

Region 1 PY17 Annual Report

Executive Summary

Program Year 2017 included many challenges in terms of the economy and employment opportunities it also included some very exciting developments in the areas of workforce system development and grant opportunities. The local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) service providers, along with our partners in the workforce system, experienced many successes in helping our job seekers to prepare for and obtain employment. Specific examples designed to help meet these challenges in Region 1, as well as, the effects of these efforts, are highlighted in the following report. The use of technology has allowed increased coordination and collaboration between staff in the Decorah and Dubuque offices. Our region served 5,686 new customers and 16,915 total customers during PY17 with 2,093 workshop attendees.

Regional Initiatives/Partnerships

Region 1 WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV Leadership meets on a monthly basis to coordinate service delivery. They participate in many initiatives and partnerships throughout our area including IVRS staff moving into the Decorah office, Opportunity Dubuque, Project HOPE, Dubuque Works, Dubuque Local College Access Network, IVRS School Plans, Second Chance, Fountain of Youth/Real Talk, Clarity Clinic, POETS workshop facilitation at the Elm Street Correctional Facility in Dubuque, Region 1 DVOP facilitates workshops for Veterans at the Anamosa State Penitentiary in Region 10, Work-based Learning events in Waukon and Manchester, Workforce Innovation Strong Economy (WISE) - Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, STEM Festival Committees in Calmar, Dubuque, and Oelwein, Success Team Partners and referral form, and joint staffing for co-enrolled participants.

Employer Services/Business Engagement

A major emphasis has been expanding our Employer Services Team which holds monthly video calls and quarterly in-person meetings with representation from IowaWORKS, IDB, IVRS, NICC, Promise Jobs, Veterans Services. The group has developed a shared calendar coordinating business events throughout the region such as Career Fairs, Job Fairs, IVRS Reverse Job Fair, Business Summits, Business Workforce Alliance, OSHA Trainings, Wellness Fairs, and Professional Days.

Region 1 Core Partners participate in the Advanced Manufacturing Sector Board, Information Technology Sector Board, and Long-term Healthcare (Calmar and Dubuque) Sector Boards that meet quarterly in-person, as well as, Community Sector Boards in Cascade, Cresco, New Hampton, Manchester, Oelwein, Waukon, and Elkader that meet quarterly in person. These partnerships include representation from education, economic development, workforce development, and agency partners, as well as, local employers. This collaboration has resulted in 58 Job Fairs being held throughout the region during PY17 along with 2,331 business contacts.

Promising Practices and Success Stories

- Winneshiek County received Home Base Iowa recognition on 9/13/17
- “Ann” had been coming in to the center repeatedly over the years to job search and work on skills. Ann had multiple barriers as she faced the cultural differences of coming from another country as well as having experienced some serious challenges in her life, of had struggled to find and keep a job, and had not had consistent employment for several years. Most recently, she began coming in to the center on a regular basis to work on Rosetta Stone and job search. Ann expressed frustration about the fact that she made many contact for jobs but was not getting hired. Through many conversations with Ann, Decorah IowaWORKS staff helped her to find a good career path that realistically met both her expectations and her skill level. Over a period of many months, Decorah IowaWORKS staff encouraged and worked with Ann to improve her work readiness skills, and to attend workshops in the center. Ann attended RES, Real Colors, Workin’ It Out, 6-Steps, and took the NCRC. Due to multiple challenges which she faced, Ann often would schedule to come in, and then would cancel. With much patience and many tries, and much encouragement from staff, Ann continued rescheduling and eventually completed all the workshops, making great strides in her interpersonal skills and confidence. Once Ann had completed this preparation, she was eager to find a job. However, being out of the workforce for so long and not having recent, relevant skills was proving to be a barrier. She was enrolled in the Title 1 program to do a Work Experience to develop updated work skills and references. With the help of a supportive WEP supervisor at the workplace and with Amy’s support in helping her work through challenges while doing the WEP, Ann completed her Work Experience and had a good reference. She applied for a full-time position, and was hired! This involved relocating to a new area. Amy helped connect Ann to local resources for moving assistance, as well as agencies in the area to which she was relocating to help her find new housing. Ann is settled into her new home and new job, and contacted us to report that she had surpassed the first month’s goals at her new job. Ann sent her thanks to the many staff who assisted her on her path.
- After his release from Joliet Prison, “Jason” relocated to Dubuque, IA, taking up residence at the Dubuque Rescue Mission. He visited the Dubuque IowaWORKS office 04/09/18, meeting with several team members, who all assisted him in preparing to put his best foot forward. Jason signed up for both resume workshops, POETS, was referred to the Fountain of Youth and was then walked over to the Express Personnel Employment representative. In less than a week, Jason had secured a job with Uelner Tool as a deburrer, at \$12.00/hour, through Express. Jason was highly motivated to find work, from the get-go.
- “Chris” attended the Registered Apprenticeship (RA) workshop. Learned from RA workshop how to locate what Employers are currently offering Registered Apprenticeships for Electrician. Signed Chris up for six more workshops after attending RA workshop including NCRC to become job ready. Chris attended five of the six workshops and obtained Gold NCRC certificate. Results are he was hired by Hawkeye Electric to start in March as an Electrician helper. In April, will interview for Electrician Registered Apprenticeship.

- “George” was attending high school as a special education student when he enrolled in the WIOA Title I Youth Program administered by ECIA at the IowaWORKS office in Dubuque. He participated in the HEART Program through the Four Oaks, Four Mounds, and Dubuque Community School District (DCSD) partnership, attended a heavy equipment simulator semi-trailer in Dubuque sponsored by IowaWORKS, and was placed in a paid work experience at Swiss Valley Nature Center through a collaboration with Dubuque County Conservation, DCSD, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), and IowaWORKS. He graduated from high school, began employment at a construction company, and plans to continue his education to become a Heavy Equipment Operator.
- “Leo”. came to his appointment and explained how he was living at the Coming Home shelter and working 2 jobs, seven days a week and is working with SSVF (who referred him) to get an apartment at the Davis Place. His primary objective is to find one higher paying job so he can afford a place of his own. I gave Veteran information on County Assistance and Iowa Legal Aid. He required quite a bit of guidance from the DVOP and SSVF director during his job search. He tended to lose focus and confuse priorities, but the AJC staff worked hard to keep him on track. He admitted to feeling overwhelmed having people working so hard for him. But in the end, he was able to get hired at Focus Services.
- “Tim”, a veteran, became a dislocated worker in the spring of 2016 due to a major layoff from a manufacturing company. He was co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program, Job Driven National Emergency Grant (NEG), Sector Partnership NEG, and Trade Act. After completing various career assessments and researching labor market information at the IowaWORKS Dubuque office, he decided to attend classes at Scott Community College in Davenport for an Associates Degree in HVAC. He graduated in May 2018 with a 4.0 cumulative Grade Point Average and accepted employment as a refrigeration technician with Arctic Glacier in Dubuque.
- “Tiana”, a single parent and public assistance recipient, was co-enrolled in the WIOA Title I Adult Program, WIOA Title I Youth Program, and Promise Jobs Program. She successfully completed the Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) course at NICC, successfully completed the Nurse Aide course at NICC, passed her state boards, attained her Iowa CNA License, and began employment as a CNA at Luther Manor.

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