

# IDAHO

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act



## Annual Report Narrative Program Year 2023



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# IDAHO

## PY2023 WORKFORCE DATA

**43,068**

Job seekers served by Idaho's workforce system



Job seekers enrolled in workforce training programs



**1,357**

Job seekers successfully employed through Idaho's workforce system

**72.2%**



Individuals successfully employed following training

**77.7%**



**69.8%**

Job seekers successfully retained employment



**177,130**

Total jobs listed in IdahoWorks

**96,613**

Covered employers in Idaho



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### Accessibility

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## Introduction

Idaho's workforce development system, led by the state's Workforce Development Council (WDC), the Idaho Department of Labor (IDOL), and other core and One-Stop partners, is committed to serving Idahoans and their workforce challenges through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and other state-led initiatives. With its connections to a variety of educational and training opportunities, this system continues its successful collaborative efforts among partners across the state as it guides and helps Idaho residents prepare to become skilled workers. This preparation helps the state, job seekers, and employers alike, answer the call for high-growth, high-demand jobs of today and tomorrow. Program Year 2023 (PY23) noted several challenges to the system, but the momentum of the state's rapid economic recovery, which began in PY21, still carries on today. This created a multitude of opportunities which allowed the state to continually adapt its approach to keep pace with the economic growth it facilitated.

Multiple stakeholders throughout Idaho's workforce development system have been recipients of training and education on WIOA requirements, roles and responsibilities, and overall partnership; a tremendous effort that has paved the way for Idaho's success with WIOA. The training and technical assistance provided to programs has ensured incredible service delivery efforts to job seekers and businesses across the state, many of whom stand to benefit from this support.

This year's annual report highlights the progress at the local and state levels, in addition to programmatic results that showcase continuous improvement of services and outcomes throughout the state. Core partners from WIOA Title II and Title IV programs also contributed to this narrative, reflecting the continued effort to expand system collaboration.

Although comprised of two local areas, Idaho continues to operate as a single service planning area, with the state WDC acting as both a state and local board, via a waiver as allowed under WIOA statutory requirements. As a small state with limited resources, Idaho has learned that it can do more together than separately, and this structure allows the state to effectively operationalize its vision to provide a comprehensive system of integrated employment & training services for all of Idaho.

WIOA is comprised of several core programs of workforce development services. These programs share common performance measures and are required to contribute to Idaho's comprehensive American Job Centers (AJCs). The state's core partner programs are as follows:

- A. WIOA Title I Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs, administered by IDOL, with the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs operated by Equus Workforce Solutions and the Youth program operated by IDOL.
- B. WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy program, administered by Idaho Career-Technical Education.
- C. WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, administered by IDOL.

D. WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation programs, administered by Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:

- Idaho Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

In addition to Idaho's core partner programs, other additional partner programs participating in Idaho's Combined State Plan include:

- E. Senior Community Service Employment Program, administered by the Idaho Commission on Aging.
- F. Jobs for Veterans State Grants, administered by IDOL.
- G. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), administered by IDOL.
- H. Unemployment Insurance, administered by IDOL.

## Workforce Development System Report

The WDC is the designated WIOA-compliant State Workforce Development Board, and is specifically responsible for advising the Governor, Legislature and appropriate executive agencies on matters related to developing and implementing a comprehensive workforce development strategy for Idaho.

The 37-member council brings together a well-integrated mix of business and industry, education, labor, community, and government representatives to establish the vision and plan for Idaho's workforce development system. The chair, vice chair and executive committee must be from the private sector. Appointed by the Governor, the WDC's overall membership includes:

- 17 positions representing industry;
- 7 positions representing the workforce;
- 10 positions representing government;
- One member from each chamber of the Idaho Legislature; and
- The Governor or his designee.

The WDC performs much of its work through a committee structure. The full council meets quarterly; its committees meet monthly or quarterly. The council empanels standing and ad-hoc committees, appointed by the chair when needed. Committee members may include individuals from the public who have special knowledge and qualifications to be of assistance to the council. The council currently has seven standing committees:

- Executive Committee,
- Child Care Expansion Grant Committee,
- Work-Based Learning Committee,
- Workforce Development Policy Committee,
- Grant Review Committee,
- One-Stop Committee, and
- Outreach Committee.

This WIOA Annual Narrative Report for the state, the result of a coordinated effort between its WIOA core partners (Titles I, II, III and IV), describes Idaho's progress towards meeting its strategic vision and goals for the state's workforce system.

## Goals for Idaho's Workforce Development System

The WDC, which serves as Idaho's State Board for the purpose of WIOA compliance, has developed strategies and objectives in the WIOA State Plan for the three goals set by the Governor for Idaho's workforce development system. The WDC reviews and updates this plan at least biannually with significant input from partners, employers, and/or industry associations.

The three goals for the State's workforce system, provided in the Governor's executive order, are outlined below. Under each of these goals, the WDC identified several strategies that relate more

specifically to the populations, services, policies, and priorities within the workforce development system.

Goal 1 – Increase public awareness of and access to career education and training opportunities.

*Strategy* – Identify, develop, connect, and activate a diverse network of influencers throughout the state that together can promote information about resources in a way that effectively reaches their market/membership/locale.

*Strategy* – Promote awareness of workforce services, education services, and information to the diverse current and potential workforce.

Goal 2 – Improve the effectiveness, quality, and coordination of programs and services designed to maintain a highly skilled workforce.

*Strategy* – Create, align, and sustain partnerships with stakeholders to implement workforce development programs.

*Strategy* – Create a baseline to allow for measurement of success in the future.

*Strategy* – Support development in work-based learning and innovative programs that drive Idaho’s present and future workforce solutions.

*Strategy* – Leverage existing local employer-focused initiatives to build and support effective pathways to connect Idahoans to careers.

*Strategy* – Cultivate a high-quality One-Stop Career System that connects employers and workers and facilitates access to workforce services, education services, and information.

*Strategy* – Champion public policy initiatives that enable dynamic response to evolving employer needs.

Goal 3 – Provide for the most efficient use of federal, state, and local workforce development resources.

*Strategy* – Be objective, data driven, and accountable.

*Strategy* – Identify gaps and opportunities in the workforce system and initiate or support policy and/or allocate resources to meet them.

*Strategy* – Identify opportunities for alignment across projects and resources to enhance results across all stakeholder groups.

The economic and activities analysis, plus the WDC’s outreach to communities statewide, identified the following priority focus areas that are of special concern for the purposes of improving Idaho’s workforce system under WIOA. These focus areas, listed below, inform the strategies used to meet the goals listed above. These focus areas also guide the structure of the State Plan and serve as a continuing theme that unites our goals, strategies, and operational elements.

### **Improving Public Awareness and Access to the Workforce System**

Five public listening sessions conducted in late 2023 with the WDC, local governments, and economic development agencies, show several opportunities for system improvement. First, this includes actionable messaging of services and benefits available to jobseekers and employers, leveraging technology where appropriate to support implementation. Combined Plan

Partners have agreed to build communication materials that are accessible and appropriately targeted to all Idahoans, with a focus on older populations, underserved groups, and individuals with significant barriers to employment. Specific goals for implementation during this state plan period include:

- Create and implement a communications strategy targeted to specific audiences
- Identify audiences in need of targeted messaging
- Collaboratively develop a communication strategy and messaging
- Collaboratively identify key communication points
- Identify key audiences and messaging to ensure all materials are accessible to all audiences
- Leverage listening-session feedback to inform messaging
- Identify teams and resources needed for development and implementation of the communication plan
- Leverage partnerships with high-utilization resources to distribute information
- This may include libraries, adult education centers, food banks, service providers, and others.
- Coordinating Business Services across partners to ensure delivery of streamlined and high-quality solutions
- Clearly identify the services each program has to offer
- Develop regional goals and performance metrics
- Implement targeted, coordinated business visits via regional teams

### **Build workforce system capacity to receive participants with more significant barriers to employment**

With effective outreach as identified in Focus Area 1, above, Idaho’s service providers may see an uptick in the number of individuals with higher barriers to employment accessing services across the state. Building the capacity of each provider and the system as a whole to serve these individuals is a key goal identified by Combined Plan Partners. Specific goals for implementation during this state plan period include:

- Leverage data to prepare staff and services
- Train frontline staff to be welcoming to all customers
- Train frontline staff to use all available resources
- Collaboratively develop an inter-agency resource hub
- Develop and share trainings on the resource hub
- Communicate expectations and rationale
- Request meaningful engagement; interactive webinars that follow up with questions about the relevance/usefulness of information provided
- Leverage technology to fill gaps for participants
- Collaboratively identify gaps that could be filled by AI or other technology
- Leverage technology to cover routine tasks and improve service quality to participants
- Aligning with Digital Access for All Idahoans plan
- Identify funding sources



- Include state employees in the Libraries' Digital Access for All Idahoans Plan to build employee technological capacity
- Build the capacity of participants, specifically older populations and individuals with limited technology proficiency, to effectively use the technology we're leveraging

### **Service to Youth**

Provide services sensitive to the needs of young people in diverse demographic groups who fall between the ages of 16 and 24. With an unemployment rate for 16- to 19-year-olds at 10.3 percent and 20- to 24-year-olds at 5.6 percent, these two groups make up two of the highest unemployment rates in the state and indicate a clear opportunity for employers in a tight labor market. In order to adequately serve youth, Combined Plan Partners have indicated that service sensitive to the needs of intersectional groups will be essential. Specific goals for implementation during this state plan period include:

- Service to youth within, but not limited to, the following groups:
  - Youth with disabilities
  - Justice-involved youth
  - Hispanic youth
  - Youth within racial and ethnic minorities
  - Youth who are English language learners
  - Tribal youth
  - LGBTQ+ youth
  - Youth residing in rural or remote communities
- Create a matrix of all the services available to youth (via agencies; additional nonprofit services to be identified as needed)
- Leverage high-utilization resources to conduct youth outreach and identify needs
- Work with employers to identify barriers to youth employment

### **Career Pathways/Sector Partnerships**

Our economic analysis revealed that many of Idaho's in-demand and high-growth occupations are in industries such as manufacturing, construction, health care, and professional, scientific, and technical services. The WDC, in partnership with the State Board of Education and the state's Chamber of Commerce, is beginning to evaluate skills and certifications that are valued across industries to transform the delivery of workforce training and education. Specific goals for implementation during this state plan period include:

- Develop career pathways via Talent Pipeline Management (TPM)
- Identify target industries for TPM, prioritizing those expected to see job growth due to the IJJA, CHIPS and Science act, and the BIL
- Identify which occupations will be created and when, related to federal investments indicated above
- Identify the necessary credentials, training, and timeline to deliver qualified individuals when they are needed
- Train Combined Plan Partners on TPM

- Connect TPM hosts to Combined Plan Partners
- Provide “elevator pitch” for state plan partners to discuss TPM with their employer participants.

## WIOA Program Updates

Since WIOA’s implementation, Idaho has adopted a statewide strategy to maximize and leverage workforce development resources throughout the state. Its workforce development system is a network of state, regional, and local agencies along with community organizations that provide employment, education, training, and related supportive services. It offers services to the public and people with barriers to employment, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, migrant/seasonal farmworkers, adults, and youth.

At the heart of this network are the state’s American Job Centers (AJCs), which are comprised of two comprehensive One-Stop career centers, six principal affiliate AJCs, multiple network and specialized centers manned by the system’s partners, and the 30 mobile service locations spanning the Gem State. IDOL’s local offices serve as the principal onramps to the workforce development system’s services - primary access points to a multitude of resources and the cornerstone of service delivery ranging from job search assistance to access to occupational training opportunities for high-growth/high-demand industries and occupations to business services to fill talent needs and other employer-support strategies. The state’s AJCs work closely with all the workforce development system’s partner agencies to integrate services and provide a coordinated and customer-focused delivery of service, ensuring a seamless experience as participants receive information and/or services on a variety of programs from across the state.

Idaho’s workforce development system strives to work toward improving people’s lives and increasing prosperity in the state. It is committed to meet any challenges head-on to achieve these objectives, including having a heightened focus on job training and skill development to improve outcomes for all workers while meeting the needs of employers statewide to yield positive results.

Idaho continues to “WOW” observers as its economy continues the previous years’ furious pace, leaving the torment of the COVID era behind. Its seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for PY23 began at 3.1 percent and ended at 3.4 percent, which many still consider a low or ideal unemployment rate as it indicates a vibrant, healthy economy very close to or at full capacity. As a result, employers across the state still find themselves having to endure the challenges this imposes upon them – a constricted channel to a more fluid workforce. In an effort to meet their labor needs, Idaho’s businesses have reached out to the state to help address this dilemma. The bulk of these requests focused on the state’s workforce development system and the many programs available to open the constricted channel to the job seekers they look to hire, thereby improving the flow of information about their available employment opportunities. In addition to the quarterly WIOA regional partner meetings, AJCs have also established regional business services teams with meetings designed to get to the heart of local employers’ needs and concerns. In many instances, partners have conducted group outreach by visiting select employers to assess

how WIOA can help. Those employers on the receiving end of these visits have been very appreciative of the effort and the assistance that follows.

As noted earlier, many Idaho job seekers found work available across the state during this past program year. However, there are those that need help meeting this objective. In those instances, many turned to the state's AJCs. With unemployment rates at such low percentages, those hardest to serve, usually with significant barriers, found the help they needed to enter or re-enter the workforce through these locations and the programs they house.

Through the expanded use of social media, online recruiting, interviewing, and hiring events, the provision of workshops and other informational events (some through online tools), and community outreach efforts, many individuals have found success through the various One-Stop programs offered to the public. The state's Title I-B programs sought to maintain high levels of performance through collaboration with other programs, such as the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program for dislocated workers, to provide participant-based services using labor market information and encouraging enrollment of participants in employer-coordinated work-based training, like On-the-Job Training (OJT) and apprenticeships.

Following in last year's efforts, PY23 also saw Idaho's Title I-B programs make a strong push to provide work-based learning opportunities to eligible participants, especially to youth, to help ensure they achieve success once they obtain unsubsidized employment after participating in the program.

Before the start of each program year, USDOL and the WIOA grantee agree upon the performance level goals for each core indicator. To ensure program transparency, USDOL evaluates annually the goals and performance of each grantee and makes both available for public review. Performance is measured through several core performance measures, which are subject to goal setting and, when necessary, corrective action. Median earnings and credential attainment are among the six performance measures upon which WIOA titles/programs are assessed on a quarterly basis across the state.

Since earnings play a key role in determining whether an individual participant's success after program completion has occurred, the state's Unemployment Insurance program has Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with WIOA partner programs, allowing for the receipt of wage information for exited program participants and assessment of their financial success. A WIOA participant's credential attainment, another required measure, is also recorded and tracked via the state's management information system for all three Title I-B programs and other core programs. See the Performance Accountability section that follows for more detail.

Since WIOA's full implementation in 2016, Idaho tailored its program eligibility criteria to align with WIOA's Priority of Service mandate. Below is an excerpt from Idaho's Integrated WIOA Eligibility and Priority of Service Policy and the order for offering individualized career and training services:

### Priority to Receive Service for Individualized Career Services and Training Services

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient.
2. Other individuals who are recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient. *NOTE:* At least seventy-five percent (75%) of Adult program enrollments must be comprised of a combination from these groups.
3. Veterans and eligible spouses who are NOT recipients of public assistance, low income or basic skills deficient.
4. Other individuals who are not recipients of public assistance, low income, or basic skills deficient, but have a potential barrier to employment as defined by WIOA.

This policy is recognized as a Title I-B program strength and is also acknowledged by core and One-Stop partners as a directive, critical to all workforce programs in the state. One-Stop and other community partners understand the importance of this mandate targeting those most in need and continue to refer prospective participants to the Adult program. This not only ensures Idaho efforts to meet USDOL's minimum preferred service level of 75 percent enrollment of Priority of Service populations, but also that it concentrates on identifying these populations, including those underserved individuals.

The development of multiple tools and strategies leading to the implementation of virtual services have helped to overcome impediments impacting the provision of services to the job seeker and employer communities. Workforce programs offer and provide virtual services at either groups' convenience, eliminating the need to visit an office. The increased use of social media and virtual meetings, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, are examples of technological enhancements used to connect employers and job seekers. Idaho's One-Stop partners also deliver services in a similar fashion, increasing the workforce development system's reach, especially in rural Idaho. By culling ineffective offerings from their service portfolio, system partners have successfully adapted virtual service delivery models as necessary. Because of the state's commitment to serve those in need, many of its workforce programs continue to serve larger numbers year over year.

#### WIOA Title I-B

**ADULT - Who is served:** Basic services are available to all adults with minimal eligibility criteria. Basic, individualized, or training services are authorized for adults who face significant barriers to employment. In some cases, these services are available to underemployed workers who need more help to reach self-sufficiency. Priority is given to veterans and eligible spouses, low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, and individuals living with low incomes. For each customer, the overarching goal is employment or enhancement within their occupation.

**Participation:** Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, Idaho WIOA staff provided more in-depth, one-on-one assistance to 769 job seekers, and 294 of those job seekers received training services. Idaho spent \$2,296,550 on employment and training services to Adult participants during this time.

**Program Description:** The program prepares individuals 18 years and older for participation in the labor force by providing basic services and access to job training and other services. Services are coordinated through the state’s workforce development system, facilitated through its AJCs found throughout Idaho. Basic services include skill assessment, labor market information, consumer reports on training programs, and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training services include more intensive assessments, work experiences, and occupational skills training.

**DISLOCATED WORKER - Who is served:** WIOA prescribes specific eligibility guidelines for dislocated workers under Title I-B. These individuals lost jobs through no fault of their own, usually due to plant closures, company downsizing, or some other significant change in labor market conditions, and are unlikely to return to their occupations because those jobs are no longer economically viable. Other conditions can lead to eligibility for services, such as being a separated military service member, an eligible spouse of a military service member, a displaced homemaker, or a self-employed individual out of work due to general economic conditions.

**Participation:** 211 participants received career services and 69 received training services through the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024. During this time, Idaho spent \$1,265,525 to serve the individuals enrolled in this program.

**Program description:** This WIOA program tailors employment and training services to meet dislocated workers’ needs, establishes early intervention for workers and firms facing substantial layoffs, and fosters labor, management, and community partnerships with the government to address worker dislocation. Dislocated workers are also eligible for basic services, including skill assessments, labor market information, training program consumer reports, and job search and placement assistance. Individualized and training include more intensive assessments, work experiences, and occupational skills training.

**YOUTH - Who is served:** Unless specifically directed by the WDC (the state’s approved statewide local board) to do otherwise, Idaho’s Title I-B Youth program serves 100 percent out-of-school (not attending any school) youth who are between 16 and 24 years old, and need additional assistance, based on identified barriers, to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

**Participation:** 616 young people received career services and 260 received training through Idaho’s WIOA Youth Program between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, which spent \$2,060,404 to serve these youth.

**Program Description:** The program prepares this population for success in education or training and the world of work. WIOA helps to provide Idaho youth the skills and knowledge to be successful members of the workforce. Eligible youth may receive counseling, tutoring, job training, mentoring, or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study skills training, and obtaining a GED or equivalent. The additional

requirement for spending 20 percent of youth funding on work-based learning is also more appropriate for out-of-school youth.

Please refer to Appendix A to see Idaho success stories for several WIOA titles.

## WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

During PY23, Employment Services (ES) staff provided career services to 18,651 individuals, with the total number of reportable individuals for this period totaling 42,745. Idaho's WIOA partners served 9,498 employers across the state in several capacities, primarily through recruitment efforts as the state continued its recovery and the labor market remained tight. Employment Services saw the posting of 177,130 job orders into the state's WIOA management information system (MIS), *IdahoWorks*, from employers within Idaho and its common labor market areas.

### Activities and Events

- The department's Career Acceleration Program (CAP) provides direct case management by ES staff and benefits participating job seekers in their job search efforts. The program is designed to help job seekers with employment barriers who need more individualized assistance, yet who are work-ready and willing to engage with program staff to reach their employment goal within 90 days of enrollment. In PY23 CAP enrolled 1,258 individuals with 670 exiters. Of these exiters, 489 participants, or 73 percent Exited for Employment.
- Idaho AJCs hosted approximately 53 hiring events/job fairs during PY23. These were hosted through a variety of means. Virtual events still took place, but most employers opted for in-person events, each with a focus on specific industries, larger single employers, or multiple employers.
- As the state's unemployment rate continued its plateau at lower levels, Idaho's labor exchange system, *IdahoWorks*, saw an increase in the creation of new employer accounts throughout the state, as seen in the PY23 Employer Penetration Rate (see Performance Accountability Section, Table 1). AJC staff worked hard to ensure new accounts reflected legitimate employers and quality job listings for job seekers across Idaho.
- Latest *IdahoWorks* Features and Enhancements for PY23
  - ReEmployLink allows AJC staff to identify claimants statistically likely to exhaust their UI benefits. Staff who work with the ReEmployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program can easily perform outreach to job seekers who are most at risk for exhausting their UI benefits. This new module is able to apply a formula to claimant information to create a claimant profile score that may signal to AJC staff that the job seeker may need additional intervention to

succeed in finding and retaining new employment. Staff can then schedule a job seeker for a variety of services to avoid any potential employment pitfalls.

- My Calendar, another new feature in *IdahoWorks*, allows staff to efficiently manage appointments with job seekers or employers, and apply any relevant information to either profile.
- Upcoming Events, a new planning feature, facilitates the creation of new in-person or virtual events with comprehensive details about the occasion. Staff can invite job seekers or employers, with the ability to track the attendance of participants.
- Training
  - AJC ES staff completed the Workforce Development Professional (WDP) Certification training in June 2024. With staff from across the state participating in this effort conducted over a years' span, this certified training program covered 10 competencies: 1-Customer Service; 2-Diversity; 3-Labor Market Intelligence; 4-Effective Communication; 5-Workforce Development Policies & Programs; 5-Business & Economic Development Intelligence; 6-Career Development Principles; 7-Collaboration; 8-Problem Solving & Teamwork; 9-Program Implementation Principles & Strategies; and 10-Case Management for workforce.
  - ES staff also took part in a series of trainings presented throughout Idaho, entitled Peer-to-Peer Learning. Various subject matter expert staff from around the state presented various themes and topics via webinars to their fellow workforce staff. The variety of topics included: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging; Career Support for People with Disabilities; Effectively Using Artificial Intelligence (AI); Justice Involved/Re-entry Individuals; and Big Interview – a step-by-step job interview training software the state makes available to customers that seek additional help with their job search.

### **Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker**

The Wagner-Peyser Act directs states to fund a Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program to connect migrant farmworkers to the state's workforce development system and the services it offers. Both the State Monitor Advocate and outreach staff promote these services, including the labor exchange system, many of which contain information pertinent to both MSFW job seekers and agricultural and non-agricultural employers, including information related to rights and protections provided to MSFWs. During PY23, the state's five AJCs with significant MSFW activity across the state included bilingual staff who conduct outreach activities during seasonal peaks, sometimes coordinating efforts with other MSFW service providers. In addition to providing referrals to jobs and other workforce services, staff also assist MSFWs with *IdahoWorks* registrations and job applications.

To ensure program and service equity to MSFWs, the State Monitor Advocate continued to strengthen and expand collaborative relationships with not only outreach staff, but various organizations across the state. This includes existing close collaborative relationships with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) grantee – the Community Council of Idaho (CCI), the State Department of Education Migrant Program, Idaho Legal Aid, the Idaho Food Bank, Boise State University Department of Public Health and Population Science, and several community outreach health programs.

In May 2024, staff from AJCs throughout Idaho, along with CCI staff, gathered at the Caldwell One-Stop to participate in in-depth training on MSFW outreach, foreign labor certification programs, and complaint processes for these programs.

Through efforts that included extensive use of radio and social media as means of effective outreach, Idaho continued to exceed the outreach goals established in its Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP) and the standards set in 20 CFR 653. The state made 4,207 contacts during PY23, surpassing the required 40 contacts per week requirement, despite a reduction from the previous program year's efforts. This achievement occurred as a result of the state's collaboration with other agencies and organizations serving farmworkers throughout the year. As a result of the program's dogged efforts, the state was able to meet two of the four minimum service level indicators for MSFWs:

- Outreach contacts per week
- Timely processing of complaints

In addition, Idaho also met three equity indicators for services to MSFWs:

- Received basic career services (self-services)
- Received UI claim assistance
- Referred to employment

### **Foreign Labor Certification**

Idaho experienced a more than 8.87 percent increase in the number of federal H-2A temporary labor certification program applications during PY23. This surge accounted for 982 additional applications over PY22's activity. A total of 627 Idaho employers requested more than 7,413 foreign workers, or 3.16 percent above the previous year, all to facilitate Idaho's production of its agricultural crops. Idaho also facilitated an additional 418 applications for interstate clearance orders needing 8,402 workers to fill the existing need.

Training played a significant role in the program this year. State Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) staff took the opportunity to:

- Provide housing inspection training to local housing inspectors.
  - The state received authorization to procure two 2023 Ford F-150 trucks and two 2024 Ford F-150 trucks to effectively navigate Idaho's rural roads. These vehicles were deployed in areas with the highest demand for farm labor contractor



services, facilitating the increased number of housing inspections necessitated by the steady rise in workload.

- Provide insight on program rules and regulations to an employer group, reaching 150 employers across the state, taking place in October/November 2023 and June 2024.

The H-2B program, like H-2A, permits employers to temporarily hire foreign workers to perform non-agricultural labor or services in the United States. Again, like the H-2A program, the H-2B program has grown significantly in PY23, with 257 job orders and 142 Idaho employers seeking foreign nationals to fill their non-agricultural positions across the state. The state expects that requests under this program will continue to grow.

## **Veterans**

During PY23, veterans' representatives and other workforce staff registered 1,278 Idaho veterans for assistance with workforce services, administering career services to 1,120 veterans, and aiding 349 veterans with barriers to employment.

Although ES staff serve veterans, Jobs for Veterans State Grant's (JVSG) Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs) focus on providing intensive case management services exclusively to a defined veteran population. JVSG staff participate in annual training sessions that provide them with the most up-to-date information and resources needed to deliver the highest quality of services to veterans.

The JVSG program also includes Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERS) and consolidated positions that perform both DVOP and LVER activities. The LVER duties include outreach to employers regarding the benefits of hiring a veteran, helping to arrange job fairs, and training AJC staff on program changes. The DVOPs provide a list of work-ready veterans to the LVER and consolidated positions to inform employers of potential candidates during employer outreach.

IDOL applied for and received a grant to serve homeless veterans - the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program (HVRP) in the spring of 2022. The grant award - \$75,000 a year for three years - serves homeless veterans through short-term training so they may obtain unsubsidized employment. Grantees may provide supportive services such as transportation and work clothing, minor car repairs, and required tools. With the assistance of an HVRP subject matter expert, department veteran staff took advantage of a training provided in August 2023, evident by the year's positive outcomes. During the second year of program implementation, the department enrolled a total of 36 veterans, exceeding its planned goal of 30 enrollments. Participating veterans earned an average of \$21.32/hour, surpassing the planned outcome of \$16.19/hr.

## Partner Programs within the State Workforce Agency

### Trade Adjustment Assistance

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program continues to operate under the Trade Act 2015 Sunset provision that went into effect on July 1, 2022. Under the Sunset (termination) provision, all states continue to serve TAA workers who qualify for benefits and services under petitions that certified prior to July 1, 2022. Although states are encouraged to submit new petitions, the US Department of Labor, Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA) is not currently authorized to process those petitions. When a new Trade Act bill, that includes TAA, is passed by the U.S. congress and legislators, OTAA will begin processing all submitted petitions.

Under this provision, Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) is no longer available to workers. The two benefits ended on June 30, 2022. The loss of these benefits is very unfortunate as the TRA benefit, an unemployment insurance supplement for TAA participants, helped to provide income support while the participant attended training. RTAA offered a wage subsidy to older workers to account for any wage differential between their layoff wage and new employment wage. Without congressional and legislative approval of Trade Act programs, thousands of American workers no longer have access to benefits that will improve their employment opportunities after their employment was taken from them because of foreign-trade job loss.

The TAA team continues efforts to reach workers who qualify under petitions certified prior to July 1, 2022, and who have not used the TAA benefits and services still available to them. The TAA team along with the Communications team and local office staff still conduct outreach efforts to encourage workers to take advantage of these benefits. Contact with trade-affected workers occurs through social media posts, emails, phone calls, press releases, unemployment insurance reports that connect a claimant to a TAA petition, and letters. These efforts generated some interest but no new enrollments.

Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, six participants received TAA services.

## System Wide Initiatives

### Rapid Response

To ensure delivery of comprehensive workforce services to transitioning businesses and workers facing dislocation due to layoffs and/or business closures, Idaho's governor designated IDOL to facilitate these services through its Rapid Response Unit. Carrying out state Rapid Response activities falls primarily to IDOL, as it reaches out to employers, regardless of size, in both Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) and non-WARN instances.

The state Rapid Response Unit provides collaborative leadership to meet USDOL's Rapid Response mandate and oversees both state and local Rapid Response teams. These teams coordinate activities at different levels with the assistance of One-Stop and Core partners, including WIOA

Title I-B Dislocated Worker providers, TAA, Wagner-Peyser Services, and organized labor. The state team strives to ensure the delivery of quality Rapid Response services as it works to harness administrative and programmatic systems, support local efforts, and continue to enhance and sustain partnerships across Idaho's workforce development system so employers and impacted workers can access the services they need to facilitate their transition.

The state unit and its local Rapid Response teams throughout Idaho work with employers and their employees to quickly maximize public and private resources to minimize disruptions associated with job loss. This can include the provision of on-site customized services by accommodating work schedules, and helping through the painful transitions associated with employment loss.

The IDOL's Rapid Response Unit adopted virtual services as a primary means of meeting the needs of its customers as it receives Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices or other notices of closures or layoffs. Local Rapid Response teams throughout Idaho utilize a video developed by the state unit, along with other materials, as the state's principal means of providing critical program and service information to those impacted by layoffs or closures. The resources, available in both English and Spanish, meet the needs of both employers and their impacted employees, whether presented virtually or in-person. Links to these resources on IDOL's website, including the videos, are available to workers if they are unable to participate in a Rapid Response orientation. These are also shared with attendees and employers to allow them to review the information again as they progress through their employment transition.

Across the state, local teams provided information about the workforce development system's services and benefits available to affected workers. Fifteen employers in the state received Rapid Response services during the program year. Eight of these employers filed WARN announcements, accounting for 881 workers from across the state impacted by these layoffs.

### **Sector Strategies**

The 2024 WIOA State Plan includes innovative approaches designed to meet the needs of the individuals who face barriers to employment in an economic climate where historically low unemployment rates are straining employers' ability to find talent. Our economic analysis revealed that much of Idaho's current job demand and job growth are in education and health services; trade, transportation, and utilities; construction; professional and business services; and leisure and hospitality. While jobs in retail trade and accommodation & food service lean towards lower wages, they play an important role in the development of workplace skills for Idahoans with the highest barriers to employment. In addition, these two industries are important in our rural communities where options for full-time, year-round jobs with benefits are often limited. Providing career pathways into the higher skilled jobs or leveraging entry-level employment in these industries to develop workplace skills is necessary for Idaho's sector strategies and career pathways. Additionally, jobs in education are increasingly appearing on state and regional "in-demand" occupation lists signifying the need to invest in strategies that grow the talent needed to train the workforce of the future.

The WDC, in partnership with the Idaho Association of Commerce & Industry, launched the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Talent Pipeline Management Initiative (TPM) in 2020, leveraging state workforce development training funds to train an initial cohort of 30 individuals in the methodology. The WDC now supports TPM in all six regions of the state and has allocated \$550,000 through the end of FY25 to fund TPM Project Managers. These individuals work with local industry cohorts and education providers (K-career) to align the talent pipeline through the following steps:

1. Organize Employer Collaboratives
2. Engage in Demand Planning
3. Communicate Competency and Credential Requirements
4. Analyze Talent Flows
5. Build Talent Supply Chains
6. Continuous Improvement

The WDC is pleased to report that the initial cohort and current Project Managers have created talent pipelines within the food processing, health care, and construction industries, with ongoing projects in culinary arts and broadband internet.

The state's Workforce Development Training Fund has also supported sector strategies by providing state-funded grants to partnerships of industry and education groups to develop or promote training in high-demand occupations, including an additional \$13 million dedicated to support STEM-focused projects. Over the past few years, the WDC has shifted its investment strategy to emphasize industry sector grants and direct training to individuals through Idaho LAUNCH. Further, with the expansion of Idaho LAUNCH to target graduating high school students specifically, the WDC is connecting Idaho's identified in-demand jobs directly to education. With a transparent system that allows students to see the in-demand jobs list and facts about each job, such as the skills needed and projected salary, this program allows students to select education and training pathways that connect real jobs in their communities.

### **Career Pathways**

Through the State's work-based learning initiative, Idaho LEADER (Learn.Do.Earn), all of the core partners, along with the State Board of Education, State Department of Education, Department of Commerce, Department of Health & Welfare, STEM Action Center, Department of Correction, Department of Juvenile Corrections, and Idaho Public Television, are working to increase the line of sight between our youth, transitioning adults, and career opportunities. The group has adopted a work-based learning continuum that categorizes opportunities for employers to engage with education and the workforce system under Learning About Work, Learning Through Work, and Learning At Work. Scaling apprenticeship is a high priority under LEADER and the investments made through the State Apprenticeship Expansion and American Apprenticeship Initiative grants in Apprenticeship Idaho have moved the state forward significantly. In addition, the WDC implemented a Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant that created a public-private partnership with Idaho Business for Education, and the Idaho Office of the State Board (OSBE) of Education is

implementing a Closing the Skills Gap award. While these grants have concluded, apprenticeship expansion and maintenance efforts are continued through the Apprenticeship Idaho Coalition to ensure that employers and apprentices experience a seamless approach to services.

The expansion of Idaho LAUNCH, previously mentioned, is also driving efforts to clearly articulate career pathways so that high school seniors see not only a place to start, but the many options that can get them to where they want to be.

### **Teacher Externship Program**

Beginning in late PY18/early PY19, the WDC and STEM Action Center piloted a teacher externship program with 16 educators and employers. Teachers were paired with an employer worksite for a minimum of 200 hours during the summer to not only gain practical experience in an occupation, but to also learn about the greater workforce needs of the organization. Both teachers and employers have lauded the program, given that it improves connections between Idaho's classrooms and workplaces and allows teachers to take real-world experiences back to their students.

The WDC, in partnership with Micron Technology, provided funding for the teacher externship program from January 2023 through June 2025. After the grant's conclusion, the value of the program has prompted the WDC to allocate \$750,000 for the next three years to fund teachers' stipends, ensuring that the program remains low or no-cost for participating employers.

A recent grant for the program allowed for much broader outreach and recruiting for the externship program, and also made the experience free for employers. Participation in 2024 jumped to 97 externs. A quote from one of the teacher externs from the summer of 2024 is below:

*I externed with CBS News last summer and had an excellent experience so was delighted when we both wanted to work together again. Since my first externship, Jacob Boone, my supervisor and the promotions manager at CBS News, and his wife Jaynee Boone, the General Manager of the Hampton Inn Boise Airport, both served as Business Professionals of America regional competition judges for me. Jacob also often provided equipment and studio setup advice for my yearbook program, which helped save my school hundreds of dollars. Since the connections I'd made last summer greatly benefitted my classroom and my program I was looking forward to participating again...*

*Some of the things I appreciated most about working with CBS was the diversity of experiences I had, the trust and confidence they put in me, and the kind and welcoming nature of their staff. I look forward to sharing these experiences in my classrooms in the future, particularly the knowledge I've gained regarding production of live events, working with a diverse range of clientele, and the immense amount of creative problem solving, critical thinking, and agile reaction skills this career field requires. Most importantly, I hope the connections I've made through this program will continue to benefit my students, as the access to industry and content experts has already proven invaluable. I would highly recommend any teacher, rookie or veteran, to take full advantage of this program.*

-- Julia Sharkey, 2024 extern with CBS2 News

## Eligible Training Provider Reporting

Going into its fourth year, the IDOL simplified the reporting process this year, beginning with the elimination of the separate application process for public and private training providers. Consolidating this function into a single application format contained within *IdahoWorks* for both training providers and staff helped to improve overall data collection efforts. To meet the federal requirement of including non-WIOA participant outcomes in the measure, OSBE provides student data via an encrypted file transfer process, complying with state and federal privacy concerns.

Another item that facilitated a smoother reporting process this year was the re-establishment of an agreement between IDOL and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) to obtain Idaho driver's license data. This agreement, initially established in 2011, authorizes ITD to forward Idaho driver's license data to IDOL, which allows it to triangulate wage data with the incoming data in an effort to identify training participants for reporting on wage outcomes. This process assists greatly in those instances when providers do not or cannot provide this information as requested. Early iterations of this practice resulted in an 85 percent match rate. With the improved data collection and processing advancements, it is estimated that the match rates will have improved since then.

## Work-Based Learning – Including Registered Apprenticeships

In PY23, Idaho made significant headway in developing its Registered Apprenticeship (RA) program as a workforce solution for employers throughout the state. Apprenticeship partners in Idaho worked with employers to develop more than 26 Registered Apprenticeship Sponsorships with 46 programs. The state's RA team engaged 276 new Idaho businesses during the program year to spur the development and creation of new apprenticeship programs, leading to 1605 apprentices being registered, 26.2 percent of whom were women.

During PY23, the team developed or contributed to the development of some new and innovative RA opportunities. A variety of employers and industry groups sponsored RA opportunities in Idaho with plans to develop some of these programs into School-to-Registered Apprenticeship Opportunities. Coordination among all WIOA partners helps to ensure that local job seeker pipeline(s) are in place, with partners eagerly willing to participate. Once these and additional RAs are developed, pipeline activities and WIOA support are expected to increase substantially.

Now that Idaho's USDOL grants supporting registered apprenticeship have either closed out or are nearing completion, the IDOL and the WDC are planning a strategic process to determine a new, collaborative direction for the Idaho Apprenticeship Coalition – a group of entities receiving federal funding to expand or in support of apprenticeship opportunities in the state. Simultaneously, partners who provide funds have continued to work together throughout PY23 to ensure seamless service delivery and referrals to employers and apprentices. Agency leadership have decided to have all three initiatives exist under the umbrella of Apprenticeship Idaho and are working on setting a common goal for the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship in the state.

Chet Jeppesen, an AJC supervisor in Burley, Idaho, participated in a panel discussion on youth apprenticeships at an Employment and Training Administration (ETA) conference in San Diego, California. During this session, Chet shared a Machine Operator Apprenticeship School to Registered Apprenticeship Program (STRAP) success story. The program, in its seventh year, places non-college bound high school students in employment opportunities they may not have had access to. Paid a high wage during their participation, they receive a nationally recognized certification as machine operators in the manufacturing industry once they complete the program. As a student four years ago, Sebastian completed the training but has since furthered his career, being promoted into a supervisor position with the company. The STRAP program provided him a career pathway to advance his future, as it has with many others. Chet goes on to recognize the staff responsibility in this effort:

*A great take-away I had was the focus on building and strengthening youth. As workforce professionals, we should assist the youth and help employers understand the youth do want to work. They just want to be respected, heard, and have a voice. As we educate our employers/business partners, we can better assist in the workforce development and create a future workforce.*

## Performance Accountability – Data Tables

### Effectiveness in Serving Employers

After multiple discussions among core and One-Stop partner agencies, the state of Idaho selected two of the three approaches offered by USDOL to serve as its pilot effort for measuring Effectiveness in Serving Employers under WIOA:

1. Employer Penetration- the total number of businesses that received a service or assistance during the reporting period; and
2. Retention with the Same Employer - the programs' efforts to provide employers with skilled workers who remain employed with the same employer for at least 12 months.

The state noted that its reported results for PY23 were quite positive. The rate for *Retention with Same Employer at 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Quarters after Exit* was 70.8 percent, an almost one and a half percent point increase from the previous year. During PY23, Idaho's unemployment rate increased slightly, about one-third of a percentage point, over the year, measuring 3.1 percent in July 2023 and 3.4 percent in June 2024. Even with this small uptick, these levels continue to challenge Idaho employers and their workforce needs.

For the other measure, *Employer Penetration Rate*, the state's workforce development system and its partners provided a service to or assisted 9,498 businesses. This represents an increase of seven percent over the number of employers assisted in the previous program year. However, because of the positive economic activity in the state, businesses flourished here, and its workforce development system achieved the same service level to employers across Idaho, or 9.8 percent of all employers in Idaho. The workforce system continues to maintain a strong relationship with Idaho employers as a significant number of businesses are using WIOA-partner agencies to fill job openings, elicit information on various programs, utilize training services, etc.

The performance measures shown on the following tables are measured in terms of percentages.

**Table 1. Effectiveness in Serving Employers PY2022-23**

Serving Employer Measures	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Employer Penetration Rate	NA	9.8	9.8
2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr Retention	NA	69.4	70.8

### **Negotiated Performance and Outcomes**

Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, below, highlight Idaho's PY22 and PY23 negotiated levels of performance and available outcomes for WIOA's Title I-B (Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth), Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title III (Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services), and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation program outcomes to feature its WIOA core programs.

PY23 was the eighth year of implementation under WIOA. Its various performance reports are based on the federal Program Year (FPY), which runs from July 1 through June 30. It should be noted that for PY22 and PY23, USDOL agreed to have the same negotiated performance level for each measure in both Title I and Title III.

**Table 2. Employment Rate (Second Quarter Post-Exit)**

Program	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Adults	81.4	73.1	74.1
Dislocated Workers	80.1	80.3	80
Youth	75	80.7	76.5
Adult Education	35 / 37	35.64	33.5
Wagner-Peyser	65.7	69.7	72.2
Vocational Rehabilitation	59.5 / 60	64.5	64.5

**Table 3. Employment Rate (Fourth Quarter Post-Exit)**

Program	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Adults	80.4	73.5	73.5
Dislocated Workers	81	77.6	76.2
Youth	78.6	80.3	78.9
Adult Education	36 / 37	40.6	36.2
Wagner-Peyser	66.2	67.2	69.8
Vocational Rehabilitation	57.8 / 58.3	62.3	61.1



**Table 4. Median Earnings (Second Quarter Post-Exit)**

Program	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Adults	\$7,025	\$7,803	\$8,204
Dislocated Workers	\$8,016	\$8,866	\$10,564
Youth	\$4,350	\$5,862	\$5,939
Adult Education	\$4,900 / \$5,200	\$5,737	\$5,430
Wagner-Peyser	\$6,175	\$8,319	\$9,110
Vocational Rehabilitation	\$4,400 / \$4,500	\$4,950	\$5,380

**Table 5. Credential Attainment Rate**

Program	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Adults	72.2	49.8	73.3
Dislocated Workers	72	41.9	67.3
Youth	51.5	42.1	53.7
Adult Education	43 / 45	34.7	19.3
Wagner-Peyser	NA	NA	NA
Vocational Rehabilitation	42.8 / 44	60.9	59.7

**Table 6. Measurable Skills Gains**

Program	PY22-23 Neg. Perf.	PY22 Outcomes	PY23 Outcomes
Adults	57.9	78.5	84.1
Dislocated Workers	60.4	81.8	81.7
Youth	50	80.7	80.9
Adult Education	30 / 31	37.3	41.6
Wagner-Peyser	NA	NA	NA
Vocational Rehabilitation	55.1 / 57.6	55.3	58.9

**Data Validation Policy/Process**

As a recipient of USDOL Employment and Training Administration (ETA) program funding, IDOL is required to maintain and report accurate and reliable program and financial information. USDOL data validation standards, which consists of two separate functions: report validation (RV) and data element validation (DEV), require the state to ascertain the validity, accuracy and reliability of report and participant record data submitted to ETA.

The state conducted its DEV for PY23 under the data validation policy it developed with WIOA guidelines in mind. The department's Workforce Administration staff completed its data validation efforts using selected samples from: WIOA Title I-B core programs, including Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth programs; the National Dislocated Worker Grant, Wagner-Peyser; Jobs for Veterans State Grant; and Trade Act programs. Staff reviewed the accuracy of the participant data reported in the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) as was the verification of the presence of mandate source documentation. Click on the link to view Idaho's [Data Validation Policy](#).

### **Common Exits**

Idaho's WIOA management information system (MIS), *IdahoWorks*, serves as a repository for its WIOA Title I-B formula programs, Wagner-Peyser/Employment-Services, TAA, and discretionary grant programs. *IdahoWorks* integrates labor exchange, case management, and reporting functions. It also recognizes and implements the state's common exit policy for individuals in the WIOA Title I-B, Title III, and TAA programs. As directed by WIOA, individuals co-enrolled in more than one program will be considered exited from the state's workforce development system once they have been exited from all programs and received no services for at least 90 days prior to exit. Click on the link to view Idaho's [Common Exit Policy](#).

## Evaluation Update

Please refer to Appendix B for the WIOA PY23 Evaluation Update.

## Annual Customer Satisfaction Assessment

Idaho recently implemented a new customer satisfaction survey process in January of 2024 to address Customer Satisfaction within the state's AJCs and mobile locations.

### **New Methodology**

Job seekers visiting an AJC or one of the state's 30 mobile locations are now made aware of the availability of a customer satisfaction survey through posters, in both English and Spanish. Customers may quickly access the survey by using the QR code displayed on the posters, or by clicking on the Qualtrics survey on one of the lobby/customer computers.

The survey asks:

1. Which IDOL office did you visit? (If Mobile, please list the city:)
2. What brought you in today?
3. Please rate your experience on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=highly dissatisfied and 5=highly satisfied).
4. What did we do well?
5. What could we improve?
6. Additional Comments (Please provide your name and phone number if you would like to be contacted regarding your feedback):

From January through June of 2024, 295 customers responded with an average rated score of 4.94.

As with previous surveys, the state will review these and other survey findings to modify AJCs service delivery as necessary to ensure customer satisfaction.

## Waiver Update

### **Waiver Update – To Allow the State Board to Act as the Local Board**

Waiver to allow the State Board to act as the Local Board - WIOA Section 107(b). This waiver has been in effect since PY05, when the governor of the state consolidated the six workforce development areas at the time into two local areas. These two areas entered into an agreement, which is still in place, to have the state function as a single statewide planning area. By requesting the waiver to have the WDC (the WIOA State Board) conduct the functions of the local board, Idaho has been able to reduce its overall state and local administrative costs, which its governors have supported since the waiver's initial implementation. This move has become even more important since WIOA imposed increased reporting and administrative requirements upon states considering the significant funding reductions the state has faced since 2012.

The primary goal sought by this waiver is to reduce administrative costs and maximize the available money directed to career and training services, including work-based learning, and services to business and job seekers. The eventual programmatic outcome results in service to a larger number of participants than would otherwise be served due to higher administrative costs. To maximize resources available for service delivery, the state continues to use the flexibility of this waiver to allow the WDC to serve as the local workforce board. When initially implemented, this move saved the state WIA program \$1,482,788 by removing the required maintenance of six local areas throughout the state. These former administrative funds have been utilized as program funds allowing for more participants to be served, which permits the state to maintain service levels despite funding cuts over the years. In today's dollars, the costs easily translate to a programmatic infusion of \$2,454,446 which, in 2024, amounts to just over 37.4 percent of the state's total WIOA Title IB allotment from USDOL for PY23.

The single statewide planning structure helps reduce annual overhead, emphasizing spending program funds towards direct training and support of businesses and participants. By strengthening administrative oversight and accountability processes, it has helped significantly in eliminating administrative deficiencies over the years that may have resulted in disallowed costs.

As state education policy aligns with the state's workforce development goals, Idaho's statewide structure enhances efforts to transform its workforce development system into a demand driven system. Having the State Board provide the functions of both the state and local board presents an additional benefit to board members, as they can gain a full perspective of WIOA activities throughout the state and recognize that all areas of the state face similar challenges.

## Appendices

### Appendix A – Idaho PY23 Success Stories

Title I-B	Youth
Title I-B	Adult and Dislocated Worker
Title III	Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services (ES)
Title IV	Vocational Rehabilitation
Title II	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act/Career Technical Education (CTE) Registered Apprenticeship

### Appendix B – WIOA PY23 Evaluation Update

## WIOA Youth Program Success Stories

### KMWEE

Kmwee, a WIOA youth participant, relocated to Idaho and the United States as a refugee with her mom and sister.

Having limited financial resources and few marketable skills, she sought support to help explore career options and obtain occupational training. She learned about IDOL and WIOA during a community outreach presentation hosted by IDOL at a local community college. Kmwee attended English as a Second Language classes to improve her language skills to eventually fulfill her aspiration of working in the medical field.

Once enrolled, IDOL's WIOA Youth program assisted Kmwee with Career Exploration, Individual Support and Guidance, Labor Market Information, Occupational Skills Training, Financial Support, Financial Literacy, Job Search Assistance, Career Development and Supportive Services.

With this assistance from the program, she successfully completed her certification in Medical Assisting and Phlebotomy, gaining valuable, marketable skills necessary to secure employment and begin earning a starting wage of \$15/hr.

In an email, Kmwee stated,

*This program really fulfilled my dream. Without it, I wasn't sure where to start pursuing my dream. I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to be part of this program and to meet [the career planner], who always helps me out when I couldn't find a way. Thank you for letting me join this program. I can't thank you enough. I don't think a word can describe how I feel about WIOA program.*

### IAN

Prior to enrollment in the WIOA Youth program, Ian graduated from Idaho Job Corps where he earned a certificate in welding. But he ended up working in customer service at a large retailer and faced several challenges in his employment there. Sincerely wanting to establish himself as a welder, he found that securing employment in this field proved difficult, even with his certification.

Working with the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, their staff referred Ian to IDOL's WIOA Youth program as a co-enrollee. Ian and his IDOL career planner worked together to fine-tune his goals and interests through several skills and interest inventories, job search planning, and labor market information. Ian's career planner reached out to a local employer, providing them information about the WIOA program's On-the-Job-Training (OJT) activity.

Convinced by IDOL staff, the employer brought Ian on board, where he participated in a 13-week welding OJT. He now earns \$18.00 per hour, and the employer is very pleased with his performance in his new job.

Ian stated, "(It's) Been an amazing experience and as far as moving on from other past jobs, this has gotten me where I really wanted to be and given me that push."

### **EMILY**

Emily left high school in 2019 after completing 10<sup>th</sup> grade. In late 2022, she was referred to the WIOA program. Her goal was to complete her GED and find a career path.

Over the course of the next 18 months, Emily worked with her career planner and an AJC mobile services staff member. Emily completed career interest assessments, financial literacy training, and studied for her GED exams. She enrolled in dental assistant training through Idaho Launch in May 2023 and interned at a dental office for two months. Emily graduated, worked with IDOL staff to develop a resume, and was hired as an orthodontist assistant. This allowed Emily to move out of her parents' home and become self-sufficient.

When asked about the impact of the WIOA program, Emily said, "The program was a huge help to me, and I really appreciate it. The chance that they gave me was the opportunity of a lifetime that I never would've had otherwise. I am now working full time as an orthodontist assistant, thanks to WIOA."

## WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Success Stories

- A Career Coach with Equus Workforce Solutions, Idaho's Adult and Dislocated Worker provider has two Adult participants who recently graduated their training programs. After successfully obtaining their Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDL), both have found full-time employment: One with a local utility company and another with a local cement company.
- Another Equus participant, a Dislocated Worker, successfully completed training in Heavy Equipment Operation, and is now working full-time for a local construction company. The participant indicated to her career coach that her one-week paychecks are now more than she was earning in an entire month in her prior job.
- A Dislocated Worker participant was having difficulty returning to work because his resume was outdated. With staff assistance, he updated his resume and within a week accepted a job as a Territorial Sales Manager for a large pet food company.

## Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services (ES) Success Story

### MIKE

Mike worked as a meat cutter for about 10 years. He left that occupation to pursue work in the transportation/material moving industry. But, unfortunately as an 11<sup>th</sup> grade high school dropout with a GED, he soon found himself unemployed and receiving unemployment insurance benefits. Lucky for him, he was selected to attend an RESEA interview at a local Idaho Department of Labor AJC office.

During his initial RESEA interview, it became clear that Mike was interested in a career that would provide a livable wage, the opportunity to learn new skills, and a good work-life balance. He had no idea where to start his job search, but the IDOL workforce consultant eagerly shared all the work search resources available to assist Mike in getting back to work.

He took an online interest inventory through one of the state's workforce platforms, *Next Steps Idaho*. And after talking through his goals and interests with AJC staff, they tapped relevant labor market information to identify details about the skilled trades, specifically HVAC and plumbing, in which he had shown an interest. It appeared that Mike's local area had multiple apprenticeship opportunities for job seekers who were interested in them.

Through additional research into both the plumbing and HVAC industries, and with a heavy focus on each occupation's job descriptions and education requirements, Mike decided to pursue plumbing as a career. He was extremely excited about being able to attend training as an apprentice while continuing to work full-time and provide for his family. He was also pleasantly surprised by the promotional opportunities available in the occupation, as well as the ability to earn a livable wage within a relatively short time.

Mike was referred to both the WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker and Idaho LAUNCH programs for assistance to fund his training. He began his related technical instruction through the Workforce Training Center at a local college and was shortly thereafter hired by a local plumbing company, earning \$18.00/hr. to start.

Through interviews, assessments, and referrals to other agencies, Mike continued to receive assistance from a variety of programs and services which created a comprehensive, wrap-round service delivery model that helped him make an informed decision about his steps toward self-sufficient reemployment.

Mike stated, "You guys have been so awesome. I tell everybody about you. I received employment services in another state, but they just threw a job at me and told me to move along. You all seem to really care about helping me find a career."



## Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) Success Stories

- [VR Success - Anthony, Young Automotive Business Diversifying its Workforce](#)
- [VR Success - JP, Igniting Fulfillment and Extinguishing Stigma](#)
- [VR Success - Charlie, Intervention Supports Veteran's Career Goals](#)
- [VR Success - Bryant and Jerek- Double the Experience, Double the Growth](#)
- [VR Success - Idaho City School District Summer Work Experience for Students with Disabilities](#)

## Career -Technical Education (CTE) Success Story

### YAHYA

Yahya was in her final year of high school in Kenya before seeking asylum, via the United Nations, in the U.S. She and her family landed in Idaho, where Yahya thought she would just work and make money, but the jobs she found quickly really didn't lead anywhere.

Yahya connected to the College of Southern Idaho's College and Career Readiness program where she learned about a CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) course. Yahya stated "When I was young, I wanted to be a doctor, so when I saw the CNA class, I went for it. I said, let me start with this."

### Critical Support

Yahya enrolled in CSI's CNA class and received assistance as a co-enrollee in the WIOA Youth program and other funding available through the Idaho Department of Labor. In addition, she received assistance with the supplies needed for class.

Having the equipment necessary for the class, along with supportive classmates, helped Yahya succeed. In fact, Yahya's classmates viewed her as such a good student that they sought out her help in their own studies.

A critical part of succeeding in class is having family support, which Yahya's family truly emulated. Her family was thrilled about her decision and encouraged her to continue her studies. A special moment was the happiness the family felt when Yahya passed all her CNA exams to become certified as a nursing assistant.

### Significance of Passing CNA Tests

Passing her final CNA test meant the world to Yahya - it proved to her that she did her best and reminded her that "hard work pays off." When asked about any challenges she faces in terms of her education and advancement, Yahya stated, "To me, it's just that maybe the time, I don't get enough time to study, because of my work, my children, so...that's the big challenge that I face sometimes."

Yahya wants other adults who might be considering going back to school for their GED or to further their education to remember, "It's never too late to go back to school, no matter what. Especially since the state is also supporting most people with funding, they have to go for it, they don't have to give up."

### New Perspective

Yahya's experience in the program changed her perspective on education and lifelong learning. Because for Yahya, it changed her life as she is now able to get the career and job that she wants in the future.

## Registered Apprenticeship Success Stories

- [10 Mini-Cassia area students enroll in Machine Operator Registered Apprenticeship program | idaho@work](#)
- [Returning to the workforce: Apprenticeships help pave the way | idaho@work](#)

### WYATT

Four years ago, just before COVID impacted many businesses, Wyatt visited a local IDOL office. Due to COVID, the local IDOL office was closed to walk-in traffic, but the WIOA Youth career planner and a Registered Apprenticeship coordinator were approved to work out of the office and enrolled Wyatt in the WIOA youth program after visiting with him. They also worked with a small electric company, in business for almost 50 years, that had previously battled through recessions but kept their doors open and paid employees through these periods. It stayed open through COVID because of the emergency work it provided.

The company had just launched an apprenticeship program and was ready to implement and mentor a new apprentice during this time. It reached out to IDOL, and Wyatt's profile matched what it would take to fill the company's need. The employer/employee relationship first began under an OJT to ensure the fit. Wyatt more than proved himself, establishing himself as an ideal apprentice candidate. The company committed to take him on and began his 4-year apprenticeship as an Industrial Maintenance Mechanic.

Wyatt stated that he:

*"...learned how to read complex wiring diagrams, operation safety under industrial equipment and electrical components. I would highly recommend the apprentice program due to all the assistance received for equipment needed, guaranteed pay scale increases during the program and wouldn't have been able to do this kind of work without the aid from my mentor and work supervisor. The challenges I encountered was, if a co-worker was gone, I had to learn how to work independently and troubleshoot on my own."*



His apprentice mentor, Christine, stated, "I learned how to address concerns with Wyatt to get the best results for his learning experience. I have seen a lot of growth with Wyatt and now is able to work independently with little or no instruction."

Wyatt is set to receive his USDOL RA Certificate of Completion in September of this year. Congratulations!

## WIOA EVALUATION UPDATE

In 2023, more than 125,000 Idahoans received benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) administered by Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (DHW). Approximately 20% of recipients are mandated to participate in DHW's SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) programs. The remaining recipients have no such mandate and may access workforce services available elsewhere.

During PY23, IDOL has laid the groundwork to conduct a rigorous evaluation to assess the effect of Idaho's workforce development system programs on this population, primarily their service impact, and whether they increased or improved employment outcomes.

Setting the stage for this evaluation, the following activities were completed during PY23:

- IDOL and the Office of the State Board of Education staff participated in the Applied Data Analytics Training Opportunity offered by National Association of State Workforce Agencies (NASWA) and the Coleridge Initiative.
- IDOL learned about the SNAP E&T program, exploring how the mandatory program could better coordinate with the One-Stop system.
- The National Governor's Association selected a team from IDOL, DHW, and the Idaho Workforce Development Council to participate in its on-going Policy Academy designed to improve SNAP and WIOA partner program collaboration.
- Initiated during PY 23, negotiations for a data sharing agreement authorizing DHW to provide data to help track the co-enrollment of SNAP and TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) participants with One-Stop partner programs is soon to be finalized between the agencies.

Analysts from both IDOL's Research and Analysis and Workforce Programs Administrative Bureaus have laid out the evaluation's next steps – setting up a research project to answer following questions relevant to the evaluations' initial phase:

1. SNAP population - How many SNAP recipients are actively receiving services through WIOA partner programs at present?
2. Employment Outcomes - What are the employment outcomes for mandatory and voluntary SNAP recipients, and how do these outcomes differ based on co-enrollment in various WIOA Titles?

The answers to the above questions will serve as a baseline to:

- Develop policy;
- Plan service delivery/program design;
- Expand outreach to SNAP participants; and
- Maintain continuous evaluation of outcomes as IDOL and DHW implement this new partnership.

The initial phase of this evaluation, funded by Idaho's WIOA Governor Reserve Fund, will be conducted by IDOL throughout PY24.

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