



ULSTER COUNTY
OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT AND
TRAINING

2010 ANNUAL REPORT
To the
Ulster County Legislature

Nancy E.K. Schaefer
Director
651 Development Court, Kingston NY 12401
845.340-3170

MISSION STATEMENT

The **Ulster County Office of Employment and Training (OET)** is the county department that assists county residents with upgrading skills, providing employment resources and job search techniques and training for occupational skills. Entirely funded with federal resources from the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), OET oversees the planning, strategizing and expenditure of that fund source so that training is provided to the Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth of Ulster County.

The **Ulster County Workforce Investment Board (WIB)** is a 32 member volunteer board of business leaders, community leaders and education professionals. Its statutory mandate is to set policies and oversee all program operations and funding expenditures. Board members are appointed by the Ulster County Executive and serve a two-year term. These Ulster County community leaders develop policy that reflects the distinct needs of local businesses and provide guidance to the educational community in developing training programs that fit the specific needs of local industry. The WIB's purpose is to develop and support policies designed to increase employment opportunities, improve the skill sets of job seekers and coordinate the various funding sources available for workforce development.

The WIB provides oversight for workforce development activities in Ulster County, and specifically for ULSTER WORKS and the Ulster County Office of Employment and Training. Its specific mission is to meet the skill needs of Ulster County workers and employers by promoting collaboration among the economic development, education, training and job placement resources and local employers.

WIA mandates that each WIB include a **Youth Council** to be responsible for coordinating youth workforce and job training policies. The 23 current members of the Youth Council represent such agencies as Youth Build, Boys and Girls Club, VESID, UCOET, UCMH, UC Jail, SUNY Ulster, Ulster-Greene ARC, Ulster BOCES and Family of Woodstock.

PROGRAMS OF THE OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

- **YOUTH, ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER TRAINING** - Resources from the Workforce Investment Act are received via three main funding sources, ADULT, DISLOCATED WORKER and YOUTH. Classroom training is provided through collaborations with local eligible training providers in the area. Training provided to these populations is based on federally mandated eligibility criteria and criteria established by the local Workforce Investment Board policies. Our current funding cap is \$2,500 per training. Training is provided only for occupations listed on our Demand Occupations List which is established by the Local Workforce Investment Area Board.

Youth Programs: A year round youth program is delivered in-house by OET staff and via contract with Family of Woodstock. The program is designed to expose youth to the world of work through internships, jobs, workshops and mentoring. Youth are offered paid work experience, occupational training, work readiness training, active counselor oversight during the work experience and/or occupational training and constant mentoring. This program is an effective method by which we are creating an emerging workforce that has excellent work readiness skills offering our business community a competitive asset in the market economy.

The **Summer Youth Employment Program** is funded with Department of Social Services TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) funding to provide summer work experience and mentoring for eligible youth over the summer months only. This program offers the business community the opportunity to work with local youth in helping to build our emerging workforce.

- **TRADE ACT ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE** - funding provides training funds for those unemployed or dislocated as a result of industry moves to overseas. OET received \$50,998 from Trade Act federal sources for those workers dislocated at the following companies: NXP Semiconductors, JM Originals, Watson Labs and Manpower-IBM.
- **ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center** is located on Ulster Avenue in Kingston. The OneStop operations are overseen by a consortium of the Ulster County Department of Social Services (UCDSS), Ulster County Office of Employment and Training (UCOET), Ulster BOCES, SUNY Ulster and New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL). Under this collaborative effort, the **ULSTER WORKS OneStop** provides services and resources to customers seeking employment and employers seeking skilled workers. Staff at the OneStop are functionally aligned and are representative of different agencies all equipped to assist the customer with finding employment and training. **Experience Works (Title V)** funding provides specific job training and employment services to the population over 55 seeking employment. **UCDSS** provides part-time staffing at the One Stop. Primary staffing at the OneStop, however, is from the **NYSDOL Employment Services Division** and the **Ulster County Office of Employment and Training**.

Job Seeker Services: An initial assessment of the job seeker determines the level of services required that will assist the customer with a plan of options available. A comprehensive assessment determines the level of intensive services needed and whether classroom training to upgrade skills or obtain credentialed training is available. Clients are referred to workshops, trainings and case management services, if necessary, for their job search.

Employer Services: The OneStop provides space at the Ulster Avenue facility to Employers for mass recruitment offerings. Staffing is provided and job matching for customers to fill employer open positions is offered. Tax credit assistance to Employers, human resources guidelines and pre-interviewing referral services are provided. Staff works closely with economic development and the various Chambers of the County to assist businesses with upgrading the skills of their workforce to retain their economic input into the county.

2010 Workshops and On-Site Training Sessions at the ULSTER WORKS OneStop:

- Resume Preparation
 - Getting Help With Your Resume (Intermediate Level)
 - Job Search Workshop
 - The Veteran Job Search Workshop
 - Setting up an E-Mail Account/Completing On-Line Application
 - Mock Interviewing
 - Government Employment Workshop
 - “When The Money Gets Tight”
 - “Go Green! – Green Training Opportunities”
 - Job Tips for the Ex-Offender/Employer Expectations
 - Maintaining Mental Health and Wellness Throughout the Job Search
 - Community Resources and Employment Options for Individuals with Disabilities
-
- **DISABILITY PROGRAM NAVIAGATOR (DPN)** - Funding from the US Department of Labor (USDOL) via the NYS Department of Labor (NYSDOL) provides us the opportunity to make available counseling and other special services to the disabled job seeker. A highly qualified staff person counsels and assists job seekers through the myriad of services available to this population from VESID, UC Mental Health, RCAL, Ulster-Greene ARC and other local and state agencies. A countywide collaborative effort of vocational service providers targets the disabled population with coordinated activities that are more efficient and effective for the customer. Our DPN counselor is part of this network and provides regular presentations and assistance integrating the Ulster Works OneStop with this countywide effort.

 - **13N GREEN TALENT PIPELINE REGIONAL PROJECT** - is a New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) regional grant with Westchester Workforce Investment Board as the lead agent. This initiative is a collaborative effort with 7 Hudson Valley WIBs, regional educational institutions and the businesses of the regional green industry sector to create a smooth pipeline by which we are training and building a skilled workforce for the green economy.

 - **CAREER PATHWAYS REGIONAL INITIATIVE** - is an Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA) funded grant by which persons aged 18 to 24 are provided case management services to move up the career ladder from the DSS roles to self-sufficiency gaining credentials and job training, job search services and ultimately ending in gainful employment.

Significant Challenges Encountered in 2010

Higher Unemployment in Ulster County

Ulster County continued to suffer significant job loss and economic slowdown from the worldwide recession. Ulster County's unemployment rate increased from 7.8% in December 2009 to 8.0% in December, 2010. Newly registered OneStop customers numbered 3,155 from 1/10 through 6/10. An additional 2874 customers were registered from 7/10 through 12/10.

Resources Continue to Lag Behind Need

- The total allocation for WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funding for PY 2010 is \$1,074,948, a **reduction from last program year's funding level**. Due to depleted funding, OET placed a moratorium on Adult-funded new skills trainings from September, 2010 to November, 2010; we estimate that during this timeframe approximately 80 individuals did not receive training.
- Significantly **increased numbers** of clients at our offices have placed a serious demand on space requirements at the BRC and increased demand on staff. We are regularly requesting space assistance from SUNY Ulster and the Youth Bureau at the BRC due to the high volume and demand.
- Continuation of state and federal funding for our **Disabilities Program Navigator (DPN)** was cast in doubt again this year. USDOL has offered a new funding source for the coming year which will alleviate some of the funding burden on this position. It will, however, add additional responsibilities on the DPN at the OneStop.
- Construction of a **website** for the **ULSTER WORKS OneStop** was a challenge throughout 2010. Social networking, internet visibility and a sharp computer literate customer base, requires us to be technically accessible to both the job seeker and the employer. A lack of funding led to our seeking a new approach to developing this site. The County Executive's office was able to connect us with a local company willing and able to reconstruct an attractive and workable site. These services are available pro bono to OET and the WIB and are still in the planning phase.
- Uncertainty about **Summer Youth Employment** funding led to major challenges in planning, contracting for and implementing the Summer 2010 program. Funding availability and the amount allocated to Ulster County was not known until mid to late June for a program that normally begins the week of July 5th.
- **Career Pathways** - Customers serviced by this grant have been limited due to limited referrals from UC Department of Social Services. Better coordination with more referrals is needed to expand the numbers of persons moving from assistance roles to self-sufficiency. A better collaborative network is needed between agencies to affect positive outcomes for this grant.

Significant Achievements in 2010

- **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)** - 80 youth aged 14-20 were employed in 46 worksites throughout Ulster County. The youth worked from July 12 through August 13, 2010 and averaged 25 hours/week @ \$8.00/hour. Work experience positions ranged from camp counselors to maintenance aides to janitors to tutors to secretaries. The businesses that hosted the youth included for-profit, not-for-profit, and government and educational institutions.

- **Increased Unemployed Result in Increased Customers served at the ULSTER WORKS ONE STOP** - Over the last three years, the average unemployment rate in Ulster County rose from 5.5% in 2008 to 7.7% in 2009 to 7.8% for 2010. The number of unemployed people county-wide has also risen from 5,022 in 2008, to 6,975 in 2009, to 7100 in December, 2010. The number of individuals served at the One Stop in 2008 included 5,409 new customers with a total served of 6,420; in 2009, there were 5,624 new customers with a total served of 7, 276; in 2010, there were 6,029 new customers with a total served of 6,838. When looking at the numbers in our Program Years, there were 6,145 served in PY 08 (July, 2008 to June, 2009) and 7,740 served in PY 09 (July, 2009 to June, 2010).

- **Occupational Training Numbers for 2010:**
 - All Adult** (includes Adult and Adult Stimulus):
 - 88 trained @ \$135,425.
 - Adult Formula:** 66 @ \$87,363;
 - Adult Stimulus:** 22 @ \$48,062.

 - All Dislocated Workers** (includes DW, DW Stimulus and Trade Adjustment Assistance):
 - 87 trained @ \$182,749.
 - DW Formula:** 27 @ \$44,840;
 - DW Stimulus:** 51 @ \$86,911;
 - TAA:** 9 @ \$ 50,998.

 - All Youth** (includes Youth and Youth Stimulus):
 - 38 trained @ \$45,325.
 - Youth Formula:** 37 @ \$43,530;
 - Youth Stimulus:** 1 @ \$1,795.

- **Performance Monitoring NYSDOL** - In administering WIA programs, OET and the WIB are required to meet US Department of Labor-mandated performance standards in order to avoid programmatic and monetary sanctions. For 2010, OET and the WIB assured that all programs operated to meet or exceed all standards and did not suffer any loss of funding due to program performance.

- **A OneStop Strategic Planning Group** was organized by the County Executive's office to strategize and negotiate how best to provide a consistent approach to serving mutual customers with employment, vocational and training services. Facilitated discussions were held to further our strategic planning. These meetings were led by New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) President John Twomey and were aimed at expanding effective collaborations of county operations at **the ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center**. Meetings were held in February, March, April, June and August, 2010 at

- An **Ulster County Workforce Summit Conference** was held at SUNY Ulster in June, 2010. The event was attended by 50 participants from over 20 local service providers. Focus of the event was on collaboration and how best to provide services to mutual customers regarding workforce and employment issues at the **ULSTER WORKS OneStop**. John Twomey of NYATEP (NY Association of Training Employment Professionals) was the keynote speaker and was followed by workshops which led to strategic steps by which planning could proceed to expand services to the increased numbers of unemployed and persons seeking job training.
- **Work Readiness Skills Development Workshops** offered at the **ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center** each month have expanded and served approximately 900 Ulster County residents who received skills development training in how to interview, write a resume, search the internet for jobs and research and apply for civil service positions as well as ex-offender workshops, green training opportunities and veterans workshops.
- **Business Services at the OneStop** - ULSTER WORKS continued to provide business services at the ULSTER WORKS One Stop center. As part of those services, employers are provided job posting services, employee screenings, tax credit information and on-the-job training. The Ulster County Red Carpet Team, comprised of mandated and non-mandated partners of the ULSTER WORKS OneStop, provides an array of services related to workforce and economic development opportunities designed to attract, retain and assist Ulster County businesses. This effort has been expanded by the addition of a regional Business Services unit of NYSDOL that has assisted with providing increased services with OJT offerings to a number of Ulster County businesses. Direct contact to local businesses and services at local regional TSEC conferences has also been affected.
- **Youth Job Fairs** were held in Kingston (March, 2010), Saugerties (May, 2010) and Highland/Marlboro (March, 2010) which were attended by 308 Ulster County youth. Work readiness training was provided to prepare youth for employment interviews so businesses were assured they would only be presented candidates that were work ready. This effort involved schools, after-school programs and a number of community agencies.
- **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)** provided \$34,885 in funding for two additional staff persons for OET in 2009: an Outreach Stimulus Coordinator and a Senior Account Clerk/Typist. These positions were slated to continue in 2010 at an additional cost of \$36,815; however, both of these individuals went on to find permanent employment.
- **13N Green Talent Pipeline**, a revitalized NYSDOL regional initiative, provided tuition assistance funding for 12 persons for training in the Green Industry Sector. Additionally, it sponsored a full-day Stormwater Workshop for local municipalities and businesses and a "Homes For Seven Generations" Workshop in Ulster County. Also offered to local school districts was a "green" initiative training by professionals from Ulster BOCES.

- **The Disability Program Navigator** provided services to 224 customers from January through December, 2010. The services delivered included providing customers with various sources of information re: 55b/c Civil Service information, **ULSTERWORKS One Stop** services, as well as other resource information for assistance with Americans with Disabilities Act, Social Security Administration/Ticket To Work and MYBENEFITS information and Certificate of Good Conduct and Certificate of Disabilities information for Ex-Offenders; referral to OneStop services, DSS services, Gateway's Job Shop and internship programs, NYS Office of Vocational and Educational Services (ACCESS VR) and to SUNY Empire/UCCC higher education programs; and developing new and ongoing partnerships to achieve seamless, comprehensive, and integrated access to services within the **OneStop Center** and with local area/partner agencies to create systemic change, and expand the workforce development system's capacity to serve customers with disabilities.

Inter-Departmental / Interagency Collaborations in 2010

- **Youth Job Fairs** - In planning and operating the 3 Youth Job Fairs in Kingston, Saugerties and Highland/Marlboro, the Youth Council collaborated with Ulster BOCES Youth Build, Family of Woodstock, Inc., the Boys and Girls Club, SUNY Ulster, UC Mental Health, Gateway Industries and UC Office of Probation and other agencies.
- **A OneStop Strategic Planning Group** was organized by the County Executive's office to strategize and negotiate how best to provide a consistent approach to serving mutual customers with employment, vocational and training services. Facilitated discussions were held to further our strategic planning. These meetings were led by New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP) President John Twomey and were aimed at expanding effective collaborations of county operations at **the ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center**. Meetings were held in February, March and April and August, 2010 at the BRC. Participants of this collaborative effort included: VESID, Ulster BOCES, SUNY Ulster, UC Department of Social Services (DSS), NYSDOL, Experience Works, Community Action, Rural Opportunities as well as Department Heads from County Departments of Probation, UC Mental Health and Office for the Aging. A separate meeting was held in August, 2010 with business leaders to initiate how best to incorporate business needs in this planning.
- **Mid-Hudson Coalition for Court Innovation** - The Youth Council is spearheading this effort to build a strong coalition and collaboration between the courts and the local youth-serving agencies to more effectively coordinate resources for youth entering the criminal justice system. This effort has resulted in a more efficient use of resources in an attempt to help youth make alternative and constructive life choices.
- **NYSDOL Hudson Valley Regional Business Services** and local business services efforts are working more closely to coordinate services for our local businesses. The **ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center** Business Services Representative and the WIB Director are part of this effort. Along with members of the UC Red Carpet Team, and the NYS DOL Regional staff, these efforts can only improve our connecting with local businesses prior to any need for layoffs or downsizing.
- **Youth Council Efforts at the UC Jail** – With the addition of the Superintendent from the Ulster County Jail as a newly appointed member to our Youth Council along with the ministers of the New Progressive Baptist Church who regularly visit and minister to the youth at the jail, the participating agencies of the Youth Council have networked and collaborated to provide an important and effective launch of services to these at risk youth. Work readiness training, resume preparation assistance and case management services are available to these youth upon their release from the system. Coordination of the youth serving agencies with the jail personnel, the school district personnel working in the jail and the Superintendent have been an extraordinary experience of effective and important collaboration.
- **Vocational Steering Committee** – is a collaborative team of employment and training counselors that service the disabled person population in Ulster County. Gateway Industries, UC Mental Health, UC Dept of Social Services, People's Place, RCAL and VESID, along with other agencies, meet quarterly to share how best to provide services to this population. The WIB Director and the DPN for the **ULSTER WORKS OneStop** are active members of this committee.

Fiscal Issues for OET 2010

This department is 100% federally funded with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding and receives no funding from Ulster County. OET did operate within the confines of our budgeted allotment for the calendar year 2010 which is comprised of the last half of OET's Program Year 2009 (1/1/10 - 6/30/10) and the first half of our Program Year 2010 (7/1/10 - 12/31/10).

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) formula funding to OET is funneled through the NYS Department of Labor from three sources: **Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth**. For PY 2009 (July 2009-June 2010), the total WIA allocation was \$1,109,159.

- **ADULT** funds are used to provide services to individuals ages 18 and older. When funds are limited, the Workforce Investment Act requires local areas to establish priority criteria for these funds, to target public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for services. Veterans are always priority of service.
- **DISLOCATED WORKER** funds are used to provide services to individuals who qualify as dislocated workers. There are several ways an individual may qualify as a dislocated worker, but generally it means an individual who has been laid off, is eligible for or has exhausted Unemployment Insurance benefits, and is unlikely to return to their previous industry or occupation.
- **YOUTH** funds are used to provide ten required program elements to low-income youth ages 14-21 (although performance requirements and directives have forced us to limit our population to older, out-of-school youth).

Adults and Dislocated Workers are generally served through the **Ulster County ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center**. Performance criteria attached to these populations relate to employment, retention and earnings, and monitoring of the program is overseen directly by the New York State Department of Labor.

Our **Youth** program is operated by two entities: one is our in-house program staffed by an OET Workforce Assessor, and the other is a comprehensive program operated under contract with Family of Woodstock.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for increased training was awarded to Ulster County in Program Year 2009 in the amount of \$1,078,463. In PY09, we expended \$359,428 for our Summer Youth Employment Program 2009, as well as an additional \$481,570 for customer training plus two staff positions, leaving the balance of \$237,464 for expenditure in PY10.

TANF funding (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) is received by OET each summer from the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) through UC Department of Social Services for a **Summer Youth Employment Program**. The total TANF funding for SYEP 2010 was \$110,291, all of which was expended.

NYS Department of Labor Disability Program Navigator funding is allocated to the Office of Employment and Training to provide employment services to the disabled community through the hire of a Disability Program Navigator. The amount dispersed under the DPN grant for PY 2009 was \$29,364.

Trade Adjustment Assistance funding provides training funds for those unemployed or dislocated as a result of industry moves to overseas. OET received \$50,998 from Trade Act federal sources for those workers dislocated at the following companies: NXP Semiconductors, JM Originals, Watson Labs and Manpower-IBM.

Anticipated Challenges For 2011

Funding Challenges

Decreased Fund Availability

- WIA and NYSDOL Wagner-Peyser funds are subject to the availability of Federal funds. It is expected that both programs will be re-funded by Congress, but there is always some uncertainty as to the amount of funds allocated. Though OET anticipates level funding for the next few years, those funds are not nearly enough to meet the needs of the increased numbers of unemployed and underemployed in the current economy. That, along with staff costs, creates a critical concern for redesigning our program and training services. Indeed, our seriously depleted training funds have already forced one training moratorium in PY 2010.

Increase in Customers and Service Needs Due to the Economy

- The number of customers is expected to remain at record highs. Space and resource needs are being planned for in negotiations between the County Executive and SUNY Ulster.
- Increased services at lower costs - we are challenged to maintain a large array of skills development workshops at ULSTERWORKS while continuing to provide other NYSDOL-required services to a larger customer base.

Build a Virtual Presence to Broaden our Marketing and Branding

- Complete design and launch of ULSTER WORKS OneStop web site for the OneStop center using pro bono services. Build a presence in the social networking virtual world so that our services reach a larger constituency of job seekers and employers.

Build a Career Pathway for those Receiving Benefits to Move to Self-Sufficiency

- Effect positive outcomes from the OTDA-funded Career Pathways Grant by improving the referral process to help ensure the attainment of training and employment milestones for DSS clients.

Goals for 2011

- **Build a unified workforce system** with our workforce partners and county human services departments at the **Ulster Works OneStop Center** at the BRC. Build the space capacity at the Business Resource Center to fit our agency and customer needs. Expand our space to include our partners in the workforce system. Build stronger alliances with our partners to assist in providing customers with more efficient services, employment and skills development at the OneStop.
- **Career Pathways OTDA Regional Grant** - Build effective and positive outcomes from the Career Pathways Grant for DSS clients to decrease the numbers on the County DSS roles and return employable people into the workforce. Build better alliance between DSS for increased referrals for this grant.
- **Disabilities Employment Initiative for 2011** - Build a new Disabilities Employment Initiative based on goals and directives for the new USDOL-funded Program. Included in that program is participation in the Social Security Administration's (SSA) effort for the Ticket to Work Program. By becoming an SSA Employment Network in the Ulster Works OneStop Center, our services will expand for those clients seeking to be move from receiving benefits to enter the realm of self-sufficiency into the job market.
- **13 N Green Talent Pipeline** - Continue intensive planning for a third round of funding for building a skilled workforce for the "green" business sector in the Hudson Valley region. Planning is designed to lead to the development of a series of "green" economy workshops for the business community. Funding is also available for renewable energy occupational trainings and green initiatives in the local schools.
- **Build Social Networking Interfacing Capabilities for Job Seekers and Employers** - Complete development and launch of Ulster Works OneStop website and social networking sites to link the ULSTER WORKS OneStop to the virtual world.
- **Demand Occupation List** - work closer with the Board and business communities to update our Demand Occupation List so that customers trained better reflect Ulster County's workforce needs.
- **Youth Job Fairs 2011** - The Youth Council will continue planning for Youth Job Fairs in 2011. Drawing on the success of last year's Youth Job Fairs, the Youth Council will expand into four areas of the county - Kingston, Highland, Ellenville and Saugerties in Spring, 2011 to ready youth for summer jobs.
- **Expanded Workshop Schedules** - With an anticipated increase in space capacity, an expanded Workshop Curriculum and Schedule at the ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center is planned. Additional workshops will provide long-term unemployed with increased support services to deal with the ravaging effects of long term dislocation from the job market. Additional workshops will include topics such as debt and mortgage counseling, volunteer/networking opportunities and health services information for the uninsured.
- **Increased Business Services from the OneStop** - As part of improving business services at **ULSTER WORKS OneStop Center**, a staff person designated to servicing the business community directly will result in more OJT training assisting businesses

