

Do Businesses Think Federal Funding Should Support Workforce Training?

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding helps businesses increase productivity, strengthen competitiveness, and meet skill and hiring needs, as it helps Americans gain skills businesses need, get jobs, and improve earnings. That's why over 900 employers across the US have signed a petition to their elected officials to preserve WIA funding on the National Association of Workforce Boards' website. (<http://www.nawb.org/portals/0/NationalLetter.pdf>)

WIA-funded programs assist businesses to create jobs.

- In 2009-10, WIA funding assisted **South Carolina** businesses to create 1,086 jobs and save 2,629. http://www.doleta.gov/performance/results/AnnualReports/PY2009/SC_PY_2009_State_Data_Book.pdf
- The OJT reimbursement from the state of **Mississippi** is a critical part of why: (1) We have stayed in Mississippi for over 14 years. (2) We recently expanded, spending an additional \$2.3 million and creating 30 new jobs and (3) why we continue to see Mississippi as a place where we can continue to expand and grow our business. *Bob Bolcyn, Plant Manager, EcoWater Systems LLC, Ripley, MS*
- "Through this tough economic time, our partnership with Michigan Works! has been critical to enabling business success in **Michigan** Operations. As Dow looks to maintain and grow business in this region, we look forward to developing other innovative programs and solutions together." *Jennifer Hayes, Organizational Effectiveness/Culture Change & Learning Leader, Dow Chemical, MI*

WIA meets small businesses' employment needs.

- **Kentucky's** on-the-job training helped a small business expand. It hired a worker and expects to hire another. "This has given us the opportunity to find workers and move into the future with better products that allow us to keep up with current technology." *Shawn Collins, owner, Ideal Print Shop, Middlesboro, KY*
- In **Oregon**, "I am part of a turn-around team that was put in place to restructure a 60-year old company that was not growing and losing money each year. The benefit that the Workforce Investment Act has provided to us in terms of training and motivating our employees has been tremendous. We now have had positive earnings and growth for three consecutive years and have increased our workforce by 15%." *Robert Degnan, President and CEO, Package Containers, Inc., Canby, OR*
- In **Illinois**, Joule Technologies, a fixture manufacturing company, used WIA training dollars to train their employees on new processes. "At Joule, we were able to invest in training that resulted in a 60 percent reduction of lead times, an increase of on-time delivery to 94.5 percent and a reduction of customer returns by over 80 percent. It's not just about increasing performance, it has allowed us to grow our business and retain employees." *Don Wallin, President, Joule Technologies, IL*

WIA-funded programs improve business competitiveness in the global economy.

- 84 percent of businesses reported that **Pennsylvania's** Industry Partnerships and training they provide helped them significantly increase their productivity (more than 6,300 businesses received services in the reporting year, 2008). Pennsylvania's Workforce Investment Boards are deeply involved in leading and supporting the Industry Partnerships (the Commonwealth's name for its regional sector initiatives) and the state targeted training funded by WIA to the high priority occupations Industry Partnerships focus on. (Sources <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=18&objID=490341&mode=2> and <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=18&objID=765961&mode=2>.)
- In **Illinois**, "Even in the middle of the recession we did better than other, similar facilities in our company. Our partnership with a sector initiative, Manufacturing Works, for assistance with recruiting and retention,

and our own cross-training and coaching, were major contributors to our profitability." *Areli Cazares, Human Resources Manager, Wheatland Tube, Chicago, IL*

WIA-funded programs develop the skills businesses need.

- In **Illinois**, "UPS Integrad is a driver training program that combines technology, hand-on experience, and real-time feedback to get new driver candidates ready for the road. . . The results include a sharp increase in driver proficiency, and a reduction in first-year injuries and accidents. We encourage you to make funding of WIA a priority so that vital employment and training services like Integrad can continue." *Ray Drake, Vice President, UPS State Public Affairs, IL*
- In **Ohio**, five more states, and Washington DC, CVS has partnered with One-Stop Career Centers to create Retail Learning Centers. "If you walked into it," he says, "you would think you were in a CVS store. Everybody wins in this kind of situation. The clients of these agencies win because they get a career-path job. The agencies are trying to get these folks employed and given career-path opportunities. And we're getting good employees." *Steve Wing, Director of Workforce Initiatives for CVS in 2010, RI*
- In **Pennsylvania** "The Jobs to Careers behavioral health program at Temple University's Episcopal Hospital Campus has benefited our workforce, our institution, and our patients. More education for the frontline staff through this pilot has translated into improved quality of care. We are also excited that the work-based learning curriculum supports career advancement for the mental health staff by qualifying successful completers with 21 college credits toward a degree as well as a pay increase." *Kathleen Baron, Executive Director, Episcopal Hospital, Temple University Health System, PA*
- "As a business representative from Allele, Inc. on the Governor's Workforce Development Council, I can attest to the growing demand for skilled workers in **Minnesota**. Demographic and educational attainment data make it clear that there is a need for more of the 'right' skill training, not less. I believe that WIA-funded skill training initiatives, like Minnesota FastTRAC which focuses skill training on industry recognized credentials, are the best solution to prepare readily available adults with the necessary skills to meet employers' workforce needs. Strengthening the skills of our current workforce is the only way that Minnesota businesses will remain competitive and keep the state's economy growing over the next 20 years." *Inez Wildwood, Manager, Talent Acquisition & Development, Allele, Inc., Duluth, MN.*

Businesses use publicly funded workforce services and have a high level of satisfaction.

- In 2007, the GAO found that across the United States, "Most medium and large employers are aware of and use the system and are quite satisfied with its services." <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d071051t.pdf>
- **Alabama's** workforce system attained 95% employer satisfaction in 2009-10. In **Minnesota**, employers who posted job orders and employers who received business services in 2009-10 reported Satisfaction Index scores of 79.5 and 81.1, respectively. WIA-funded programs have had high satisfaction levels over the years: for instance **Wyoming** attained 79% employer satisfaction in 2007-08 and **Montana** attained an 87% weighted employer satisfaction value in 2006-7. (Sources: state Workforce Investment Act reports.)

The National Association of Workforce Boards,



National Network of Sector Partners,

