

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 50-09
	DATE June 29, 2010

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS
STATE LABOR COMMISSIONERS
COMPREHENSIVE AND AFFILIATE ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER
DIRECTORS

FROM: JANE OATES *Jane Oates*
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Encouraging Partnerships between the Workforce Investment System and Public Libraries to Meet Career and Employment Needs

1. **Purpose.** To announce a partnership between the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) and the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) encouraging collaborations between the workforce investment system and public libraries aimed at improving the quality and quantity of employment and training services to job seekers and unemployed individuals.
2. **Background.** ETA and IMLS entered into a partnership in October 2009 in recognition of the important roles that both the public workforce system and libraries have in addressing the varied employment-related needs of American workers, job seekers, unemployed workers, and employers. The goal of our Federal effort is to encourage libraries and the workforce system to collaborate in the delivery of employment and training services at the state and local levels, resulting in increased and enhanced employment and training services to job seekers that lead to good jobs, including career pathways and sustainable wages.

Demand for employment- and career-related services grew in the recent economic downturn and remains high today. Partnerships between the nation's public workforce system and the library system can increase the quality and number of access points for individuals to receive needed career information and assistance. For example, a March 2010 study sponsored by the Gates Foundation and IMLS estimates that 30 million Americans used a library computer to help address career and employment needs in the last 12 months. These job seekers reported using the library to submit online applications (68 percent), search for employment opportunities (76 percent), and work on their résumés (46 percent). Many of these people are regular library users. Three-quarters of these people reported using the library at least once a week. Given that job seekers are using libraries as a source of help, library staff can benefit from the expertise of the workforce system and the specialized tools and resources it has developed. Moreover, the workforce system can increase its reach and visibility by embracing

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libraries as a partner. Many states and local areas see and are acting on the mutual benefits of collaboration between the workforce system and libraries.

Highlights of several current partnerships between the public workforce system and the nation's libraries are included in the appendix. Examples of formal and informal partnership activities include:

- Signing of memoranda of understanding or other formal agreements;
- Co-locations between One-Stop Career Centers and libraries;
- Inclusion of libraries as a stop on the route of mobile One-Stop Career Centers;
- Collaborating to train library staff about in-person and virtual employment and training resources available through the public workforce system;
- Collaborating to train public workforce system staff about the value of and opportunities for partnering with libraries;
- Using space available at a library to provide career assistance and employment services to library patrons (e.g., familiarizing patrons with career resources available electronically or in-person at One-Stop Career Centers) or to host career events (e.g., job fairs); and
- Sharing workforce and labor market information, including data on high-growth industries and occupations, from the public workforce system to libraries.

4. **ETA and IMLS Current and Planned Activities.** Activities planned and underway as part of this Federal effort include sharing of career and training information and tools among our two systems and dissemination of information about workforce-library partnerships. They include:

- Including library locations on America's Service Locator (www.servicelocator.org), a national online search tool. Now anyone can easily locate the nearest library along with a One-Stop Career Center or social service provider within their community.
- Sharing of information about in-person and online employment and training resources available through the public workforce system with IMLS and its strategic partners via appropriate Web sites, newsletters, conferences and other means.
- Collaborating with the National Governors Association, National Association of State Workforce Agencies, National Association of Workforce Boards, American Library Association, and Public Library Association to identify and disseminate examples of partnership activities between the public workforce system and libraries at the state and local levels.
- Planning (and archiving) a Webinar with the public workforce system and libraries to share examples of partnership activities for July 2010. Resources and information on state and local partnerships are available on the Reemployment Works! Community of Practice (<http://reemploymentworks.workforce3one.org>) on Workforce³One, ETA's online knowledge sharing, e-learning, and technical assistance portal.
- Training for librarians and other staff on the national electronic tools, including the workforce information portal CareerOneStop (www.careeronestop.org) and the

occupational database O*NET (<http://online.onetcenter.org>), is planned for August 2010. These tools are accessible to library patrons and other job seekers anytime at any physical location via the Internet.

- Sponsoring (by IMLS) a nationwide effort to train librarians on employment services through regional workshops for state librarians, development of curricula and tips for developing effective partnerships with the public workforce system at the state and local levels, and development of other resources.

5. Action Requested. State and local workforce investment boards, state workforce agencies, and One-Stop Career Centers are encouraged to establish partnerships with public libraries to complement and extend the career and employment services available through the public workforce system to job seekers and unemployed workers.

Additionally, the public workforce system is encouraged to participate in the Webinar on this partnership scheduled for July 2010 and to visit the Reemployment Works! Community of Practice (<http://reemploymentworks.workforce3one.org>) on Workforce³One to access or share examples of partnerships. Information pertaining to the date of the Webinar will be available on Workforce³ One (www.workforce3one.org).

6. Inquires. Please direct questions concerning this Training and Employment Notice to the appropriate ETA regional office.

7. Attachment. The attachment is Appendix, “Highlights of Existing Partnerships Between the Public Workforce System and Public Libraries.”

APPENDIX. HIGHLIGHTS OF EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

STATE PARTNERSHIPS

With Gubernatorial Support, the State of North Carolina Trained Librarians on Workforce System Resources

With the support of the Governor, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the Employment Security Commission, and the State Library within the Department of Cultural Resources partner to train library staff in resources available to help individuals search and apply for jobs. In March 2009, representatives from the State Library and local JobLink Career Centers (JLCCs) presented nine workshops to nearly 300 public library staff representing 85 percent of the state's public libraries as well as two community college librarians. The workshops provided librarians with an overview of services and job search resources available through JLCCs and shared information on ways in which local libraries could partner with JLCCs. After the workshops, a Job Search Toolkit wiki was developed, available at <http://jobsearchtoolkit.pbworks.com>.

State Support for Local Partnerships in Illinois

As part of a strategic effort to expand partnerships to meet the needs of job seekers, unemployed workers, and businesses, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Employment and Training, encourages local workforce areas to partner with libraries in their communities. Currently, 75 library systems in the state are Illinois workNet™ partners. Libraries direct patrons to Illinois workNet™ for career and employment assistance and refer them to Illinois Skills Match, a Web-based skills match program sponsored by the Illinois Department of Employment Security. The Illinois workNet™ Web site provides contact information for all of the Illinois public libraries and identifies libraries as locations where job seekers may access the Internet free of charge and receive computer training. Illinois workNet™ Centers have oriented librarians on the tools and resources available through the Illinois workNet™ system and have provided training to librarians on helping patrons with job searches and to patrons on résumé writing.

The States of Delaware and Virginia Have Engaged Libraries as "Access Points" to Deliver Employment Services

The States of Delaware and Virginia have engaged libraries as "Access Points" in their SHARE (Sharing How Access to Resources Empowers) Networks. Access Points are community-based and nonprofit organizations that are nonfinancial partners serving as employment information centers by providing job seekers and unemployed workers with career assistance and connections to One-Stop Career Centers via computer or direct referral.

The Delaware Workforce Investment Board trains library staff on the use of Delaware JobLink and conducts workshops on résumé preparation and electronic job searches at several library locations. As one of its partnership activities, the Library of Virginia assists job seekers and unemployed workers with completing online employment applications, including conducting job searches and filing for unemployment insurance.

Close Linkages with Local Libraries Extend the Reach of Programs for Youth in the Virgin Islands

The Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL) is partnering with the library system on youth employment activities. The Territorial Director of Libraries, Archives and Museums participates on the Virgin Islands' Youth Council, a sub-council of the state workforce investment board. The VIDOL uses library locations and book mobiles to disseminate information about the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 youth program and the summer youth employment program. In addition, as a component of the summer youth employment program, the VIDOL used library locations to conduct career exploration activities for youth.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnering to Provide Access to Employment Resources in Anoka County, Minnesota

Since 2005, the Anoka County Job Training Center (ACJTC), the local workforce investment board, and the Anoka County library system have partnered to inform job seekers about each other's resources and make referrals. The ACJTC designated an official liaison from the Minnesota WorkForce Center-Anoka County to the library system. The liaison conducts tours of the WorkForce Center, trains new and existing library staff on the Center's electronic resources, and provides libraries with outreach materials. The WorkForce Center has dedicated space to library resources and library card applications. Library staff educates WorkForce Center staff about its resources, trains the staff to use its Web resources, and makes library cards available. In addition, libraries disseminate information to patrons on the services available through the WorkForce Center. Finally, ACJTC and library leadership meet quarterly to discuss ways to enhance the partnership.

Creating a "Connection Site" to Serve Seattle-King County Job Seekers Seven Days a Week

In June 2009, the Seattle Public Library created a Job Resources Center at its central library location and branded it as a WorkSource Seattle-King County "connection site." The Job Resources Center includes six dedicated computer terminals that patrons can use for up to two hours to conduct job search activities. Workforce development experts from South Seattle Community College, a WorkSource affiliate site, teach a series of workshops at the library aimed to build job seeking skills. The library redesigned the job resources section of its Web site and developed a video tutorial to better serve patrons who need employment assistance. As employees of a connection site, library staff members receive two WorkSource trainings that provide an introduction to the public workforce system and to the WorkSource system Web site.

South Central Michigan Works and Adrian Public Library Open Doors for Entrepreneurs

The South Central Michigan Works! (SCMW) workforce investment board and the Adrian Public Library are members of a regional alliance launched in 2009 to coordinate services to small business entrepreneurs. The ultimate goal of the alliance is to implement a "no wrong door" approach to serving the area's entrepreneurs. At its Adrian One-Stop Career Center, SCMW provides a Biz Resource Center with information on writing business plans and offers a diversification program to help companies find new markets and customers. The library offers access to electronic databases, a business resource center, and meeting space, as well as assistance with activities such as conducting market research. In addition to working together to serve entrepreneurs, SCMW and the library partner to deliver other workforce services. For

example, SCMW offers services at the library in the evenings and weekends, including workshops for job seekers on topics such as résumé writing and interview skills.

Making Workforce Services Mobile in Colorado

The Jefferson County Workforce Center and Jefferson County Public Library in Colorado collaborate to provide residents, including those in the rural and mountain communities, with access to meaningful workforce services. One result of the partnership is “eTrain Mobile Training Lab,” a renovated van that is staffed by a knowledgeable instructor and equipped with a resource center and a computer lab. Launched in 2009, the eTrain serves as a community classroom, assessment center, and registration hub. Residents from Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek Counties are able to access career and employment information, including workshops on résumé writing, job searches, and skill assessments, through the eTrain. The Jefferson County Workforce Center and the Jefferson County Libraries contribute funding for the cost of operating the eTrain.

Using Community Kiosks to Inform Citizens of Milwaukee About Workforce and Other Social Services

With funding from the Helen Bader Foundation, the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB) established five kiosks at different sites in the community. Each kiosk enables users to access and print information on community resources in education, employment, and public services. Additionally, the kiosks incorporate touch-screen technology, which extends access to information to people with limited computer skills. The kiosks were launched in May 2009 pursuant to a memorandum of understanding between MAWIB, Milwaukee Public Library, Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin, and the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services. Initial locations included MAWIB, Center Street Library, Goodwill, and the Milwaukee Housing Authority. Over the summer of 2010, the partnership plans to install two additional kiosks, one each at the City Hall and another library branch.