

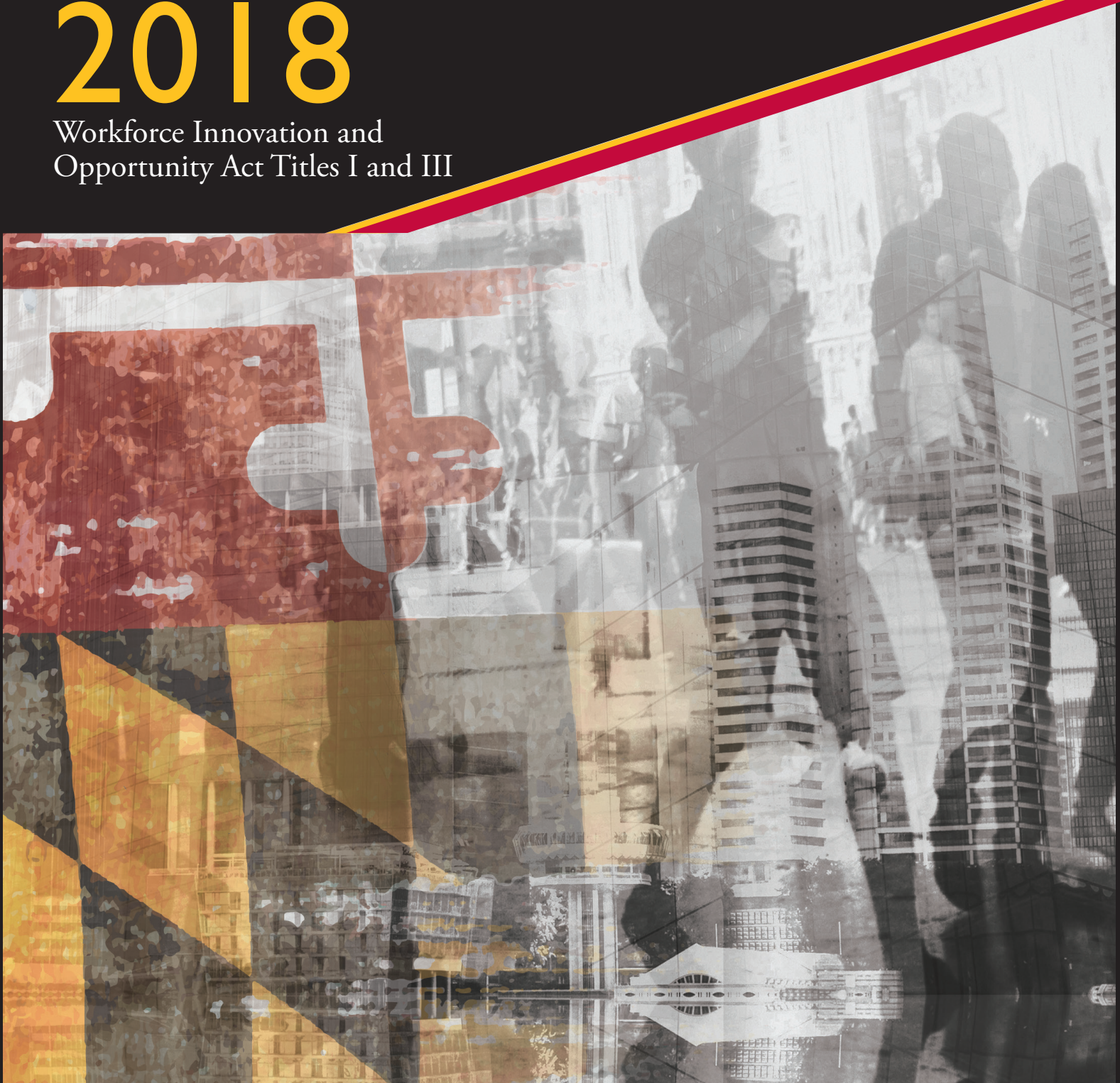


WIOA

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

Workforce Innovation and
Opportunity Act Titles I and III



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MARYLAND ANNUAL REPORT

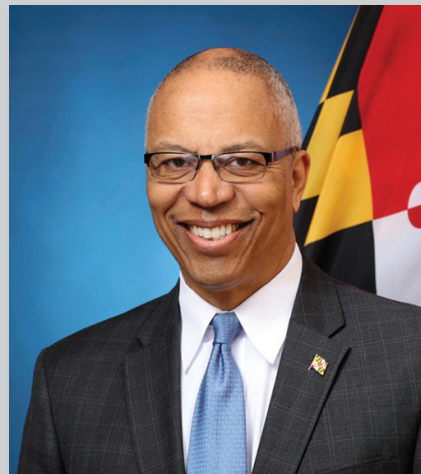
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Titles I and III

Program Year 2018

December 2, 2019



Larry Hogan
Governor



Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Tiffany P. Robinson

Secretary

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

James Rzepkowski

Assistant Secretary

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

DIVISION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ADULT LEARNING

MISSION STATEMENT

The Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning's mission is to ensure businesses have the skilled workforce they need to be competitive in today's environment as well as help people get jobs by working to better serve the unemployed, jobless veterans, newly dislocated workers, trade-impacted workers, New Americans, ex-offenders, low-wage workers, and the "hardest to serve."

December 2, 2019

On behalf of Governor Larry Hogan, it is my pleasure to present ***Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Year (PY) 2018 Annual Report Narrative – Titles I and III***. This publication illustrates Maryland's successful job placement and training activities for the period of July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019, as required by U.S. Department of Labor's Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 5-18.

Governor Hogan's vision is to change Maryland for the better. That vision drives the collaborative efforts of the Department of Labor (Labor) as well as our State and local workforce partners. In the pages of Maryland's WIOA State Plan, all partners committed to learn together, discuss pressing issues, and come to lasting solutions for our collective customers: businesses and jobseekers. I am proud to report that with every regulation promulgated pursuant to the federal Act, with every piece of guidance issued by the federal agencies charged with oversight of the programs included in this Plan, and with every technical assistance and training received, Maryland is doing just that.

I am excited to share with you the many successes of the workforce system as contained in this report. Utilizing an employer-driven model, and through partnerships formed in the State's 30 American Job Centers (AJCs), 12 Local Workforce Development Areas, and WIOA partnerships, Maryland is providing services fundamental to Maryland's economic stability and growth.

During this year, Maryland has made key investments in the work-and-learn model of Registered Apprenticeships, reaching a record number of over 10,700 apprentices. Thanks to Maryland's EARN program, more than 4,500 unemployed or underemployed Marylanders have obtained employment. Flexible and innovative, EARN Maryland ensures that Maryland employers have the talent they need to compete and grow while providing targeted education and skills training to Maryland workers.

By communicating and collaborating with State and local partners, thoughtfully implementing changes resulting from WIOA, and developing strategies that engage populations with significant barriers to employment, we are enabling citizens to obtain the skills and expertise they need. In short, we are changing Maryland for the better.

Best regards,



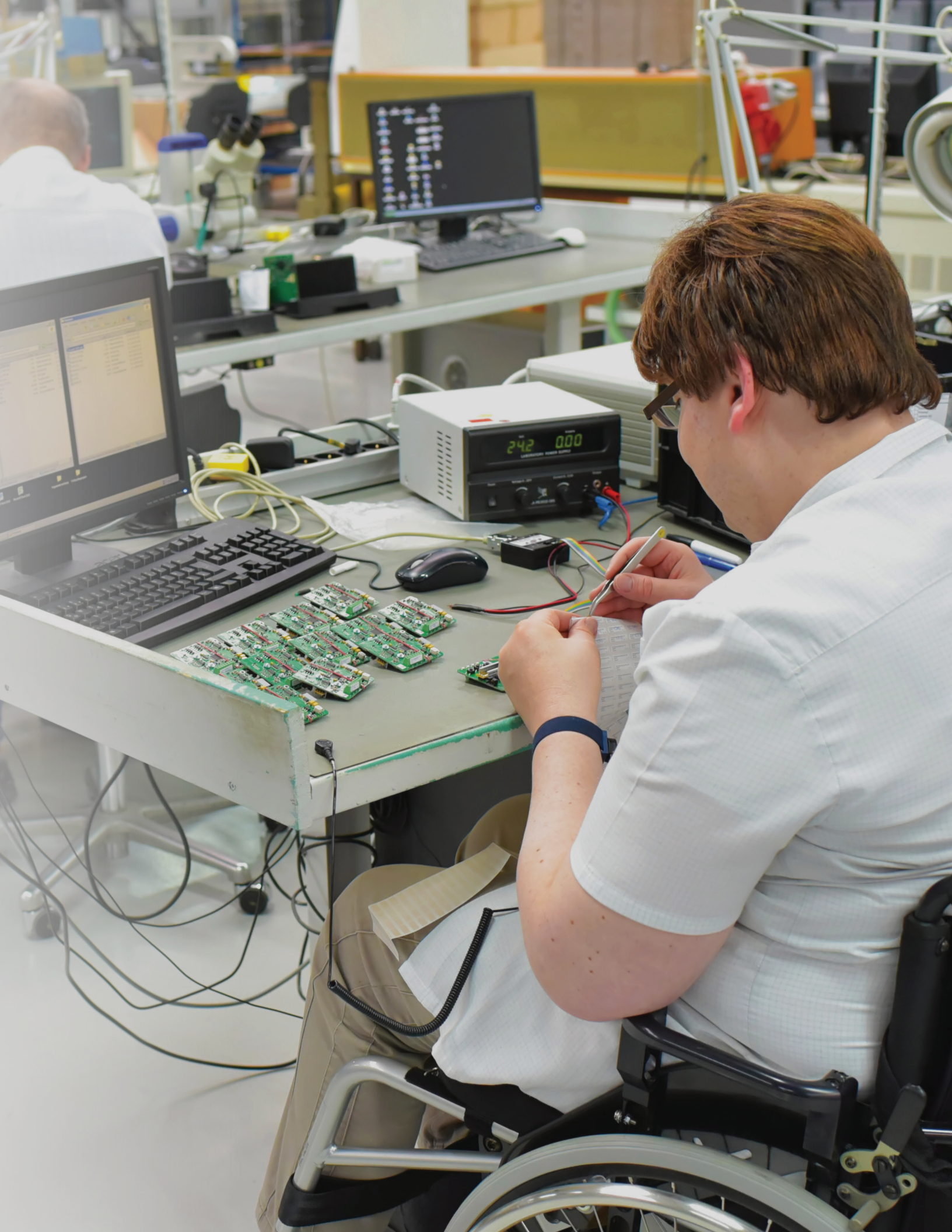
Tiffany P. Robinson
Secretary

WAIVERS

At this time, Maryland does not wish to submit a waiver. However, the State reserves its right to request a waiver from U.S. Department of Labor as it fully implements the requirements of WIOA.

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Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act PY 2018 Annual Report Narrative – Titles I and III

BASED UPON TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 5-18

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is landmark legislation designed to strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and help put Americans, especially those with significant barriers to employment, back to work. WIOA supports innovative strategies to keep pace with changing economic conditions and seeks to improve coordination between the core WIOA and other federal programs that support employment services, workforce development, adult education and literacy, and vocational rehabilitation activities. Moreover, WIOA promotes program coordination and alignment of key employment, education, and training programs at the federal, state, local, and regional levels. Furthermore, this legislation ensures that federal investments in employment and training programs are evidence-based and data-driven as well as accountable to participants and taxpayers. WIOA provides employment, job training, and education services to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth.

In their narratives, states should include the following requested items:

Identify each waiver that the state has had in place for at least one program year and provide information regarding the state's progress toward achieving the goals and performance outcomes in ETA's letter of approval for the waiver (sec 189(i)(3)(C)(ii)) and outlined in the state's waiver request (when applicable). Discuss how activities carried out under each approved waiver have directly or indirectly affected state and local area performance outcomes. To the extent possible, provide quantitative information.

This section is not currently applicable to Maryland. However, the State reserves its right to request a waiver from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) as it fully implements the requirements of WIOA, and is actively exploring a few waiver requests, which would be submitted as part of Maryland's April 2020 State Plan.

Identify the two approaches the state has chosen for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot. If the state is piloting a state-established measure of Effectiveness in Serving Employers, or has any other metrics to assess employer engagement, describe the measure or metric as well.

WIOA Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measures

States must select two of the three measures below to report on for Program Year (PY) 2018 and PY 2019. Maryland has chosen to track and report on all three measures:

- Employer Penetration Rate – addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a state and local economy; percentage of employers using WIOA core program services out of all employers in the State.
- Repeat Business Customers – addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods; percentage of employers who have used WIOA core program services more than once during the last three reporting periods.
- Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters after Exit – addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers; percentage of participants with wage records who exit and were employed by the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit.

Include brief descriptions of: (a) current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies used; (b) efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies and local boards; (c) a list of completed evaluation and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically; (d) State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations; and (e) any continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated.

Labor has no current evaluations; however, the State is working to build in an evaluation component to the Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessments program.

Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for one-stop center certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800. This description should include: 1) the state's methodologies; 2) the number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate; 3) the results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers; and 4) a description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.

USDOL requires that states conduct customer satisfaction surveys to both jobseekers and business customers. A centrally conducted survey was administered via an email solicitation with a link to an online survey delivered through Survey Monkey.

Regarding jobseeker customer service, 3,293 surveys were distributed and 206 responses were received, which is a 6.3% response rate. The Customer Satisfaction survey consisted of 10 questions. These questions referenced the level of satisfaction with services: whether (1) the customer's satisfaction was met and (2) services received were close to the ideal set of services the customer would expect. If the customer accessed the Maryland Workforce Exchange Virtual One Stop (MWE-VOS), he or she was asked questions regarding whether (1) the system was helpful and (2) he or she would recommend the system to a friend.

Referencing business customers, 647 employers who were receiving staff assisted services were contacted and 55 employers responded, which is an 8.5% response rate. The

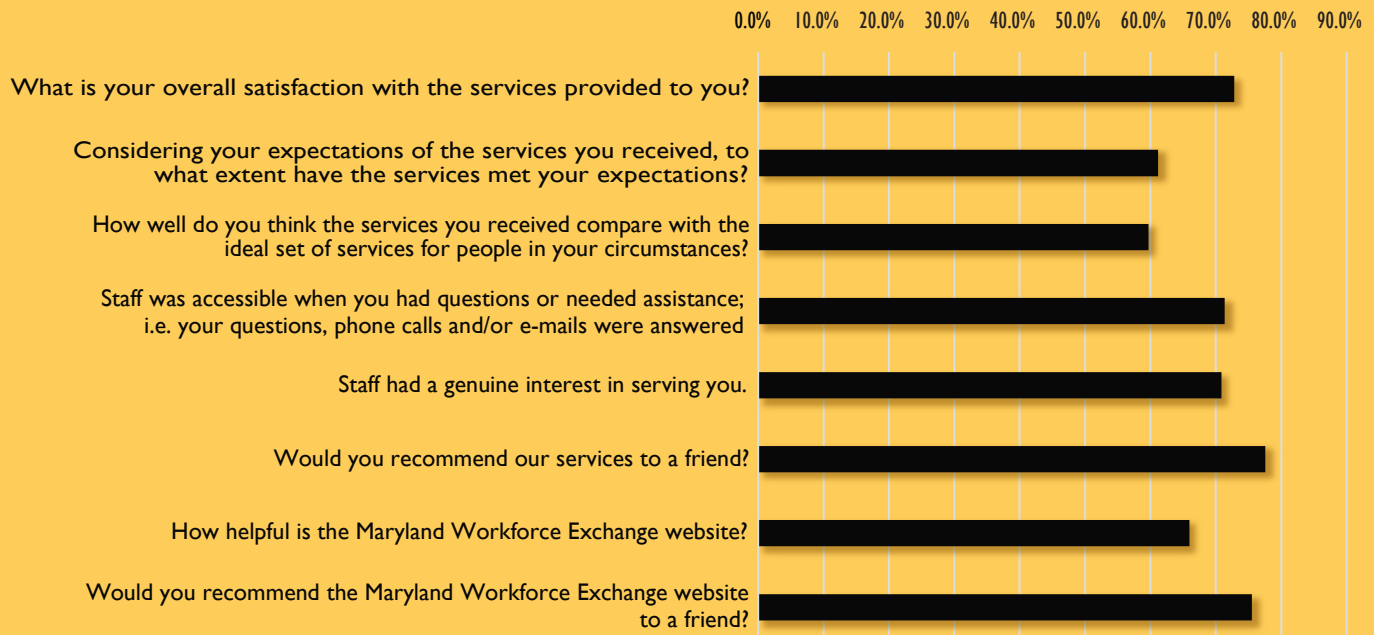
employer survey consisted of 10 questions, covering such topics as (1) how the employers learned about business services available through American Job Centers (AJCs), (2) how satisfied they were overall, (3) whether staff were available for them and showed a genuine interest in them and their needs, and (4) whether they would recommend AJC business services to others.

As is illustrated in the following *Customer Satisfaction* chart, 72.8% of the jobseeking customers were somewhat or very satisfied overall with the services they received. Over 61.2% of customers felt the services they received met or exceeded their expectations. Almost 60% felt the services they received were ideal for individuals in their circumstances. 71.4% felt staff was accessible and reachable, and 70.9% of customers trusted that AJC staff were truly interested in serving them. 77.6% would recommend the services. Of those who visited the MWE-VOS, 66% found the site helpful or very helpful. Of those who visited the MWE-VOS, 75.5% would recommend it to a friend. Overall, a majority of customers who utilized services provided through the AJCs and MWE-VOS found them useful and helpful in supporting their needs.

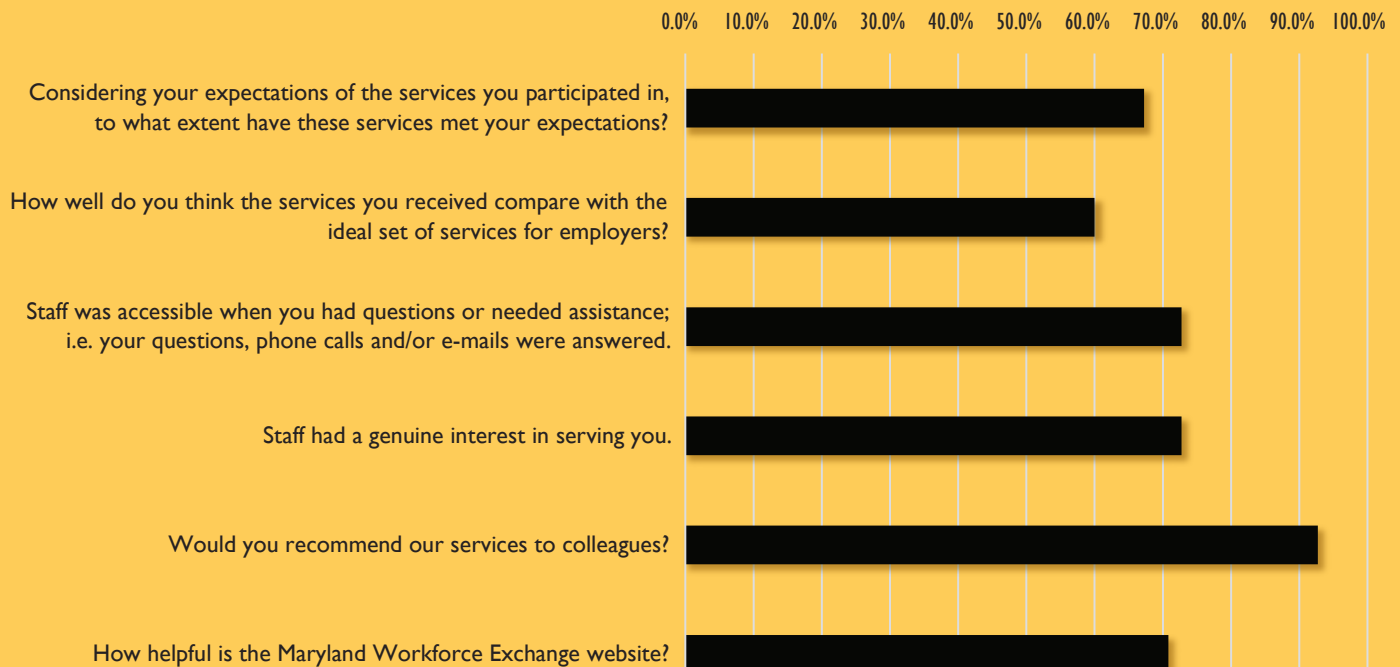
Regarding business services customers, the following *Employer Satisfaction* chart shows that 67.3% indicated the services they received met and exceeded their expectations. Approximately 60% felt the services they received were ideal for employers in their circumstances. 47.3% of the employers surveyed were introduced to the AJCs through the MWE-VOS. Over 72% thought staff were accessible and reachable, and 72.7% of employers trusted staff had sincere interest in serving them. 92.7% of employers would recommend AJC business services to colleagues. Of the employers who used the MWE-VOS, 70.8% found the site helpful or very helpful.

These survey results illustrate several points and allow the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) to determine whether and where any issues exist. Once all areas are fully examined and issues are uncovered, DWDAL can work toward resolutions that can be implemented. Customers commented on the invaluable services Maryland is providing through the AJCs and the MWE-VOS. What stands out in these surveys results, though, is that DWDAL staff, the system in general, and the services provided are beneficial and valuable assets to customers and businesses alike.

Customer Satisfaction - Question by Percent



Employer Satisfaction - Question by Percent



Progress made in achieving the state's strategic vision and goals, as described in the state's Unified or Combined State Plan, for developing its workforce and meeting employer needs in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The State's workforce system is committed to implementing the *Benchmarks of Success for Maryland's Workforce System (Benchmarks of Success)*, which focus on a shared vision of excellence.

Maryland's vision, as described in the State Workforce Plan, is to increase the earning capacity of Marylanders by maximizing access to employment, skills and credentialing, life management skills, and supportive services. The state is working to achieve this vision through implementation of five main strategic goals, including:

- Maximize access to employment;
- Maximize access to/use of skills and credentialing;
- Maximize access to/use of life management skills;
- Eliminate barriers to employment; and
- Strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system.

Each strategic goal has a series of benchmarks that the State will ultimately track to gauge progress to better understand the system's success in working towards this shared vision and five shared goals. Maryland's workforce system uses the *Benchmarks of Success* as a framework, guiding the shared goals and activities of the WIOA system. The *Benchmarks of Success* allows partners to think systematically about how workforce services are delivered, whether services are reaching priority populations, and where to eliminate gaps to build a more prepared, responsive workforce for Maryland's businesses.

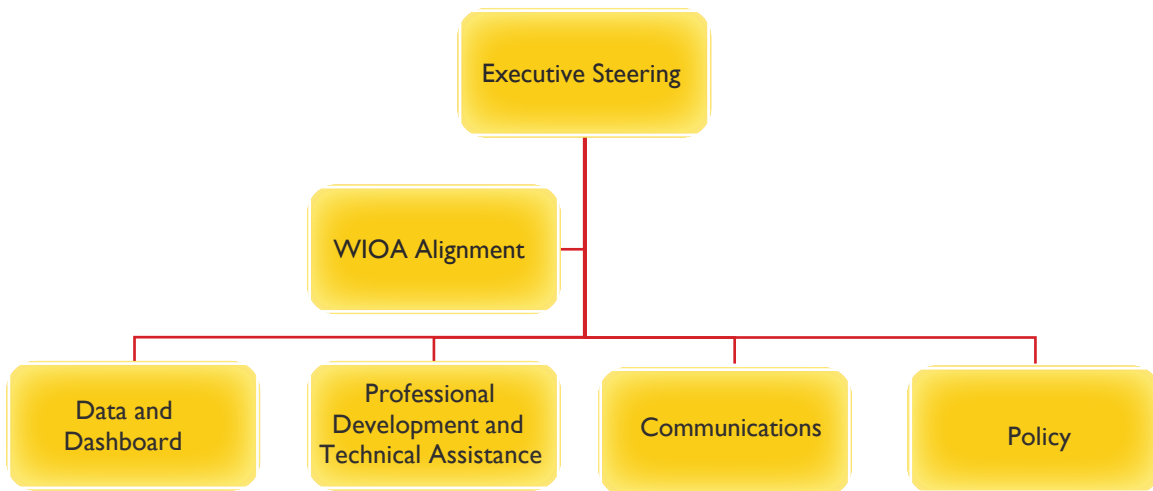
In order to implement the *Benchmarks of Success* and the vision articulated in the State Workforce Plan, Maryland partner agencies created a system of committees, including:

- **Executive Steering Committee**- including the executive leadership from the core WIOA partner agencies, responsible for providing strategic oversight and direction to the *Benchmarks of Success* initiative, and governing the WIOA Alignment Group;
- **WIOA Alignment Group**- responsible for ensuring the strategic vision of the Executive Steering Committee is realized by providing operational guidance to the other *Benchmarks of Success* committees;
- **Data and Dashboard Committee**- responsible for developing a consistent, sustainable system all workforce partners can use to measure, analyze, display, and apply the *Benchmarks of Success* data to continuously improve the quality and effectiveness of services;
- **Communications Committee**- responsible for developing a plan that identifies stakeholders, effective communication methods, and maps out the implementation of the *Benchmarks of Success*; this committee facilitates and maintains the internal communication between the committees as well as external communication about the *Benchmarks of Success*; and



- **Policy Committee**- responsible for identifying opportunities to support the implementation of the *Benchmarks of Success* via policy change.
- **Professional Development and Technical Assistance Committee** (inactive)- responsible for producing, disseminating, and facilitating professional development and technical assistance programming that supports Maryland's WIOA partners in what the *Benchmarks of Success* are and how they can be used to drive continuous improvement; additionally, this committee will conduct a stakeholder analysis.

The chart below displays the hierarchy of the committees:



These committees feed back into each other for continuous collaboration and improvement of services, data, and vision.

The Professional Development and Technical Assistance Committee is currently inactive. The WIOA partners collaborated to create a Chief Learning Officer position to oversee professional development across the Maryland workforce system. The Chief Learning Officer plans to reactivate the Professional Development and Technical Assistance Committee in 2020.

The main purpose of this brand new position is to create and maintain a comprehensive, statewide professional development and technical assistance portfolio that supports the strategic goals set forth in the WIOA State Workforce Plan and reflects the vision of the *Benchmarks of Success* for Maryland's Workforce System. As defined in the State Workforce Plan, the position supports DWDAL and Maryland's Workforce partners in delivering high quality, integrated services to workforce system customers and excellent customer service to internal staff as well as staff from partner agencies.

In the first and second implementation years of the *Benchmarks of Success*, the committees brought local and state stakeholders together and developed a number of deliverables, including:

- A system of sharing the *Benchmarks of Success* vision and updates (videos, newsletters, collateral materials, presentations to Local Workforce Development Boards and other stakeholders, etc.);
- An analysis of and plan forward for collecting, calculating, and displaying data from different partners, programs, and systems, including setting data baselines and targets across the multi-agency system;
- Regional and Local Planning Guidance for WIOA Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas to revise their plans to correspond to the revised State Workforce Plan;

- A series of policy recommendations concerning:
 - (1) jobseeker advisory groups; including customer voice in decision-making; (2) workforce solutions to the opioid epidemic; (3) youth apprenticeship; (4) transportation; (5) abating the benefits cliff; (6) measurable skill gain; and (7) engaging employers around priority populations; and
- Creation of a Chief Learning Officer position to oversee professional development for the workforce system as a whole.

The committees are now in the process of planning goals and action items for 2020.

Progress made in implementing sector strategies and career pathways. The discussion may include business engagement strategies, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), work experiences for youth and adults, transitional jobs, and incumbent worker training strategies and policies in the state.

Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP)

MATP has made significant progress in implementing sector strategies and career pathways through its growth. Registered apprenticeship was transferred to DWDAL in October 2016. Since that time, Maryland has focused on making the MATP a key component of its workforce strategy.

Initially, MATP came to DWDAL with a total of three staff, 400 registered apprenticeship sponsors, and 8,500 apprentices. After a thorough evaluation, MATP was overhauled to bring the program into compliance and to help facilitate growth. This process has included an enhanced customer service approach that has meant quarterly engagements with each registered apprenticeship sponsor (business) along with continued outreach to prospective new businesses. From November 2016 through November 2019, over 750 businesses have been actively engaged on behalf of registered apprenticeship. These engagements included site visits, round tables, industry conferences, and other events wherein staff and businesses have been able to exchange information.

As a result of this engagement, Maryland has experienced the largest growth of new registered apprenticeship sponsors in 15 years. Since November 2016, there have been 60 new registered apprenticeship sponsors added with an additional 24 re-activated for a net gain of 82. (For comparison, the previous combined four years of activity in Maryland

showed 23 new sponsors and six reactivated for a net gain of 29.) Additionally, Maryland has increased the number of apprentices working for businesses to over 10,700. This is the largest number of apprentices that Maryland has had in the history of the program.

To strengthen career pathways, the higher education community in Maryland has also been a focus for registered apprenticeship. Recognizing the strong ties between related instruction for apprenticeship and the college system, four of Maryland's community colleges have now become registered apprenticeship sponsors for the first time in Maryland's history. The colleges are now able to work directly with businesses on related instruction as well as the process of maintaining the paperwork and registration components for the businesses.

Maryland has also made great strides in making the case for youth apprenticeship opportunities. The Department of Labor has been proud to partner with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Department of Commerce (Commerce) in developing a youth apprenticeship program available for participating local Maryland school systems (currently, Baltimore City as well as Allegany, Baltimore, Carroll, Dorchester, Frederick, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Talbot, and Washington counties).

Originally in 2015, House Bill 942 established an apprenticeship pilot program, Apprenticeship Maryland, to prepare students to enter the workforce by providing on-site employment training and related classroom instruction needed to obtain a license or certification for a skilled occupation. The program began in the summer of 2016 and lasted for two years.

In June 2018, MSDE and Labor were pleased to announce the implementation of the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP) as a new Career and Technology Education Program of Study. Because of combined efforts, 11 local public school systems have adopted the model, bringing total participation to 13 of Maryland's 24 local school systems. Moving forward, members of the Labor Apprenticeship and Training Program and MSDE's Career and College Readiness team continue to meet with officials at Maryland K-12 public schools systems that express interest in this youth apprenticeship model. Additionally, for the current 2019-2020 school year, a total of 64 students are registered as youth apprentices. These statistics represent 36.2 % growth since the end of the prior school year, and over 481% growth since inception.

Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN)

EARN Maryland is a state-funded, competitive workforce development grant program that is industry-led, regional in focus, and a proven strategy for helping businesses cultivate the skilled workforce they need to compete.

EARN Maryland has been recognized as a national best practice for its innovation in sector strategies, and is a model that many States seek to emulate. Currently, there are 71 Strategic Industry Partnerships in operation, targeting a wide array of industries. More than 4,500 unemployed and underemployed Marylanders have obtained employment as a result of EARN Maryland training, and over 7,400 incumbent workers have received training. In addition to targeted investments in Cyber/Information Technology and Green Jobs training, EARN Maryland received additional funding in FY 2020 to serve residents and employers in and around Opportunity Zones.

EARN Maryland continues to be a sound investment of State resources. A recent study on the economic impact of the program shows that for every dollar the State invests, an additional \$18.50 in economic activity is created.

Maryland Business Works (MBW)

Maryland Business Works is an incumbent worker training program administered by DWDAL in consultation with Commerce. The program was established to support employer strategies for retention, growth expansion, and layoff aversion through upgrading the skills of currently employed workers of Maryland's businesses. The program's training funds are available to businesses serious about increasing employee productivity, upgrading the skills of current employees, and creating opportunities for expanding the existing workforce. Projects funded through MBW are focused on in-demand occupations and skillsets, as defined by businesses, and are intended to lead to potential career growth and increased wages for participating workers. Participating companies are required to match the funds provided by the MBW program for the actual training costs on a dollar-to-dollar basis. Companies pay for 100 percent of total training costs and then receive a 50 percent reimbursement by Labor upon successful completion of the trainee.

During PY 2018, 471 incumbent workers received training and an industry recognized credential. \$351,393.45 was spent for training—for an average cost per participant of \$746. Businesses increased wages for 274, and 269

new positions were planned. In addition, registered apprenticeships utilized funding to train 235 registered apprentices in Maryland. Industries utilizing the grant included construction trades, manufacturing, IT/Cyber, and professional services.

Career Pathways

Maryland invested \$1.5 million of its WIOA Governor's set-aside funding to local workforce entities for Career Pathway initiatives that are developed in strong partnership with Title II Adult Education providers.

In keeping within the WIOA regulations' focus on career pathway models, Labor developed this initiative with the following goals in mind:

- Increase WIOA Title II adult learners' access to WIOA Title I training and career opportunities;
- Focus on meeting lower-level adult learners where they are in education-level and support them in meeting career goals;
- Increase adult learners' co-enrollment in WIOA Titles I and II;
- Address the needs of businesses;
- Expand career pathways through piloting one or more proven interventions;
- Support the creation of a Maryland WIOA Co-Enrollment and Career Pathways Guide to facilitate the distribution of information related to best practices, successes, challenges, and more; and,
- Achieve sustainability once grant funds are exhausted or the project has ended through connecting to the Maryland Eligible Training Provider List or by other means.

Local workforce development boards had the opportunity to apply for up to \$250,000 in funding to develop innovative demonstration projects with a consortium of local partners, including adult education providers and business partners. Eligible applicants were provided a menu of interventions that were selected by the department after careful consideration and review of national best practices. These interventions include

- English language acquisition,
- Distance learning,
- Registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship,
- Integrated education and training,



- Integrated English literacy and civics education, and
- Transition support specialist between local workforce and adult education entities.

Most of Maryland's local boards applied for this funding, and ultimately the State selected four career pathway projects that will offer adult learners innovative career pathways. Through strategic investments such as these, the department is changing the way the state approaches workforce development. The projects created with this funding began on April 1, 2018, and will commence for a period of two years. Areas of emphasis include the following:

- A focus on English Language Learners interested in allied healthcare careers and training for two certifications: Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Patient Care Technician (PCT);
- Specialized workforce services to English Language Learners (ELLs) and low basic skills individuals to create and align career pathways into the construction trades by using the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) service delivery model; this will integrate English as a Second Language (ESL) course instruction with pre-apprenticeship and occupational skills training.
- Career pathways as a method through which Adult Education students funded under Title II can gain skills, credentials, and upward mobility in the healthcare sector as Emergency Medical Technicians;
- Innovative programming and services to qualified candidates interested in a career pathway in the healthcare or transportation and skilled trades industries; instruction in both career areas will be contextualized utilizing the I-BEST model with distance learning components; and
- A focus on trades, manufacturing, construction, transportation, healthcare, and leisure and hospitality industries allowing for support of entry level credentialing and providing candidates opportunities to move through stackable credentials or apprenticeship opportunities.

Mid-Maryland

This project, Zap the Gap, focuses on English Language Learners interested in allied healthcare careers, and trains for two certifications: Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Patient Care Technician (PCT). Orientation, career exploration/essential skills, and bridge classes were held at the AJC. The Transition Coordinator maintains office hours at the AJC.

As of September 2019, Mid-Maryland has trained two cohorts of eight students. Seven students from the first cohort are currently working part or full-time. Seven students from the second cohort attended an organized CNA/PCT recruitment event on July 17, 2019. Students from the second cohort have been encouraged to continue English classes to strengthen English Language skills. Three students are currently enrolled in ESL classes in the summer and several others plan to continue in the fall.

Prince George County

Employ Prince George's provided specialized workforce services to English Language Learners and low basic skills individuals to create and align career pathways into the construction trades by using the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) service delivery model.

As of September 2019, 14 participants enrolled in the National Certification Apartment Maintenance Technician (CAMT) Career Path. This program offers an accelerated program to obtain job readiness-related soft skills combined with occupational trade-related technical skills training which is required to obtain the CAMT credential. The training consists of courses in interior and exterior maintenance and repair, electrical maintenance and repair, plumbing maintenance and repair, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning maintenance and repair, and appliance maintenance and repair. The first cohort of 8 individuals either are preparing for, or have passed their examination. The Heritage Care CNA/GNA training program began the training cohort on August 19, 2019.

Baltimore City

The Baltimore Accelerating Connections to Employment's Emergency Medical Technician (BACE-EMT) Project supports career pathways as a method through which Adult Education students funded under Title II can gain skills, credentials and upward mobility in the healthcare sector. The BACE-EMT project uses the Integrated Education and Training model of service delivery.

As of September 2019, eleven of fifteen students completed the EMT course. During the month of September, two students took the EMT written exam while four continue to prepare. Four students are certified EMTs; with two employed as full-time EMTs. The remaining certified EMTs are job searching for full-time positions. In addition, one non-certified EMT is employed as a Transporter – the job classification will be upgraded to EMT as soon as the student becomes certified. Five students have applied for positions with the Baltimore City Fire Department and one student has applied for a position with the Prince George County Fire Department. The second cohort started on September 25 with nine students enrolled in the course.

Anne Arundel County

This county's project offers innovative programming and services to qualified candidates interested in a career pathway in the healthcare or transportation and skilled trades industries. Healthcare instruction focuses on providing candidates with the skills needed to obtain a dialysis technician license while learning advanced skills that will lead to training and employment as a dialysis technician and other occupations with a regional dialysis center. Instruction in the transportation and skilled trades industry will focus on providing the basic occupational skills that are essential for any skilled position in the field. Instruction in both career areas will be contextualized utilizing the I-BEST model with distance learning components.

As of September 2019, a pathway in healthcare was created – from CNA/GNA to Patient Care Technician (PCT) and other credentials (phlebotomy, etc.). Stackable credentials are a value-added to the existing career path. Seven people were enrolled and have now successfully finished CNA training. Participants are preparing and taking their CNA/GNA certifications. Three participants are in pending mode, and two obtained certifications and either are being interviewed or are applying for jobs. One participant is employed full-time and one is employed part-time. Currently, recruiting is ongoing for the second career track training related to the skilled trades.

Western Maryland

The purpose of the grant aligns with the local plan for Western Maryland that identifies the same areas of employment and has the ultimate goal to provide opportunities that offer living wages improving overall quality of life and maintaining employment sustainability. The grant achieves these goals by continuing to strengthen partner collaborations utilizing resources effectively to address barriers of identified candidates and to establish robust career pathways that will allow Title II adult education students to co-enroll in Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to increase their earning capacity. Western Maryland's grant focuses on trades, manufacturing, construction, transportation, healthcare, and leisure and hospitality industries allowing for support of entry level credentialing and providing candidates with the opportunity to move through stackable credentials or apprenticeship opportunities. The following career pathway model will provide the framework to achieve this goal.

As of September 2019, in Washington County, registration for new and continuing students began in August and will continue through September when classes are scheduled to begin. The transition specialist completes the intake process at the individual's preferred location. One participant earned a GED® and started a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) A course. Another participant finished the core trade pre-apprenticeship course and started the cybersecurity certificate program. One participant obtained employment as a welder while enrolled in the welding certification program.

Allegany College initiated tours of the Culinary School for participants to spark interest in the field of hospitality. Potential students complete a career exploration and interest survey prior to receiving a handout showing the steps necessary to complete their pathway to success.

In Garrett County, regular meetings between Title I and Title II staff are proving helpful in identifying potential candidates. Two new participants have been added. The majority of the participants have their high school credential and are in reading and/or math remediation to improve their skills while engaged in workforce training program. To date, forty three individual have been served.

Youth Work Experience

Labor has been working diligently with the local workforce development boards, youth managers, and vendors to address any and all technical assistance and training requests to improve adherence to the required elements of WIOA youth services and funds. Labor's statewide disability and youth services coordinator continues to work along-side Labor's fiscal staff to monitor local boards' fiscal adherence to the WIOA requirements on appropriate allowable work experiences, the usage of the reporting tool developed to track work experiences, as well as appropriate documentation on the quarterly financial status reports.

Local areas have reported that the restructuring of their programs has enabled them to provide more meaningful work experiences and contributed to their ability to meet the fiscal requirements. Local areas continue to provide feedback to the state on their efforts to meet the 75% Out of School Youth mandate. During the recent local plan updates, the local areas adequately addressed the 14 service elements, eligibility requirements, partnerships, and major industries based upon Labor Market Information, the use of summer employment to provide work experiences, and providing paid internships upon successful completion of an employability boot camp.

Within this past year, Labor has seen consistency with the local areas meeting or exceeding the required 20 percent work experience funding allocation for PY 2018. Labor will continue working with the local areas to provide training and technical assistance to address any deficiencies in fiscal or programmatic performance.

If the state has received a small state minimum allotment exception to decrease the minimum out-of-school youth expenditure requirement, describe how the exception has impacted services provided to both in-school youth and out-of-school youth, including specific strategies for serving each population, as well as how the state and/or local area is ensuring serving out-of-school youth remains a priority.

Labor does not have an exception.

The state's performance accountability system, including

- Any specific state performance measures or goals and progress towards meeting them.
- Any performance deficiencies on the primary indicators of performance, which may include descriptions of any factors impacting performance.
- The state's common exit policy, including which ETA-funded partner programs are included in the state's common exit policy.¹
- Negotiated performance levels for local areas for titles I and III core programs for program years 2016-2017.
- The state's approach to data validation and ensuring data integrity, including a description of the methodology of any validation activities that occurred.

Performance Indicators

In accordance with §677.155(a)(1)(i-vi), and TEGL 10-16, Change 1, the primary indicators for performance are: WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Wagner Peyser Performance Measures

- ***Employment Rate QTR2*** – Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment in the second quarter after exit (Q2 post-exit);
- ***Employment Rate QTR4*** – Percentage of participants in unsubsidized employment in the fourth quarter after exit (Q4 post-exit);
- ***Median Earnings*** – Median earnings of participants in the second quarter after exit (Median earnings Q2 after exit).
- ***Credential Rate*** – Percentage of participants with post-secondary credential attainment or high school diploma or GED® during participation in the program or within one (1) year after exit (Wagner Peyser is excluded from this measure.); and
- ***Measurable Skills Gain*** – Percentage of participants who, during the PY, are in education or training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credential or employment, and who achieve measureable skills gain (documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, toward the credential or employment). (Wagner-Peyser is excluded from this measure.)

In accordance with §677.155(d)(1-6), the primary indicators for the youth program under title I of WIOA are as follows:

¹ Common exit occurs when a participant, enrolled in multiple partner programs, has not received services from any DOL-administered program in which the participant is enrolled, to which the common exit policy applies, for at least 90 days, and no future services are planned.

WIOA Youth Performance Measures:

- **Placement in Employment or Education QTR2** – Percentage of participants who are in education and training, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit (Q2 post-exit);
- **Placement in Employment or Education QTR4** – Percentage of participants who are in education and training, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit (Q4 post-exit);
- **Median Earnings** – Median earnings of participants in the second quarter after exit (Median earnings Q2 after exit);
- **Credential Rate** – Percentage of participants with post-secondary credential attainment or high school diploma or GED during participation in the program or within one (1) year after exit; and
- **Measurable Skills Gain** – Percentage of participants who, during the PY, are in education or training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credential or employment, and who achieve measureable skill gain (documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, toward the credential or employment).

In accordance with §677.155(a)(1)(vi), a new primary indicator exists to help determine the effectiveness in serving employers under WIOA. This indicator is

WIOA Effectiveness in Servicing Employers Measures:

- **Employer Penetration Rate** – addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy. Percentage of employers using WIOA core program services out of all employers in the State.
- **Repeat Business Customers** – addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; the percentage of employers who have used WIOA core program services more than once during the last three reporting periods.
- **Retention with Same Employer in the 2nd and 4th Quarters after Exit**. Addresses the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers; Percentage of participants with wage records who exit and were employed by the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit.

States must select two of the three measures above to report on for PY2018 and PY2019 program year. *Maryland has chosen to report on all three measures for these program years.*

WIOA Negotiated Performance Targets and Results

The implementation of WIOA common performance accountability requirements has varied across titles of the core WIOA programs, including trade and Jobs for Veterans State Grant due to variations in federal agency oversight, policy guidance, and related requirements. For example, whereas Labor negotiated Title I and Title III goals with USDOL for most common measures, MSDE-Division of Rehabilitation Services did not negotiate any measures at all with the U.S. Department of Education, since all measures are new for Title IV and “baseline” data will be collected.

Baseline indicators are indicators for which the State did not need to propose an expected level of performance in the State Plan for PY 2016 or PY 2017 and, therefore, did not need to come to agreement with the federal Departments on negotiated levels of performance. Baseline indicators will not be used in the end of year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance. Baseline measures under WIOA for Title I and Title III are Youth Median, Measurable Skills Gains, and Effectiveness in Serving Employers.

When negotiating performance goals with the State, the U.S. Department of Labor used the following:

- Historical data, including annual WIA performance information (PY 2007-2014) and recent quarterly performance results to support projected performance and service populations, and economic factors;
- The statistical adjustment model;
- Continuous improvement; and
- Government Performance and Results Act goals.

WIOA Assurance Statement

The State of Maryland assures USDOL that all required elements of the PY 2018 WIOA Annual Report have been reported accurately and uniformly to permit state-by-state comparisons across WIOA programs. The State assures USDOL that the WIOA Annual Report complies with the Act and federal regulations.

MD Common Exit Policy

Per Maryland Policy Issuance No. 01-2014: any participant who receives services funded in whole or in part from the WIOA, W-P, Veteran's Employment and Training Service (VETS) and Trade Act Adjustment /Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance (TAA/TGAA) programs, sequentially or simultaneously, will be counted as a participant in each program, and will share a common "date of participation" and a common "date of exit" for federal reporting.

Maryland Performance

Title I and Title III Performance - Maryland PY 2018

		Standard	MD Performance	% Standard Achieved
Employment Rate QTR2	Adults	75%	76.3%	101.7%
	Dislocated Workers	80%	84.4%	105.5%
	Labor Exchange	58%	66.7%	115.0%
Employment Rate QTR2	Adults	71%	74.9%	105.6%
	Dislocated Workers	76%	83.2%	109.5%
	Labor Exchange	57%	68.0%	119.2%
Median Earnings	Adults	\$5,900	\$6,963	118.0%
	Dislocated Workers	\$7,900	\$9,585	121.3%
	Labor Exchange	\$5,000	\$6,209	124.2%
	Youth		\$3,386	Baseline
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR2		67%	75.8%	113.2%
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR4		61%	75.8%	124.3%
Credential Attainment	Adults	58%	63.8%	109.9%
	Dislocated Workers	56%	59.2%	105.7%
	Youth	65%	66.2%	101.8%
Measurable Skills Gains	Adults		65.8%	Baseline
	Dislocated Workers		69.4%	Baseline
	Youth		46.6%	Baseline

Employer Effectiveness Measures			
Retention With Same Employer		66.4%	Baseline
Penetration Rate		8.3%	Baseline
Repeat Business		30.6%	Baseline

Local Workforce Development Area Performance and Their Negotiated Goals for PY 2018

WIOA and Labor Exchange Title I Performance - Maryland and Local Workforce Development Areas - PY 2018

		ROLLING 4 QUARTERS														State Standard
Performance Measure		Standard	State Perform.	AA	BCO	BCI	FR	LS	MG	MM	PG	SM	SQ	US	WM	
Employment Rate QTR2	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR2 Adult			Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	Perf.	
	Adults	75%	76.3%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	72%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	
	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR2 DW			80%	80%	78%	80%	80%	76%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	80%	
	Dislocated Workers	80%	84.4%	73.5%	90.8%	85.7%	77.7%	100.0%	76.6%	87.1%	79.2%	86.0%	89.5%	93.6%	88.8%	80%
	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR2 LX			58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	
	Labor Exchange	58%	66.7%	63.3%	66.6%	66.9%	68.5%	76.2%	63.1%	66.0%	64.9%	64.4%	68.3%	70.1%	67.4%	58%
Employment Rate QTR4	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR4 Adult			71%	71%	71%	71%	71%	68%	71%	71%	71%	71%	71%	71%	
	Adults	71%	74.9%	70.8%	70.2%	75.1%	81.2%	75.7%	67.9%	74.9%	70.7%	75.6%	78.9%	88.2%	84.8%	71%
	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR4 DW			76%	76%	75%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	
	Dislocated Workers	76%	83.2%	74.7%	88.0%	86.9%	78.8%	100.0%	75.0%	88.0%	76.3%	83.7%	84.7%	92.7%	87.8%	76%
	Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR4 LX			57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	57%	
	Labor Exchange	57%	68.0%	67.6%	68.0%	68.9%	69.4%	72.1%	65.5%	68.4%	66.5%	65.6%	68.6%	69.6%	67.4%	57%
Median Earnings	Local Adjusted Earnings Standard Adult			\$6,200	\$6,300	\$4,500	\$6,500	\$5,200	\$5,200	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$4,600	\$7,300	\$5,100	\$6,700	
	Adults	\$5,900	\$6,963	\$6,370	\$7,570	\$5,026	\$6,853	\$6,630	\$7,742	\$6,017	\$8,092	\$6,479	\$9,064	\$6,882	\$6,613	\$5,900
	Local Adjusted Earnings Standard DW			\$8,400	\$8,300	\$6,500	\$8,500	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$8,500	\$10,000	\$6,200	\$8,000	\$5,500	\$7,000	
	Dislocated Workers	\$7,900	\$9,585	\$8,502	\$10,354	\$7,950	\$8,768	\$9,938	\$10,886	\$10,210	\$12,094	\$10,216	\$10,523	\$7,871	\$7,389	\$7,900
	Local Adjusted Earnings Standard LX			\$6,400	\$5,800	\$4,500	\$6,300	\$4,500	\$6,800	\$6,500	\$5,800	\$5,000	\$5,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	
	Labor Exchange	\$5,000	\$6,209	\$7,100	\$6,609	\$5,378	\$7,398	\$5,020	\$8,077	\$7,673	\$6,574	\$6,102	\$6,432	\$5,741	\$4,906	\$5,000
	Local Adjusted Earnings Standard Youth															
	Youth		\$3,386	\$3,986	\$3,488	\$3,751	\$3,936	\$2,815	\$2,905	\$3,283	\$3,294	\$1,980	\$3,711	\$4,276	\$2,772	
Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR2 Youth				67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	67%	
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR2		67%	75.8%	69.0%	91.7%	71.1%	73.2%	73.9%	66.8%	78.0%	73.7%	71.8%	97.0%	98.4%	80.0%	67%
Local Adjusted Employment Rate QTR4 Youth				61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	61%	
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR4		61%	75.8%	78.5%	84.6%	69.4%	72.1%	86.2%	72.4%	70.5%	75.6%	64.7%	88.0%	92.1%	71.3%	61%
Credential Attainment	Local Adjusted Credential Attainment Adult			58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	58%	50%	58%	58%	
	Adults	58%	63.8%	48.6%	73.9%	69.6%	57.1%	77.8%	67.7%	54.5%	57.3%	62.2%	55.6%	80.6%	68.4%	58%
	Local Adjusted Credential Attainment DW			55%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	46%	56%	56%	
	Dislocated Workers	56%	59.2%	34.9%	76.7%	84.0%	56.8%	100.0%	66.7%	51.9%	50.8%	87.5%	42.5%	87.0%	52.8%	56%
	Local Adjusted Credential Attainment Youth			65%	65%	65%	65%	65%	58%	65%	65%	65%	65%	65%	65%	
	Youth	65%	66.2%	51.9%	63.3%	75.0%	60.6%	68.2%	48.0%	60.9%	59.0%	17.6%	64.3%	88.9%	66.0%	65%
Measurable Skills Gains	Local Adjusted MSG Adult															
	Adults		65.8%	55.5%	63.6%	56.7%	69.4%	83.2%	47.0%	55.6%	64.4%	71.0%	75.7%	84.3%	60.9%	
	Local Adjusted MSG DW															
	Dislocated Workers		69.4%	81.0%	61.4%	76.9%	57.7%	100.0%	57.1%	65.3%	68.4%	72.5%	77.1%	85.2%	67.8%	
	Local Adjusted MSG Youth															
	Youth		46.6%	52.6%	22.2%	74.6%	35.0%	66.7%	38.3%	32.1%	53.6%	20.0%	48.9%	84.2%	30.8%	
Local Adjusted Employers																
Retention With Same Employer			66.4%													
Local Adjusted Employers																
Penetration Rate			8.3%													
Local Adjusted Employers																
Repeat Business			30.6%													

Maryland exceeded 14 measures based on the negotiated goals for PY 2018.

Local Workforce Development Areas:

Codes for LWDA	
(AA) Anne Arundel	(MG) Montgomery
(BA) Baltimore County	(MM) Mid Maryland
(BM) Baltimore City	(PG) Prince George's
(FR) Frederick	(SM) Southern Maryland
(LS) Lower Shore	(SQ) Susquehanna
(US) Upper Shore	(WM) Western Maryland

Data Validation Process

The State established processes for data validation that meet all federal guidelines issued by USDOL. Data validation is a series of internal controls or quality assurance techniques established to verify the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data. Maryland requires that the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) use MWE-VOS to upload documents upon receipt from the participants for data validation purposes. This digital medium streamlines the process by eliminating the need to maintain paper documents while allowing the validation process to be conducted remotely, accurately, and more frequently than in prior program years. Maryland has a process in place to ensure that all documentation related to eligibility and performance outcomes are in MWE-VOS by the end of the applicable program year.

Labor's Office of Workforce Information and Performance pulls a random sample of files quarterly and annually. The samples contain files from all LWDAs for all Title I and Title III programs.

Quarterly – The information from the extract file is checked against the state's Management Information System to ensure the information contained in all federal extract files is accurate. Data are reviewed for errors, inconsistencies, missing data out of range values, and any anomalies. LWDAs are contacted to make corrections. This is done prior to the submission in the federal reporting system, "WIPS." Then a sample of participants records are reviewed by Monitoring mainly for the participant's eligibility to verified against source documentation to assure requirements have been met. This proactive approach is conducted on a quarterly basis to ensure the local areas are aware of any issues and can receive technical assistance all year round. LWDAs are required to address all identified findings and/or concerns in a timely matter. Corrections made in MWE-VOS are verified by monitoring staff before the finding or concern is considered closed.

Annually – The annual data validation is used primarily for ensuring data used in performance calculations were accurate, reliable, and comparable. A sample of participants contained in the WIOA measures are pulled. The 24 elements listed in TEGL 7-18 are monitored and assessed based on required source documentation and state procedures. This time of year is also for training local area staff and showing best practices amongst the areas. Staff will be trained on what, why, and how data validation works. Once a year, LWDAs are asked to perform data file reviews on other local area files. This shows staff what they are required to have within their own records and allows the sharing of best practices, which they may use within their own LWDA. Labor Central Office program management staff is available for any questions or issues that arise during this training.

Each year, Maryland plans to assess the data validation process to ensure the process is working as intended and will make any revisions as needed.

Activities provided with the funds reserved by the governor, which can be up to 15 percent of the state's allotment. In this section of the narrative, states may describe activities undertaken in whole or in part with their Governor's Reserve and how those activities have directly or indirectly impacted performance.

- Maryland invested \$1.5 million of its WIOA Governor’s set-aside funding to local workforce entities for Career Pathway initiatives that are developed in strong partnership with Title II Adult Education providers.
- Over several years, Maryland invested a total of \$1.5 M of governor set aside in MBW, an incumbent worker-training program, as described earlier in this report. The program was established in an effort to support employer strategies for retention, growth expansion, and layoff aversion through upgrading the skills of currently employed workers of Maryland’s businesses. Projects funded through MBW are focused on in-demand occupations and skillsets, as defined by businesses, and are intended to lead to potential career growth and increased wages for participating workers. Participating companies are required to match the funds provided for the actual training costs on a dollar-to-dollar basis. During PY 2018, 471 incumbent workers received training and an industry recognized credential. \$351,393.45 was spent for training—for an average cost per participant of \$746. Businesses increased wages for 274, and 269 new positions were planned. In addition, registered apprenticeships utilized funding to train 235 registered apprentices in Maryland. Industries utilizing the grant included construction trades, manufacturing, IT/Cyber, and professional services.
- DWDAL invested \$61,000 in a 200-hour electrical trade pre-apprenticeship program for Howard County high school students identified as not going to attend college. The program provided classroom instruction and hands-on-skills training to enter electrical apprenticeship and/or employment into the skill trades. Fifteen seniors were selected for participation in the pre-apprenticeship program, with seven of the students identifying as having a disability. To date, eight students are working full time in the electrical field. Eight of the participants were enrolled in a four year registered apprenticeship program with six of those individuals moving into the second year of their apprenticeship as of October 1, 2019.
- DWDAL invested nearly \$31,000 in a second 200-hour electrical trade pre-apprenticeship for Howard County high school students identified as not going to attend college. The program provided classroom instruction and hands-on-skills training to enter electrical apprenticeship and/or employment into the skill trades. Thirteen seniors were selected for participation in the pre-apprenticeship program. Upon completion, ten of the participants were enrolled in a four year registered apprenticeship program with nine of those individuals still being registered as apprentices as of October 1, 2019.

- A partnership between Baltimore’s Promise, Baltimore City Public Schools, and the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development (MOED), the demonstration grant “Grads2Careers” (\$750,000) recruits individuals in a target population to become participants of training programs and supports program participants with wraparound services that address participants’ needs and barriers. Grads2Careers will also place graduates of their training programs into well-paying jobs or apprenticeship opportunities in high-growth occupations and will offer job retention services to help ensure long-term success. Funded partners will work in partnership with lead implementation partners to recruit, enroll, support, and track Grads2Careers participants.

The target population of the Grads2Careers consists of Baltimore City graduates who fit the following eligibility requirements:

- Baltimore City High School graduate (Classes of 2018 and 2019),
- Baltimore City Resident,
- Not planning to enroll or currently enrolled in a two or four-year college at the present time, and
- Not graduating with an industry-recognized credential or certificate.

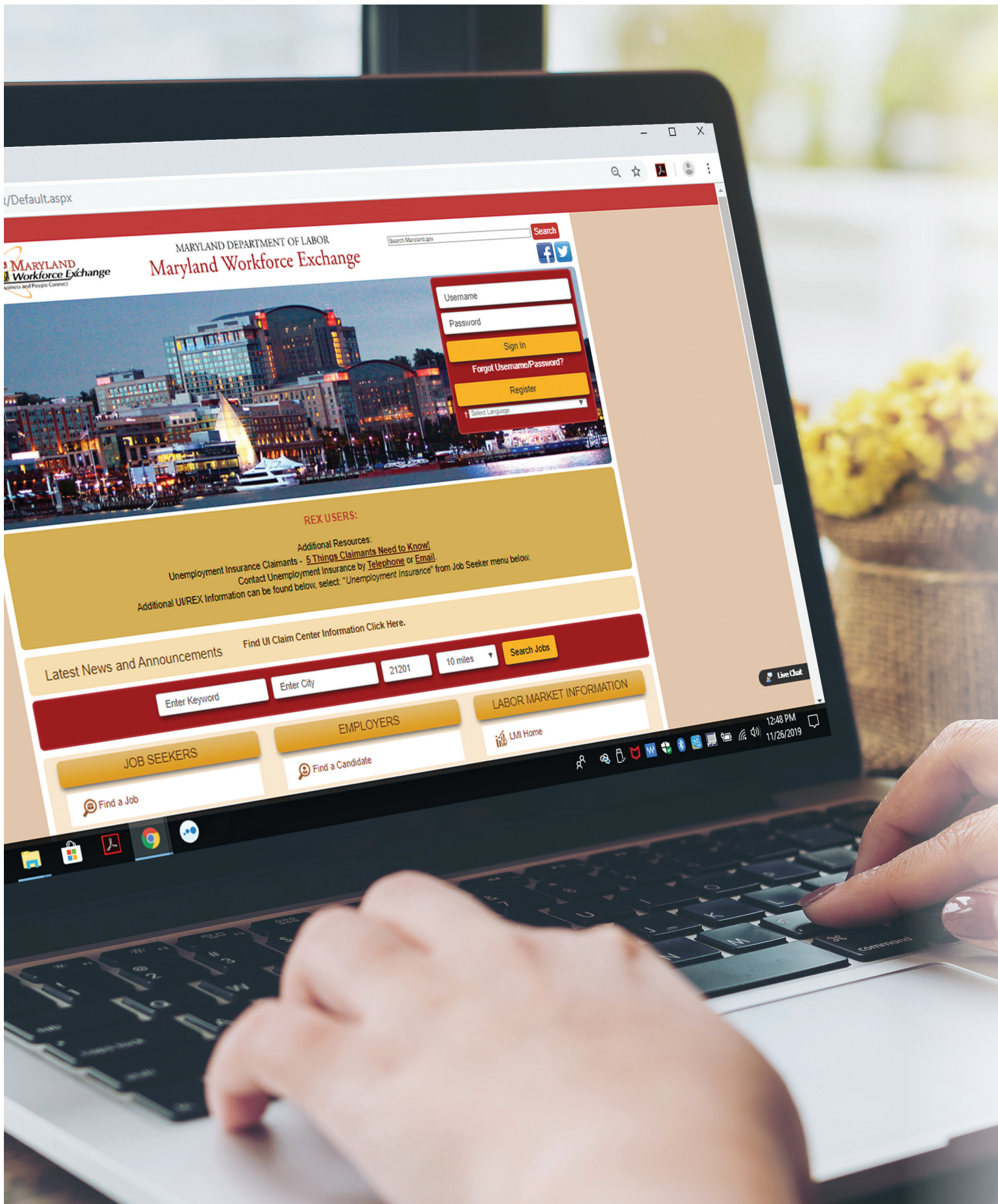
A secondary population eligible for occupational skills-training slots funded by Grads2Careers are young adults who have graduated within 18 months of the Class of 2018 and Class of 2019’s graduation date. In Cycle One, high school graduates who have graduated between December 2016 and June 2018 will be eligible. In Cycle Two, high school graduates who have graduated between December 2017 and June 2019 will be eligible.

More information on Grads2Careers may be found at <https://www.bmoreg2c.com>.

Services provided

Funded partners will be responsible for the following:

- Work in partnership with the Workforce Recruitment Coordinator (a shared position between the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development and City Schools) to recruit participants in the target population;
- Work with Baltimore’s Promise to connect program participants to opportunities prior to beginning



- training (potentially before graduation), focusing on soft skills and professional development;
 - Employ comprehensive and well-designed approaches to assess participants' skills and needs;
 - Provide occupational training that (1) employs existing or innovative approaches shown to be effective or promising and (2) can be tailored to use with recent high school graduates;
 - Secure job opportunities or apprenticeships in ideally one of six prioritized areas (Healthcare, Construction, Manufacturing, Bio-Sciences, Information Technology, and Logistics) for participants that complete training, and facilitate placements into these opportunities; and
 - Comply with all data collection and evaluation requirements, such as using a participant consent form for the purposes of data collection, inputting data into MOED's Efforts to Outcomes system, and allowing a 3rd party research institution to track participants' earnings data.
- Maryland used \$500,000 of WIOA Set Aside Funding to hire five Reentry Navigators. These navigators are located in the following locations: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, the Lower Shore, Prince George's County, and Western Maryland. The navigators interface with inmates as they are in correctional education programs (both academic and occupational). They then serve at the critical point of contact to the local AJCs. They also interact with businesses who hire ex-offenders. These contractual positions report directly to the labor exchange administrator for the local area. The goal of this intervention is to create a connection between correctional education and the workforce system as well as to inform the State as to best practices for engaging this population.
 - Maryland awarded I'm Standing Community Corporation's (ISSCC) grant for \$115,000 to provide Cyber Security training for 25 veterans. ISSCC provided a Cyber Security training program and job placement for the 25 Cyber Security trained veterans. The Cyber Security Program began in June 2018 and ended in May 2019. Completers earned industry certifications in CompTIA A+, Cisco CCENT, Cisco CCNA Security, and CompTIA Security+.
 - Metropolitan Washington Chapter, Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc., was awarded funds for \$149,995 for a re-entry pilot program. The pilot program encouraged Maryland's workforce system and registered apprenticeship sponsors to rethink the reentry population as a viable pipeline. The proposal provided an opportunity to consider innovative approaches in workforce development per WIO. The goal was to eliminate barriers to employment for re-entry participants by providing pre-apprenticeship training, supportive services, and comprehensive On the Job Training, combined with Related Instruction as Registered Apprentices. Participants entered into skilled trade's occupations as Registered Apprentices with the outcome of being journeypersons in their respective occupations.

Rapid response activities and layoff aversion

Rapid Response is an early intervention strategy designed to provide and inform individuals of services supporting them during transition between positions. Rapid Response is designed to shorten or eliminate time between employment opportunities for an individual, reducing or eliminating the time an individual would receive Unemployment Insurance. Services are provided to businesses faced with reducing their workforce regardless of the reason(s) for the reductions.

Rapid Response teams (consisting of a state representative and a local WIOA representative as well as other partners) confidentially meet on short notice with companies to assess potential layoffs and closings and work collaboratively planning the most appropriate response meeting workers' needs. Depending upon the needs of the impacted workers, coordination with other partners may be necessary, such as the Division of Unemployment Insurance (DUI), Veteran Services Unit, Division of Rehabilitative Services, and approved State of Maryland Contract Interpretation Services.

During Rapid Response events, participants receive information concerning the AJCs and all the available employment services and resources. Impacted workers are encouraged to visit their nearest AJC as soon as possible.

Case managers are encouraged to refer and co-enroll Trade Program participants in appropriate programs to ensure optimal service delivery leveraging resources from Trade, discretionary grants and Title I programs concurrently. Partner programs may be able to assist with assessment of the participant, childcare, travel costs, case management, and on-the-job training not covered under Trade.

Maryland's Layoff Aversion consists of strategies and activities to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from layoffs. As applicable, layoff aversion activities may include:

- Immediate and on-site contact to determine assessment of layoff plans, reemployment prospects for workers, available resources, and possibility of Trade impact;
- Short-time compensation;
- Employee skill upgrading and customized training;
- Provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and program;
- Information sessions on the Trade Program;
- Information on Pell Grants and the GI Bill;
- Interviewing skills workshops;
- Résumé workshops;
- Job fairs and targeted hiring events,
- Providing on the job training assistance;
- Connecting businesses with workers;
- Working with Economic Development to learn of potential businesses coming to the area with hiring needs; and
- Working with employers on proactive measures such as succession planning or opportunities of potential economic and work transition or expanding of business.

When the April 30, 2019 news broke that Verso Paper Mill Company—located in Luke, Maryland (a small town in Allegany County)—was permanently closing its operations of more than 130 years, Labor jumped into action. It immediately mobilized its Rapid Response team comprised of DWDAL and DUI staff to coordinate activities and provide services to help the dislocated workers, including their contract employees and partners.

Two events were held with the following results:

- ▶ May 2019
 - Rapid Response Attendees – 504
 - Job Fair Attendees – 935

- 685 jobseekers
- 145 employer representatives
- 66 partner agency representatives
- 39 investment services representatives

▶ June 2019

- Rapid Response Attendees – 156
- Job Fair Attendees – 399
 - 202 jobseekers
 - 51 employers
 - 122 employer representatives
 - 35 partner agency/investment services organizations
 - 75 partner agency/investment services representatives

To date, 172 Verso impacted workers are registered in the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program.

During PY 2018, Rapid Response activities in Maryland included:

- 81 companies served,
- 121 Rapid Response events,
- 7,176 impacted workers receiving Rapid Response services, and
- Workforce Recruitment/Layoff Aversion services including 2,711 events servicing 1,005 employers.

The Dislocation Services Unit works jointly with the Business Solutions Team to keep abreast of employment needs throughout the state and learn of any new industries potentially moving to Maryland. When Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications (WARNs) or Notices of Dislocation events are received, the Dislocation Services Unit looks to match of the industry sectors of the impacted workers to the potential placement of existing vacancies. Regular Business Engagement meetings are also held which provide an opportunity for business staff around the State to come together and make connections for our customers.

A new Rapid Response policy was issued on August 18, 2018: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi5-18.pdf>.

Activities provided under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service section 7(b) (e.g., services to groups with special needs or extra costs of exemplary models for delivering services).

Under Title III of WIOA, the Wagner-Peyser Act, a greater emphasis is placed on providing services to UI claimants with referrals to additional AJC services. This is in an effort to ensure claimants remain eligible for UI benefits and to provide meaningful assistance in their efforts to regain employment. Wagner Peyser staff provide services to reemployment customers to facilitate a faster return to work to reduce the average week's duration in which unemployment benefits are claimed. During this period, the average week duration decreased from 23 weeks to 20 weeks. Labor exchange services, which are the primary services provided under Wagner-Peyser, fall under the basic career services identified in WIOA. Wagner-Peyser staff must use funds authorized by WIOA to provide basic career services.

Maryland has increased staffing in the Tax Credit unit to increase productivity in the unit for the purpose of certifying applications more efficiently. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit benefits business as an incentive to hire individuals with barriers to employment or special needs. The addition of additional staff has allowed the unit to process applications faster and created a reduction of the unit backlog.

In addition, funds have been utilized to provide outreach to Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers in order to distribute information regarding services available to eligible customers in the AJCs.

Any National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) awarded to or within the state and how those funds are coordinated with state rapid response activities and dislocated worker programs, as well as how the DWGs fit in with state co-enrollment policies and disaster/emergency management activities, as applicable.

Maryland is pleased to have been awarded funding under the National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker grant program. DWDAL applied for these funds to support the operations of Workforce Development's response to the opioid epidemic in Maryland given the prevalence of opioid-related deaths especially evident in the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas in the region. Maryland coordinates this response with member agencies in the Opioid Operations Command Center operating under the Maryland Emergency Management Agency and others responding to the crisis. Specific details related to co-enrollment can be found in Policy Issuance 2019-01 – Workforce Solutions to Address Maryland's Opioid Crisis Policy, which supports the state's recommendation that customers be co-enrolled whenever possible to allow for maximizing the services available for meeting customer needs.

As part of that award, the Department created the Opioid Workforce Innovation Fund (OWIF). The goal of the OWIF is to seed new and innovative service delivery models that blend workforce and behavioral health services.

While the OWIF has been successful in meeting its identified goals, perhaps the biggest success is the relationships forged as a result of the project's collaborative approach. For example, the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment Development has formed a coalition, comprised of OWIF grantees located in Baltimore City, which include Recovery and Wellness Centers, non-profit and community-based organizations, and workforce partners. This group convenes on a quarterly basis to discuss best practices, current trends, and lesson learned around serving individuals impacted by the opioid crisis. The creation of this group has yielded many fruitful conversations and has built a community of organizations that will continue to work together to serve individuals impacted by the opioid crisis beyond the life of this grant.

Additionally, the Department's relationship with the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) has strengthened as a result of the OWIF. An individual from BHA sits on the OWIF Review Panel, lending subject-matter-expertise during the application review process. Given the close collaboration on the project, BHA has witnessed first-hand the success of the OWIF. As such, Labor will receive a grant from BHA to award two to three additional OWIF grants.

Finally, as a result of the partnership with BHA and the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), Labor led efforts on a grant proposal to the Opioid Operational Command Center that received funding in August 2019. The pilot seeks to develop a new offering through Labor's Correctional Education program to train Certified Peer Recovery Specialists (CPRS). This training will occur at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW) and allow 20 women who are currently incarcerated to participate. Of those, a percentage would be close to release, and others will be fulfilling longer sentences.

Women who are released soon after completing training will work with Labor's assigned Reentry Navigators, who provide a plethora of services meant to aid in the successful reintegration of those previously incarcerated, specific to workforce. The Reentry Navigator also interfaces with employers and will be able to connect successful trainees to employment in the behavioral and mental health fields upon release. For the students who will be incarcerated for a longer period of time, the CPRS certification will provide a more meaningful purpose, allowing the skills learned through the training to help countless other women incarcerated at MCIW through their recovery journey. DPSCS is committed to the exploration of making the services provided by a certified peer a paid program assignment, and is also willing to explore the concept of trainees earning diminution of confinement credits for their participation in the program.

The potential impact of this training is significant and far-reaching. For example, the women trained will earn their required 500 hours of supervised work or volunteer experience by providing direct peer support to women who are currently incarcerated. Further, this certification is highly sought by employers in the mental and behavioral health fields and will greatly increase employability upon release. Additionally, the content delivered through the credential training process simultaneously supports each incarcerated citizen in further developing their personal recovery, increasing the likelihood for sustained recovery after being released back into the community.

Any technical assistance needs of the state workforce system.

In today's society, all Marylanders should have the opportunity to grow up with a good education, get a job, maintain a career, and participate in their communities. In order for this to happen, Labor has to ensure a fair and effective service delivery system is provided that supports Marylanders' learning and growth. As a state, Maryland is assuring that this achievement is being met through the use of effective tools and ongoing technical assistance to local areas as much as possible. However, Maryland is still in need of Subject Matter Expert training, as staff play an intricate part in how participants achieve success. As such, Labor is looking for technical assistance in the areas below:

- Provide technical assistance to state staff and local areas for Eligible Training Providers (ETP) monitoring. Local government will need to utilize creative modes to assure that their area ETPs are providing quality customer centered training options. The local area will need to know how to evaluate ETP services to participants and track the outcomes for individual sustainability after trainings. USDOL can play an active role by offering concrete examples of what has worked in other jurisdictions and contacts with key personnel in those jurisdictions.
- Provide technical assistance to Local Boards that provide a clear understanding as to how One Stop Operators should be reviewed and evaluated. USDOL can share unique insights into effective and efficient processes and approaches to monitoring, clarifying gray areas of what boards can and cannot do in this process.
- Provide refreshers in areas of program eligibility to reinforce understanding and clarify any misunderstanding as to the use of Social Security Number and Disability documentation (i.e. Supplemental Security Income or School Individualized Education Program).
- Provide training on effective Case Management techniques using other states as examples. Having this type of technical assistance will assist in helping LWDAs develop story-maps while assessing gaps, as well as barriers. This process will also identify potential responses to address these issues and needs.
- Provide training to state program and monitoring staff as to each one's roles and responsibilities, including how to provide beneficial technical assistance to the field – where do lines align or where do lines cross?
- Provide training to state monitors as to how they can effectively train locals on how to self-monitor – differences between fiscal and programmatic (i.e. Promising Practices).

Promising practices, lessons learned, and success stories that focus on serving employers, communities, and individuals with barriers to employment, including information based on the state's evaluation and related research projects. This discussion should cover a broad range of at-risk and priority populations served, including out-of-school youth, low-income adults, dislocated workers, individuals who are basic skills deficient, individuals with limited language proficiency, individuals with disabilities, veterans, the long-term unemployed, and any other individuals with barriers to employment, or other populations the state may wish to discuss.

YOUTH JOB SEEKER | Meet Rusty

Saying yes for success: Upper Shore American Job Center partners work together to help Rusty

Rusty did not like going to high school very much, and he dropped out during his junior year.

After working a dead end job for a few years, Rusty engaged with Upper Shore AJC Partners to transform his life. MSDE's Division of Rehabilitation Services, DWDAL, Upper Shore's Workforce Scholarship Office and Chesapeake College's Perkins Career and Technology Education, and the Chesapeake College Foundation all had a role in the transformation.

Rusty's first interaction with the AJC was the pursuit and completion of his Maryland High School Diploma through the National External Diploma program. Now that Rusty had his diploma, the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Upper Shore Workforce Scholarship Office worked with Chesapeake College's Career and Technology Education staff to enroll him in a welding program. DWDAL worked with Rusty to help him get a job with a local company using his developing welding skills. The Chesapeake College Foundation supplied scholarship funding that was blended with WIOA Act funding so that Rusty could attend class at night while working during the day.

Rusty illustrates what happens every day in the AJCs—partners work together to find a way to say “yes,” and “yes” leads to success.

APPRENTICESHIP | Meet Ali

Apprenticeship through the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH) proves to be the key to greater financial stability

Ali immigrated to the United States in 1982 because of limited job opportunities in his home country of Jordan. He completed a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and worked for several years as an engineer until managing a 7-Eleven store. After 22 years, Ali sold his store, overwhelmed by the difficulties of owning his own business.

After being unemployed for three months, Ali heard about the apprenticeship program through the Anne Arundel County Muslim Council, a local community organization. He began the apprenticeship program's English as a Second Language and Essential Skills courses, where he learned how to navigate the process of finding and preparing for employment in the United States.

He was selected as an Environmental Care Supervisor apprentice at Johns Hopkins Hospital, and since beginning six months ago, he has completed the competencies and coursework required to move to the second wage level. Thanks to his increased earnings through apprenticeship, Ali and his family enjoy greater financial stability. He hopes to continue moving forward in his career with Johns Hopkins Hospital.

WAGNER-PEYSER/ADULT JOB SEEKER | Meet Gwendolyn

Business Solutions Consultant Lisa Nash helps Gwendolyn transition from volunteering to employment

Gwendolyn had volunteered with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development at the Northwest AJC for one year. She was assisting job seekers on the computer, answering questions, filing documents, making copies, and facilitating résumés. Gwendolyn was always professional, wore a smile, and was very patient and kind to everyone with whom she came in contact. She always exhibited sincere concern and compassion for those who felt distressed due to their unemployment.

Mr. Gerald Grimes informed Lisa Nash, Business Solutions Consultant, that Child Support was hiring. On December 12, 2018, Lisa e-mailed Gwendolyn's résumé to Ms. Nakia Thomas, Operation Director of Baltimore City Office of Child Support Services, Western Office, located at 2401 Liberty Heights Avenue, Baltimore, MD.

Gwendolyn was hired as a Caseworker on January 7, 2019, and is earning \$15.00 an hour. She is very happy with her new employment opportunity!

APPRENTICESHIP | Meet Maureen

The Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH) registered apprenticeship program changed Maureen's life

Maureen immigrated to the United States from Nigeria in October 2017, seeking asylum after being forced into marriage. During her first year in the United States, Maureen faced many challenges. The process of filing for asylum takes many months and sometimes even years, and unable to earn an income in the interim, Maureen considered returning home to Nigeria.

Shortly after receiving work authorization, she learned about BACH's apprenticeship program from Asylee Women Enterprises, a local nonprofit organization that houses and assists women who have sought asylum in the United States. She enrolled in BACH's contextualized English as a Second Language class, where she learned how to navigate the process of applying to jobs in the U.S.

After working with BACH's Career Coach for résumé assistance and interview preparation, she was selected as an Environmental Care Supervisor apprentice at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Maureen holds a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management and has years of experience in sales and marketing in her home country. She is now able to draw on these skills in her new role. Currently, she is earning more than \$16 an hour as an apprentice and has built up enough savings to move into her own apartment. When asked about her experience in her first four months as an apprentice, Maureen said, "The program has changed my life and still is. It's taught me and still is teaching me a lot about myself, the people around me, and the environment where I've found myself. I see how much I've grown from the person I was and the person I am now thanks to my managers and colleagues. They encourage me grow, do better, mentor me, and are always leading me in the right direction."

WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker | Meet Woodrow

Woodrow gets the training he needs to keep him employed for years to come

Woodrow came to the WIOA program after working with an employer for 13 years as an Auto Glass Technician. Woodrow earned a good salary but was without any industry-wide credentials. He lost his job in 2018 and was worried about his ability to make a similar, livable wage because of his narrow focused skill set.

Woodrow enrolled in the WIOA Adult program at The Career Center at Hunt Valley. Hunt Valley Career Consultant, Andrea Fuhrman, assisted Woodrow to develop a comprehensive employment plan with intensive case management. Woodrow received WIOA funding for The Community College of Baltimore County's Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A truck driving training and earned his credential in February of 2019.

Shortly thereafter, Woodrow obtained a driving job with a local area employer at a starting salary over 60% higher than his previous employment. This income increase was significant given the short time period Woodrow invested to participate in the WIOA program. It is also important to note that the new job allowed Woodrow to be home every night. Woodrow's involvement with Baltimore County's workforce development services and his new CDL Class A license will keep him employed for years to come.

WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker | Meet Abdelhady

Thoughtful, intensive career planning and WIOA funding help Abdelhady with his successful career change

Abdelhady visited The Career Center at Hunt Valley, as he was interested in a career change and inquired about WIOA training. Hunt Valley Career Consultant, Kellie Bass, assisted Abdelhady with career guidance. Abdelhady was employed as a project officer/general engineer with a federal government agency, but his position was eliminated after one year. Abdelhady held a previous contractual position with another federal agency for six years.

Abdelhady wanted to pursue a career as a CDL A driver, with the goal of owning a business as a tractor-trailer operator. Kellie enrolled him in the WIOA Adult program. With the assistance of his Career Consultant, Abdelhady developed an employment plan, which involved occupational skills training in commercial vehicle driving. He successfully completed CDL A training and passed his Motor Vehicle Administration test for tanker endorsement in February 2019. Abdelhady received his CDL A license and currently works for a local area trucking company. Thoughtful, intensive career planning and WIOA training funding helped Abdelhady to reach his destination for a career change and provided a roadmap to his dream career.

Any challenges the state workforce system faces, which may include policy, implementation, or other relevant challenge.

Like most states, Maryland faces challenges in streamlining the state workforce system, for the State Workforce Plan is a collaboration of 13 programs, overseen by a number of state and local organizations, each with their own data system and metrics.

Recognizing the opportunity to further enhance the State's workforce ecosystem, Maryland began analyzing the data side by bringing the state Attorney Generals together to inventory what Memoranda of Understanding, Resources Sharing Agreements, and Data Sharing Agreements currently exist and to identify gaps (e.g. that may hinder universal intake, referral, follow-up, prevent duplication of data, etc.) and solutions. Additionally, two state partners, the Division of Unemployment Insurance and the Department of Human Services, are moving from legacy systems to modernized ones, which will enable greater collaboration.

The state of Maryland recognizes system collaboration as a necessity; therefore, the Benchmarks of Success has a goal to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system. This goal includes benchmarks that encapsulate the pieces of a collaborative and effective workforce system, including the:

- Creation and use a common comprehensive employment readiness assessment accessible to all across the workforce development system;
- Creation and use a common case management tool across the workforce development system;
- Increasing the percent of workforce partners that are integrated through co-location, cross-training, and/or technological access;
- Creation and implementation a professional development system for the workforce development system;
- Increasing the annual percent of workforce development system partner organizations who provide formal benefits counseling; and
- Increasing the annual percent of Maryland's workforce system customers co-enrolled in WIOA workforce programs.

Maryland will continue to pursue these goals through the Benchmarks of Success committee system in 2020.

Any strategies/policies relating to Pay-for-Performance contracting, which may include examples from local areas.

N/A

