



Workforce Innovation  
and Opportunity Act

# WIOA

ANNUAL REPORT

# 2019

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MARYLAND ANNUAL REPORT  
Workforce Innovation and  
Opportunity Act Titles I and III  
*Program Year 2019*

December 1, 2020



**Larry Hogan**  
Governor



**Boyd K. Rutherford**  
Lt. Governor

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Secretary

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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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 1, 2020

On behalf of Governor Larry Hogan, it is my pleasure to present *Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program Year (PY) 2019 Annual Report Narrative – Titles I and III*. This publication illustrates Maryland's successful job placement and training activities for the period of July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2020, as required by United States Department of Labor's Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 5-18.

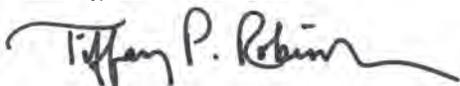
Governor Hogan's vision is to change Maryland for the better. That vision drives the collaborative efforts of the Maryland Department of Labor as well as our state and local workforce partners. The 2020 – 2024 WIOA State Plan demonstrates the commitment of partners to learn together, discuss pressing issues, and come to lasting solutions for the business and jobseeker customers we collectively serve. 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's workforce system is making Governor Hogan's vision a reality.

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, 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 strategic investments in the work-and-learn model of Registered Apprenticeships, reaching a record number of over 10,700 apprentices. Thanks to Maryland's EARN Maryland (EARN) program, more than 4,500 unemployed or underemployed Marylanders have obtained employment. The flexible and innovative EARN program 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 implementing successful strategies to engage populations with significant barriers to employment, we are empowering citizens with the skills and expertise they need to secure and advance in family-sustaining employment on career pathways. In short, we are changing Maryland for the better.

Best regards,



Tiffany P. Robinson  
Secretary  
Maryland Department of Labor

## 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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**JOB SEARCH**  
**QUALIFICATION**



**CAREER**



**APPLICATION**



## Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act PY 2019 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.

***The prompts listed in TEGL 5-18 appear in blue immediately before each related response.***

*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.*

Maryland submitted requests for two waivers to the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) in the state's 2020 State Plan submission:

1. A request for a waiver from the requirements for the collection and reporting of performance-related data on all students participating in training programs listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Under this waiver, Maryland will continue to collect and report performance data for all WIOA-funded participants in accordance with the above regulations.
2. A request for a waiver from the requirements that "not less than 75 percent of funds allotted and available for statewide activities, and not less than 75 percent of funds available to local areas shall be used to provide youth workforce investment activities for out-of-school youth." Maryland requested that both the required state and local percentage for Out-of-School (OSY) youth expenditures be lowered to 50 percent.

USDOL granted our waiver requests via letter on June 20, 2020. The ETPL waiver will cover Program Year 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021). The Youth waiver will cover Program Years (PYs) 2019 and 2020 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021), which includes the entire time period for which states are authorized to spend PY 19 and 20 funds.

*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 Servicing 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.*

MD Labor has no current evaluations; however, the State is working to build in an evaluation component to the Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the process for evaluating RESEA has become of secondary importance to ensuring timely processing of claims during this period.

*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.*



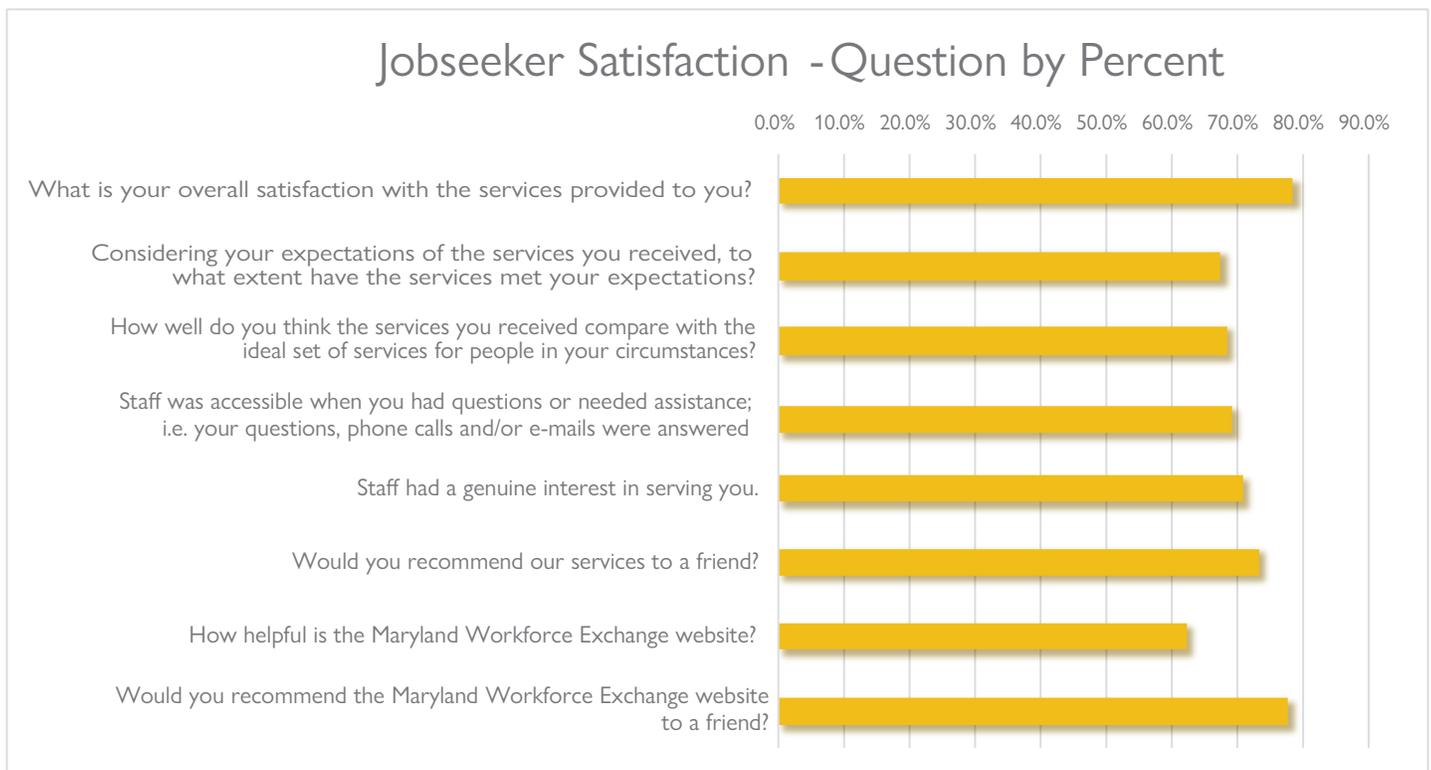
## *Jobseeker Satisfaction*

A Jobseeker Satisfaction survey comprised of 10 questions was administered via an email solicitation with a link to an online survey delivered through Survey Monkey. A total of 2,729 surveys were sent, and 153 responses were received—a 5.6% response rate.

Among jobseeker respondents, 77.8% were somewhat or very satisfied with services. Over 67% of customers felt the services they received met or exceeded their expectations. A little over 67% felt the services they received were ideal for individuals in their circumstances. 69.3% felt the staff was

accessible and reachable, and 73.9% of customers trusted staff had a real interest in serving them. 82.9% would recommend our services. Of those who visited the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE), 63.8% found the site helpful or very helpful, and 77.6% would recommend it to a friend. Overall, a majority of customers who utilized our services found them useful and helpful in supporting their needs.

Survey questions and responses by percent are shown in the following table:



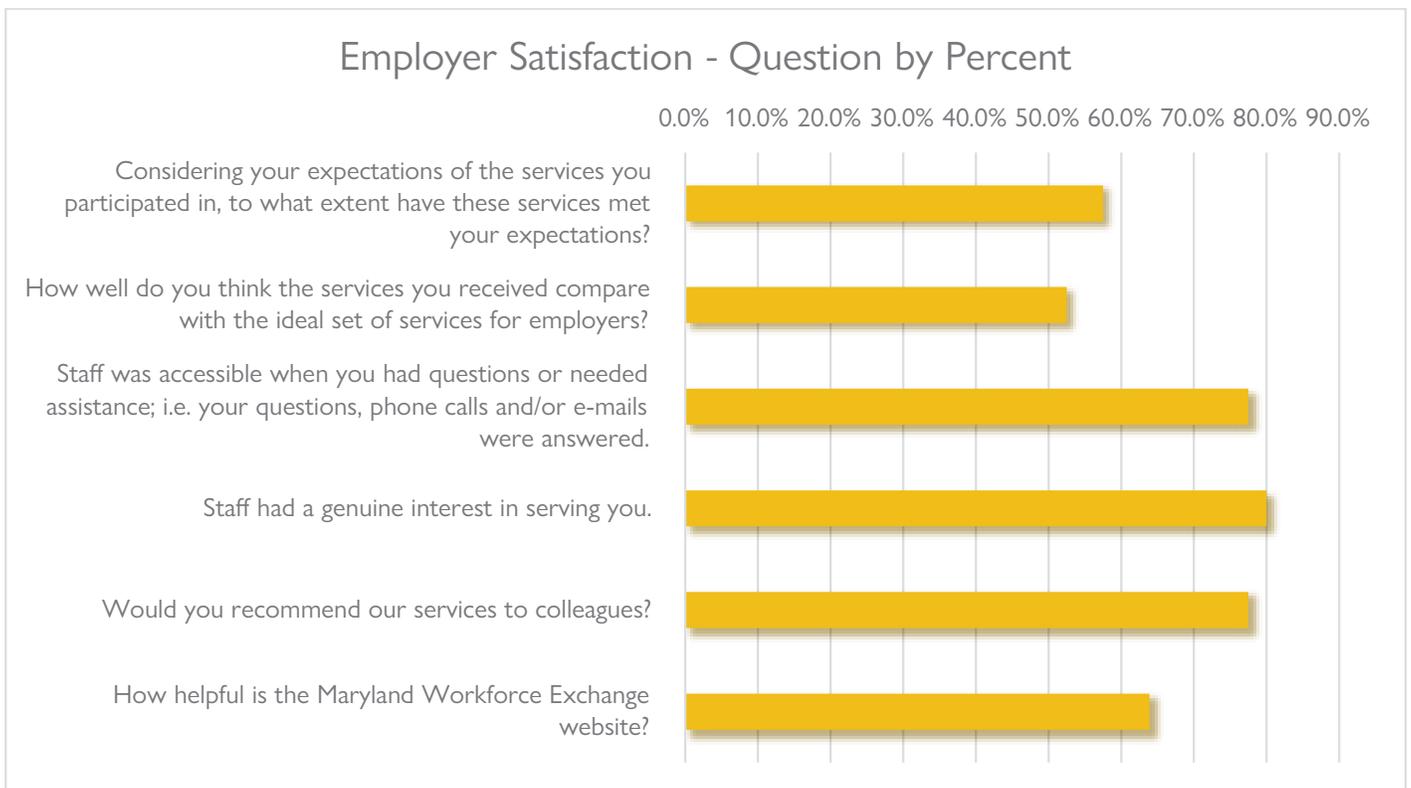
### Employer Satisfaction

A 10-question Employer Satisfaction Survey was conducted using the same methodology applied for the Jobseeker Satisfaction survey. A total of 698 employers who received staff-assisted services were emailed links to an online survey. Of those sent emails, 40 responded—a 5.7% response rate. Among employers, 57.5% felt the services they received met and exceeded their expectations. About 52% felt the services

they received were ideal for employers in their circumstances. A majority of employers surveyed, 45%, were introduced

to American Job Centers (AJCs) through the MWE. Over 77% of respondents felt the staff was accessible and reachable, and 80% of employers trusted that staff had a real interest in serving them. Nearly 78% employers would recommend our services to colleagues. Of employers who used the MWE, 63.9% found the site helpful or very helpful. The following table includes the questions included in the survey and the response results:

Survey questions and responses by percent are shown in the following table:



## Summary

These survey results show that areas exist which may require some growth and improvement. These surveys allow us to see whether any issues exist. Once all areas are thoroughly examined, and issues determined, a resolution can later be implemented. Customers commented on the invaluable services Maryland is providing through the state's AJC network and the MWE. What stands out in these survey results is that our staff, our system, and the services provided were a beneficial and valuable asset to our jobseeker and employer customers alike.

*4.e 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)***, a strategic initiative that focuses on a shared vision of excellence.

As described in Maryland's ***2020 - 2024 State Workforce Plan***, the Benchmarks of Success defines five strategic goals to increase the earning capacity of Marylanders by maximizing:

1. Access to employment;
2. Skills and credentialing;
3. Life management skills;

And by:

4. Eliminating barriers to employment; and
5. Strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland's workforce system.

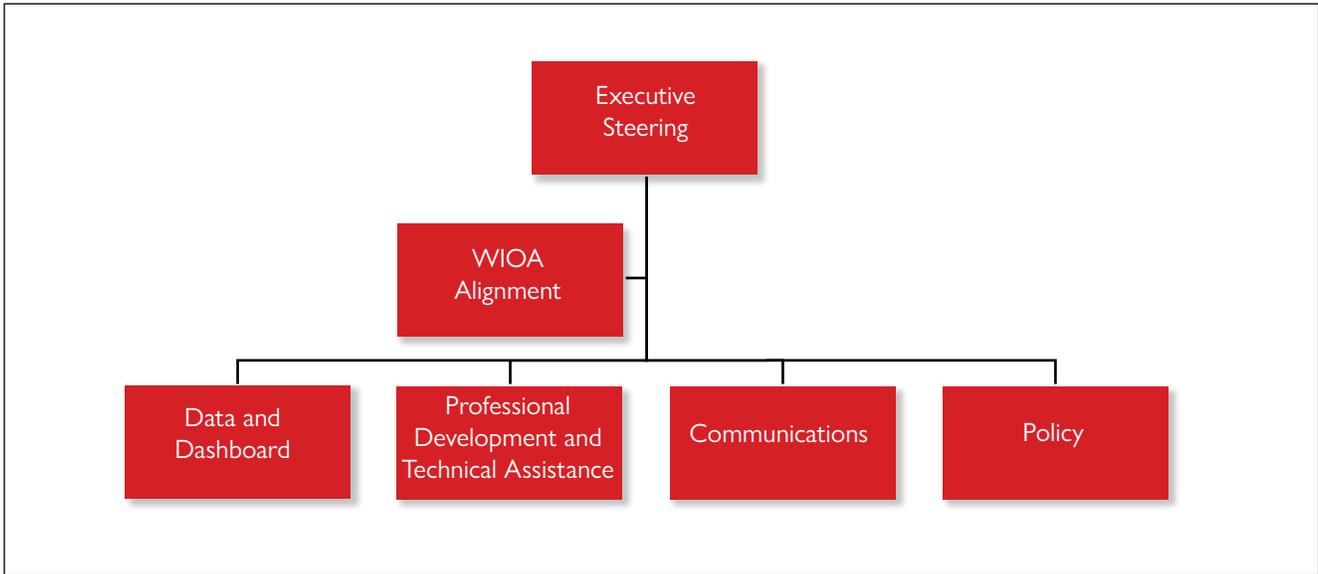
Each of the strategic goals has a series of benchmarks that the State will ultimately track to gauge progress to better understand the system's success in working towards this shared vision and five shared goals. Maryland's workforce system uses the Benchmarks of Success as a framework, guiding the shared 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 fostering the integration of Maryland's workforce system by broadly promoting the activities of the Benchmarks of Success committees and the services and resources of partner agencies and programs;
- **Policy Committee-** responsible for identifying opportunities to support the implementation of the Benchmarks of Success via policy change; and

- **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 is responsible for conducting 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 WIOA partners collaborated to create a Chief Learning Officer (CLO) position to oversee professional development across the Maryland workforce system. The main purpose of this 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. As defined in the State Workforce Plan, the position supports DWDAL and Maryland’s workforce partners in delivering high quality, integrated services to customers, partners, and staff. The CLO chairs the Professional Development and Technical Assistance Committee.

In the first three 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.);
- Collection and analysis of Benchmarks of Success data from the partner agencies, programs, and systems, including baseline across the multi-agency system;
- Regional and Local Planning Guidance for WIOA Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) to correspond to the State Workforce Plan in 2018 and in 2020;
- 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 CLO position to oversee professional development for the workforce system as a whole as well as a professional development framework for the system.



*4.f 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. 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 staff worked diligently 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 June 2020, over 1,850 businesses have been actively engaged on behalf of registered apprenticeship. These engagements include 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. There have been 82 new registered apprenticeship sponsors added since November of 2016, with an additional 24 re-activated, for a net gain of 109. (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.

The diversity of Maryland's program has also improved. In PY19, there were 3,944 new apprentices registered, up 66.2 % from Calendar Year (CY) 14. Of these, there were 4,180 total minority apprentices, up 42.8 % from CY14; 526 total women apprentices, up 73.0 % from CY 14; and 610 total veteran apprentices, up 10.7 % from CY14. Overall for the year, there were a total of 3,781 participating employers, up 12.0 % from CY 14.

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, five of Maryland's community colleges have now become registered apprenticeship sponsors for the first time in Maryland's history. These 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. MD 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, Caroline, Carroll, Dorchester, Frederick, Howard, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Talbot, Washington, and Wicomico 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 MD Labor were pleased to announce the implementation of the Apprenticeship Maryland Program (AMP) as a new Career and Technology Education Program of Study.

Members of the MD Labor's MATP and MSDE's Career and College Readiness team continue to meet with officials at Maryland K-12 public school systems who express interest in the youth apprenticeship model. For the current 2019-2020 school year, a total of 74 students were registered as youth apprentices, representing growth of 57.4 % since the end of the prior school year, and over 572 % growth since the program's inception. A total of 63 students completed the program at the end of the school year.

### ***EARN Maryland (EARN)***

EARN 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.

## Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

EARN 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 nearly 70 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 training, and over 7,400 incumbent workers have received training. In addition to targeted investments in Cyber/Information Technology and Green and Clean Jobs training, EARN 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 \$18.43 in economic activity is created.

### *Maryland Business Works (MBW)*

MBW 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 % of total training costs and then receive a 50 % reimbursement by MD Labor upon successful completion of the trainee. To date, Maryland has invested a total of \$2.0 M of Governor set-aside funds in the MBW.

During PY 2019, 360 incumbent workers received training and industry recognized credentials with the support of the MBW program. \$332,647.09 was spent for training—for an average cost per participant of \$924. Businesses increased wages for 330, and 326 new positions were planned. In addition, registered apprenticeships utilized funding to train 287 registered apprentices in Maryland. Industries utilizing the grant included construction trades, manufacturing, IT/Cyber, and professional services.

### *Career Pathways*

Maryland has invested \$1.5 million of its WIOA Governor's set-aside funding in local workforce entities since 2018 to support career pathway initiatives developed in partnership with Title II adult education providers.

In keeping within the WIOA regulations' focus on career pathway models, MD 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 regarding education levels, 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 entities 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 specialists between local workforce and adult education entities.

Most of Maryland’s local boards applied to participate in the Career Pathways initiative. Ultimately, the state selected seven career pathway projects over three rounds of awards to 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 the Career Pathways initiative began on April 1, 2018 and are currently active. Areas of emphasis include:

- 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 individuals with low literacy skills 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*

Mid-Maryland’s “Zap the Gap” project focuses on ELL participants interested in allied healthcare careers, and trains for CNA and PCT certifications. Orientation, career exploration/essential skills, and bridge classes were held at the AJC where the Transition Coordinator employed by Howard Community College also maintains office hours. As of June 2020, Mid-Maryland has trained 21 participants. Of these, 17 successfully completed training and are either employed or are seeking employment.

### *Prince George’s County*

Employ Prince George’s provided specialized workforce services to ELL participants and individuals with low literacy skills 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 June 2020, 23 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 Heritage Care CNA/ GNA training program began the training cohort on August 19, 2019. For both projects, a total of 20 have completed training and are either employed or are seeking employment.

# Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

## *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 June 2020, 24 students completed the EMT course. Eight students are certified EMTs; with five employed as full-time EMTs. The remaining certified EMTs are 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.

## *Anne Arundel County*

Anne Arundel 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.

In December 2019, a third round of career pathway grants were made to the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) and Howard Community College (HCC). These targeted funds support localities in developing career pathways that increase opportunities for adult learners while expanding the talent pipeline for the business community. AAWDC, in partnership with the Anne Arundel Community College and regional employers, will offer innovative programming and services to qualified candidates interested in a career pathway in the Dental Assistant and Auto Mechanics occupations. HCC's grant award will support the development of the Vision for Success program, which will support intermediate or high level ELLs in becoming Ophthalmic Technician Assistants.

As of June 2020, a pathway in healthcare was created – from CNA/GNA to PCT and other credentials (phlebotomy, etc.). Stackable credentials are a value-added to the existing career path. Seven participants were enrolled and have now successfully finished CNA training. Four participants are

employed full-time and one is employed part-time. Recruiting for new candidates will continue, and recruiting is ongoing for the second career track training related to the skilled trades.

## *Western Maryland*

The goal of Western Maryland's project is to provide opportunities that offer living wages that improve overall quality of life and promote employment sustainability. The grant achieves these goals by strengthening partner collaborations, utilizing resources effectively to address the employment barriers of identified candidates, and establishing robust career pathways that allow Title II adult education students to co-enroll in Title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs. Western Maryland's project focuses on trades, manufacturing, construction, transportation, healthcare, and leisure and hospitality industries, in alignment with the in-demand sectors identified in the local workforce plan. Target occupations allow for support of entry level credentialing and providing candidates with the opportunity to move through stackable credentials or apprenticeship opportunities.

As of June 2020, in Washington County, registration for new and continuing students is underway until classes are scheduled to begin. The Transition Specialist completes the intake process at the participant's preferred location. One participant earned a GED® and started a Commercial Driver's License - 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, 60 individuals have been served.

## *Youth Work Experience*

MD Labor continues its efforts to ensure that the local workforce development boards, youth managers, and vendors meet the fiscal requirements outlined to provide 20% of

their budget to provide work experience for Title I Youth participants. MD Labor is working diligently to address all technical assistance and training requests to improve adherence to the required elements of WIOA youth services and funds. MD Labor's statewide disability and youth services coordinator works closely with MD 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.

At the request of the LWDA Directors, MD Labor included a waiver request to USDOL with the State Plan to reduce the out-of-school expenditure requirement to 50%. MD Labor believes that the availability of the waiver would provide programmatic flexibility to the LWDA's that would foster the creation of innovative programming and improve outcomes for Title I Youth Participants. The waiver has been approved by USDOL for PY 20 and 21. As a result of the approved request, LWDA's will be required to articulate in their local plans how they will implement the waiver. MD Labor will closely monitor LWDA's that chose to implement the waiver to ensure that performance in those areas improve as a result of the implementation.

Given the onset of COVID-19, LWDA's have been limited in their ability to provide work experiences. Although many have chosen to alter how work experiences are provided, offering variations of virtual and onsite opportunities, many have reduced the number of participants in their programs. LWDA's continue to provide feedback to the state on their efforts to meet the 20% work experience mandate. During

these challenging times, LWDA's, partners, and contracted service providers have continued to address the 14 service elements, eligibility requirements, partnerships, and support major industries based upon labor market information. The use of virtual case management, mentoring, and job readiness training have allowed programs to remain connected with their enrolled participants.

Within this past year, LWDA's have consistently met or exceeded the required 20% work experience funding allocation for PY 2019. Labor will continue working with LWDA's to provide training and technical assistance to address any deficiencies in fiscal or programmatic performance.

*4.g 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.*

MD 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.*



# Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

- *The state's common exit policy, including which ETA-funded partner programs are included in the state's common exit policy.*
- *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<sup>®</sup> during participation in the program or within one (1) year after exit. (Wagner Peyser is excluded from this measure.)
- 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 measurable 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:

### 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<sup>®</sup> during participation in the program or within one (1) year after exit.
- Measurable Skills Gain – Percentage of participants who, during the PY, are in education or training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credential or employment, and who achieve measurable skill gain (documented academic, technical, occupational or other forms of progress, toward the credential or employment).

In accordance with §677.155(a)(1)(vi), there is a new primary indicator for the effectiveness in serving employers under WIOA, which is:

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<sup>1</sup> Common exit occurs when a participant, enrolled in multiple partner programs, has not received services from any USDOL-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 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; 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.

## 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 JVSG due to variations in federal agency oversight, policy guidance, and related requirements. For example, whereas MD Labor negotiated Title I and Title III goals with the USDOL for most indicators, MSDE-DORS did not negotiate any measures at all with the U.S. Department of Education, since all measures are new for that Title 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 2018 or PY 2019 and, therefore, did not need to come to an agreement with the federal Departments on negotiated levels of performance. Baseline indicators will not be used at 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 Titles I and Titles 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:

1. 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 (WIOA data 2015 included);
2. The statistical adjustment model;
3. Continuous improvement; and
4. Government Performance and Results Act goals.

## WIOA Assurance Statement

The State of Maryland assures the U.S. Department of Labor that all required elements of the PY2019 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, WP, Veteran’s Employment and Training Service (VETS) and Trade Adjustment Assistance /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 2019

		Standard	MD Performance	% Standard Achieved
Employment Rate QTR2	Adults	75%	80.5%	107.3%
	Dislocated Workers	80%	84.4%	105.5%
	Labor Exchange	58%	67.4%	116.2%
Employment Rate QTR2	Adults	71%	77.1%	108.6%
	Dislocated Workers	76%	83.8%	110.3%
	Labor Exchange	57%	69.3%	121.6%
Median Earnings	Adults	\$5,900	\$6,712	113.8%
	Dislocated Workers	\$7,900	\$9,480	120.0%
	Labor Exchange	\$5,000	\$6,695	133.9%
	Youth		\$3,800	Baseline
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR2		67%	73.6%	109.9%
Youth Education and Employment Rate QTR4		61%	72.5%	118.8%
Credential Attainment	Adults	58%	63.7%	109.8%
	Dislocated Workers	56%	61.2%	109.2%
	Youth	65%	64.7%	99.5%
Measurable Skills Gains	Adults		57.2%	Baseline
	Dislocated Workers		62.2%	Baseline
	Youth		49.7%	Baseline
Employer Effectiveness Measures				
Retention with Same Employer			63.3%	Baseline
Penetration Rate			8.5%	Baseline
Repeat Business			28.9%	Baseline

Maryland exceeded 13 measures and met 1 measure based on the negotiated goals for PY2019.



## 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 LWDA use the Virtual One Stop (VOS) system to upload documents upon receipt from participants for data validation purposes. Moving to a digital upload process eliminates 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 VOS by the end of the applicable program year. Due to COVID-19, Maryland has moved processes to an entirely virtual model.

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

*Quarterly* – The information from the extract file is checked against the state Management Information System (MIS) to ensure the information contained in all federal extract files is accurate. Data is reviewed for errors, inconsistencies, missing data, out-of-range values, and any anomalies. LWDA's are contacted to make corrections prior to the submission in the federal Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). MD Labor proactively reviews records in the case management system and compares them to the data extract on a quarterly basis to ensure LWDA's are aware of any issues and can receive technical assistance during the year. The Monitoring and Compliance Unit analyzes a sample of participants records to verify participant eligibility against source documentation, to assure requirements have been met. LWDA's are required to address all findings and/or concerns in a timely manner that are identified. Corrections resulting from findings are entered in the MWE and are verified by staff from the Monitoring and Compliance Unit before the finding or concern is considered closed.

*Annual* – The annual data validation process is used primarily for ensuring the data used in performance calculations are accurate, reliable, and comparable. A sample of participant data contained in the WIOA measures is pulled. The 24 elements listed in TEGL 7-18 are monitored and assessed based on required source documentation and state procedures. All elements indicated in TEGL 23-19 are validated. This time of year is also for training local area staff and showing best practices amongst the areas. Staff training is also conducted

during the annual validation process on what, why, and how data validation works. Once a year, LWDA's 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. MD Labor Central Office program management staff is available for any questions or issues that arise during this training.

Each year, Maryland assesses the data validation process to ensure it is working as intended and makes revisions as needed.

*4.i.1 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.*

- **Baltimore's Promise Update**

Baltimore's Promise is a collective established to coordinate strategy, identify quality programs, support alignment activities, establish shared measures for meaningful results, build public will, and advance policy on behalf of Baltimore City's youth. It is in the fifth month of implementing program adjustments in connection with the COVID-19 emergency. Most providers working through the Baltimore's Promise collective have transitioned two remote service models during the pandemic.

The two exceptions are the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), which is hosting the lab component of their CNA/GNA/PCT course at their Randallstown campus, and Civic Works (CW), which is hosting their professional development courses and discussion courses virtually, while some of the hands-on components of the trainings are being held at CW's site (e.g. Sherwin Williams Paint Training). At both the CCBC and CW, safety precautions are in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, including providing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), hand sanitizer, temperature checks, sanitation crews on site, etc.

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) launched its full online curriculum on April 30, 2020. Maryland New Directions (MND) is hosting virtual cohorts in Maritime, Transportation, and Distribution Logistics, as well as Hospitality. Year Up (YU) has transitioned fully into remote learning, including YU's ongoing internship

phase. Grads 2 Careers (G2C) has similarly moved to remote operations, and the G2C team conducts weekly check-ins with providers to stay current on organizational changes and challenges. Providers that have completed their G2C cohorts are still actively reaching out to former students for resource support, job placement support, and student check-ins. The Biotechnical Institute of Maryland (BTI) and Bon Secours Community Works continue to assist participants during their job placement phase. Programs are in an ongoing process of adjusting to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, including planning for training in the fall under Phase Three of Governor Hogan’s *Roadmap to Recovery*.

Below is the current list of providers and the training they provide:

PROVIDER	TRAININGS
BCCC	IT Helpdesk, CNA/GNA
BTI	Biotechnology (BioSTART and Lab Associates)
CW (Youthbuild)	Construction
CCBC	Geriatric Nursing Assistant, PCT, CAN, Medical Front Office with Phlebotomy, Pharmacy Technician
MND	Maritime, Transportation, Distribution and Logistics, Hospitality
Urban Alliance	Land surveying program in collaboration with the Maryland Society of Surveyors
Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF)	Construction
YU	Cyber Security, Helpdesk/Desktop Support training programs

PERFORMANCE NUMBERS – CUMULATIVE TO DATE	
Measure	Outcome
Total # Participants Enrolled	343
Total # Participants Receiving Industry Recognized Training	343
Total # Participants Completing an Industry Recognized Training	239
Total # Participants Receiving an Industry Recognized Credential	190
Total # Participants Placed into Unsubsidized Employment	153
Average Wage at Initial Placement	\$13.42
Total # Participants Retaining Unsubsidized Employment for 60 Days After Placement	107 (Cycle 1 (50) and Cycle 2 (57))

Performance Numbers – Segmented By Vendor											
Vendor's Name		Enrollment		Completion		Certifications		Placement		Average Wage	
		Month	Total	Month	Total	Month	Total	Month	Total	Month	Total
1	BCCC	0	32	0	16	0	0	0	9	-	\$12.83
2	BSCW	0	60	0	48	0	50	1	38	\$13.50	\$12.60
3	BTI	0	24	0	14	0	0	0	9	-	\$16.41
4	CCBC	2	100	9	64	0	71	5	43	\$16.50	\$13.67
5	CW	1	28	0	18	1	18	0	12	-	\$14.97
5	JOTF	0	17	0	16	0	17	0	10	-	\$14.34
6	MND	0	37	0	35	0	23	1	22	\$11.00	\$12.10
7	UA	0	26	0	20	0	11	0	12	-	\$13.43
8	YU	0	19	8	8	0	0	0	0	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>\$15.29</b>	<b>\$13.39</b>

- Maryland used \$500,000 of WIOA Governor set-aside funding to hire five Reentry Navigators. The Reentry Navigators serve the following LWDA: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, the Lower Shore, Prince George's County, and Western Maryland. They interface with inmates in correctional education programs (both academic and occupational) and serve as the critical point of contact to the local AJCs. In addition, Reentry Navigators interact with businesses who hire ex-offenders. These contractual positions report directly to the Labor Exchange Administrators in each LWDA. The goal of this intervention is to create a connection between the correctional education program and the workforce system as well as to inform the State regarding best practices for engaging this population. During the report period, Reentry Navigators provided intensive services previously not provided prior to release to 477 returning citizens behind the fence. A total of 197 of the returning citizens who worked with Reentry Navigators were placed in employment opportunities.
- MD Labor awarded \$149,995 to the Metropolitan Washington Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. to support 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 talent pipeline. The proposal provided an opportunity to consider innovative approaches in workforce development. 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 trades occupations as registered apprentices with the outcome of being journeypersons in their respective occupations. Thirteen total participants entered into pre-apprenticeship training. Two of the individuals were unable to complete the training, but 11 participants were successful. The 11 who completed the training have either directly entered into apprenticeship, are pending registration, or have entered into employment in the skilled trades but elected not to become apprentices. The breakdown is as follows:
  - Three participants registered as apprentices,
  - Six participants pending registration as apprentices, and
  - Two participants employed but who have elected not to begin an apprenticeship.

- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) MD Labor funded the Baltimore Electrician Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC) to continue expansion of its apprenticeship program by working with participating local public school systems to offer a School to Apprenticeship pathway. IBEW received \$57,000 to accomplish the following:

- Work with local public school systems to recruit student candidates who: will be entering their senior year, are on pace to graduate, are able to pass a drug test, have taken and passed a minimum of Algebra I, and will have a valid driver's license and vehicle by the end of the School to Apprenticeship year.
- Have the opportunity to take the first year of the JATC's related instruction in an online format (up to 50 students).
- Be provided classroom time and space to work with instructors as needed on both the curriculum and hands on labs.

- Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH)

BACH is a nonprofit dedicated to eliminating the critical shortage of qualified healthcare workers in the Baltimore area by working with local agencies, healthcare institutions, and other entities to create opportunities for residents to pursue careers in health professions. Through its work with seven major healthcare employers in the Baltimore region, BACH has a frontline understanding of workforce needs and experience convening employers to ensure efforts are industry-led. Due to the organization's history of delivering outstanding outcomes, along with their work as an intermediary, BACH leads this effort.

Since November 2016, BACH has been creating its own registered apprenticeship program by utilizing ApprenticeshipUSA Expansion Grant funding. To date, BACH has created the occupations of Environmental Care Supervisor, Surgical Technologist, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Central Sterile Processing Technician. Twenty-five apprentices are currently registered and 11 have completed.

BACH was awarded additional funding in the amount of \$668,575 over a period of two years beginning on September 1, 2019 and ending on August 31, 2021 to support the continuation and

expansion of its Healthcare Apprenticeship Program. To date, 48 total participants have been served through the grant. Nineteen of these participants have entered into registered apprenticeship against the grant goal of 95 to be served. Approximately 15 participants are expected to be registered into the occupations Surgical Technologists, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Environmental Care Supervisor prior to December 31, 2020.

The Sponsor has increased the number of employers participating in their program, registering Sinai Hospital, Franklin Woods Center, and Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center as new employers into their program during the grant period. This will assist the Sponsor in additional scaling efforts of their program.

The Sponsor is in the process of registering one additional new occupation, Medical Assistant.

- Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC) – Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS), Apprenticeship \$65,850

The IEC-AACPS pre-apprenticeship grant is designed to serve a total of 12 AACP seniors during the 2019 - 2020 school year. All 12 participants received OSHA-10 and Red Cross CPR Certifications along with their high school diplomas. Ten of the participants completed the entire pre-apprenticeship Electrical Pathway Program. Five of the ten immediately entered employment and were registered or are in the process of being registered as apprentices with an average starting wage of \$12.80 per hour.

One of the remaining five elected not to begin a career as an electrician and has moved on to college. The remaining four are all in the process of receiving their driver's licenses and meet weekly with IEC staff to provide updates on their progress. Upon receipt of their licenses, they will begin employment and be registered as apprentices.

- Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MD MEP) \$250,000

The MD MEP received a grant designed to expand registered apprenticeship programs in the manufacturing industry by creating new registered apprenticeship programs, reactivating inactive registered apprenticeship programs, registering new manufacturing occupations, and bringing new

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employers into their Group Non-Joint Program.

To date, grant efforts have resulted in:

- Reactivation of one Sponsor
  - Second occupation is in development with this Sponsor
  - Ten apprentices scheduled for registration within the year
- Registration of one new occupation for one Sponsor
  - Apprentices scheduled for registration within one year
- Reactivation in process for one additional Sponsor within the year
- Several new employers scheduled for registration in the MD MEP Apprenticeship

## *4.i.2 Rapid response activities and layoff aversion*

Rapid Response is an early intervention strategy designed to provide and inform individuals of services to support them during the transition between positions. The goal of Rapid Response services is to shorten or eliminate the time between employment opportunities, 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 with companies to assess potential layoffs and closings and work collaboratively to plan a response that meets 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 employment services and resources available through AJCs. Impacted workers are encouraged to visit their nearest AJC as soon as possible. Case managers are encouraged to refer and co-enroll Trade Adjustment Assistance (Trade) Program participants in appropriate programs to ensure optimal service delivery leveraging resources from Trade, discretionary grants, and WIOA Title I programs concurrently. Partner programs may be able to assist with participant assessments, childcare, travel costs, case management, and on-the-job training not covered under Trade.

Maryland's Layoff Aversion services include strategies and activities to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment resulting from layoffs. Due to COVID-19, all related activities have been re-structured to deliver required information virtually or via conference call, including Town Hall meetings. Services 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;
- Work Sharing/Layoff Aversion and Reopening Unemployment Insurance program;
- Employee skill upgrading and customized training;
- Provision of information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs;
- 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.

During PY 2019, Rapid Response activities in Maryland included:

- 180 employers served;
- 310 Rapid Response events; and
- Workforce Recruitment/Layoff Aversion services including 4,392 events servicing 1,785 employers.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, both Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion activities increased tremendously around the state. As of March 5, 2020, when the State of Emergency was declared in Maryland, the following activities were recorded:

- 906 Recruitment Postings/Flyers;
- 47 Virtual Job Fairs;
- Layoff Aversion/Direct Connect One Employer to Another = 3 (very difficult to do under current circumstances with COVID-19);
- 421 Job Blasts to Partners/Staff;
- 251 Assisting Employers with MWE for Posting;
- 334 Total number of dislocations received (including Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notifications [WARNs], impacting 26,880 workers); and
- 240 WARNs filed since March 5, 2020, impacting 21,550 workers.

The Dislocation Services Unit (DSU) works jointly with the Business Solutions Team to stay abreast of employment needs throughout the state and learn of any new industries potentially moving to Maryland. When WARNs or Notices of Dislocation events are received, the DSU 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 that provide an opportunity for business staff around the state to come together and make connections for our customers.

On March 5, 2020, Governor Larry Hogan declared a state of emergency in Maryland as a result of the public health threat associated with COVID-19. Over subsequent days, the Governor issued a series of Executive Orders to encourage social distancing to protect citizens from further spread of the disease.

To support small businesses facing financial impacts from the pandemic-related shutdowns, MD Labor established the COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund with \$7 million of state and federal Rapid Response resources.

The COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund directed grants to small businesses experiencing economic stresses to mitigate potential layoffs or facility closures due to COVID-19 and promote social distancing. Eligible businesses applied for funding up to \$50,000.

MD Labor accepted applications to the COVID-19 Layoff Aversion Fund starting March 23, 2020. By March 25, 2020, the majority of the funds had been obligated. An additional \$2 million of state funds were provided for a total of \$10 million.

*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).*

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Under Title III of WIOA, the Wagner Peyser Act, a greater emphasis is placed on providing services to unemployment insurance (UI) claimants with referrals to additional AJC services, to ensure claimants remain eligible for UI benefits and to provide them with meaningful assistance towards their efforts to regain employment. Wagner Peyser staff provide reemployment services to UI claimants to facilitate a faster return to work to reduce the average week's duration of UI benefits. 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 for the purpose of certifying applications more efficiently. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit benefits are designed to incentivize businesses to hire individuals with barriers to employment or special needs. The addition of staff has allowed the unit to process applications faster and reduced backlog.

Funds have also been utilized to provide outreach to Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers in order to distribute information regarding services available to eligible customers in the AJCs.

Maryland has allocated Wagner Peyser funds to support the Senior Community Service Employment Program under the Older Worker program. Wagner Peyser funds have been leveraged to support costs for increased staff support for AJCs to staff Employment Specialists. Employment Specialists recruit host agencies and eligible older workers to be placed in training slots for host agencies. They assist older workers in securing unsubsidized employment in conjunction with activities in Maryland's AJCs. Maryland exceeded the entered employment goal for the first time since transitioning to the workforce due to leveraging these funds in this manner.

*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. Maryland coordinates this response with sister 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 maximize the services available for meeting customer needs.

The grant ended on June 30, 2020, with Labor exceeding all projected deliverables and outcomes. Part of the grant award was allocated to eight LWDAs. Through this funding, over 300 individuals were served and more than 100 obtained employment. The grant opportunity allowed LWDAs to partner more closely with Local Health Departments and generally become more aware of best practices in serving individuals impacted by the opioid crisis.

This funding also allowed for the creation of 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. Sixteen organizations, including non-profits, recovery centers, and LWDAs received funding. As of June 30, 2020, nearly 600 individuals were trained, including unemployed and underemployed individuals and incumbent workers. Over 350 individuals earned a new certification or credential, and nearly 200 became employed.

While the OWIF was successful in meeting its identified goals, perhaps the biggest success is the lasting relationships forged as a result of the project's collaborative approach. For example, the Western Maryland Consortium has formed strong partnerships with Recovery and Wellness Centers, non-profit and community-based organizations, workforce partners, and institutions of higher education. Together, these partners have come to understand best practices, both from a workforce development and behavioral health perspective, related to serving individuals who have been impacted by the opioid crisis.

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 received a \$200,000 grant from BHA to fund three additional OWIF projects. As of August 31, all deliverables were exceeded on this project, and Labor was invited to request additional funds from BHA to continue this work.

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, which occurs at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW), kicked off in January of 2020, with twenty-three women enrolled. Unfortunately, just as the women were set to begin earning the 500 hours of supervised work or volunteer experience necessary for certification, COVID-19 caused operations at MCIW to cease. As the grant ended June 30, 2020, Labor requested and was awarded additional funding in FY21 from the OCCC to continue this project when operations return to normal at MCIW.

In September of 2020, Labor was awarded \$4,589,064 from USDOL to provide training and other services through the Support to Communities: Fostering Opioid Recovery through Workforce Development grant. Labor will award funding to seven LWDA’s representing 14 jurisdictions across the state that have experienced negative social and economic impacts due to the opioid crisis. More than 700 Marylanders are anticipated to participate in the new pilot program, which will provide participants with job training and recovery services, leading to employment in 14 high demand industries and occupations.

*4.k 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, MD 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, MD Labor is looking for technical assistance in the areas below:

- 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.
- 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).
- Training on effective Case Management techniques using other states as examples. Having this type of technical assistance will assist in helping LWDA’s develop story-maps while assessing gaps, as well as barriers. This process will also identify potential responses to address these issues and needs.
- 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?
- 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).



# Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

*4.1 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.*

## PY2019 Success Stories for the Annual Report

### DISLOCATED WORKER | *Meet Michael*

*Michael is excited to find a new position in less than six months.*

Michael had an impressive career, by any measure. A native Marylander, he had earned both his bachelor's degree in finance and his master's degree in business administration from Maryland educational institutions. For the next 30 years, Michael held key healthcare administrative roles in large hospital and ambulatory care organizations. So it came as a shock in the fall of 2019 when, despite all of his experience and accomplishments, Michael suddenly found himself unemployed due to a corporate restructuring.

Quickly regrouping, Michael discovered the Susquehanna Workforce Network's AJC in Harford County. Staff at the Center assisted Michael in establishing a profile in the Maryland Workforce Exchange. Then they referred him to Maryland's Professional Outplacement Assistance Center (POAC), a unique workforce system center designed to provide career services to individuals in the professional, executive, technical, managerial, and/or scientific occupations. POAC Assistant Director Tom Dezell enrolled Michael in an intensive two-day "JumpStart" workshop where he learned about the latest job search strategies, résumé customization, interviewing techniques, and negotiation strategies. Tom also gave Michael individualized feedback on his résumé and LinkedIn profile as he refined them.

In only four months, Michael found himself accepting a healthcare operations manager role. "I have only great feedback for the POAC team," Michael says. "They provided excellent content and education for professional job seekers. They were supportive, gave me personal feedback, and were available whenever I needed them."

### VETERAN | *Meet Sovang*

*Sovang transitions to civilian life through the help of Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation.*

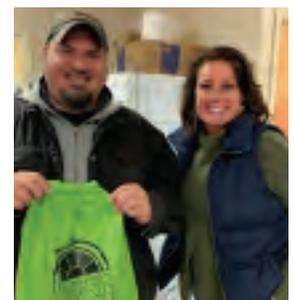
Sovang was an active service member preparing to transition into civilian life when he was referred to the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation's Military Corps Career Connect (C3) initiative. C3 is a statewide initiative focused on building career success for transitioning active duty service members, active-duty spouses, and recently separated veterans. Through C3, Sovang enrolled in the Hiring Our Heroes Corporate Fellowship. Sovang's Fellowship experience included a 12-week program that integrated professional training with hands-on experience working for Amazon Web Services as a cloud consultant.

After successfully completing his Fellowship, Sovang was offered a full-time position with Amazon Web Services as a cloud networking consultant earning \$217,000 a year.

### WIOA ADULT | *Meet Denis*

*Deaf man realizes his dream of being a truck driver.*

Denis came to the Western Maryland Consortium (WMC) after being a stay-at-home parent for nine years. Always having a love for driving and being on the road, Denis knew he wanted to be a truck driver. In 2013, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) changed their rules affording Denis the opportunity by allowing exemptions for the hearing portion of the US Department of Transportation physical. His exemption was quickly approved, and his first hurdle



to becoming a truck driver was now in his rearview mirror. His next step was to find a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) program that would work with him and teach him how to drive a truck. WMC works closely with Hagerstown Community College (HCC) and puts many drivers through their program yearly.

Denis decided to go to the HCC CDL program because it is one of the preferred schools for trucking companies in the Mid-Atlantic region. Denis faced many challenges as a CDL Class A student with a hearing impairment. A supportive training program and full-time interpreters helped him overcome those challenges and succeed in reaching his goal.

Denis was the first deaf person in the state of Maryland to obtain a CDL Class A license in the six years since the FMCSA began granting hearing exemptions. He is currently driving locally for DM Bowman Trucking.

*"The staff and instructors were so amazing and supportive all the way. The program exceeded my expectations. I was the valedictorian in my CDL A class and felt so proud knowing that I did very well in all areas. I am very sad to say goodbyes to my instructors and classmates. My career counselor at WMC, Jesse, was very supportive and I'm so lucky to have had her and everyone else at WMC and HCC help me through the CDL A program." -Denis*

#### DISLOCATED WORKER/BUSINESS SERVICES | [Meet Kevin](#)

*Kevin finds his dream job with the help of Susquehanna Workforce Center – Bel Air.*

After 21 years in the same company, Kevin suddenly found himself out of work and confused as to the next step and chapter in his career path. He sought out the help of staff at Susquehanna Workforce Center – Bel Air.

Job Service Specialist III Tondi Correll assisted Kevin by helping him to focus on his "passion," which meant a career change. They looked for an employment opportunity on MWE, and together they designed a cover letter and résumé aligned with the job posting. Regional Business Solutions Consultant Liz Rodriguez was then able to connect to the company's Human Resources Director and subsequently submitted Kevin's cover letter and résumé.

Thanks to the team efforts of the AJC staff, Kevin was contacted for two consecutive interviews and was selected for the job. He changed careers after 21 years and followed his passion as a Cosmetology Instructor. Kevin started his new position on March 3, 2020.

*"I realize now that the opportunities are endless if you have people guide you and encourage you at a time when you can feel very lost without a job. Thank you for all you've done to help guide, encourage and ultimately help me find my dream job." -Kevin*

#### WIOA ADULT/RE-ENTRY | [Meet L. Jones](#)

*L. Jones gets the training and supportive services he needs to become successfully employed.*

Before connecting with Frederick County Workforce Services (FCWS), L. Jones had been in prison, followed by a drug treatment program and then a halfway house. While he was in the treatment program, representatives from FCWS came to present an overview of all the free resources available through the Frederick County AJC. L. Jones decided right then and there to take advantage of these services.

As a result of this decision, he began to work directly with an experienced Employment & Training Specialist on career exploration and skills assessment. This led to effectively applying for training and supportive service funds.

L. Jones has since secured independent housing, successfully completed occupational training, and passed his licensure exam. He is now gainfully employed.

*"I don't know what I would've done or where I would be at without the help of the workforce program and my Employment & Training Specialist. They've been so helpful in so many ways. I could never thank them enough. I would definitely recommend this program to anybody looking to change or start a new career!" -L. Jones*

# Maryland's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

## WIOA ADULT/RE-ENTRY | *Meet James*

*James receives training and finds a job he likes.*

James started working with Career Consultant Andrea Fuhrman located in Baltimore County's Hunt Valley Career Center in November of 2019. He had a college degree and a wide variety of interests ranging from the arts to accounting to several trades. James had a criminal background and had served time in prison. His involvement with the justice system created a significant obstacle to employment because of some ongoing restrictions related to his background. James was working in a position that he really disliked, earning \$15 per hour as an Office Assistant, when he started in the WIOA program.

Andrea and James worked closely together on a variety of career assessments to help identify a specific employment goal. He participated in various center workshops including the "Know Your Rights" session, which was facilitated by Maryland Legal Aid. Andrea and James decided to focus on his strengths in finance and organizational skills. James received WIOA funding for Towson University's online Accounting and Bookkeeping class with QuickBooks, which he successfully completed.

James successfully secured a job as an Office Manager for Southwest Partnership in Baltimore City starting on February 3, 2020 and began earning \$24 per hour with benefits. James is much happier in this position, which also better supports him financially. He indicated that the specific skills he learned in his training program helped him to make an impact in his interview and have helped him on the job.

## WIOA ADULT/VETERAN | *Meet Tara*

*Tara receives the training and guidance she needs to become financially secure.*

Tara was a veteran who was not able to find a job despite her education and work experience. She was concerned that she had now fallen behind in her mortgage payments and already had exhausted her savings. Without a job, Tara could risk losing her home. She came to Prince George's AJC on February 12, 2020, in search of help.

Disabled Veteran Outplacement Program Specialist Cordia McArthur at the AJC was there to offer assistance and connect Tara with resources. She referred Tara to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Dislocated Worker program, which provided the funds for her to complete training in the field of project management. Cordia also referred Tara to the POAC where she received networking assistance and financial management education.

Tara accepted a position as a Privacy Analyst in the Project Management field with a starting salary of \$120k.

*"In the midst of a denial, I was referred to your office as an additional resource to help veterans at various stages in their job/career placement [and]...our dual efforts put me on the radar of hiring managers. In keeping with my personal promise to always give back even if I have little to give at the time, I would like to offer any volunteer assistance in helping current or future candidates... Thank you again for all of your help!" -Tara*

## WIOA ADULT | *Meet Steven*

*Steven overcomes challenges and becomes happily employed.*

Steven started working with Career Consultant Andrea Fuhrman located in Baltimore County's Hunt Valley Career Center in August 2019. In addition, Steven worked with the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to overcome a number of personal challenges in his education and work experience. He was working part time in a law office during someone's maternity leave, but was really hoping to launch a career in the federal government in an Information Technology (IT) role. Steven holds a bachelor's degree and has some internship experience in IT. To build on these assets, he was awarded training funds through WIOA that enabled him to enroll in the University of Maryland Baltimore County's Cyber Foundations program from September 1, 2019 – February 5, 2020, which he successfully completed.

Andrea and Steven worked together to fine-tune his résumé. While he was in training, Steven found a short-term position working for a company where he provided technical assistance to mental health counselors and patients conducting remote appointments, but this position ended after a short time. Andrea and Steven worked together on a customer service position with the Social Security Administration, and he was hired on March 2, 2020 earning \$39,000 per year with benefits. Most importantly, he is so happy to have a federal job with an opportunity to obtain a security clearance. He likes the position and is working to continue to advance within the agency. Steven was planning to take his A+, Security + and Net+ exams when COVID-19 hit and closed the testing centers, but he will revisit those opportunities “soon.”

*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, which includes 13 programs overseen by a number of state and local organizations, each with their own data system and metrics.

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 DUI 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 includes a strategic goal aimed at strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of Maryland’s workforce system. Benchmark measures designed to support the state in achieving this strategic goal include:

- Creating and using a common comprehensive employment readiness assessment accessible to all across the workforce development system;
- Creating and using 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;
- Creating and implementing a professional development system for the workforce development system;
- Increasing the annual percentage of workforce development system partner organizations who provide formal benefits counseling; and
- Increasing the annual percentage of Maryland’s workforce system customers co-enrolled in WIOA workforce programs.

Maryland faces challenges in 2020 with the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Larry Hogan acted early and aggressively to address the COVID-19 pandemic as it gained a footprint in Maryland, declaring a state of emergency on March 5, 2020. As the crisis evolved, the Governor issued a series of Executive Orders aimed at encouraging social distancing to further slow the spread of disease. An Executive Order issued March 23, 2020 closed all non-essential businesses in the State, and a “Stay-at-Home” directive followed on March 30, 2020. The pandemic has had a substantial impact upon Maryland’s economy, with over one million new UI claims between since March 1, 2020. The significant impacts of COVID-19 and associated disruptions of service prompted MD Labor to issue a policy on COVID-19 flexibility guidelines for Maryland’s workforce system, including extensions, flexibilities, exemptions, etc. to certain requirements of workforce development and adult education programming.

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

N/A



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