

Workforce CONNECTIONS PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, POSSIBILITIES

Executive Summary

This year was perhaps the best year ever for the Southern Nevada Workforce Investment Area. Not only did Workforce Connections (Southern Nevada's Workforce Investment Board) meet or exceed all established performance measures established by the State of Nevada and the U.S. Department of Labor, the agency did exceedingly well on its own measures, using key indicators leading to better overall performance. For example, for the first time in the agency's recent history, only a minimum number of findings or deficiencies were noted in this year's audit reports. More importantly, the total number of clients served far exceeded expectations and due to management's restructuring and resource allocation, the funding targeted for training was significantly greater in comparison to normal formula allotments.

One key feature or strategy introduced in Workforce Connections' tactical work plans was that of the Local Employer Advisory Panel (LEAP). The panel will provide the agency comprehensive intelligence that allows Workforce Connections to pinpoint demand-driven training and employment opportunities for job seekers. A direct result of Workforce Connections' LEAP initiatives will be increased wages earned by registered clients. Beyond this, Workforce Connections' staff and associated partners participated in community outreach initiatives throughout the program year. These initiatives included; 1) Town Hall meetings to hear and understand the employment and training concerns of local residents, 2) U.S. Department of Labor local Minimum Wage Forum hosted by the Acting Secretary of Labor; 3) Job Fairs supported and hosted by Nevada's U.S. Congressional Delegation and 4) the Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus which enabled Workforce Connections' management staff to submit critical inputs in support of State Legislature Bill Drafts resulting in Nevada Revised Statutes.

Most notably toward the latter part of this program year was the launching of Southern Nevada's Workforce Investment Area Comprehensive One-Stop Career Center. The Center's grand opening brought about a new wave of business customers and job seekers accessing critically needed employment and training services. This report highlights the strength of partnership in forming a consortium to collaborate to deliver better employment and training services to the residents of Southern Nevada. While there were many exciting initiatives during this program year, none can top the successful completion of the State Energy Sector Partnership Grant (SESP) which allows Workforce Connections' staff to excel in every area of service delivery and establishes sustained clean energy programs and services in support of the State's Clean Energy Sector.

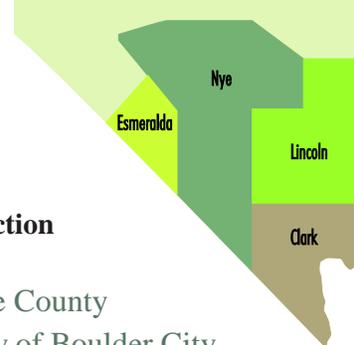
PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, POSSIBILITIES

Local Leadership to Fulfill Local Needs

Local Elected Officials Consortium

The Local Elected Officials Consortium oversees primary board activities such as the appointment of board members, fiduciary responsibilities over local area resources, budget approvals and the coordination of inter-local government agreements.

Workforce Connections serves the Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln and Nye Counties of Southern Nevada. The northern counties are served by sister board, Nevadaworks.



Member

Commissioner Andrew Borasky
Councilwoman Peggy Leavitt
Commissioner Ralph Keyes
Councilwoman Anita Wood
Councilman Bob Beers
Commissioner Adam Katschke
Councilwoman Gerri Schroder
Commissioner Lawrence Weekly

Jurisdiction

Nye County
City of Boulder City
Esmeralda County
City of North Las Vegas
City of Las Vegas
Lincoln County
City of Henderson
Clark County

Workforce Connections Board of Directors

Created to carry out the duties of regional workforce development outlined by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Workforce Connections Board is a diverse group of people actively engaged in the community who identify needs and opportunities, and align resources towards effective workforce development. Our board members include leaders from various areas of the community including:

- Local elected officials
- Public service organizations
- Private business sector leaders
- Labor organizations
- Educational institutions
- Professional service associations

The Board uses their understanding of the local labor market and the economic forces

impacting us to define the scope of work performed by Workforce Connections and its program partners. Working with economic developers, K-12 and post-secondary educators, chambers of commerce and community service organizations, the Board keeps their ear to the ground and aligns strategies that build better partnerships for better investments in the community.

Workforce Connections Board of Directors

Board Members	Representing	Committees: ADW	Budget & Finance	Executive	Youth Council
Maggie Arias-Petrel	Global Consulting	●			
Michelle Bizé	Las Vegas Review Journal	●			
Hannah Brown	Urban Chamber of Commerce Workforce Connections Chair	●	●	●	
William Bruninga	Advance Energy Applications		●		
Matthew T. Cecil	Fisher & Phillips LLP	●			
Mark Edgel	Southern Nevada Laborers Local # 827 Training Facility	●			
Willie J. Fields	WJF Shoe				●
Dan Gouker	College of Southern Nevada		●	●	
Sonja Holloway	Sierra Nevada Job Corps			●	●
William Kirby	Rural Nevada		●		
Dr. David Lee	Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce	●			
Vida Chan Lin	Western Risk		●		
Valerie Murzl	Station Casinos	●		●	
Bart Patterson	Nevada State College				
Lynda Parven	The Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation	●			
Charles Perry	Nevada Healthcare Association	●			
Mujahid Ramadan	MR Consulting				●
William Regenhardt	National University	●			
Daniel Rose	Sheet Metal Local #88 Joint Apprenticeship Training Center	●			●
Tommy Rowe	Rural Nevada				●

2012 WIA Participant Characteristics

Characteristics of WIA Formula Adult

		Number of Participants	Percentage of All Participants
Total Number of Participants		2,406	
Gender			
	Male	1,062	44.1
	Female	1,344	55.9
Race*			
	Latino or Hispanic	432	18.0
	Black or African American	740	30.8
	White	869	36.1
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	41	1.7
	Asian	161	6.7
	Hawaiian Native or Other Pacific Islander	42	1.7
Age at Enrollment			
	18-21	153	6.4
	22-54	1,990	82.7
	55+	241	10.0

Characteristics of WIA Formula Dislocated Worker

		Number of Participants	Percentage of All Participants
Total Number of Participants		1,015	
Gender			
	Male	501	49.4
	Female	514	50.6
Race*			
	Latino or Hispanic	172	16.9
	Black or African American	299	29.5
	White	364	35.9
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	13	1.3
	Asian	36	3.5
	Hawaiian Native or Other Pacific Islander	13	1.3
Age at Enrollment			
	18-21	5	0.5
	22-54	812	80.0
	55+	197	19.4

Characteristics of WIA Formula Youth			
		Number of Participants	Percentage of All Participants
Total Number of Youth Participants		2,903	
Gender			
	Male	1,602	55.2
	Female	1,301	44.8
Race*			
	Latino or Hispanic	1,067	36.8
	Black or African American	1,243	42.8
	White	742	25.6
	American Indian or Alaskan Native	88	3.0
	Asian	100	3.4
	Hawaiian Native or Other Pacific Islander	70	2.4
School Status (at registration)			
	In-School	1,891	65.1
	Out-of-School	1,012	34.9
Age at Enrollment			
	14-18	2,125	73.2
	19-21	772	26.6

* Participants acknowledge more than one race



Re-entry Town Hall Event hosted by Commissioner Weekly

PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, POSSIBILITIES

Strategic Workforce Development Initiatives

Industry/Regional sectors: We're focusing our efforts and aligning our resources to support the industries identified by the Governor's Economic Development Plan. We're implementing important rural initiatives that provide much needed services in these areas. These initiatives support the Governor's overall vision, fulfill community needs and create new career pathways in Southern Nevada.

Targeted populations: Our programs assist a wide variety of people, offering unique tools and training opportunities to ensure the fastest path to regaining employment and strengthening our workforce. These populations include: Adult & Dislocated Workers, Youth, Businesses, Veterans, Persons with Disabilities, Foster Care Youth, At Risk Youth and Ex-offenders.

Rural Support: The rural areas of Southern Nevada which include Esmeralda, Lincoln and Nye counties, pose unique challenges to support the workforce. Areas separated by distances are not serviced by public transportation, have a limited number of large employers, and lack the social services infrastructure commonly found elsewhere. These communities, therefore, require a different approach to sustain and develop jobs for residents. In service to adult workers in these areas, Workforce Connections and partners have coordinated hiring events, supported efforts to sustain local businesses and maintained Career Connections. Efforts to engage youth include providing education services, work readiness training, and on-the-job experiences in partnership with public and private sector employers.

Demand Driven

Local Employer Advisory Panel (LEAP): As part of our 2 year Strategic Plan we've assembled an advisory panel comprised of local employers within our local workforce investment area. Panel members will be employer representatives with decision-making and hiring authority from local industry sectors. This panel will deliver "real time" and locally relevant workforce intelligence for Southern Nevada's One Stop System and One Stop Career Center. The intelligence received will help ensure the delivery of a full range of relevant services for employers and job seekers.

Training Providers: Training will be added and/or removed from the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and the Pre-Vocational List (PVL) as needed, according to demand information gathered from LEAP and WIA partners system-wide.

Community Driven

Throughout the year, Workforce Connections facilitated and participated in events which brought the community together with our board members, elected officials and staff.



- **Re-Entry Town Hall Meeting**, hosted by Clark County Commissioner Lawrence Weekly. On August 1, 2012 at the request of Commissioner Lawrence Weekly (Board Member), Workforce Connections staff and service providers were on hand to listen to and provide program information to both male and female ex-offenders. The town meeting was held at the Pearson Center. During the two and a half hour discussion several ex-offenders spoke about how they got to prison, what happened while in prison and the difficulties they've faced since being released from prison. Several ex-offenders spoke about their successes and what it took to get there.
- **Minimum Wage Forum**, hosted by Acting Secretary of Labor, Seth Harris. The Acting Secretary of Labor, Seth Harris, moderated a minimum wage roundtable on April 18, 2013. Secretary Harris has traveled throughout the United States requesting feedback from workers to determine what an increase in the minimum wage would mean to them. The stories shared from the participating roundtable were a strong indication of how individuals with families struggle to make ends meet.
- **Job Fair**, hosted by Senator Harry Reid. Workforce Connections was on hand June 15, 2013, when Senator Reid's office, together with UNLV's Office of Veterans Services and Career Services, hosted the Veterans Career Fair & Workshops. In attendance at the event were 156 representatives from 88 actively hiring employers. The event was open to all veterans, service members and dependents and was well attended with 220 attendees. The Career Fair offered workshops on resume and interview skills, VA benefits, and ways to "turbo charge" the job search by effectively using social media.

- **Community Fair**, hosted by Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus (NLHC). On March 2, 2013 the NHLC organized a Workforce Development Community Fair at the Rafael Rivera Community Center. WC staff was present to provide information on WIA resources available through the One Stop System. The STEM-based Green Mobile Classroom was there as well to engage youth in attendance.
- **Community Fair**, hosted by State Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, County Commissioner Lawrence Weekly, and North Las Vegas City Councilman Anita Wood. Workforce Connections was present at the event “Standing at the Crossroads” at Goynes Park. Strong vendor turnout provided over 31 community agencies the opportunity to interact with residents and provide much needed information and resources to the area. All of workforce Connections funded partners were present.
- **Job Fair**, hosted by Congressman Joe Heck. During this last program year Workforce Connections assisted Congressman Joe Heck’s office with assisting with two different job fairs. The goal of these job fairs was to connect future members of Southern Nevada’s workforce with companies that were actively recruiting new workers. Over 40 employers participated in each event. Both job fairs also provided workshops for attendees that assisted them on the spot with resume and cover letter preparation and interview skills. A workshop was also conducted at each event that was specific to Veterans.



Formula Funds

Program Year 2012 service providers for Adult and Dislocated Workers

Bridge Counseling Associates

Bridge Counseling Associates provides employment and training services to Southern Nevada residents. Employment services include but are not limited to resume building, job search assistance, interview skills, assessments, referral information, etc. With regard to training services offered; BCA assists eligible participants with trainings in the following sectors:

- Logistics (Truck Driving)
- Clean Energy (Heating and Air Conditioner Repair & Refrigeration Repair)
- Healthcare (Substance Abuse Counselor Training)

Bridge Counseling Associates also provides follow up services to ensure employment retention. All services are offered on a one-on-one basis which provides participants with undivided attention from their case manager as well as privacy for sensitive matters.

Easter Seals Nevada

Easter Seals of Nevada provides services for individuals with disabilities, impairments, challenged with barriers to employment. Services are provided through a mix of intensive services such as employment & training assessments, an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), Job Development, short-term prevocational skills and in-house training tools. In house training tools include Dress for Success, Resume Writing, Job Search Tools, Interview Skills, Body Language Skills, Transferable Skills, Customer Service, and Soft Skills. These types of services assist an individual with disabilities to prepare and learn skills to successfully enter the workforce, or re-enter after an illness or injury. Training is individualized and the focus is placed on the individual's abilities versus their disability.

Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow (FIT)

FIT provides job seekers with the tools necessary to find and maintain employment, while at the same time creating a deep and talented workforce that will help businesses succeed and grow the economy.

We work with any and all individuals lacking the skills required to compete in today's workforce, and who wish to obtain or advance a career in one of Nevada's identified high-growth sectors.

We achieve our goals through a combination of free in-house trainings in the areas of digital literacy, work readiness, and job search techniques, as well as training provided through vocational schools and partner employers.

Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow – Re-Entry Program

FIT Re-Entry Initiative provides ex-offenders with the tools necessary to successfully reintegrate back into the workforce.

Services provided include the following:

- Financial support for Occupational Skills Trainings, as determined on a case-by-case basis using a holistic assessment that takes into account: employment goals, the nature of previous charges and convictions, current aptitude and skillset, and previous work experience
- On-the-Job Training (OJT)
- “Stages of Employment” re-entry job readiness workshop that focuses on time management skills, effective job searching, and interviewing techniques.
- Individualized and intensive case management and career counseling, along with follow up retention services for one year after employment has been obtained
- Tools, uniforms, work cards and other items required for employment once a person has been hired for a job
- Courses in basic computers and digital literacy

GNJ Family Life Center

GNJ’s WIA program provides registered participants with labor market information, career assessments, community resources, GED testing, personal development classes and employability workshops. In addition, registered participants may receive support services, assistance with the cost of training and employment placement.

Goodwill of Southern Nevada, Inc.

“A hand up, not a handout”, an idea conceived by Goodwill’s founder 110 years ago, still guides Goodwill Industries of Southern Nevada, Inc. in fulfilling its workforce development mission today. At Goodwill, we believe that work creates the economic energy that builds strong families and strong communities.

Through our signature Career Connections Program we give job seekers year-round access to a comprehensive and holistic menu of job training and work readiness services, job search tools, career advice, one-on-one counseling, job leads as well as critically needed supportive services. Our efforts are supported by an exceptionally qualified, compassionate and motivated staff providing services in three office locations.

Latin Chamber of Commerce Community Foundation

The mission of the Latin Chamber of Commerce Community Foundation is to carry on and expand the social, cultural and educational program of the Latin Chamber of Commerce. Taking a family-centered approach, the Foundation provides services for persons throughout the lifespan. Youth programs provide GED completion, occupational and on the job training, tutoring, scholarships, culturally based leadership programs and programs to help out of school youth. Adult and Dislocated Worker programs provide unemployed and underemployed Nevada adults with workforce development and training, job placement, occupational training and supportive services. The Arturo Cambeiro Senior Center provides seniors in the Hispanic community with high quality adult day healthcare programs.

Lincoln Adult Workforce

The Lincoln Adult workforce provides career services, training opportunities, and OJT/WEX to participants and clients. Career services include resume workshops and job hunting support. The training opportunities align with the ETPL and in demand occupations. The majority of our clients do online trainings through PBS Vegas Virtual education. We also work closely with local businesses to provide On the Job trainings for new employees, or employees that want to grow in their current job, and work experiences for those that have little to no work history. Lincoln Adult Workforce is growing and becoming well known among the community.

Nevada Hospital Association

The Nevada Hospital Association's Health Care 20/20 Program focuses on the health care industry sector by transitioning unemployed new graduate registered nurses into professional practice. The program helps them with training, job placement and supportive services in order to allow them to be economically self-sufficient. Health Care 20/20 helps in bridging the gap between the new graduate nurse and the community hospitals' New Grad Nurse Residency Programs.

The program also helps employers find and retain competent and qualified workers through On-the-Job (OJT) training.

Nevada Partners Inc.

Nevada Partners, Inc. is a community-based, nonprofit agency in North Las Vegas, Nevada. Their mission is to build a healthy, sustainable community where all residents achieve their full potential through effective education, meaningful employment, safe and affordable housing, and vibrant civic and cultural engagement. By collaborating with

private employers, public agencies, community and faith-based groups, they are able to connect youth, adults, and dislocated workers with the support they need to thrive.

Nye Communities Coalition

NyECC Career Connections is committed to delivering quality accessible service in a number of sectors including: manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, mining and clean energy. Through increasing collaboration with business, community, civic and non-profit organizations we strive to connect job seekers with employers through innovative strategies. Our program serves Nye and Esmeralda County which covers almost 22,000 square miles. To put this rural service area into perspective there are a little over two people per square mile. In addition to Adult Workforce the coalition offers Youth Workforce as well as Health and Wellness programs as we move towards the One Stop model.

Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority

Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority focuses on the Green Economy and Health Care industry sectors by exposing participants to career development and work readiness training bundled with supportive services, career coaching, on the job training and job search assistance to help participants become self-sufficient. The typical participant is an unemployed or underemployed resident of the Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority or an eligible individual 18 years of age and older in the Las Vegas metropolitan area.

Program Year 2012 service providers for youth

GNJ Family Life Center

GNJ serves the youth community through a mix of innovative practices including the following: Easy enrollment through a Quick Response code (QR). This QR code links to the enrollment questionnaire and enables the youth to complete the form from their cell phone any time or anywhere. GNJ's Career Simulation Center provides a hands-on classroom offering our participants real life employment simulations. This is done by immersing them in a physical work environment for either retail or a business office. We have also introduced an innovative track to employment titled; "Youth Industry Sector Bus Tour" that will introduce our youth participants to the industry sectors of Nevada.

Goodwill of Southern Nevada

Goodwill of Southern Nevada's youth program, ELITE, provides educational, training and employment services to youth with disabilities and other barriers to education and employment. Services are tailored to meet the specific needs of each individual and can include tutoring, GED test preparation, career planning, on-the-job work experiences and occupational skills trainings where they can develop positive and productive work skills to help maximize their quality of life.

Help of Southern Nevada's WIA Youth Program

HELP of Southern Nevada provides educational and work readiness services in a positive support system to help youth obtain career and educational aspirations. Participants take part in educational planning and credentialing assistance, work readiness, leadership development and life skills support programming. In the past year, HELP served homeless and/or at risk youth in the areas of Las Vegas, Searchlight, Sandy Valley, Jean and Good Springs with educational and employment related assistance to be successful in achieving educational and career goals. Credit deficient seniors received support and advocacy services to help ensure increased numbers of high school graduates in Basic, Bonanza, Chaparral, Cimarron, Clark, Del Sol and Sunrise Mountain High Schools.

Latin Chamber Community Foundation (Youth)

The Foundation's Summer and Out of School Youth programs provide participants with assistance in completing high school or GED, career counseling, occupational training assistance work experience and job placement to help youth move from couch to career. Our goals with youth include assisting them with completion of a high school diploma or equivalent, entering the workplace, college or the military, and demonstrating improvements in literacy and numeracy. These goals are achieved using a one on one case management approach in which the following services are utilized:

- Tutoring
- GED/High School Completion
- Individualized career coaching
- On the Job Training in high demand job sectors such as Healthcare, Logistics, IT and Manufacturing
- Occupational training including truck driving, medical assistant, HVAC and many others
- Transportation, childcare, work-related tools, clothing assistance and other supportive services on an as-needed basis

Lincoln County Youth Career Program

Our program works with both in school and out of school youth in rural Lincoln County. We provide career services as well as educational support such as tutoring and credit retrieval. Career services that we focus on are resume workshops and interview skills classes. We also do interest surveys and help youth figure out what careers interest them and what they want to do in the future. Tutoring and credit retrieval are helpful to youth here due to the lack of summer school and private tutoring services. We like to help the youth of Lincoln County succeed!

Nevada Partners Inc.

Nevada Partners (NPI) provides an array of programming designed to ensure that youth secure educational credentials and viable post-secondary opportunities. Targeted to reach high-risk schools and zip codes, NPI provides academic advisement, career counseling, and developmental support in the areas of leadership, health and wellbeing, mental health and life skills.

Nye Communities Coalition

The Youth WERKS program has been running for 5 years serving Nye and Esmeralda County. We focus on youth age 16 to 21 that have low-income and a second barrier preventing them from attaining employment or completing their educational goals. Youth WERKS staff work closely with youth by building positive work ethics, strengthening their personal development, and helping them become successful young adults. Staff are able to do this by providing trainings on: job interview skills, resume building, hygiene classes, group development, and activities involving communication skills, team building, and more. It is our goal to reach all eligible youth within our communities and provide the structure and support to attain their goals.

Olive Crest

Project Independence is a program serving current and former foster youth, ages 17-21. The program is dedicated to helping our youth complete their high school diploma or

GED, pursue a trade certificate or secondary education and to assist our youth with securing a job or internship that will match their individual interests and financial needs. Project Independence is focused on helping every youth create a strong set of personal skills that will help them on their journey to become successful, self-supporting adults. We accomplish this goal by providing workshops related to resume building, interview preparation and overall work readiness.

Southern Nevada Children's First

Southern Nevada Children's First has incorporated a unique wrap around program, with multiple services for their customers, with emphasis on all aspects of their development into adulthood. Participants are provided assistance in transitional housing, support service to the homeless youth and youth adults, eliminating the largest barrier to participation in mainstream society and programming. With intensive focus on self-sufficiency and independent citizens in their community. Southern Nevada Children's First provides intensive case management with an array of programs and trainings such as; mental health counseling, education and career planning, child care, life skills training, men's group, nutrition classes, anger management, high school tutoring on site, proficiency preparations classes; parenting classes, and virtual high school on site.

Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority

Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority's YES Program provides educational and employment services in a comprehensive approach to help youth who have struggled to better be able to achieve their goals. The YES Program will create opportunities for youth in its program to explore career options in the fields of Science, Math, Engineering and Technology. Youth have access to a full range of services to support their goals of obtaining their educational credential and pursuing the career of their choice, including services that address barriers that may have stopped them from succeeding before.

Youth Advocate Program

The Re-Entry program focuses on 17-21 year old youth that are at-risk/high-risk in the Clark County and Lincoln County area; a past with parole/probation, criminal history and/or homeless. We work with the Caliente Youth Center and Spring Mountain Youth Center to ensure high risk youth that are exiting these facilities succeed and act as a "step-up" program in assisting them with continued community support. This program focuses on job skill training, vocational skills and educational services to ensure that youth leave with gainful employment, techniques and knowledge to keep a job and/or a professional work reference. YAP has in house licensed social workers and counselors who counsel youth who are in need of Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Services. Youth are assisted with obtaining their GED/High School Diploma, scholarships to technical trade schools, college and continued educational programs.

Non-Formula Funds

YouthBuild Grant

YouthBuild Las Vegas (YBLV) continues to focus on supporting economically vulnerable youth in achieving academic success and receiving vocational training. Via a partnership with Habitat for Humanity Las Vegas, YBLV continues its emphasis on building and/or rehabilitating low-income housing, while youth commit to civic engagement and leadership development.

In 2012 YBLV received its initial YouthBuild AmeriCorps award. Since YBLV is already serving communities, developing leaders and providing educational opportunities for young people, becoming a YouthBuild AmeriCorps program gave greater recognition to the service-orientation of its model and provided opportunities for participants to see themselves as change agents within their communities. In addition, upon successful completion of their service, members receive the Eli Segal AmeriCorps Education Award to put towards post-secondary education and/or advanced vocational training opportunities.



Youthbuild participants get hands on experience and the opportunity to learn about construction.

SESP Grant

In 2010 Nevada received the State Energy Sector Partnership (SESP) Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. The SESP grant was designed to provide programs and services aimed at training Nevada's current and future workforce for jobs in the green economy. Through SESP, WC provided training funds for Job Seekers and Incumbent Workers aiming to improve their green skills, as well as green career pathways for Youth ages 14-

21. Since December of 2010, a total 3,333 participants were served by WC (1,214 above and beyond the initial target of 2,119 participants). The original award was \$3,503,000. In December of 2012 an additional SESP award of \$200,000 was received to serve participants specifically in the Healthcare Information Technology field, an emerging green practice. An additional 130 participants were served with the second award. 108 were Incumbent Workers and 22 were Job Seekers.

The grant period of performance ended on June 30, 2013. Here is a summary of the SESP grant outcomes:

- Participants enrolled in training: 3,463 (100%)
 - 502 Job Seekers
 - 1,326 Incumbent Workers
 - 1,635 Youth
- Participants that completed training: 3,013 (87%)
- Participants that received a certificate: 2,632 (76%)
- After completion of the training:
 - 382 Job Seekers (76%) were placed into employment
 - 1,323 Incumbent Workers (99%) retained their employment and/or received promotions
 - 1,439 Youth (88%) were on the path to post-secondary activity

As part of the SESP Sustainability Plan, all grant strategies and activities identified for sustainment have been incorporated into the WIA program model moving forward.



The Green Mobile Classroom is equipped with STEM interactive labs and hands-on activities. The classroom is powered by solar energy (see photo-voltaic panels on the roof).

Layoff Aversion Grant

Layoff Aversion is a proactive upstream strategy on the continuum of Rapid Response. Operating at the intersection of economic development and workforce development, the objective is to assist businesses in high-growth industries that are experiencing operational challenges in an effort to avert layoffs and/or business closure.

In the last year, we were able to significantly impact businesses in the health care sector assisting physicians and their medical offices in the following specialties: Oral Surgery / Dentistry, Obstetrics/Gynecology, Cosmetic Surgery, Orthopedic Surgery, Pediatrics and Geriatrics. The challenges that these medical offices were experiencing includes the following: financial problems, declining patient load, operational inefficiencies, lack of workforce development and training, acquiring and implementing Health Information Technology (HIT), insurance contracting, Cross-training staff and Relocation to rural Nevada where health care is needed most.

As a result of our assistance, all of our clients not only survived their business challenges, but are now thriving in what many still believe is a difficult economy. With Workforce Connections' skilled business consultants and their use of dynamic community resources, the health care sector is stronger and more equipped to deliver the highest quality care available.

Department of Justice – “Get Out” grant

Workforce Connections was awarded a Second Chance Act demonstration grant through the Department of Justice in the fall of 2010. The primary goal of this grant was to train ex-offenders in Photovoltaic Installation. This training consisted of 40 hours of classroom instruction, a final exam and preparation for the State of Nevada Photovoltaic Installers License administered by OSHA. For the past two years Workforce Connections has enrolled 391 ex-offenders into this program, and 372 ex-offenders completed the training successfully. Eligible trainees were identified with assistance from Nevada Department of Corrections at the following facilities: High Desert State Prison, Southern Desert Correctional Facility, Florence McClure Women's Correctional Facility and Casa Grande Transitional Center. Upon the trainees' release Workforce Connections assisted in referring to employers and other partnering agencies with further employment and training needs. This grant was successfully completed in December 2012.

PEOPLE, PARTNERSHIPS, POSSIBILITIES

Possibilities Put to Work: Highlights from 2012

Formulation of One Stop Career Center



In the midst of a challenging economy and the growing need for job opportunities in southern Nevada, Workforce Connections has implemented and opened the new Southern Nevada One Stop Career Center. Within a year of facing a myriad of challenges, the staff sought the support of independent consultants, with cumulative years of technical know-how and hands on experience, who guided them in the implementation and development of a cutting edge operation.

The success of this system is driven by the collaboration of many workforce system leaders and system partners who understand the demand driven economics of this area of the state and are willing to offer programs and services to meet these needs. The One Stop Career Center was designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers and employers under one roof.

The initial start of this project focused on developing a successful Center by hiring and training capable staff, seeking Consortium partnerships and developing key operational processes to affect a successful launch. The One Stop Career Center Consortium members which consisted of required partners (per WIA regulation) and community businesses and service providers worked diligently to craft the conceptual framework under which the center would operate.

Thirty-one (31) One Stop Delivery Systems Partnerships agreements were executed and all agreed to work toward common goals and measures in a “One Stop” partnership.

The majority of the required partners have signed on and we are constantly seeking partners to join our effort of serving the residents of Southern Nevada. The partners bring a myriad of occupational training options to the center such as:

- Careers in Culinary
- General Office training
- Medical Billing training
- Security Guard training
- Call Center training
- Administrative Assistant training
- Allied Health career training
- HVAC training
- CDL Trucking Certification

In addition to the aforementioned opportunities for training onsite classes will be held to develop or enhance skills for those customers who are underemployed or unemployed. Persons with Disabilities are also encouraged to visit our center to receive services from the State of Nevada's Vocational Rehabilitation Division.

Veterans receive first priority at the One Stop Career Center. The partners in the center will help Veterans find jobs and opportunities for which they qualify for by helping them translate their military job experience into civilian job criteria. In addition to priority referrals to jobs, vets can also enroll in the free job search workshops, find help developing a resume, learn about career training programs and get help understanding the network of veterans' benefits available through the Veterans Administration, state and local government.

The importance of selecting a site for the One Stop Career Center was also a critical consideration. Finding a location in an underserved area with high demand needs and accessible transportation was critical. The selected site is located across the street from the College of Southern Nevada, a two year college with an enrollment of 38,000 students, a perfect initial audience for the delivery of the One Stop Career Center's Core Services. (I.e. computer access, notary services, job search activities, resume building, assessment testing, employment statistics etc.)

Prior to the official opening of the Center, "casual drop-ins" averaged 45- 50 per day. On June 28th the Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening took place and the Southern Nevada One Stop Career Center, located at 6330 West Charleston Blvd, was officially opened for business. In addition to the central location, an affiliate computer training site was set up in January 2013. This site offers local residents computer literacy training in an area where a large percent of the underserved and unemployed population reside.

Consideration is now being given for an expansion of these services by opening additional One Stop Career Centers to service residents throughout Southern Nevada. The One Stop Career Center is on the move in Southern Nevada and putting people back to work..... "Moving Nevada Forward"

STEM Initiatives

Since World War 2, half of the U.S. economic growth has been due to scientific and technological innovation. In the immediate future, employment in STEM based occupations will grow 70% faster than employment in other occupations. Occupations in STEM fields generally provide good salaries, benefits and advancement opportunities. However the U.S. is losing its status as a preeminent scientific and technological innovator. In 1970, 50% of the people who held science and engineering doctorates in the world were Americans. By 2010, it had dwindled to 15%. The international competitiveness of the U.S. fell from 1st to 7th. Foreign-owned companies and foreign-owned investors now account for nearly half of all patents granted in the U.S. Businesses in the growing sectors of the U.S. economy are encountering a shortage of qualified workers with STEM skills. STEM knowledge has become essential whether workers are on the factory floor or in the executive suite. Employers want both entry-level and managerial workers to have the types of critical-thinking, problem-solving and teamwork skills that study of STEM can develop. Furthermore, all youth and adults need these skills in everyday life to solve problems and make decisions.

WC's original STEM program "What's It Mean To Be Green?" exposes participants to careers in the clean energy industry, one of the Governor's identified industry sectors. WC has expanded its STEM programs to include activities that expose participants to careers in the other sectors as well. The nine identified sectors are:

- Aerospace and Defense
- Agriculture
- Clean Energy
- Healthcare and Medical Services
- Information Technology
- Logistics and Operations
- Manufacturing
- Mining and Materials
- Tourism, Gaming and Entertainment



The "What's It Mean To Be Green?" program utilizes curriculum and hands-on activities to introduce youth to the green economy and green career pathways.

National Job Shadow Day



For the third consecutive year Workforce Connections has partnered with the Clark County School District Community Partnership Program to host National Job Shadow Day. This collaboration aims to increase high school graduation rates, encourage students to enroll in post-secondary education, and connect the business and education communities in order to develop the future workforce.

This year's National Job Shadow Day was expanded to include every level of high school student. On February 4, 2013, approximately 350 of these 9th-12th graders visited various businesses and got their chance to “view their future” while engaging workforce professionals about the necessary skills needed to work in a variety of career fields. Consistent with Governor Sandoval's State Plan for Economic Development, National Job Shadow Day 2013 focused its “job shadows” within the eight identified industry sectors. These include Aerospace and Defense, Business IT Ecosystems, Clean Energy, Health & Medical Services, Logistics & Operations, Mining, Materials & Manufacturing, and Tourism, Gaming & Entertainment. The eight sectors not only leverage Nevada's strengths, but also provide the highest potential of labor market opportunities in core and emerging sectors for the Silver State's future workforce.

Rural Development

Workforce Connections is expanding efforts in the rural areas of Southern Nevada by creating an interconnected virtual support system. By coordinating with local elected officials, local chambers of commerce, economic development initiatives and educational institutions such as University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Great Basin College, Workforce Connections is assisting rural areas create capacity in their communities that support both their local economies as well as connecting them to urban areas of Southern Nevada.

Success Stories



Bridge Counseling Associates

A man came to Bridge Counseling Associates 04/04/2013 looking for work. During his initial assessment it was discovered that this participant was homeless and living in a shelter with no job or family. He had just been informed that he would no longer have a place in the shelter and needed to find another place to stay. His case manager immediately began looking up shelters and found him a place to stay. The only requirement was that he make strides toward self-sufficiency.

During the initial assessment it was discovered that this participant had many years of truck driver experience but it was too long ago to get a job in the field. Participant stated that he has been trying to get back into the field but could not afford to get his license and didn't have a truck to use for the driver's test. With help from his case manager, this participant was able to gather all eligibility documentation and was enrolled into the program.

BCA determined that this participant needed training in order to return to his desired career field. Participant with enrolled into training with Southwest Truck Driver Training and within 4 weeks had his class A CDL. Client completed training on a Thursday and left Las Vegas for orientation Sunday with Werner Enterprises. Client is now out on the road and living in his truck. He is ecstatic that all of his income is his as he has no expenses. This participant is well on his way to full self-sufficiency.



Easter Seals Nevada

Easter Seals Nevada has enrolled an individual with a physical disability. She is a voluntary retirement and honorably discharged Veteran. This individual is a 50 years old, Hispanic female that would like to re-enter into an administration position whether in the tourism industry or medical services. She has physical barriers that limit her flexibility, stamina, ability to lift, kneel, bend, and overall be able to withstand the physical demands of a full-time shift within her previous position of healthcare. Through the assessment, development of an Individual Employment Plan the employment team discussed the types of jobs she would be best matched for due to her high level of customer service and management skills experience. She was very realistic in her pay range with transitioning into an entry level job with a company to then grow within. She was also flexible in changing fields and would consider training available to secure a new field of employment. The best practice of this enrollment was the candidate's participation and acceptance of responsibility for her own employment. The Job Developer was in weekly

contact with the individual following up on leads and developing other interview opportunities. The individual did accept a Reservation Coordinator position that had few physical demands, focused on customer service skills in the tourism industry, has medical & holiday benefits, overtime compensation, ability for sales compensation, and was full-time status. Individual was employed within thirty days of WIA enrollment.



Foundation for an Independent Tomorrow (FIT)

Despite years of hard work in the fast food industry, 27 year-old Tysa could not bring in enough money to support herself and her 7 year-old son. She felt limited to a life of minimum wage jobs. At FIT, through vocational assessments and research, Tysa learned she was a great candidate for the dental field.

After Tysa enrolled in and completed free classes offered at the FIT office in computer literacy and introductory medical terminology - so that she would have the proficiency in those areas needed to be successful both in school and in the workplace - FIT paid for her books and tuition at an approved Dental Assistant training program. Tysa was also provided with bus passes to help with the added transportation costs getting to and from school. Despite the difficulty in balancing work, school and home life, Tysa was motivated by her son and maintained a 4.0 GPA through training.

Tysa is now employed as a Dental Assistant and is already in line for a raise. She is well on her way to a stable career that enables her to provide for her son!



Goodwill of Southern Nevada

Las Vegas is a tough place to find work for a 43 year old who just moved to town, but add in two felony convictions, including a 12 year prison sentence for manslaughter and drugs, and the odds become even lower. This did not stop Goodwill's Career Connections and WIA client Marcus from working together to find a career.

Marcus was working as a welder in another state and was laid off from his job. He moved to Las Vegas looking to start over, and heard about Goodwill's Career Connections program from his family. He came in during April 2013 and met with our staff to talk about changing careers to less physically demanding work. Marcus was enrolled into WIA and was able to receive transportation assistance to evaluate training locations to fulfill his goal of becoming a truck driver. After researching his options, Marcus chose Southwest Trucking and Goodwill was able to pay for his training with WIA funding and get him enrolled into a truck driver program within a few weeks of

meeting with us. We were able to assist Marcus with his transportation needs while he attended school and provide encouragement along the way.

After graduating, Marcus was able to secure full-time employment with a Henderson based company as a driver and is now able to afford his own housing versus living with family. Marcus told Career Connection's staff he was "grateful for the opportunity and for someone to believe in him versus judging him for his past".



GNJ Family Life Center

Mahogany Ducon has an astounding story of how a dream can be made a reality with the help of GNJ's WIA Youth Funding. Mahogany came into the program not sure if she could achieve her dream of becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). She informed staff that ever since she could remember, she had dreamed of taking care of people who were sick. After researching several CNA programs she realized that she did not have the personal finances to attend the training, making it almost impossible for her to achieve her dream. After hearing about GNJ's youth programs and training services, she came to our office to ascertain if we could assist her with the cost of training. GNJ paid for her to attend the CNA training at CSN and through perseverance and determination, she successfully completed the course. Approximately a month after she graduated, she took the state exam and passed. Now she is a licensed CNA.



Help of Southern Nevada

Michael, an 18 year old unemployed and high school dropout enrolled in HELP of Southern Nevada's WIA Youth Program at our Searchlight branch. His highest level of education was 10th grade due to being expelled because of behavior issues. After receiving supportive services to help remove some of his barriers, he slowly started getting back on track. He enrolled in an online High School and started taking a Mining course to further his education for a possible employment opportunity. Along with hard work and perseverance, he received a Certificate of Training from the U.S. Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration. Shortly afterwards, he was hired as a Construction Laborer in the Mining Field at Skanska USA Civil West, Rocky Mountain District Inc. In addition, he studied to get good grades and obtained a High School Diploma from Jefferson High School. We are proud of this young man for perseveringly and being an excellent role model to the other youth in our program.

Latin Chamber of Commerce Community Foundation



As a client enrolled in the Out of School Youth Program at the Latin Chamber of Commerce Community Foundation, William Llamas' story captures the essence of what wise investment in at-risk youth can accomplish. Mr. Llamas is one of four brothers raised by a single mother in Las Vegas. Without appropriate support and motivation, Mr. Llamas became increasingly disengaged from his studies in high school. He dropped out of high school before completing the eleventh grade. Responding to the Latin Chamber Foundation's recruitment efforts, Mr. Llamas learned about our Out of School Youth Program. Mr. Llamas was enrolled and provided with an individual plan for his development and growth. Through tutoring and supportive services, the Youth Case Management team helped William increase his literacy and numeracy skills. As an exemplary client, Mr. Llamas regularly attended tutoring sessions, complied with programmatic requests and remained determined to improve the prospects for his future through education, training and hard work. Not only did Mr. Llamas increase his demonstrated Literacy and Numeracy gains, he recently earned his GED. After completing the GED, Mr. Llamas entered into a Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Program to pursue work in this field. Mr. Llamas will shortly complete his HVAC training, and is sure to enter the HVAC field and enjoy a rewarding and productive career in service to the community.



Lincoln County Youth Career Program

One of the success stories that we have for the youth program is an out of school youth that was interested in going to college to become a Veterinary tech. She was unsure how to do it and by the end of her time working with us we had her in college in Las Vegas at PIMA. She has been taking classes since March and has loved it. She went to the shelter the other day to work with the animals and is really happy with her choice to leave Lincoln County and pursue her dream of working with animals.

Lincoln Adult Workforce

One of the Adult participants needed help finding full time work and wanted to take a bookkeeper class online. She was able to secure employment through the program by working on her resume and interview skills. She has maintained the job for over six (6) months and will be finished with her Bookkeeper class at the end of the month. With her certificate she hopes to find employment in the field and work full time. Without the

support of the Adult program she would not have been able to get started and stay living in Caliente.



Nevada Hospital Association

M. Martinez from MountainView Hospital stated:

“I always knew that I would be a nurse, but I placed my dream on hold for 21 years in order to raise my two sons. When my youngest son was a freshman in high school, I started taking nursing classes, one class at a time, and when he was off to college, I enrolled in a nursing program. After receiving my nursing license, I enrolled with Health Care 20/20 and was offered to train in the New Grad Nursing Program with MountainView Hospital.”

The Health Care 20/20 Program has proven to be very successful in developing excellent new grad nurses and employer partners have shown their satisfaction with the program’s outcome. It proves that dreams do come true.



Nevada Partners (ADW)

One of the year’s greatest success stories is the story of Ms. Staten. Ms. Staten began her journey with Nevada Partners in March 2012, as a student in need of licensing and work supports. With the initial assistance she received, Ms. Staten secured employment in the healthcare sector at the tremendous wage of \$32.50 per hour. Within 90 days, Ms. Staten’s wage increased to \$68.00 per hour. After much success in the healthcare field, Ms. Staten opened her own business this spring. With firm appreciation for the value of workforce development services, Ms. Staten now supports on-the-job training for motivated individuals desiring to enter the healthcare field. Workforce Investment Act services are changing lives!



Nevada Partners (Youth)

In January 2012, I. Smith enrolled with Nevada Partners as a young father and high school dropout. Reengaged in education through adult education services, Mr. Smith struggled with obtaining his diploma while overcoming challenges with family and

financial support. Committed to Mr. Smith's success, Nevada Partners enrolled Mr. Smith in the Academy of Human Development to provide additional support with attaining a credential. Along this journey, Mr. Smith attended tutoring weekly, job searched, and overcame bouts of homelessness. Through perseverance, solid partnerships and intensive case management, Mr. Smith has graduated, secured employment at a major grocer, and purchased his first vehicle. This fall, Mr. Smith will attend the College of Southern Nevada. Workforce Investment Act Youth Services are changing lives!



NYE Communities Coalition

The biggest success of the past year is the increase in collaboration with other agencies and organization. NyECC continues to take steps to move toward the One Stop model. With youth and adult workforce on the same campus we can serve job seekers of all ages and backgrounds. Our health, wellness and prevention division offers classes to quit smoking, manage diabetes or chronic disease and child car seat inspections and installations.

In the second half of the year we increased program reach by focusing on OJT's and hiring events. We were part of a group that organized a county-wide Job Fair that attracted 40 employers and 400 job seekers. This set the table for developing a monthly Job Fair on our campus. OJT's were setup with 21 clients at 10 businesses. The average wage was \$12.50 per hour.

Operating under the One Stop model we partner with Health and Human Services, VITA Tax Program and Vocational Rehabilitation on campus. A new initiative with the Pahrump library will establish a "Job Zone". This will increase access by extending hours and days to available services.

NOW HERE is where NyECC Career Connections is at. We are here to make a difference in the lives of Nye and Esmeralda County residents.



NYE Communities Coalition (Youth)

There are many success stories in our 2012-2013 program year. We would like to share the story of one particular youth who stood out. Dallas Kelley came to us as a 17 year old teen mother. She had not completed high school, did not have family support throughout her pregnancy, was unemployed and was filled with doubt.

Dallas has come a long way since then. She completed her GED by taking the classes offered on campus and receiving financial assistance to pay for the exam. Dallas gained a work experience in our Campus Café and was provided with assistance to become ServSafe certified. NyECC previously ran a restaurant on campus named “Campus Café” that later transformed into Campus Catering. This allows youth with a culinary interest to gain real-world work experience in their career choice. Shortly after, Dallas then became employed at two different restaurants in town. She recently received a promotion to management. Dallas has also had a goal to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. She is now enrolled and on her way at Great Basic College. All Dallas needed was someone to hold her accountable, provide trainings and financial support in order to meet all her goals and become a successful WIA youth.



Removed from his parents at the age of 9 and placed with his grandmother until the age of 13, Jeremy was again removed from family and lived in 3 more foster homes by the time he turned 18. Jeremy was ready and eager to emancipate from the foster care system, but with his 16-month-old son, Jeremy Jr. at home, the need to make ends meet came with a much more significant price than that of other youth his age. Motivated to beat the odds and with a perseverance that Jeremy himself describes as a “Blessing from God,” Jeremy chose to stay voluntarily under the jurisdiction of the court. Jeremy was referred to the Olive Crest Project Independence program in May 2013. Since that time, he has received his high school diploma, secured a part-time job in the retail industry and is set to start college in the fall. With the knowledge that Jeremy is the recipient of a \$10,000 scholarship and working diligently towards his goal of becoming a therapist and providing for his family, Project Independence recently loaded him up with a new backpack full of school supplies, a gift card for graduating from high school, and a box of diapers for Jeremy Jr. With a grin that lights up any room he enters, Jeremy exudes humility and hope for his future. The team at Project Independence is grateful and honored to be a part of Jeremy’s journey.



Southern Nevada Children’s First

Our success story for the month at Southern Nevada Children’s First is a client in our WIA program by the name of A. Carter. This young man’s journey began as a struggle. Carter came to us in the summer of 2012 and was chosen for the work experience training program. Although faced with many challenges, he excelled at his worksite at the 100 Academy, which resulted in him being offered permanent employment.

Upon completion of the employment process, Carter was involved in an altercation at the worksite that resulted in him not getting the permanent position. Feeling remorse, he wrote a letter of apology and took responsibility for his behavior in the incident.

While in his last year of high school, Carter again faced and worked through several challenges. In the last month prior to graduation, there was yet another incident that involved Carter being expelled and told he would not be permitted to walk with his class at graduation. His mother and I teamed up and contacted everyone possible who could assist us in making sure he did walk with his class. We felt that he had worked very hard, overcame many challenges and deserved to walk with his class. He earned that privilege despite the struggles!

In addition to speaking with school staff and officials, Carter was also introduced to a mentor who made himself available to discuss any issues and challenges while awaiting word on whether he would be allowed to walk with his class. This proved to be a wonderful relationship as the two bonded and another positive role model was in his life who offered additional support and guidance.

Mr. Carter did graduate and was allowed to walk with his class! He is currently enrolled in Job Corps and will start that program in the fall of this year. He is also employed, staying out of trouble and will be attending college at UNR when he completes Job Corps.



Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority (Adult)

In February 2012, M. Sunga, a 48 year-old female came to SNRHA, skilled as a pastry baker in CA, having owned her own business. Although she had over three years in CA, she stated that her experience would not allow her to obtain and maintain employment in NV. She was enrolled into the Baker's Helper training at the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas in February 2012 and completed in May of the same year. She was hired at the Vdara, prior to her training completion, earning \$17.31 an hour.

One month following Mrs. Sunga's enrollment, her under-employed husband, N. Sunga, enrolled into the WIA program. He was working at a local convenience store approximately 20 hours per week and earning minimum wage. His desire was to work in the medical field where he could help others and earn more for his family. Mr. Sunga entered training for Phlebotomy at Medical Skills for Life in April 2012, and completed in August 2012. He obtained employment as a Lab Technician within the same month, working full-time, and earning \$10 an hour.



Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority (Youth)

A 19 year-old female, out-of-school youth, enrolled into the GIFT Youth program in July 2012. The daughter of a single mother, she dropped out of high school and went into Job Corp during her tenth-grade year. Lasting a little over two months in Job Corps, she returned home. Her goal upon entering the youth program was to pursue her GED, become a Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) technician, and eventually enroll into the military with a skill. She attended several trainings that were offered through the GIFT program such as OSHA 10, “What’s It Mean to be Green” (WIMTBG), Leadership Training, Tutoring, Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling.

Throughout her time in the program, Miss Johnson has increased her score by one grade level on the Literacy/Numeracy testing. She has performed Work Experience (WEX) in August 2012, at a local HVAC company which led to with On-the-Job Training (OJT). Upon completing OJT she was offered her full-time employment. A short period after being hired in November 2012, Miss Johnson chose to leave her job and place more focus on obtaining her GED in which she received in April 2013. She is now focusing and studying hard to score high on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test to enter the military.

Youth Advocate Program

Alfonso had a rough upbringing as a child. His mother and father were both alcoholics, and his father was incarcerated. As a teenager both of Alfonso’s parents passed away as well. Alfonso went to live with his older sister afterwards. Alfonso was arrested for various reasons and placed on formal juvenile probation. In the 11 months that Alfonso has been a part of the WIA program he has accomplished much. Alfonso started by working at Subway, he then enrolled in a GED program, and found a better job at Food-4-Less. Alfonso also has test anxiety, something he has been dealing with his entire life. With the mentorship and support provided by YAP, Alfonso overcame this and has successfully attained his GED. He has since enrolled in college with the help of a scholarship and desires to enter the military.

Workforce Connections – Layoff Aversion Grant

As both a medical doctor and doctor of dental surgery, Mark Degen was able to offer his patients the most advanced medical and surgical techniques as well as the latest technology to ensure the highest quality care. But no one could pay for his expertise or

technology. For Dr. Degen, employee layoffs were imminent and practice closure a possibility if something did not change.

Unfortunately, most independent medical practices are facing these same challenges.

Across the nation, doctors list shrinking insurance reimbursements, changing regulations, rising business and drug costs among the factors preventing them from keeping their practices afloat. On average, there's a 10 to 15 percent profit leak in a private practice. Much of that is tied to money owed to the practice by patients or insurers.

Dr. Degen's problems represented the complex business challenges of compounding factors: the national recession, Southern Nevada's record breaking unemployment and the inherent challenges of the business of health care.

According to Mark Degen, "Since initiating Workforce Connections' Layoff Aversion program in May 2012, Red Rock Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Center has recognized a 10 percent annual increase over last year's numbers within six months; retained three employees for whom employment was at risk; and added an additional three employees as of December 2012 - a 100 percent increase in staff. Overall Red Rock Oral has been able to right our business and grow with the assistance of the Workforce Connections 'Dream Team' of consultants."