



Board Report

January 22, 2025

Participant Service Goals for PY'24

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Carry-In Clients PY'23	New in PY'24 (7/1/23-12/31/24)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	544	111	188	299	55%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	106	31	27	58	55%
WIOA Out of School Youth	139	20	25	45	32%
WIOA In School Youth	35	11	6	17	49%

For Program Year 2024 (7/1/24-6/30/25), Region 8 has increased customer enrollments and we are already well on the way toward meeting the new PY24 goals. This is largely due to enrolling more clients in the RESEA, QUEST and WRG Programs. Our education, training and job placement services have also helped a lot of participants successfully achieve their career goals, which is reflected by the recent success story highlighted below:

Olivia Staggs was selling insurance but she was struggling to support her two children. She knew she needed training to increase her earning potential and find a career she would enjoy. Olivia met with Linton WorkOne Career Advisor Kelly Gambill to discuss her training options. Olivia received WRG funding for tuition to attend EMT training at Wagler Education and Training Center. She successfully completed the course and earned her EMT license in August of 2024. Olivia is now a full-time employee of Daviess County Hospital earning an annual salary of \$58,000. The bigger fulfillment for her is giving back to her community.

“I went back to school to become a full-time EMT; not for the salary, but because I wanted to be there for people on their worst days. I was my parents' caretaker during their final days and feel I was put on this earth to help people. Being an EMT gives me the opportunity to help others without having the connection of my parents but still being compassionate for the families and doing what I was trained to do.

I chose Wagler/Vigiles Academy because of their location being convenient and the class time worked with my full-time job. The training they provided went above and beyond any and all expectations I had. The scenarios and training prepare you for a lot of things you could possibly see out in the field. I plan on continuing my education and becoming a paramedic.”



Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	July	August	September	October	November
Brown	4.2%	3.8%	3.8%	3.6%	3.8%
Daviess	3.8%	3.4%	3.2%	3.0%	3.2%
Greene	5.8%	5.3%	5.2%	4.7%	5.0%
Lawrence	5.6%	5.2%	5.0%	4.6%	4.8%
Martin	3.6%	3.3%	3.2%	3.1%	3.2%
Monroe	5.7%	4.5%	3.9%	3.9%	4.1%
Orange	5.3%	5.2%	5.2%	4.6%	4.7%
Owen	5.3%	4.8%	4.6%	4.4%	4.6%

As of November 2024, Indiana's unemployment rate was 4.2%, which was higher than the national average of 4.0%. Greene, Lawrence, Orange, and Owen counties were higher than the state average and Brown, Daviess, Martin, and Monroe counties were below the state average. In addition, Indiana's labor force participation rate of 63.4% was higher the national rate of 62.5%. This rate is the percentage of Hoosiers ages 16 years and older who are either working or actively looking for work. Those not in the labor force primarily include students, retirees and other non-working populations, such as individuals unable to work due to a disability or illness, or adults responsible for their family's childcare needs.

Region 8 staff continue to answer basic UI questions and help customers use WorkOne computers to file UI claims as needed. Customers who need additional assistance are required to call or email the UI Contact Center at DWD. Customers at the Bloomington and Linton WorkOne locations have the option of using a designated phone to speak directly with an Unemployment Specialist at the UI Contact Center. Customers have the option to file by phone if they do not have access to a computer or smart phone to file online.

RESEA

The Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program targets unemployed individuals who are most likely to exhaust UI benefits and provides career services designed to help them get back to work more quickly. Last program year (7/1/24-12/31/24), there were 419 individuals selected to participate in RESEA services. Of those required to participate, 199 Assessment Interviews were completed with an RESEA Specialist which resulted in a 47% participation rate. Of the remaining claimants, 26 had returned to work and the others declined services due to various reasons. During the same timeframe, 199 participants were selected for SUBRESEA which are the claimants that are most likely to exhaust their benefits. The intention of SUBRESEA is to further connect with the claimant to identify new strategies and resources by which they may be referred to support their efforts of obtaining employment. Of those required to participate, 152 successfully completed their required 1:1 meeting resulting in a 76% participation rate. Of the remaining claimants, 29 returned to work and the rest declined services.

Requirements and service delivery methods for the RESEA program will be changing in 2025. Details of these changes will be provided during the board meeting.

Business Services Updates

WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

There were no WARN notices issued in this quarter.

From July to December of 2024, the Business Service Team assisted with the following:

- A total of **136 Distinct Employer** contacts were made, representing a **23%** achievement of our annual program goal of 600 contacts.
- A total of **928 Business Contacts** were made, representing a **58%** achievement of our annual program goal of 1,600 contacts.

During the last quarter, the Region 8 Business Services Team and local office staff have participated in various activities throughout the region. A few of those are:

- School career fairs at Bedford North Lawrence and Springs Valley High Schools
- Career Exploration Workshops and mock interviews provided at Mitchell High School
- Job Fairs hosted by WorkOne South Central and the Martin County Alliance for Economic Growth
- Daviess County Economic Development Meeting - Apprenticeship and Employer Training Grant (ETG) Presentation and Discussion
- The Skilled Trades Showcase at StoneGate Arts & Education Center in Bedford. Over 600 students and parents attended the event with 20 vendors/unions promoting apprenticeship programs and careers in the Indiana union construction industry. Interactive opportunities were provided throughout this event to allow students to experience skills needed in the construction industry.



GRANT UPDATES



Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant

Workforce Ready Grant

For Program Year 2024 (7/1/24 - 6/30/25) - Region 8 received an initial allocation of \$750,000 of WRG funding. A total of \$75,000 is budgeted for administrative costs, and the remaining \$675,000 has been allocated for customer tuition assistance. As of 12/31/24, the region has enrolled 92 students into training programs and \$322,770 of tuition funds have been obligated. 80 students have completed training, 73 have earned a certification, 5 customers are currently still attending training and 7 have failed to successfully complete their class.

Success Story:

Benjamin Bridges met with Katie Payne in October of 2024 to discuss a new career path. Ben grew up in Tennessee and had always worked in the manufacturing industry since his parents had chosen that pathway for him as a child. He moved to Indiana a few years ago to be close to his wife's family and took another manufacturing position as soon as he relocated. Ben said he was becoming burnt out on working in manufacturing when he discovered the CDL program at Wagler Education & Training Center. Ben signed up and was referred to WorkOne to discuss funding options. His tuition was paid using WRG funds and he continued to work 40 hours a week to support his family while attending night classes. Ben completed training, earned his CDL on December 6th and started a full-time truck driving position on December 16th making \$22/hr. Ben has been very happy with his decision to attend CDL training and now feels satisfied and fully capable of supporting his family with his career.

Employer Training Grant

Region 8 received an initial ETG allocation of \$250,000 for Program Year 2023. In January, Region 8 received an additional \$750,000 in funding to support Region 8 employers which brought the contract total for PY '23 to \$1,000,000. A total of \$100,000 is budgeted for administrative costs, and the remaining \$900,000 will be obligated for employer training. These funds allow employers to receive reimbursement for training that occurred between 7/1/23 – 6/30/24 and was required to be invoiced by December 31, 2024. Approximately \$720,000 of those funds were expended; however, the remaining funds will be unspent due to employers being unable to complete the training or retain their employees as anticipated.

Region 8 also received \$750,000 for Program year 2024 (7/1/24-12/31/24). A total of \$75,000 is budgeted for administrative costs and the additional \$675,000 will support regional employers. Region 8 has been given the opportunity to request additional funds if needed. To date, over \$500,000 has been obligated but funds for additional employer reimbursements are still available. Businesses who would like more information about how to apply for ETG funding should contact Gail Mitchell (gmitchell@vinu.edu) or Earl Isom (eisom@dwd.in.gov).

CHE Intermediary Capacity Building Grant

In June 2024, Region 8 received \$240,000 from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to serve as an intermediary to increase and strengthen student /school connections with employers and postsecondary institutions. Region 8 collaborated with Regional Opportunity Initiatives and Southern Indiana Education Center to serve the 27 school districts throughout the region. WorkOne Career Advisors are providing individual and small groups of students with informative and productive Career Discovery Meetings. Students receive a packet that contains information about their areas of interest as well as career planning tools, websites and organizations that can serve as resources as they make college and career decisions. Students also have access to WorkOne Career Advisors to provide additional information or career guidance as requested. Meetings began last school semester and will continue until the end of the grant period in June 2025.

Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant

In April 2023, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board received \$547,000 through a DOL sponsored grant acquired by the DWD Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) funding is intended to expand the number of programs and apprentices; diversify the industries that utilize Registered Apprenticeship (RAP); and increase access to, and completion of, RAPs for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. The goal for these participants will be a nationally recognized credential. The grant period is effective from 7/1/22 through 5/15/26.

RAP and certified Pre-Apprenticeship participants can receive funding for Related Technical Instruction (RTI), On-the-Job Learning (OJL) and Supportive Services (SS). To date, Region 8 has funded 36 pre-apprentices and 36 apprentices. Due to program requirements and other circumstances causing unintentional competition among entities within the region, it has been difficult to enroll individuals as anticipated. In August, DWD requested to move a portion of this grant to another region that needed additional funds. Region 8 agreed to move approximately \$296,000 to assist in this process. An amended contract with DWD containing updated budget amounts and program metrics is currently in process.

Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Grant

In July 2022, Indiana applied for the Department of Labor's Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Grant. This National Dislocated Worker grant enables individuals who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social and economic inequities that the pandemic exacerbated, to enter, return to, or advance in high-quality jobs in growth industries including infrastructure, environment and climate, and the care economy. As of 6/1/24, Region 8 has received funding in the amount of \$769,500. A total of \$74,500 is budgeted for administrative costs, and the remaining \$695,000 has been allocated for training, supportive services and job placement assistance. As of 12/31/24, 224 individuals were enrolled in QUEST. Of those enrolled, 101 have received training funds. Region 8 has obligated approximately \$642,500, and we anticipate fully expending the total grant amount of \$769,500 before the 1/30/25 ending date of the grant.

JAG Expansion Update

Region 8 JAG has been very successful with program expansion throughout the region. JAG Manager, Sam Perkins, has worked at engaging schools to discuss the benefits of adding new or additional programs. Over the past year, Region 8 has added the following programs:

- Bloomfield HS (11th/12th grade)
- Bloomfield (Middle School)
- Linton - Stockton HS (11th/12th grade)
- Shakamak (Middle School)
- Shakamak HS (11th/12th grade)
- Owen Valley HS (9th/10th grade)
- Owen Valley (Middle School)
- Brown County HS (9th/10th grade)
- Brown County (Middle School)
- WRV (Middle School)
- Edgewood (Middle School)
- Edgewood HS (9th/10th grade)
- Eastern Greene (Middle School)

These additions bring Region 8 JAG programming to a total of 21 schools. JAG Manager Sam Perkins is now ready to focus on program performance to meet the 6 of 6 outcomes for the program year.

JAG Project Highlight – Linton Stockton High School

The Linton-Stockton High School JAG class participated in a Christmas wrapping assembly line. The goal of the project was to focus on communication and working as a team as well as the importance of good attendance. As a team, students were tasked with wrapping as many presents as possible within seven minutes. They had to pick a job such as paper measurer and cutter (ensuring the proper amount of paper was used as not to waste paper since wasting product in the business world is wasting money), wrapper (ensuring the product looked nice), quality control (ensuring the product met proper standards), and shipping (putting the gifts in a box to be shipped to customers). Communication was key as the students needed to manage their time wisely. Just as the students got into a groove, Mrs. Franklin pulled one of their workers, stating they were leaving because they were sick or decided to leave early or going on break, which made the students again use their communication skills to determine who was going to pick up the slack to ensure the work continued smoothly. The biggest take away for the students was understanding that good communication is important! The groups who communicated well performed very well, while the students who didn't communicate as well struggled. It was a fun activity and a great team builder.

