



Board Report

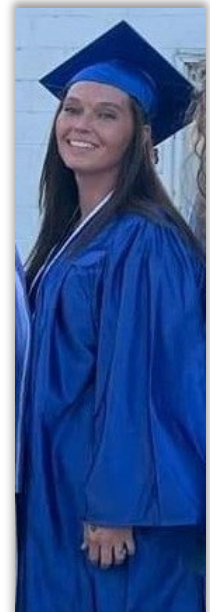
September 28, 2024

Participant Service Goals for PY'24

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Potential Carry-In Clients PY'23	New in PY'24 (7/1/23-8/31/24)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	544	115	67	182	33%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	106	36	17	53	50%
WIOA Out of School Youth	139	23	9	32	23%
WIOA In School Youth	35	11	0	11	31%

For Program Year 2024 (7/1/24-6/30/25), Region 8 is off to a great start with 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:

Nicole F. is a mother of 3 who was ready to make some changes in her life. For the last six years, she had worked a job making less than \$25,000 annually, but felt her options were limited due to not having her high school diploma. Nicole was motivated to continue her education from watching her daughter who not only received her High School Diploma, but earned her CCMA before she graduated. It was important for Nicole to further her education so her children could see that education is a priority. Nicole began attending Adult Education Classes at Wagler Education and Training Center. During the course of earning her HSE, Nicole met with Career Advisor Heather Allen to discuss attending CCMA classes. Nicole was eligible to receive funding through WIOA Adult and QUEST services. She began attending CCMA classes at Wagler and earned a CCMA certification at the end of May 2024 as well as her HSE. Nicole was recently offered a full-time job at Sullivan Family Practice where she completed her clinicals for the CCMA course. Nicole passed her CCMA Exam on the first attempt and is now making almost \$18.00 an hour, working 5 miles from her residence with benefits, health insurance and a 401K.



Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	March	April	May	June	July
Brown	3.9%	3.2%	3.6%	3.9%	4.2%
Daviess	3.1%	2.5%	3.1%	3.4%	3.8%
Greene	5.0%	4.1%	4.6%	5.1%	5.8%
Lawrence	4.7%	3.9%	4.3%	5.0%	5.6%
Martin	3.4%	2.8%	3.1%	3.5%	3.6%
Monroe	4.4%	3.4%	4.4%	5.3%	5.7%
Orange	4.4%	3.7%	4.3%	4.8%	5.3%
Owen	4.6%	3.7%	4.3%	4.8%	5.3%

As of July 2024, Indiana's unemployment rate was 4.0%, which was lower than the national average of 4.3%. All of the Region 8 counties were higher than the state average with the exception of Daviess at 3.8% and Martin at 3.6%. In addition, Indiana's labor force participation rate of 62.5% was still slightly below the national rate of 62.7%. This rate is the percentage of Hoosiers 16 and older that 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 (7/1/23-6/30/24), there were 1,645 individuals selected to participate in RESEA services. Of those required to participate, 1,057 Assessment Interviews were completed with an RESEA Specialist which resulted in a 64% participation rate. Of the remaining claimants, 172 had returned to work and the others declined services due to various reasons. During the same timeframe, 901 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, 521 successfully completed their required 1:1 meeting resulting in a 58% participation rate. Of those remaining claimants, 73 returned to work and the rest declined services.

WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

There were no WARN notices issued in this quarter.

Business Services Updates

Business Services Manager, Robin Branch, retired at the end of June. Gail Mitchell, who has been serving as the Assistant Business Manager and Apprenticeship Coordinator for the region, has now been promoted to the Business Services Manager position. Gail brings new enthusiasm to the team and will focus her efforts on the updated performance metrics in the DWD Business Consultant Contract.

Business Awareness and Retention Metrics	
Total Business (HBTN)	2,314
Business Awareness (20% of business engaged within industry sector)	463
Business Penetration (10% of business engaged and received services beyond informational*)	231
Business Retention (5% of business engaged and received more than one service beyond informational*)	116

*Services beyond information include:

- Accessing Untapped Labor Pools
- Engaged in Strategic Planning/Economic Development
- Layoff Aversion
- Work based learning
- Rapid Response/ Business Downsizing Assistance

GRANT UPDATES

CHE Intermediary Capacity Building Grant

Region 8 recently 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 is currently collaborating with Regional Opportunity Initiatives and Southern Indiana Education Center to serve the 27 school districts throughout the region. WorkOne Career Advisors will provide individual and small groups of students with informative and productive Career Discovery Meetings. Each participating student will 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 will also have access to WorkOne Career Advisors to provide additional information or career guidance as requested. Several schools have expressed interest in having their students meet with the Career Advisors to complete these meetings and those are currently being scheduled.

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 8/31/24, the region has enrolled 51 students into training programs and \$151,138 of tuition funds have been obligated. 32 students have completed training and 28 have earned a certification. A total of 18 customers are currently attending training and one failed to successfully complete their class.

Success Story:

Lucas S. is 49 years old, single, and is currently housed at the Greene County Community Corrections Center. He has a high school diploma, but no further education. He also had the barrier of being involved with the criminal justice system, which has been a significant obstacle to gainful employment for him. Lucas was determined to make a change for the better. He met with Career Advisor Heather Allen, at the Linton WorkOne office. He was eligible for WIOA Adult, WRG and QUEST funding. Through career research, Lucas determined that welding would be a great occupation based on his skills, interests and abilities. Lucas attended training at Wagler Education and Training Center from February to April of 2024. He was highly motivated and determined to be successful in Welding classes. He was ultimately able to obtain his MIG & TIG certification. He was focused on job search and pushed through the challenges of rejection to obtain full-time employment as a Welder, earning a wage of \$23.00. He would also like to pursue a job with the Union once his legal issues have been resolved and he is no longer in the work release program. Lucas is very appreciative of the opportunity to attend training and build a path to a better future.

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 employer to receive reimbursement for training that occurred between 7/1/23 – 6/30/24 and will be required to invoice by 12/31/24. Over \$726,000 has been obligated thus far, and the Business Services Team has reached out to assist in obligating the remaining funds.

Region 8 also received an initial allocation of funding of \$250,000 for Program year 2024 (7/1/24-12/31/24). A total of \$25,000 is budgeted for administrative costs and the additional \$225,000 has already been obligated. Region 8 has requested an additional \$500,000 to assist current employers who are applying and have been given the opportunity to request additional funds if needed. 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).

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 17 pre-apprentices and 24 apprentices. Due to program requirements and other circumstances causing unintentional competition among entities within the region, it has been difficult to enroll individuals as was anticipated. In August, DWD requested to move a portion of this grant to another region that was in need of additional funding. Region 8 agreed to move approximately \$250,000 to assist in this process. An amended contract with updated program metrics will be issued by DWD in the near future.

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 and supportive services. As of 8/31/24, 155 individuals were enrolled in QUEST. Of those enrolled, 57 have received training funds. Region 8 has spent approximately \$348,500 of this grant and anticipates to expend the majority of these funds by the end of the grant in December.

Success Story:

William C. is the single parent of a 7-year-old son. He felt his biggest barrier to employment was a lack of education or certifications beyond high school. He had worked various jobs throughout his life and thought he was doing really well when he established his own home maintenance service in Bloomington. When COVID hit, it affected his business immensely. He attempted to remain operational but the majority of his team members did not return to work and he had to close in 2022. William met with Career Advisor Molly Yawar at the Bloomington WorkOne and completed career research. It was determined that truck driving would be a good occupation for William. He began attending QUEST funded training on 7/1/24 at C1 Driving School in Indianapolis. He earned his CDL on 8/6/24 and was able to obtain employment by 8/19/24 as a truck driver earning \$25.00 an hour plus benefits. William feels confident that his newly obtained credential will ensure he is able to provide for his son now and in the years to come.



JAG Expansion Update

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

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

JAG is nearing the end of their expansion phase as there are less than 25 programs remaining to meet their overall goal of 250 programs statewide. Region 8 JAG has moved our focus to sustaining our 16 programs and ensuring continued program success throughout our school districts.

State JAG Conference Award Winners – Melissa Gillenwater and Jill Ferguson

Region 8 is proud to have two of our JAG Specialists honored in June at the State JAG Conference. The JAG Newcomer Award was given to Owen Valley JAG Specialist Melissa Ferguson. This recognition is for Specialists who have served in their position for less than a year, but have already made a significant impact on their school and students. The Rookie of the Year award is given to outstanding Specialists one year into joining the JAG family. This award was given to Jill Ferguson from Edgewood High School. Congratulations to both of our Specialists!



FIRST PICTURE: From left to right -DWD Commissioner Richard Paulk, Melissa Gillenwater and Brianna Morse - DWD Director of Youth Initiatives and Field Support **SECOND PICTURE:** Pictured middle: Jill Ferguson

JAG Success Story:

Rebecca, JAG Senior and recent graduate of Owen Valley High School, faced a significant setback when she was denied admission to three military branches due to her poor eyesight. This rejection, which would have significantly impacted her ability to afford college, seemed to have dashed her dreams of a military career.

Rebecca refused to let adversity define her. Determined to overcome this obstacle, she sought guidance from her Owen Valley JAG Specialist, Melissa Gillenwater. Melissa knew Rebecca's potential, so she invited a Navy recruiter to speak to the class, hoping to showcase Rebecca's intelligence and dedication to serving her country.

The recruiter was impressed by Rebecca's determination and offered to accompany her to the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) for a medical evaluation. Despite the initial challenges, Rebecca qualified for the Navy. Not only did she qualify, but her exceptional intelligence allowed her to sign on as a Nuclear Engineer.



Rebecca is pictured at the far left. This photo is at the Final Oath of Enlistment Ceremony.