

WORKFORCE FLORIDA STATE LEVEL ACTIVITIES

The Workforce Florida Board as charged by the Workforce Innovation Act of 2000 maintains three state-level policy councils for the purpose of addressing specific workforce populations and issues. The local Regional Workforce Boards are charged with maintaining corresponding committees for the same purpose. Through initiatives funded by the state councils and the corresponding local committees, innovative approaches to improving Florida's workforce and increasing the competitiveness of Florida businesses can be demonstrated.

Workforce Florida's Office of Business Outreach administers Workforce Florida's three state-level councils as well as the employer-specific training programs. This office also liaisons with the business and economic development communities in the state to foster economic growth.

The Workforce Florida Board may also create, as needed, special committees, work groups and task forces to address specific challenges and issues. Examples of special committees and task forces are: the Nursing Task Force; the One-Stop Committee; the Strategic Planning Workgroup; the Red and Green Performance Review Workgroup; and, the Targeted Occupations Task Force.

The next section provides highlights of state-level activities of Workforce Florida's various councils, committees, task forces and workgroups. It concludes with a summary of Florida's methods of insuring accountability and continuous improvement.

Council and Committee Programs and Initiatives

The Workforce Florida Board of Directors annually allocates each of its three policy Councils state-level funds to implement training initiatives that build on policy objectives outlined in the strategic plan. These initiatives take the workforce system to the next level by changing behavior and emphasizing demand-driven services. Highlights of council and committee activities, programs and initiatives follow.

High Skills/High Wages Council

The purpose of the High Skills/High Wages Council is to develop strategies which align Florida's education and training programs with high-paying, high-demand occupations that advance individuals' careers, build a more skilled workforce and enhance the state's efforts to attract and expand job-creating businesses.

Training Projects

Title: Skills Upgrade Training Initiative for Rural Communities

Purpose: In line with the Governor's initiative for rural outreach, competitive funding was provided to *rural* RWBs to continue implementation of employed worker training activities. (Currently 14 of Florida's 24 RWBs include rural counties.) Over the past three years, Florida rural communities have experienced plant closings/layoffs

by 250 companies affecting 30,000 workers. Awards were based on needs and numbers of currently employed workers in targeted industries.

Funding Allocation: \$1,000,000 [WIA 15%]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Awards totaling \$509,701 made to seven RWB's on 9-30-04. 1,875 were projected to enroll in training.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$384

Progress to Date: Project completed on 6-30-05. 1,328 persons completed training (or 71% of plan).

Identified Issues: Every RWB that applied for funding under this initiative received funding. Of the seven RWBs receiving awards, three regions—8, 10 and 19—had completion rates in excess of 102%. The one rural company in RWB 12 experienced scheduling difficulties due to increased customer and product demand and could not utilize the funds. The region was unable to find a replacement company. RWBs 3, 17 and 24 did not enroll the number of projected participants. However, for those that were enrolled, their completion rate was 81% or higher.

Proposed Solutions: Outreach has occurred to those RWBs that were eligible, but did not apply for grant funding. Discussions were held with rural RWB partners, the Rural Economic Development Initiative and Enterprise Florida, Inc., to determine training opportunities for Florida's rural areas.

Title: *Manufacturing/Targeted Industries Training Initiative*

Purpose: With manufacturing employment declining nationally (estimated at 1.6 million jobs since 2001) and in Florida (estimated at 35,200 jobs over the same time frame), it was important that the state prioritize and act on issues that affect our state's manufacturers' ability to compete globally for market share in an increasingly competitive environment. In cooperation with Enterprise Florida Manufacturing Advisory Council (EFMAC), numerous manufacturing firms in the state were surveyed to determine their short-term, as well as their long term training needs. This training initiative was aimed at addressing these training needs. Additionally, skill upgrade training will be provided to incumbent workers in the state's targeted industry sectors:

- Life Sciences (including Biotechnology, Medical Device Manufacturing, Pharmaceuticals, Health Care)
- Information Technology (including IT Products/Services, Software Development, Modeling/Simulation/Training, Photonics/Lasers/Optics, Microelectronics, Telecommunications)
- Aviation / Aerospace
- Homeland Security / Defense
- Financial / Professional Services

Funding Allocation: \$2,078,144 [WIA 15%]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Awards to 14 RWBs were made on 9-29-04. 6,855 persons projected to be trained.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$450

Progress to Date: The project completed on 6-30-05. 4,170 persons were trained (or 60% of projected goal).

Identified Issues: 14 RWBs received awards. Four regions—8, 14, 20 and 21—had completion rates greater than 100%. RWBs 10 and 12 lacked enrollments; however, of

the number enrolled, they had 100% completion. Regions 1, 15, 16, 17 and 22 deobligated funds from lack of involvement by participating companies.
Proposed Solutions: Not applicable—project completed.

WFI Administered Employer-Specific Training Programs:

Title: *Quick Response Training Program*

Purpose: Provide grant funds for employer-specific training for businesses creating new high skill/high wage jobs in targeted industries. Wage requirements are relaxed for projects in rural/urban distressed areas, brownfields and enterprise zones.

Funding Allocation: \$5,000,000 annually [Penalty & Interest Funds]

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$1,109

Progress to Date: For FY 7-01-04 through 6-30-05, 7,185 workers are receiving customized training for new jobs created by a total of 10 new-to-Florida companies and 25 expanding companies.

Identified Issues/Lessons Learned: Several counties in Florida, particularly rural counties, have never had a company benefit from QRT training assistance. Consistent with the Governor's desire that Florida's rural regions receive special assistance to participate in the state's economic diversification efforts, staff has developed a rural outreach plan that will be accomplished with advice from the Governor's Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development. The plan was discussed at the February 20, 2004 Council meeting. A presentation on the program was made to the Florida Rural Economic Development Initiative on April 13th in Lake City. Council staff will participate in upcoming rural workshops organized by EFI and OTTED.

Proposed Solutions: ongoing.

Title: *Incumbent Worker Training Program*

Purpose: Provided grant funds to assist Florida companies with skill upgrade training for their existing workforce to help them remain competitive. Funding priority was given to businesses that are small, or located in rural, enterprise zone, brownfield or inner-city areas, and those businesses in a targeted industry. Florida's IWT program, established in 1999, is funded at \$2 million annually. Due to the increasing demands for skills upgrade training, the Council voted unanimously to increase the amount of funding for this program. Since inception of the program, more than \$31 million in requests has been received and due to limited funding, only 38% have been awarded.

Funding Allocation: \$3,000,000 [\$2,000,000 annually [WIA 15%] and \$1,000,000 Council funds [WIA 15%].

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$250

Progress to Date: For FY 7-01-04 through 6-30-05, grants were awarded to 105 companies for the training of 15,487 incumbent workers.

Identified Issues: To ensure that as many small businesses as possible are aware of the benefits of the IWT program, Catherine Kennedy, IWT Program Administrator, conducted several outreach meetings with key small business organizations. These organizations included the various manufacturing associations around the state, the Black Business Investment Board, the Florida NFIB (National Federation of Independent Businesses), Florida United Business Association (FUBA) and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. The IWT program continues to be very popular and a great need for Florida's businesses.

Proposed Solutions: Ongoing.

Non-Training Projects:

Title: *Biotechnology Curriculum Development*

Purpose: Provided funding for research and development; development / validation /assessment of biotech training curricula; and the formulation of a training delivery system to meet the needs of Florida’s biotech industry for existing and future workers.

Funding Allocation: \$1,200,000 [WIA 15%]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Funds awarded to Florida Consortium for Biotechnology Workforce Development with Florida Community College at Jacksonville as fiscal agent.

State’s Average Investment per Trainee: not applicable

Progress to Date: Project completed. 40+ hours of web-based curriculum was developed along with “hands on” lab instruction as requested by the Florida biotech industry reviewers. Staff, in conjunction with the consortium, is researching the best avenue for siting, launching and marketing the final product to Florida industry. See www.biotraining.org for more information.

Identified Issues: None

Proposed Solutions: Not applicable—project completed.

Better Jobs/Better Wages Council

The purpose of the Better Jobs/Better Wages Council is to assist families transitioning from welfare to work, former welfare recipients working in low-wage jobs with limited mobility, and the larger population of underemployed adults move toward self-sufficiency by employing prevention, diversion, pre-employment and post-employment strategies that focus on engaging employers and facilitating non-traditional training/education programs.

Training Projects

Title: *Career Advancement & Retention Challenge III SECOND YEAR*

Purpose: Innovative employed worker training programs that target career advancement and retention for current and former TANF recipients and TANF eligible families at risk of welfare dependency. CARC III supports WFI priorities (strategies) including developing a statewide approach to assist rural areas in workforce development. Currently 16 of Florida’s 33 rural counties have CARC III projects. The Council will work with regions to specifically describe elements of the CARC III projects that are beneficial to and replicable in other rural areas – maximizing the return on investment (ROI) for these state demonstration projects. Also in support of WFI priorities, one of the basic tenets of CARC III is the requirement to partner with employers upfront to provide demand driven, just-in-time training. Again, the focus this year will be to clearly identify both qualitatively and quantitatively service delivery models that are uniquely successful in partnering with employers upfront and replicating those models in other regions.

Funding Allocation: \$3,979,795 [TANF]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Awards to 12 RWBs. All projects are completed. A total of 2,287 persons (130% of plan) were enrolled in training. Of this number, 1,575 persons completed training (120% of plan). 855 persons were targeted to obtain two of three benchmarks (e.g., upgraded position, receive an increase in earnings, or continue education) with 641 reaching this goal. These benchmarks will be tracked through December 31, 2005. Based on current outcomes we anticipate meeting or exceeding the targeted performance. This project also tracks participant and employer satisfaction with the project. These last two elements will be reported by September 30, 2005.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$1,740

Progress to Date: Awards made to RWBs on and were effective as of 7-01-04. All projects are completed with performance benchmarks tracked through December 31, 2005.

Identified Issues: None known.

Proposed Solutions: Not applicable—project completed.

First Jobs/First Wages Council

The purpose of the First Jobs/First Wages Council is to promote successful entry of youth into the workforce through education and job experience, including school-to-work initiatives that enlist business and community support to ensure that students have the educational and occupational skills required to succeed in the workforce. This council also addresses adults entering the workforce for the first time and youth programs related to welfare reform.

Training Projects:

Title: *Education: Pathways to Independence SECOND YEAR*

Purpose: To assist RWBs for activities to promote *basic skills* in reading, math, written and verbal communication, comprehension; *thinking skills* in creativity, decision-making, problem-solving, visualization; *personal development skills* in self-esteem, accepting responsibility, social skills, initiative and personal integrity to assist regions serving in-school youth or drop-out retrieval programs. This project is consistent with the Council's highest priority in its strategic plan--increasing the number of high school graduates as well as completers.

Funding Allocation: \$1,391,032 [WIA 15%]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Continuation funding awards were made to five RWBs to provide assistance to 604 youth.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$1,826

Progress to Date: Awards made to RWBs on 7-01-04. All projects are completed. A total of 762 youth (or 125% of plan) were trained. All nine benchmarks were exceeded.

Identified Issues: None known.

Proposed Solutions: Not applicable – project completed.

Title: *Skills Training for Youth/First Time Job Entrants (2nd Year)*

Purpose: To assist RWBs for training targeted to high growth/high impact jobs that pay a living wage. Business Services and Health Services occupations are targeted as well as occupational clusters in a region that are gaining the most new jobs that pay a living wage.

Funding Allocation: \$1,668,246 [WIA 15%]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: Awards made to seven RWBs that will provide training to 964 youth/first time job entrants.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: \$1,426

Progress to Date: Awards made to RWBs on 7-01-04. All projects are completed. A total of 1,170 youth (121% of plan) were trained. Six of the seven benchmarks were exceeded with the seventh one at the 95 percentile.

Identified Issues: None known.

Proposed Solutions: Not applicable – project completed.

Title: *Strengthening Youth Partnerships Demonstration Projects*

Purpose: In July 2003, the Council convened the first in a series of meetings to initiate a process for linking state partners and resources. The purpose was to enhance communication, coordination and planning among key organizations that play a role in developing Florida's youth, particularly in the area of workforce skill attainment. This endeavor will be continued in the 2004-05 year and beyond. Funds will be used to fund demonstration projects emanating from the state youth meetings with priority consideration given to rural regions, or those having rural counties in the service area, provided they meet all other requirements established by the state workgroups (Career Institutes, At-Risk Youth, Disabled Youth) and other agency partners.

Funding Allocation: \$1,472,000 [WIA 15%/TANF]

Awards/Expected Outcomes: \$641,428 was awarded for Project Connect to serve 259 juvenile offenders and \$830,572 was awarded to implement career institutes in five school districts using the CHOICE Career Institute Model with a minimum of 305 youth meeting TANF or WIA eligibility.

State's Average Investment per Trainee: Project Connect: \$2,477; CHOICE Replication: \$2,723.

Progress to Date: Competitive RFP's were issued for Project Connect (responses due 10-26-04) and CHOICES career institute replication activities (responses due 12-08-04). RWBs 3, 12, 13 and 18 received Project Connect grant funds; RWBs 1, 4, 10 and 24—in conjunction with their respective school boards—received CHOICE Career Institute grant funds to replicate the model developed and used by the Okaloosa County School District.

Identified Issues: None known.

Proposed Solutions: Not applicable—project completed.

Cross Council Projects

Work Readiness Credential (WRC)

The three WFI Councils have reserved a total of \$350,000 in 2004-05 to support the continuation of a cross council initiative on worker readiness.

Background: The Equipped for the Future Work Readiness Credential (WRC) is based on a cross-industry standard, defined by experts from multiple business sectors, of what entry-level workers need to be able to do to be fully competent. The WRC is designed to address employer demand for a work readiness credential that provides:

- An accurate reflection of the full range of knowledge and skills critical to competent entry-level performance
- A valid and reliable measure of performance in real world applications
- A reliable, legally defensible predictor of effective entry-level performance
- A consistent standard across the country
- An appropriate foundation for industry-specific skill standards and certifications

The credential assessment and delivery system has been pilot tested in all partner states, including Florida. It is slated to be field tested in September 2005 in partner states and to be available for broad use by chambers, businesses, One Stops and education and training providers in 2006.

The WRC is being developed through a national consensus-building process that includes businesses, unions, chambers of commerce, education and training professionals, and state workforce boards in six states: Florida, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Washington, and the District of Columbia. These states have joined together in a consortium to support development and implementation of this critical workforce tool. Funding from the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) helped to support the first phase of product development. Florida joined the project in 2003, collectively funding this multi-year, multi-state national initiative. Other Florida partners include seven regional workforce boards (2, 8, 12, 13, 17, 18, and 21) as well as the Florida Department of Education.

National advisors: National Association of Manufacturers/Center for Workforce Success; National Retail Federation Foundation, National Governors Association (NGA), National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), and the Institute for Educational Leadership/Center for Workforce Development. Contractors on the project for the critical technical work on the development of the credential is being carried out by SRI International in partnership with HumRRO (Human Resource Research Organization), the BMC, Inc., Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee, and WestED.

Project timeline (includes key phases, tasks, products and dates):

PHASE 1: COMPLETED

Establish Skill Benchmarks and Design Credential Delivery System (December 2, 2002 – October 31, 2003)

Task 1.1: Develop a draft Work Readiness Skills Profile (12/2/02 – 4/4/03)

Task 1.2: Draft design for the credentialing process and delivery system (12/2/02 – 10/31/03)

Task 1.3: Gather importance ratings of skills (4/7/03 – 6/13/03)

Task 1.4: Conduct structured feedback sessions (6/16/03 – 9/26/03)

Note: Two structured feedback sessions were held in Florida (September 30th in Orlando and October 1st, 2003, in Destin) as well as in other participating states with entry-level workers and supervisors of entry-level workers. These sessions gained the input from nearly 50 Florida workers/supervisors (and built on earlier input from 100+ supervisor surveys).

Task 1.5: Revise skills profile (9/29/03 – 10/31/03)

Task 1.6: Prepare products and publications plan (moved to Phase 2)

PHASE 2: COMPLETED

Identify and/or Develop and Pilot Test Assessment Instruments for the Work Readiness Credential (February 23, 2004 – March 11, 2005)

Task 2.1: Prepare assessment plan (2/23/04 – 5/14/04)

Task 2.2: Identify existing instruments (2/23/04 – 5/14/04)

Task 2.3: Develop new instruments

Subtask 2.3.1: Develop situational judgment assessments (5/17/04 – 3/15/05)

Subtask 2.3.2: Develop structured interview (5/17/04 – 3/15/05)

Note: Four Florida representatives, including staff from the Center for Modeling & Simulation in Orlando as well as Sharon Watley, WFI Board member, served as Subject Matter Experts during this phase.

Task 2.4: Convert for computer- and/or Internet-based administration (5/24/04 – 3/15/05)

Task 2.5: Pilot-test instruments (11/8/04 – 3/11/05)

Note: Pilot test in Florida took place on April 22, 2005 in Ft. Walton Beach (RWB 2).

Task 2.6: Prepare curricular and instructional support materials (2/23/04 – 3/11/05)

PHASE 3:

Field-Test the Credential Delivery System and Validate the Credentialing Assessment Instrument as Measures of Work Readiness Skills (March 14, 2005 – March 11, 2006)

Task 3.1: Specify validity evidence (3/14/05 – 4/1/05)

Task 3.2: Validate assessment instruments (4/04/05 – 11/04/05)

Subtask 3.2.1: Develop validation plan

Subtask 3.2.2: Administer assessment instruments and collect criterion information

Subtask 3.2.3: Conduct analyses

Subtask 3.2.4: Prepare criterion-related validation report

Task 3.3: Establish cut scores (11/7/05 – 1/6/06)

Task 3.4: Develop supporting products and publications (3/14/05 – 3/11/06)

PHASE 4:

Develop and Field Test the Work Readiness Credentialing Process (March 14, 2005 – March 10, 2006)

Task 4.1: Finalize design for the assessment instrument delivery system (3/14/05 – 3/11/06)

Task 4.2: Develop Work Readiness Credential support materials (3/14/05 – 3/11/06)

Task 4.3: Field-test the credential delivery system (4/4/05 – 11/04/05)

Task 4.4: Design longitudinal evaluation (1/9/06 – 3/1/06)

One-Stop Committee

The One-Stop Task Committee of the Workforce Florida Board was originally established to develop a state-wide workforce brand for the one-stop system and design an initial marketing campaign. Additional areas of focus were added to include one-stop minimum standards, credentialing, best practices awards and, electronic access to one-stop services.

Outreach to Employers and Jobseekers

The **Employ Florida** affiliate brand continues to be developed as a tool for customers to find state and local workforce resources and services throughout Florida. All 24 regional workforce boards as well as the two state partners, Workforce Florida and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, have representation on the state Employ Florida Communication Consortium which continued meeting quarterly in 2004-2005 for the following purposes:

- Review and evaluate previous and on-going Employ Florida outreach/marketing
- Discuss current local and state marketing activities
- Share and discuss solutions for system-wide and multi-regional outreach
- Identify future opportunities
- Continue to develop and adjust the Employ Florida affiliate brand strategy

The Employ Florida brand managers and/or consortium members provide regular updates to the Workforce Florida One-Stop Committee as well as at the Workforce Florida Partners Meetings.

The Employ Florida website, www.EmployFlorida.com has been expanded to not only provide a consolidated point of access for locating one-stop centers and other local and state resources but as the access point to the Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM).

The Employ Florida Marketplace (EFM) is a powerful online labor market exchange tool specifically designed for employers, job seekers, students, training providers, workforce customer service representatives and professionals, and others seeking benefits and services. The EFM was launched March 1, 2005 as another component of the Employ Florida network of workforce services and resources. In addition to using the nearly 100 one-stop centers with physical locations throughout Florida, now our customers can find and access our services virtually anywhere using the Employ Florida Marketplace.

The Employ Florida Marketplace provides fast access to a complete set of employment tools in one web site. This system is designed to be comfortable for everyone, even the person who has little computer experience.

Employer users will find the following features helpful:

- Define skills and post job orders to find potential candidates
- Research labor market information on salaries and economic data
- Set up a Virtual Recruiter search agent to automatically find candidates within the system that match the job skills of the job order
- Communicate with job seekers, workforce customer service representatives, training providers, and others within the system email and message center.

Features to help job seekers and students within the system include:

- Use a professional format to create and send resumes and cover letters to employers
- Assess your job skills, set goals, and research training providers
- Review available jobs and apply online
- Set up a Virtual Recruiter search agent to automatically review job postings and notify you of jobs that match your skills
- Track your job search efforts and resumes sent in a personal profile folder online

- Learn about services and benefits for which you may be eligible
- Determine a budget and plan for training
- Research regional labor market information, such as salaries
- Use the email/message center to contact employers and workforce customer service representatives

Other achievements for the One-Stop Committee include: continuation of the annual One-Stop Best Practices/Excellence Awards – renamed in 2005 the *Employ Florida Workforce Excellence Awards*; development and monitoring of minimum One-Stop facilities/services standards—including verification of the required credentialing for One-Stop staff; and further strengthening of multiple Partnership Agreements/MOUs with state-level agencies/programs providing workforce or support services, particularly those with special needs including individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, etc.

Other State-level Activities and Initiatives

2004 Hurricane Season Response and Recovery Efforts

The Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and its partners displayed unprecedented energy and cooperation at the local, state and federal level when devastating storms of 2004 impacted working Floridians throughout the state. Within a seven-week period (August 13 – September 26, 2004) Florida was struck by an unprecedented four hurricanes. Ultimately, every county in Florida was included in the disaster declaration. Unemployment Compensation Services processed 99,762 hurricane-related claims from August 13, 2005 through April 15, 2005. The claims resulted in a total of \$68 million in benefits paid.

The Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program continues to process claims and benefit payments to eligible claimants from the 2004 hurricanes.

AWI deployed over 75 state and regional employees to volunteer in assisting victims in storm relief, disaster unemployment compensation, and relieve personally impacted local staff.

Mobile One-Stop Centers

Florida's workforce system suffered physical damage to a number of One-Stop Centers following each hurricane, but the need to provide services increased dramatically. AWI was able to use its Mobile One-Stop Center, a 40 ft. self-contained vehicle, to provide critical services in locations where regular services did not yet exist. Workforce partners established/activated eight mobile response equipped with satellite connections, computers with internet access and portable office space. Through a satellite uplink that connects the 19 onboard workstations to the agency mainframe, clients were able to file claims for unemployment, work on resumes and apply for jobs. AWI's Mobile One-Stop Unit alone logged about 4,000 miles in continuous hurricane service mid-August to the first week in October.

AWI also implemented one of the first state agency disaster recovery internet sites for providing information to internal and external customers to assist in storm relief efforts and services; <http://www.floridajobs.org/emergency/emergency.html>.

USDOL awarded Florida a total of \$75 million in a National Emergency Grant (NEG) to provided temporary jobs to clean up the communities affected by the storms. As of June 30, 2005, 5,177 participants have been served under the NEG and 4,797 participants have been employed in temporary jobs. Additionally, 1,305 have been placed into employment and the Regional Workforce Boards are planning to train approximately 472 participants. At this time, some areas are still continuing clean-up activities from the 2004 hurricanes. (The statistics provided here are based on periodic administrative reports submitted by the regional boards to the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and do not necessarily reflect data in the WIASRD.)

Workforce partners also assisted Enterprise Florida, the state economic development entity, in business recovery workshops and business assistance centers designed for businesses recovering from the storm and in need of resources. AWI received and responded to a record number of calls from storm victims and businesses seeking assistance; September alone saw a 54 percent increase in call volume.

Workforce Florida Nursing Taskforce

Purpose: The Nursing Task Force was charged by the Workforce Florida Board to address the issue of the nursing shortage in Florida. The Task Force is chaired by William Mayville and has consisted of the chair and three board members. Career ladders and career bridges in the nursing profession was a major focus for developing more nurses. The Task Force proposed the establishing of a work-based employer-supported career ladder program that, if successful, would present to health workers a viable and realistic approach for health industry employees to reach the nurse level.

2004-2005

The Building Bridges Nursing Initiative, proposed by the Task Force, was authorized by the Board to address the critical shortage of nurses and to provide a career ladder for employed Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) to continue their full-time employment while participating in a Practical Nursing training program. The instruction will be delivered at the worksite under the auspices of a State Board of Nursing-approved training provider. Students participating in the Building Bridges program will receive the same classroom instruction and clinical experiences as students in traditional programs. Each education partner's faculty, however, will revise the training program components and delivery schedule to allow the students to retain full-time employment. Funding for the program is provided from both the Workforce Investment Act and Welfare Transition programs. Students will be entered into OSMIS and tracked by a special project code.

Two Regional Workforce Boards were approved to begin the first projects. Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board (Region 24) has received funding to train 24 employees of the Lee Memorial Health System. The health care facility has partnered with Lee County High-Tech Central to provide the modified training over a two-year

period. The first 12 students began their first classroom instruction on October 9, 2004 and the students will graduate in August of 2006. WORKSource (Region 8) has developed a partnership between River Garden Hebrew Homes / Wolfson Health and Aging Center and Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ). Students began classes on January 31, 2005.

The Nursing Task Force met with the Florida Hospital Association in December 2004 to discuss designing a model to also address the critical workforce need for registered nurses especially at the bachelor and master's levels.

State-Level Youth Outreach

Florida Trend's NEXT Magazine

Florida's high school students are the workforce of the future. High school students are not only faced with academic preparation for graduation, most are also beginning to shape their direction for future employment and careers. Career awareness, skills assessment, mentoring programs, internships, as well as, GED classes, teen pregnancy prevention and other services to ensure successful entry into the workforce are available through Florida's workforce system.

To promote these services to the teen audience, Workforce Florida continued its participation in Florida Trend's highly successful *NEXT* magazine. *Florida Trend's NEXT* magazine is written by and for high school students. Workforce Florida obtained a two page full color layout in the 2004/05 issue promoting the newly launched Employ Florida Marketplace as a way to learn more about jobs, skills, education and training and to locate Florida's network of 100+ One-Stops via the website at www.employflorida.com and the toll free phone number, 1-877-FLA-2345.

In addition to providing a copy of the magazine to 750,000 Florida youth, grades 9-12, *Florida Trend's NEXT Magazine* also provides a Teacher's Guide with suggestions on how to incorporate the magazine into lesson plans and classroom activities. The magazine also has a companion website at www.FloridaNext.com with additional expanded information, links, activities, surveys and more.

Accountability and Continuous Improvement

Florida workforce law expressly calls for increased accountability for the workforce system for the state, localities and training providers. Florida has several methods for continually monitoring performance which have great value as both real-time management tools as well as tools for continuous improvement.

Although federal law, regulations and instructions call for extensive reporting of multiple performance data for the array of federally funded programs, and some federal programs provide incentive bonuses for high performing states, coupled with at least theoretical sanctions and monetary penalties, Florida's incentive/corrective action mechanisms are largely the product of state law and state Workforce Board policy decisions and design. The structure is custom designed to cover all major programs under the state Board's oversight, including the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Wagner-Peyser (WP) and

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). As a further policy matter, Florida's incentive/corrections apply to both short-term, interim outcomes (mainly EER-Entered Employment Rates) as revealed in the Florida "Red and Green" quarterly reports based on administrative data, as well as the longer-term outcomes (mainly Job Retention) reported annually to the U.S. Department of Labor (WIA & WP) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (TANF) using UC/UI wage records. Certain other requirements imposed by state law are used as "threshold" qualifiers/disqualifiers. For example, Regional Workforce Boards that do not achieve the state law requirement that do not achieve the 50% rate of expenditures on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and other training, are automatically disqualified for all WIA Incentive Payments. Similarly, failure to achieve the minimum "participation" rate for TANF participants disqualifies for all TANF performance awards, short-term and long term.

Each year the Workforce Florida Inc. Board of Directors approves an incentive pool "off the top" of the annual budget out of state-level discretionary WIA, WP and TANF funds. Additional incentive money for the pool comes from federal performance awards including WIA incentives and TANF High-Performance Bonuses, both of which Florida has won consistently. The resulting pool is then divided 50/50 for short-term and long-term performance awards for the 3 major programs/funding sources. RWB who have met the "threshold" qualifications re expenditures on training and TANF participation rate then compete to achieve individual targets and against their peers for comparative excellence awards. All RWBs that achieve their individually negotiated short-term and long-term performance targets (e.g. EER and Job Retention or WIA, WP and/or TANF) are awarded minimal performance incentives when the outcome data is reported, typically August for short-term, December for long-term. Then the RWBS that performed in the top "green" quartile compared to their peers get a superior performance award. High performing RWBs are also awarded public recognition and plaques in the high visibility annual Workforce Summit.

In addition to the monetary incentive "carrots," Florida also applies some "sticks" in the form of corrective "consequences," in addition to the threshold disqualifications described above. Typically low-performing RWBs are required to first provide their own Corrective Action Plans. Then if low performance persists, state-level staff work with RWB staff to design a state-approved Program Improvement Plan with specific deliverables, often supported by state and peer technical assistance and training (TAT) and sometimes supplemental funding for specific interventions. Continued chronic performance and operational problems then result in progressive levels of direct, sustained on-site oversight by state staff or state-designated RWB peer supervision, "receivership," or replacement of local executive staff, all of which have been applied in Florida. So far no Region has been re-designated or consolidated due to performance problems but that option remains as an ultimate sanction.

Encouraged by the positive trend lines displayed by our short-term and long-term performance measures and the track record of regularly winning federal high-performance monetary and recognition awards, Florida's workforce system will continue to apply, re-examine, refine, and refresh its incentive/correction structure to maintain continuous improvement.

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

First Jobs/First Wages						Better Jobs/Better Wages						High Skills/High Wages										TOTAL					
Pathways 2nd Yr.	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	Skills Training 2nd Yr.	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	Youth Demo. Projects*	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	CARC III 2nd Yr.	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	RURAL Skills Up. Train.	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	WFI Employer-Specific Training Programs										Total Awards	Leveraged Funds	# Trained
															MANUFACTU RING Skills Up. Train.	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	QRT	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	IWT	Leveraged Funds	# Trained	Leveraged Funds			
						98,890	450,162	35							142,056	143,765	167	282,870	1,357,977	300	99,579	554,782	370	623,395	2,506,686	872	
303,543	125,000	198	288,000	125,000	172									60,236	54,757	116				9,024	125,191	60	660,803	429,948	546		
									291,000	289,500	118													291,000	289,500	118	
						200,000	566,378	67				106,042	101,046	114				1,378,519	4,862,504	675				1,684,561	5,529,928	856	
						201,205	274,000	59	285,983	194,422	117							515,079	2,751,769	611	292,490	1,143,150	765	1,294,757	4,363,341	1,552	
			267,288	0	133													168,252	843,912	104				435,540	843,912	237	
																							0	0	0	0	
																		923,332	2,976,392	1,235	74,949	337,481	100	998,281	3,313,873	1,335	
			273,350	721,780	221				257,485	393,838	208	146,550	48,850	188	200,000	271,900	224	615,002	9,474,440	594	166,222	7,053,819	678	1,658,609	17,964,627	2,113	
			277,711	200,000	279				235,000	163,000	107										170,615	9,223,686	757	683,326	9,586,686	1,143	
						369,181	944,493	145				15,565	4,717	23	102,116	94,394	306	259,686	3,708,563	150	10,000	89,136	52	756,548	4,841,303	676	
			82,888	208,629	54				225,000	201,000	251										18,495	26,374	233	326,383	436,003	538	
						192,000	247,000	70				16,050	5,000	0	198,619	607,757	109	702,739	3,733,073	640	386,299	2,867,897	1,903	1,495,707	7,460,727	2,722	
464,788	56,540	218				142,000	204,013	50	408,204	420,000	162							482,505	3,362,682	518	11,624	40,090	33	1,509,121	4,083,325	981	
															129,647	139,969	917	78,120	244,146	79	535,719	4,967,672	2,311	743,486	5,351,787	3,307	
									608,000	550,000	380				0	0	0	426,347	1,832,538	500	300,763	6,247,801	2,042	1,335,110	8,630,339	2,922	
															173,523	196,112	140	102,997	1,222,468	75	55,725	52,234	35	332,245	1,470,814	250	
												111,994	42,405	883	126,172	119,030	807	82,320	266,780	70	21,173	98,808	44	341,659	527,023	1,804	
						107,428	128,613	72	355,822	76,283	133							97,808	1,508,375	53	13,630	44,568	23	574,688	1,757,839	281	
												69,376	21,022	74				89,250	214,839	37				158,626	235,861	111	
71,822	190,989	36	129,009	163,188	71				485,099	325,813	237				207,900	216,339	502	1,006,079	9,308,128	662	617,045	648,463	290	2,516,954	10,852,920	1,798	
385,879	221,000	223							328,202	377,000	249				220,000	200,158	489	13,269	25,350	16	24,986	273,370	88	972,336	1,096,878	1,065	
															179,695	172,407	35				465,675	4,003,187	1,475	645,370	4,175,594	1,510	
															124,381	113,074	321	610,681	16,915,796	571	262,278	2,783,674	916	997,340	19,812,544	1,808	
165,000	189,000	87	350,000	312,400	240	161,296	1,057,979	66	500,000	286,400	325	44,125	18,360	46	13,800	13,800	37	135,686	1,434,890	295	332,141	5,774,577	3,312	1,702,048	9,087,406	4,408	
1,391,032	782,529	762	1,668,246	1,730,997	1,170	1,472,000	3,872,638	564	3,979,795	3,277,256	2,287	509,702	241,400	1,328	1,878,145	2,343,462	4,170	7,970,541	66,044,622	7,185	3,868,432	46,355,960	15,487	22,737,893	124,648,864	32,953	
	\$1,826			\$1,426			\$2,610			\$1,740			\$384			\$450			\$1,109		\$250			\$690			