

Executive Summary

St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department Local Workforce Investment Area 24

Strategic Plan Program Years 2011-2012

The Mid America Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB), St. Clair County Board Chairman and CEO, and the Intergovernmental Grants Department (IGD) are submitting its Five Year Strategic Plan. This plan is intended to meet the needs of both employers and workers within Local Workforce Area (LWIA 24). The counties that comprise the service area of LWIA 24 include St. Clair, Monroe, Randolph, Washington, and Clinton.

As required by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Local Workforce Area 24 is submitting a modification to the Five Year Strategic Plan to modify the reallocation of Program Year 2010 Workforce Investment Act Formula Allocated funds per DCEO WIA Notice No.11-NOT-01 in the amount \$942, 971.00 which is an increase of \$82,649.00 for Adults, \$820,174.00 which is an increase in the amount of \$85,828.00 for Dislocated Workers and \$954,530.00 for Youth. The Program Year 2011 Workforce Investment Act Program reallocation is in the amount of \$2,717,675.00.

As part of the on going effort to focus on economic growth, job creation, and the need to develop a skilled, trained workforce throughout Workforce Area 24, the Mid America Workforce Investment Board has adopted a minimum training expenditure policy as required by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Bureau of Workforce Development. The training expenditure policy will require Local Workforce Area 24 to expend at least 40% of its formula-allocated program funds on training in both the WIA Title I Adult and Dislocated worker programs. LWIA 24 will adhere to all required guidelines to meet the 40% training requirement for Adult and Dislocated Worker funding streams per WIA Policy Letter No. 07-PL-40.

This requirement does not include administrative expenditures. In an effort to successfully implement the aforementioned policy, LWIA 24 will make the necessary adjustment to its common training practices in order to comply. New training practices will include incumbent worker projects, on-the-job training, and other customized training to meet the requirements as well as the employment needs of businesses in the region. Current program designs will be re-evaluated and structured accordingly.

LWIA 24 will continue to explore incumbent worker training opportunities in the following industries: Business, Education, Manufacturing, Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics. LWIA 24 will adhere to all required Incumbent Worker Training guidelines per WIA Policy Letter No. 07-PL-33, Change 3, to include at least one of the seven "at-risk" indicators as part of the Incumbent Worker project plan to avoid layoff aversion.

The Mid America Workforce Investment Board commissioned a study of the past, present and future of economic and workforce development issues in Bond, Clinton, Madison, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington counties. This study identified key issues for the Southwestern Illinois Region. Based on the findings of the study, MAWIB has identified 4 key areas. These areas:

Economic Development

- Promote entrepreneurs in Southwestern Illinois and concentrate on strengthening existing businesses.
- Address a growing shortage of healthcare professionals
- Reduce regional “brain drain” and actively encourage professionals to return to the area.
- Enhance content and broaden the scope of the workNet centers market research.

Post-Secondary Education

- Encourage the workNet centers and community colleges to become pro-active in meeting training and other workforce needs of employers in Southwestern Illinois. Increase direct interaction between educators and the business community.
- Align education, training, and career preparation with Southwestern Illinois’ major economic clusters and those of the greater St. Louis Region.

Primary and Secondary Education

- Reduce high school dropout rates and raise graduation rates. Ensure full compliance with ISBE procedures for accurately recording dropouts and calculating dropout and graduation rates in all area high schools.
- Positively impact the academic performance of Southwestern Illinois primary and secondary students as measured by Illinois standardized tests. But also emphasize teamwork, customer service and other “soft” skills.

Career Guidance

- Enhance the quality of career and guidance counseling in all public high schools, the workNet Centers, and the community colleges. The Illinois Career Resource Network provides all the information that students, grade 5 through adult, need to plan well for success in the labor market.
- Dramatically improve the quality, quantity and attractiveness of vocational high school curricula. This is important both to prepare non-college bound students for productive places in the workforce as well as to provide learning experiences for students who find conventional academic environments ill-suited to their learning styles and/or interests.

The Mid America Workforce Investment Board plans to work toward accomplishing these initiatives through continuing partnerships with local businesses, schools and resources of the LWIA 24 Southwestern Illinois workNet system.

A necessary element in achieving these initiatives is the Southwestern Illinois workNet system. Local Workforce Investment Area 24 workNet system boasts full-service centers in East St. Louis and Belleville supplemented by one (1) satellite center in Southwestern Illinois College, and four (4) Southwestern Illinois workNet offices located in Washington, Clinton, Randolph and Monroe counties. Both full-service workNet centers are equipped with a full range of training, education, and employment programs providing a customer-friendly system for both job seekers and businesses. Daily workshops at the Belleville workNet center include online job search, resumes, interviewing, re-entry services for formerly incarcerated and career planning. Illinois is the first state to provide *reNew!* an online training module for job seekers to take charge of their attitude and manage their emotional state during the difficult process of finding a job.

At the workNet centers, adult job seekers and dislocated workers move through a three-tiered system of services: Core, Intensive, and Training. This means that more extensive levels of service are provided when the individual is unable to obtain employment with the more basic services.

Transitional Occupational Reemployment Quotient (TORQ) is being used to assist all customers with employment. It is also used to determine the re-employment skill gap for individuals preparing for training. Affiliated workNet offices offer in person or computer assisted access to all core, intensive, and training services. When funding is limited, welfare recipients and low-income individual receive priority for intensive and training services.

Southwestern Illinois workNet centers also serve as the point of access for development and employment activities. Discretionary activities such as customized screening and referral of participants, customized services to employers, supportive services such as child care and transportation assistance, and needs-related payments also have a point of access at the workNet centers.

A key target for the workforce investment system is comprised of the following at risk populations who are most in need of services to reach self-sufficient employment: school dropouts; homeless or runaway youth; pregnant or parenting teens; youth in foster care; TANF or low income adults; disabled; adults with limited English speaking abilities; youth and adults who have basic skill deficiencies; Welfare-to-Work participants; working poor; older workers; displaced homemakers; offenders; single parents; long-term unemployed; underemployed; and workers dislocated from low demand occupations.

A rigorous approach to continuous improvement has been and will continue to be applied at the local level of the workforce investment system in order that the system will continue to achieve the high levels of performance envisioned in the Workforce Investment Act.

**St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department
Local Workforce Investment Area 24**

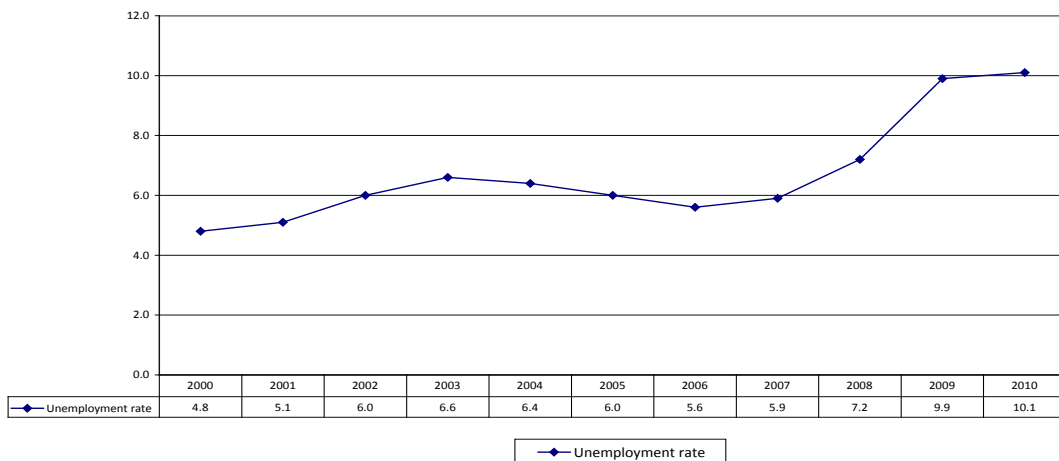
Strategic Plan Program Years 2011-2012

I. Local needs analysis and assessment

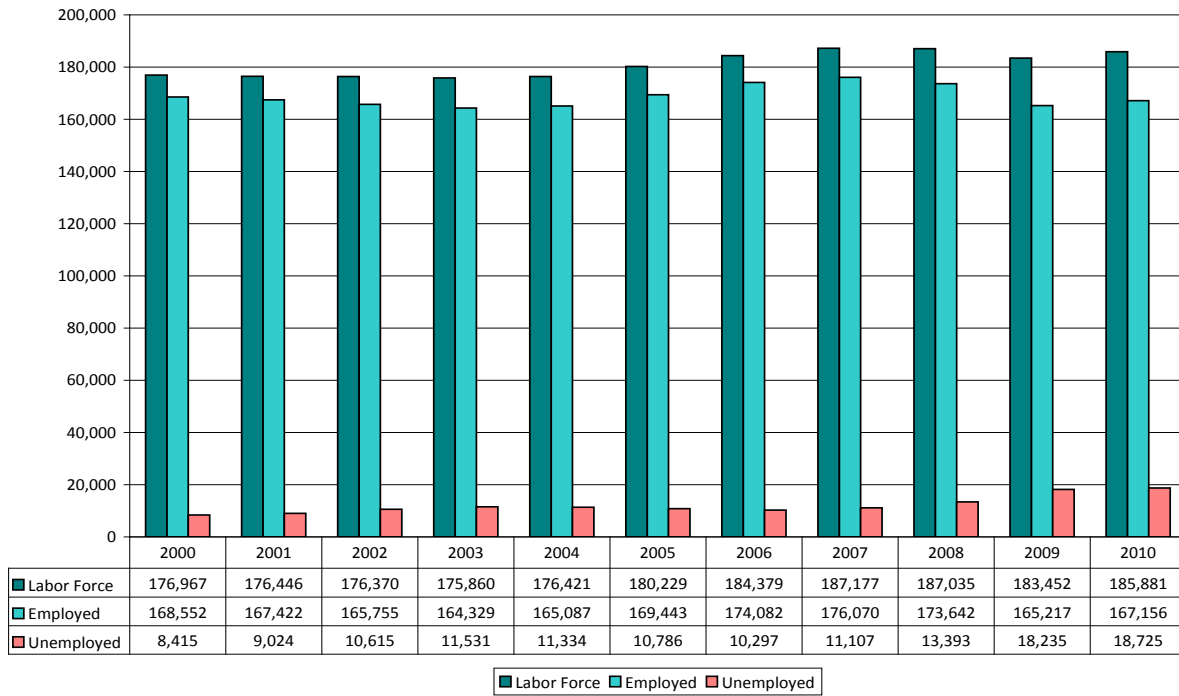
A. Current and projected customer needs

Over the past ten-year period the unemployment rate has more than doubled. The number of workers employed actually declined despite increases in population and the size of the workforce. The 2010 not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for Local Workforce Area 24 was 10.1 percent. The rate increased 4.1 percentage points from the 2005 level of 6.0 percent, and over ten years the rate increased 5.3 percent from 4.8 percent in 2000. The number of unemployed individuals increased over 7,900, from 2005 to 2010. The impact of the national recession on the local workforce was significant and the challenges continue. Despite an increase of nearly 9,000 workers in the area's labor force there were over 2,000 fewer workers employed in 2010 than in 2005. The population of LWIA-24 increased 5.6 percent (20,690) from 256,082 in 2000 to 270,056 in 2010. The population of St. Clair County, the area's largest county, increased 5.5 percent (+13,974) from 2000 to 2010, from 256,082 to 270,056. Population declined in Randolph -1.2 percent (-417) and in Washington -2.9 percent (-432), two of the rural counties in LWIA-24. Migration from smaller, rural communities into the larger cities to locate employment contributed to the population shift. St. Clair County and the cities of Belleville and East St. Louis were labor surplus areas for Fiscal Year 2010. The U. S. Department of Labor issues the labor surplus area listing on a fiscal year basis to direct federal procurement contract money to areas where people are in the most severe economic need. The national recession affected the region dramatically in 2010.

LWIA-24 Annual Average Total Nonfarm Unemployment Rate



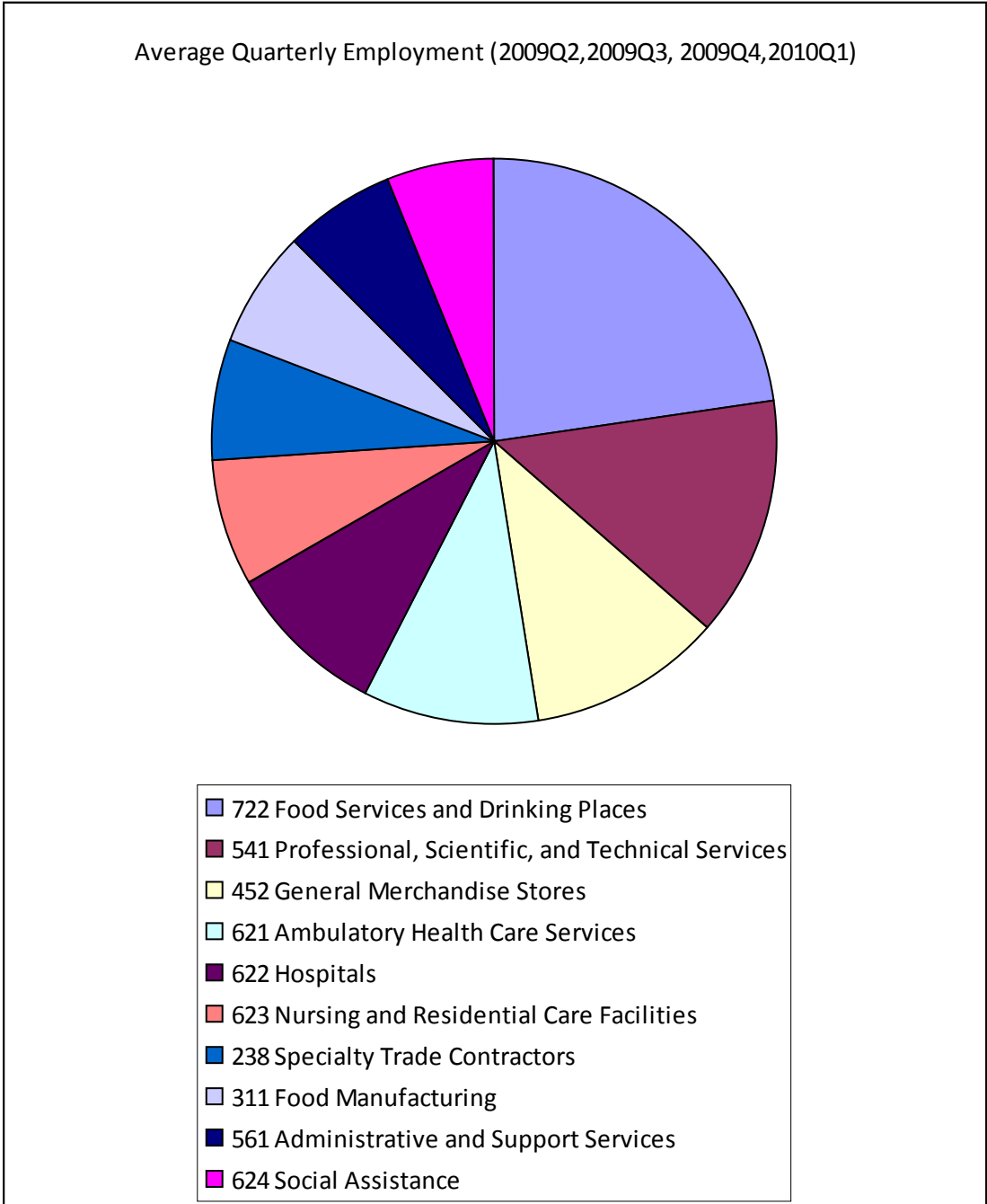
LWIA-24 Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Annual Averages



B. Identification of key customer segments

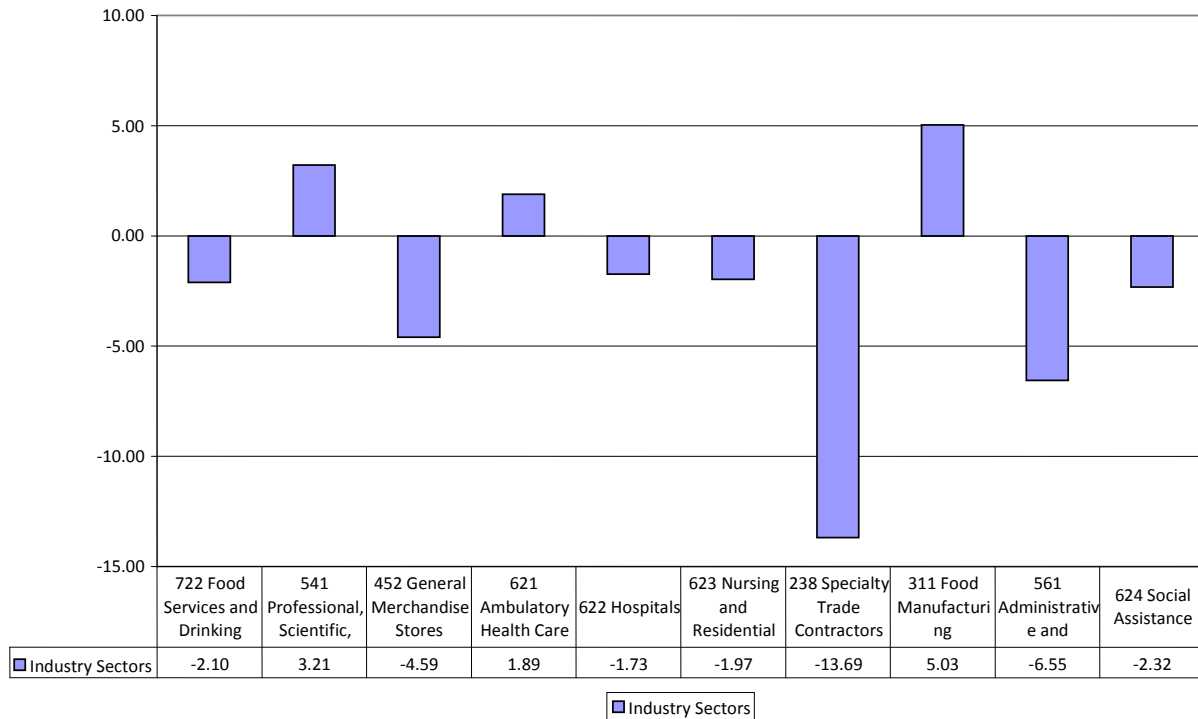
Ten Largest Industry Sectors in LWIA 24, 2009

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Illinois Department of Employment Security, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Growth in Employment by Industry Sector



Illinois Department of Employment Security, Long Term Industry Projections

Growth in Employment

Professional and Scientific and Technical Services, Health Care, and Food Manufacturing were the three areas of positive occupational growth by industry in the area in the ten largest industry sectors. The impact of the recession is clear. Of the ten industry sectors employing the largest number of workers, seven demonstrated negative growth. Only three industry sectors added employment.

Employer Needs

The projected rate of growth overall in WIA-24 from 2008-2018 is 0.56 percent. The industry projections below demonstrate the highest future demand. Health care occupations continue to occupy the high-demand focus, as well as early childhood educational services and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic (STEM) careers.

Local Workforce Areas Employment Projections

| North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) | | Base Year Employment | Projected Year Employment | Change | Annual Compound |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Code | Title | 2008 | 2018 | 2008-2018 | Growth Rate |
| 000000 | TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES | 150,835 | 159,466 | 8,631 | 0.56 |
| 621900 | Other Ambulatory Health Care Services | 358 | 503 | 145 | 3.46 |
| 624300 | Vocational Rehabilitation Services | 432 | 589 | 157 | 3.15 |
| 621300 | Offices of Other Health Practitioners | 927 | 1,260 | 333 | 3.12 |
| 624200 | Food, Housing & Emergency Relief Services | 462 | 627 | 165 | 3.10 |
| 621400 | Outpatient Care Centers | 633 | 856 | 223 | 3.06 |
| 519000 | Other Information Services | 24 | 32 | 8 | 2.92 |
| 624400 | Child Day Care Services | 873 | 1,162 | 289 | 2.90 |
| 541600 | Management, Scientific & Tech. Services | 500 | 665 | 165 | 2.89 |
| 624000 | Social Assistance | 3,417 | 4,504 | 1,087 | 2.80 |
| 621600 | Home Health Care Services | 359 | 471 | 112 | 2.75 |
| 541400 | Specialized Design Services | 34 | 44 | 10 | 2.61 |
| 624100 | Individual and Family Services | 1,650 | 2,126 | 476 | 2.57 |
| 621000 | Ambulatory Health Care Services | 5,665 | 7,179 | 1,514 | 2.40 |
| 483000 | Water Transportation | 87 | 107 | 20 | 2.09 |
| 611600 | Other Schools and Instruction | 124 | 152 | 28 | 2.06 |
| 493000 | Warehousing and Storage | 462 | 566 | 104 | 2.05 |
| 621200 | Offices of Dentists | 821 | 995 | 174 | 1.94 |
| 620000 | Health Care & Social Assistance | 19,984 | 24,212 | 4,228 | 1.94 |
| 623000 | Nursing and Residential Care Facilities | 4,066 | 4,925 | 859 | 1.94 |
| 621100 | Offices of Physicians | 2,230 | 2,699 | 469 | 1.93 |

Illinois Department of Employment Security, Long Term Industry Projections

Employer Needs

Construction, particularly heavy and civil engineering construction, specialty trade contractors for ARRA infrastructure projects are in demand. The Mississippi Bridge expansion and other infrastructure development will place demands on the skilled trades' workforce. Labor and local community college leaders have implemented training programs in partnership with area community organizations to increase minority participation in the trades and provide access to these careers.

Advanced manufacturing, specifically durable goods manufacturing is expected to increase, despite projection, due to announced developments after the baseline period. Expansions at area refinery, steel production and bio-fuels facilities have altered the demand for the future.

Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities, especially warehousing and storage, continued to expand prior to the economic recession. The region has been identified as the most cost-effective transportation center in the nation, with its central location and excellent transportation infrastructure. Inter-modal transportation plans are being developed by area leaders to exploit the regional resources and create economic growth.

Health Care and Social Assistance provides the final of the four high-demand industry sectors projected throughout the region. Ambulatory health care services, particularly staffing for the many new offices of highly specialized health practitioners, outpatient care centers and home health care services will continue to require skilled employees as the population ages and requires more intensive health care services. Social assistance, specifically child care, continues to demonstrate a high demand.

C. Policy and programmatic implications of the local needs.

Local Workforce Investment Area 24 continues to ensure that current workers and business are positioned to react to these changing economic conditions. The region boasts a level of cooperation and planning, with Vision 2020 the latest initiative, to meet and exceed the challenges of the 21st century economy. To meet ever-changing skill demands of the local businesses WIA 24's Southwestern Illinois workNet one stop and satellites utilize expanded online resources for employers and jobseekers including Illinois Skills Match which is the labor exchange program focusing on skills. Illinois workNet provides free web pages to companies in the high-demand industries, to better serve both business and their potential employees. Community college partners respond to employer needs with vocational programs and customized training for business partners. Community groups provide a myriad of services and utilize the Illinois workNet one stops to promote and deliver integrated services.

The largest employer in the region is Scott Air Force Base with more than 14,000 military and civilian personnel. In addition to the significant impact the Base has on southwestern Illinois, it is estimated that more than 80 percent of its employees reside within the region. Other major employers that uniquely shape the region's economy include U.S. Steel, Conoco Phillips Refinery, ASF-Keystone, Global Brass and Copper (dba Olin Brass), Memorial Hospital, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation and Midcoast/Jet Aviation. Institutions of higher education also play an important role in the local economy and include Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, McKendree

University, Greenville College, Lewis & Clark Community College, Southwestern Illinois (Community) College, and Kaskaskia College (Community).

Opportunities in the area to meet needs

In search for solutions to the decline in high-wage occupation, southwestern Illinois has accelerated its unique focus on energy production in recent years. In 2003 the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center was opened on the Southern Illinois University campus, and in April 2008 the 54-million gallon-per year Center Ethanol Production Plant in St. Clair County began production. Construction of the Prairie State Energy Campus in Washington County began in 2007, and it is anticipated that the “clean coal” electricity generating station will be operational in 2012. In Madison County Conoco Phillips’ plan for a \$4 billion expansion of its oil-sands pipeline project are proceeding optimistically, while the refinery addresses environmental challenges.

With advancements in technology and increased consumer demands, it is likely that energy-related occupations will continue to evolve in southwestern Illinois, which no doubt will spur growth and development in other industries. And while regional leaders are committed to preserving the rural traditions and quality of life that southwestern Illinois has provided past generations, they are also open to transition. They realize they must act now and act responsibly to ensure that investments in the region continue and that southwestern Illinois provides attractive employment options for the future’s best and brightest talent.

II. Local strategic vision and goals

A. Development and utilization of local workforce development system

LWIA 24 plans to develop, implement, and improve an adult and dislocated workers workforce system that fully supports and is consistent with the state’s vision to create a world class workforce development and education system that is responsive to the needs of employers and job seekers. In keeping with the Act, LWIA 24 will give local workers the chance to equip themselves with the skills and information needed to compete in the new economy as described in section 1(A), and help workers take responsibility for building a better future for themselves and their families. It is envisioned that such a local system will be built around the following key principles:

LWIA 24’s workforce development system will be efficient: The physical co-location of workforce development programs in workNet centers in East St. Louis and Belleville creates a convenient access point for local area citizens, minimizes the duplication of services, and streamlines efforts to meet employment-related needs of at-risk populations. Future plans to add additional partners through co-location or electronic access will allow for the enhanced targeting of at-risk populations.

LWIA 24’s workforce development system will be easily accessible: Services at the two full service workNet centers will include all core services, intensive services, and point of access to training services. Available core services will be provided onsite by staff cross-trained to provide these services. Available intensive services will primarily be offered onsite by WIA staff. Contract arrangements may be made to offer pre-vocational services when deemed necessary. Training services access will be onsite through a referral arrangement to state-approved training providers located offsite or LWIB-approved OJT or customized training providers. Remote areas can receive access to key services through conveniently located workNet offices. A resource room will be easily accessible and universally available to employers and job seekers for labor exchange and labor market information at all affiliated sites.

LWIA 24's workforce development system will be effective: The availability of performance information regarding individual training programs and the use of Individual Training Accounts will enable LWIA 24 to reach a new level of effectiveness for their workforce development programs. LWIA 24 will create an informed consumer market for training programs through the conscientious use of available program specific performance information and professional counseling. LWIA 24 will only encourage the use of high performing training programs that move LWIA 24 completers into good jobs.

B. Primary workforce development goals

The following local goals have been developed for the improvement of LWIA 24's workforce system over the five years covered by this plan. Each goal directly relates to the customer needs identified in Section I.

1. Goals to improve interagency collaboration and coordination.

- To build on the already existing system by expanding services to job seekers and employers through Illinois workNet and addition of workNet partners by physical co-location and/or electronic access.
- To cross-train partner staff at workNet centers in regard to full range of programs and services available through the workforce development system.
- To increase the economic self-sufficiency of at-risk populations by improving the coordination of state agency programs serving at-risk populations and by targeting intensive and training services to meet the employment related needs of these groups.
- To give priority service to welfare recipients and other low wage individuals, when funding is limited and it has been determined that efforts are not being duplicated.
- To execute MOUs between partners that delineates their respective roles and ensures increased inter-agency collaboration and co-ordination.

2. Goals to improve the local service system.

- To identify and create, on an ongoing basis, employment and training opportunities that close the skills gap for available and future jobs in the local labor market.
- To ensure adequate funding is available to develop, monitor and track an eligible provider system.
- To ensure that, as part of the certification process, a minimum standard of quality has been met by service providers and to eliminate those who have not met performance standards.
- To expand the local service provider system to include community-based organizations, non-profit organizations and social service agencies for the purpose of achieving a broader and better selection of service providers at a reasonable cost.
- To continuously expand and improve the local service provider system through systematic performance evaluations.
- To develop local standards for initial and subsequent provider eligibility that reflects LWIA 24's economic conditions, client characteristics, and the labor surplus status of coverage area.

3. Goals to increase customer choice.

- To empower the customer choice of job seekers through the timely dissemination of “consumer reports” containing information for each individual training provider and their programs supplemented with local data necessary to make an informed choice.
- To establish a local policy on individual training accounts that will maximize service levels without minimizing customer choice.
- To establish a mechanism that allows participants to nominate new providers.

4. Goals to develop and maintain the technological infrastructure needed to provide informational services.

- To develop common intake and case management systems for the Local Workforce System
- To improve the efficiency, speed and accuracy of the labor exchange function by instituting and training staff at all workNet centers, satellites, and other WIA employment and training remote stations.

5. Goals to leverage funds from sources other than WIA

- To ensure the inclusion of all required partners in the system to meet the employment-related needs of at-risk populations and to leverage funds.
- To aggressively pursue funds from regional resources, educational grants, grants from companies in the private sector, and awards from foundations.
- To aggressively pursue cost effective training offered by entities.

C. State or federal policies or regulations inhibiting goals

The policy that eliminates the automatic eligibility of UI profiled workers may result in missed opportunities to serve a segment of the population that badly needs WIA services to get back into the workforce.

III. Local system infrastructure and services

A. Description of the local workforce system

1. Identification of the fiscal agent

The St. Clair County Board Chairman, Chief Elected Official for LWIA 24, has designated the St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department (IGD) to serve as the local grant sub recipient and administrative entity for WIA funds. As administrator, the IGD will be responsible for the disbursement of grant funds for workforce investment activities at the direction of the Mid America Workforce Investment Board

2. Establishment of the workforce system

As required by the Act, LWIA 24 will deliver services via the One-Stop System. The Mid America WIB, in collaboration with the St. Clair County Board Chairman, will oversee the One Stop System. There are two physical “full service” workNet centers in LWIA 24. A satellite center and four (4) LWIA employment and training offices strategically located in the 4 rural counties.

a. Actions taken prior to WIA

In December of 1995, the IGD responded to the 1992 JTPA Amendments and established two Illinois Employment Training Centers (IETC) in two of the most heavily populated municipalities in the area, Belleville and East St. Louis. These two municipalities and their surrounding area serve 90% of the economically disadvantaged population in the Workforce Area. In July and October of 1999, IETC's in Belleville and East St. Louis respectively, became fully certified by the State as full-service employment and training centers. A fully certified satellite center was added at Southwestern Illinois College in Belleville in October of 1996. In 2000 the IETC's were branded as One Stop, a comprehensive service for the unemployed and under employed.

The following are current partners at the Belleville and East St. Louis workNet and the services offered.

Employment & Training Division of IGD

Full array of WIA adult, dislocated worker, and youth activities that include orientation, intake, assessment, eligibility determination, individual counseling, employment plan development, case management, training services, support services and Trade Adjustment Assistance.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (full time-both centers)

- Provides Labor Market Information, Information on UI claims and benefits, Job Placement Assistance and Referrals, Employment Service; Veteran's Employment and Training Programs, and TANF.

Southwestern Illinois College (full-time-Belleville only)

- Provides Job Search Assistance, Financial Aid Information, and Adult Education Information, SWIC registration, resume writing and assistance in resource room.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

- Provide job training services and case management to persons 55 or older.

Area Agency on Aging of Southwestern Illinois

- Provide transportation, Information assistance and Case Management for persons 55 or older.

Office of Rehabilitation Services (part-time-Belleville only)

- Offers vocational evaluation, career counseling, job readiness training, job placement, job coaching, job retention, educational assistance, and follow-up services.

Community Services Block Grant (full-time E. St. Louis, only)

- Provides medical prescription vouchers, emergency crisis intervention, temporary emergency housing.

St. Clair County Housing Authority (One Stop Centers)

- Provides federal housing assistance to eligible households within funding constraints.

Job Corp (E. St. Louis only)

- Employment and training services

b. Entities designated as One Stop operators under WIA

- St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
- Southwestern Illinois College

Future plans for the LWIA 24 workforce system

- To explore the development of another satellite workNet center at Kaskaskia College located in Clinton County
- Recruit additional community-based workNet partners
- Improve access to workforce services through technology

3. Roles of required and optional partners

a. Local vision for partnership

The local vision for how workNet partners will work together to provide services to the customers of the workforce system is to implement a design where there will be no wrong door. It should not matter if an individual enters the system as a UI claimant or job seeker looking for information on training, he or she will have access to the full range of services available through the local system.

Furthermore, LWIA 24's local vision of partnership is to foster and prompt, lasting economic self-sufficiency among all job seekers by providing access to a broad range of information, equipment, instruction, and resources to assist in securing training and in completing a comprehensive job search.

This effort is intended to eliminate waste and duplication; expand services to more people; improve the responsiveness of programs; and provide increased customer choice, integration of services and customer driven performance outcomes.

b. Description of intended Roles of partners in one stop services

LWIA #24 will negotiate a single comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that fully describes the roles of partners in the workNet centers. LWIA 24 anticipates that this negotiated MOU will address the following issues:

- The core services which will be provided by each partner through the workforce system
- The provision of access to appropriate services from all partners.
- The provision of financial contributions for universally accessible core services.
- The local definition of “system costs” and “shared costs” and how each partner will provide financial support for general support of the one-stop.
- The contribution of each partner to the services provided to key customer segments.

B. Training provider eligibility and program certification

LWIA 24 will adhere to all required training provider eligibility and program certification per WIA Policy Letter No. 09-PL-57, Change 1, as determined by the Governor and the State Board. Locally, MAWIB will publicize WIA training provider eligibility and program certification process to local training providers. Each training provider will be responsible for the collection of application and performance information and have the final determination of a training program’s eligibility according to State requirements.

All providers that want to be eligible to receive funding in LWIA 24 under Title I of WIA must submit an application to the local workforce investment board. A condition of initial eligibility is that applicants must meet one of the following State criteria:

- That the provider must be currently approved or accredited under existing process such as that offered by the North Central Association, the Illinois Community College Board, or the Illinois State Board of Education;
- That the program for which certification is being sought has been recognized by the industry as meeting the standards necessary for approval or accreditation such as Pro Start for food services, A plus for computers, ASE for auto mechanics, CARF for community rehabilitation programs, or by the Illinois Occupational Skills Standards, and Credentialing Council or;
- The provider is receiving or has received funds, for a program for which certification is being sought under a grant, contract or voucher from an agency within the Illinois Workforce Development System within three years of the date of application. Funding sources may include, but are not limited to, the WIA Vocational Rehabilitation and Welfare-to-Work programs.

1. Initial training provider eligibility

Initial training provider eligibility will primarily be subject to established state criteria with the addition of several local requirements, described below.

How training providers apply for Certification:

All training providers are required to make application for initial eligibility to the Mid America Workforce Investment Board (LWIA 24). To facilitate this process, an internet-based application is located at www.iwds.cmf.state.il.us/iwds. Application via the Internet will be the only acceptable method of submission to the LWIA 24 Eligible Provider System. Providers without internet access are welcome to access the internet at resources rooms located in either of the full-service one stops/workNet centers, SWIC satellite, or LWIA employment and training offices. Applicants must additionally submit all information on all programs for which they are seeking certification to the Illinois Resource Information System (IRIS) as a condition of accepting provider certification under initial eligibility. IRIS can be accessed on the internet at www.library.illinois.edu/iris.

The third condition of certification is that providers register with the Illinois Common Performance Management System (ICPMS). The local contact for application questions is the Employment & Training Division Manager. MAWIB will also require out-of-state providers who wish to provide services to LWIA 24 residents to complete the LWIA 24 application in addition to their state's application.

Training providers are classified into three categories: **Exempt**, **non-exempt**, and **excluded**.

Providers should follow the application procedures for initial eligibility that applies to their category as detailed below:

Exempt Providers: The WIA extends automatic initial eligibility to certain training providers. These providers are still required to apply to the LWIB in order to be included on the State List of Certified Training Providers' however; they are not required to submit performance information for initial eligibility. Exempted providers are those that meet one of the following criteria:

- A post secondary educational institution that is eligible to receive federal funds under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and that provides a program that leads to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree or certificate.
- An entity that carries out programs under the "National Apprenticeship Act."

Non-exempt Providers: Under WIA, non-exempt providers are required to apply to the LWIB for initial eligibility determination. The submission of "performance information is required if the applicant is providing training program on the date of application. Providers must agree to have participant information included in the Illinois Common Performance Management System database. Non-exempt providers include the following:

- Post secondary educational institutions that provide training service programs that do not lead to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree or certificate.
- Entities that provide apprenticeship programs that are not registered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training under the National Apprenticeship Act.
- All other public or private providers of training service programs.

Excluded Providers: Providers of on-the-job training, customized training or youth activities authorized under WIA are not subject to LWIA 24 Training Provider Certification System. Instead,

these excluded providers should respond to the procurement procedures detailed in section III (C) of this plan.

Existing providers will be informed of application opportunities by a direct mailing. Providers are currently in the workforce development system will learn of application opportunities through a direct mailing to vendors on the IGD “interested provider list” and through display ads published in local area newspapers.

When Providers apply for certification:

The internet-based application for provider certification will be available to providers on a daily basis, but, applications will only be reviewed by the MAWIB quarterly. To be considered for approval, applications must be submitted no later than first working day of any month in which the Mid America Workforce Board is scheduled to meet. IGD will release a schedule of the LWIB’s quarterly meetings on request.

The Employment and Training Division staff will verify that all application information is complete, accurate, and in compliance with state and local requirements: applicant must properly register each program in IRIS; program/course being offered for eligibility consideration must meet the need of the LWIA 24 labor market: the applicant’s exemption status; the performance information (if required) is complete, accurate, and meets the minimum standards established by the State; and the applicant’s willingness to enter into a Non-Financial Agreement with St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department (MAWIB’s administrative entity). If any problems are encountered with applications, applicants will be immediately notified. Corrections must be made to applications and resubmitted no later than 10 working days prior to a scheduled meeting of the LWIB. Only complete and accurate applications will be presented to the LWIB for certification approval. If corrections are not made by the prescribed deadline, the applicant must wait to the next quarter to be reviewed for certification.

Applicants can check on their eligibility status by clicking on the “Provider Status Lookup Page” of the internet based WIA Provider Certification application www.iwds.cmcf.state.il.us/iwds. Local approval of training by the Mid America Board guarantees inclusion on the State List of Certified Training Providers Approved List. Provider status should appear no later than two working days following the quarterly meeting of LWIB. The period for initial eligibility is 12 months. Should a provider create a new program(s) after they have been determined initially eligible and want this program(s) to be added to the state list, this program(s), after meeting all requirements of their classified category described above, will go through a period of initial eligibility. Should providers want to add an existing program(s) to the state after the institution has been determined initially eligible, this program(s) will be added to the state list with the same anniversary date of the original application after all requirements of their classified category are met.

2. Subsequent eligibility

The local procedures in support of the subsequent eligibility phase of provider certification will be developed in accordance with State guidelines to be established later this year. The Local board does plan to establish additional requirements for subsequent eligibility. The following additional criteria may be included in applications for subsequent eligibility:

- Provider must collect and submit customer satisfaction information from program participants.
- Provider must submit the average time between training completion and employment for program participants.

- Provider must submit the number of program participants working in training-related jobs.
- Retention rates in employment and the subsequent wages of individuals who complete the applicable program.
- Where appropriate the rates of licensure or certification of all individuals who complete the program.
- The percentage of individuals who complete the program who attain industry-recognized occupational skills in the subject, occupation, or industry for which training is provided through the program, where applicable.
- Provider must submit the pass/fail rate of program participants taking standardized certification test relating to the training program (e.g. the A + certification)

Programs and providers can be removed from the eligible list for several reasons: failure to meet local standards (determined either by the local area or during the data verification process by the state agency), intentionally submitting inaccurate information, or other violations of the WIA requirements.

3. Request for Reconsideration Procedures

Locally, MAWIB has established a written grievance procedure for providers to dispute ineligibility determinations or removal from the eligible list.

4. Individual Training Accounts

The following local policies have been developed regarding the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITA's):

a. Availability of the list of eligible providers of training services

The Illinois Department of Employment and Security will make and maintain the State list of eligible providers of training services available to customers. LWIB will instruct WIA staff to disseminate hard copies of this list, each time it is updated, to all the WIA workNet centers, satellites, and employment and training centers. The list will also be available on the Internet www.illinoisworknet.com so customers can access the list via the resource rooms.

With Internet access available at every workNet center, satellite, and employment and training office in WIA 24, customers can access additional data on trainings institutions and service providers on the state approved list through the use of the Illinois Resource Information System (IRIS). A complete program description can be found here plus information about special populations served under the program. The consumer friendly attributes of IRIS make it the perfect vehicle to enhance customer choice. The custom print functions of IRIS will also allow customers a means to get the information in a print format to take home for further review.

The Employment and Training Division staff will extract summary performance reports, by program, and by provider level, from the Illinois Common Performance Management System Data Base. These reports will be disseminated to all WIA 24 centers for use by customers in making "choices" information will be update annually.

State plans are in the works to integrate all of the above components into a comprehensive consumer reporting system for WIA. This system built on the Internet, will make provider certification information broadly accessible to WIA 24's workforce investment system customers at a time and a location convenient for them.

b. Referral and payment arrangements

WIA 24 case management staff will work with its customers in developing a reasonable career development plan. Staff will not manage the career of the customer, but provide guidance and resources needed so he/she can make an informed decision that is based upon the person's skills, interest, local labor market data, and the long-term prognosis for employment in that occupational area.

The extent to which customers are empowered to make career and training choices can vary across ITA systems. LWIA 24 sees as an important step in developing an ITA/eligible training provider system is what the staff response should be if an individual fails to conduct a thorough analysis of the labor market or if staff believes he/she is making unwise choices. WIA regulations state that an individual selects a training program after consultation with a case manager. Determining the limited but legitimate instances where a case manager might reject the participant's choice and identifying an appeals process for individuals will be addressed by LWIB and local policy issued.

Locally, the WIB also feels that to build a strong ITA system, there should be local policies that promote WIA performance accountability. We designed policies that require each customer to sign a "Customer Rights and Responsibilities" and "Agreement to Participate and Cooperate in Follow-Up Activities" in order to engage the customer and promote accountability.

The referral arrangements between the one stop system and the eligible providers of training services that will ensure the ability of customers to receive chosen training services and the payment arrangements between the local board and eligible providers of training services for ITA's are as follows. The following key points and process steps must be considered in the development of these policies:

- The customer will be shown the State list and all the provider information after he/she has been through assessment process and through core and intensive services, and it is determined that the customer needs training.
- ITA's would be issued only after "work first" efforts or prescribed assessment process.
- The eligible training program must meet the training needs identified in the individual's employment plan and the individual must have the skills and qualifications to successfully complete the programs.
- The training program selected must be directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or in another area in which individual would be willing to relocate.
- ITA process flow:
 - The school is chosen with the assistance of Case Manager
 - The Case Manager contacts school to notify; customer makes personal contact with school.
 - The school prepares an acceptance letter, which includes approximate costs; forwards to case manager at workNet center

- The Case Manager prepares ITA and forwards to IGD Technical Services. (The approval process for the ITA could be an individual participant's counselor, by a committee, by a representative of the local board, or other mechanism.
 - Technical Services staff sent obligation letter/voucher to the school
 - Participant enrolls and begins classes.
 - School prepares ITA billing form.
 - Tech Service Staff makes payment to school
 - Tech Service Staff reports expenditures and obligations to Fiscal.
- Participants could be informed of the dollar amount available to their ITA and available from other sources, such as the Pell Grant, all subject to local and state policy. Participants could regularly receive statements that report funds they have accessed from their account and those that remain.
 - Payments to training providers from ITA's will be made through vouchers. Payments will be made incrementally coinciding with each vendors billing requirements, through payment installments, cost reimbursement or entire cost could be paid shortly after client enrolls; partial completion, and placement.

c. Limitations imposed on the use of ITA's

LWIA 24 will include only training costs, as locally defined, for purposes of a voucher. The definition includes tuition, fees, equipment, tools, and books. Support cost, such as transportation and childcare assistance, will be provided under a means other than the ITA, and shall be prioritized to assist local residents of Local Workforce Area Workforce Area 24, individuals laid off from employers located in WIA 24, and for programs certified by the MAWIB.

Other limitations have been established by the MAWIB on the use of ITA's. These limitations will be implemented in a manner, which does not undermine the WIA's requirement to maximize customer choice in the selection of an eligible service provider and could incorporate one or more of the following strategies:

- Training vouchers cannot exceed two years in length.
- Individual training accounts shall be limited to \$12,000 for programs of one year or less to \$14,000 for programs over one year for MAWIB certified programs. Management may use discretion to evaluate customers on a case by case basis in the event that the program exceeds the maximum of \$14,000.00. If such discretion is used Management will inform MAWIB of the decision.
- Programs on the state list that are not on MAWIB certified list, maybe used if the program is a high growth high wage occupation.

C. Competitive procurement procedures

1. Procurement of OJT or customized training

On-the-Job training or Customized Training will not be provided under ITA's and therefore will be subject to a different set of procurement requirements that involve a contract for services. The LWIB will apply locally developed standards to approved unsolicited proposals for these types of services outside of the RFP cycle, based on the availability of funds and appropriateness of the training in assisting WIA to reach its goals. Because of the existence of

the employer-employee relationship in that the participant will work as a regular employee for the employer, sole source awards are permitted for these trainings.

On-the-Job training by a public, private non-profit or private sector entity. A contract is developed between the employer and the LWIA 24 to provide occupational training to a WIA participant in exchange for the reimbursement of up to 50% of the wage rate to provide OJT participants with continued long-term employment with wages, benefits, and working conditions equal to those of regular employees who have similar length of time and are doing the same kind of work.

OJT contracts will be limited to a period of time commensurate with becoming proficient in the occupation (consideration will be given to job skill requirements, participant's basic skill level, prior work experience and individual employment plan. LWIA 24 does not anticipate a large demand for this type of training and will offer on an "as-needed" basis only. LWIA 24 will not contract with an employer who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing.

Customized training is totally or partially funded by the WIA and must contain a written commitment from the employer to hire all successful completers. Training is usually designed by the employer to cater directly to his/her immediate employment skill needs. LWIA 24 will not contract with an employer who has previously exhibited a pattern of failing.

The designated one-stop operator in LWIA 24 shall collect performance information from the on-the-job training and customized training providers as the Governor requires, determine whether these same providers meet performance criteria as the Governor may require, and disseminate information identifying eligible providers of these services and their performance information through the one stop delivery system. Providers determined to meet the criteria shall be considered to be identified as "eligible providers of training services"

2. Competitive Procurement of Providers of Youth Activities

The Youth Council (YC), established by the LWIA 24 Workforce Investment Board, will recommend eligible Youth Service Providers to the Local Board for Procurement. A local area needs assessment will be used by the YC to inform them on the development of RFP's. The Youth Council will award these contracts through a competitive process, which includes, on the direction of LWIB, the publication of a Request for Proposal (RFP). All proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria contained in the State Plan. The following standardized procedures for the competitive procurement of Youth Workforce Investment Services have been established as follows:

- LWIA 24 Youth Council will announce the availability of RFP through a public notice in at least one newspaper of the highest paid circulation in each of the five WIA counties;
- LWIA 24 Youth Council will announce, via written notification, that availability of the RFP to interested service providers who have indicated a desire to provide activities and services to youth under WIA as evidenced by their requested inclusion on a WIA 24 "interested service providers" mailing list and on the Youth Council-developed local youth directory.
- The RFP will be available for pick-up in each of "the five WIA counties from the availability date through the date the RFP is due back. All proposals must be returned to the Belleville office;
- RFP's may be mailed to any interested service provider who is located more than twenty-five miles from any of the five WIA 24 county offices.

- At the time of the RFP pick-up, the agency representative will sign a form, which shows the agency name, contact person, and date.
- Potential youth service providers must submit one original proposal and two copies for which funding will be requested.
- Proposals submitted in response to the RFP are evaluated by the Youth Council on four major factors:

Administrative Compliance: The degree to which the vendor complies with the instructions for submitting proposals outlined in the RFP. All proposals must be received by the due date and time outlined in the RFP and is subject to public recording. Failure to meet the due date and time requirements will result in rejection of the RFP. Only recorded proposals will be eligible for consideration.

Vendor Responsibility: Only proposals that meet the administrative compliance outlined in the RFP are evaluated for potential funding. The RFP will request certifications, conflict of interest disclosures, taxpayer identification number, references, and documentation of financial ability. Failure to provide requested information or to supply quality information could result in rejection or downgrading of proposal. In determining whether a vendor is responsible, the following items will be evaluated: past performance; financial stability; references; compliance with applicable laws; and perceived ability to perform completely as specified and other relevant factors.

Responsiveness: Only proposals that meet both the Administrative and Responsibility requirements will be evaluated for responsiveness. Proposals will be ranked from best to least qualified (without consideration of price). A point method of evaluation will be used to rank proposals.

- **Price:** Proposals will be ranked from least costly to most costly using a point method. In determining whether the price is fair or reasonable, the following factors, among others, will be considered: comparison to other proposed prices; known market prices; vendor's known abilities; LWIA 24's budget.
- Proposals with the highest total points of responsiveness and price points will direct the Youth Council in its recommendations for procurement to the Local Workforce Investment Board. In situations when the highest scoring proposal has prices that are not fair and reasonable and the proposer will not negotiate to an acceptable level, the YC will recommend the next highest ranked vendor. The LWIB makes final approval on procurements. The St. Clair County Board must uphold LWIB approvals of sub grants or contracts in excess of \$10,000.
- Failure to meet performance standards as described in a formal contract disqualifies the service provider from consideration for funding in that type of training for the program year immediately following the sub performance year. After one year of ineligibility, the service provider will again receive full consideration on a competitive basis for proposed training of this type;
- All potential service providers whose proposals have been considered by the LWIB will be notified within thirty calendar days of the LWIB decision to approve or deny their proposal;
- Appropriate WIA staff may discuss sections of an agency's proposal with that entity for purposes of clarification, may request revisions to specific sections of all proposals, and may seek best and final offers after submission, but prior to the award;
- Following negotiation, a formal contract will be prepared and submitted to the service provider for approval and signature

LWIA 24 will treat all potential service providers fairly and equally, not require additional information from any entity that is not required from all via the original proposal or a request for revision, and will adhere to uniform requirements to avoid any preferential treatment. Although no disclosure of proposal contents will occur prior to final selection for award, all proposals will be open for public inspection following that award.

In the event of satisfactory performance by current youth service providers, MAWIB will approve non-competitive negotiations as outlined in the RFP. **MAWIB reserves the right to extend current vendor contracts based on satisfactory performance. At which time MAWIB would not do a formal RFP but would request the current youth providers to submit a current budget.** This provision for extension will be limited to a maximum of three (3) years.

Customized training proposals may be considered out of the RFP cycle, based on availability of funds and appropriateness of the training in assisting WIA to reach its goals. These are proposals in which training will be totally or partially funded by the WIA and which must contain a written commitment to hire from an employer. Sole source procurements will only be allowed when it is determined that the youth services are available only from a single vendor; only one vendor is deemed economically feasible; or it an emergency situation.

3. Procurement of intensive services

The administration, St. Clair County IGD Employment & Training Division, as grant recipient and administrative entity for LWIA 24, will provide intensive services as approved and overseen by the Local WIB through the local one-stop operator system. Should the need to supplement these services arise, local policies and procedures for competitively procuring additional providers of intensive services will be followed by the Local WIB in accordance with Section 134 of the Act.

4. Procurement of training activities

Except for OJT's and customized training, training services in WIA 24 will be provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITA's). It is unlikely that the LWIB will determine that there are an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITA's. The WIA's close proximity to the St. Louis Metropolitan area affords the area with a multitude of qualified training providers.

5. Procurement of training to special populations

If the local board determines that there is a training program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the local area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve special participant populations that face multiple barriers to employment (e.g. individuals with substantial language or cultural barriers, offenders, homeless individuals, or other hard to serve populations as determined by the Governor) it will authorize the procurement of this training on a contract for services basis. Demonstrated effectiveness can be previous successful performance and experience serving the special population(s); previous successful performance and experience operating within the targeted geographical area as pertinent; client satisfaction information; and previous successful performance and experience working with the IGD in the delivery of similar services.

The LWIB recognizes the legislative intent of the ACT and therefore will make a concerted effort to contract for blocks of services on a very limited basis. Mid America WIB does not plan to override the customer empowerment inherent in the system of ITA usage.

D. Priority of services to targeted populations.

Description of Services:

LWIA 24 plans to provide a range of services to special populations and the key customers that will be similar in scope and depth to those services offered to all adults eligible under WIA. Additionally as needed, LWIA 24 will supplement these services with targeted initiatives that will serve to assist in removing specific barriers to employment and enhance the individual's success. We will provide services to the special populations below:

- Dislocated Workers services include Rapid Response Work Shops to connect displaced workers with community programs, extended health benefits and education benefits.
- Displaced homemakers and or women services would be targeted for skill refresher courses, as well as computer literacy courses. Programs to encourage and allow women to explore non-traditional employment opportunities will be instituted at the one-stops in addition to concerted efforts to recruit eligible providers of non-traditional training for the state approved list. Programs will be pursued to help offenders improve self esteem, motivation, and performance.
- Low-income and public assistance employment initiatives that move long-term TANF dependent clients into self-sufficient employment will be continued as funding permits. Career and life counseling for older workers and programs that deal with ageism will be pursued for older workers desiring to stay productive in a changing work force. For those who are deficient in basic skills, access to adult basic skill programs and tutoring will be available.
- African Americans and other minorities with opportunities to succeed in the local labor market will be developed. Individuals with multiple barriers to employment will also be referred to special community agencies with the expertise to best serve them.
- Priority of services will be given to veterans and eligible spouses in accordance with the "Jobs for Veterans Act" and pursuant to 20 CFR 1010 and the requirements of WIA Policy Letter No. 00-PL-12, Change 2.

References:

USDOL-ETA Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 10-09, Implementing Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), (November 10, 2009), 20 CFR Part 1010
The Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002, Public Law (P.L.) 107-288, section 2(a)
WIA Policy Letter No. 07-PL-41, Change 1, Local Plan Modifications (October 29, 2008)
WIA Notice No. 08-NOT-38, Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses (June 11, 2009)
PY'00 WIA Policy Letter No. 00-12, Change 3, Eligibility for Title IB of the Workforce Investment Act (April 11, 2005)
PY'00 WIA Policy Letter No. 00-12, Change 2, Eligibility for Title IB of the Workforce Investment Act (February 22, 2002)

In addition veterans have access to services from the Southwestern Illinois WorkNet Centers including access to Illinois WorkNet website, Illinois Skills Match website, job posting, labor market information and workshops to enhance job skills.

E. Description of adult employment and training activities

The Workforce Investment Act, unlike previous employment and training programs, is focused on; promoting universal access to employment services, customer choice, and meeting the needs and wants of the customer in all of the service categories. In the WIA, there are three main levels of adult employment and training activities: core services, intensive services, and training services. These levels of services can be accessed sequentially; that is, the more extensive levels of services are provided when individual is unable to obtain employment with the more basic services. A “work-first” approach is taken under WIA in the administration of these services. The idea behind “work first” is that persons who are able to obtain employment should first do so with the more intensive services, such as training reserved for those persons who cannot obtain employment without these interventions. You see below that Title I implement the “work first” concept by creating a distinction between the types of services, and require that access to the most intensive services by reserved for those who cannot obtain or retain employment through the receipt of the less intensive services.

This new focus will provide new opportunities for low wage workers to benefit from the workforce investment system. Listed below are the types of adult employment and training activities available in the local area:

1. Available self accessed and informational core services (registration is not required).

These basic employment services are universally accessible to all customers of the one stop system, ages 18-21. Adults who are only accessing self-service and informational core service will not have to meet any eligibility requirements, or submit to any form of customer registration, as a condition of receiving services. The only requirement is that they be age 18 or greater.

- determination of eligibility to receive services under Title I B
- Outreach intake (which may include profiling) and orientation to Southwestern Illinois workNet offices and programs. Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, and abilities and need for supportive services.
- Internet job search
- Self service access to job vacancy listings
- Self service career information and exploration.
- Self service access to labor market information including job skill requirements and info on demand occupations.
- Information about the range and quality of education and training services available in the local area.
- Information on support services and referral to support services.
- Performance information about eligible training providers and the local one stop delivery system.
- Group workshops on job search, self-assessment, resume writing and others.

- Job clubs
- Information regarding filing for Unemployment Insurance
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for Welfare-to-Work activities and training and education programs.

2. Available staff assisted core services (registration is required)

These services are for clients, age 18-21, who have met general eligibility requirements for all persons serve by Title I: authorized to work in U.S. and compliance with military selective service requirements.

- Follow up services including counseling, regarding the workplace for 12 months after placement
- Staff-assisted job search and placement assistance, including career counseling.
- Individual job development
- Staff assisted job referral services (testing and background checks done before referral or when operating as an employer's agent).

3. Available intensive services (registration is required)

These services are for clients who have met the general eligibility requirements described above and received one or more core services and are unemployed and unable to find full-time, unsubsidized employment that will lead to self-sufficiency through core services and have been determined to be in need of more intensive services in order to find employment or are employed, but have been determined to be in need of more intensive services to obtain or retain employment that allows self-sufficiency:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessment (including diagnostic testing and interviewing to determine the customer's barriers and employment goals).
- Development of the individual's employment plans and the services necessary to achieve his/her goal.
- Group and/or individual counseling.
- Case management services.
- Short-term pre-vocational services.
- Follow-up services after entering employment, including counseling for registrants previously receiving intensive or training services.

4. Available training services (registration required)

- These services are for clients who meet Title I general eligibility requirements and;
- Have received one or more intensive services (no required time in intensive) and unable to obtain or retain employment through core and intensive services and;
- Are unable to obtain or retain employment through such services.
- After interview, evaluation, or assessment, and case management, has been determined to be in need of training services and have skills and qualifications to

- successfully participate in the selected program of training.
- The selected program is directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area or in another area where the individual is willing to relocate.
- Are unable to obtain other grant assistance for such services, including Federal Pell Grants are required assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs, including Federal Pell Grants are determined to be eligible in accordance with the priority system previously described:
- Occupational skill training.
- On-the-job training
- Workplace training and cooperative education programs
- Private sector training programs
- Skill upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training
- Job readiness training
- Adult education and literacy activities in combination with training
- Customized training for employer who commits to hiring.

5. Discretionary activities

Activities such as customized screening and referral participants, customized services to employers, supportive services such as child care and transportation assistance, and needs-related payments will also have a point of access at the one stop. Supportive services may only be provided to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities. Eligibility for supportive services such as transportation, child care, dependent care, and housing are available only to individuals who are participating in core, intensive or training purposes and unable to obtain supportive services through other programs. Needs-related payments, if local policy allows and funding permits, can be paid only to unemployed individuals who are enrolled in training services; exhausted their U.I. and do not qualify or cease to qualify for trained adjustment assistance under TAA or NAFTA-TAA

4. Planned registrants by level of service

Please refer to “LWIA 24 Program Cumulative Registrants”.

F. Description of Dislocated Workers employment and training activities.

In order to be provided services under the dislocated worker funding stream, an individual must, in addition to meeting the general eligibility requirements of Title I, fall into one or more of the following four groups:

Unlikely to return to prior industry or occupation or;

Laid off or terminated due to plant closure or substantial layoff or;

Formerly self-employed but now unemployed or; displaced homemaker

The dislocated worker population has traditionally included persons with different needs, employment histories, and experiences from the adult low-income population. These include higher financial needs that manifest into higher salary requirements; specific training needs, often without associated basic job readiness deficits, and more pressing retirements and pension issues. Like many adult workers, lack of educational credentialing, lack of fluency in English, and lack of academic skills can

also be barriers to re-employment. LWIA 24 plans to assist the customer in making the transition to a new career a smooth one. The core, intensive, and training services available to dislocated workers are similar to those available to all eligible adults under WIA. As with adults, these services will be available throughout the one stop system and all the same service type eligibility requirements apply. Since dislocated workers are eligible for unemployment insurance they will have a different self-sufficiency level. Additionally, dislocated workers may be eligible to have the following activities supported through WIA funding out of area job search expenses, relocation expenses, internship, and work experience.

In addition LWIA 24 will facilitate Rapid Response Workshops that will be coordinate with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the AFL-CIO, and local partnering agencies in an out reach effort to assist the dislocated worker. During these workshops the dislocated worker will be informed of WIA services and given an employee survey. An assessment will be completed on each participate that will include reading and math. Once the test results are reviewed an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) will be developed to provide the dislocated worker with comprehensive services based on specific needs. Needs related payments may be available participants based on funding and determination of needs. All participants must be eligible according to the local needs related policy.

G. Description of Youth Activities

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires that all youth programs in local workforce investment areas (LWIA's) must include the following elements which are specified in 20 CFR 664.410:

- Provide an objective assessment of each youth participant which includes a review of the individual's academic and occupational skill levels and service needs,
- Develop an individual service strategy for each individual including identification of an age-appropriate career goal. This service strategy must incorporate the results of the previously completed objective assessment process and supportive services needed for the youth participant.
- Provide preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities and employment,
- Provide linkages between academic and occupational learning, and
- Provide strong linkages to the local job market and employers.

In addition, local programs in local workforce investment areas must also make the following services available to youth participants;

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, alternative secondary schools,
 - Summer employment opportunities which are directly linked to academic and occupational learning,
 - Paid and unpaid work experiences including internships and job shadowing,
- 1) Occupational skill training, Leadership development opportunities,
 - 2) Supportive services for youth which allow program participation and may include child care, transportation assistance, tuition, books, uniforms, work clothes, work supplies. Youth may also receive classroom based stipends/incentives to "reward" their achievements. The rewarding of stipends must be based on an approved achievement driven system. In addition youth have access to services from the Southwestern Illinois WorkNet Centers including access to Illinois WorkNet

website, Illinois Skills Match website, job posting, labor market information and workshops to enhance job skills.

- 3) Needs related payments may only be provided to out-of-school youth participants who are co-enrolled in adult services which would follow the guidelines of the Adults and Dislocated Worker Needs Related Policy.
- 4) Adult mentoring which may occur both during and after program participation for a period of at least 12 months,
- 5) 12 months follow-up services, and comprehensive guidance and counseling. This includes drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referrals to counseling if they are appropriate for the participant.

Incentives are paid for GED completion, the maximum payment will be \$25.00 per test per student and a maximum of \$200.00 for GED completion. Total GED stipends cannot exceed \$350.00. All payments must comply with governmental entities OMB Circular A-87

The planned level of services by registrants can be found by referring to LWIA 24 Program Cumulative Registrants.

IV. Performance Management

A. Negotiated Performance Goals

WIA Title I B Performance Goals Local Workforce Area Workforce Area 24

| | Measures | Program Year | |
|------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | 2010 | 2011 |
| AEER | 1A Entered Employment Rate | 77% | 77% |
| ARR | 1A Employment Retention Rate | 86% | 86% |
| AAE | 1A Average Earnings Rate | \$11,000.00 | \$11,000.00 |
| | | | |
| DEER | 1DW Entered Employment Rate | 86% | 86% |
| DRR | 1DW Employment Retention Rate | 91% | 91% |
| DAE | 1DW Average Earnings Rate | \$12,900.00 | \$12,900.00 |
| | | | |
| ADC | 1Y Attain Degree or Certification | 45% | 45% |
| PEER | 1Y Placed in Employment/Education | 56% | 56% |
| LNLG | 1Y Literacy and Numeracy Gains | 32% | 32% |
| | | | |

B. Other Performance Measures

Mid America Workforce Investment Board has a local performance action plan to ensure that strategies are in place to meet performance measures.

C. Continuous Improvement Programs

1. Descriptions of local continuous improvement program

LWIA 24 plans to improve and maintain workforce excellence. On behalf of LWIA 24, the St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department intends to make every effort to continually improve overall performance outcomes, service provider performance, and key local area processes.

a. Eligible Service Provider performance

The performance requirements that are inherent in the service provider eligibility certification system should make providers perform at the highest level. To ensure high performance, local criteria will be added to the state minimum requirements for subsequent eligibility.

b. Key Local area processes, including local strategies for staff development and cross-program training.

Continuous improvement is the systematic and ongoing improvement of products, programs, services and processes by small increments and major breakthroughs. LWIA 24 intends to take the necessary steps to ensure continuous improvement in performance outcomes each year. An aggressive attempt to improve outcomes for customers of the Workforce Investment Area system by enhancing system-wide performance will be undertaken. To this end, workNet staff and LWIB members will be encouraged to participate in a “continuous improvement process” that includes the Malcolm Baldrige principles and the self-assessment system.

2. Needs for state funded assistance.

Technical Assistance Needs include:

- Front line staff training with enough “slots” so that all partner agencies front line staff could attend. (Regulations of all programs, best practices and customer service skills)
- Funds to contract for continuous improvement development.

Organization Development Needs of WIB and Youth Council include:

- Leadership development, especially for non-members.
- State assistance to contribute to LWIB staffing expenses to reduce burden on 10% administration limits.

V. Assurances

- A. The local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

- B. The local board will not use any funds under the Workforce Investment Act to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.
- C. The local board will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.

VI. Plan development process

A. Description of process

LWIA 24 staff developed the adult portion of the local workforce investment plan in direct response to the local needs of the area. The localized goals and services for the area were developed in compliance with the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, final interim regulations, and in keeping with the submitted state adult, dislocated worker plan. Meetings with the local successful adult providers were conducted to gather input and collaborate in the development of the local plan. The St. Clair County Board Chairman, and CEO, was fully apprised of plan development and collaborated on the submission of the Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth Plans. In addition LWIA 24 local plans included the incorporation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding for Adult, Dislocated Workers and Summer Youth. The Plan is being accompanied by letters of approval from both the CEO and the LWIB Chairman.

B. Public comment mechanism

A public notice was published in the newspaper inviting the attention of local elected officials, the business community, labor organizations, educators, vocational rehabilitation agencies, service providers, welfare agencies, community-based organizations, transportation providers, and other interested parties for their review and comment on the adult, dislocated worker portion of the local Title I-B plan (see attachments). Targeted mailings were made to elected officials, business community, labor organizations, educators, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other interested parties to inform them of the plan to and invite them to collaborate in the development of the local plan (see attachments).

C. Formal comment measures

None

D. Comments collected

Budgets and registrants can be found in IWDS Grant #11-681024.