

Northwest TN Workforce Board American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Tuesday, February 1, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce, 1069 Main St., Milan, TN or Zoom

Minutes

Committee Members Attending In-Person: Ted Piazza, Lori Burdine, Monica Heath, Sabra Bledsoe, Janet James; **via Zoom:** Jimmy Williamson

County Local Elected Officials Attending via Zoom: Mayor John Penn Ridgeway

Staff and Contractors Attending In-Person: Jennifer Bane, Ginger Powell, Laura Speer, Gina Johnson, Erica Nance (OSO), Ashley Mayton (OSO); **via Zoom:** Lana Burchfiel, James Starnes (OSO), Connie Stewart (CSP)

Review and Approval of Minutes of 10/24/23 Meeting: Lori Burdine called the meeting to order and asked the group for comments regarding the prior meeting's minutes.

- **MOTION: Ted Piazza moved to approve the 10/24/23 minutes as presented and Janet James seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Election of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair: Jennifer Bane reported that Rita Alexander has requested to move from the Chair to Vice-Chair position due to conflicts with other commitments. Lori Burdine has agreed to serve as Chair.

- **MOTION: Ted Piazza nominated Lori Burdine for Committee Chair and Rita Alexander for Vice-Chair. John Penn Ridgeway seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

American Job Center Services Report: One-Stop Operator (OSO), Erica Nance, presented the attached AJC Services Report for October-December 2023 which details AJC traffic counts, visit reasons, customer survey results, and estimated results for the quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals. Weakley County has less visits since they are a part-time specialized center. Carroll County survey numbers are up. Janet James inquired if customers who do not indicate they are completely satisfied are able to provide feedback on the reasons for that. Erica explained the survey does offer that option and most customers who are not satisfied need specific assistance with unemployment that staff in the AJCs cannot provide. Jennifer Bane also noted that the question regarding satisfaction is not required, and it is skipped by some customers. Also, sometimes customers indicate satisfaction in the other questions and mark unsatisfied overall leading staff to believe it is in error. Ted Piazza asked about improvement of KPIs that are not on target. Jennifer noted that even though some of the goals were off target for the quarter, they are on target overall for the year. Quarterly goals are established based on historical data but may not always be accurate for the current year. Erica noted that a Veterans representative has just been hired after several months without a staff person, so we should see an increase in enrollments. SNAP E&T has been without funding and unable to enroll participants. The resource fairs in the jails should increase our Justice-Involved numbers. RESEA is still zero, but Erica said that they had a meeting yesterday to discuss raising this number, adding that RESEA numbers have declined since the program is only offered virtually. Jennifer added that there is also a very short window for capturing RESEA co-enrollments to be counted towards the KPI goal. Lori Burdine noted that not having TAA is actual good because that means no layoffs. There are only 4 or 5 who are actively enrolled, and there have not been any new enrollments in several years, so the same numbers have been counted for the KPI goal for a few years.

- **Workforce Services Report:** Sabra Bledsoe, NW TDLWD Regional Director, reported the AJCs are currently assisting CECO Door with job fairs. The AJC in Dyersburg is offering a Resume Workshop on 2/21 and a spring job fair in early March. A Reentry Resource Fair is being planned for April for Second Chance month. Programs and Operations staff are working on a Strategic Plan to continue Youth Work Experience. In addition to the new Veterans Representative, a new mobile AJC staff person has also been hired.

Career & Training Services Report: Connie Stewart presented the attached Training Services Report detailing cumulative enrollments as of December by service type and county, a breakdown of Individual Training Account (ITA) enrollments by sector and provider, and total ITA investments by provider for all participants this program year. Connie and Jenn agreed that the Work Experience numbers need to be reviewed since they may not be an accurate reflection of the enrollments since the summer youth employment program (SYEP) enrollment goal has been reached. Laura Speer mentioned that VOS was having reporting issues, so we will revisit the enrollment numbers. Connie said we are a little

behind on enrollments. We are not seeing as much traffic in the AJCs, so the Career Advisors are going to the training facilities to distribute information on our services. Youth funds are getting low and additional funds may need to be requested. Healthcare is still the leading training sector with most participants still attending a TCAT and most funding being spent at private providers. Connie also mentioned that they have received many RESEA referrals, but most are not ready to move forward with training and enrollment. Most Title I staff no longer serving RESEA customers has also impacted co-enrollments. Enrollments are also down some due to fewer on-the-job training (OJT) enrollments.

Business Services Report: Ginger Powell, Deputy Director, presented the attached Business Services Report detailing the cumulative OJT contracts and enrollments as of December, the completion rate, and the breakdown of number trained by sector. Ginger agreed with Connie's remark that OJT enrollments have slowed with less hiring / participation from current OJT contractors. Staff are looking at expanding with new companies, so hopefully this will pick up and also help enrollment numbers. We are doing some youth OJT through the SYEP. Manufacturing and skilled trades, such as HVAC and electrical, are the sectors with the highest enrollments. Virtually Speaking webinars continue to be offered quarterly with the next scheduled for March 7th. Staff continue to issue labor market reports with 24 provided this year so far. Several schools have requested information to assist with grant applications. The Apprenticeship Grant shows no enrollments or money expended, but this will change quickly once paperwork is received and processed. The funding is based on projections from employers, so it is mainly a matter of processing paperwork to expend the funds. We have until June, but by the next quarter this money will likely be spent and there is a possibility we may receive additional funds. The Consolidated Business Grant is also now fully obligated, with most training to be complete by April or May to help ensure funds are expended by the grant end date of June 30th. An additional \$70,000 was requested to be able to fund all applications received but was denied by the TDLWD. Unfortunately, these enrollments are not counted in KPI enrollments and expenditures do not count towards the required minimum participant cost rate (MPCR).

Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) Strategic Priorities—Fringe & Other Benefit Options: Jennifer Bane reported that one of the primary goals from the TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD) that we are tasked with working on is increasing the LFPR. One of the items from our May strategy session on this topic was benefit options and varying preferences by generation. Additionally, the new National Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG) focuses on assisting individuals in obtaining high quality jobs, which the grant specifies include access to employer-provided benefits. We are looking to our committee and board to share best practices or feedback of what they have learned about benefits, including traditional benefits as well as others such as flexible schedules, as well as generational differences in the workplace. Additionally, the state is developing their strategic plan, and we are working on a regional and local plan that will also focus on this. We are waiting on a report from the state on the results of the consultants' evaluation of the system and the American Job Centers structure which will also be incorporated into the plans. Committee members provided feedback on options such as incentives for attendance, flexibility in work hours such as accommodating slight changes to allow time for children to be dropped off at school or longer hours and fewer days per week, and bonuses for job performance. The importance of communication regarding scheduling accommodations and staff onboarding were also noted. The group also recognized the potential need to backfill positions as new employers begin to hire. Items that the Board and AJC staff may be able to assist with include continued work with youth and young adults to promote career opportunities, connections to training providers to facilitate specialized training, obtaining data on why individuals aren't participating in the workforce to be able to better address those issues, and offering pre-hire workshops for employers.

Other Business: Jennifer Bane reminded the group that Conflict of Interest Forms are now due.

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events: Future meeting dates and upcoming events were listed on the agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lana Burchfiel

Public Information Special

Northwest TN Workforce Board
American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Thursday, February 1, 2024 – 10:00 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce
1069 S. Main Street
Milan, TN

Chair - Rita Alexander

[Join Zoom Meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 836 4761 5244
Passcode: 021334

Vice Chair – Lori Burdine

Agenda

1. Welcome and Call to Order Rita Alexander
2. Review and Approval of Minutes – October 24, 2023 meeting **(Vote Required)** Rita Alexander
3. Election of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Rita Alexander
Chair Nominee: Lori Burdine Vice-Chair Nominee: Rita Alexander
4. American Job Center Services Report Erica Nance, One-Stop Operator
a. Workforce Services Report Sabra Bledsoe, NW TDLWD Regional Director
5. Career & Training Services Report Connie Stewart, CSP Executive Director
6. Business Services Report Ginger Powell, Deputy Director
7. LFPR Strategic Priorities – Fringe & Other Benefit Options Jennifer Bane, Executive Director
 - a. Employee / applicant feedback?
 - b. Effective and innovative strategies?
 - c. Succession Planning – engaging the emerging workforce and retaining early retirees?
 - d. What can / should the Board do to assist with these items? Virtually Speaking webinar pending.
8. Other Business All
 - a. Conflict of Interest Forms Due

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events

Meeting / Event	Date and Time	Location
Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board Meeting	March 5 th , 10:00 am	NW HRA / DD (Martin)/Zoom
Future Virtually Speaking Webinar	March 7 th , 9:00 am	Zoom
Local & Regional Plans Posted for Public Comment	March 8 th	www.tnworks.org
State Board Meeting	March 22nd, 8:30 am – 12:00 pm	Nashville / YouTube
Remaining 2024 Committee Meetings	Thursday, 10:00 am May 2 nd August 1 st October 31 st	Milan Chamber of Commerce / Zoom
Remaining 2024 Board Meetings	Tuesday, 10:00 am June 4 th Thursday, Sept. 5 th (w/ SW) December 3 rd	NW HRA / DD (Martin)/Zoom TBD / Zoom NW HRA / DD (Martin)/Zoom

Northwest TN Workforce Board American Job Center (AJC) Committee

Tuesday, October 24, 2023 – 9:30 a.m.

Milan Chamber of Commerce, 1069 Main St., Milan, TN or Zoom

Minutes

Committee Members Attending In-Person: Ted Piazza, Sherry Fowler, Sabra Bledsoe; **via Zoom:** Lori Burdine, Jimmy Williamson, Willie Huffman

Staff and Contractors Attending In-Person: Jennifer Bane, Ginger Powell, LeAnn Lundberg, Erica Nance (OSO), Ashley Mayton (OSO); **via Zoom:** Lana Burchfiel, Catherine Vandyke, Gina Johnson, James Starnes (OSO), Connie Stewart (CSP)

Others Attending via Zoom: Gina Abbott

Review and Approval of Minutes of 7/25/23 Meeting: Ted Piazza called the meeting to order and asked the group for comments regarding the prior meeting's minutes.

- **MOTION:** Lori Burdine moved to approve the 7/25/23 minutes as presented and Jimmy Williamson seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

AJC Partner Presentation—GROWWTH: Catherine Vandyke reviewed a flier that gave an overview of the Growing Relational and Occupational Wealth in West TN Households (GROWWTH) TANF Pilot program. In partnership with the University of Memphis, the goal is to serve at least 2,500 families across West TN in the 3-year funding period, but there is some talk of extending the funding period for another year. Catherine reviewed the eligibility criteria and the supportive services that are available to assist participants in obtaining a high-quality job, either directly, through short-term credential training, or by starting their own business. Some of the supportive services are only available for employed participants to ease the transition off of benefit programs. Catherine mentioned they have asked for clarification regarding the childcare providers that participants can use as part of the program. The TANF Pilot projects are all part of a study funded by the TN Department of Human Services, so eligible applicants will be randomly selected into one of two groups that receive a different mix of services. As soon as we get to 700 participants the study will end and all eligible participants can receive the full array of GROWWTH services. As of right NW has 31 enrollments, including 8 total academy participants.

American Job Center Services Report: One-Stop Operator (OSO), Erica Nance, presented the attached AJC Services Report for July-September 2023 which details AJC traffic counts, visit reasons, customer survey results, and estimated results for the quarterly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) goals. Erica mentioned that justice-involved numbers do not include the Adult Education, Mobile AJC, or Office of Re-Entry grant enrollments. We are hoping that these numbers will be included in the final KPIs results when they are received from the State. She also reviewed the attached Access Points newsletter. One new Access Point, the TN Rehabilitation Center in Paris, was added during the quarter and a Job / Resource Fair event was held there in September. Training was also conducted with two existing Access Points. An Access Point in Gibson County is assisting in providing Rapid Response services to employees affected by a recent closure announcement.

- **Workforce Services Report:** Gina Abbott, AJC Regional Director-West, reported the Commissioner has challenged Workforce Services staff with developing a business engagement plan to restructure the current system that has changed since the pandemic. Heading that plan is Amy Maberry, who leads the Training, Oversight, and Strategic Support Unit (TOSS) team. The plan focuses on strong relationships between the businesses and the workforce system, creating a consulting relationship, and case managing employers. This will create a statewide model so that there is a consistent approach in serving employers. Gina also reported there is an opening for a Veteran's position. The position will now be stationed in Huntingdon instead of Dyersburg but will continue to serve all the Northwest (NW) counties. Trevor White with the Office of Reentry has also started a podcast on assisting justice-involved individuals. Workforce Services staff will be participating in the upcoming NAWDP Youth Symposium and Rural Prosperity Conference. The Apprenticeship TN Office will host its West TN Conference at Dyersburg State on 11/14. All NW and SW training providers completed the required annual Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) reports.

Career & Training Services Report: Connie Stewart presented the attached Training Services Report detailing cumulative enrollments as of September by service type and county, and a breakdown of Individual Training Account (ITA)

enrollments by sector and provider, and total ITA investments by provider for all participants this program year. Connie noted that On-the-Job Training (OJT) enrollments have been down, and Ginger Powell reported that a few employer partners were not renewed due to low performance. Business Services staff are outreaching to new partners and anticipate numbers will soon increase. Most of the ITA enrollments continue to be in healthcare. Connie also reported that the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) is helping fund Youth participants due to limited formula funding which will help us to achieve our Youth KPI of 72 new enrollments for the year.

Business Services Report: Ginger Powell, Deputy Director, presented the attached Business Services Report detailing the cumulative OJT contracts and enrollments as of September, the completion rate, and the breakdown of number trained by sector. Ginger noted that the majority of enrollments in the other category are for skilled trades. We will be receiving Consolidated Business Grant (CBG) funds which will be used for Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) and expanding OJT opportunities. The Virtually Speaking webinar held last quarter focused on GROWWTH and all of the employers who participated became GROWWTH certified employers. All recordings are available on the website. The apprenticeship numbers show zero as contracts were just recently issued. Staff also continue issuing Lightcast reports, which now have additional counties available for use in the Southwest area. A new opportunity to apply for sector funds was also announced, allowing us the opportunity to move the apprentices in the applicable sectors off of the original funds and freeing up funds for the ones that could not originally be funded with the small amount of funding received. All requests are based on existing employer need, so we should be in good shape once we get the contracts to begin enrolling apprentices and expending the funds.

Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy Change: Jennifer Bane presented the proposed policy changes to the ITA Policy outlined in red text in the attached handouts. The change allows applicants who file an appeal to provide any type of documentation of applicable employment opportunities rather than only allowing for a pre-hire letter.

- **MOTION: Jimmy Williamson moved to approve ITA policy changes as presented and Lori Burdine seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.**

Other Business: Jennifer Bane presented the following items:

- **Strategy Session Results & Next Steps:** The survey results reviewed at the strategy session and the identified action items are included in the handouts. Jennifer noted that staff will begin working through the action items and bring follow-up items to the Board. We will also move forward with developing a labor force participation taskforce as discussed in the strategy session and would welcome volunteers. Sector-based taskforces will also be developed as part of the new QUEST National Dislocated Worker Grant which will also assist with this work.
- **2024 Meeting Schedules & Locations:** The proposed meeting dates and times are noted on the agenda. The schedule combines all committee meetings onto one day and pushes the meetings back about a week to allow sufficient time for staff to compile data for the reports, particularly the fiscal numbers. Jennifer will request use of the Milan Chamber meeting space for these meetings, and the NW Development District / Human Resource Agency for Board meetings.
- **Officer Elections:** Officers will need to be elected at the next meeting. Both the Chair and Vice-Chair are required to be private-sector representative. Jennifer will send out a reminder email for nominations and volunteers.
- **Other:** Jennifer mentioned the Conflict of Interest Forms will be due soon. An email will be sent and forms will be available at the next Board meeting.

Future Meeting Dates & Upcoming Events: Future meeting dates and upcoming events were listed on the agenda.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lana Burchfiel

Public Information Specialist

American Job Center Services

Customer Visits

Carroll  786

Dyer  604

Weakley  138

1,528 Visitors Received
PY23 Q2

3,389 / 6,404 Visitors to Date
PY23

AmericanJobCenter
TENNESSEE

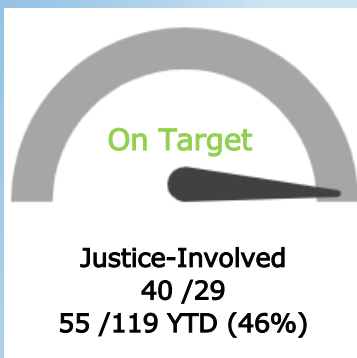
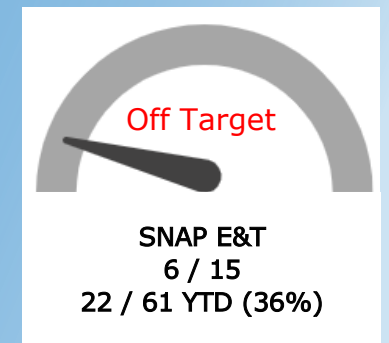
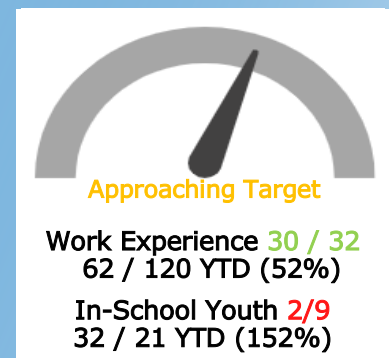
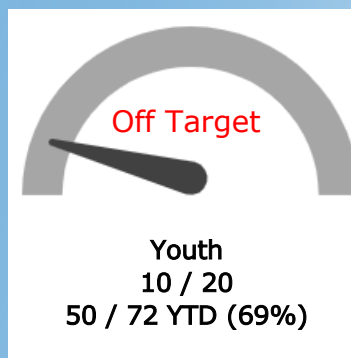
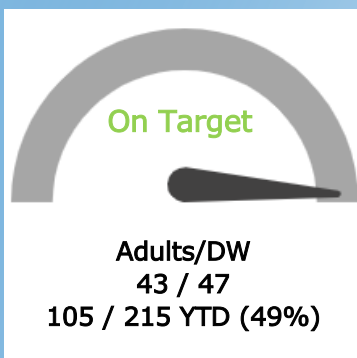


TOP 5 REASONS FOR VISIT

1. Job Search/Resource Room
2. Unemployment
3. Networking Events
4. Job Search Assistance
5. Title I Career Coaching

2,939 Services Provided

Key Performance Indicator Results



Training Services

Total Enrollments by Service

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)



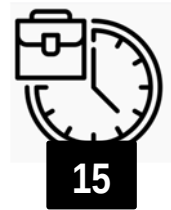
Work Experience



Youth Incentives



On-the-Job Training



National Dislocated Worker Grant

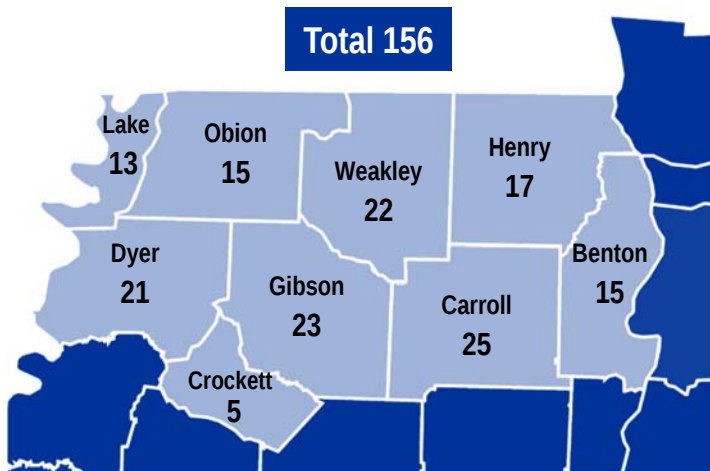


0 / 100 Enrolled

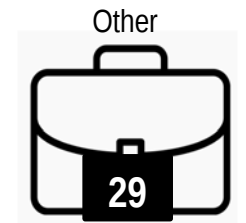


\$1,008.64 of \$615,977.62 Expended

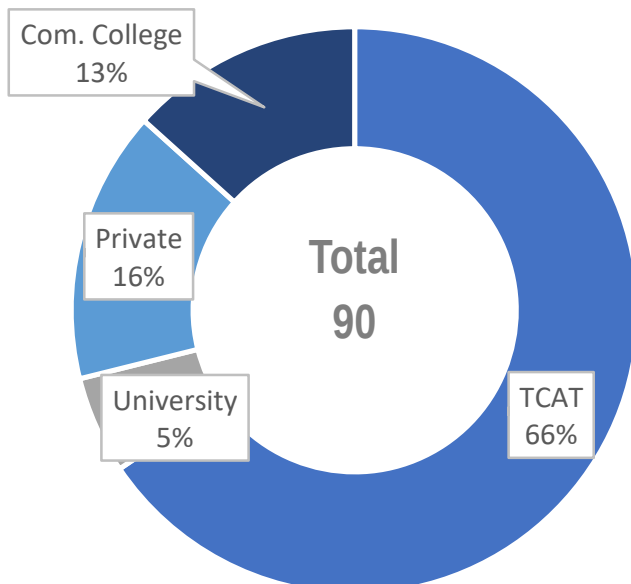
Total Enrollments by County



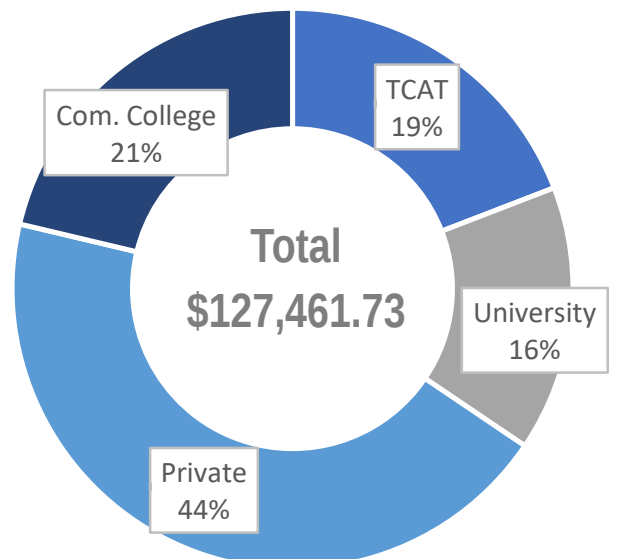
ITAs By Sector



New ITAs By Provider

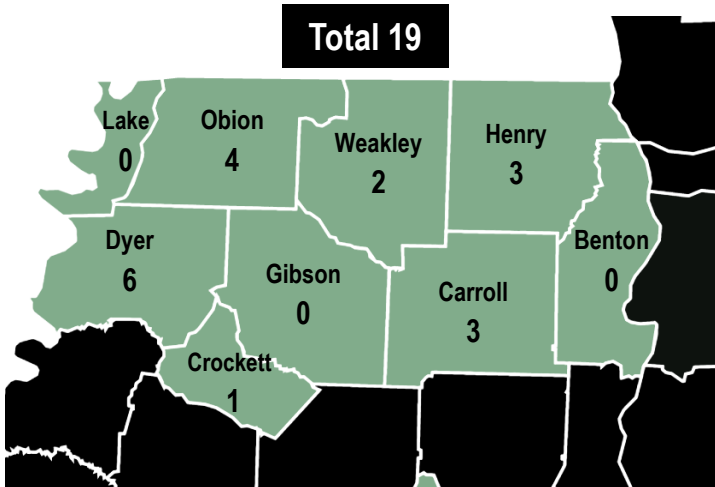


Total ITA Investment by Provider

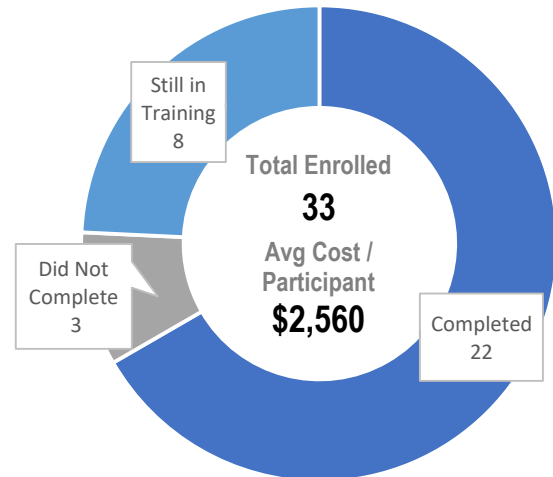


Business Services

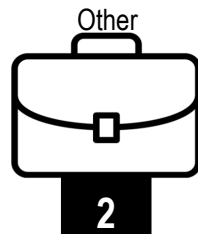
OJT Employers by County



On-the-Job Training Participants



Trained by Sector



Virtually Speaking Webinars



- ✓ Strengthening Your Talent Pipeline Using the GROWTH Program Graduates
- ✓ Work Opportunity Tax Credit: What it is and How Employers Benefit

All webinars are recorded, and may be found by scanning the QR code, or on YouTube @NWSWTNAJC



Economy Overviews



Education Reports



Industry Reports



Occupation Reports

Apprenticeship Grant

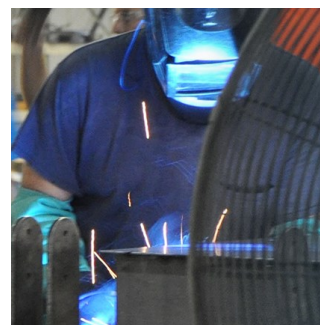


Off Target



Off Target

Consolidated Business Grant



10
Employers
Participating

207
Proposed
Number
to Train

\$0
Expenditures / \$339,323