



## **WIOA STRATEGIC PLAN**

for

Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board  
Local Region 3

Serving Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, and Somerset Counties

PY 2016 – 2020

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WIOA TITLE I STRATEGIC PLAN  
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The recently implemented Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires workforce boards across the country to develop an employer-driven workforce system that meets the needs of local employers and targeted populations. To develop a four-year strategic plan that aligns with the goals of WIOA, the Central/Western Maine Workforce Development Board (CWMWDB) convened a range of stakeholders during a series of focus groups that took place in May and June 2016. During the focus groups, education and training providers, service providers, chambers of commerce and trade associations, economic development organizations, and employers were all offered the opportunity to provide feedback on the greatest needs and challenges facing the workforce and economy in the region and opportunities for the workforce system to improve its services and benefit both employers and job seekers. During these focus group sessions, goals and strategies were developed that will guide the CWMWDB as it continuously improves its employer and job seeker services.

In addition to these focus groups, the CWMWDB hosted a webinar updating these stakeholder groups on the progress since the 2013 WIOA Plan was released and on WIOA legislation. Information from this webinar and the webinar recording were sent to all stakeholders, including those who were unable to attend. Additionally, stakeholders who were unable to attend focus groups in person were invited to complete an online survey designed for each stakeholder group to offer feedback, suggestions, and input.

## Section 1A: Analysis of Regional Economic Conditions

### **State Context**

Maine's economy has recovered substantially from the recession of 2008, during which nearly 30,000 jobs were lost before employment stabilized in 2010. Since then employment has rebounded, but remains shy of the pre-recession peak. The oldest Baby Boomers have aged into their late sixties and begun leaving the labor force in increasing numbers. The number of young people available to replace them in the workforce is much smaller. As a result, job growth is slowing. The outlook is for less than one percent net job growth between 2014 and 2024.

In April 2016, Maine's unemployment rate of 3.4 percent (seasonally adjusted) was the lowest since February 2001 and below the twenty-year pre-recession average rate. Maine's unemployment rate has remained below the national rate for more than eight years.

The State faces major workforce development challenges in the years ahead from first, advancing age structure that is slowing labor force growth and second, restructuring of employment that is reallocating both the types of jobs available and performance requirements of jobs.

### **Demographic Trends**

Trends in Maine's population and workforce present challenges and opportunities. Maine is the oldest state in the nation by median age. The leading edge of the large baby boom generation has reached retirement age and all of that group will surpass age 65 in the next 15 years. Between 2012 and 2032 Maine's working-age population (ages 20 through 64) is projected to shrink by 16 percent from 801,600 to 672,400 – a loss of 129,200 potential workers. This situation constrains the region's growth potential. If the region does not foster an environment that will entice higher rates of in-migration, it will face job decline in the longer term.

Through 2024, the impact of Maine's aging population will be tempered by baby boomers who continue to work past traditional retirement age. Labor force participation among people over age 65 will initially increase, presenting an opportunity to capitalize on the skills and experience of older workers who continue in their current careers or in "encore" careers. Older workers generally have more experience, higher earnings, higher labor force participation rates, and lower unemployment rates than younger workers who are still developing the skills and experience necessary for success. The challenge facing employers is two-fold: a deficit of younger workers to replace older workers leaving the labor force; and accelerating losses of skilled and experienced employees.

### **Structural Shifts in Employment**

The last recession accelerated the restructuring of employment on multiple levels. On an industry level, job losses were concentrated in manufacturing and construction, accelerating a long term decline in jobs related to producing goods relative to those providing services. Many manufacturing and construction jobs pay above average wages and are accessible to workers without post-secondary education. Jobs such as these in well-paying occupations with lower educational requirements are a declining share of employment.

Demand is also decreasing for administrative support occupations, long a source of a middle-class lifestyle for many without a college education. The number of jobs in these occupations is projected to decrease between 2014 and 2024.

Many workers displaced from production, construction, office and administrative support, and other declining occupations lack the qualifications to fill jobs in growing occupations that offer similar levels of pay. Because those fields of work are not expected to rebound to pre-recession levels, prospects for those without post-secondary education are likely to worsen in the years ahead without well-directed job training resources.

While many individuals find their years of accumulated experience are no longer in demand, many employers are challenged to find the workers with the education, experience, or skills needed to perform functions critical to their operations.

Demand for workers in education and health care, professional and business services, and leisure and hospitality is rising. The staffing needs of those industries are primarily for professional and technical functions—which generally require post-secondary education or training and offer higher-than-average earnings—and for service functions—which generally do not require post-secondary education or training and offer lower than average earnings. The result is increasing concentrations of jobs at the upper and lower ends of the education and earnings spectrum, and decreasing shares of jobs in the middle.

### **Central/Western Region Workforce Development Area**

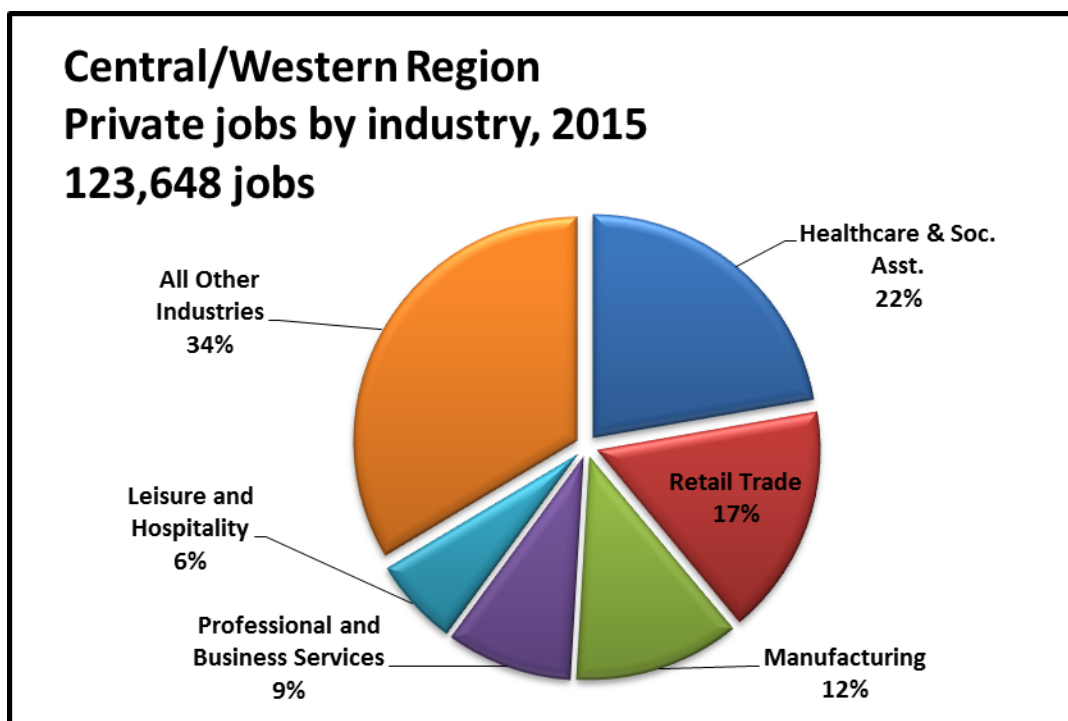
The Central/Western Region workforce development area encompasses about 30 percent of Maine's land area and is home to 28 percent of the state's population and 25 percent of private sector jobs. The largest population centers in the region are the cities of Lewiston and Auburn in Androscoggin county, and Augusta and Waterville in Kennebec county.

Like the state, the region will be challenged by a rapidly aging population. Between 2012 and 2032 the Central/Western Region is projected to lose 16 percent of working age population (ages

20 through 64); within the region, outlook ranges from a loss of 11 percent (Androscoggin County) to 20 percent (Somerset County) of working age population.

The 2015 annual average unemployment rate of 4.7 percent in the Central/Western Region was higher than the 4.4 percent statewide average. Within the region unemployment rates ranged from a low of 4.1 percent in Androscoggin County to a high of 6.6 percent in Somerset County.

The disparity of unemployment rates across the five counties is due in large part to variations in economic structure within the region offering better job prospects in the central, more populous counties (Androscoggin and Kennebec) than in the sparsely populated rim counties (Franklin, Oxford and Somerset). The economic base in Androscoggin and Kennebec counties is diversified across a broad spectrum of industries, with higher concentrations of jobs in professional and business services, and transportation and warehousing (Androscoggin), and healthcare (Kennebec) than the region or state. In addition, Kennebec County is home to Augusta, Maine's capitol city, and has a significant concentration of jobs in state government (15% of jobs compared to 4% of jobs statewide). In the rim counties, the economy is less diverse and more concentrated in forest-based manufacturing and highly seasonal industries such as agriculture/forestry/fishing/hunting (Somerset and Oxford), and leisure and hospitality (Franklin and Oxford).



Within the region, incomes tend to be higher in the central counties (Androscoggin and Kennebec) compared to the western counties (Franklin, Oxford and Somerset). From 2010 through 2014, the median household income ranged from a high of \$46,559 in Kennebec County to a low of \$40,695 in Oxford County, compared to the state median of \$48,804 (U.S. Census Bureau, ACS).

In 2015, of the Central/Western Region's fifty largest private employers, seventeen were health care and social assistance providers, eight were manufacturers and eight were retailers. Recent expansions of the region's economic base include the opening of Oxford Casino in June 2012. Oxford Casino created more than 400 jobs in 2012 and is stimulating further local development.

CENTRAL/WESTERN MAINE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA FIFTY LARGEST PRIVATE EMPLOYERS, 2015		
EMPLOYER NAME	EMPLOYMENT RANGE	BUSINESS DESCRIPTION
MAINEGENERAL MEDICAL CTR	3001-3500	General medical and surgical hospitals
WAL MART ASSOCIATES INC	3001-3500	Discount department stores
CENTRAL MAINE HEALTHCARE CORP	2501-3000	General medical and surgical hospitals
HANNAFORD BROS CO	1501-2000	Supermarkets and other grocery stores
T D BANK N A	1501-2000	Commercial banking
ST MARY'S REGIONAL MEDICAL CTR	1001-1500	General medical and surgical hospitals
BATES COLLEGE	501-1000	Colleges and universities
NEW BALANCE ATHLETIC SHOE INC	501-1000	Footwear manufacturing
CIANBRO CORPORATION	501-1000	Highway, street and bridge construction
COLBY COLLEGE	501-1000	Colleges and universities
VERSO PAPER CORP.	501-1000	Paper, except newsprint, mills
S D WARREN	501-1000	Paper, except newsprint, mills
T MOBILE USA INC	501-1000	Telemarketing and other contact centers
PINE STATE TRADING COMPANY	501-1000	Wine and spirit merchant wholesalers
MURPHY HOMES INC, JOHN F	501-1000	Residential developmental disability homes
CATALYST PAPER OPERATIONS INC	501-1000	Paper, except newsprint, mills
FRANKLIN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
REDINGTON FAIRVIEW GENERAL HOSPITAL	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
SUNDAY RIVER SKIWAY	501-1000	Skiing facilities
CENTRAL MAINE POWER CO	501-1000	Electric power distribution
SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN CORP	501-1000	Skiing facilities
BONNEY STAFFING CENTER INC	501-1000	Temporary help services
INLAND HOSPITAL	501-1000	General medical and surgical hospitals
L.L.BEAN, INC.	501-1000	Mail order houses
NORTH COUNTRY ASSOCIATES	501-1000	Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing
HUHTAMAKI INC	501-1000	All other converted paper product manufacturing
STEPHENS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	251-500	General medical and surgical hospitals
HOME RESOURCES OF MAINE INC	251-500	Services for the elderly and disabled
PIONEER PLASTICS CORPORATION	251-500	Laminated plastic plate, sheet, and shape
C N BROWN CO	251-500	Fuel dealers/gas stations with convenience stores
SHAWS SUPERMARKETS INC	251-500	Supermarkets and other grocery stores
TAMBRANDS INC	251-500	Sanitary paper product manufacturing
PER SE TECHNOLOGIES INC	251-500	Other accounting services
ROMAD COMPANY L.P,	251-500	Limited-service restaurants
NESTLE WATERS NORTH AMERICA INC	251-500	Bottled water manufacturing
BB DEVELOPMENT LLC	251-500	Casinos, except casino hotels
GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF NORTHERN N E	251-500	Vocational rehab. services and retail stores
MAINEGENERAL REHAB & LONG TERM CARE	251-500	Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing
ANDROSCOGGIN HOME CARE & HOSPICE	251-500	Home health care services
MACS CONVENIENCE STORES LLC	251-500	Gasoline stations with convenience stores
RITE AID OF MAINE INC	251-500	Pharmacies and drug stores
BARCLAYS SERVICES LLC	251-500	Telemarketing and other contact centers

HOME DEPOT USA INC	251-500	Home centers
TRI-COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	251-500	Outpatient mental health centers
GREAT FALLS HOLDINGS INC	251-500	Telemarketing and other contact centers
MARDENS INC	251-500	Discount department stores
J M P B	251-500	Services for the elderly and disabled
KENNEBEC MENTAL HEALTH ASSOC	251-500	Outpatient mental health centers
MEDICAL CARE DEVELOPMENT INC	251-500	Residential developmental disability homes
DINGLEY PRESS LLC, THE	251-500	Commercial printing, except screen and books

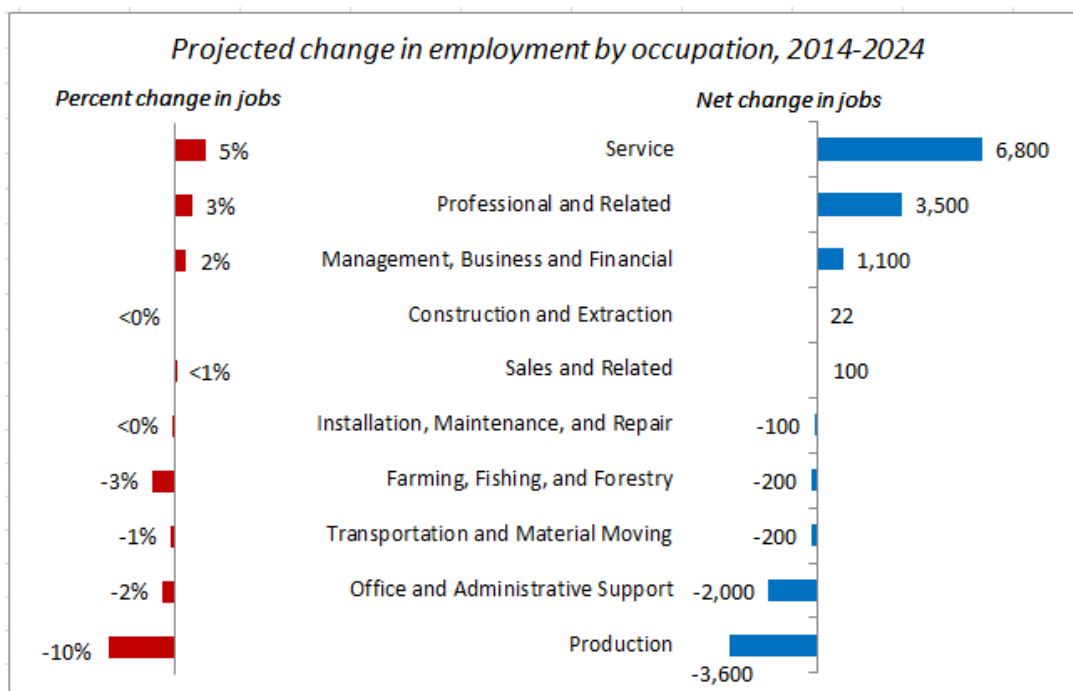


## Outlook 2014 to 2024

From 2014 to 2024, Maine is projected to add 5,300 jobs, an increase of 0.8 percent. Growth will be concentrated in private-sector wage and salary jobs, adding 9,500 jobs (+1.9%), offset by a loss of 3,600 public-sector jobs (-3.7%). Self-employed, private household and jobs held by unpaid family workers is expected to decrease by 600 (-1.0%). By industry and occupation, the outlook is largely a continuation of long-term trends.

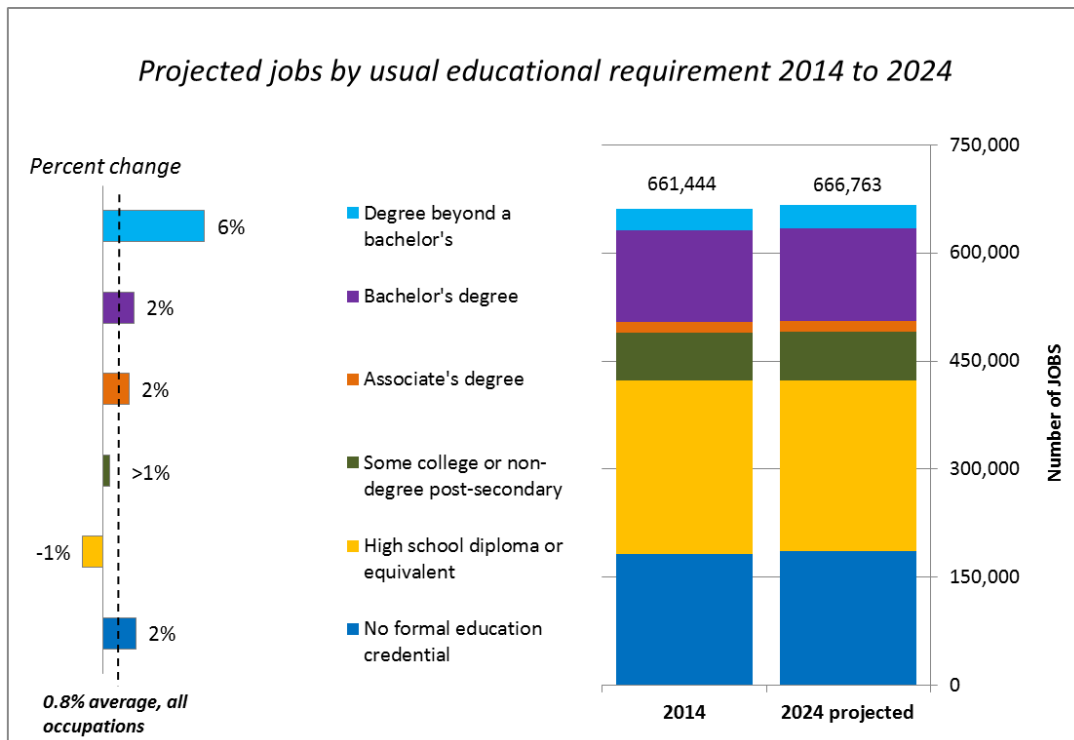
By industry, growth will be concentrated in health care and social assistance, professional and business services, and leisure and hospitality sectors. Sectors with the largest projected job losses will be manufacturing, government and information.

By occupation, job growth will be concentrated in the two largest categories: service, and professional and related occupations. Modest growth is also expected in management, business and financial occupations. Largest net losses are projected in production and office and administrative support occupations.



Within professional and related occupations, healthcare practitioner and technical occupations are projected to add the most net new jobs (4,129) and to increase at the fastest rate (9.5%), followed by computer and mathematical occupations (958 net new jobs, an 8.8% gain). Other professional occupations with faster than average growth are: life, physical and social science (4.7%), community and social service (3.6%), and legal occupations (2.3%).

Within service occupations, groups with the most net new jobs are: healthcare support (2,119 jobs, a 9.4% gain), food preparation (1,734 jobs, a 3.1% gain), and personal care and service occupations (1,646 jobs, a 5.4% gain). Other service occupations with faster than average growth are: protective service (4.1%), and buildings and grounds maintenance occupations (3.0%).



Most jobs in 2014 and projected in 2024 are occupations that require no formal education credential or a high school education. Though the fastest job growth is expected in occupations with the highest educational requirements, the share of jobs requiring post-secondary education or training will remain about one-third of total jobs (36% in 2014 and 37% in 2024).

Nineteen of the 40 occupations with largest projected net growth require education or training beyond high school. On the other end of the spectrum, 28 of the 40 occupations with the largest projected net job loss are in occupations that require no formal education credential a high school diploma or less for entry.

Forty Occupations with the Largest Projected Net Job Growth in Maine Between 2014 and 2024					
SOC Code	Occupation	Average Employment		Net Growth	Education/Training Requirement
		2014	2024		
29-1141	Registered Nurses	14,617	16,219	1,602	Bachelor's degree
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	11,813	12,968	1,155	No formal educational credential
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	9,071	10,063	992	High school diploma or equivalent
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	9,179	10,024	845	Postsecondary non-degree award
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	9,992	10,830	838	No formal educational credential
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	5,695	6,364	669	No formal educational credential
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	20,315	20,816	501	No formal educational credential
31-1011	Home Health Aides	3,290	3,764	474	No formal educational credential
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	3,681	4,047	366	High school diploma or equivalent
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	6,931	7,284	353	No formal educational credential
31-9092	Medical Assistants	3,208	3,535	327	Postsecondary non-degree award
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	4,809	5,120	311	Bachelor's degree
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	1,175	1,468	293	Master's degree
35-3011	Bartenders	2,855	3,118	263	No formal educational credential
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	1,893	2,153	260	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	1,615	1,870	255	Bachelor's degree
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	1,498	1,737	239	Bachelor's degree
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	3,671	3,908	237	High school diploma or equivalent
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	5,769	6,005	236	No formal educational credential
29-1123	Physical Therapists	1,332	1,555	223	Doctoral or professional degree
29-1069	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	2,583	2,805	222	Doctoral or professional degree
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	2,835	3,037	202	High school diploma or equivalent
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	3,952	4,150	198	High school diploma or equivalent
53-3041	Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	1,214	1,401	187	No formal educational credential
29-1071	Physician Assistants	949	1,131	182	Master's degree
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	1,885	2,051	166	Bachelor's degree
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	11,362	11,518	156	Bachelor's degree
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5,303	5,453	150	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	1,951	2,089	138	Some college, no degree
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	2,026	2,164	138	High school diploma or equivalent
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	963	1,100	137	Master's degree
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	4,388	4,525	137	No formal educational credential
33-2011	Firefighters	2,211	2,340	129	Postsecondary non-degree award
11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,137	1,264	127	Bachelor's degree
13-1111	Management Analysts	1,381	1,506	125	Bachelor's degree
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	10,977	11,098	121	No formal educational credential
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	2,456	2,572	116	High school diploma or equivalent
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	1,725	1,839	114	Postsecondary non-degree award
13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	795	907	112	Bachelor's degree
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	2,108	2,217	109	High school diploma or equivalent

Forty Occupations with the Largest Projected Net Job Loss in Maine Between 2014 and 2024					
SOC Code	Occupation	Average Employment		Net Decline	Education/Training Requirement
		2014	2024		
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	8,071	7,009	-1,062	Some college, no degree
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	6,782	6,261	-521	Bachelor's degree
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	7,463	6,972	-491	Some college, no degree
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	10,991	10,504	-487	High school diploma or equivalent
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	5,149	4,749	-400	Bachelor's degree
43-3071	Tellers	2,911	2,584	-327	High school diploma or equivalent
41-2011	Cashiers	16,997	16,711	-286	No formal educational credential
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	2,047	1,775	-272	No formal educational credential
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,898	2,635	-263	High school diploma or equivalent
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	11,674	11,422	-252	High school diploma or equivalent
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	2,140	1,929	-211	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4151	Order Clerks	1,544	1,335	-209	High school diploma or equivalent
51-2092	Team Assemblers	2,792	2,586	-206	High school diploma or equivalent
35-2011	Cooks, Fast Food	1,200	995	-205	No formal educational credential
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand	2,015	1,817	-198	No formal educational credential
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2,428	2,240	-188	Bachelor's degree
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	2,074	1,886	-188	High school diploma or equivalent
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	782	598	-184	No formal educational credential
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	2,165	1,986	-179	Bachelor's degree
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1,264	1,092	-172	High school diploma or equivalent
43-2011	Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service	462	298	-164	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	3,159	3,003	-156	High school diploma or equivalent
47-2031	Carpenters	10,829	10,677	-152	High school diploma or equivalent
35-9021	Dishwashers	2,605	2,458	-147	No formal educational credential
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	9,044	8,911	-133	High school diploma or equivalent
43-5052	Postal Service Mail Carriers	1,419	1,286	-133	High school diploma or equivalent
51-9121	Coating, Painting, and Spraying Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	575	446	-129	High school diploma or equivalent
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	1,946	1,820	-126	No formal educational credential
43-5053	Postal Service Mail Sorters, Processors, and Processing Machine Operators	666	542	-124	High school diploma or equivalent
35-2015	Cooks, Short Order	1,830	1,708	-122	No formal educational credential
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	3,995	3,873	-122	High school diploma or equivalent
49-2094	Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment	1,025	905	-120	Postsecondary non-degree award
51-7042	Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	860	744	-116	High school diploma or equivalent
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	6,633	6,518	-115	No formal educational credential
25-3098	Substitute Teachers	1,510	1,397	-113	Bachelor's degree
17-3013	Mechanical Drafters	687	578	-109	Associate's degree
51-9032	Cutting and Slicing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	415	311	-104	High school diploma or equivalent
13-2053	Insurance Underwriters	626	524	-102	Bachelor's degree
27-1024	Graphic Designers	964	864	-100	Bachelor's degree
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	1,327	1,228	-99	Bachelor's degree

Net job gains or losses drive structural shifts in industries and occupations that reallocate the types of jobs and the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform them. However, demand for workers is driven primarily by the need to replace incumbent workers who retire or leave an occupation, rather than by the need to fill newly created jobs.

From 2014 to 2024, projected openings due to replacement will outnumber those due to growth by more than eight to one. The number of job openings may be very high in some occupations with little or no growth. This is especially true in lower-paying, high-turnover occupations, such as retail clerks and hospitality workers. Alternatively, the number of openings may be relatively low in occupations with high rates of growth, especially those with low levels of employment.

About one fifth of projected annual openings are in high-wage, in-demand occupations. These 189 occupations pay a median wage higher than the state's median wage for all occupations, and have at least 20 openings per year. More than half of the occupations and associated openings require some level of post-secondary training or education for entry.

In addition to occupational qualifications, the flattening of organizations in all sectors puts a premium on self-organization, self-management, and personal initiative by workers at all organizational levels. Specialization of functions is becoming a thing of the past as workers increasingly are given more diverse sets of responsibilities requiring higher knowledge and skills. Jobs that once required little more than a strong back or manual dexterity now require higher levels of reading comprehension and communication, critical thinking, and decision making skills.

## High Wage, In-Demand Occupations List

Source: Maine Department of Labor, Center for Workforce Research and Information, 2014-2024 Occupational Employment Projections, and 2015 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for Maine, Table created 24 May 2016.

### High-Wage-In-Demand Criteria and Explanatory Notes

1. High Demand means the occupation is expected to have at least 20 openings per year between 2014 and 2024.
2. High Wage indicates a median wage above the \$16.69 per hour / \$34,710 per year median wage of all Maine occupations in 2015. National rates were used when no Maine rate was published, and appear in italics.
3. Some occupations are not listed due to statistical validity and non-disclosure constraints. It should be noted that some of these un-listed occupations may employ substantial numbers.
4. Median wage rates of \$90.00 per hour / \$187,200 per year or above are noted in italics. This represents the upper limit of the wage analysis program.
5. Entry Wage is defined as the mean wage of the lower one-third of the distribution for the occupation.
6. An "X" appearing in the High Growth column denotes an occupation that also meets the High-Growth, High-Wage, and In-Demand Criteria.
7. Many occupations listed in the "High-School Diploma or Less" category require substantial on-the-job training or work experience in a related occupation for entry. Post-secondary training that leads to a certificate of completion up to an Associate Degree may exist as an alternate means of entry into these occupations.

### High-Wage, In-Demand Jobs in Maine by Educational Requirement for Entry

Sorted Alphabetically								
High Growth	SOC Code	Occupation	Employment		Growth Rate	Annual Openings	Entry Wage	Median Wage
			2014	2024				
High-School Diploma or Less* See Note Seven Above								
	49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	1,893	2,153	13.7%	58	\$15.06	\$18.89
	47-2031	Carpenters	10,829	10,677	-1.4%	124	\$14.63	\$18.22
	13-1031	Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	1,710	1,680	-1.8%	42	\$19.68	\$29.21
X	51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	920	995	8.2%	36	\$15.06	\$21.10
X	33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	1,527	1,584	3.7%	48	\$13.36	\$17.13
	43-5032	Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	896	890	-0.7%	22	\$12.89	\$17.82
	47-2111	Electricians	3,699	3,647	-1.4%	56	\$18.15	\$22.85
	43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	2,140	1,929	-9.9%	23	\$17.20	\$22.26
	11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	3,159	3,003	-4.9%	54	\$24.18	\$27.07
X	47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	2,759	2,783	0.9%	24	\$18.57	\$25.42
	49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	2,043	2,006	-1.8%	41	\$20.08	\$28.19
X	43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5,303	5,453	2.8%	95	\$16.42	\$22.53
	51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,898	2,635	-9.1%	46	\$18.09	\$27.44
	41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	9,044	8,911	-1.5%	202	\$12.65	\$18.59
	53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	920	908	-1.3%	30	\$14.98	\$23.28
	11-9051	Food Service Managers	2,012	2,007	-0.3%	40	\$17.11	\$23.34
X	49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,167	1,193	2.2%	33	\$18.45	\$25.36
	51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1,264	1,092	-13.6%	32	\$13.36	\$20.45
	43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	1,377	1,377	0.0%	34	\$12.89	\$17.40
	41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	4,590	4,548	-0.9%	120	\$14.43	\$23.28
	45-4022	Logging Equipment Operators	2,059	1,964	-4.6%	49	\$13.79	\$17.37
X	51-4041	Machinists	1,277	1,303	2.0%	40	\$16.26	\$21.51
	49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	5,056	4,991	-1.3%	132	\$13.23	\$17.73
	49-3042	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines	1,104	1,072	-2.9%	26	\$15.51	\$20.62
	47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	1,512	1,522	0.7%	26	\$13.05	\$16.73
	47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	2,735	2,705	-1.1%	44	\$14.56	\$19.55
	47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	2,100	2,046	-2.6%	28	\$18.48	\$23.84
X	33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	2,108	2,217	5.2%	81	\$14.73	\$20.88
	43-5052	Postal Service Mail Carriers	1,419	1,286	-9.4%	27	\$17.13	\$25.26
	43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	1,104	1,073	-2.8%	30	\$16.71	\$27.87
X	41-3099	Sales Representatives, Services, All Other	2,134	2,219	4.0%	54	\$14.04	\$22.65
	41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	3,995	3,873	-3.1%	82	\$17.16	\$26.43
X	25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	1,394	1,501	7.7%	37	\$12.20	\$18.10
	51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,921	1,822	-5.2%	55	\$15.22	\$22.78
Post-Secondary Education Less Than Bachelor's Degree								
	49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	4,283	4,209	-1.7%	115	\$11.89	\$17.43
	43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	8,071	7,009	-13.2%	79	\$12.52	\$17.23
X	15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	1,951	2,089	7.1%	39	\$15.15	\$20.99
X	31-9091	Dental Assistants	1,144	1,240	8.4%	38	\$13.56	\$17.46
X	29-2021	Dental Hygienists	1,129	1,223	8.3%	27	\$25.90	\$29.90
	49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	2,163	2,173	0.5%	34	\$15.34	\$21.97
	53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	10,051	10,011	-0.4%	171	\$12.84	\$17.45
X	29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,340	1,403	4.7%	44	\$16.90	\$20.54
X	29-2071	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	1,149	1,250	8.8%	36	\$12.67	\$16.87
X	23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	1,029	1,104	7.3%	31	\$16.01	\$21.35
X	29-2034	Radiologic Technologists	994	1,020	2.6%	22	\$21.09	\$26.75
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Sorted Alphabetically								
High Growth	SOC Code	Occupation	Employment		Growth Rate	Annual Openings	Entry Wage	Median Wage
			2014	2024				
Bachelor's Degree or Higher								
X	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	4,809	5,120	6.5%	159	\$19.83	\$27.29
X	11-3011	Administrative Services Managers	1,497	1,539	2.8%	32	\$22.66	\$33.65
	11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	638	632	-0.9%	20	\$40.89	\$57.22
X	19-4021	Biological Technicians	597	645	8.0%	22	\$14.74	\$19.69
X	13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	2,759	2,862	3.7%	43	\$18.61	\$28.57
	21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	1,639	1,626	-0.8%	40	\$17.49	\$22.02
X	17-2051	Civil Engineers	1,070	1,107	3.5%	36	\$25.45	\$35.56
	21-2011	Clergy	2,311	2,304	-0.3%	50	\$19.05	\$22.47
X	11-3021	Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,137	1,264	11.2%	26	\$32.47	\$48.91
	15-1131	Computer Programmers	851	762	-10.5%	21	\$21.22	\$32.54
X	15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	1,615	1,870	15.8%	47	\$25.28	\$35.38
	11-9021	Construction Managers	3,309	3,238	-2.2%	46	\$25.45	\$36.26
	27-3041	Editors	549	517	-5.8%	20	\$13.03	\$19.30
	11-9032	Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	1,318	1,223	-7.2%	38	\$58,000	\$78,540
X	11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	713	722	1.3%	22	\$48,600	\$35.47
	21-1012	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	1,314	1,288	-2.0%	28	\$16.86	\$22.22
	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	6,782	6,261	-7.7%	150	\$37,060	\$52,240
X	29-1062	Family and General Practitioners	843	859	1.9%	25	\$54.57	\$80.97
X	11-3031	Financial Managers	2,735	2,823	3.2%	74	\$29.90	\$43.30
X	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	11,362	11,518	1.4%	304	\$19.75	\$36.21
	27-1024	Graphic Designers	964	864	-10.4%	23	\$12.50	\$18.04
X	21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	748	820	9.6%	25	\$19.64	\$23.21
X	13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	1,228	1,238	0.8%	31	\$18.44	\$25.06
	25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	994	924	-7.0%	29	\$35,480	\$51,170
X	23-1011	Lawyers	3,165	3,209	1.4%	50	\$25.49	\$40.27
X	13-2072	Loan Officers	1,140	1,189	4.3%	24	\$18.51	\$26.27
X	13-1111	Management Analysts	1,381	1,506	9.1%	31	\$20.19	\$28.75
	11-9199	Managers, All Other	2,324	2,301	-1.0%	51	\$31.45	\$44.15
X	13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	795	907	14.1%	21	\$21.33	\$32.64
X	11-2021	Marketing Managers	665	702	5.6%	20	\$27.53	\$44.21
	17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	774	763	-1.4%	24	\$28.87	\$38.12
X	29-2011	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technologists	833	897	7.7%	26	\$21.46	\$26.99
X	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	1,885	2,051	8.8%	65	\$29.12	\$39.61
X	21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	1,349	1,452	7.6%	42	\$19.60	\$25.88
	25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2,428	2,240	-7.7%	54	\$37,900	\$52,240
X	15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	1,370	1,423	3.9%	23	\$23.26	\$31.02
X	29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	1,175	1,468	24.9%	57	\$38.63	\$45.19
X	29-1122	Occupational Therapists	963	1,100	14.2%	33	\$23.39	\$30.97
X	13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	505	599	18.6%	22	\$20.88	\$43.87
	29-1051	Pharmacists	1,273	1,277	0.3%	30	\$46.30	\$61.29
X	29-1123	Physical Therapists	1,332	1,555	16.7%	58	\$30.31	\$35.70
X	29-1071	Physician Assistants	949	1,131	19.2%	39	\$39.18	\$48.65
X	29-1069	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	2,583	2,805	8.6%	92	\$46.55	\$90.00
X	11-2031	Public Relations and Fundraising Managers	488	515	5.5%	20	\$28.12	\$39.02
X	27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	1,159	1,222	5.4%	20	\$18.12	\$23.85
	13-1023	Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	874	844	-3.4%	24	\$19.43	\$26.08
X	29-1141	Registered Nurses	14,617	16,219	11.0%	505	\$24.29	\$30.21
	11-2022	Sales Managers	1,009	1,010	0.1%	24	\$34.90	\$51.45
	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	5,149	4,749	-7.8%	122	\$37,250	\$52,050
X	11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	1,154	1,201	4.1%	35	\$19.46	\$26.58
X	15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	1,498	1,737	16.0%	45	\$28.97	\$40.85
	25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	1,327	1,228	-7.5%	25	\$37,590	\$51,220
X	29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	710	750	5.6%	22	\$22.61	\$30.37
X	21-1011	Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	882	959	8.7%	26	\$15.58	\$20.59
X	13-1151	Training and Development Specialists	821	887	8.0%	27	\$17.17	\$25.04
	13-1022	Wholesale and Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	664	668	0.6%	21	\$15.41	\$25.87
2015 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for Maine. Table created 24 June 2016.								

2015 Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for Maine, Table created 24 June 2016.

## Section 1B: Analysis of Knowledge and Skills Needed to Meet Employment Needs

### Central/Western Region Worker Profile

Statistics describing worker flows into and out of the Central/Western Region reveal that 71 percent of the region's 153,500 resident primary job-holders lived and worked within the area. In 2014, about 45,000 resident workers commuted to jobs outside the region, partially offset by 37,000 non-resident workers commuting into the region to work, for a net outflow of 8,000 commuters.

The profile of the Central/Western Region's resident workforce was similar in most respects to that of the state. The most notable difference was in shares of jobs by earnings. The Central/Western Region had a larger share of resident workers in jobs paying between \$1,251 and \$3,333 per month and a smaller share in higher-paying jobs than the state as a whole. (2014, OnTheMap, U.S. Census Bureau)

Workers with Primary Jobs who live in the Central/Western Region		
	2014	
	Count	Share
<b>Total Primary Jobs</b>	153,547	100.00%
<b>Jobs by Worker Age</b>		
Age 29 or younger	31,612	20.60%
Age 30 to 54	82,835	53.90%
Age 55 or older	39,100	25.50%
<b>Jobs by Earnings</b>		
\$1,250 per month or less	32,716	21.30%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	67,330	43.80%
More than \$3,333 per month	53,501	34.80%
<b>Jobs by NAICS Industry Sector</b>		
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,608	1.00%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	66	<0.5%
Utilities	877	0.60%
Construction	8,262	5.40%
Manufacturing	18,057	11.80%
Wholesale Trade	5,417	3.50%
Retail Trade	21,356	13.90%
Transportation and Warehousing	4,786	3.10%
Information	1,729	1.10%
Finance and Insurance	4,777	3.10%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,443	0.90%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,826	3.80%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,658	1.70%



Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	7,716	5.00%
Educational Services	15,951	10.40%
Health Care and Social Assistance	27,459	17.90%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,259	1.50%
Accommodation and Food Services	10,850	7.10%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	3,975	2.60%
Public Administration	8,475	5.50%
<b>Jobs by Worker's Gender</b>		
Male	75,576	49.20%
Female	77,971	50.80%

## Section 1C: Analysis of Workforce in the Region

Statistics describing worker flows into and out of the Central/Western Region reveal that 71 percent of the region's 153,500 resident primary job-holders lived and worked within the area. In 2014, about 45,000 resident workers commuted to jobs outside the region, partially offset by 37,000 non-resident workers commuting into the region to work, for a net outflow of 8,000 commuters.

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Accommodation and Food Services	10,850	7.10%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	3,975	2.60%
Public Administration	8,475	5.50%
<b>Jobs by Worker's Gender</b>		
Male	75,576	49.20%
Female	77,971	50.80%

A job vacancy survey conducted in September 2015 indicated 5,800 job vacancies in the region. By industry, the highest concentrations of vacancies were in healthcare and social assistance (33% of regional vacancies compared to 31% statewide), construction (15% compared to 6% statewide), accommodation and food services (13% compared to 16% statewide) and manufacturing (13% compared to 4% statewide). By occupation, the highest concentrations of vacancies were in office and administrative support (15%), construction and extraction (13%) and sales occupations (11%). The highest demand for workers (share vacancies compared to share jobs) was in construction, community and social services, and personal care and services occupations.

## Section 1D: Analysis of Workforce Development Activities in the Region

While the ecosystem of partners delivering workforce services in the region is robust and interconnected, there continue to be opportunities for improvement. Based on a focus group that included a broad representation of partners and workforce development stakeholders, the following areas were identified for improvement:

- Improving communication by:
  - Cross-training partners on services and resources
  - Clarifying vocabulary, program goals and metrics, and eligibility requirements

- Sharing information about employer needs
- Improving soft skill training
- Developing a better understanding of employer job seeker requirements and identifying what is really necessary (e.g. is a certain educational level really a requirement for a certain job?)
- Recruitment of job seekers into training classes

## Educational Overview

In 2014, nearly 3,600 educational degrees and certificates were awarded in the region by 13 educational institutions. Over the past ten years, the number of educational awards in the region has increased by nearly 25%. In the state and nation, the number of educational awards has outpaced growth in the region, increasing by 40% and 45%, respectively.

Over 60% of academic awards were for a Bachelor's degree or Master's degree while 30% were awarded for Associate's degrees. Four year colleges and universities in the region produce the most graduates, including Colby College, University of Maine at Augusta, Bates College, and University of Maine at Farmington. Central Maine Community College and Kennebec Valley Community College also produce a significant number of graduates in the region, the majority of which are for Associate's degrees. In the region, just 1.3% of academic awards completed in the region were for certificates that require less than 1 academic year.

### Regional Completions by Award Level

Award Level	Completions (2014)	Percent
Award of less than 1 academic year	48	1.3%
Award of at least 1 but less than 2 academic years	232	6.4%
Associates degree	1,082	30.1%
Bachelors degree	2,148	59.7%
Postbaccalaureate certificate	10	0.3%
Masters degree	79	2.2%

Source: EMSI Q2 2016

In May, June, and July, the CWMWDB reached out to employers in the region to get their feedback on the workforce and education system and suggestions for improvement. A summary of feedback is below:

### Manufacturing:

Employers expressed satisfaction with some recent initiatives to improve the pipeline of manufacturing workers, including technical centers in high schools and manufacturing-focused educational programs at the community college level, such as the Precision Machining certificate and Associate's degree programs at CMCC, among others. Despite these training opportunities, employers said that these programs were not producing enough graduates to satisfy the demand from employment growth and retirements in the manufacturing industry. Overall, manufacturers cited increased automation of processes as a trend that will change the skillset required of workers. Additionally, finding trainers and instructors for programmable logic controller (PLC) courses and on-the-job training is challenging.

### **Healthcare:**

The healthcare industry is in need of CNAs, RNs, and Medical Assistants. While employers have been working with the Ready to Work program to train CNAs, they have found it challenging to retain these CNAs. Employers mentioned that the “soft skills” component of the Ready to Work program has helped improve the quality of applicants. Additionally, employers would like to partner more with education and training providers to facilitate recruitment and provide opportunities for on-site training and job shadowing.

### **Other Training Needs:**

Employers consistently cited a need for soft skill training, especially combined with occupational training. Additionally, HVAC workers with an understanding of programming will be required and employers cited the need for workers with information technology and computers skills.

### **Other Education/Training Challenges:**

Education providers cited funding as a major challenge to developing programs that meet employer skill needs as many employers have limited budgets for training. Additionally, developing new programs and attracting the appropriate faculty can be costly.

Attracting and retaining students is another challenge. The cost of courses can prevent students from completing courses. Additionally, conflicts with work and balancing family/life obligations with schoolwork as well as program difficulty/student preparedness can also prevent students from completing courses.

As discussed throughout the plan, the CWMWDB has identified a series of goals and strategies that will address these challenges. These include, among others:

- Improving information sharing, especially related to business services
- Engaging more closely with employers to develop training curricula
- Leveraging partner and WIOA resources to coordinate wraparound services that help students complete educational and training programs
- Building the pipeline of skilled workers by helping recruit students into targeted educational and training programs
- Pursuing grant funding with partners to support employer training needs

## **Section 1E: Local Board’s Strategic Vision & Goals**

### **Vision Statement:**

“A diverse and satisfied workforce meeting the needs of employers.”

CWMWDB’s vision is a strong, vibrant, sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities for employers and creates high demand-high wage jobs for job seekers. It is a system that promotes active, engaged industry partnerships to create a highly trained, educated, and diverse workforce, leading to improved quality of life for the residents of Central/Western Maine.

The vision captures CWMWDB’s two most important variables: the workforce and the employers. The 4-year Local Plan’s emphasis, through its priorities and strategies, is to help

build a motivated and skilled workforce. Identifying employers' needs will be critical to the human resource training and talent development initiatives. When skilled workers meet and exceed the expectations of employers, they develop a sense of purpose for the work they perform, inspiring intrinsic rewards, such as enjoyment of one's job. The employers benefit when they can consistently staff their human resource needs with satisfied, talented workers.

### **Overarching Goals:**

- Improved communication among workforce stakeholders (including employers)
- Balance of supply and demand of labor
- Improved foundational learning and adaptability skills

### **Proposed Strategies:**

- Strategy One – Improve Communication within the Workforce Development System
- Strategy Two – Identify and Implement Sector and Asset-Based Models
- Strategy Three – Increase Opportunities for Educators to Know and Experience the Workforce Needs of Employers
- Strategy Four – Balance Supply and Demand of Labor
- Strategy Five – Foundational Learning and Adaptability Skills

### **Overarching Priorities:**

**Priority 1 – Communication:** The CWMWDB will guide investments in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training that will result in a diverse and satisfied workforce meeting the needs of employers. These initiatives have been designed to consider and address the demands and areas of focus for local employers, businesses, educators and trainers (i.e. teachers, principals, guidance counselors, superintendents), as well as the skill and education gaps of the available local workforce. Regular interaction between the education system, employers, and the workforce development system is absolutely necessary for the success of the 4-year plan. It is the consensus that ongoing meetings on a regular schedule will ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the capabilities and resources of each partner and will further identify opportunities for collaboration. The Center for Workforce Research and Information (CWRI) Economic Development Districts (EDD), industry associations, CareerCenters and other key organizations will provide real-time data to determine current and future high-growth and high-paying industries and occupations. Ongoing round table discussions between stakeholders and focus groups can further identify skill gaps, recruitment challenges and solutions. The CareerCenter Business Services Teams will assist in creating relationships and staying connected to stakeholders in education and training so that the workforce development system (WFDS) is aware of current educational and training opportunities.

**Priority 2 – Collaboration:** Through unified and increased collaboration, the WFDS will promote an integrated approach to addressing the workforce and industry skill and educational needs. This includes businesses, educators, trainers, economic developers, other key agencies, and providers and people representing the entire workforce development system in Local Region 3. Workforce representatives include Vocational Rehabilitation staff, consultants, and trained specialty staff. Vocational Rehabilitation staff are invited to be members of the Board, and of the Workforce subcommittee.

To further enhance collaboration between economic and workforce development, the Business & Economic Development Specialist from one of the region's Economic Development Districts serves on the CWMWDB Board. Active partnerships have been developed with local and regional economic development entities in all of the five counties as noted throughout this plan. The intent of these partnerships are to promote superior opportunities for Maine's businesses and citizens through private sector led initiatives among local and regional workforce and economic development agencies.

Industry partnerships and sector strategies will be tailored to the Region's economy as well as mirror and support strategies for the State of Maine. This includes specific industries such as healthcare, computer and information technology, call centers, and manufacturing among others (also listed below). To address these crucial industries' needs, the Region has an active health care industry partnership with Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC), Franklin Memorial Hospital (FMH), Maine General Medical Center (MGMC), Alfond Center for Health, and St. Mary's Hospital. These were the original developers and writers of the successful Maine Health Care Grant. In order to support this, CWMWDB continues to meet on a regular basis looking for additional grant funding and new strategies to meet the needs of this industry for the future changes in health care. CWMWDB with local partners also developed a call center training curriculum that has been used to train potential workers for the multiple call centers in the region including Stericycle and Sykes/Barclays. Another example of how Local Region 3 supports these industry partnerships is through the work done with Central Maine Community College (CMCC) on the \$4.7-million-dollar IT grant and the \$900,000 Regional Advanced Machining Partnership (RAMP) grant. CMCC was awarded this major grant from the National Science Foundation. The three-year RAMP grant will pay for the college to develop a new advanced machining program to address the pressing needs for highly skilled advanced machining workers.

**Priority 3 – Developing a Pipeline of Workers through Outreach and Education:** In order to increase the participants throughout the region, focus group members have agreed to connect with the workforce, students and educators out in the community. This can be done in part through career and education fairs, in-person visits, and finding creative ways to make CWMWDB more available and quickly address issues among stakeholders. Key industrial players in the area have been identified as Health Care, Home Care, Precision Machine Tool & Manufacturing, Leisure & Hospitality, Professional & Business Services, Customer Service Call Centers, and Retail. The CareerCenters' Business Services Teams will visit employers individually to determine their current job openings, challenges in filling those positions, as well as short and long term solutions for finding qualified employees. Those same Business Service Teams offer an array of services that can help strengthen and broaden the economic base by assisting small businesses and new startups with hiring, training, expanding and possibly other needs as reasonably identified. CWMWDB wants to pursue the concept of integrating a "Rapid Response" type approach with a team of experts who will be available for any new business that wants to start up or move into Local Region 3. This will increase their ability to respond quickly to businesses' needs around workforce development. The CareerCenter works closely with the community colleges so they can become immediately aware when a business needs customized training to fill their more highly skilled job openings. Other training monies can be leveraged and are available through grants, ASPIRE, WIOA, and Vocational Rehabilitation training dollars and employer sponsored trainings.

In order to foster their understanding of what the needs are in their local economy, employers and educators (i.e. teachers, principals, guidance counselors, superintendents) should be making better connections with students. It is important for students and adults in training programs to discover how they can become more marketable and employable through relevant education and training at the high school and college level. Local Region 3 needs to see an increase in the number of adults with an education beyond high school. This can be accomplished using organizations such as College for ME – Androscoggin (see page 38) as a conduit. Additionally, Local Region 3 is having conversations and working with the area chambers of commerce, and key personnel at the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG), Kennebec Valley Council Of Government (KVCOG), Somerset Workforce Connect, Kennebec Valley Community College (KVCC), Central Maine Community College (CMCC), the University of Maine at Augusta (UMA), the University of Southern Maine (USM), Kaplan University and all HR personnel at the four major hospitals in the area. The goal is to increase the awareness and participation of trainers and educators, which should ultimately overflow to the potential members of the workforce.

Looking ahead over the next five years and beyond, the WFDS recognizes the importance of connecting youth to education and training opportunities that lead to employment, ensuring that students, parents, teachers, counselors, and school administrators have access to quality data regarding career pathways and options. It is equally important to ensure that eligible youth, (including disconnected youth and those with multiple barriers) have the opportunity to develop and achieve their career objectives. Education and workforce training will help with this so that before local youth finish high school, they can be exposed to more career and educational options. Counselors, mentors, parents, employers and teachers will help the youth define and identify skill sets that compliment students' choices. This integrated training approach will help to offset shortages of school counselors and teaching time. In school, activities such as job shadowing and field trips can allow for a more hands on approach to workforce exposure. When learning how to best lead and mentor the local youth, all stakeholders should be invited to attend teacher workshops and trainings including business leaders, students and parents. It has been suggested that an "Adopt-a-School" program be established by businesses, or something similar.

**Priority 4 – Develop Demand-Driven Training Opportunities:** CWMWDB markets OJT and customized training as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business and employer groups. Other local partners such as economic development agencies, business and trade associations, business advisory groups, chambers of commerce, educational institutions and other collaboratives will be encouraged to work with CWMWDB and CareerCenters to support and promote demand-side training to meet business needs through OJT and customized training.

CWMWDB has identified, targeted and partnered with high-growth, high demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and Customized Training strategies. CWMWDB will continue to support Health Care, Information Technology, and Advanced Manufacturing & Machining. More current sectors include Construction and Related Trades, Retail and Service, and other specific local initiatives for job development in key parts of area-specific sectors (such as agriculture/local foods and Ecotourism in Franklin and Somerset). Labor Market Information and industry-specific surveys/studies support this emphasis. To ensure that businesses receive services that directly benefit them, CWMWDB taps business partners to help support the demand-driven strategy. Specific business needs will be determined by

individual businesses, business sector-forums, business and trade associations involvement, economic development information and educational institutions recommendations that are used to drive this demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development and determine appropriate lengths of training.

CWMWDB leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures. CWMWDB will utilize state technical assistance to expand the use of OJT and Customized Training. To the extent possible, WIOA Title I funds will be used to leverage other funds that are available to support worker training such as, TAA and National Emergency Grant Funds. Additional policies and collaborations between workforce and economic development will be developed throughout the implementation of this plan to expand these training options. CWMWDB will recommend that service providers utilize resources from economic development, trade associations, educational institutions and other WIOA partners to enhance these training opportunities.

Other creative ways to market the CareerCenter Business Services are to speak at chamber of commerce breakfasts or be a spotlight business at a chamber event, speak to Kiwanis or Rotary business audiences at their luncheons, post available business services on the CareerCenter Facebook page and articles in the local paper about the CareerCenter Business Services offered free to employers.

**Priority 5 – Performance Monitoring:** CWMWDB uses several methods for defining goals, measuring outcomes and reinforcing agreements to evaluate the impact of its collaborations and services to the region. CWMWDB regularly reviews the performance and effectiveness through routine monitoring of the system both quarterly and annually. In addition to monitoring program and fiscal management, the monitoring tool is designed to monitor activities that reflect LWDB policy compliance. CWMWDB meets regularly with the CareerCenter Managers to discuss operations, performance standards, best practices, customer need & capacity and access to services. As a result of these meetings value to the employers, participants and partners are discussed and evaluated for effectiveness and corrective action plans may be necessary to ensure high quality services. Managers and staff from WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and Vocational Rehabilitation have joint staff meetings to discuss what each organization does so they can jointly work together on projects beneficial to customers. These entities are part of the One Stop Operator Agreement and these meetings enable the partners to reinforce the roles and responsibilities of the partners within the One Stop as they relate to implementing, managing and operating the One Stop system.

**Priority 6 – Develop Stackable, Industry Recognized Training Programs:** CWMWDB recognizes that attaining industry recognized credentials is an integral component to many of the occupations that are high wage/high demand occupations.

With this in mind, CWMWDB will continue to work with employers and training partners to increase the opportunities, access and participation in Customized training, OJT, and industry recognized credentials that will be closely aligned with employers needs in the targeted industry sectors that are identified in this plan. CWMWDB will use the current policies that focus on employer services and training opportunities to help facilitate this increase:



- Customized Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Guidelines for Customers with Degrees/Licenses/Certificates
- Incumbent Worker On-the-Job Training

Additional policies and collaborations between workforce and economic development will be pursued throughout the implementation of this plan to expand these training options. CWMWDB will recommend that service providers utilize resources from economic development, trade associations, educational institutions and other WIOA partners to enhance these training opportunities.

## Section 1F: Strategy to Achieve Vision and Goals

### **Key Priorities and Goals**

During the recently completed focus groups, stakeholders echoed many of the same concerns and challenges expressed during the 2013 focus groups. Key findings from the focus groups were:

- A need for regular and meaningful communication among stakeholders
- Means to share information seamlessly among stakeholders
- Limited awareness of employment potential in region among students and secondary education providers
- Need to build employer awareness of workforce services
- Need for more collaborative business outreach/business services among workforce, education, and training agencies
- Employers expecting significant retirements among most experienced workers over the coming years
- A need for soft skill training for workers – especially incorporated into K-12 education and occupational training
- Transporting rural workers to urban employment centers and urban workers to rural employment centers
- Build pipeline of skilled workers by increasing enrollment in training programs
- Short-term programs needed that offer stackable, industry-recognized credentials

To address these challenges and opportunities, the CWMWDB has developed the following goals and strategies that will be implemented over the next four years, in collaboration with education, training providers, service providers, and employers in the region. Implementing these strategies will be essential to reaching the CWMWDB's vision for "A diverse and satisfied workforce meeting the needs of all employers".

### **Improved Communication**

Business (existing employers and economic developers) and Education (K-12, post-secondary, adult education, and sector-specific trainers) need a two-way communication system to ensure that education and training are developing systems to create a skilled workforce that meets the current and future needs of employers. This includes backwards planning of training with pipelines designed for specific employment opportunities, developing short-term industry-recognized and stackable credentials, and building career pathways that help workers move into

more skilled positions and unlock higher wages.

### **Goals**

1. Support and facilitate industry sector development.
2. Increase employer engagement in workforce development system.
3. Improve educators understanding of employers' workforce needs/skills requirements.
4. Reduce the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs.
5. Develop mechanisms to seamlessly share information about employer needs among stakeholders.
6. Develop regular training opportunities for stakeholders (e.g. annual webinar) so workforce board and stakeholders can provide updates about current priorities and resources
7. Cross-train all business outreach representatives so that all workforce and education/training agencies are represented during business visits

### **Balance Supply and Demand of Labor**

To meet employers' need for skilled and work-ready individuals, the workforce system must connect unemployed workers, individuals who have exited the workforce, incumbent workers, veterans, individuals with disabilities, and youth with training opportunities and quality jobs. In addition to connecting these workers with training, supportive services must be incorporated into training programs for workers with barriers to employment and training.

### **Goals**

1. Reduce the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs and increase the support system for youth.
2. Increase employer engagement in workforce development system.
3. Improve educators understanding of employers' workforce needs/skills requirements.
4. Engage employers in training programs to develop appropriate curriculum, use machinery, and offer job shadowing and similar opportunities.

### **Improve Foundational Learning and Adaptability Skills**

Basic literacy, numeracy and academic skills should be developed for all participants in adult education programs and students seeking to attain their GED or high school diploma. Schools need to develop and teach higher-level thinking habits, complex reasoning skills, and problem solving skills, "habits of mind" for all students in K-12 and beyond. All students need the ability to "to change lanes" in employment, training and career pathways. Increase the awareness of the youth population's ability to "change lanes" and the importance of it. There is a need to start that awareness and process early on (possibly as early as Pre-K) as one of the messages that children receive from teachers and mentors. The whole community needs to support and be involved in the effort and to promote the importance of critical thinking and good academic habits to the community at large.

### **Goals**

1. Reduce the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs and increase the support system for youth.

2. Partner with adult education providers to incorporate soft skills and career ladder preparation into curriculum.
3. Increase employer engagement in workforce development system.

## Key Opportunities

### **Improve Communication within the Workforce Development System**

The combined committees would like to create a pipeline of employment by linking new training to existing jobs. In order to build that bridge and allow the workforce to cross it, the region must build upon existing coalitions and collaborations to improve dialogue and two-way communication between the workforce, trainers/educators and employers. (e.g. Maine Workforce and Economic Development Alliance).

### **Identify and Implement Sector and Asset-Based Models**

As previously stated, Local Region 3 can increase efficiencies by using current data available through Mobilize ME for all regions in the state. The information obtained through these reports, enables local and regional economic development entities to support and facilitate growth opportunities for both companies and targeted industries. Local Region 3 will review and revise its 16 career and industry cluster list and align it with any new sector identified. This list is used to determine the occupational training opportunities with the best potential for employment. This has essentially been done with the data that is available in this report (Section I C). The overall emphasis is to develop a better ability to match and forecast skill requirements in order to meet employer workforce needs; this is a critical step and must have increased employer involvement in order to gain accurate data.

### **Increase Opportunities for Educators to Know and Experience the Workforce Needs of Employers**

Local Region 3 will support educators (i.e. teachers, principals, guidance counselors, superintendents) in their efforts to create and deliver relevant course offerings linked to industry needs. Employers and educators will need to form better connections with students so that they can help them to fill future employment demands.

### **Balance Supply and Demand of Labor**

The goal is to reduce the current number of unemployed workers and streamline policies and practices to access skilled untapped/underutilized labor pools. This can be done by reducing mismatch between job seekers skills and critical employer needs. A key element in this strategy is improved communication as described above. CWMWDB needs to keep an open line of communication to all partners who work directly with existing, growing/expanding, and new businesses so the workforce development system can screen, educate, train, and prepare workers in advance before the employer is in a critical need of employees.

### **Foundational Learning and Adaptability Skills**

CWMWDB supports the critical need for schools and trainers to develop and teach higher level thinking habits, critical thinking, complex reasoning skills, problem solving skills, and good “habits of mind” for all students K-12 as well as in post-secondary settings. For this reason, CWMWDB supports Adult Education’s focus on career pathways as an integral component to

enabling people to move forward in the workforce and those preparing to enter.

## Section 2: Description of Workforce Development System in Local Area

By engaging with existing partners and incorporating more partners into the workforce system, the CWMWDB can increase awareness and participation in training programs, developing a more robust pipeline of skilled workers to meet employer needs. Potential new partners include employers/businesses, local and state leaders, education leadership, and policymakers. To ensure meaningful engagement, these partners and stakeholder groups should have opportunities for cross-training, discussing success stories, and sharing resources, opportunities, and needs.

Stakeholders will give job seekers and youth opportunities to experience the workforce first hand. Information on needs, job openings, future industry growth and training/education opportunities should be transferred to multiple interested parties. Once workers are trained and a solid base of skilled workers is formed, the region can use an inventory of available skill sets as an incentive for relocation and to develop/expand businesses. Communication via email, social networking and other inexpensive yet efficient means can be used to make it easy to forward information to all appropriate parties, provided that the information doesn't require any more work or edits.

To ensure and encourage coordination of discretionary and formula-based investments, CWMWDB will continue working closely with partners in the workforce development system to identify opportunities to use program funds to leverage other funding sources.

### **Working with Partners**

CareerCenters have several partners with whom they coordinate in order to provide services to customers. They are continually developing new linkages with groups that wish to have a presence in the CareerCenter and hope to increase the number beyond those listed below as needs dictate.

**Unemployment Compensation:** The CareerCenters work closely with the Bureau of Unemployment Compensation to ensure fair and seamless service to mutual customers. CareerCenter staff have been trained to assist customers with the new Internet claim filing system; fax and phones are also available for customers to file claims. Training approval letters are now sent electronically to UI, thus, reducing the chances for delays in UI checks. The required follow-up for WIOA enrolled customers is based on the UI wage records, which are also available to CareerCenter staff.

**Labor Market Information System:** There are Labor Market Analysts available from the Maine Center for Workforce Research Information to job seekers, employers, and staff on a referral basis to provide in-depth Labor Market Information (LMI). In addition, the LMI system has been upgraded to be more user-friendly for CareerCenter staff and customers.

**Job Corps:** Job Corps information and recruiter are available upon request to meet with and assist youth interested in accessing Job Corps services as well as those returning to the area upon completion of their Job Corps training.

**Title IVC Veteran's Program:** A Title IVC Veteran's Representative assists Veterans in the CareerCenter Information Center(s) with career services and meets with referred Veterans to determine eligibility for Veterans training funds. Customers may be co-enrolled in WIOA for comprehensive and seamless case management.

**Department of Health and Human Services:** MDOL has a Memorandum of Agreement with Department of Health and Human Services to affect public assistance recipients with regard to their work experience and employment needs. This new memorandum of agreement is being carried out with the 12 full service CareerCenters and the 16 DHHS offices. In addition, customers utilize WIOA services at the CareerCenters and some choose to work more in-depth with an Employment Counselor. Career Services are also available to DHHS participants if needed. The same service options are also part of the Rapid Response Initiative process.

**Adult Education:** Adult Education is also a major partner in providing the WorkReady Credential and ESOL courses for Lewiston's multinational population. They come to the Lewiston CareerCenter to meet with customers and provide information about programs offered at adult education locations. Adult Education is a significant service provider for the other CareerCenters as well and they meet onsite with customers.

**SCSEP:** Senior Community Service Employment Program information is available in the CareerCenters to assess potential customers who wish to learn more about and participate in this employment program. The CareerCenters can also serve as an onsite training facility for SCSEP recipients.

### Section 3: Description of 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

Through close partnerships with education providers, industry, economic development/chambers of commerce, and service providers, the CWMWDB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment. Expanding these opportunities will rely on specific strategies that increase collaboration and coordination among partner organizations. These strategies, discussed in more detail in Section 1E and 1F, include:

- **Improving communication among all stakeholders:** this strategy is addressed regularly throughout this plan. In order to ensure employers and job seekers can leverage all of the workforce resources available in the region; the partners must develop seamless methods of regular communication and clear processes for referring job seekers and employers.
- **Increasing awareness of partner resources:** in order to leverage complementary resources and avoid service duplication, each partner must be aware of the resources, criteria, and priorities of other workforce service providers in the region. Specific strategies could include regular meetings, an annual training conference or webinar, or an online clearinghouse outlining the resources of each organization.
- **Employer engagement:** no amount of data can replace the value of regular and meaningful engagement with employers. The goals of this engagement are many, including increasing employer awareness of workforce resources, encouraging employers

to hire applicants with barriers to employment, and collaboratively developing career pathways and training programs that result in industry-recognized, stackable credentials. Continually improving business services will require a coordinated and robust business outreach that incorporates business outreach representatives from many partners, including economic development and chamber of commerce partners.

#### Section 4: Strategies to Support Employers, Meet Business Needs, Coordinate with Economic Development, and Strengthen Linkages between Partners

##### **i) Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employer in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs**

As mentioned in Sections 1E and 1F, the CWMWDB has identified employer engagement as a key priority to achieve its vision. In order to support employers of all sizes in the region, especially those in in-demand industries, the CWMWDB, in collaboration with a range of partners, including economic development and chambers of commerce, will engage in a variety of strategies, including:

- Creating and leveraging sector-based partnerships
- Engaging with employers to develop industry-led training programs
- Analyzing economic and workforce data to better understand trends in the region and employer needs
- Creating a robust and coordinated business services program

Based on a study of employment demand and projections, the CWMWDB has identified 3 priority industries for the Local Region 3. These priority sectors are: healthcare, advanced precision machining, and travel and tourism. Additionally, the Information Technology industry will continue to be priority for the region. The CWMWDB also conducted a scan of economic development strategies and CEDS for economic development organizations and chambers throughout the region to determine the industries they are prioritizing. In addition to healthcare, manufacturing, travel and tourism, and IT, the following industries have been identified as priorities for economic development partners:

- Forestry and Wood/Paper Products (Kennebec, Oxford, Somerset Counties)
- Agriculture/Food/Local Food (Androscoggin, Kennebec, Oxford, Somerset Counties)
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Androscoggin, Kennebec Counties)
- Bio-Tech (Franklin and Kennebec Counties, Manufacturers Association of Maine.)
- Renewable Energy (Kennebec, Somerset Counties)
- Call Centers – Customer Service/Electronic Retail (Androscoggin, Franklin Oxford Counties)
- Construction (Somerset County)

More details about these strategies can be found subsequently.



## Sector-Based Partnerships & Industry-Led Training

Through several recently implemented grants, the CWMWDB has had the opportunity to work with partners to facilitate sector-based partnerships and develop training programs that meet employer's needs. Even as some of these grants come to an end, they have provided replicable models for developing employer-driven training programs and sector-based strategies that can be continuously applied and improved in the future.

As a result of these partnerships over the last several years, the following Employer Engagement model has been developed and implemented in Local Region 3 for various targeted industries:

### **Identify industries/employers that are growing/emerging**

- Employers engaged at beginning of talent pipeline
  - Determine workforce needs/issues (new jobs/incumbent workers)
    - Identify specific skills for occupations
  - Career pathways for incumbent and entry level workers
  - Assist in curriculum development and implementation
  - Involved in initial review of potential training participants
  - Participate as guest speakers/instructors, train at facility, onsite tours
  - Active in pre-employment preparation (resume, mock interviews, etc.)
  - **Job placement and employer's competitive position strengthened**

## Healthcare

CWMWDB has an active Health Care Action Team industry partnership that includes HC professionals from Central Maine Medical Center, Maine College of Health Professions, St. Mary's Regional Medical Center, MaineGeneral Medical Center, Franklin Memorial Hospital and Redington-Fairview General Hospital in Skowhegan. These health care professionals along with the local LWDB and MDOL were the original developers/grant writers of the very successful statewide Maine Health Care Grant that ran from 2010 to 2103.

Maine's Health Care Grant helped over 1,000 incumbent and unemployed Maine citizens gain a new health care credential and/or post-secondary degrees (Associates, Bachelors, or MSN) and played a major role in generating new jobs, promotions, new creative training programs (Eldercare Specialist Critical Care and ICU Nurse Apprenticeships) and better staffed hospitals, medical centers, and health care facilities throughout Maine. The success of this grant demonstrates the importance of bringing education and industry together to identify needs and develop solutions. The partnership (now the Maine HealthCare Workforce Forum) continues to meet on a regular basis looking for new grant money and new strategies to meet the needs of the fast growing health care industry and replacement of aging baby boomers in medical professions.

The Central/Western region, along with the rest of the state, implemented a Centralized Clinical Placement Management System (CCPMS) modeled after a similar software program in Massachusetts. As of June 29, 2016, the Maine CCPMS database is managing 908 group placements of which 650 were filled and 258 are open. This represents 5,768 filled and open

Maine nursing student-slots that are managed in CCPMS. This system facilitates the placement of RNs in clinical settings so they are able to graduate and begin work as a nurse. Prior to this system, nursing students often struggled to secure clinical placements required to complete their degree. That program also has a Centralized On-Line Orientation Program that can be customized to each medical facility and a Nursing Faculty Database to see who is available for vacant faculty positions. Maine is in the process of growing that database usage.

CWMWDB also worked closely with the healthcare Regional Program Advisory Group (RPAG) to develop and implement an Eldercare Specialist training program at St. Mary's D'Youville Pavilion which is anticipated to expand throughout the state through Maine Quality Center funding over the next 3-5 years using the Maine Healthcare Workforce Forum as the conduit.

As a result of these successful industry partnerships the CWMWDB and its partners continue to develop and implement successful health care training projects for the unemployed and under-employed in the five county region. These include Ready2Work CNA training projects with OJT's built into the process at St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and D'Youville Pavilion, Clover Health Care in Auburn, Maine Veteran's Home in Augusta, Gray Birch & Glenridge Long Term Health Care facilities affiliated with MaineGeneral in Augusta, Mt. Saint Joseph Residence & Rehabilitation in Waterville, Lakewood in Skowhegan, and Schooner Estates in Auburn where the workforce development system in Local Region 3 developed a CRMA/PSS Ready2Work custom training program for each facility.

One of the newest health care training projects is currently in development with MaineGeneral and the Maine Apprenticeship Program. Maine's Sector Partnership and Apprenticeship Program Manager is working with the Vice President of Human Resources at MaineGeneral to create a fast track Medical Assistant Apprenticeship program to meet the growing need of new trained MA's for their multiple outpatient medical facilities in Central Maine. CWMWDB's goal is to support the fast-track apprenticeship model by promoting it within the workforce development system and to pursue the feasibility of expanding it across Local Region 3.

Franklin Memorial Hospital (FMH) in Farmington, has been conducting a summer health care occupational training program entitled "Scrub Club" for middle and high school students for over ten years. Health care foundational topics covered during the program include: CPR, Sports Medicine, Suturing, IV, Intubation, RT, Health Informatics, Pharmacy, First Aid, Brain Injury, Dementia, Casting, PT, EMT, Radiology, Speech Therapy, EMT and a live Mock Accident in the woods. The goal is to introduce students to the various aspects of the health care industry at an early age to facilitate an interest in the industry, whereby education can be tailored accordingly for each student.

### **Information Technology**

CWMWDB continues working with Central Maine Community College (CMCC) on a \$4.7 million IT grant. The IT program phase of the grant ends 3/31/17 (with the extension), the remaining six months of the grant (9/30/17) is data collection and final evaluation reporting by an external evaluator. The final data should be available mid-November 2017. The Maine IT grant has created a greater community awareness and has been an incredible ambassador; students and employers are realizing that CMCC and KVCC have local solutions for IT training needs. Both community colleges plan to continue offering as many certification preparation courses as possible. KVCC's plan is to continue the CSI (Computer Systems Integration)



program as well as continue offering an expanded list of new IT offerings. CMCC provided funding for the Testing and Assessment Center and will continue its use to expand their assessment and programming capabilities for the IT industry.

A prominent employer that relies on IT as a function of its business model partnered with the Lewiston CareerCenter to convene employers and other demand-side stakeholders to identify demand occupations, skill needs, workforce training opportunities, emerging needs and areas of growth. One of the outcomes of the meeting was to create a Regional Program Advisory Group (RPAG) for the IT industry. The initial meeting consisted of employers, educators, and service providers and was used to discuss issues and challenges of finding enough qualified IT workers for the unfilled IT positions at employers such as Androscoggin Bank, CMCC, State of Maine OIT, Oxford Networks, Symquest, Connectivity Point, Caretech, Mingle Analytics, and others.

Following the employer engagement model noted above, a meeting of education providers and other stakeholders was convened to identify and respond to workforce skill and training needs as identified by employers. The stakeholders met with the CareerCenter and CWMWDB staff to discuss new certifications, degrees, and special training programs to determine the best fit of programming to offer local IT companies. Educators then met with the employers to discuss their offerings and curricula in IT-related areas. The next step is to work with the RPAG to determine the feasibility of creating short-term training that has been jointly developed by educators and employers.

As part of the strategy to begin the IT talent pipeline from high school into job placement, CWMWDB is working with all six of Local Region 3's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Centers. Staff is connecting with the CTE's to determine the level of IT training available at the high school technical center level with the goal of connecting students to employment through OJT and/or apprenticeship; work experience and occupational training that will lead to job placement.

### **Manufacturing**

The CWMWDB supported Central Maine Community College on its \$900,000 Regional Advanced Machining Partnership (RAMP) Grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2013. The three-year RAMP grant has enabled the college to develop a new Advanced Precision Machining program to address the pressing needs for highly skilled advanced machining workers, such as Kennebec Technologies, Mountain Machine Works, and Maine Machine Products.

CMCC already has a machine program with a strong reputation. The new certificate program included six courses on advanced machining. As indicated throughout this plan CWMWDB is focused on industry partnerships and sector development as a major factor in facilitating economic opportunities for employers and increasing employment openings in the region. Again, this model of employer-driven training programs can be replicated for other manufacturing sectors and other priority industries.

As of Spring 2016, CMCC's Regional Advanced Machining Partnership that was created in 2013 is currently in their one year no-cost extension. They will meet one more time next Spring for an annual review which will then be included in the final report to the NSF. As a result of the NSF grant the Certificate of Advanced Machining will continue at the college. In addition, CMCC

has become the Northeast Training Center for the Haas Technical Educators (HTEC) network with 44 instructors from 20 community colleges attending classes at CMCC May, June and July of 2016. The college is hosting the HTEC 2016 – CNC Educators Training Conference – The Next Dynamic Decade in July with workshops designed to deliver the Certificate in Advanced Machining curriculum.

The impact from the grant includes the following and similar results are anticipated due to the new programming that will be on-going at CMCC:

- 8 new courses offered for the first time as part of that program.
- 28 employees from 4 different Maine companies were impacted.
- Summer 2015 dissemination curriculum workshops were held for teachers from 23 community colleges, universities, and high schools from around the country
- 278 students were impacted in 9 states.

As indicated throughout this plan CWMWDB is focused on industry partnerships and sector development as a major factor in facilitating economic opportunities for employers and increasing employment openings in the region. This is also viewed as an important strategy for the State of Maine.

To continue to support and strengthen the manufacturing industry, and their focus on advanced precision machining occupational training, CMCC was awarded a grant of almost \$1.6 million in July 2016. The funds will be used, to expand CMCC's precision machining technology laboratory by 8,600 square feet to accommodate increasing demand for skills training by enrolled students and businesses. The expanded facility will allow a 20% increase in student enrollment, which is critical to meeting the industry's estimate of 900 high-skill, high-wage precision machining vacancies that will occur during the next five years.

### **Data Analysis**

The Workforce Development System in Local Region 3 will listen to feedback from stakeholders and continue to match skills, training and job opportunities as needed. In addition to feedback from partners and employers, the CWMWDB will leverage data resources in the region to better understand workforce needs and employment trends in the region. Armed with this data, the CWMWDB will be better able to anticipate future workforce needs and plan accordingly. Additionally, this data can be a useful tool when engaging with employers. The Maine Job Link analytics will also be used to find employers hiring in specific industries along with data from the Center for Workforce Research and Information. [www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/](http://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/)

### **Business Outreach**

Meanwhile, Business Services outreach (through CareerCenters) ensures that all staff understand the job order process and is able to walk an employer through the process. However, a key starting point to this strategy may also be the identification of industries and companies that have the potential to grow and expand thus increasing employment opportunities in the region. Identifying specific companies and engaging them to participate in the workforce development system will facilitate opportunities for employers and educators to work together and convene a discussion between them to develop training modules and programs that address the skills gap. One way to do that is through industry-led sub-committees (industry partnerships) which can also serve as a critical component for connectivity between industry and education. These

connections will also give employers an opportunity to participate in activities such as the Professional Development Day for teachers.

In the Lewiston-Auburn (LA) area for the past three years through the Lewiston CareerCenter, CWMWDB, and the LA Metro Chamber, the partners have sponsored LA Educators Economic Bus Tour Day. This event is held the first Friday after school ends every June. The event is centered around taking approximately 40 local LA teachers on 2 buses to various businesses and manufacturers in the LA area to educate them about the types of job opportunities and careers available to their students when they graduate from high school. In 2016, the group focused on the following industries: manufacturing, healthcare, IT and financial services. Employers visited included Elmet Technologies, Globe Footwear, Central Maine Orthopedics, Geiger, P & G, International Paper, CMCC and TD Bank. This informational/educational exchange is designed to help educators understand the skill needs of specific businesses in the community and gives both business and educators the chance to communicate and ask questions of each other. The results of this collaborative effort are a strengthened economy, companies in competitive positions, and a skilled workforce moving beyond a livable wage with career pathways for advancement. Another example in Local Region 3 of connecting educators with employers is through the Somerset County Technical Center and Skowhegan High School. They have developed and implemented a Business to Education Class where faculty from both schools have been out meeting businesses in the community to learn what needs to be changed in their curriculum to better meet the needs of the local businesses. CWMWDB's goal is to replicate this concept throughout the region at other CTEs as well as the Educators Economic Bus Tour Day.

Business outreach also is conducted by Business Services teams in each CareerCenter. Tours are scheduled on a regular basis with local businesses and manufacturers in the 5-county region for CareerCenter employees and includes VR and WMCA staff. The tours are effective in learning the specifics of and observe in action all the different jobs in a particular company. These tours provide staff better insight on how to match job seekers with the appropriate job or training opportunity.

Successful implementation of this strategy can be measured by Local Region 3's ability to successfully identify targeted industries with high growth/high wage occupations and the employers throughout the region that are in these growth categories. It is CWMWDB's goal to ensure that relationships are formed with those businesses that have available employment and ask them to determine and classify common skills across these growth industries and additional skills that need to be developed for these jobs. CWMWDB will continue to work with the EDDs as outlined previously to support the priority industries that are identified in their CEDS documents. Through improved communication additional industry specific occupational skills will be identified.

Industry and Employer Advisory Boards (Universities, CTE's and Community Colleges) have the ability to identify co-investment opportunities quickly and act on them. Once identified, the Industry/Employer Advisory Boards and CWMWDB should be able to align occupation and training lists so that everyone knows what industries to invest in or what all partners are investing in. New information can also be gathered by networking at Job Fairs, Chamber functions and various Trade Association meetings.

As noted earlier, manufacturing and advanced machining are targeted industries in this region.

CWMWDB will continue to support the advancement of two programs in Maine that will facilitate both targeted training opportunities and job placement in these complementary industries: Dream It Do It and Manufacturing Day. These programs support CWMWDB's 4-yr plan in the following ways: they promote and facilitate overall industry sector development; the programs promote and highlight the importance of foundational learning and adaptability skills; there is an increase connectivity between the industry and economic development entities that can lead to company and industry growth; they support and reinforce improved communication within the workforce development system; and they work toward eliminating the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs.

#### Proposed Activity:

Dream It–Do It is a program sponsored by the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAMe), where students are allowed on site and given the opportunity to visit high technology manufacturing companies. The program is a national network and campaign focused on local workforce initiatives to underpin the next generation of manufacturing, a unique network to engage, educate and employ today's students in high-quality manufacturing jobs while promoting manufacturing to parents and educators. CWMWDB views this program as an excellent avenue for strategic connections between students and employers, educators and employers, and students with educators. The strategy will reinforce the manufacturing sector development and will help to attract, educate and recruit a qualified manufacturing workforce pipeline. This will be accomplished utilizing CareerCenter youth counselors as well as other partners in the workforce development system to promote the program, which will provide students with firsthand knowledge about how the manufacturing industry has changed to a more high tech “clean environment”. CWMWDB's goal is to support the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAMe) by promoting the program region wide, by creating linkages within the region between employers and educators, and encouraging stakeholders to participate in the program as well as offer them opportunities to participate in the LA Teachers Economic Bus Tour (held the first week every June after the school year ends). CWMWDB's support and promotion of this program offers local manufacturers, schools, community-based organizations and other stakeholders the opportunity to partner with a respected national platform to promote manufacturing as a top tier career choice.

#### Proposed Activity:

The National Association of Manufacturers spearheads the National Manufacturing Day [www.mfgday.com](http://www.mfgday.com) held the first Friday of October with a mission to focus on altering the perception of manufacturing and highlighting students and technology. This program is similar in nature and purpose to the Dream It–Do It initiative that CWMWDB plans to actively support and promote. Both of these strategies will reinforce the manufacturing sector development and will help to attract, educate and recruit a qualified manufacturing workforce pipeline. CWMWDB was instrumental in increasing participation significantly in this activity to almost triple the number of industry and school participants when the program started in Maine three years ago. In October 2015, MAMe had its Flagship Event in Auburn at Strainrite. Over 46 Auburn sixth graders participated in an interactive tour and demonstration of their manufacturing process in making industrial type liquid filters for companies like Minute Maid, Gatorade, and Shipyard Brewery. Overall, in Local Region 3, close to 500 students visited over a dozen different manufacturers.

To commemorate National Manufacturing Day, Manufacturing Extension Partnerships across the country and organizations such as the Manufacturers Association of Maine (MAMe) will host statewide events to illustrate what manufacturing is. Plant tours and other events students, parents, educators, legislators and job seekers to learn about the innovative and challenging environments of today's manufacturers and the rewarding careers available for those with the right skills and training. By opening shop floors to young individuals and incorporating hands-on activities, the students can comprehend that manufacturing is a technology-driven industry that offers secure and good-paying jobs. CWMWDB views this program as an excellent avenue for strategic connections by utilizing CareerCenter youth counselors as well as other partners in the workforce development system. CWMWDB's goal is to support the National Manufacturing Day by promoting the program region wide; encouraging employers and educators to participate in the program, and expanding the number of students, schools, parents, and manufacturers participating in this event every year. It presents to them a great career alternative to a 2 year or 4-year degree in order to get a good paying job in Maine.

#### Proposed Activity:

To continue to support and strengthen the manufacturing industry, and their focus on advanced precision machining occupational training, CMCC was awarded a grant of almost \$1.6 million in July 2016. The funds will be used, to expand CMCC's precision machining technology laboratory by 8,600 square feet to accommodate increasing demand for skills training by enrolled students and businesses. The expanded facility will allow a 20% increase in student enrollment, which is critical to meeting the industry's estimated 900 high-skill, high-wage precision machining vacancies that will occur during the next five years. CWMWDB continues to focus on demand driven strategies and will continue to support CMCC in its effort to develop a new advanced machining program to address the pressing needs for highly skilled advanced machining workers.

#### Proposed Activity:

CWMWDB promotes and values the importance of an educational experience that prepares both students and job seekers to enter employment in high wage/high demand occupations. In an effort to provide students with an increased understanding of the relevance of high school requirements as preparation for STEM opportunities, CWMWDB will actively support and promote participation in the Maine Research Internship for Teachers and Students (MERITS) program within Local Region 3 through the workforce development systems. The MERITS program is part of the Maine Space Grant Consortium, and provides research opportunities at institutions conducting research and technology development for highly motivated high school students who are interested in STEM careers. The intent of the MERITS program is to expose students to career opportunities in Maine to provide a direct way by which Maine businesses and research communities can attract young people with high potential for possible future employment. CWMWDB's goal is to support the MERITS program by promoting it within the workforce development system and region wide and by creating linkages within the region between employers and educators who would be ideal participants.

#### Proposed Activity:

Health care continues to be the most significant industry in Local Region 3 in terms of the workforce skills gap, current labor needs, and future labor shortages as a result of the pending

need for replacement workers due to a significant aging workforce. CWMWDB will continue to work closely with industry representatives to identify and address workforce issues and will actively promote programs that will help eliminate the mismatch between job seeker skills and employer needs. To address these challenges, the CWMWDB will actively promote Maine's new health care statewide clinical placement software system (funded by the Maine Health Care Grant in 2012). This database improves communication among health care workforce partners and reduces the number of unemployed RN's by minimizing the gap between clinical training and job placement. The software system electronically lists clinical sites statewide and current students seeking clinical opportunities, allowing Maine to maximize use of all available clinical sites for those student nurses. CWMWDB will continue to promote this software system through the workforce development system to help ensure that health care students are aware of its capabilities and clinical opportunities.

#### Proposed Activity:

CWMWDB will continue to support and promote the Scrub Club concept by working with CMMC, St. Mary's, and MaineGeneral to determine the feasibility of replicating the "Scrub Club" experience at their hospitals. CWMWDB's goal is to develop a more robust healthcare talent pipeline by exposing youth to various careers in the healthcare industry through a summer educational program. This program can also be used a recruitment tool for healthcare providers in the area, especially as they find it more difficult to find workers due to Maine's aging population.

#### Proposed Activity:

Through collaboration with local Adult Educators in Androscoggin and Kennebec Counties, the local CareerCenters have developed and implemented several Ready2Work (R2W) Academies combined with the required curriculums for Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), Certified Registered Medical Assistants (CRMA), and Personal Support Specialists (PSS) for several long term care facilities in both counties over the last two years. Participating medical facilities include: Maine Veteran's Home; St. Mary's Hospital D'Youville Pavilion; Schooner Estates; Mt. St. Josephs; Lakewood, Glenridge, and Gray Birch Residential Care Facilities. Eligible participants are pre-screened, assessed, and tested prior to starting classes. CWMWDB's goal is to expand and/or repeat these successful R2W training programs in all five counties of Local Region 3 in collaboration with the local Adult Education programs and health care providers.

#### Proposed Activity:

The KVCC Maine is IT! Team is researching the feasibility of offering a Free IT Bootcamp for Veterans. The potential Bootcamp would be offered on Saturday mornings or in the evenings. The sessions would include topics such as: Jobs in the IT field and have a few of their Advisory Council business owners talk about the IT jobs in their fields and then proceed into topics of interest. The CareerCenters and CWMWDB would be partnering with KVCC on this activity. This kind of training is needed to continue to build and support the IT labor demand in Local Region 3; CWMWDB's role is to support post-secondary educator in both pre-training and post-training activities to prepare the workforce that will result in successful completion of the IT courses and ultimately lead to job placement.



#### Proposed Activity:

CWMWDB will continue to seek innovative ways to assist students in their employment pursuits. A new initiative that has CWMWDB's attention is Foster Tech's Career Exploration Day. Mt. Blue High School and Foster Tech Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center held a Career Expo Day that CWMWDB, along with other partners helped plan for 11/10/15. Over 70 employers were invited to participate along a motivational speaker to encourage and engage the students. It was a huge success for the employers, students & teachers. So much so, that it will be expanded this year to an all-day event including a special morning session called Totally Trades for girls and an evening session for parents to meet with employers along with their kids. CWMWDB's plan is to expand this idea to increase Foundational Learning and Adaptability Skills to all CTEs and as many schools as possible in the region with special emphasis on getting the parents to the schools alongside their kids to talk to employers together.

#### Proposed Activity:

CWMWDB will continue to explore new ways to use social media, technology and non-traditional methods to get appropriate messages across to the workforce, educators, businesses and stakeholders. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Survey Monkey, and other social media can be used to quickly get messages, information, updates and job postings out to the public. Other state government departments are using this technology such as police departments, the Department of Transportation and MDOL. Educators and businesses are using it efficiently and appropriately as well.

### **ii) Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area**

#### **Business Services**

In order to understand the needs of employers, the region requires a robust business services program. To most efficiently engage with employers, the business services program will need to leverage not only the WIOA-related resources but also the business outreach programs at community colleges, CTE, EDOs, and Chambers of Commerce. By integrating and sharing information among these partners, the CWMWDB can better understand the needs of employers without having to expend substantial resources.

CWMWDB offers business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers through the CareerCenters. In Local Region 3, the CareerCenters use a collaborative approach to business services. They have formed working relationships with their local economic development entities, chambers of commerce, civic organizations, adult education, high schools, colleges, universities and other area resources. This approach allows them to obtain information on business needs from many sources and meet those needs in a timely manner by utilizing working, effective partnerships. Specific stakeholders include: chambers of commerce, the Governor's Account Executives, Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE), Small Business Development Center, Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, AVCOG, KVCOG, Maine Center for Women Work & Community, Vocational Rehabilitation and Community Action Programs. CWMWDB's goal is to help facilitate opportunities for these partners to increase engagement with employers and communication within the Workforce Development System.

Whatever the business needs are, a team of committed, enthusiastic and interested people are

ready to assist them. The Business Services Team has resulted in much less duplication of services and enables the CareerCenters in Local Region 3 to maintain a consistency of effort, presentation and effectiveness as well as a more balanced approach. The use of Labor Market Information (LMI) is an integral part of providing professional services to the business community. Economic Development partners utilize LMI to assist businesses in making relocation and other business decisions. The CareerCenters utilize LMI to identify employers in growing industries in order to target training and job placement opportunities. LMI is also readily available through the CareerCenters to assist local employers in their workforce decisions.

Integration of business services is part of the “no wrong door” approach in Local Region 3. Its Business Services Team has assisted many businesses with issues and initiatives; most situations lend themselves best to the team or collaborative approach. The CareerCenters use effective communication skills – telephone, e-mail, and site visit or data entry in MJLA to document services and keep all partners “in the loop”. Wagner-Peyser services such as job recruitment, job matching and referral are an integral part of the total business services package. When members of the Business Services Team contact employers, all services offered through the CareerCenter are presented. Below is a summary of the key roles of the Business Services Team along with examples of business service activities:

- Business Services Teams will visit employers individually to determine their current job openings, challenges in filling those positions, as well as short and long term solutions for finding qualified employees. Those same Business Service Teams offer an array of services that can help strengthen and broaden the economic base by assisting small businesses and new startups with hiring, training, expanding and possibly other needs as reasonably identified. CWMWDB wants to pursue the concept of integrating a “Rapid Response” type approach with a team of experts who will be available for any new business that wants to start up or move into Local Region 3. This will increase their ability to respond quickly to businesses’ needs around workforce development and create a “no wrong door” approach.
- Business services and outreach will play an integral role in promoting partnerships with professional service organizations and local businesses, and supporting sector goals. CWMWDB and the CareerCenters in Local Region 3 will promote regular contact of their business partners through the CareerCenter Business Service Teams, invitations to the local CareerCenters for mini and major Job Fairs, business visits by the Business Services Team member(s) to offer no charge business services that are applicable to their current challenges, and opportunities for businesses to recruit prospective employees using the CareerCenter facilities to fill their current job openings. The CareerCenters will continue to reach out to contact those businesses with the most job openings on the Maine Job Bank System and those employers that are in high-wage/high demand industries like Health Care and Precision Manufacturing. In all interactions with employers, the CareerCenter Business Services Teams/Team Member will continue to promote the fact that all business services are at no charge and have the potential to save the employer both time and money.
- In addition to the Business Services Teams, the CareerCenters use a collaborative approach to business services within the region. They have formed working relationships with a variety of partners and stakeholders and area resources. This approach allows them



to obtain information on business needs from many sources and meet those needs in a timely manner by utilizing working, effective partnerships. Examples of some of the partners include but are not limited to: chambers of commerce, the Governor's Account Executives, Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE), Small Business Development Center, Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments, Kennebec Valley Council of Governments, and New Ventures, Vocational Rehabilitation and Community Action Programs. The partners work together to promote job fairs, resource fairs, offer on-site business needs assessments and business consultation services.

- Regular business surveys are sent out to employers who have used the CareerCenter services to identify how to improve business services similar to what is already being done in person when 30 to 40 employers attend a Job Fair or 5-6 attend the Mini-Job Fairs at local CareerCenters. The Business Services Team members from the CareerCenters and the Director of Employer Services personally hand out business surveys to find out the major challenges they are having in recruiting qualified workers and have conversations with them about their responses and issues and challenges they are currently dealing with and what they anticipate will be issues in the short foreseeable future.
- Other creative ways to market the CareerCenter Business Services are to speak at chamber of commerce breakfasts or be a spotlight business at a chamber event, speak to Kiwanis or Rotary business audiences at their luncheons, post available business services on the CareerCenter Facebook page and articles in the local paper about the CareerCenter Business Services offered at no charge to employers.
- Business Services outreach (through the CareerCenters) ensures that all staff understands the job order process and is able to walk an employer through the process especially those currently undergoing expansion in high growth and high paying occupations and industries.
- The Business Services Team assists in the development of pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships as a training option and promote the programs to area employers. The BST directly refer interested employers to the Maine Apprenticeship program and will meet as a team to determine if apprenticeships can be used to meet the employer's labor needs.

### **Key Business Service Strategies of CWMWDB & the Career Centers**

- Help develop, set up, organize, run, and attend local Job Fairs at the CareerCenters and other locations in the communities (like CMCC, UMF, Oxford Hills High School)
- Maintain regular ongoing contacts with businesses whom all CareerCenters have developed good relationships.
- On a regular basis invite businesses, training providers, area community resources, etc., to staff meetings to educate all staff on their job requirements and share pertinent information to help us better serve businesses and the public.
- Use the Maine Job Bank open order list, newspapers and electronic media to establish lists of businesses to contact in person to learn more about their individual employer needs and provide them with information about CareerCenter services that could assist them in meeting those needs.

- Offer to provide mini-job fairs or half day recruitments to meet businesses seasonal needs/openings on a regular basis. Offer special job fairs or recruitment days for businesses like Sunday River and Sugarloaf.
- Be aware of the CareerCenters' ability to connect businesses to training funds for current and future business/employer needs for qualified/trained workers.
- Arrange tours for CareerCenter staff as it will give staff a better idea of what is required by the employer in filling their occupational needs.
- Attend local area Chamber breakfasts/events to promote CC Business Services and connect with and learn more about businesses in the region or new businesses that could benefit from the region's array of Business Services.
- By making regular contacts with businesses with current job driven/in demand training needs, identify "niche industries" that don't show up on the LMI radar like welding and the local textile (stitching) industries.
- All Business Service Team members must regularly interact with the business community in order to cultivate and maintain the important relationships that provide jobs and job training opportunities for customers.
- Maintain an active database/spreadsheet of all business contacts with important information on the date of last contact, name of employer, type of industry, HR contacts and other pertinent info.
- Let businesses know you can provide them the latest CWRI- LMI data on prevailing industry wages, what the current labor pool looks like, local, state, and national trends in employment or unemployment.
- In all transactions with business partners remember the key to success is to listen to what they really need and make sure you understand the need(s) correctly by restating it to the employer before offering any services. Business Services Teams offer an array of business services that can help a business start-up, hire, expand, and train their employees and stay connected to them by regular phone and e-mail follow-ups to see if their needs are being met.

Once needs are identified through data analysis and business outreach, the next step is to develop programs that meet those identified needs. The CWMWDB will fully leverage its resources and those of its partners to offer Work Experience, On-The-Job Training (OJT), and Customized Training, as funding allows. These resources allow the CWMWDB to both provide employers with the skills and workers they need and provide workers who may have barriers to employment with access to quality jobs.

Below is a summary of services for populations with barriers to employment. By providing these groups with the training and services they require to access employment, the CWMWDB both supports these workers and provides employers with a larger pool of qualified workers.

### **Individuals with Disabilities**

The strategies of a previous grant program entitled Able ME have helped to address programmatic, communication and physical barriers which has enabled CWMWDB to offer a full array of One-Stop services available to persons with disabilities and ensure that the services

are fully accessible. Able ME has been instrumental in developing activities to improve integration of CareerCenter programs to provide seamless service delivery to customers with disabilities who are accessing the workforce development system.

In late 2013, the Maine Department of Labor (MDOL) was awarded a 3-year grant to implement Round 4 of the Disability Employment Initiative program in Maine. The DEI grant is jointly funded and administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). MDOL entered into a subrecipient contract with Local Region 3 to implement DEI. The DEI grant is designed to improve education, training, and employment opportunities and outcomes for adults with disabilities who are unemployed, underemployed and/or receiving Social Security disability benefits.

Local Region 3 has hired two Disability Resource Coordinators to implement the program through February 2017: one staff is located at the Augusta CareerCenter and the other position is at the Lewiston CareerCenter. The Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) works with CWMWDB to support the One-Stop Employment Service CareerCenter system in the successful inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce. The DRCs work to build effective community partnerships that leverage public and private resources to better serve persons with disabilities and to improve employment outcomes.

Another important element of the DRC's role is to work to improve coordination and collaboration among employment and training programs carried out at the state and local level, as well as to expand the use of Employment Networks (ENs), with a focus on growing BES's Ticket to Work program. This initiative is designed to ensure the accessibility of one-stop services and programs for all community members with disability and serve as a resource to CareerCenter and partner staff and employers where the employment of persons with disabilities is concerned. Participation in this initiative enables CWMWDB to take an active role in creating sustainable systems and policies to better serve persons with disabilities at the local area CareerCenters, including policies that increase/improve prospective employment opportunities for persons with disabilities with businesses.

A major component of CWMWDB's work is to promote a public workforce development system that is coordinated, integrated, and effective for the widest range of jobseekers and responsive to business customers' needs. The DEI grant enables CWMWDB to accomplish this by improving the accessibility, capacity, and accountability of the One-Stop CareerCenter system to serve persons with disabilities resulting in education and career pathways that lead to unsubsidized employment and economic self-sufficiency.

MDOL is currently drafting policies that will help codify staff training on topics such as those offered originally in the CareerCenters served by DEI. This will afford an opportunity to those partners in Local Region 3 who didn't receive the training before, along with providing reinforcement to CareerCenter staff already trained under DEI. Board and state-level policies that address universal access, non-discrimination, financial capability services for CareerCenter customers and use of integrated resource teams will be considered. Any new policies in these areas will require staff training and orientation, for both incumbent staff and new employees.

MDOL has convened a professional development team that is currently drafting a training plan.

As an outgrowth of DEI, the plan will identify training for WIOA partners' staff on how to incorporate financial literacy/capability, use of integrated resource teams to address customers with multiple barriers or concerns affecting employment success. The resources developed by DEI, such as the Basic Financial Assessment tool, will be shared with partners. CWMWDB will encourage the use of these tools through appropriate means, which may call for an MOU, co-training, etc. Additionally, steps suggested at the Financial Freedom Forum, such as routine financial resource fairs, will be incorporated into ongoing events offered in CareerCenters.

#### Proposed Activity:

As the CWMWDB dives further into WIOA implementation, the Board is hoping to continue practices, such as the Basic Financial Assessment Tool, integrated resource teams (IRTs), and more Board engagement on universal accessibility of services and offices. Staff training, corresponding policy development, and continued refinement of practices, protocols, and partnerships will be explored.

#### **Veterans**

CareerCenters in Local Region 3 regularly coordinate services with the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program and the Local Veterans Employment Representatives. In CareerCenters where a DVOP/LVER staff is not housed, consultations are held with service provider staff. These meetings help identify eligible Veterans for enrollment in WIOA services or for referral to other programs that will enhance prospects for job training, job development, employment and retention supports consistent with the Jobs for Veterans Act. If necessary, the CareerCenters hold "slots" in their workshops just for Veterans; dedicate computer stations for Veterans; and hold training slots for Veterans. As for WIOA funds, if a Veteran and a non-Veteran are requesting training assistance, and both have completed assessment and met the criteria, and only one person could be assisted, the Veteran would get priority over the non-Veteran.

The DVOP Veterans representatives implement a variety of methods to contact Veterans and provide services. They meet with numerous Veterans every day; and they share the information with other Veteran representatives so they can either look up job opportunities or visit employers that have or meet those needs. Information is also shared between the VETS Team when they receive a notification of an employer specifically looking for a Veteran; the DVOP keeps track of who they are meeting with and send out referrals as they come in. The VETS Team regularly holds classes once a quarter oriented toward Veterans. They also send out "welcome" emails to Veterans coming into the CareerCenter for the first time or if those signing up for unemployment insurance. Email blasts are also sent out to Veterans looking for work in the region for job fairs and specific job openings. The CareerCenters follow CWMWDB's policy on Priority for Veterans Services. CWMWDB will continue to support and direct the following activities and services in Local Region 3 CareerCenters:

- Direct front-end Staff (Reception and Information Centers) to make inquiry about Veteran status, and upon request refer Veteran customers to a Veterans' Representative.
- Assure that procedures are established to ensure that the Maine Job bank and Local CareerCenters match Veterans as established in the OSOS system to job orders on a regular basis as appropriate.
- Create and maintain a Veterans Services display area in the lobby.

- DVOPs and/or LVERs can make presentations at staff meetings to inform staff about Veterans services updates.
- Press releases can be written regularly promoting services to businesses and Veterans.
- The Lewiston CareerCenter VETS team has created and presented a workforce development video series (12 programs) for Veterans entitled Changing LIVES (Local Information for Veterans Employment and Services).
- Interview Workshop for Veterans; during this workshop the basics of interviews as well as interview questions are discussed and why employers ask the questions they do. Informational interviews are also discussed as well as the importance of conducting them during a Veteran's job search and exploration.
- Veteran focused job and resource fairs, including an Occupational Licensing & Job Fair.
- Direct outreach of CareerCenter services to employers at least once a week in the region.
- Veteran Representatives will be doing continuous outreach to homeless shelters, Veteran service organizations, and other resource providers to try to serve more Veterans in the community. The goal is to reach out to as many public sources as possible in which Veterans are or may possibly utilize.
- Additional outreach strategies and services for Veterans that will be implemented by the DVOPs and LVER include:
  - Offering case management services based on Veterans' needs.
  - Providing direct assistance on Resume development, interview skills/mock job interviews, dress for success, career decision making.
  - Conducting outreach efforts to community partners to explain Veteran services so that agency staff can make referrals to CareerCenter when they are meeting with Veterans.
  - Using LinkedIn, Twitter and/or Facebook to connect to younger Veterans.
  - Continuing to tape the Public Access TV shows for Veterans.
  - Continuing to work with VSOs as it appropriate.

## **New Mainers**

The Lewiston CareerCenter has a dedicated consultant that works almost exclusively with any New Mainer that visits the CareerCenter. The role of the consultant is to assist them in their pursuit of employment and to act as the point person for connections to employers. Information on resources to overcome barriers to employment is also available at the Lewiston CareerCenter, such as access to ESL training. The current consultant is well established in this role and is known throughout the new Mainer and Somali community and by employers who regularly hire them.

Another initiative that is supportive of New Mainers is the Cultural Connections to Employment. Their goal will be to engage leadership from New American/ New Mainer/ Immigrant, Refugee, Asylum Seeker communities in Androscoggin County to facilitate cultural dialogues with employers. The dialogues will produce Action Items that College for ME-Androscoggin will support. College for ME-Androscoggin will track the impact of the Action Items to identify best practices moving forward.

## Youth Services

Local Region 3 provides comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth by using appropriate assessment strategies, jointly developing individual service plans, and enrolling youth in appropriate activities which include the availability of the fourteen youth service elements. CareerCenter staff assess youth needs using a variety of tools such as structured interviews and standardized testing instruments. Staff work with youth to develop an individualized plan to address the needs or barriers identified in the assessment process. Youth participate in an appropriate mix of services from these fourteen elements to achieve their educational or employment goal. See Section 9 for more information on the youth service elements.

CareerCenter staff develop and maintain good working relationships with local businesses, public and private agencies, education providers and community resource providers to coordinate services for the participants. Local Region 3 maintains close working relationships with a number of partnering agencies to promote the provision of comprehensive, integrated services to youth. The partnering agencies are responsible for workforce development, foster care, education, human services, juvenile justice, as well as other agencies that work with youth with barriers to employment or who are at-risk.

The CareerCenters operate under a “no wrong door” approach for youth. It maintains close contact with many community partners throughout the area that serve youth. When youth walk into any of the locations, their needs and goals are assessed both formally and informally. A tentative plan is sketched out to determine what steps are needed in order for youth to reach their goals. Since no single agency is usually able to do it all, partners network to see who can provide the identified services; depending on needs, one partner may provide shelter, another mentoring, a third work experience, etc.

One partner will generally be the “lead” agency and will meet with the others to ensure that youth needs are being met and they are progressing toward their goals. Youth case managers begin by assessing youth’s interests to determine education and training opportunities. Once interests are clarified, labor market information is explored through the Center for Workforce Research and Information, O\*NET, and other resources to establish if their interests match high wage, high demand fields and what the career pathways are that lead to those jobs. Labor market resources are readily available to parents, teachers, counselors, and school administrators through the internet. Youth case managers are available to assist people in understanding the data as well.

Eligible youth, including those who are disconnected and with multiple barriers, are best able to achieve goals when:

- A comprehensive assessment is completed using a variety of instruments suited to the youth.
- Youth are involved in setting their own goals.
- Partner agencies work together, each contributing their areas of expertise.
- Supportive services, mentoring, and follow-up are available as needed.

Below are descriptions of the partners in the region that work closely with the CareerCenters in providing assistance to youth as they prepare for employment.

TAKE2 Take 2 is a program that provides education and job training for 18-21 year old youth who have a history of involvement in the juvenile justice system by participating in a full time community service learning program. The CareerCenter Youth Counselors work closely to refer eligible youth to their programs and when applicable provide supportive services and funds for training. In Take2, youth restore relationships with their community as they work toward their GEDs, receive credits through the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) and learn valuable work readiness and life skills. All program elements are woven into community service projects performed in collaboration with local nonprofits. The training program is 10 weeks long, has a 300-hour commitment, and provides a \$100/week stipend as well as a \$1500 educational award at completion. The educational components include:

- Working toward earning their GED or other educational goals
- Improving math and reading skills
- Acquiring financial literacy and other skills
- Investigating post-secondary education and vocational training opportunities
- Building employability through training on job searches, interviewing, resumes and other related topics.

The Nutrition Center (NC) programs at St. Mary's are almost entirely integrated with each other. Older youth lead children's programs with the support of staff both at schools, libraries, and housing locations. NC's newest program, the Youth Campaign Crew involved youth who have been involved as Summer Youth Gardeners and Youth Interns. They are developing and running a program in partnership with LPS' Nutrition Service Director to "Put Change on the Menu" in their schools. They are engaging their peers greatly in this effort.

All youth involved in NC programs have significant barriers to accessing quality education and job opportunities. Its programs offer youth job training, leadership skills, team building skills, and both hard and soft communication skills. The NC is a reference for many youth who apply to unsubsidized work or education programs after participating in its programs. WMCA, the WIOA youth service provider for the Lewiston CareerCenter, works closely with Lots to Gardens and Tree Street Youth. The following is an example of how services are integrated: WMCA provides assessment, work experience wages, supportive services, workshops, and follow-up. Lots to Gardens and Tree Street provide worksites, mentoring, leadership development and assist with follow-up. Youth may start in their junior or senior year of high school. If they remain in the program for 2 years, they start in beginning positions on the worksites and progress to team leaders with added responsibility.

### **iii) Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development**

The CWMWDB has a strong history of working closely with its economic development partners. In developing this plan, the CWMWDB hosted a focus group with economic development and chamber of commerce representatives from around the region. During this focus group, these partners shared information about economic trends in the region and the needs of employers. Additionally, economic development partners are often involved in grant applications and implementation and the development of employer-driven training programs.

Economic development and chamber representatives are also essential partners in the region's business services efforts. These partners often have close connections with employers and can be



an important conduit of information about employer workforce needs. A major goal of the CWMWDB has been and will continue to be improving communication among partners. This will be especially important as information about employer needs gathered by various partners will need to be collected and acted upon. One pathway to ensure this takes place is to identify all participating partners and their resources related to employer engagement and developing a simple mechanism to share information about employment needs.

All of the EDDs across the state have developed cluster strategies for their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS) and have collected data for each region. Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) are working with EDDs to minimize any duplication and leverage resources. The four LWDBs now have an active partnership with the Economic Development Districts (EDD) and Councils of Governments (COG) throughout the state. CWMWDB works well with the region's EDDs; the Executive Director serves on the CEDS Sub-Committee for the Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG). CWMWDB is identified several times in the Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments (AVCOG) CEDS 2016 Update: the Key Priorities, Goals and detailed Strategies of CWMWDB's current Local Plan are outlined in the "Education and Workforce Development" section (also listed in the same section of KVCOG's CEDS) ; the healthcare industry workforce development support that CWMWDB is engaged in is listed in the Region Industry Specialization section; and CWMWDB is identified as a partner in the Economic Growth Driver – Education and Workforce Development section.

#### **iv) Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and the unemployment insurance programs:**

The CareerCenters work closely with the Bureau of Unemployment Compensation to ensure fair and seamless service to mutual customers. CareerCenter staff have been trained to assist customers with the new Internet claim filing system; fax and phones are also available for customers to file claims. Training approval letters are now sent electronically to UI, thus, reducing the chances for delays in UI checks. The required follow-up for WIOA enrolled customers is based on the UI wage records, which are also available to CareerCenter staff. Additionally, a representative of Maine DOL's Bureau of Unemployment Compensation serves on the CWMWDB, helping make strategic decisions and better coordinate services.

#### **Section 5: Description of how the local board will coordinate workforce activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities**

The CWMWDB works closely with its economic development partners in the region. As mentioned previously (Sec. iii), economic development and chamber representatives were involved throughout the development of this plan, including participation in a focus group and an online survey.

As noted previously, the CWMWDB identified priority industries in part by identifying the priorities of economic development organizations in the region. By prioritizing the same industries, economic development and workforce development activities can be coordinated so all resources are leveraged and the benefits to employers are maximized. Priority industries are identified below:



- Healthcare (regional)
- Manufacturing (regional)
- Information Technology (regional)
- Forestry and Wood/Paper Products (Kennebec, Oxford, Somerset Counties)
- Agriculture/Food/Local Food (Androscoggin, Kennebec, Oxford, Somerset Counties)
- Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (Androscoggin, Kennebec Counties)
- Bio-Tech (Franklin and Kennebec Counties, Manufacturers Association of Maine.)
- Renewable Energy (Kennebec, Somerset Counties)
- Call Centers – Customer Service/Electronic Retail (Androscoggin, Franklin Oxford Counties)
- Construction (Somerset County)

The CWMWDB region includes all or part of multiple Economic Development Districts (EDDs). Those in the region are:

- Androscoggin Valley EDD
- Kennebec Valley EDD
- Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission EDD

In addition to Economic Development Districts, there are a variety of other organizations, including chambers of commerce that are involved in economic development activities. The CWMWDB plans to regularly engage with these partners to better understand employer needs, coordinate business services, and improve employment opportunities for residents of the region.

As past and current members of the CWMWDB Board of Directors, economic development representatives are involved in the strategic decisions of the Board. The Business & Economic Development Specialist from one of the region's Economic Development Districts serves on the CWMWDB Board and also serves on the Steering Committee for the Board.

### **Promote Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services**

In order to promote entrepreneurial skills and training, the CWMWDB partners with the local Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), New Ventures Maine, and chapters of SCORE in the region. Through these partnerships, the CWMWDB connects clients interested in starting a business with workshops and training. The CWMWDB also partners with local chambers to market small business and entrepreneurship programming/services and to make appropriate referrals for job seekers.

### **Section 6A-D: Description of One-Stop Delivery System in Local Area**

#### **(A) Description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers**

CWMWDB meets regularly with CareerCenter partners to assess the effectiveness of its service configuration within the region. These meetings enable CWMWDB to regularly review the performance and effectiveness of its workforce development system. Routine monitoring of the system both quarterly and annually also provide insight to the effectiveness of the existing CareerCenter configuration.

- CWMWDB meets regularly with the CareerCenter Managers to discuss operations, performance standards, best practices, customer need & capacity and access to services.
- Managers and staff from WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and Vocational Rehabilitation have joint staff meetings to discuss what each organization does so they can jointly work together on projects beneficial to customers.
- The One Stop Operator Agreement helps specify the role and responsibilities of the One Stop Operator as they relate to implementing, managing and operating the One Stop system.

**(B) Description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means**

The CareerCenters of Central/Western Maine deliver the services of the required One-Stop partners in a seamless and integrated manner to job seekers, Veterans, incumbent workers, youth and businesses. During 2012, the CWMWDB developed a comprehensive MOU in the form of the One Stop Operator Agreement between CWMWDB and Local Region 3 Service Providers, such as the Bureau of Employment Services, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The purpose of the Agreement is to specify the role and responsibilities of the One Stop Operator as they relate to implementing, managing and operating the One Stop system in Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford, and Somerset Counties, otherwise known as the Local Workforce Development Region 3 under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This document has helped integration and delivery efforts by outlining how the services provided by each of the required and optional partners are coordinated and made available through the CareerCenters.

The CareerCenters employ additional methods for integrating its services with other workforce programs. Managers and staff from WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and Vocational Rehabilitation have joint staff meetings to discuss ways they can jointly work together on projects beneficial to customers. They meet review/exchange information to make sure there is no duplication. Implementing this strategy enables them to jointly determine whether there are any gaps or duplication in the One-Stop Center's (or community's) service delivery structure.

Operational collaboration of workforce development activities and other related activities and programs outlined in the Statute have been facilitated by the collaboration between the MDOL/BES and the LWDBs. This is accomplished through frequent, ongoing dialogue between the MDOL/BES and the LWDBs during each program year. See Section 2 above for information about how CareerCenters in Local Region 3 employ methods for integrating services with other workforce programs. One example is through the development of the MOU described in the preceding paragraph.

The CareerCenter One-Stop system in Local Region 3 is designed to provide customers with easy access to services and information provided by partner agencies. Each of the comprehensive/full service centers provide an array of services available to all customers. All services are designed to be delivered in both self-service and staff assisted formats. Each of the CareerCenters in the region provide Information Center level assistance to job seekers and

employers. When possible, volunteers from partner programs and the community will help support the staffing of the Information Center. During peak times, when customer demand exceeds the capacity of the assigned Information Center staff, staff members including Wagner-Peyser and other contributors are called upon to provide customer services on a rotating basis.

CareerCenter services, delivery modes and methods, staffing designs and recruitment and marketing efforts will be customized for each CareerCenter location. Staff and resources will be identified by each partner agency within each CareerCenter location to provide delivery of career services. All CareerCenter staff assigned to the Information Center will be responsible for providing all WIOA career services as well as working with Wagner-Peyser and Rehabilitation Services staff in general customer services arising from the universal access service nature of the CareerCenter.

In particular, WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff are cross-trained in a number of areas including customer reception and registration, information center orientation and assistance, facilitating workshops and providing general labor market services. Special workshops and seminars for universal customers pertaining to self-service tools and resources such as basic computer usage, using the Internet and preparing a resume are facilitated by staff from the WIOA Service Provider and Wagner-Peyser as well as others wishing to participate on a scheduled rotating basis thus promoting a seamless service delivery system.

Customers who are determined to be ineligible for WIOA or other partner intensive or training services may participate in services specifically provided by Labor Exchange for the universal access customer base. All services for WIOA eligible and ineligible customers will be of the same content and quality.

Career services are provided as an extension of the self-directed and staff assisted service menu. Entrance into these more specialized and individualized service activities is based on eligibility (for WIOA customers) and need is determined by an assessment interview with the customer. A monthly menu of career services activities is published for each CareerCenter. Information Center Specialists, WIOA case managers and Labor Exchange specialists will coordinate the referral of customers in need of additional services to the appropriate program based on individual service plans. Workshops and seminars are delivered by a combination of WIOA and Labor Exchange staff, trained in the particular service area. Workshops and case management practices will be the primary mode of intensive service delivery. Full assessment and plan development services will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual customer.

**(C) Description of how entities within the One-Stop delivery system, including One-Stop operators and the One-Stop partners, will comply with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) 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**

The CWMWDB ensures compliance with these regulations in a variety of ways. At the highest level, representatives of the Department of Rehabilitative Services, Department of Health and Human Services, Maine DOL Vocational Rehabilitation, Maine New Ventures, Adult and Community Education, and community colleges and other education providers in the region serve on the Local Region 3 Board of Directors. These representatives help ensure the policies

and procedures of the CWMWDB and its CareerCenters comply with Section 188 and the ADA of 1990.

At the individual CareerCenters, the CWMWDB and its partners endeavor to make their services available to all residents of the region, including those with disabilities or other barriers to employment. The CareerCenters are equipped with auxiliary aids/assistive technology and other support to ensure services are available to those in need. Additionally, the CareerCenters bring together partners with the expertise to support individuals with barriers to employment on-site. See Section 4 ii (Individuals with Disabilities for additional information about services/programs for persons with disabilities.)

#### **(D) Description of the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners**

CareerCenters have several partners with whom they coordinate in order to provide services to customers. They are continually developing new linkages with groups that wish to have a presence in the CareerCenter and hope to increase the number beyond those listed below as needs dictate.

**Unemployment Compensation:** The CareerCenters work closely with the Bureau of Unemployment Compensation to ensure fair and seamless service to mutual customers. CareerCenter staff have been trained to assist customers with the new Internet claim filing system; fax and phones are also available for customers to file claims. Training approval letters are now sent electronically to BUC thus, reducing the chances for delays in Unemployment Insurance (UI) checks. The required follow-up for WIOA enrolled customers is based on the UI wage records, which are also available to CareerCenter staff.

**Labor Market Information System:** There are Labor Market Analysts available from the Maine Center for Workforce Research Information to job seekers, employers, and staff on a referral basis to provide in-depth Labor Market Information (LMI). In addition, the LMI system has been upgraded to be more user-friendly for CareerCenter staff and customers.

**Job Corps:** Job Corps information and recruiter are available upon request to meet with and assist youth interested in accessing Job Corps services as well as those returning to the area upon completion of their Job Corps training.

**Title IVC Veteran's Program:** A Title IVC Veteran's Representative assists Veterans in the CareerCenter Information Center(s) with career services and meets with referred Veterans to determine eligibility for Veterans training funds. Customers may be co-enrolled in WIOA for comprehensive and seamless case management. See Section II D. 1 for details about services for Veterans.

**Department of Health and Human Services:** MDOL has a Memorandum of Agreement with Department of Health and Human Services to affect public assistance recipients with regard to their work experience and employment needs. This new memorandum of agreement is being carried out with the 12 full service CareerCenters and the 16 DHHS offices. In addition, customers utilize WIOA career services at the CareerCenters and some choose to work more in-depth with an Employment Counselor. More comprehensive services are also available to DHHS participants if needed. The same service options are also part of the Rapid Response

Initiative process.

**Adult Education:** Adult Education is also a major partner in providing the WorkReady Credential and ESOL courses for Lewiston's multinational population. They come to the Lewiston CareerCenter to meet with customers and provide information about programs offered at adult education locations. Adult Education also provides services at the other CareerCenters, meeting onsite with customers regularly.

**SCSEP:** Senior Community Service Employment Program information is available in the CareerCenters to assess potential customers who wish to learn more about and participate in this employment program. The CareerCenters can also serve as an onsite training facility for SCSEP recipients.

## Section 7: Type and Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training

The CWMWDB works with numerous partners to offer quality and demand-driven training for adult and dislocated workers. Some of the methods CWMWDB uses to leverage resources to provide increased access to training opportunities are: apprenticeships, OJT's, training dollars from the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Vocational Rehabilitation, Competitive Skills Scholarship Program (CSSP), Non-WIOA grants, PELL grants, employer sponsored training, tuition reimbursement programs, Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) funding opportunities, in-kind funding, etc. All resources will be used or sought out to improve access to training opportunities for job seekers in Local Region 3. Additional support will be provided by CWMWDB to identify and obtain diverse funding opportunities that will be targeted for specific training such as WorkReady. This strategy will also enable CWMWDB to expand its revenue streams to help offset any future decreases in WIOA funding.

### **On-the-Job Training and Customized Training**

CWMWDB will follow the State policy and guidance for promoting OJT with respect to both worker and business responsibilities. The following guidelines will be used:

- On the Job Training can be provided to both WIOA eligible unemployed workers and to incumbent workers.
- WIOA-eligible individuals are enrolled in OJT as appropriate based on their individual employment plans.
- Training provided through use of OJT does not require the use of an individual training account (ITA).
- Incumbent workers: OJT contracts may be written for employed workers when the employee is not earning a self-sufficient wage as determined by CWMWDB policy, the requirements are met and the OJT relates to the introduction of new technologies, introduction to new production or services procedures, upgrading to new jobs, that require additional skills, workplace literacy, or other appropriate purposes identified by CWMWDB.
- CareerCenters are responsible for collecting performance information from OJT providers as the Governor may require

CWMWDB, along with the CareerCenters also have the primary responsibility to encourage the development and marketing of OJT and Customized Training as a tool for promoting skills attainment within high growth, high wage industries. OJT and customized training are promoted as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business, employer groups. Other local partners such as economic development agencies, business and trade associations, business advisory groups, chambers of commerce, educational institutions and other collaboratives will be encouraged to work with CWMWDB and CareerCenters to support and promote demand-side training to meet business needs through OJT and customized training.

CWMWDB has identified, targeted and partnered with high-growth, high demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and Customized Training strategies. CWMWDB will continue to support Health Care, Information Technology, and Advanced Manufacturing & Machining. More current sectors include Construction and Related Trades, Retail and Service, and other specific local initiatives for job development in key parts of area-specific sectors (such as agriculture/local foods and ecotourism in Franklin and Somerset).

Labor Market Information and industry-specific surveys/studies support this emphasis. To ensure that business receive services that directly benefit them, CWMWDB taps business partners to help support the demand-driven strategy. Specific business needs will be determined by individual businesses, business sector-forums, business and trade associations involvement, economic development information and educational institution recommendations that are used to drive this demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development and determine appropriate lengths of training.

CWMWDB leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures. CWMWDB will utilize state technical assistance to expand the use of OJT and Customized Training. To the extent possible, WIOA Title I funds will be used to leverage other funds that are available to support worker training such as CSSP, WIOA, TAA and National Emergency Grant Funds. Additional policies and collaborations between workforce and economic development will be developed throughout the implementation of this plan to expand these training options. CWMWDB will recommend that service providers utilize resources from economic development, trade associations, educational institutions and other WIOA partners to enhance these training opportunities. Another approach to OJT and Customized Training is to identify those employers who have multiple long term unfilled job listings on the MJB and contact them about the available services, using OJT and apprenticeships to leverage other resources and monies.

The decision on allocating funds for training opportunities will be based on high-growth, high-demand, and economically vital occupations. Training services authorized under this policy shall be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to eligible individuals through the CareerCenter. ITAs place training resource information in the hand of the participant. Rather than being directed to a provider of training by an agency, participants will be able to select high quality training for in-demand occupations from a list of approved training providers. The list of eligible training providers is compiled and made available electronically by the Maine DOL. Consumer information about eligible training providers is available to all training seekers electronically through the CareerCenter.

Participants will receive assessment, counseling, and development of an Individual Services Strategy (ISS) through individualized career services prior to issuance of an ITA. The participant will research the labor market demand for the desired training and establish that this training will result in a viable occupational goal. Upon completion of an Individual Services Strategy for an ITA, the ITA funds will be obligated, and customers will work with case managers assigned to assist them to achieve their goals and be responsible for managing their ITAs.

Participants will provide their case manager with verification of successful progress as outlined in their ISS to continue to receive ITA funds for extended training. The limits on funds and training time for each ITA issued will balance customer needs and the availability of training funds. The case manager, in developing the plan, will need to document that there is no duplication of funds and that all other funding avenues have been explored and exhausted. The participant will be kept informed of his/her account status. Disbursement of funds will be in accordance with the approved Individual Training Contract. Monies cannot be used for up-front payment for training.

The ITA policy will be communicated in simple, understandable language to customers of the CareerCenter. The customers will have access to the list of Eligible Training Providers (ETP) and will be able to use their ITA to acquire services from eligible providers. Participants may choose between OJTs (on-the-job training), customized training, apprenticeship or use of ITA for tuition in a training program provided by an approved training provider. The determination of the best option will be discussed with and jointly agreed upon by the participant and case manager, with the final approval of the CareerCenter Manager.

Participants may request training for an occupation not on the “demand list” if they can provide sufficient and verifiable documentation to demonstrate demand. Employer information and commitment to hire (at a wage rate that meets or exceeds the minimum earnings threshold for self-sufficiency as required for other funded occupations in the local area) is required for approval of these requests.

If there are two approved eligible providers providing the same training, similar quality and geographic accessibility (based on performance and customer satisfaction data, schedules and support services, ADA capacity, etc.) and total costs for training and support package are different, the provider with the most cost effective program must be selected.

The ITAs may be used for education and job skills training for employment in one or more of the careers shown to be locally in demand in the reports from CWRI and O\*NET. ITAs may be used to obtain specific skill certification leading to one of the occupations in current demand in the local labor market as determined by CWMWDB. It is imperative that a customer’s occupational choice be consistent with an individual employment plan developed with professional guidance.

CWMWDB has the following Service Policy, which governs the enrollment of public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services if funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited.



## **Policy & Procedures Governing Adult and Dislocated Worker Enrollment**

The following policies and procedures will govern the application of enrollment of customers in Adult and Dislocated Worker services provided under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These policies and service guidelines assume that all CareerCenter customers will receive Basic career services and have full access to Information Center service options, including enrollment in the variety of existing workshops for developing job search and application skills. The policies and procedures outlined below apply to the use of funds for training programs for basic employability skills and more extensive career transition and technical training skills.

Case managers will work with individuals to explore a number of training/career redirection options, including internet resources available to the general public, adult education, community programs for skills development (such as literacy development programs, local training initiatives, faith-based program options). The following guidelines are meant as a guide to case managers and Local Region 3 CareerCenter Managers to evaluate individual needs for training:

### **Specific WIOA Enrollment Considerations:**

- Is the customer unable to find employment by using CareerCenter self-directed and informational services only?
- Is the customer enrolled in a partner program? If so, how much, if any, is that program able to assist the customer with his/her employment goals? Does the partner program have funds that can be leveraged with WIOA funds?
- Will participation in the program have an impact on increasing employment for those who are unemployed or an impact on increasing wages and retention for those who are underemployed or incumbent workers?
- Will participation in the program have a positive impact on participants retaining employment for six months and longer following program closure? Employment does not have to be with the same employer.
- Will participation in the program result in higher average earnings? Average earnings in the second and third quarter after exit for adults will be based on the average earnings set by MDOL's performance goals for WIOA.

### **General Considerations:**

These are things to consider in deciding appropriate activities for customers, not factors to consider in whether to enroll:

- Ability to achieve employment goals without additional help.
- Level of work maturity (level of commitment, motivation, focus).
- Developed achievable and realistic employment goals.
- Work history (positions in last two years, retention, job progression/history, progression in positions held, for example).
- Level of reading/math skills (include ESL/ESOL issues).
- Level of writing and verbal communication skills.
- Basic computer skills.

### **Priority of Service Considerations:**

Under WIOA Section 134 (d)(4)(E) it states that if funds allocated to a local area for adult



employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services will be established. Customers already enrolled in training will not be displaced even when funds are limited. In addition, customers who apply after funding has been determined as limited must still meet eligibility criteria. Priority of Service in Local Region 3 will be as follows:

- Low income veterans and/or their spouses.
- Adults receiving public assistance or those who are low income.
- Adults with disabilities whose income meets the eligibility criteria.

While the WIOA adult priority of service does not apply to WIOA Dislocated Workers or National Emergency Grants, in Local Region 3 if dislocated worker or NEG funds become limited, priority will be given to new customers who meet WIOA Dislocated Worker or NEG eligibility criteria as follows:

- Veterans and/or their spouses.
- Dislocated workers who have become low income or are receiving public assistance.
- Dislocated workers who have disabilities.

Dislocated worker or NEG customers already enrolled in training will not be displaced even when funds become limited.

If WIOA Dislocated Worker funds are not available, and WIOA Adult funds are available, after first considering applicants in the priority of service categories for WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Workers who are also WIOA Adult eligible may be considered.

Training services are intended for WIOA Title I participants who are low income (70% of LLSIL Guidelines) who after an interview, assessment, and career planning have shown they are unable to obtain or retain employment, or whose jobs provide inadequate wages, and who can benefit from such training, provided that they were determined to need training, that the training programs are directly linked to employment opportunities, and that they are unable to obtain sufficient grant assistance such as Pell Grants.

Training services will be available to Adults and Dislocated Workers who have met the eligibility requirements for Individualized Career services and are unable to obtain or retain employment through those services. Training services and delivery strategies will focus largely on the issuance of Individual Training Accounts. Adult and Dislocated Worker customers are eligible for training services if:

- Assessment and counseling services have been received through Basic and Individualized Career services that result in an individual employment plan.
- The individual employment plan defines the purpose of training (occupational goal) and the amount of the ITA as well as the participant's interest and capacity.
- The training is selected from the statewide demand and growth occupational training program list.
- The average wage level for employees with this training is significantly greater than the participant can earn without this training, and this wage level can lead to self-sufficiency.
- The participant can meet the requirements for admission into the training program.

- The participant is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the cost of such training.

Priority for training services will be given to those Adult program customers (other than those who are being served through dislocated worker funding) who meet the above criterion. This process is described in the Eligible Training Providers Eligibility Policy and the Individual Training Account policy. The One-Stop partners will also provide training to ensure that staff can provide high-quality counseling to customers. In addition, eligible customers may receive a variety of education, training, and support services supported by a partner or multiple partners as identified in the Participant Supportive Services Payment Policy.

## Section 8: Coordination with Statewide Rapid Response

Businesses are informed by the CareerCenter staff of layoff aversion strategies such as employee buyouts, upgrading of skills where appropriate and linking needs of the employer with state and local economic development agencies for working capital or trained workforce. They are also informed about the Maine DOL's Rapid Response (RR) program. CWMWDB, along with the CareerCenters also have the primary responsibility to encourage the development and marketing of OJT and Customized Training as a tool for promoting skills attainment within high growth, high wage industries. When a RR team has been alerted to a plant closing and/or significant layoff, the RR team contacts the CareerCenters and CWMWDB. The partners work together to identify the laid off positions and contact economic development community, chambers, business associations to alert them of available workers in specific occupations. The goal is to assist the laid off employees in obtaining work quickly as well as meeting the existing labor needs of employers.

## Section 9: Description of Youth Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Activities

Through the CareerCenter services in Local Region 3, eligible youth can participate in year-round work experience and on-the-job-training activities. CWMWDB strongly encourages and supports work experience and on-the-job-training activities. One of the main benefits of investing in such activities is that they are an effective tool to assess employment readiness.

Local Region 3 plans to establish a Youth Committee as the forum to guide and inform the Board regarding an integrated vision for serving youth. Having membership from crosscutting organizations, the Youth Committee will represent most facets of the youth employment and training arena. The Youth Committee will also convene on an as needed basis, *ad hoc* advisory groups to create and develop specific program initiatives.

Local Region 3 CareerCenters work with a variety of "community partners" to promote collaboration in the delivery of services to youth that are most in need or have significant barriers to employment. The collaborative goal of these partnerships is to connect youth to educational and training opportunities that lead to successful employment. Career decision making is available through the Adult Education programs; The Maine Centers for Women, Work and Community and the CareerCenters. The information obtained is transferable to other assessment partners that is used to determine training opportunities. This strategy is instrumental in CWMWDB's commitment to an integrated approach to addressing workforce skill needs.

Community groups that Local Region 3 partners with is quite extensive and include but is not limited to: State Agencies – VR, DHHS, BCFS; Staffing Agencies – Kelly , Manpower and Bonney Staffing; Youth Programs – Job Corps, Take2, New Beginnings, Boys and Girls Clubs; Educational/School Programs – Alternative Ed Programs, CTE's, After School Programs;; Support Services – Driver's Ed, Atlee and Gleaton Eye Care, Goodwill-Hinckley, Kennebec Behavioral Health, South End Teen Center of Waterville, and many more. In all these partnerships, roles are identified and the delivery of service is negotiated to the benefit of the youth.

- **75% out-of-school youth (any new partners and/or strategies)**

Beginning last year Local Region 3 enrollments have been strictly out-of-school youth. The CWMWDB's strategy is to work with programs such as the Work with ME program (an affiliate of the Auburn Police Department) along with the Auburn School Department's credit recovery program that target OSY. To date, Local Region 3 has enrolled 8 youth in this project and 7 have completed their Auburn Ad Ed diplomas of these 7 a few are moving on to post-secondary. These are very at risk youth! The region is also working with Take2 and have enrolled 10 youth. Academic components are offered directly through these partners and workshops. The Board is also referring youth to the employer driven projects where they receive Work Readiness, occupational skills training and on-the-job-training.

- **20% work experience (any new partners and/or strategies)**

Work experience is one of the major services provided to enrolled youth. In addition to the sites named above, the CWMWDB is working with Tree Street Youth, the PAL center (Police Athletic League), Lots to Gardens, and private sector sites such as Chapman House and Clover Manor. Academic components are built into the WE and offered on site through the partners. Work experiences are also being used as a way for employers to "evaluate" youth for potential hire.

- **Financial literacy (any new partners and/or strategies)**

The CWMWDB works with partners, such as Work with ME and New Ventures, to arrange financial literacy offerings to be delivered as a group activity on site for youth. Effort is made to keep youth services "portable" so they can be delivered where the youth are rather than exclusively at the CareerCenter.

- **Youths who are individuals with disabilities (any new partners and/or strategies)**

A majority of enrolled youth are individuals with disabilities who are also working with CWMWDB partners. Since no agency can do it alone, the CWMWDB works with partners such as Work with ME, PAL, Auburn School Dept. credit recovery program, and Take2 to offer emotional support and encouragement while addressing academic and occupational goals.

Local Region 3 provides comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth by using appropriate assessment strategies, jointly developing individual service plans, and enrolling youth in appropriate activities which include the availability of the fourteen youth service elements. CareerCenter staff assess youth needs using a variety of tools such as structured interviews and standardized testing instruments.

Staff work with youth to develop an individualized plan to address the needs or barriers identified in the assessment process. To support youth participants to attain a secondary school

diploma or its recognized equivalent, enter into post-secondary education, and/or gain career readiness skills the following service elements will be made available:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized post-secondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate;
3. Paid and unpaid Work Experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include:
  - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities throughout the school year;
  - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
  - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
  - d. On-the-job training opportunities;
4. Occupational skill 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, if the local board determines that the programs meet the quality and criteria described in section 123;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership Development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate;
7. Supportive Services;
8. Adult Mentoring for the period of participation and subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
9. Follow-Up Services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate;
11. Financial Literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial Skills;
13. Services that provide Labor Market and Employment Information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as Career Awareness, Career Counseling, and Career Exploration services; and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for transition to postsecondary education and training.

CareerCenter staff develop and maintain good working relationships with local businesses, public and private agencies, education providers and community resource providers to coordinate services for the participants. Local Region 3 continues to promote the provision of comprehensive, integrated services to youth by participating with a number of partnering agencies responsible for workforce development, foster care, education, human services, juvenile

justice, as well as other agencies that work with youth with barriers to employment or who are at-risk.

WMCA supports all eligible youth in the Nutrition Center programs by financing their pay. This has enabled the NC to deepen the responsibilities of several youth who are now taking on roles formerly carried out by college students, most of whom are not from the Lewiston area. They partner with several organizations in the Lewiston / Auburn area, such as the juvenile justice system, New Beginnings, and Tree Street to conduct outreach for their programs and support youth who are involved in 2 or more of WMCA's partner organizations. The Nutrition Center also connects with outside organizations and businesses to further support the youth in gaining these skills. They also integrate resume building and interview practice into youth program curricula.

In Local Region 3, youth case managers work closely with a variety of organizations that serve at-risk youth. They use the same strategy mentioned above under integrated cross-program strategies. The case managers work with adult education, community colleges, and other training facilities to provide occupational skills training as well as with area businesses that have specific training needs and refer youth for that type of training credential. Direct referrals are made to Job Corps and youth case managers assist youth returning from Job Corps with job placement or continued education.

CWMWDB awards grants for youth activities as funding allows and are mainly directed at summer employment and work experience. The process CWMWDB uses includes issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for summer youth employment programming and/or worksites in Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Oxford and Somerset Counties. The period for the Summer Youth Employment Program is typically from June 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30th. In order to maximize the effectiveness of funding youth activities, CWMWDB allows flexibility when awarding grants; in such that there may be several projects awarded at different amounts or one proposal that is awarded the total grant amount available. The current Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) service providers (Western Maine Community Action and Bureau of Employment Services) determine eligibility and certify all participating youth.

“Summer employment” may include any set of allowable WIOA Youth services that occur during the above referenced summer months as long as it includes a work experience component.

The CareerCenters use labor market information gathered through O\*NET, CWRI, local employers, and other resources to assist youth in making career choices. They provide work experience opportunities, job shadowing, work readiness assessment, and job fairs to connect youth to the business community and to prepare them for employment. Partnering with other youth organizations helps the CareerCenters to provide the fourteen youth elements in an efficient and more comprehensive way. Each partner has strengths which can build off from what another partner can offer. See the example given under integrated cross-program strategies.

Non-eligible youth are able to receive all of the information center and Wagner-Peyser services available at the CareerCenter. The CareerCenter managers follow CWMWDB's Youth Enrollment Policy. These services include use of computers, fax, copier, and phones; participation in a wide variety of workshops; assistance with on line applications; access to labor market information, educational, and self-assessment materials; referrals to community

resources; job fairs; and, specialized employer recruitment events. Since there are many eligible youth in need of assistance, CareerCenters do not enroll or spend WIOA support or training dollars on non-eligible youth.

Working relations with Job Corps and other youth programs are developed and fostered to create and maintain clear lines of communication. Through this collaborative understanding staff in Local Region 3 give and receive direct referrals from Job Corps and other youth programs such as Jobs for Maine's Graduates, Technical Center programs, and life-skill programs. Meetings with Job Corps recruiters, youth and other youth programs take place as needed and typically occur onsite at the youth program agency.

### Section 10: Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs

CWMWDB regularly solicits feedback from Adult Ed Directors, CTE directors, K-12 officials, CMCC and KVCC representatives, College For ME Androscoggin, and USM & UMA officials and others who can provide customized training on demand for businesses. Informed and in-touch educators and the workforce development system is an integral component of the Key Priorities and Proposed Strategies for CWMWDB as described throughout the plan.

Providing increased opportunities for educators responsible for developing or implementing curriculum to visit both large and small employers and vice versa (e.g. Career and Technical Education (CTE) program advisory committees) will provide a "training for the trainers" type of experience. This should help to expand opportunities to assist educators in knowing and experiencing employer needs with work readiness, work ethic, problem solving, effective communication, initiative, decision-making, independence, collaboration, and innovation.

#### Proposed Activity:

CWMWDB's goal is to facilitate interaction between educators and the targeted industries identified earlier as well as the business community as a whole. The plan is to create linkages within the region between employers and educators to participate in teacher/employer programs as well as offer them opportunities to participate in the Teachers Economic Bus Tour; held the first week every June after the school year ends. CWMWDB will collaborate with LRTC and meet with other CTE's and high schools within the region to present the concept and the benefits of the program. The goal is to expand the Teachers Economic Bus Tour model of professional development day for teachers and Career Days for students to other areas of the region within the next three years. Another example in Local Region 3 of connecting educators with employers is through the Somerset County Technical Center and Skowhegan High School. They have developed and implemented a Business to Education Class where faculty from both schools have been out meeting businesses in the community to learn what needs to be changed in their curriculum to better meet the needs of the local businesses. CWMWDB's goal is to replicate this concept throughout the region at other CTEs as well as the Educators Economic Bus Tour Day.

#### Proposed Activity:

Leadership Maine: Education Leaders Experience, founded in partnership with Unum and the Maine Principals' Association, is designed for K-12 education leaders and is a program of the Maine Development Foundation. This program offers established educational leaders a unique experiential learning opportunity which is designed to build strong relationships between

educational leaders and business partners and to build a collaborative support network of leaders statewide. CWMWDB's objective is to promote this program within the workforce development system as an additional avenue to improve communication. The intent is for participants within Local Region 3 to benefit from access to key community and business leaders who provide meaningful insight into how to prepare Maine students to tackle Maine's critical economic issues.

#### Proposed Activity:

Access to training and higher education opportunities for entry and advancement in the workforce is a critical element to having a productive labor force that is qualified and adaptable in meeting the changing needs of employers. This is and has been a fundamental priority for CWMWDB. In an effort to increase the number of people with college degrees (Associates and Bachelor's), one year certificates, state licensure, or nationally industry-wide recognized certification, CWMWDB supports College for ME – Androscoggin (C4ME-A) and recognizes the need to increase the numbers of adults in all counties with post-secondary education beyond high school diploma using such organizations as C4ME-A as a conduit. C4ME-A's goal is to radically transform ways of connecting youth, families, employers, students and community partners for the purpose of educating, preparing and supporting Maine's workforce. In partnership with, and support for C4ME, CWMDB will be able to focus on building a talent pipeline from high school and beyond with career pathways as a way to build the pipeline. C4ME will be instrumental in this endeavor through their implementation of the following strategies:

- Developing and implementing a high school senior workshop series that focuses on post-graduation pathways. Participants in this workshop series will be eligible for summer internships in desired career paths.
- Building a virtual education to career pathway that will be made available to every middle and high school student in Androscoggin County. This virtual education to career pathway will demonstrate which academic requirements and recommendations will lead to desired academic and professional opportunities upon high school graduation. This mechanism will be able to provide purposeful pursuit of all professional opportunities through relevant educational options.
- Increasing Employer Outreach to provide midlevel management educational and training resources and opportunities to use as professional development in employee assessments. C4ME-A reaches out to Employers to support them in supporting their employees in educational pursuits. C4ME-A also works directly with individuals concerning career exploration and college navigation.

This program has been invaluable in assisting people to further their education. It has also helped employers to recognize the value of educating their incumbent employees to help their business succeed and grow and plan for succession. It is CWMWDB's goal to work with C4ME-A to pursue the feasibility of replicating this program in other counties within the region. This will be accomplished by meeting with other workforce development partners in each of the four counties and present the concept and the benefits of the program. The plan is to expand the concept within the region either by starting new coalitions or building and supporting existing ones.

## Section 11: Coordination with Transportation Services Providers

The CWMWDB understands that transportation remains a major challenge for employers and workers in the region, especially given the size of the region and the dispersion of both workers and employers across the region, in both rural and urban areas. Some employers in the region have adopted private transportation strategies to transport workers from their homes to the job site.

In order to help guide future transportation planning, the CWMWDB will engage more closely with the Maine Department of Transportation (DOT) and local/regional agencies to inform them about employer and job seeker transportation needs. Through employer engagement, described previously, the CWMWDB will endeavor to understand the specific transportation challenges employers and their workers are facing.

Through increased engagement with ADA transit providers, such as the Kennebec Valley Community Action Program (KVCAP), the CWMWDB will better understand the transportation resources available to individuals with disabilities and how that may influence their employment options.

## Section 12: Coordinating One-Stop Services to Avoid Duplication

As described previously, the CWMWDB meets regularly with partner agencies at the CareerCenters. These meetings have many purposes, including evaluating performance; discussing resources, priorities, and challenges; and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Additionally, CareerCenter staff are cross-trained in common operations, such as reception and intake, in order to maximize the utilization of all staff. This cross-training serves another important purpose: ensuring each agency understands the roles, resources, and programs of the other partner agencies so that duplication of services can be avoided. Furthermore, the CWMWDB plans to develop a One-Stop Operations committee that will meet regularly, identify goals to streamline and improve operations, and develop steps to meet those goals.

## Section 13: Coordination with Adult Education and Literacy Activities

The CWMWDB meets regularly with adult education and literacy partners to discuss challenges employers are facing and the specific skills that are lacking in the workforce. Many skill gaps, especially those related to reading, arithmetic, and soft skills, can be addressed at least in part by adult education providers.

Additionally, the CWMWDB is working with adult education providers to share the new priorities of WIOA, especially **career pathways**. The CWMWDB will be working with these agencies how best to incorporate career pathways into the existing GED and other adult education curricula.

Additionally, representatives of the adult education and literacy organizations serve on the CWMWDB, helping identify strategies and initiatives and ensuring that efforts in the region are coordinated.

Through its engagement with employers and economic development partners, the CWMWDB



plans to act as a resource to adult education and literacy providers – sharing with them information about employer occupational and soft skill needs to ensure that education curricula align with business needs. As part of the industry sector development in Local Region 3 as well as integrating services with a new required core partner under WIOA, CWMWDB has begun working more closely with Adult Education. In Local Region 3 the Adult Educators have created sub-regional “Alliances” consisting of Adult Education providers in near proximity of each other. The CWMWDB is working with each Alliance to identify growth industries within each Alliance geographic service area that have a need for occupational training that will lead to the creation of industry specific career pathways.

The following is a summary of the region’s strategies, current activities and proposed activities to allow all age groups access to an efficient and effective Career Pathway in Local Region 3:

### **Strategies/Actions**

#### **1. Build cross-agency partnerships and clarify roles:**

- For employer projects initiated in the region to date, the project began with a meeting with area partners to determine what the various components were and who would be responsible for each.
- Sometimes roles were shared, as with recruitment, assessment, and selection, and other times unique, as with determining eligibility and enrollment.
- Partners have included: Adult Education, Community College, Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership, WIOA Service Provider, BES, LWDB, MDOL, and Employers.
- As noted earlier, C4ME - A will be focused over the next four years in helping to develop solid career pathways for all people living in Androscoggin County with the option to expand these activities throughout the region.

#### **2. Identify industry sectors and engage employers:**

- The region’s targeted industries are Health Care and Manufacturing. Additionally, emerging sectors include Information Technology and Business Management.
- Employers were identified through job fairs, communication with CareerCenter staff, other partners, or self-identified.
- All projects involve employers from the beginning (see below).

#### **3. Design education and training programs:**

- Once a project is identified, partners meet and learn about the employers’ needs regarding work readiness skills, occupational skill levels, and education requirements. The education and training programs are then geared to meet those needs.
- Education providers develop a Work Readiness program geared to the particular industry followed by specific occupational skills training. (One project involved the community college as the occupational skills provider, but this has mainly been provided by adult education.)
- There are 7 broad components involved with each project:

- Marketing/Recruitment: all partners, but mainly WIOA Service Provider, BES, and Adult Education
  - Pre-screening: WIOA Service Provider and BES
  - Assessments: WIOA Service Provider and Adult Education
  - Selection: All partners
  - Enrollment: WIOA Service Provider and BES (depending on program)
  - Training: Adult Education and Community College
  - Follow-up: All partners
4. Identify funding needs and sources:
- WIOA Service Provider and BES (depending on program) have provided the major source of funding. Adult Education had some scholarship funds that could be used; if needed.
  - One project was Earn-While-You-Learn, and the employer paid 50% of the wages through OJT.
  - One employer is now willing to pay for selected candidates that are not eligible for federal or state training dollars.
  - One possible funding source is employers paying some of the costs, especially for good candidates that are not eligible for federal or state training dollars.
5. Align policies and programs:
- All partners adapt their policies and programs as much as possible in order to stretch the dollars and meet the particular project's needs.
  - Local Region 3 recently updated its OJT policy to be more responsive to employer needs.
6. Measure system change and performance:
- Tracking of participant progress is done throughout the project
  - At the end of each project, there is discussion about what went well and what needs to be improved

CWMWDB is exploring an agricultural project with Backyard Farms, a construction project with a private foundation partner involving multiple employers, and a business support specialist project with Bonney Staffing involving multiple employers.

Current projects include:

- CNA Ready 2 Work Programs with:
  - Maine General (exploring other apprenticeship opportunities)
  - Me. Veterans Home
  - Mt. Saint Josephs
  - Lakewood
  - Partners: Waterville, Lawrence, and Augusta Adult Education
- OJT's with a Ready2Work model project with Alternative Manufacturing and Winthrop Adult Ed
- OJT with Office of Information Technology

- OJT with Central Maine Meats
- Working with Educare, KVCAP, KVCC and Waterville Adult Education in a 2 Gen Pilot (along with 3 other states)
- Working with Maranacook Adult Education in providing candidates/training of CDL drivers.

#### Ongoing Career Pathways Projects:

- Every training program developed over the past 2-3 years has a career pathway built in with through the local Adult Educators/local community colleges. These programs include (among others):
  - CNA
  - Welding
  - CRMA/PSS
  - Manufacturing Academy
  - IT Boot Camp
  - CSI Associates Degree developed at KVCC
  - Eldercare Specialist training at CMC
- Truck driving career pathways
- 70+ career enhancing Apprenticeships at MaineGeneral for RNs

### Section 14: Coordination with Organizations and Agencies Providing Services to Individuals with Disabilities

As described previously, the CWMWDB has a MOU with the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS), in order to provide effective services to individuals with disabilities at the CareerCenters. Another MOU, between BES and BRS, spells out a referral agreement to refer VR clients whose cases are closed due to successful employment to the BES EN.

DRCs are actively reaching out to service providers to ensure connections are made that best serve people with disabilities. There is an emphasis on making providers and their clients aware of the CareerCenters' services. The Board is focusing on agencies that serve low income individuals and individuals with mental health and substance abuse concerns.

Additionally, CareerCenter staff has undergone training on providing services to individuals with disabilities. In the past program year, CareerCenter staff have received 2.5-3-hour training sessions on Disability Disclosure in the CareerCenter, the ADA and Job Accommodations, and Disability Awareness and Etiquette. The latter two were presented in partnership with Disability Rights Maine, refreshers/updates on the Flexible Employment Fund and Adaptive Software on the public computers in the CareerCenters. Assistive Technology locator guides for each center have been or are being updated.

The CWMWDB hosted a full day conference, the Financial Freedom Forum, in June. 76 people representing service providers from Local Region 3's five-county area attended to learn about the experiences of service providers and individuals with disabilities working to improve their

financial capability and independence, and a myriad of resources were showcased to expand the service providers' knowledge of agencies and programs that can assist their clients with disabilities, along with other lower income clients, to best manage their finances as they gain employment and increase their income.

MDOL is currently drafting policies that will help codify staff training on topics such as those offered originally in the CareerCenters served by DEI. This will afford an opportunity to those partners in Local Region 3 who didn't receive the training before, along with providing reinforcement to CareerCenter staff already trained under DEI. Board and state-level policy that address universal access, non-discrimination, financial capability services for WIOA youth and others, and use of integrated resource teams will be considered. Any new policies in these areas will require staff training and orientation, for both incumbent staff and new employees.

MDOL has convened a professional development team that is currently drafting a training plan. As an outgrowth of DEI, the plan will identify training for WIOA partners' staff on how to incorporate financial literacy/capability, use of integrated resource teams to address customers with multiple barriers or concerns affecting employment success. The resources developed by DEI, such as the Basic Financial Assessment tool, will be shared with partners. CWMWDB will encourage the use of these tools through appropriate means, which may call for an MOU, co-training, etc.

Next steps suggested at the Financial Freedom Forum, such as routine financial resource fairs, will be incorporated into ongoing events offered in CareerCenters.

As the CWMWDB dives further into WIOA implementation, the Board plans to continue practices, such as the Basic Financial Assessment Tool, integrated resource teams (IRTs), and more Board engagement on universal accessibility of services and offices. Staff training, corresponding policy development, and continued refinement of practices, protocols, and partnerships will be explored.

### Section 15: Identification of Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds

The Central Western Maine Workforce Development Board is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds.

### Section 16: Description of Process Used to Award Subgrants and Contracts

It is the policy of the CWMWDB to follow a practice of ethical, responsible and reasonable procedures related to purchasing, agreements and contracts, and related forms of commitment. The policies in this section (excerpts from CWMWDB Procurement Policy) describe the principles and procedures that all staff shall adhere to in the completion of their designated responsibilities. See Appendix 3 for a complete copy of CWMWDB's Procurement Policy

#### **Responsibility for Purchasing**

The Executive Director shall have the authority to initiate purchases on behalf of the CWMWDB, within the guidelines described in this policies manual. In addition, the Executive Director may delegate purchasing authority to responsible individuals within their department. The Executive Director shall inform the Fiscal Agent of all individuals that may

initiate purchases or prepare purchase orders. The Fiscal Agent shall maintain a current list of all authorized purchasers of the CWMWDB. The approved individuals shall sign all claims for payment, thereby signifying authorization.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

All vendors/contractors who are the recipients of Organization funds, or who propose to perform any work or furnish any goods under agreements with the CWMWDB, shall agree to these important principles:

1. Vendors/Contractors will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sexual orientation or national origin, except where religion, sex, or national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the vendors/contractors.
2. Vendors/contractors agree, to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this non-discrimination clause. Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with Federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for meeting the intent of this section.

### **Authorizations and Purchasing Limits**

All contracts in excess of \$10,000.00 between the CWMWDB and outside parties must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors, as well as the Executive Director. The Executive Director is authorized to enter into any contract on behalf of the CWMWDB.

### **Required Solicitation of Quotations from Vendors**

1. Purchase decisions in excess of \$5,000 for labor, equipment, supplies or services purchased, leased or contracted for shall be made only after receiving, whenever possible, oral quotations from at least two (2) vendors.
2. Purchase decisions exceeding \$25,000 for labor, equipment, supplies or services purchased, leased or contracted for shall be made only after receiving whenever possible, written quotations from at least two (2) vendors. Specific selections shall be recommended by the Executive Director to the Board of Directors, for approval, with written quotations attached for review. Recommendations shall be based on consideration of all applicable criteria as described under "Evaluation of Alternative Vendors" below.
3. All Purchase decisions of \$100,000 or more shall be made by obtaining competitive proposals from at least three (3) responsible vendors. Sealed bids shall be utilized when required by a Federal-awarding agency.

**Solicitations for goods and services (requests for proposals) should provide for all of the following:**

1. A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description shall not contain features, which unduly restrict competition.
2. Requirements, which the bidder must fulfill, and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals (see the next section entitled "Evaluation of Alternative Vendors" for required criteria)

3. A description, whenever practicable, of technical requirements in terms of functions to be performed or performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.
4. The specific features of "brand name or equal" descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitations.
5. The acceptance, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, of products and services dimensioned in the metric system of measurement.
6. Preference, to the extent practicable and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve natural resources and protect the environment and are energy efficient.
7. A description of the proper format, if any, in which proposals must be submitted, including the name of the CWMWDB person to whom proposals should be sent.
8. The date by which proposals are due.
9. Required delivery or performance dates/schedules.
10. Clear indications of the quantity (ies) requested and unit(s) of measure.

### **Evaluation of Alternative Vendors**

Alternative vendors shall be evaluated on a weighted scale that considers the following criteria:

1. Adequacy of the proposed methodology of the vendor
2. Skill and experience of key personnel
3. Demonstrated company experience
4. Other technical specifications (designated by department requesting proposals)
5. Compliance with administrative requirements of the request for proposal (format, due date, etc.)
6. Vendor's financial stability
7. Vendor's demonstrated commitment to the nonprofit sector
8. Results of communications with references supplied by vendor
9. Ability/commitment to meeting time deadlines
10. Cost
11. Minority- or women-owned business status of vendor
12. Other criteria (to be specified by department requesting proposal)

Not all of the preceding criteria may apply in each purchasing scenario. However, in each situation requiring consideration of alternative vendors, the department responsible for the purchase shall establish the relative importance of each criterion prior to requesting proposals and shall evaluate each proposal on the basis of the criteria and weighting that have been determined.

After a vendor has been selected and approved by the department director, the final selection shall be approved by the Executive Director prior to entering into a contract.

The contract will include a statement that specifies the work to be completed and milestones that must be measurable. Quarterly reports will be required to include current status of completion of milestones.

### **Affirmative Consideration of Minority, Small Business and Women-Owned Businesses**

Positive efforts shall be made by the CWMWDB to utilize small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises, whenever possible. The following steps shall be taken in furtherance of this goal:

1. Ensure that small business, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises are used to the fullest extent practicable.
2. Make information on forthcoming opportunities available and arrange time frames for purchases and contracts to encourage and facilitate participation by small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises.
3. Consider in the contract process whether firms competing for larger contracts tend to subcontract with small businesses, minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises.
4. Encourage contracting with consortiums of small businesses, minority owned firms and women's business enterprises when a contract is too large for one of these firms to handle individually.
5. Use the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency in the minority-owned firms and women's business enterprises.

### **Procurement Under Federal Awards**

Procurement of goods and services whose costs are charged to Federal awards received by the CWMWDB are subject to the specific policies of the CWMWDB purchasing policies described earlier, under "Purchasing Policies and Procedures." In addition, procurements associated with Federal awards are subject to the following supplemental policies:

1. The CWMWDB shall avoid purchasing items that are not necessary for the performance of the activities required by a Federal award.
2. Where appropriate, an analysis shall be made of lease and purchase alternatives to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement for the Federal government.
3. Documentation of the cost and price analysis associated with each procurement decision shall be retained in the procurement files pertaining to each Federal award.
4. For all procurements in excess of the small purchase acquisition threshold (currently \$100,000), procurement records and files shall be maintained that include all of the following:
  - a. The basis for contractor selection.
  - b. Justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained.
  - c. The basis for award cost or price.
5. The CWMWDB shall make all procurement files available for inspection upon request by a Federal Awarding Agency.
6. All contracts with vendors shall require the vendor to certify, in writing, that it has not been suspended or disbarred from doing business with any Federal agency.

In addition, no employee, officer, or agent of the CWMWDB shall participate in the selection,

award, or administration of a contract supported by Federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when the employee, officer, or agent, any member of her or his immediate family, his/her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the firm selected for an award.

### **Special Purchasing Conditions**

#### ***Emergencies:***

Where equipment, materials, parts, and/or services are needed, quotations will not be necessary if the health, welfare, safety, etc., of staff and protection of Organization property is involved.

#### ***Single Distributor/Source:***

Where there is only one (1) distributor for merchandise needed and no other product meets the stated needs or specifications, quotations will not be necessary.

### **Conflicts of Interest Prohibited**

No officer, board member, employee, or agent of the CWMWDB shall participate in the selection or administration of a vendor if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise if an officer, board member, employee or agent, or any member of his/her immediate family, his/her spouse/partner, or an organization that employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in the vendor selected.

Officers, board members, employees and agents of the CWMWDB shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from vendors or parties to sub-agreements. However, unsolicited gifts of a nominal value may be accepted with the approval of the Executive Director.

In reference to awarding grants and contracts for activities carried out under WIOA Subtitle I, CWMWDB and its two service providers (BES, WMCA) refer exclusively to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) that is maintained by MDOL when procuring training services. If one of the service providers wants to secure training outside of the ETPL, they refer the vender to MDOL to be registered on the ETPL. Community-based organizations and faith-based organizations are made aware of any procurement opportunities in the same manner as other vendors; typically through an announcement in one or more local newspapers, announcement to the Board and CLEO members and the Youth Council.



## Section 17: Description of Local Levels of Performance

Local levels of performance will be negotiated with the state.

### **Adult Program**

Common Measures	Planned
Entered Employment	84%
Employment Retention	88%
Average Earnings	\$11,700

### **Dislocated Workers Program**

Common Measures	Planned
Entered Employment	89.5%
Employment Retention	82.9%
Average Earnings	\$15,026

### **Youth Program**

Common Measures	Planned
Placement in Education Employment or Education	66.3%
Attainment of a Degree or Certificate by Participants	73.3%
Literacy and Numeracy	33%

## Section 18: Description of Activities Board will take to improve performance

The CWMWDB is constantly seeking opportunities for improvement. Many of the specific strategies that will be utilized to improve services are described throughout this report. The primary strategies include:

- Develop and leverage sector-based strategies to develop demand-driven training
- Improve communication among partner agencies and employers to improve services and avoid duplication
- Balance the supply and demand of labor by improving access to and awareness of in-demand career opportunities and related training
- Improve foundational learning and adaptability skills

Additionally, the CWMWDB believes the board's operation can be improved by increasing the number and level of engagement of private sector board members. Through their input, the CWMWDB will be able to ensure its activities align with the needs of employers and more quickly make changes based on employer feedback. This engagement can be accomplished through a comprehensive Board Orientation that not only describes the role of the board but also identifies examples of job seeker success and collaborations with employers.

The Board will also identify committees to assist with certain strategy objectives. At a minimum, committees focused on improving one-stop service delivery, youth services, and services to individuals with disabilities will be developed. Additional committees will align with the strategic objectives outlined in this plan and may include committees focused on targeted industries and business services.

### **Alignment with State of Maine Workforce Development Plan**

The goals and priorities of the CWMWDB, as outlined in this plan, are closely aligned with the Strategic Objectives of the State of Maine Workforce Development Board, which are, as follows:

Through the goals and initiatives proposed in this plan, the CWMWDB will support each of the State's strategic objectives. The cornerstone of each of these objectives is collaboration and coordination with partners and deep and effective employer engagement.

#### **1. Increase Relevance of Workforce Development Services to Employers**

CWMWDB has established various employer working groups in manufacturing, health care and IT along with the employer focus group meeting held in May of 2016 to collect comments (both positive and negative), constructive feedback, and creative suggestions, to increase the CWMWDB's relevance locally and regionally in the types and frequencies of employer services the CWMWDB offers to the business community. These working groups offer us immediate and continuing feedback on the types of training and education needed so job seekers are better prepared for their multiple job openings in emerging, high wage, and fast growing local industries. The CWMWDB also offer employers the CareerCenter Job Fairs in both Lewiston and Augusta on a monthly basis year-round, which provides them an opportunity to recruit from large groups of skilled job seekers who have been prepared by staff at local CareerCenters to show off their best skills and job experience. The job fairs have averaged 35-40 employers over the past year. Additionally, CareerCenter staff participates in tours of businesses throughout the year to learn in detail about employer needs and see in person what their jobs entail. The Board also provides OJT's, Work Experience, Apprenticeships and customized employer driven training programs in collaboration with local adult education and community college partners to meet local and regional businesses demands. The positive feedback received from employers from these events has helped reinforce the immediate and long term relevance of Workforce Development services to the business community.

#### **2. Produce an Educated and Skilled Workforce**

CWMWDB works with all area educators including the region's two community colleges (CMCC & KVCC), USM's Lewiston Auburn College, UMA, UMF, NTI, Region 9 Truck Driving School, Maine College of Health Professions at CMMC, Maine is IT, and New England School of Metal Works welding school. The CWMWDB's continued relationship with 6 CTE's in the 5-county region along with area superintendents and all adult education directors helps us

create, develop, and maintain a skilled and educated workforce in Local Region 3. The CSSP program helps job seekers get the type of skilled education and degrees needed that are required by today's businesses.

### **3. Align the State's Commitment and Investment in Maine's Workforce**

CWMWDB is only too aware of the current shortage of available workers within the Central Maine area. To address this, the Board will continue to create and develop new strategies to draw new educated and skilled workers, New Mainers, the disenfranchised no longer looking for work, millennials, and out of state students who currently attend and graduate from the regional colleges and universities. The CWMWDB is committed to offering only training programs and education assistance to the workforce that will result in good paying jobs in high demand industries of health care, manufacturing, IT, travel and tourism and the construction trades. By offering free access to training and education to eligible workforce participants, paid work experience, OJT's, apprenticeships, CSSP, and job matching under the state's Maine Job Link, the CWMWDB provides what is needed to invest in the local region's economy by providing an educated and skilled workforce.

### **4. Increase Workforce Development Services Operational Effectiveness**

As indicated in Maine 2016-2020 WIOA Unified Plan that "in order for Maine to achieve its vision, it is critical that the operational effectiveness of the workforce development system (WDS) increases." It must be noted that this cannot happen without the WDS in the Local Regions continually improving the operational effectiveness as well. To ensure alignment and continuity with Maine's vision coming to fruition, Local Region 3 will also pursue Maine's initiatives "that improve customer navigation, data sharing, and continuous improvement through evaluation, accountability, and data driven decision making."

Once Maine's core programs have reviewed policies and procedures, Local Region 3 will implement the revisions and modifications at the local level to improve operational effectiveness, which will support Maine's need to have an effective WDS statewide.

### **5. Grow and diversify Maine's Workforce through improved access and engagement**

The Maine 2016-2020 WIOA Unified Plan mentions that "there must be a commitment to grow and diversify Maine's workforce to improve access and engagement by implementing two basic strategies: increasing participation in the workforce among the existing population, and attracting people from outside the state to live and work in Maine." Local Region 3 recognizes the need to do this on a local level and is collaborating with WDS partners and community/health service providers to encourage and increase workforce participation. Section 4 provides specific information on strategies to increase access to employment for under-represented populations. Further, Local Region 3 is fully supportive of workforce "relocation" efforts starting to occur in Maine (e.g. [www.liveandworkinmaine.com](http://www.liveandworkinmaine.com)).

### **6. Create and align outreach and communication to achieve the vision**

To promote workforce services, representatives of the CWMWDB and its partners present at local Rotary and Chamber meetings, provide stories and interviews for local papers and radio stations, engage with customers on social media, and supply posters for over 80 public locations advertising Job Fairs or Job Training announcements. Additionally, the Board supports the Professional Teachers Bus Tours every June to local businesses and manufacturers and the Central Maine IT group and other employer advisory groups.

## Section 19: Description of Training Services, Coordination, and Vendor Selection

The decision on allocating funds for training opportunities will be based on high-growth, high-demand, and economically vital occupations. Training services authorized under this policy shall be provided through the use of Individualized Training Accounts (ITA); On-the-Job Training (OJT); Customized Training (CT); Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) and Transitional Jobs (TJ) to eligible individuals through the CareerCenter. Participants may choose between OJTs, apprenticeship or use of ITA for tuition in a training program provided by an approved training provider. The determination of the best option will be discussed with and jointly agreed upon by the participant and case manager, with the final approval of the CareerCenter Manager.

ITAs place training resource information in the hand of the participant. Rather than being directed to a provider of training by an agency, participants will be able to select high quality training for in-demand occupations from a list of approved training providers. The list of eligible training providers is compiled and made available electronically by the Maine DOL. Consumer information about eligible training providers is available to all training seekers electronically through the CareerCenter. The ITA policy will be communicated in simple, understandable language to customers of the CareerCenter. The customers will have access to the list of Eligible Training Providers (ETP) and will be able to use their ITA to acquire services from eligible providers.

Participants may request training for an occupation not on the “demand list” if they can provide sufficient and verifiable documentation to demonstrate demand. Employer information and commitment to hire (at a wage rate that meets or exceeds the minimum earnings threshold for self-sufficiency as required for other funded occupations in the local area) is required for approval of these requests.

If there are two approved eligible providers providing the same training, similar quality and geographic accessibility (based on performance and customer satisfaction data, schedules and support services, ADA capacity, etc.) and total costs for training and support package are different, the provider with the most cost effective program must be selected.

Participants will receive assessment, counseling, and development of an Individual Services Strategy (ISS) through Individualized Career services prior to issuance of an ITA. The participant will research the labor market demand for the desired training and establish that this training will result in a viable occupational goal. Upon completion of an Individual Services Strategy for an ITA, the ITA funds will be obligated, and customers will work with case managers assigned to assist them to achieve their goals and be responsible for managing their ITAs.

The ITAs may be used for education and job skills training for employment in one or more of the careers shown to be locally in demand in the reports from CWRI and O\*NET. ITAs may be used to obtain specific skill certification leading to one of the occupations in current demand in the local labor market as determined by CWMWDB. It is imperative that a customer’s occupational choice be consistent with an individual employment plan developed with professional guidance.

Participants will provide their case manager with verification of successful progress as outlined in their ISS to continue to receive ITA funds for extended training. The limits on funds and training time for each ITA issued will balance customer needs and the availability of training funds. The case manager, in developing the plan, will need to document that there is no duplication of funds and that all other funding avenues have been explored and exhausted. The participant will be kept informed of his/her account status. Disbursement of funds will be in accordance with the approved Individual Training Account. Monies cannot be used for up-front payment for training.

## Section 20: Description of Process Used to Solicit Public Comment

An integrated approach was and will be used to guide investments – to develop CWMWDB’s 4-year strategic plan and modifications to the plan over the next four years. In order to develop the local plan, CWMWDB utilized its Steering Committee. The Steering Committee made suggestions for improvement or suggested other people or partners who should be at the table from the various groups and helped make the contacts possible. At the same time all members of the Board were invited to attend at least one sub-committee meeting if they had time, or to provide their input via e-mail. This turned out to be an excellent process to get feedback, new ideas, best practices and the many challenges that the current workforce development system will have to confront in order to realize the goals of a “strong, vibrant, sustainable economy that generates growth opportunities for employers and high demand-high wage jobs for job seekers.”

CWMWDB invited key partners/stakeholders to participate in 1-3 focus groups May 2016. The majority of these were held at the Lewiston CareerCenter with the Education/Workforce Service Provider Focus Group meeting held at Central Maine Community College in Auburn. The Business/Economic Development Group included the City of Lewiston Economic Developer, economic developers from the surrounding counties, the Governor’s Account Executive, and the two regional EDDs (AVCOG, KVCOG). The Education/Workforce Service Provider focus group included partners from area community colleges, UMA, USM, Kaplan University, and several adult education directors. The Education/Workforce Service Provider Focus Group also included most of the One-Stop CareerCenter staff members who worked on describing the array of participant services to a variety of different populations that are served including youth, Veterans, older workers, disabled workers, ex-felons, etc. These planning events with the aforementioned Focus Groups have been encouraging and the consensus is to continue these meetings on a regular schedule to ensure that all partners are aware of the capabilities/resources of each partner and to identify opportunities for collaboration. Follow up meetings are pending to discuss how the strategies will be accomplished and by whom. CWMWDB would like to continue to use these focus groups for future workforce development meetings (and electronic surveys) to keep the lines of communication open for all of the business/education/training partners so that they always have input into the strategic plan and can suggest changes to the plan as the economy and new and emerging industries change the landscape of Local Region 3.

The focus groups convened and ideas/comments and dialogue from all meetings were recorded on a digital recorder and all meeting notes were sent (via e-mail) out to all attendees, the CEO, the CWMWDB Board and the Steering Committee. All Board members and CEO were routinely included in the process and were invited to attend any of the scheduled meetings. They were also encouraged to submit written input/comments they wanted to make for building a

highly effective workforce development system. Everyone involved in this system had an opportunity to be heard. The draft Local Plan was provided to the CWMWDB Board on September 16, 2016 for their review and approval; the Board unanimously approved the Local Plan.

CWMWDB staff used both electronic and personal communication to engage key players for input in the development of this Local Plan as explained above. A draft of the Local Plan was completed and posted on the CWMWDB web site [[cwmwdb.org](http://cwmwdb.org)] on August 12, 2016 and its availability was announced in two area publications [*Kennebec Journal*, *Sun Journal*]. The public comment period was also announced via email (with a link to the Local Plan) to all Board members, CEOs and other stakeholders. The draft plan was posted for a 30 day public comment from August 12, 2016 through September 11, 2016. No public comments were received during that time period. The Final Plan was submitted on September 30, 2016 to MDOL – Bureau of Employment Services.

In addition to providing the plan for public comment, the CWMWDB also sent a survey to employers, education and training providers, economic development partners, and other stakeholders to solicit their feedback on the workforce system and opportunities for improvement.

## Section 21: Description of Transition to Integrated, Technology Enabled Intake and Case Management Information

Technology System Improvement: The MJLA system is the common case management system that enables the coordination and delivery of common services and providing access to all partner programs. Any Staff member can access both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser information on a customer in order to coordinate and develop a single service plan. This joint case management cannot be shared electronically with all WIOA core partners at this time, although coordination may occur on a case-by-case basis between case managers. MJLA also provides tools to document services being provided by other partners to WIOA enrolled customers to enhance coordinated service delivery for CareerCenter customers. This tool promotes integrated access to between WIOA/Wagner-Peyser services, eliminating unnecessary duplication, providing customers with a friendly interface, and reduction of overall implementation costs.