

# WORKFORCE FLORIDA

## PARTNERS' REPORT



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*The Partners' Report is a quarterly publication of Workforce Florida. For information contact: Lucia Fishburne Communications Director 850.921.1119*

### OPPAGA Reports: "Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 Has Been Implemented"

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), in its statutorily required review of the state's workforce development system, reports that the major components of the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 have been implemented. The OPPAGA report examines three specific areas: the impact of the Legislature's efforts to restructure the workforce development system through the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000; the delivery of employment services under the federal Wagner-Peyser Act, and the integration of those services with other activities provided by the One-Stop Career Centers; and, the system's performance in achieving its intended goals.

OPPAGA reports that the consolidation of the State Workforce Development Board and the WAGES State Program Board resulted in reducing costs at the state level by \$2.5 million over the first two fiscal years of implementation allowing more funds to be shifted into workforce programs. Consolidation of Regional Workforce Boards and WAGES Coalitions at the local level also resulted in significant cost savings and better coordination of services.

### Employer Satisfaction Up

Employer satisfaction with services provided by Florida's workforce system continues to improve. Employers awarded the system an American Customer Satisfaction Index score of 77.64 for the first quarter of the current program year. This is the highest employer score yet achieved and compares with scores of 68.69 for the first program year and 74.29 for the second program year. This is also the first time that employer scores have been higher than WIA participant (75.84) and Wagner/Peyser applicant (73.12) scores.

This improvement indicates the Workforce System's increased emphasis on serving employers is paying off. Increased satisfaction among employers should translate into more demand for services by employers and result in more job openings being made available for job seekers visiting Florida's One-Stop Career Centers.

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is an economic indicator that measures customer satisfaction. In the ACSI, customer's evaluations of quality are based on actual experiences with the goods and services being measured.

In evaluating the level of integration of services funded by various federal sources OPPAGA noted that although great improvements had been made particularly through co-location of services in One-Stop centers, federal law and regulations have created several barriers to further integration of services.

The OPPAGA report also acknowledges improved performance accountability, the development of a unified automated information system to better manage participant data, significant increase in business representation on the state and regional workforce boards, as well as increased numbers of employers accessing the system.

Recommendations for improvements included: increasing employers' awareness and use of the system through statewide marketing and local outreach (although

*(OPPAGA continued on Page 2)*

*(OPPAGA continued from Page 1)*

it was noted that efforts to increase employer participation might produce conflicts with private staffing firms); continued petitioning of USDOL for waivers to rules impeding further service integration efforts; and collaboration with workforce education and training providers to identify strategies for improving completion rates and expansion of the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for basic skills training.

OPPAGA also recommended that Workforce Florida develop performance standards that, if achieved, would demonstrate that workforce program participants are making significant progress over time toward attaining financial "self-sufficiency".

OPPAGA was created by the Florida Legislature in 1994 to help improve the performance and accountability of state government through reviews of state agencies and their programs.

**IN THE BOARD ROOM**  
**Recent Workforce Florida Board of Directors Actions:**

- ◆ Directed staff to continue collaborative war/terrorism contingency planning, including the identification and use of up to \$3 million state-level unobligated workforce funds available in the current State Fiscal Year if needed, and approved the implementation of special contingency training initiatives.
- ◆ Adopted the current year Regional Targeted Occupations Lists as submitted by the DOE and approved modifications to the processes previously used to review and obtain approval of the Regional Targeted Occupations Lists.
- ◆ Adopted a provision to the existing Rapid Response supplemental funding process policy to maximize flexibility in a Regional Workforce Board's use of an existing award by allowing the region to retain up to 20% or \$50,000 of the award, whichever is less, to assist additional but possibly unrelated companies.
- ◆ Adopted a proposal from the Better Jobs/ Better Wages Council was to allocate \$700,000 dollars of the Council's TANF funds to local Regional Workforce Boards to fund outreach to primary county economic development organizations, businesses/employers, non profit community groups and local training providers.
- ◆ Approved the Marketing Work Group's recommendation that the relationship between the existing regional brand and new state brand be an affiliate "linking" relationship and directed staff to re-engage the statewide branding project.

***For board meeting agendas, materials and minutes visit:***

**George Kirkpatrick's passing** this spring has prompted many of us to remember our experiences with this giant of a statesman. Sen.



Kirkpatrick played an integral role in developing Florida's workforce system not only as a Senator and education leader. He served on the state workforce board through all of its iterations starting with the Enterprise Florida Jobs and Education Partnership, then the Workforce Development Board

of Enterprise Florida, and today as Workforce Florida, Inc. A number of folks have noted the manner of his passing being in line with the way he lived his life – totally engaged. We are happy for that.

Mike Johnson, WFI staffer, shared this eloquent commentary with WFI staff after learning of the news:

"For those of us in the workforce community, he was a giant. Where we are and what we are doing would be significantly different if it were not for the sheer magnitude of his person. He challenged us to be more than we thought we could be and we are therefore diminished that the personification of that challenge is gone."

**In memory of the Senator, the annual Workforce Innovation Award will now be known as the George G. Kirkpatrick, Jr. Workforce Innovation Award**

# IN THE NEWS . . . . .

## High Performers Lead the Way

As in every year, some regions of the state do better than others. Workforce Florida has recognized outstanding overall performance from seven of the State's 24 regions for the program year 2001-2002. Using the "Red and Green Report" annual outcomes, this recognition is based on performance in job placement, wages at placement, reduction in welfare rolls, and use of the system by businesses and workers, satisfaction of businesses and workers, and progress made with disadvantaged youth in both school and employment activities. To qualify for the "high performance" awards regions are required to have at least 6 measures rated green (approximately 35% of the 17 total measures) and no more than 3 measures rated red (approximately 17%).

The 2001-2002 program year high performers are:

- Region 2** Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties.
- Region 3** Chipola Regional Workforce Development Board, Inc. (Calhoun, Holmes Jackson, Liberty and Washington Counties). Top performing region for 3 years in a row.
- Region 4** Gulf Coast Workforce Board (Bay, Franklin, and Gulf Counties). Top performing region for 2 years in a row.
- Region 8** First Coast Workforce Development, Inc. (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. John's Counties).
- Region 9** Alachua/Bradford Regional Workforce Development Board.
- Region 17** Polk County Workforce Development Board. Top performing region for 2 years in a row.
- Region 20** Workforce Development Board of the Treasure Coast (Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and St. Lucie Counties). Top performing region for 3 of the last 5 years.

## "Toolkit for Economic Development" Makes A Difference

The 2000 Legislature established the Toolkit for Economic Development Grant Program to provide assistance to distressed communities in an effort to improve the conditions of needy families. Thirty-two Toolkit grants were awarded in 29 different counties. Most of the projects funded by these grants contained some type of training component and some projects dealt exclusively with community cleanup/beautification (tearing down crack houses) or business stimulation (renovating business facades, micro-loans and economic development initiatives). Other projects centered on strengthening families through parenting and drug abuse workshops.

Although there were significant performances that had to do with outreach to businesses, public awareness and providing support to the targeted population, some of the more quantifiable direct results of the Toolkit program included:

- ◆ **4,190** persons were enrolled in training;
- ◆ **3,349** persons completed training (80% of those enrolled);
- ◆ **749** persons were placed into full-time employment;
- ◆ **15** businesses in targeted neighborhoods received facelift renovations (TANF participants or TANF-eligible persons were employed on each of these projects); and
- ◆ **29** dilapidated homes and other buildings that were identified as either active or potential crack houses in Orlando were demolished.

*"Now I never doubt myself by saying, 'I can't!'"*  
*An 18-year old, single mother who had never had a job before. She completed training through the Urban League of Broward County Toolkit project and is now employed. She has hopes of going on to college.*

Toolkit also provided funding that resulted in the startup of **50** small businesses and contact with over **1,000** businesses in separate projects located in the south central and northwest regions of the state. These contacts represented a long-term investment in providing employment opportunities to the targeted population through educating employers about the benefits of hiring TANF-eligible persons and how to utilize the regional workforce boards for recruiting employees.

There were many immediate, quantifiable successes in terms of training completions and job placements. But the long-term success of Toolkit will be measured in terms of a reduction in crime, greater economic opportunities through business growth and sustainable employment, and more educational success through the mentoring and remedial programs that were offered.

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WORKFORCE FLORIDA BOARD & RELATED MEETINGS

**APRIL 22, 2003**

Executive Committee and  
 Council/Committee Chairs  
 Orlando and via Teleconference

**MAY 21, 2003**

Partners' Meeting ( RWB Executive Directors)  
 Orlando, Embassy Suites, Downtown

**MAY 22, 2003**

Board of Directors and Committee Meetings  
 Orlando, Embassy Suites, Downtown

**JUNE 18, 2003**

Executive Committee and  
 Council/Committee Chairs Teleconference

ANNUAL  
 WORKFORCE  
 SUMMIT  
 October 6-9, 2003  
 Orlando  
 Mark your calendars!



OF THOSE BUSINESSES THAT  
 HIRED IN THE 2001-2002  
 PROGRAM YEAR,  
 19.1% UTILIZED  
 FLORIDA'S WORKFORCE  
 SYSTEM FOR SOME PART OF  
 THE HIRING PRACTICE.  
 THIS IS UP FROM 13% IN THE  
 PREVIOUS YEAR.



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