

North Country
Local Workforce Investment Board
2014 Regional Workforce Plan

1. Labor Market Information for Workforce Planning

Labor Market Information (LMI) to support Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) regional workforce planning has been developed in a form that provides workforce planners an understanding of: (1) labor demand, or the occupational skills needed by businesses – immediately, short-term and long-term; (2) the labor supply, or availability of skilled workers in each of these labor markets; and (3) the education and community capacity to create skilled workers.

LMI for Workforce Planning is available at:

<http://labor.ny.gov/workforcenypartners/lwia/lmi-for-workforce-planning.shtm>.

This information includes: LWIB regional priority occupations; Regional Economic Development Council priority occupations; occupations in demand in current, short-term and long-term labor markets; and occupations associated with significant economic development projects.

2. Priority Sectors and Projects

- a. Sectors – Identify the priority sectors for the region and explain why each of these sectors was designated as a priority.

The NCREDC has identified the following sectors as priority for the region. Referring to page 3 of one of the top award winning strategies, called Transformational, the strategic plan develops 3 macro strategies:

1. Increase and retain jobs in industries that export products and import dollars including value added manufacturing and agricultural jobs, as well as jobs in sectors including tourism, biotech, and renewable energy.
2. Build wealth by strengthening existing resources, building capacity and fostering entrepreneurial opportunities.
3. Leverage economic development strategy in order to contribute a significant portion to the resurgence of NYS economy through increased jobs and tax revenues the newly created jobs will generate.

While Healthcare is not listed as a priority sector in previous strategies, it has been a priority sector in all 3 LWIAs. The NCREDC, on June 6, 2014 is expected to accept/adopt the new NC Health System Redesign Commission report. In affect becoming a new component of the overall Regional Plan.

Manufacturing: including supporting legacy companies to increase and retain positions, as these companies export products and import dollars.

Agriculture: the dairy industry remains an anchor in the region. The whole region is tied to Greek yogurt, cheese and milk products. It is also being tied to Tourism. The area in seeking to develop the tourism and hospitality industry with the increase in agribusiness such as wine, home grown products, local meat production with the natural resources such as the Adirondack Mountains, Thousand Islands, and other waterways to attract people into the area.

Construction: While this sector has had its ebbs and flow of business since 2008, it remains a strong sector within the region. The upgrading of the infrastructure in the area is evident by several NCREDC awards to area towns & villages. Further economic development has and will be dependent upon infrastructure upgrades.

Hospitality and Tourism: Future economic development in the area will be linking Agribusiness with this sector and will be seen as a strength of the region. The region has Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, the Tug Hill region, Thousand Islands, St. Lawrence River, Lake Ontario, Black River, and other waterways that add to the recreational pleasure of year round activities. In addition to snowmobiling, ATV riding, mountain climbing, kayaking, boating, hiking, camping and skiing, the area is also home to an Olympic venue, historical sites, wineries and distilleries. The region should be attracting visitors from outside the area to enjoy the beauty and recreational activities. Projects such as the Saranac Hotel and 1000 Islands Harbor Hotel, along with existing hotels, are important to attracting and importing revenue and creating jobs.

b. Projects - Identify regionally significant economic development projects or initiatives.

In our seven county region, the following have been some of the more significant projects and initiatives awarded through the NCREDC program.

2011:

Clinton: Bombardier Mass Transit Corp – Omega Facility Expansion and Strand Theater Restoration - Phase 1

Essex: Cleaner Greener Communities Regional Sustainability Planning Program

Franklin: Trudeau Institute Enhancing Biosciences in New York and SLIC Network Solutions Broadband (also Hamilton County)

Hamilton: Hamilton County Broadband Phase 1

Jefferson: DANC Community Housing Program (Fort Drum-focused), Krog & Hart Hotel (Cape Vincent), COR Watertown Beaver Meadow Housing and Watertown International Airport Business Center - Phase 1

Lewis: Lyons Falls Mill Site Redevelopment - Phase 1

St. Lawrence: Newton Falls Railroad rehabilitation (also in Lewis and Jefferson counties), Massena International Airport Hanger Reconstruction, Massena Terminal Railroad Track and Bridge Rehabilitation, and OBPA Access Road Construction

2012:

Clinton: Strand Theater Restoration - Phase 2

Essex: Adirondack Meat Company facility construction and International Paper natural gas conversion

Franklin: Wild Center Wild Walk – Phase 1

Hamilton: SLIC Long Lake Broadband and Hamilton County Broadband - Phase 2

Jefferson: COR Route 26 Carthage Apartments, Watertown International Airport Business Center - Phase 2, JCIDA Maple Court Rehabilitation, Norstar Development Creekwood - Phase 2, and Celtic Energy Cape Vincent Green Energy Willow project

Lewis: Lyons Falls Mill Site Redevelopment - Phase 2

St. Lawrence: Sparx North Country Food Hub

Multi-county: DANC Community Tourism Transformation Fund and DANC 911 Centers
Broadband Connection

2013:

Clinton: Plattsburgh Airport International Terminal Expansion and Strand Theater Digital
Conversion

Essex: Inn on Schroon Lake Restoration, Lake Flower Lodging Resort Hotel construction and
Essex County Communities' renewable energy systems installation

Franklin: Roedel Companies Hotel Saranac renovation and Wild Center Wild Walk – Phase 2

Hamilton: Adirondack Museum renovations

Jefferson: COR Arsenal Street Mercy Health Care Center Redevelopment and Jefferson-Lewis
WIB Manufacturing Technology Program.

Lewis: Applied Bio-refinery Sciences Bio-refinery Scale up

St. Lawrence: OBPA Agribusiness Capacity Building

Multi-county: ANCA North Country Branding, OBPA Regional Tourism project, Bioenergy Project
Partners wood pellet heating initiative, DANC Value-Added Agriculture program, Clarkson University
North Country Hotspot, and North Country Broadband Fund

3. Aligning Business-led Partnerships and Resources

- a. LWIB Membership – Describe how the business membership of each of the region's LWIBs align with or support business representation of priority sectors and regionally significant projects or initiatives.

All three WIBs are currently in compliance with WIA Sec 117 as it relates to the mandated representatives and reflects the major sectors within each LWIA. As openings occur all efforts will be made to seek new members in the priority sectors or areas of significant projects and or initiatives. The Jefferson-Lewis WIB has Timeless Frames and Current Applications; the St. Lawrence WIB has Currant Renewable Energy; and the North Country WIB has Glens Falls National Bank, Laborers Local 186, and Empire State Development. The North Country WIB also consists of 3 sitting members of the NCREDC, including Garry Douglas who is co-chair of the council.

- b. Business Advisory Committees – Prepare an inventory of Business Advisory Committees established by community colleges, and describe LWIB involvement in these committees where applicable. Note that NYSDOL will create web-based mechanism to compile information on business advisory committees.
- c. Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Planning – Describe how the region's LWIBs coordinate with REDC planning.

The North Country Regional Economic Development Council Workforce Development Workgroup includes all three Workforce Investment Boards; Jefferson-Lewis, St. Lawrence and the North Country under the direction of Cheryl Mayforth , Tom Plastino and Wanda McQueen

respectively. Tom Plastino serves on the Implementation committee. Tom Plastino and Cheryl Mayforth also serve on the Opportunities Agenda committee.

The WIBs are operating under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 with a total annual funding of 3.4 million federal dollars for 2013. WIA has not been reauthorized since 2003 and has lost 70% of its funding over the last decade. Although faced with decreases in funding, the WIBs continue to move forward with training and employment programs to support our local and regional labor force and businesses. The three combined WIBs have developed individual training accounts for 1195 people in the last year. The region has an average of 10% for our unemployment rate.

The WIBs operate 9 One-Stop Career Centers throughout the region. During 2012 they served 19,216 customers receiving unemployment benefits and 7298 walk-in customers seeking job search assistance for a total of 26,514 customers. The average customer is 40 years old with an educational attainment of a high school diploma. Unemployment in New York State remains high for individuals 16-24 years of age. Each WIB receives funding for the Summer Youth program through WIA and through TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) funding. A total of 113 WIA youth participants and 406 TANF participants were served during the summer of 2013. Each WIB also operates a Year Round Youth program with 192 served.

The WIBs support job and career-exploration programs such as Workforce 2020, Gateways, AIME, IMPACTT, EMERGE NNY and Entrepreneurial Day. The WIBs also conduct Job Fairs throughout the year.

One specific career exploration program that the WIBs have instituted is ADK P-TECH. This program is an innovative, transformational high school to college program that serves students from a consortium of school districts in Clinton County. The primary focus of P-TECH is systemic workforce awareness and development beginning in middle school and continuing through college. This future workforce must be invested in with both an immediate (1-3 year) and long-term (5+ years) focus. This is achieved through a unique delivery system that integrates academic learning, real world problem solving, work readiness skills and work place experiences. By utilizing a STEM focused multi-tiered approach to provide inquiry based learning opportunities for high school students in the areas of STEM, with inclusion of the Arts and Design, students will be engaged and take responsibility for their own learning.

As the region continues to be faced with the challenges of meeting the needs of our workforce it becomes important to seek ways of preparing our youth with the necessary skills to meet the needs of our local employers. The development of a STEM (Science Technology, Engineering & Math) Network under the leadership of Dr. Mary Margaret Small from Clarkson University, has provided an avenue to meet these challenges. Due to the vastness of the region, 3 Hubs were developed this year to support greater involvement and impact on meeting workforce demands by creating opportunities for students to develop both the technical and soft skills necessary for successful employment. Some very strong professionals, including WIB and Career and Technical Educational administrators, have stepped up to lead this effort. The purpose of the network is to develop collaborations between business and industry, higher education, and public schools. It's focus is on workforce development that is strong and consistent. The STEM Network continues to have strong support from Siemens Corp. and King+King Architects.

One collaboration with Corning, STEM Professionals in the Classroom, is exposing our North Country students to real STEM workers and possible career paths. Engineers from Corning went into middle school tech classes to teach a problem solving lesson. As a pilot program, they went to Massena and Norwood-Norfolk schools. In light of the success, plans are being finalized to expand this program, both in terms of the number of industry professionals involved and the number of schools. We plan to implement it in all three regions.

Another STEM industry partner that is assisting with workforce development is Alcoa. Through the Alcoa Foundation, two new programs are being funded: an IMPACTT-like program that St. Lawrence BOCES and CITEC received a grant to implement for high school students. It is modeled after the successful one that is operated in Clinton County schools by the WIB .

The other STEM workforce related program is Math Olympics. This 3 year grant from the Alcoa Foundation was awarded to two professors at Clarkson. The focus is on the soft skills or the 4C's: Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Creativity, and Communication. The program challenges high school students to debunk common misconceptions using their knowledge of STEM disciplines. The program also integrated real STEM professionals into the summer residential camp. A plant manager from Alcoa was the keynote speaker. He debunked the myth that the first job you get is your job for life. The plant manager from Allen VanGuard presented on the technology behind the bomb suits that are made at its plant in Ogdensburg. These programs and partnerships will continue into the next school year.

In support of the work of the North Country Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan, the WIBs have joined forces with Clarkson University, the Workforce Development Institute, Clinton Community College and the North Country LDC to support strategy number one, of creating a strong workforce development system to support the needs of employers in the targeted clusters using a combination of new and incumbent worker training, certificate programs, degree programs and recruitment assistance. The Workforce workgroup has recently completed a project to survey and map the skills and occupations offered in the targeted sectors throughout the North Country region. The project was presented at the April 4, 2014 NCREDC meeting. The following link is to the Workforce Survey:
<http://www.co.jefferson.ny.us/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=10242>

The second strategy being addressed is to support the manufacturing sector. Each of the WIBs have maintained support for the manufacturers in the targeted areas. Through On-The-Job Training programs utilizing the NEG OJT funds, area manufacturers have been able to provide opportunities to the long term unemployed. Higher education programs such as the manufacturing program at Clinton Community College, and Engineering programs at SUNY Canton, SUNY Jefferson and Clarkson University, support this sector by providing training in high demand occupations. In October 2012, each LWIA partnered with the IDAs, CITEC and the North Country STEM Learning Network to hold three area National Manufacturing Awareness Day events. The same partners are currently planning for the 2014 Manufacturing Day to be held on October 2, 2014. In the Clinton/Essex/Franklin/Hamilton County area initiatives such as Beekmantown & AIME are programs designed to develop soft skills and various manufacturing skills to meet the needs of the area employers. In Jefferson County a committee of manufacturers, IDA and BOCES re-establish a machinist/manufacturing tech program. Jefferson-Lewis WIB was awarded \$36,000 to provide training to long-term unemployed in the Machinist/Manufacturing Tech Program. In St. Lawrence County, the St. Lawrence IDA and other workforce professionals with the support of the WIB received funding of \$167,000 in a

tribal compact for new and incumbent employee training. They have formed a committee to develop a manufacturing technology training program as well.

A CFA has been awarded for \$100,000 to CV Tech (BOCES) to develop and train 26 people in AIME; 4 in CCCs Certified Production Technician, 10 in welding and 15 in Literacy/HSED(GED) instruction. The contract begins July 1, 2013. Roth Industries was awarded \$3000 for incumbent worker training which has been completed.

Tourism and agriculture each have their own working groups to address, promote and support these strategic goals. Nonetheless, St. Lawrence County used a portion of the \$167,000 mentioned above for a pilot project that provided agricultural work experience and training to 4 recent high school graduates.

The three WIB Directors have been asked to assist the NCREDC on the Governor's initiative, the Opportunity Agenda. WIB directors met to discuss plan development with various Community Action Planning Councils. The Opportunity Agenda is a strategy that will invest new and existing CFA resources in projects that: foster a business environment that provides residents with the opportunity to enter the workforce; and provide North Country residents with the tools they need to overcome economic barriers and fully participate in the state's economic revitalization. The Opportunity Agenda was not funded.

The WIBs leverage outside funding in order to augment programs. The New York State Department of Labor has received National Emergency Grant funding (ends 6/30/14) to assist the long-term unemployed and has written a total of 35 contracts totaling \$196,406. The North Country WIB partners with AmeriCorps and Jefferson-Lewis has partnered with JCIDA & CAPC on a grant to train those who are at or below 125% of poverty.

All three WIBs, in conjunction with the NCREDC, are committed to support Start Up NY through collaboration with all of the campuses of higher education on plans and strategies for leveraging each schools educational and training assets and capabilities in support of investment and job creation.

- d. Other Business-led Partnerships – Describe how the any other business-led partnerships support workforce planning in the region.

Each of the WIBs have various committees and associations with other business led partnerships that support workforce planning in the region. Each area works closely with the Industrial Development Agency, Local Development Corporations, Chambers of Commerce, Trade Unions, Manufacturing Councils and committees, NAHEC (Northern Area Health Education Center), CITEC and Workforce Development Institute. Unique to Jefferson, Lewis & St. Lawrence counties is the Fort Drum Regional Healthcare Planning Organization.

4. New York State Career Center Services

- a. Business Services – Describe the NYS Career Center Regional Business Services Team’s capacity to broker the region’s demand and supply for skilled workers.

The regional business services team consists of three WIB Directors, two NYSDOL Business Services Representatives (one in Plattsburgh and one in Watertown) and one Jefferson County Business Service Representative and a representative of ESD. The region consists of 11,420 square miles and is lacking a visible presence in the region other than the WIB Directors. Travel is difficult and time consuming. The area lacks a single major population center or dominant metropolitan area and is made up of many micropolitans; Plattsburgh, Malone, Lake Placid, Ticonderoga, Watertown, Lowville, Massena, Ogdensburg, Canton, Potsdam, Lake Placid and Saranac Lake. Each area is unique in its priority sectors. Business Service Representatives make daily phone contacts and seek to bring in job leads through these contacts.

- b. Worker Services – Describe NYS Career Center services to address unemployment in target populations.

The North Country Region has some of the highest unemployment rates in the state. Each of the One-Stops offer individualize services and group workshops. Each One-Stop also works closely with their county’s Department of Social Services to address the needs of each community. In Jefferson-Lewis and Clinton-Essex-Franklin-Hamilton, the One-Stops hold customized recruitments where businesses come in and see people at the One-Stops. The One-Stops also have applications from businesses so that customers can fill out an application, they applications are collected and delivered to the companies. Each area holds job fairs to connect workers with businesses. When WARN notices are issued each area seeks like businesses to review resumes from the dislocated workers.

In Clinton-Essex-Franklin-Hamilton, we have dedicated staff to assist individuals with disabilities with employment and training needs. This includes providing training and resources to businesses regarding ADA regulations and employment of this unique population.

- c. Labor Exchange – Describe how the NYS Career Center System brokers filling jobs.

Job matching is an important function of both the LSRs and business services representatives. In Jefferson County, where the State’s largest military installation is located, transitioning service members are a priority population. When job leads come into the One-Stop, the Veteran's LSRs are given the lead first and then 24 hours later, it is released to the rest of the staff. This is also the procedure for Clinton-Essex-Franklin-Hamilton One-Stops as well. Customers are also contacted via email through the SMART System. Linking the customer to job leads is an important function of all the One-Stops within the region.

- d. Partnerships - Identify partnerships that help fill job openings.

Jefferson-Lewis: Lewis County Dept of Social Services, Jefferson County Dept of Social Services, VA & Vet Center, Jefferson Community College, Transitional Living Services, Jefferson-Lewis BOCES, Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance, ACCESS-VR, ATTAIN Lab, Pathstones, Fort Drum Employment Readiness Program, Clarkson University (engineering positions) & Community Action Planning Council of Jefferson County.

Clinton-Essex-Franklin-Hamilton: Clinton County Workforce Investment Council, Essex County Workforce Investment Council, Franklin County Workforce Investment Council, Hamilton County Workforce Investment Council, OTDA, FEH BOCES, CEWW BOCES, SUNY Plattsburgh, Clinton Community College, North Country Community College, ACCESS-VR, Clinton County DSS, Clinton County Employment and Training, SUNY Small Business Development, Adirondack Community Action Programs, North Country Chamber of Commerce, Ticonderoga Chamber of Commerce, Malone Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton County DSS, Franklin County DSS, Essex County DSS, The Development Corporation, Thrive, NYPIN, PTECH, and IMPACTT.

St. Lawrence County: St. Lawrence County Dept. of Social Services, St. Lawrence County Office of the Aging, St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau, St. Lawrence County Veterans Department, St. Lawrence County IDA, St. Lawrence NYSARC, SUNY Canton, SUNY Potsdam, Clarkson University, St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, ACCES-VR, Penski, Inc. and Personnel Staffing.