training, and career guidance. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

OVR staff are instrumental in informing and training PA CareerLink® staff on topics and updates pertinent to disability and employment issues. They also assist in providing input regarding accommodation needs, within our centers, for persons with disabilities. *An “accommodation” line item is part of our PA CareerLink® centers’ Resource Sharing Agreements to ensure the availability of funds when a need is determined.*

3.3 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

Our SWC Workforce Development Area continuously achieves success in meeting performance outcomes in the delivery of WIOA services within our One-Stop locations. At our local Pa CareerLink® sites, there are a number of co-located partners that share a common mission of assisting individuals with barriers to employment. As a result of these co-located partners, we strive to maximizing resources to expand access to activities that result in a seamless delivery of services and meaningful employment. Common services including customer orientations, workshops, career resource center(s), referrals to targeted programs and

co-enrollments are coordinated as appropriate. Resource sharing is accomplished through an approved Cost Allocation Plan outlining common costs and methodology for cost allocation.

As described in other sections within the Plan, the SWC WDB will partner with required WIOA partners to increase awareness of career pathways and promote the access to educational opportunities that result in meaningful employment. Some examples of our existing collaborations include:

- Individuals who receive public assistance are referred to the *Employment, Advancement Retention Network (EARN)* for employment and training assistance. EARN services and staff are fully-integrated and co-located with our PA CareerLink® offices for job search and job development services. Participants are encouraged to attend PA CareerLink® workshops and other program offerings.
- *TANF Youth Programs* are also co-located and collaboration is made with all area school districts and career & technology centers to provide services to youth up to age 18. Co-enrollment of these populations is encouraged, as deemed appropriate, with our WIOA Youth programs.
- *Low-income individuals* are referred to the New Choices/New Options programs provided by the community colleges in our area. Services, free of charge to participants, include career counseling, computer instruction job placement assistance, resume and interviewing skills workshops to single parents, displaced homemakers, and those exploring nontraditional occupations to achieve self-sufficiency.
- *Displaced homemakers* who qualify as dislocated workers under WIOA Title I are eligible for a range of services including case management, supportive services, GED preparation, and, in some cases, training.
- *Services Older individuals:* Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging and the Senior Employment Centers are partnering service providers within our PA CareerLink® network serving customers who are eligible under Title V Older Workers, i.e., individuals who are 55 years old and older. In addition, our PA CareerLink® centers serve as host agencies and hire older workers as greeters.

Last year, our area's Title I providers developed an intergenerational program with WIOA Youth and the SWPA Area Agency on Aging. Local high school seniors, eligible under WIOA, became computer basics trainers for older individuals. This program, "*Senior 2 Senior*" was a great success and is incorporated into summer programming for interested in-school youth. The WIOA youth(s) that are part of this initiative earn a wage, and both groups learn new skills and develop a great appreciation for each other. This collaboration is enabling our area's senior population to develop the basic computer skills needed to obtain entry-level placements under the Title V program.

- *Persons with limited English proficiency:* Our Title II Providers (*listed on page 31*) will provide 'English as a Second Language' classes when requested by our customers. These referrals are made following an individual's initial assessment and orientation to PA CareerLink® services.
- *Services to persons with disabilities:* Our local partners that service persons with disabilities will collaborate with workforce and education systems to develop strategies for streamlining and enhancing service planning and delivery.
- *Ex-offenders* - PA CareerLink® centers in the Southwest Corner collaborate with State correctional and county corrections centers. The PA CareerLink® staff also work closely with county adult and juvenile probation offices and serve as a referral mechanism for job search/ development activities.

Our workforce area has implemented *Reentry Conferences and Resource/Job Fairs* for ex-offenders and their families. These conferences offer the opportunity for the ex-offenders to reinstate their driver's licenses, health insurance, social security benefits, as well as having their record expunged, when

applicable. We also focus on financial literacy, credit rebuilding, fair housing, veteran programs, like the veterans' leadership program and local treatment programs for those in need.

The Southwest Corner has built a strong partnership with PA Department of Corrections, Bureau of Juvenile Justice, local probation offices, and Wardens, as well as, community-based services for housing, and recovery help for those in need. We are supported in these endeavors by our County Commissioners and Judges, as well as the Clerk of Court offices in each county who all participate in our conferences.

The Southwest Corner will be offering a *Reentry Employment Specialist training* here for all three counties for any and all staff of affiliated programs and offices. We will also be engaging with our Criminal Justice Advisory Boards, to be better able to understand the needs of those that are in our penal system before their release.

- *Our WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs* continue to build co-enrollment opportunities with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, EARN, Adult Basic Literacy and Education, Trade, Rapid Response, Veterans, NEG grants, etc.
- *Adult Basic Education providers* are co-located at each of our PA CareerLink® centers as well, providing easy access for GED and Remedial and ESL services. These programs are open-entry/open-exit and self-paced, thus allowing for continuous enrollment of service – targeting those with basic skills deficiencies. Our providers are also able to conduct pre and post tests on academic skill levels for our customers.
- We will continue the development of career pathways in high priority areas of healthcare, advanced manufacturing, building and construction, energy and transportation and logistics to improve the successful participation in postsecondary and vocational education activities leading to industry recognized certifications.

3.4 Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies;

This must include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in element 3.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B)]

The Southwest Corner WDB has fostered engagement with employers through various initiatives since inception of the PA CareerLink® one-stop service delivery system; first, by supporting a business service delivery structure in our three counties. The Title I WIOA providers and other partner agencies conduct employer outreach and engagement efforts in their counties. PA CareerLink® centers conduct industry/employer specific recruitment events and job fairs, workshops (*as previously mentioned*) and provide other general information of importance to the employers throughout the region. The PA CareerLink® staff are also engaged with the local and regional employer communities through their membership in the Chambers of Commerce and economic development organizations to form a community of practice to better serve our region.

Each of the PA CareerLink® centers in the Southwest Corner has its own **Business Service Team (BST)**, composed of representatives from different partnering agencies, that:

- Reaches out to local employers, especially those in key industry clusters, to let them know about services available to them through the PA CareerLink® system and to collect information about employer needs (current and future) related to worker skills, training, hiring, physical space, and other aspects of workforce development;
- Develops and implements strategies to increase the number of employers registered on the PA CareerLink® system and the number of job orders posted;
- Works with the PA CareerLink® partners to ensure that common measures are met; and
- Develops linkages with local economic development initiatives.

The business service teams are responsible for:

- Conducting orientations for new employers; helping employers register on the JobGateway™ system, writing job descriptions, posting job orders, and identifying and screening applicants;
- Connecting employers to internal and/or external services or agencies that can support employer goals and meet employer needs; providing employers with information about grants available to train new workers (on-the-job training) or upgrade the skills of existing workers (customized job training, incumbent worker grants);
- Compiling and disseminating local labor market information, including prevailing wages; and
- Providing employers, through a partnership with the PA Office on Vocational Rehabilitation, with information about employee assistance programs.
- Other employer engagement opportunities include:
 - *Industry Partnership Engagement*
 - *Sector Partnerships*
 - *Collaborations with Small Business Administration – Small Business Development Centers*
 - *Memberships with Chambers of Commerce/Community Economic Development organizations*
 - *Incumbent Worker Training initiatives*

We continue to provide and/or make referrals for the following services to maintain and/or create a pipeline of skilled workers through

- *Customized job training (CJT);*
- *On-the-job training (OJT);*
- *Apprentice Training Programs; and*
- *Work-Based Learning*

B. Support a local workforce development system described in element 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses;

Business Service Teams (BSTs) provide area employers with integrated services to address their employment and training needs. They also provide employers with information on services available through our PA CareerLink® centers. Services provided include recruitment of skilled workers, applicant screening, JobGateway™ assistance, training for incumbent workforce and other services identified by employers. The BSTs provide information to employers regarding On-the-Job Training program services, Industry Partnership training resources, WED-Net training information, Apprenticeship and other work-based learning best practices, and training resources available.

The Business Service Teams have prioritized outreach efforts towards our targeted Industry Clusters to support the growth and development of key sectors of the economy. BST outreach efforts have assisted the SWC WDB in identifying skill gaps, training needs and other pertinent issues confronting business and industry in the region.

The services that the BSTs offer employers go beyond those services provided by the PA CareerLink® centers. There is a close working relationship with other employer service organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Agencies, the Small Business Development Centers in our region, and other statewide, county, and local agencies that provide services to both existing and startup businesses. Through electronic communications such as e-mail and our local websites, the BSTs provide, support, and disseminate a large volume of information regarding services available to the business community. Information regarding possible WARN or large scale layoffs are communicated between our local workforce area and the Regional Rapid Response Unit. Contact with these employers takes place as quickly as possible in an attempt to determine if any services or resources available can assist the impacted employer in averting the layoffs. All BST members are familiar with OJT services and other training services that may be available to assist businesses, either with recruiting and expansion plans, or possibly with training or upgrading services for their existing workforce. The BSTs facilitate Job Fairs to assist their customers in their ongoing recruitment needs, as well as provide individualized business recruiting assistance through the PA CareerLink® centers or in other locations.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs;

The Southwest Corner WDB recognizes that the growth of the regional economy relies on strategic collaboration between the Workforce Development Areas, Community and Economic and Industrial Development agencies. Below is a list of the Economic and Industrial Development Boards and organizations that the Southwest Corner WDB has either representation on, or a close working relationship:

- Allegheny County Economic Development
- Armstrong County Department of Economic Dev.
- Beaver County Chamber of Commerce
- Beaver County Corporation for Economic Dev.*
- Catalyst Connection
- Clarion University Small Business Dev. Center
- Community Development Corporation of Butler County
- Duquesne University
- Economic Growth Connection of Westmoreland Co.
- Greene County Chamber of Commerce
- Greene County Planning and Development*
- Greene County Industrial Developments, Inc.
- Indiana County Chamber of Commerce
- Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Indiana University of PA
- Innovation Works
- Pennsylvania State University
- Pittsburgh Regional Alliance
- Private Industry Council of Westmoreland/Fayette
- Regional Industrial Development Corporation
- Riverside Center for Innovation
- Saint Vincent College
- SEWN
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
- Three Rivers Workforce Development Board
- Tri-County Workforce Development Board
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Pittsburgh Small Business Dev. Center
- Urban Redevelopment Authority
- Washington County Authority*
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- Washington County Council on Economic Dev.
- Washington County Redevelopment Authority
- Westmoreland County Industrial Dev. Corporation

**indicates member representation on the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board*

Our workforce development programs are designed to support continued economic development in the region. The lead organization for the Commonwealth's PREP Program is the Local Development District: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC). PREP partners provide a powerful network of regional experts who can help business owners address nearly every type of challenge facing their companies. In addition to the services provided directly by specific PREP partners, the network can also help businesses access critical state and federal resources, such as loans, grants, technical assistance, or other support. The SPC services also include Business Financing, Government Contracting Assistance, International Trade Assistance, Non-Profit Assistance, Transportation Planning, Research and Information, and Local Government Services. Each year, the Southwest Region PREP partners provide services to local customers, primarily local businesses but also individual residents who are looking to learn about business start-up and management.

3.6 Describe the workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area.

In selecting youth service providers, we look for organizations that are already well connected to the community yet willing and able to develop new partnerships to achieve common goals and overcome challenges. We expect our providers to work closely with local schools, county assistance offices, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies, housing authorities, job corps centers, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and community and faith-based organizations to recruit, deliver services tailored to their needs, address potential barriers to program participation, retention or completion, and facilitate successful transitions from the program to employment or additional training.

Our youth service providers reach out to students approaching graduation from local school districts and career and technology centers, offering orientations to the PA CareerLink® centers and helping students register on the JobGateway™ system. They also serve on transition councils that help in-school youth with disabilities make a smooth transition from school to work.

To improve linkages and the quality of referrals made by case managers, our youth service providers have developed a comprehensive database of youth serving agencies. Contacts are updated annually.

Our youth service providers develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each participant after conducting an initial intake and objective assessment and verifying eligibility. The objective assessment covers academic level, basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. The youth service providers will provide case management, a critical program component, especially for high-risk youth.

Our youth service providers are members of Transition Councils for each county, working hand-in-hand with Guidance Counselors and Transition Coordinators to develop cooperative and collaborative projects and initiatives to benefit our area's youth. Our youth service providers are engaged in serving all youth, regardless of barrier, to the best of their abilities and have excellent working relationships and referral mechanisms in place with multiple youth-serving organizations to meet the specific needs of the youth we serve.

As a core partner, OVR has the ability to collaborate with the local Workforce Development Board to provide in-school youth with disabilities opportunities to participate in pre-employment transition services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. These skill gains will help to meet one of

the intentions of WIOA, to better prepare in-school youth with disabilities to graduate high school and work toward meaningful careers.

Our WDB's Youth Committee is currently discussing the re-design and update of an existing resource mapping project regarding youth service delivery programs. Through identification and research, we can determine best practices, unique programming ideas and streamline referral methods and service provision.

3.7 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Many of the Southwest Corner WDA's high priority occupations require a college degree, associate's degree, certificate, or some other employer/industry recognized credential. The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Area has developed strong working relationships with our local area secondary and post-secondary education providers. We are fortunate to have a diverse mix of relevant and in-demand training opportunities that meets the needs of our employer community, as well as, provides various levels of educational opportunities that assist our workforce development system in building a strong career pathways network.

In an effort to coordinate educational programming that meets the needs of our area's employers, The SWCWDB collaborates with our area's providers to ensure that training programs align with industry needs and high priority occupations. Coordination strategies include:

- a. Representation from the education community on our LWDB who work together with our employer representatives to collaborate and provide valuable input regarding the training needs in our area.
- b. Ensuring that the employer members on our SWCWDB are representing high priority industries in our area including: Building and Construction; Transportation and Logistics; Health Care; Energy; and Advanced Manufacturing. This provides for relevant industry input on the types of industry related training and skill levels that are needed locally and regionally.
- c. Committing to having workforce development representation on secondary and post-secondary education advisory boards and committees including: representation on all four (4) our Career & Technology Centers' Advisory Boards, Carl Perkins Participatory Planning Committees and Occupational Advisory Committees (OAC). By doing so, we can provide current and forecasted labor market information, as well as, presenting the current needs of our employers.

In addition, our Title I Youth Providers serve on our counties' Transition Councils and participate in IEP meetings within all of our local school districts. Local Labor Market information, including High Priority Occupations and career development/employment resources within our PA CareerLink® system are provided.

- d. Developing partnerships with local area training providers in all four (4) PA CareerLink® locations. Our Education entities that commit to PA CareerLink® partnerships and inclusion on RSAs include:
 - All-State Career School
 - California University of PA
 - Community College of Beaver County
 - DCI Career Institute
 - Dean Institute of Technology
 - Douglas Education Center
 - Mon Valley Career & Technology Center

- Penn Commercial Business & Technical School
- Penn State-Beaver
- PIA Jump Start Programs
- Pittsburgh Technical College
- Rosedale Technical College
- Shale Energy Institute
- Triangle Tech
- Western Area Career & Technology Center
- Westmoreland Co. Community College-Greene County Education Center

These partnerships are valuable to our system as they assist in providing various on-site services including: financial literacy, resume writing, interview skills, and financial aid workshops to our job seeker customers. Education Representatives are also assisting in our Career Resource Centers. They volunteer and staff our local PA CareerLink® job fairs and coordinate on the development of career expos with our secondary schools.

NOTE: Although the above listed training providers are partners in our PA CareerLink® system, PA CareerLink® staff ensure that customers explore ALL training opportunities and make informed choices prior to enrollment in a training component, regardless of who the provider is.

- e. Title II partners (Community Action Southwest, Penn State Adult Literacy Action and Intermediate Unit I) provide onsite remedial and GED programming. These programs, through self-paced instruction, can include: tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to the completion of secondary school, including dropout prevention strategies and necessary basic skills upgrades for post-secondary training enrollment.

To ensure that there is not a duplication of services, Title II providers have scheduled days at the PA CareerLink® sites to ensure a full-time remedial and GED presence. Our PA CareerLink® sites have internal referral processes in place to coordinate enrollment into these services.

- f. Our Local are CTCs serve as host sites for summer youth work experiences and industry-related career camps. Our CTCs educators serve as camp instructors and utilize their workshops to teach WIOA youth about specific industries and occupations as well as provide hands-on experiences. These opportunities have included: Building and Construction – including carpentry and masonry, Transportation and Logistics, Mechatronics & Engineering, Computer Networking, Welding, and Energy Industry camps.
- g. The SWCWDB also has representation from the Building Trades Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees. JATC representatives have made presentations to PA CareerLink® staff on their related industries and application processes. Apprenticeship opportunities are also made available to all customers via postings in all of our sites.
- h. Consortium based training is encouraged for incumbent worker training via Industry Partnership (IP) funds. IP involved employers join together to train their employees in common industry driven training opportunities, ensuring cost savings and avoiding a duplication of service. WedNet funding is also discussed with our employers.

We will continue to encourage programs at postsecondary institutions that train job seekers for high priority occupations to apply to be on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Our LWDB efficiently leverages all available resources to ensure a comprehensive and seamless provision of services while avoiding duplication.

3.8 Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers.

Our Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board, through our PA CareerLink® centers, leverages supportive services provided by all community partners to eliminate job seekers' barriers to employment. Through coordinated and strategic partnerships with PA CareerLink® and a network of providers, the SWCWDB ensures that appropriate and necessary services are available to assist adults, dislocated workers, and youth in the Southwest Corner.

Our Workforce Area benefits from a high level of service integration between WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Act, and other workforce training programs. Our area's workforce system partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Basic Literacy Education, Department of Human Services, Community Action, US DOL Veterans, and providers of training actively communicate and coordinate resources, including funding for supportive services and transportation for co-enrolled customers. It can become challenging without this level of coordination and we are strengthening these relationships through continued communication and planning.

Local Resource Directories for each of our PA CareerLink® sites are part of our orientation to services and are provided to all individuals during their initial assessment. PA CareerLink® staff will assist with determining service need and provide referrals to other state and local agencies offering supportive services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments.

In order to eliminate a duplication of service, identification of available services and/or identification of services that have been exhausted are determined prior to expending program funds for supportive services. Each participant is given individualized case management services and plan development in order to eliminate possible duplication. Supportive services are based on individual participant needs, plan development, and in compliance with local policy and WIOA and any subsequent Federal and/or Commonwealth of Pennsylvania clarifications.

Participation in many regional transportation planning efforts, support out attempt to address our area's transportation barriers to meet the needs of job seekers.

The primary means of facilitating transportation to customers in need is through the use of bus passes or travel reimbursement – both of which are provided on a temporary basis, normally through the first month of employment and in line with the WDA policy.

A needs related payment is paid to WIOA Adult and Youth individuals attending training at least 12 hours a week provided that they are not working and not receiving unemployment compensation. \$10 a day will be paid for each date of attendance documented on the two-week timesheet that is signed at the school and sent in.

A needs related payment for WIOA Dislocated Workers will be paid to those attending training at least 12 hours a week provided that they are not working and not receiving unemployment compensation AND they started training by the end of the 13th week following their layoff. \$10 a day will be paid for each date of attendance documented on the two-week timesheet that is signed at the school and sent in.

In addition to a needs based/needs related stipend, we also offer a transportation stipend in the amount of \$5 or \$10 per day (\$10 if > 20 miles' round trip) to participants enrolled in a WIOA classroom training program.

3.9 Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the Department's merit staff, and the local board's contracted service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication.

The Southwest Corner's approach to workforce development efforts have always been centered on quality customer service to job seekers and employers, the leveraging of various resources and funding streams to eliminate duplication of services, collaboration with other partner agencies, and support for a service delivery structure which maximizes access to all customers. We have collaborated with other workforce areas in our region and worked to support regional approaches to the workforce needs of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

The SWC Workforce Development Board, through the PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium, ensures that a comprehensive cross-training and development plan is established for the PA CareerLink® sites and staff. The purpose of cross-training is to facilitate full access to services and the appropriate exchange of information.

Our PA CareerLink® centers utilize a customer flow model based on customer need. The customer flow procedure incorporates a method to identify customer needs upon entry, and provides immediate engagement and connectivity to services during the customer's first visit. Our customer flow model includes a cohort of individuals that are served jointly by WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and other partner staff, specifically at basic service level.

Co-enrollment of participants across programs and funding streams, when appropriate, encourages the coordination and leveraging of resources among partners and facilities. Co-enrollment is a strategic necessity in the context of limited resources. PA CareerLink® partner staff work with co-enrolled participants across programs and funding streams when appropriate and coordinate as needed to assure that the participant receives the services that are needed.

Our provision of services to job seekers allows for customer choice, through ITA and OJT services, and maximizes the use of DOL resources to support training that meets the needs of both job seekers occupational goals, and the job skills needed by employers in the labor markets we serve.

The WIOA staff and State Merit staff work closely together to provide the basic career services needed by most customers and make the most efficient use of the staffing resources available in our WDA. At the same time, this allows us to maintain a high level of funding devoted to training services in our counties. The effectiveness of this approach is also reflected in the long and consistent record of meeting common performance measures.

Our service delivery structure allows for flexibility in service strategies, access to a wide range of services, and the ability to share and effectively utilize the resources available in the Southwest Corner WDA.

3.10 Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan. (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

Our Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board meets with our local area's Adult Basic Literacy Education (ABLE) partners at the quarterly WDB meeting at the request of the providers. The ABLE providers are regular attenders to the quarterly meetings and one representative currently serves on the SWCWDB. The providers prepare information for the board regarding their delivery of services, collaboration between each other, the PA CareerLink®, the Title I Providers, and the WDB. The Board will provide any suggestions as necessary, and vote to recommend the plan as presented to the PA Department of Education (PDE) for approval. The discussion and vote are recorded in the WDB minutes.

A Title II representative is also a member of our workforce development board. Each of our PA CareerLink® centers has integrated and co-located Title II staff along with on-site service provision.

3.11 Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the targeted populations that the local board plans to focus additional effort and resources towards. In terms of the targeted populations, briefly describe the local board's objectives, goals, and strategies, operational tactics and resources it will deploy.

Our PA CareerLink® centers gather information on the populations they serve. We utilize this data to ensure that we provide priority of service as outlined in the Governor's State Plan, with priority given to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, ex-offenders and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Those found to be 1) Recipients of public assistance, 2) Other low-income individual, and 3) Individuals who are basic skills deficient will obtain priority of service status. In addition, Veterans will also obtain priority of service status. Priority of service allows eligible individuals to take precedence over non-covered persons in obtaining services.

As per federal guidance in Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 03-15, veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient will receive first priority. Non-veterans who are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient will receive second priority. Veterans and eligible spouses not included in priority groups will receive third priority and all other individuals will receive last priority.

The SWC WDA will continue to collaborate with all of our many partnering organizations to help individuals with barriers to employment access the essential resources (in addition to utilizing WIOA funds allocated to the region to serve those with barriers to employment) necessary to overcome the barriers to assure that training and placement needs are met with quality employment outcomes.

We will continue to collaborate with the Department of Human Services (DHS) to connect our workforce development services to meet the needs of the individuals we serve. Our EARN providers and TANF Youth Providers and DHS utilize data sharing practices to identify and serve individuals who are dually enrolled.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) provides services to individuals with disabilities to help them secure and maintain employment and independence. These services are designed to ensure individuals with disabilities become qualified trained members of the workforce, increasing regional workforce diversity and the overall number of skilled workers available to business in the region. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple, individualized services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement. Under WIOA, OVR has the ability to provide both eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities with pre-employment transition services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. PETS services may include but not be limited to; paid work experiences, job shadowing, workplace

readiness training, and career guidance. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

PA CareerLink® centers are overseen by Operator consortiums. Our PA CareerLink® partners assist in the collaboration and provision of services to the special populations that each partner serves. The region's PA CareerLink® center staff will collect information to identify clients with barriers to employment.

The SWC WDA's PA CareerLink® partnering agencies and organizations (*only listed are RSA and Community Partnerships*) are:

- WIOA Title I - Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth Programs:
 - Job Training for Beaver County, Inc.
 - Southwest Training Services, Inc.
- WIOA Title II - Adult Basic Literacy Education Programs
 - Adult Literacy Action – Penn State Beaver
 - Community Action Southwest
 - Intermediate Unit I
- WIOA Title III - Wagner Peyser:
 - Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations
 - Trade Act
- US DOL Veterans
- WIOA Title IV Program –*OVR and contracted programs serving persons with disabilities:*
 - Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Goodwill Industries of Southwestern PA
 - Greene ARC
 - Transitional Employment Consultants (TEC)
- WIOA Title V Programs:
 - Beaver County Area Agency on Aging
 - Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging
 - Westmoreland County Community College – Greene County Education Center
- Department of Human Services - County Assistance Offices
- EARN Program Providers
 - Job Training for Beaver County, Inc.
 - Washington Greene County Job Training Agency, Inc.
- TANF Youth Program Providers
 - Job Training for Beaver County, Inc.
 - Southwest Training Services, Inc.
- Unemployment Compensation

- Worker’s Compensation Office of Adjudication
- Community Development Block Grant and Housing/Homeless Programs
 - Community Action Southwest
 - Housing Authority of Beaver County
- Career and Technology Centers
 - Beaver County Career & Technology Center
 - Mon Valley Career & Technology Center
 - Western Area Career & Technology Center
- Community Colleges
 - Community College of Beaver County
 - Community College of Allegheny County – Washington Center
 - Westmoreland County Community College- Greene County Education Center
- Colleges and Universities
 - California University of PA
 - Penn State Beaver
 - Rosedale Technical College
 - Pittsburgh Technical College
- Business & Technical Schools
 - All State Career School
 - Computer Training 4 Less
 - DCI Career Institute
 - Dean Institute of Technology
 - Douglas Education Center
 - Penn Commercial
 - PIA Jump Start
 - Shale Energy Institute
 - Triangle Tech
- Employers/Staffing Agencies
 - MANCAN
 - Liken Staffing
 - Environmental Compliance and Testing
 - Valley National Security

AND, many other agencies, county and community based organizations and training providers throughout the region.

The following information details the largest population(s) of individuals in the region with barriers to employment.

Disabilities

Over 52,000¹ individuals in the region are living with disabilities according to the U.S Census Bureau. Title IV – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation programs provide services to persons with disabilities. We also have the following partners within our PA CareerLink® system that provide additional services to persons with Disabilities: Transitional Employment Consultants (TEC), Goodwill Industries of Southwestern PA; Greene Arc and services through our Title I Providers.

Individuals Living Below the Poverty Level

Of the Southwest Corner region’s 332,257² population who are 16+ years of age, 34,401² (or 11%) individuals live below the poverty level. Of those living below the poverty level, 8,930² (or 26%) are employed, 3,943² (or 12%) are unemployed, and 21,528² (or 63%) are not in the labor force. It is a challenge and a priority for the PC WDA to help these individuals who seek employment find jobs that pay family sustaining wages.

Citizenship and Language Proficiency

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that there are 2,908³ individuals living in the region who are not U.S. Citizens. Similarly, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that there are 6,555³ individuals in the region who speak English less than “Very Well”. The SWC WDA notes that lack of English proficiency does not necessarily prevent immigrant workers from obtaining employment, but those who are proficient boast higher income at all levels of educational attainment.

¹Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table S1811, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

²Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table B17005, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

³Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table B16001, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimates

3.14 Briefly describe any additional funding outside of WIOA title I and state general funds, and how such funding will be leveraged in support of the local workforce system.

Our Board’s strategy is for us to leverage funding from multiple sources, both public and private, with funds allocated from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) at the core of our funding sources.

Additional projects and funding opportunities have been successfully procured/secured by the Southwest Corner WDB through the following grants and funding opportunities (please find grant/funding description followed by program these funds are leveraged against when applicable):

- POWER ETA and POWER EDA Grants – *WIOA Dislocated Worker*;
- Sector Strategy Innovation Grant (Energy Sector) – *WIOA Dislocated Worker*;
- National Emergency Grant (NEG) – *WIOA Dislocated Worker*;
- EARN and TANF Youth Grants – *WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth*;
- Industry Partnership Sustainability Funds for Transportation / Logistics, Energy, Building/ Construction – *WIOA Adult*;
- Rapid Response Additional Assistance (RRAA) – *WIOA Dislocated Worker*;
- Chevron Grant (to service dislocated coal miners and manufacturing) – *WIOA Dislocated Worker*;
- Children and Youth Services (CYS grant) - *WIOA Youth*;
- Community Foundation funds – *WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker, WIOA Youth*;
- United Health Care computer equipment grants;
- Employer Donations for Industry related youth pipeline activities

Our Workforce Development Board will continue to seek foundation, local, state, and federal funds to assist the workforce needs of the employers and job-seekers. Our Board is actively pursuing the following grant opportunities:

- Families Forward Grant– through the Domestic Relations
- The Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation – for development of Labor Shed Information

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

4.1 Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

Training providers must offer and maintain focus on trainings that provide quality outcomes, not only for the participants, but for the communities and employers in the area. By aligning their programs with the goals and expectations of the SWC WDB, they are focusing their programs on skills and needs most relevant to local employers. The SWC WDB reviews performance of training and communicated industry needs to training providers so that programs can be developed or modified to meet industry demand. Providers must supply a variety of program-specific information, including a program description, program length, program delivery methods, tuition/costs, prerequisites, and credentials offered.

The Southwest Corner WDB ensures that the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) will be available for PA CareerLink® staff members who are responsible for assessing individuals for training programs and referring them to appropriate high-quality training. The SWC WDB will follow the state's petitioning process to possibly add additional training programs to the list that may not be included. We will continue to work with Registered Apprenticeship programs and encourage inclusion on the ETPL. To ensure quality of the ETPL, only programs that meet the minimum performance measures related to program completion, job placement rates, median earnings, and credential attainment of their students will be approved for inclusion.

We will continue to work together, with employers and training providers, in the development of appropriate and industry relevant training opportunities.

B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means.

The JobGateway™ system provides universal access to employment and training opportunities. We partner with local organizations that provide ride sharing services and information. Our SWC PA CareerLink® centers are centrally located within the communities they serve, and are accessible by the Public transportation system.

The Southwest Corner WDA has four (4) comprehensive PA CareerLink® centers within our three (3) counties, including two (2) within Washington County. These Centers were strategically developed during the implementation of the PA CareerLink® system to provide for easy access to both our job seeker and employer customers.

The JobGateway™ on-line system is easily accessed for self-directed services and other employment and training related information via any Internet computer.

The majority of our area's library systems have the capability for individuals to log onto the JobGateway™ system from their locations. Individual can also pre-register for events via the on-line system. In addition to our local libraries, we also reach out to other community resources such as schools and community-based organizations that provide Internet access to their students or customers and advise them of our websites and services available to customers who do not have their own access through the Internet or mobile devices.

The SWC WDB has recently redesigned our website www.southwestcornerwdb.com and is constantly working to develop a comprehensive workforce development site that includes programs and initiatives within the Southwest Corner including, but not limited to, links to the JobGateway™ system and Title I providers and other relative resources.

Our WDB encourages our PA CareerLink® centers to use site specific Facebook pages, e-mail, and other web based Internet methods to communicate and inform job seekers and employers regarding services and events.

C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) the Southwest Corner WDB will take steps to ensure that appropriate auxiliary aids and services are made available when necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in and receive benefits of our services as well as provide the following notification on our marketing materials: *"Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities."* An "accommodation" line item is part of our PA CareerLink® Resource Sharing Agreements (RSAs) to ensure funding is available when needed.

All Southwest Corner PA CareerLink® locations are accessible for individuals with disabilities. Cross-training for PA CareerLink® partnering staff is conducted by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation staff (as requested) for the purpose of understanding technology and materials available for customers with disabilities and, most importantly, addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The Operators shall ensure that all facilities, technology, and services, partner services and outreach materials are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Equal Opportunity (EO) guidelines.

4.2 Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

The Southwest Corner WDB partners closely with numerous training providers who offer a variety of training programs to equip job seekers with the necessary skills to be competitive in today's job market. The programs range from short term industry recognized credentials to post secondary degree completion programs. Many of our local training providers have formed employer advisory committees consisting of our high priority industry sectors. These employer committee members provide input into the curriculum

and equipment and materials to insure trainees will possess the skills the employer require upon graduation.

Once the allocations are received from the Commonwealth, staff and the Finance Committee of the WDB determine funding levels needed to support the infrastructure and personnel costs, as well as the what allocations are necessary to align with and implement strategies and vision as outlined in the WDB Strategic Plan. WIOA funds are allocated to support infrastructure, personnel, contracts and other costs through a formal budgeting process. After these amounts are determined, the balance of the funds are allocated to activities to provide the basic, individualized career services, and training in support of the Commonwealth Combined Plan. The budget is approved by the Full Board prior to the start of the fiscal year, July 1.

Individual programs include; On-the-Job Training, Individual Training Accounts and Pre-Apprenticeship Training. All programs are developed to support the Strategic Plan. Once an individual has been assessed and appropriate services have been determined, the funding source(s) for a service are determined based on allowable activities.

The WDB ensures that services are provided to adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in WIOA Section 134(d)(3)(A) by thoroughly assessing each individual to determine eligibility for services, documenting all services available and documenting all services provided. The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board has been awarded and continues soliciting Federal funding through the following grants to support existing Adult and Youth programs:

The local **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL)** for the Southwest Corner includes more than 200 state approved training programs providing training in high priority occupations including: healthcare, building and construction trades, information technology, advanced manufacturing, and transportation to name a few. To ensure quality of the Local ETPL, programs must meet performance benchmarks related WIOA students and ALL students including:

- program completion
- job placement rates
- median earnings, and
- credential attainment

Additionally, to inform customer choice as job seekers select among available training opportunities, providers must provide a variety of program-specific information, including:

- location and contact information
- program description
- program length
- tuition/costs
- prerequisites, entrance requirements and credentials offered

Funding to attend training programs on the ETPL is available to qualified WIOA participants through individual training accounts (ITAs). Referrals will be coordinated with local union apprenticeship programs as appropriate and WIOA Title I funds for apprenticeship training can be provided to individuals.

The ETPL list is updated on an annual basis. All training providers receive an eligibility packet from the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board which includes the following information when programs/courses are submitted through the on-line application. This information is requested annually:

- Completed and signed Training Provider Authorized Form including an outline of current procedure for obtaining performance levels
- Documentation verifying the performance information for each program submitted
- Most Recent School Catalog or outline/curriculum of program(s) submitted
- Grievance Procedures – if they are not outlined in handbook.
- Copy of State License (if applicable)
- Form PDE 3808 outlining courses approved by the Department of Education/Private Licensed School Act (if applicable)
- Copy of Current Accreditation Certificate (if applicable)
- Financial statement and/or annual report or equivalent
- If a program is NEW, a letter must also be forwarded to the Southwest Corner WIB stating when this program first was offered to the general public, the anticipated graduation date of the first class and how the provider will track and record the required performance measures.

If a training program is denied, the SWCWDB will issue a denial notice within thirty (30) days of receipt of a completed application. A separate notice is required for each training program being denied. The notice will clearly identify the program being denied and the specific reasons for the denial. The denial notice shall also advise the training provider of its right to appeal the local WDB's decision within thirty (30) days of the date of the denial. The provider is also able, at this point, to issue an appeal on the state level.

4.3 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

Early intervention is of utmost importance when assisting companies and workers that are affected by layoffs, closures or other unforeseen event. The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board and the PA CareerLink® centers in our area play a key role in ensuring that needs are identified and service provision is at the forefront. When notice of a layoff occurs, the SWCWDB and Rapid Response Coordination Services (RRCS) collaborate to provide a comprehensive strategy and plan for response.

When the Rapid Response meetings occur, our local Rapid Response Team, (which includes: SWC WDB staff, State Rapid Response staff, PA CareerLink® staff – including BWPO staff, Title I staff and Business Services Team reps, Unemployment Compensation and Health Care entities) disseminate information regarding unemployment insurance, pension benefits, health care benefits, education and training services/programs, job search activities, crisis counseling, emergency assistance, and community and economic development activities. The goal is to get workers affected by layoffs engaged in our workforce development system as soon as possible to provide for rapid re-employment and/or re-training.

Recently, the SWC WDB applied for, and was awarded, a \$450,000 Rapid Response Grant to assist with the mass layoffs in the mining industry in our area. A portion of these funds are used to support staff that is dedicated to working with mining related, dislocated workers. The majority of the funds are to support the training/re-training needs and employment initiatives of the dislocated population.

In addition, our area collaborated with Westmoreland/Fayette WDB and Southern Alleghenies WDB on the recently awarded POWER grant through ETA. With our assistance in the development of the grant

proposal, Pennsylvania was awarded a \$2 million grant to serve individuals that have lost their jobs due to the decline in the mining industry.

4.4 Provide an analysis and description of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices, for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area.

Note: This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

Through resource leveraging with other youth development programs, SWC WDB is able to effectively support and fill gaps in the family, educational, and social frameworks that are often missing in the lives of at-risk youth. Ensuring youth receive access to all 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements, the WDB partners with a number of local entities such as: All Southwest Corner Area School Districts and Career and Technology Centers, County and State/Federal funded organizations including Housing Authority of Beaver, Washington and Greene counties and local county assistance offices; local municipalities and townships; Community Based Organizations such as Title II providers, alternative schools and county juvenile justice systems. The linkages afforded through the SWC PA CareerLink® system partners further assure coordination and elimination of duplicate services. Our local WDB PA CareerLink® centers facilitate onsite contact with the above mentioned organizations. This contact provides opportunities for youth referral and ongoing case management interaction.

Collaboration with our Office (s) of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to provide services to individuals with disabilities. These services are designed to ensure individuals with disabilities become qualified trained members of the workforce, increasing regional workforce diversity and the overall number of skilled workers available to business in the region. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple, individualized services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, and job placement.

Under WIOA, OVR has the ability to provide both eligible and potentially eligible in-school youth with disabilities with pre-employment transition services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. PETS services may include but not be limited to; paid work experiences, job shadowing, workplace readiness training, and career guidance. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

Our LWDB will monitor youth programming to ensure that we meet the requirement for 75% of local WIOA youth funds to be spent on out-of-school youth. We are also focused on work-based learning for both in-school (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OOSY) and will meet the 20% minimum expenditure. We believe our current approach for serving ISY and OOSY is working very well, and will continue to evolve through this first year of WIOA implementation. As a customer-focused program, all youth participants have access to the 14 youth program elements, based upon their needs and goals.

14 Program elements include:

1. *Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidenced based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary diploma or its recognized equivalent or a recognized postsecondary credential:* Our availability of services will include: assessment and testing to identify need, referral to online tutorial assistance, adult literacy organization, or GED instruction.

2. *Alternative secondary school or dropout recovery services:* - Our youth service providers partner with agencies that receive funds through Job Corps, Carl Perkins, Adult Literacy, etc. to support alternative secondary school and dropout recovery services.
3. *Paid and unpaid work experiences that have both academic and occupational education components (which may include summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities):* Summer employment opportunities linked to academic and occupational learning - Our summer youth employment program, an integral component of our year-round program, offers participants the opportunity to gain hands-on work experience, interact with a positive peer group, avoid "learning loss" associated with inactivity during summer months, and develop "soft" skills (e.g., promptness, reliability) that are valued by employers.
 - In addition to the summer youth employment program, we offer opportunities for youth to participate in work experiences, internships, and job shadowing throughout the year for the purposes of career exploration and skill development. Work experiences take place in the private (for-profit or non-profit) or public sector. WIOA funds may be used to pay wages and related benefits as appropriate, according to the objective assessment and individual service strategy.
 - *Collaboration with our local Office(s) of Vocational Rehabilitation* ensures individuals with disabilities have access to a comprehensive range of services to eliminate employment barriers.
 - *Collaboration with juvenile justice system* - Our WIOA Title I Providers in the Southwest Corner have coordinated and implemented Juvenile Restitution programs (*voluntary program – This agreement will be agreed upon between our Title I providers, Probation offices, youth and their parents.*) with their respective County Juvenile Probation Departments and County Clerk of Courts offices. Our Title I Providers secure a work experience opportunity paying youth an hourly rate. Placement for each youth is done by considering the youth's skills, residency, and available transportation in relation to the job site. Upon referral and agreement with the County(s) Juvenile Probation Department, the youth and their parents, a restitution plan is developed. This program has enabled the youth to provide a service to their community, work to pay off restitution fees, and still receive a paycheck for the work they do. The program has also provided the youth with an adult mentor that will be a role model and provide positive reinforcement.
4. *Occupational skills training (which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area involved):* Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster: We combine GED preparation with paid work experience opportunities to establish a career ladder and strengthen linkage to employment.

Out-of-School Youth who are eligible for training under WIOA Title I may apply individual training accounts (ITAs) towards courses or programs that are on the ETPL statewide list, (i.e., they prepare workers for high priority occupations.) Assessment, career exploration, job search workshops, and other workforce activities designed to match abilities with skills for career choices.

5. *Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster:* Currently, our Title I Providers provide an industry recognized credentialing opportunity with the National Retail Federal Customer Service certification program. Both Title I programs are certified testing centers with certified proctors on

staff. Classroom instructional support will be provided for out-of-school enrolled youth - Instruction will be done Monday through Friday on a regularly scheduled basis. This credential meets the criteria for common performance measures. Also included with credentialing are youth that attend a post-secondary training as well as on-the-job training experiences. These individuals will earn recognized credentials after successful program completion.

6. *Financial literacy education:* Financial literacy education is incorporated into the work experience orientation program with speakers from area banks. In addition, the library has online financial literacy programs and periodic group training.
7. *Leadership development opportunities (which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate):* We provide opportunities for youth to develop leadership skills through the following activities: community and service learning projects; peer mentoring and tutoring; organizational and team work training, including team leadership training; training in decision-making -including determining priorities; citizenship; and life skills training (e.g., parenting, work behavior, budgeting); training in positive social behaviors through self-esteem building, cultural diversity training, and work simulation activities, etc.)
8. *Follow-Up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation:* Our youth service providers remain in contact with participants for at least twelve months after they complete the program to make sure their transition to work or post-secondary education or training is smooth. Follow up services are tailored to individual needs. Examples include interventions to address work-related problems, assistance in advancing or securing a better job, career development and further education, work-related peer support groups, and adult mentoring. A Youth Retention Specialist is on our Title I provider's staff, dedicated to follow up services and successful transition following exit of the program.
9. *Comprehensive guidance and counseling* - We recognize the pressures that face teenagers today so we partner with other agencies to provide the services they need to help them make good choices and protect their health and safety. Individual needs are ascertained during the initial intake and throughout the program. Our Title I staff have youth program case managers that serve as single points of contact for youth engaged in our programs. Partnerships exist with drug & alcohol, housing, domestic violence, and other agencies.
10. *Entrepreneurial skills training:* Our Title I Providers will utilize their network of providers to refer youth to entrepreneurial programs. One such program is the Junior Achievement of Western PA "JA Be Entrepreneurial" program. This introduces students to the essential components of a practical business plan, and challenges them to start an entrepreneurial venture while still in high school. Make referrals to and support Junior Achievement for Western PA entrepreneurial programs within local school districts. This curriculum allows for the students to:
 - Recognize characteristics and practices of successful entrepreneurs.
 - Evaluate an entrepreneurial idea based on product, customer, and competitive advantage criteria.
 - Demonstrate business-planning skills for venture start-up, marketing, financing, management, and ethical decision-making.

Our Title I Youth providers facilitate summer camps in order to expose youth to the skills required to successfully create and operate a small business.

We will also utilize the expertise of the Small Business Administration (SBA) and the University of Pittsburgh Small Business Development Center to provide opportunities for our local area youth to learn more about becoming an entrepreneur.

11. *Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local areas, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services:* Our Title I Providers conduct outreach to local schools to provide career awareness and career exploration services to students using the JobGateway™ website as a resource.
12. *Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training:* Our title I Youth Providers prepare participants for Four Year Colleges, Community Colleges, Trade Schools and other opportunities through tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to completion of secondary school, including drop-out prevention strategies.
13. *Adult mentoring:* Based on assessment, adult mentoring would be available to youth through online tutorials, literacy organizations and job coaching opportunities.
14. *Support Services:* Support Services are an ongoing service utilized to assist and enable program participation or to secure or retain employment. Our providers will continue to provide supportive services when deemed necessary and not available through partnering agencies.

4.8 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate.

The Southwest Corner WDB will approve training providers on the approved Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) that are offering training programs aligned with state and region in-demand occupations and sectors.

Providers of training are required to submit, as part of their application, performance and outcomes on the training programs/courses submitted, while ensuring individuals with barriers to employment are served.

The Eligible Training Provider List is used to provide our job seeker customers with information regarding the types of training opportunities available, both in our workforce area and also in other parts of the state, as well as, out-of-state training opportunities. Information is also available regarding occupational skills that are in demand within the State and within our WDA, and other performance related data that assists them in making informed training choices.

In order to be added to the statewide Eligible Training Provider List, a provider must complete and sign a Training Provider Authorization form and submit, to our SWC WDB, the following information:

- A one-page outline of the current procedure for obtaining performance levels;
- Documentation verifying the performance information;
- The most recent school catalog or outline/curriculum for each program;
- Grievance procedures;
- A copy of its state license;
- Form PDE 3808 outlining courses approved by the PA Dept. of Education/ Private Licensed School Act (if applicable);

- A copy of its current accreditation certificate (if applicable); and
- Financial statements, an annual report or other evidence that sound fiscal practices are employed.

Programs must train students for "high priority occupations" in our area, as defined by the state. Training providers requesting assistance in completing the application process are assigned a "point of contact," a staff person, employed by one of our WIOA Title I providers. Training providers are required to retain documentation to support their applications for a period of three years.

Our staff reviews applications to make sure they are accurate and complete prior to forwarding them to the state for final approval. If we reject an application, we notify the training provider within thirty days. Training providers have thirty days to appeal our decision.

The statewide training providers/programs (ETPL) list is updated when new programs are approved. Individual training accounts can be applied only towards programs on this list. Training providers must retain records concerning participant enrollment and performance throughout the period of participation plus a minimum period of three years following the participant's completion or termination.

To maintain their status on the approved statewide list, training providers must meet performance expectations and supply factual information/statistics on the ETPL which is designed to help eligible participants make informed choices. Performance measure indicators, for both the "All Students" and the "WIOA Participants" populations, include:

- Program completion rate;
- Entry into unsubsidized employment at second quarter after exit;
- Entry into unsubsidized employment at fourth quarter after exit;
- Median earnings during second quarter after exit; and
- Attainment of post-secondary credentials.

Training providers with poor performance are required to develop a corrective action plan, in consultation with our staff and approved by the state, which identifies the deficiency and outline specific steps to be taken to correct it.

4.9 Describe the process and criteria the local board will use to include a wide range of providers and opportunities through the Local Training Provider List (LTPL).

Note: Such criteria must include the factors listed in the WSP 04-2014 in addition to any criteria established by the local board. Eligibility of a provider and/or program must be based solely on measurable factors.

The Southwest Corner WDB will comply with the provisions as outlined in WSP 04-2015, Appendix B when submitting applications for training services to be included on the Local Training Provider List (LTPL). Over the years, we have developed strong working relationships with our various training providers and closely with both our employer and training provider communities to identify any training or skill gaps identified in our region. The LTPL (similar to the statewide ETPL) will catalog training providers and their respective training services/programs *exempted from the statewide ETPL eligibility requirements*. We will ensure that this list remains up-to-date and will disseminate this list consistent with the requirements of this policy (WSP 04-2015) and through the PA CareerLink® system. Only providers that the local board determines to be eligible will be included on this list. This list will be comprised of training services contracted at the local workforce level.

Section 5: Compliance

5.1 Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

OVR have cooperative agreements in place through the PA CareerLink® Business Plan, Partner Agreement, and Resource Sharing Agreement. These agreements outline the relationship between OVR and the local board. The purpose of the PA CareerLink® is to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance access to services while improving long term employment outcomes for both job seeker and employer customers receiving assistance. As the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is a partner and a SWCWDB Operator, their assistance is sought at all levels to ensure that there is adequate outreach to persons with disabilities, and that services are accessible to all customers. SWCWDB, the appropriate SWCWDB Committee, and Operator Consortium will ensure that cross-training is established for each PA CareerLink® and its staff. The purpose of the cross-training is to facilitate full access to services and the appropriate exchange of information.

PA CareerLink® and WIOA services will be available to all job seekers, including those with disabilities. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Career Resource Center with career exploration activities, job search (self-directed/computer-based) via Job Gateway® and job referral with staff help in decision making process;
- Candidate matching/placement assistance;
- Labor market information and job vacancy listings;
- Job seeker workshops;
- Follow-up contact after job placement;
- Case management, job club activities, short-term pre-vocational services, and other intensive services;
- Short-term pre-vocational services such as adult basic education, English as a second language, basic computer literacy, interviewing skills, soft skills, and training services.

OVR also works directly with the Business Services Team, enhancing business outreach; recruitment and referral for job vacancies primarily for targeted business and industry; job candidate qualification review; provision of economic, business and workforce trend data and information; organized service delivery around business and industry needs; referral to human resource and other business services; and job development. The integrated partner resources of the PA CareerLink® system also affords employers with a single contact site for finding qualified candidates, accessing training services and becoming involved in local initiatives. The career resource center will also offer employers Internet access for screening resumes and candidates and for reviewing on-line regional and statewide labor market information on the Commonwealth's CWDS system. There will also be information regarding issues like unemployment insurance, Equal Employment Opportunity, complying with the ADA and available training services.

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation will identify and service the disabled community and provide business development services, which includes the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

5.3 Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services.

The Southwest Corner WDB has adopted a detailed procurement policy that is compliant with the Uniform Code and state guidance. The local board has created and maintains a localized procurement policy to align with federal and state statute, regulations, and policy. The local procurement policy, as well as the resultant practices and procedures, reflect the FMG's Procurement policies. The local board assures that procurements will be conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition through the use of internal controls. Internal control examples include: public notice requesting an RFP, engagement in two or more requests for services (RFS), committee evaluations, written selective procedures for procurement transactions, and final local board vote.

Value of Purchase	Director Approval	Fiscal Committee and Workforce Board and/or CLEO Board Approval	Additional Process
\$0 - \$3,000.00	Required	Not Required	No additional process
\$3,001.00 – \$5000.00	Required	Not Required	Quotes from three (3) entities
\$5,001.00-\$149,999.99	Required	Required	Quotes from three (3) entities (contractors/subrecipients) -RFP is Required
\$150,000.00 - Up	Required	Required	Quotes from three (3) entities (contractors/subrecipients) -RFP is Required

Micro-purchases- Procurement by micro-purchase is the acquisition of supplies or services in which the aggregate dollar amount does not exceed \$3,000 (or \$2,000 in the case of acquisitions for construction subject to the Davis-Bacon Act). To the extent practicable, micro-purchases are equitably distributed among qualified suppliers. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations if the price is considered to be reasonable.

Small purchases- Are those purchases that relatively simple and informal procurement methods are used for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.

Competitive proposals- Competitive proposal requirements: Requests for proposals (RFPs) are publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Sufficient time to respond to proposal is provided to prospective bidders; Any response to publicized requests for proposals are considered to the maximum extent practical; Proposals are solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources; Our evaluation form explains the method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting recipients; Contracts are awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program with price and other factors considered.

Non-competitive proposals- (sole source) Is used only when one or more of the following circumstances apply: The item is available only from a single source; The public exigency or emergency for the requirement will not permit a delay resulting from competitive solicitation; The federal awarding agency

or pass-through entity expressly authorizes noncompetitive proposals in response to a written request from the non-federal entity; or After solicitation of a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

5.4 Describe the local area’s negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template.

Note: See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources “Performance Targets Template”.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board uses the negotiated performance measures as the indicators for contracted service providers and the one stop operator. Our area has been very successful in meetings and/or exceeding all measures for many years. We are confident that once our negotiated performance levels are finally determined, we will remain successful in assisting our local area job seekers and employers with their workforce development needs while continuing to meet performance.

Factors such as program enrollment, active participants, placements and other relevant outcome measures, wage at placement and retention are incorporated into the LWDB’s strategic plans and reviewed quarterly by the LWDB.

The negotiated levels reflect the efforts of the local workforce system to provide quality employment services and include goals for the percentage of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in terms of employment, median earnings, credential attainment rate, measurable skill gains, and effectiveness in serving employers. The levels provide a means for the public and policy makers to assess how successful the local workforce system is in providing quality services and helping the unemployed obtain jobs.

SOUTHWEST CORNER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA:

WIOA Performance Measures	Local Area PY15 Performance Goals
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	65%
Dislocated Worker	74%
Youth	65%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	65%
Dislocated Worker	75%
Youth	57%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	\$5,000

Dislocated Worker	\$7,000
Youth	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Negotiated Goals
Adult	55%
Dislocated Worker	57%
Youth	70%
Measurable Skill Gains	Negotiated Goals
Adult	Baseline
Dislocated Worker	Baseline
Youth	Baseline
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Negotiated Goals
Adult	Baseline
Dislocated Worker	Baseline
Youth	Baseline

5.6 Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan.

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board will release a draft of its local plan on April 30, 2016, making it available for a 30-day period for public comments. The release of the proposed local plan will be made available to members of the public through various means. All feedback from business, labor, education, economic development, social services and community-based organizations will be reviewed, and then as deemed appropriate, incorporated in the final plan document.

5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan (i.e. no later than Thursday June 2, 2016), the proposed plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.

A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment.

The SWC WDB's process to obtain input on this Plan includes:

- **Public Notice:** A notice is published in (NEWSPAPERS), as well as on our website www.southwestcornerwdb.com announcing the release date of the draft Plan with the opportunity to provide comments. Hard copies of the plan were also made available at our Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board office for 30 days.
- **30-Day Comment Period:** The date on which the Plan is released and made available to the public marks the start of a 30-day public comment period during which comments on the published draft are accepted.
- **All comments should be sent to:**
Ami Gatts, Director
Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board
351 West Beau Street, Suite 300
Washington, PA 15301
agatts@washingtongreene.org

B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and

Input from system stakeholders and collaborators (*including individuals representing business, labor, education, economic development, community-based organizations and others*) were obtained during the plan development process as described above.

C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]

5.8 List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each PA CareerLink® center within the local area.

Site Name	EEO Officer	Location	Contact Information
PA CareerLink® - Beaver County	Rich Strother WIOA Program Manager, Job Training for Beaver Co.	285 Beaver Valley Mall Route 18 Monaca, PA 15061	Phone: (724) 728-2020 x 102 Fax: (724) 728-2074 Email: rstrother@jtbtc.org

PA CareerLink® - Greene County	Alisa Hatchett CareerLink Supervisor, Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations	4 West High Street Waynesburg, PA 15370	Phone: 724-852-2900 x 235. Fax: (724) 627-4047 Email: ahatchett@pa.gov
PA CareerLink® - Washington County	Carl North CareerLink Supervisor, Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations	90 West Chestnut Street Suite 150 Lower Level Washington, PA 15301	Phone: (724) 470-2116 Fax: (724) 223-4670 Email: cnorth@pa.gov
PA CareerLink® - Mon Valley	Linda Jack CareerLink Supervisor, Bureau of Workforce Partnership Operations	570 Galiffa Drive Donora, PA 15033	Phone: (724) 379-4750 x 111 Fax: (724) 379-6406 Email: ljack@pa.gov

5.9 By checking the box adjacent to each line item, the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components/documents listed are in place and effective prior to July 1, 2016. Copies of the listed compliance components/documents are not required at this time, but may be requested during monitoring and/or auditing.

- ✓ Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials
- ✓ Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated
- ✓ Agreement between the local elected official(s) and the local workforce development board
- One-Stop Partner Agreement(s)
- ✓ Resource Sharing Agreement(s)
- ✓ Resource Sharing Agreement Budget(s)
- ✓ Local workforce development board policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest
- ✓ Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipts of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable costs
- ✓ Local procurement policy
- ✓ Program management policy and process including equal opportunity for customers; supportive services; needs related payments; file management; eligibility; self-sufficiency criteria; individual training accounts; layoff assistance; priority of services; grievance for eligible training providers list; transitional jobs; stipends; and training verification/refunds
- ✓ Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan
- ✓ Human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline; layoffs, terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity/non-discrimination
- ✓ Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable

ATTACHMENT I

Public Comments and Additions to the Plan

Public Comments

The draft of the Southwest Corner Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan was posted on the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board's website (www.southwestcornerwdb.com) as well as in the workforce area's local newspapers and via email for public comment from April 30, 2016 through May 31, 2016.

Stakeholders and the general public were notified of the posting of the plan and the opportunity to provide comment. The following comments were submitted and a response follows each.

Comment #1:

Date Received: May 9, 2016

From: Darla Openbrier, District Administrator

Organizational affiliation: OVR, Washington District Office

Comment: PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING TO THE LOCAL PLAN:

1.4 PROVIDE AN ANALYSIS AND DESCRIPTION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING TYPE AND AVAILABILITY OF EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES. INCLUDE ANALYSIS OF THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF SUCH SERVICES, AND THE CAPACITY TO PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES, IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE EDUCATION AND SKILL NEEDS OF THE WORKFORCE AND THE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS IN THE REGION.

[WIOA SEC. 108(B)(1)(D)] AND [PROPOSED 20 CFR 679.560(A)]

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation assists Pennsylvanians with disabilities to secure and maintain employment and independence under Title IV-Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple services that may include but not be limited to; diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement, individualized support services; and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. OVR also provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities.

Response to Comment 1:

Thank you for your comment. The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board values OVR as a partner in the PA CareerLink® system and welcomes the opportunity for increased partnership. Services to individuals with disabilities are a priority for the Southwest Workforce Development Board and the changes are addressed on page 15 Section 1.4 of the transitional local Plan.

Comment #2:

Date Received: May 16, 2016

From: Peter Zurflieh

Organization Affiliation: Community Justice Project

118 Locust Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

The Community Justice Project (CJP)¹ submits these comments on behalf of Success Against All Odds and Just Harvest, and the many low-income clients CJP represents every year who seek to better their lives through better jobs. The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board WIOA Transition Plan (SCWDB Plan) was published for public comment on April 30, 2016, with comments due by May 30, 2016.

Because we work on behalf of low-income clients, our comments focus on: (i) priority of service for recipients of public assistance and other low-income, high needs persons; (ii) Career Pathways; and (iii) Transitional Jobs (subsidized employment).

Background

WIOA, like its antecedents -- the Workforce Investment Act and the Job Training Partnership Act -- places special importance on serving low-income, high needs groups. According to WIOA:

Priority for individualized career services and training services must be given to:

(i) recipients of public assistance;

(ii) other low-income individuals ; and

(iii) individuals who are basic skills deficient

WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E)

WIOA strengthens priority of service requirements under the Workforce Investment Act in a number of ways, including eliminating the provision under WIA that priority of services applies only when funds are limited. Under WIOA, priority of service must be provided, regardless of funding.

Strengthening the priority of service requirement was clearly needed, as a declining number of low-income persons were served under WIA, despite its priority of service requirement. National data show that only 48.7 percent of adult “exiters” who received training and/or intensive services through the WIA Adult funding stream were “low-income individuals” in Program Year 2013 – a marked decrease from 71.3 percent in Program Year 2001. *And only 3.8 percent of those served in Program year 2013 were TANF recipients.*²

Over the past decade and a half, WIA delivered training services to a declining share of low-income individuals, and WIA served a far lower percentage of low-income adults than the predecessor federal law in place before 1998, the Job Training Partnership Act, which required that 90 percent of the funds for adults were targeted for those who were low-income.³

¹The Community Justice Project is a statewide project of the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network focusing on impact advocacy. CJP has worked for many years with its client group Success Against All Odds and sister agency, Just Harvest, to improve access to adult and postsecondary education for single parents participating in the TANF and SNAP programs.

² Comparison of nationwide data from PY2002 and PY2013 presented in Table II-1, Characteristics of Adult Exiters Who Received Intensive or Training Services, in Department of Labor Workforce Investment Standard Record Data (WIASRD) Data Books for PY2005 and PY2013, respectively. Online at: http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/pdf/PY_2005_WIASRD_DataBook_Rev%208-14-2007.pdf (page 15) and http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/pdf/PY_2013_WIASRD_Data_Book.pdf (page 21).

³ Frank, Abbey and Elisa Minoff. 2005. “Declining Share of Adults Receiving Training Under WIA Are Low-Income or Disadvantaged.” Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy. Online at <http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/files/0254.pdf>. See also: Ridley, Neil. 2010. “Strengthening Priority of Service for Low-Income Adults through WIA Reauthorization.” Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy. Online at <http://www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/files/WIAServices.pdf>.

In light of the underlying intent of WIOA, WIA, and the JTPA - and past failure by states to realize the goals of priority of service -- the Wolf Administration placed special emphasis on this key provision of WIOA in its March 17, 2016 WIOA State Plan. In order to ensure successful implementation of priority of service for recipients of public assistance and other low-income, high needs groups targeted by WIOA, the State Plan included:

- Service benchmarks for those entitled to priority of service;

- Specific guidance to Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and CareerLinks on what “priority of service” means and how it works;
- A directive that LWDBs and Career Links provide detailed information on how they will address a range of issues critical to successful implementation of priority of service requirements.

(See, WIOA State Plan, pp. 10-11 and 67-70)

We focus in these comments on the last of these three priority of service provisions in the WIOA State Plan because an important purpose of the local and regional plans is for the LWDBs and CareerLinks to demonstrate that they have thought carefully about how they will ensure that training services are provided to low-income, high needs persons and have workable plans for so doing.

Priority of Service

In their local plans, LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers are required to “state the additional methods by which they will apply the WIOA priority of service requirements and the commonwealth’s policy regarding priority of service,” by stating “in detail” how they will address specific issues critical to successful implementation of priority of service. (WIOA State Plan pp. 69-70)

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board’s WIOA Transition Plan says very little about how the agency plans to provide priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons in a meaningful and effective manner:

Our PA CareerLink® centers gather information on the populations they serve. We utilize this data to ensure that we provide priority of service as outlined in the Governor’s State Plan, with priority given to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, ex-offenders and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Those found to be 1) Recipients of public assistance, 2) Other low-income individual, and 3) Individuals who are basic skills deficient will obtain priority of service status. (SCWDB Plan, pp. 39)

The SCWDB Plan by and large fails to fully respond or to respond at all to the to the specific requests for implementation details set forth in the WIOA State Plan, despite the clear mandate to do so. Ensuring services to those entitled to priority requires far more thought and planning than is reflected in the Southwest Corner WIOA Transition Plan.

Each of the issues related to successful implementation of priority of service implementation that LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers are required to address is listed below. For each one, we explain why the concern in question is important to successful implementation of priority of service, and we offer suggestions as to how it might be effectively addressed in the Southwest Corner WIOA Transition Plan.

(i) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will obtain data reflecting each of the three categories of persons entitled to priority of service in their service area and the approximate numbers in each category.

This data is important in order to provide a sense of whether the LWDBs and CareerLinks (local agencies) are meeting the needs of the low-income communities they serve. While the Commonwealth intends to monitor LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers to determine whether at least 70 percent of those served are persons entitled to priority,⁴ this in and of itself, does not tell us to what extent the needs of the low-income community overall are being met.

Comment 2-a: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Include county by county data easily obtained from DHS showing the number of persons receiving public assistance (TANF and SNAP) -- a core group of those entitled to priority -- from the Department of Human Services (DHS).
- State how it will obtain data reflecting the number of other low-income persons, as well as those who are basic skills deficient.

(ii) The outreach [the LWDB and CareerLink] will do to inform the public of Pennsylvania's priority of service policy and how they will target this outreach to best reach those potentially eligible for priority of service and any agencies that serve them.

Because public assistance recipients and other low-income persons have been chronically and historically underserved, many in this community have little or no idea that training services are available to them through the LWDBs and CareerLinks, much less that they have priority for training. Local agencies will have to take specially tailored measures to reach this population. (Doing so will not only provide training opportunities for populations not previously served, but will help local agencies reach priority of service benchmarks established by the Commonwealth.) (WIOA State Plan, pp. 10-11 and 68).

The SCWDB Plan barely touches upon the subject of outreach to recipients of public assistance and other low-income persons entitled to priority of service:

As described in other sections within the Plan, the SWC WDB will partner with required WIOA partners to increase awareness of career pathways and promote the access to educational opportunities that result in meaningful employment. Some examples of our existing collaborations include:

- Individuals who receive public assistance are referred to the *Employment, Advancement Retention Network (EARN)* for employment and training assistance. EARN services and staff are fully-integrated and co-located with our PA CareerLink® offices for job search and job development services. Participants are encouraged to attend PA CareerLink® workshops and other program offerings.
- *Low-income individuals* are referred to the New Choices/New Options programs provided by the community colleges in our area. Services, free of charge to participants, include career counseling, computer instruction job placement assistance, resume and interviewing skills workshops to single parents, displaced homemakers, and those exploring nontraditional occupations to achieve self-sufficiency.

(SCWDB Plan, p. 32)

⁴ The commonwealth will monitor data reported by LWDBs and PA CareerLink® centers to determine the percentage of those served who are individuals with priority of service. Should this percentage be less than 70 percent, the commonwealth shall provide the LWDB or PA CareerLink® center with technical assistance to ensure that effective affirmative outreach efforts to individuals with priority of service are made. (WIOA State Plan, p. 68)

This one-size-fits-all approach -- referring all public assistance recipients to EARN and all low-income persons to New Choices/New Directions -- falls well short of the kind of comprehensive plan needed to ensure that appropriate training services are offered to those entitled to priority of service.

Perhaps the best strategy for outreach is for local agencies to connect with the Department of Human Services and work cooperatively with DHS state level policy makers and local County Assistance Offices to explore the needs of TANF and SNAP recipients within their service area for adult and postsecondary

education, transitional jobs, and other services and to develop a collaborative system for those in need of such services to be screened, referred to, and served by the local agency.

Comment 2-b: The SCWDB Plan should include a commitment by the agency to work in partnership with DHS and its CAOs to develop a plan for outreach and provision of training services to persons receiving TANF and SNAP benefits that includes:

- A process for informing TANF and SNAP clients of the opportunities for training services available to them through WIOA, in addition to those available through DHS and its welfare to work contractors, or through both.⁵
- A process for assessing TANF and SNAP clients interested in WIOA training opportunities to determine their education level, aptitudes, barriers, career interests, and training needs/goals -- along with a breakdown of what agencies/contractors will be responsible for each aspect of this process.
- The provision of career counseling to inform TANF and SNAP clients about training and job opportunities in High Priority Occupations suited to their interests, aptitude, and experience.
- A system for referral of TANF and SNAP clients to the local WIOA agency for training services.⁶
- A process for sharing data regarding activities pursued by TANF and SNAP clients and the progress that have made.

(iii) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will inform individuals seeking to access WIOA services of their priority of service, such as through posters and prominent placement of other information.

This is important in order to ensure that those who contact the local agency for training services and do not know they are entitled to priority of service will be able to identify themselves as such and receive the priority to which they are entitled.

The WIOA State Plan, itself, suggests a couple of methods to educate the public about priority of service, but there are many more. The local agency could develop and play a video in the office waiting room, run public service announcements, place advertisements at bus stops, etc.

Comment 2-c: The SCWDB Plan should describe a range of strategic methods it will use to educate the public about priority of service.

(iv) When otherwise deemed eligible for program participation, how [the LWDB and CareerLink] will affirmatively identify persons entitled to priority of service and inform those individuals of the full array of services available.

⁵Career Pathways programs are a good example of an important opportunity available through the WIOA system that is not available through DHS or its contractors. Transitional jobs may be another, depending on location.

⁶Under WIOA this can now be done by contract with DHS, an option that should be seriously considered.

While issue (iii), above, relates to self-identification, issue (iv) is concerns the problem of how to identify persons entitled to priority of service who seek WIOA services and who either do not know they have priority or have not disclosed this. Use of a screening tool may be the most effective way for the local agency to determine whether a client may be entitled to priority.

Comment 2-d: The SCWDB Plan should describe:

- The screening or other tool it intends to use to identify persons entitled to priority of service; and

- The counseling and written materials it will use to inform them of the range of services available to them and how priority of service works.

(v) The assessments [the LWDB and CareerLink] will use to identify barriers to employment among those entitled to priority of service and the services needed to address them.

Many of those entitled to priority of service have barriers to employment, such as those listed in the WIOA statute's definition of this term.⁷ The assessment process and tools employed by local agencies should include screening for barriers to employment, done in a manner that respects privacy, but nevertheless informs the client of the types of barriers for which assistance can be provided.

Comment 2-e: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Describe the process and tools that it uses or will use for assessment; and
- Explain how this process will inform clients of the range of barriers to employment for which services or accommodations may be available, while respecting the client's right not to disclose personal information should she prefer not to do so.

Once a barrier to employment has been disclosed, services to address or accommodate that barrier will normally be needed. So, for example, a victim of domestic violence might be referred to an agency that can provide appropriate counseling services or safety planning while she is pursuing training services through the local agency. An ex-offender with a criminal history might be counseled and/or referred to a legal services provider for help with expungement. Properly addressing barriers requires knowledge of services available in the community for the range of barriers the agency is likely to encounter and developing relationships with service providers to facilitate referral.

Comment 2-f: The SCWDB Plan should describe how it will identify and facilitate access to appropriate services in the community to address the range of barriers to employment listed in WIOA.

(vi) The process by which [the LWDB and CareerLink] will develop Individual Employment Plans for persons entitled to priority of service that will address, in addition to training needs, any barriers to employment they may have.

WIOA eliminated sequential service requirements for those seeking Title I training services. This was a significant change and should serve to improve access to training services, especially for those entitled to priority of service.

⁷ "Individuals with barriers to employment" include: displaced homemakers; Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities including youth with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy and individuals facing cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers; individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF; single parents to include single pregnant women; and long-term unemployed individuals.

Comment 2-g: The SCWDB Plan should describe each step in its simplified procedure for processing requests for Title I training and other services under Title I of WIOA. In doing so, the Plan should:

- Explain the role of assessments and how they are used;
- Spell out the content and specific steps involved in developing Individual Employment Plans;
- Describe the factors involved in deciding upon and developing plans for training services;
- Explain how the local agency will incorporate plans for addressing barriers to employment.

(vii) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will ensure that they are serving the spectrum of persons entitled to priority of service, including those, such as English language learners, who may require more resources to serve.

This issue is similar to element (v), dealing with barriers to employment, but is more focused on those needing special services or accommodations, such as persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) and disabilities. These needs are common in the high needs groups covered by priority of service requirements. Addressing the needs of such persons is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and, thus, the importance of ensuring services to these groups goes without saying.

Access to Career Pathways programs, with their emphasis on adult education including English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), is especially valuable for those with limited English proficiency. But identifying LEPs and providing interpretation and translated documents will be critical in order to facilitate equitable access and provide meaningful training services. Special attention to language access by LWDBs and CareerLinks in their local plans is warranted given the importance of these services to persons with this particular barrier to employment and considering also Pennsylvania's poor performance in the past in serving LEPs:

While new provisions in WIOA do target workforce services to these basic skills deficient individuals, the record of career pathways models and other training programs in providing equitable access to individuals who are low-educated and/or LEP is very weak. This is an especially urgent concern in Pennsylvania, for example, where **only 2.5% of those exiting from Title I Adult intensive or training services in the 2014-15 program year were LEP.**⁸

Comment 2-h: The SCWDB should describe:

- How it identifies and tracks, through the education, training, and employment process, the primary language of people with limited English proficiency so staff will be prepared to provide accessible services;
- How it provides notice of the right to language services (oral communication through bilingual staff and/or interpretation as well as translated documents);
- How it affirmatively identifies persons with limited English proficiency, so as not to rely entirely on self-identification through notice of the right to language services. (This could include, for example, training of staff to recognize signs that a person is not sufficiently fluent in English to navigate the local agency's WIOA process.)
- The specific language services it provides (e.g., direct services and/or interpretation through bi-lingual staff, telephonic interpreter services, in-person interpreters, and translation services) to Limited English Proficient (LEP). (The Plan simply says "bi-lingual access is available through the state language system each site.)

⁸ Margie McHugh and Madeleine Morawski, *"Immigrants and WIOA Services, Comparison of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Native and Foreign Born Adults in Pennsylvania"* (National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, March 2016), p. 4 (emphasis added).

- How it provides notice to persons with disabilities of their rights under the ADA, including the right to reasonable accommodation.
- How accommodations may be requested and how they are determined.

(viii) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will address the special needs of individuals with barriers to employment in the delivery of services, such as by assuring that appropriate career planning services are

provided. This should include a detailed description of how appropriate career planning services will be provided, or arranged for, through collaboration with other agencies in the event that the LWDB or PA CareerLink® center lacks the required expertise.

WIOA defines “career planning” as: [T]he provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed—

(A) to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and

(B) to provide job, education, and career counseling, as appropriate during program participation and after job placement.

(WIOA Sec. 3 (8))

We see this as involving two essential components -- career counseling and case management. Career counseling is key to making wise decisions about training services and training providers and should be a central component of the assessment and training program selection process for anyone seeking services from the local WIOA agency, including especially low-income persons, who may have lacked meaningful access to such assistance in their past.

Effective case management, as described in Section 3 (8) of WIOA, is critical to ensure that clients receive support, advice, and assistance, not only in the development of their training plan, but as they pursue their training program and must deal with the need for child care, transportation, and other supportive services, as well as barriers to employment that impact on their participation.

Comment 2-i: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Explain whether case management services, as described in Section 3 (8)(A), will be provided directly by the local agency and, if not, by whom it will be provided and under what arrangements;
- Describe the case management services that will be provided, how they will be provided, and how clients will access these services;
- Explain whether career counseling will be provided directly by the local agency and, if not, by whom it will be provided and under what arrangements;
- Describe how and at what points in a client’s participation in the WIOA program process career planning is provided.

(ix) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will ensure access to services, i.e., interpreters and translated documents, for English language learners, as well as for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This is similar to issue (vii), but is more focused on how bi-lingual staff, language line or other telephone interpretation services, in-person interpreters, and translation services are used and whether adequate resources are devoted to these services.

Comment 2-j: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Identify the five most common languages spoken in the local agency’s service area and the approximate number of persons who speak these languages;
- Identify how the local agency will document LEP persons’ primary language in case records or files so staff will be prepared to provide accessible services;
- State the number of bi-lingual agency staff who speak any of the five most commonly spoken languages and their positions in the local agency;

- Explain whether and how it provides interpretation to LEP persons who seek training services;
- Explain how it trains staff to identify and meet the needs of LEP persons.

(x) How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will train staff to ensure that staff members have an understanding of who is entitled to priority of service and that the office is responsive to the needs of these groups.

Priority of services is only meaningful to the extent local agency staff understands and properly implement its requirements.

Comment 2-k: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Describe the curriculum it will use to train staff on priority of service requirements; and
- Explain who will receive this training (e.g., reception staff, line workers, management) and how often the training will be provided.

Career Pathways

As advocates for low-income public assistance recipients, we are particularly interested in the availability and quality of Career Pathways training programs. Career Pathways programs provide adult education (literacy/English-as-a Second Language/GED), career counseling, and transition to postsecondary education and job skills training. These programs have proven highly successful. States are strongly encouraged by WIOA to develop and operate such programs.

Over forty percent of adults receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) lack a high school degree or GED. Yet, less than three percent of these parents are participating in GED programs. DHS does not operate Career Pathways or any other adult education programs for parents on TANF or SNAP. Providing access to Career Pathways programs to parents on public assistance through LWDBs and CareerLinks will provide a pathway from public assistance to employment at family sustaining wages -- a benefit not only to these families, but to the state as well.

The final WIOA State Plan requires that LWDBs and CareerLinks develop and operate Career Pathways programs, as defined in WIOA, and that such programs provide for entry at the literacy, ESL, GED, or postsecondary education level (See, Proposed WIOA State Plan, pp. 8-9)

The Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board WIOA Transition Plan references career pathways only in the sense of career ladders and says nothing about how it will design, develop, and operate Career Pathways programs.

Comment 2-l: The SCWDB Plan should:

- Specify the elements of the Career Pathways programs it intends to operate, which should include at a minimum those required by WIOA;
- Identify the partners (such as Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Community Colleges, Career and Technical Schools) with whom the local agency intends to partner in operating Career Pathways programs;
- Explain the process that will be used to develop Career Pathways programs;
- State the number, location, and estimated time frame for operationalizing each Career Pathways program the local agency plans to establish.
- Explain how the local agency will provide priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons for Career Pathways slots.
- Explain how the local agency will ensure that the first step on its career pathways (Literacy, ESL or GED) is accessible to those entitled to priority of service.

Transitional Jobs

WIOA allows states to spend up to 10% of Title I funds on transitional jobs, i.e., subsidized employment, opportunities for participants. Access to transitional employment slots for low-income persons can provide valuable work experience that can lead to permanent employment. This is particularly important for recipients of public assistance, many of whom want to work but lack work experience. It also provides an important opportunity for those with criminal backgrounds.

The final WIOA state plan includes a requirement that LWDBs and CareerLinks use between 5% and 10% of their funds to provide transitional jobs and that they ensure that priority of service for transitional jobs is afforded to individuals who qualify for priority of service. (WIOA State Plan, p. 70)

The SCWDB Plan says nothing about transitional jobs.

Comment 2-m: The SCWDB Plan should:

- State the amount of Title I funds that it will dedicate to transitional jobs and the percentage this represents, as well as the total number of jobs that it anticipates will be funded;
- Describe its plans and goals for raising additional funds for transitional jobs;
- Describe in detail the design of its transitional jobs program (Local agencies that operated Way to Work programs with TANF Emergency Funds in 2010 may want to look back to those programs and explain what they would do the same or do differently from Way to Work.)
- Describe how it will recruit employers to participate in the transitional jobs program, and if there are particular employers that it anticipates will participate;
- State whether the local agency will be the employer of record for clients in the transitional jobs program and, if not, whom the employer(s) of record will be.
- State whether the transitional jobs program will be incorporate “wraparound” or complementary services (e.g., job skills training), and describe the services provided, if so.
- Explain how the local agency will provide priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons for transitional jobs slots.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

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Response for Comments 2-a through 2-m:

In response to this comment, we would like to clarify that this local/regional plan is transitional in nature and fulfills the requirements established by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area’s priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well). We appreciate all of your comments and the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board Priority of Service Policy can be viewed on the Southwest Corner Workforce Development Board website www.southwestcornerwdb.com.