Utah Department of Workforce Services

Annual Report 2002

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Utah's Job Connection

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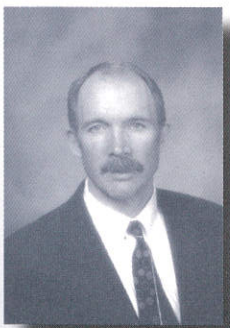
2002 was a historical year. We welcomed the world to Utah. For one brief moment, millions of members of the world community otherwise unable to make their own pioneer trek to the Beehive state, captured glimpses of a place unlike any other. Surely some of those images conveyed the message that we are an industrious, thoughtful, and forward-looking citizenry, eager to greet the future while honoring our past.

The close of the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympics marked the beginning of a march toward 1000 days of progress. The future we will build together will be marked by our investment in people, quality job creation, and building of livable communities.

We are pleased to present the Department of Workforce Services' (DWS) sixth annual report. Thanks to Governor Michael O. Leavitt, the Utah State Legislature, our Councils on Workforce Services, our agency and community partners, and especially all of our hard-working people, we remain a national leader dedicated to the unemployed, underemployed, and working citizens of Utah, as well as the employers that conduct business here. The economic weakness felt all over the nation is first witnessed on the front lines of the public employment services. We are responding and our employees are performing heroic deeds each day.

In this report, you will read about many of the accomplishments this year in workforce development, complemented by data that paint a picture of Utah's workforce, economy, and outlook for the future. Yet, a few especially significant events necessitate mention here:

- Utah's workforce development system is an effective network of services and programs targeted at improving the state's workforce through productivity, employment, earnings, and customer satisfaction. The governor and legislature's vision for integrated workforce services in a system of one-stop employment centers has become a reality. We continued this year, as we will the next, to refine and improve the system after which many states are modeling theirs.



- In April, the governor consulted with his State Council on Workforce Services. He directed us to develop a workforce development plan that prepares, markets, and connects Utah's workforce with the jobs of the future in order to feed job growth, increase earnings, and benefit all Utah citizens. We responded and drafted a system plan that binds all the partners and resources relevant to developing Utah's workforce. The heads of public, applied technology, and higher education as well as community and economic development, and many others have all weighed in and support the plan.

- In July, we received a $3.8 million bonus from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for our successful efforts in welfare reform through the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Specifically, the bonus recognized our achievements in helping public assistance recipient customers move into work and sustain their success in the workforce.

- We continue to move closer to the governor's ideal of an e-government organization, making significant progress in the delivery of services to Utah citizens via telephone and the Internet. In November, we successfully launched *jobs.utah.gov*, perhaps the most sophisticated public, employment matching system on the Web. Via *jobs.utah.gov*, employers can find qualified job seekers and job seekers can find good jobs to support their families.

We continue to do our part to lead economic recovery and respectfully submit the following annual report. We look forward to 2003 with great optimism.

Raylene G. Ireland

Executive Director
Department of Workforce Services

Randy C. Emery

Chair
State Council on Workforce Services and
Vice-President, Acordia Mountain West

Utah's 1000-Day Workforce Development Plan

To support Utah's 1000-Day Economic Plan created by Governor Leavitt, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) in conjunction with its State and Regional Councils on Workforce Services, created Utah's 1000-Day Workforce Development Plan. The plan mirrors the Governor's vision for economic prosperity – that quality jobs are available statewide. By investing in people, developing Utah as a center for technology, and by enhancing life quality, DWS will ensure that job growth exceeds the growth of the workforce, that earnings outpace inflation, and that the benefits of economic prosperity are felt statewide. The close of 2002 finds us on approximately day 340 of the thousand days. You will read about some of our accomplishments in workforce development throughout this report.

Labor Market Information

The economy in 2002 will go down as one of Utah's weakest in the past 50 years. Several factors converged this year to create a "perfect storm" type of scenario, all on the negative side. A swift and sharp national recession, a severe contraction of the high-technology sector, and the "stealing effects" associated with moving projects into the period prior to the 2002 Winter Olympics, all came together to create a sluggish economy.

We saw a significant job contraction, with employment dropping close to 13,000 jobs, resulting in a year-over contraction rate of minus 1.2 percent. Fortunately, Utah's unemployment rate, around 6.0 percent, is not particularly high considering it is a recession year, and that it has been higher in better economic times. Still, it is the highest since 1987. A monthly average of about 69,000 Utahns were unemployed in 2002, compared to 51,000 in 2001.

The changes in job counts by industrial sectors in Utah are largely negative. Government and services are the only two sectors that will finish the year on the positive side of the ledger. Growth in government was concentrated in education and centered around health care in services. Construction and manufacturing suffered big job losses during the year, with construction employment down around 8 percent and manufacturing down 5 percent. The transportation and communication industries were also hard-hit. In 2003, it is anticipated that job growth will return to positive territory, although not particularly strong and not to every industrial sector.

In 2002, Utah's average annual nonagricultural pay was roughly $30,500 – 2.8 percent above 2001's average. This is very close to last year's growth in wages. It is anticipated that wage growth will be smaller in 2003 as the effects of the recession will still psychologically influence the market. Employers will need several quarters of positive economic news before they become aggressive again with wage compensation. Utah's annual pay as a percentage of U.S. annual pay has been near 85 percent since 1988 but has drifted downward.

jobs.utah.gov

On November 4, 2002, and after more than three years in production, *jobs.utah.gov*, the State of Utah's cutting-edge, on-line, and self-directed job matching system, was unveiled at a press conference by Governor Leavitt. *jobs.utah.gov*, perhaps the most sophisticated, public system of its kind on the Web, allows job seekers and employers to instantly find each other. Job seekers can create a personalized "electronic résumé" that can be searched by employers. Employers can enter their own job listings and search for qualified applicants. *jobs.utah.gov* is the portal through which any job seeker or any business can access:

- Information on over 10,000 jobs
- Résumés representing over 80,000 job seekers
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits
- Current labor market information
- Child care resource and referral information
- Information on food or financial support
- UI contributions
- New hire reporting

The average percent of Utah's civilian, noninstitutionalized population over the age of 15 participating in the labor force remained consistent at 72 percent in 2001. This rate ranks significantly higher than the national average of 67 percent. Both Utah women and men take part in the labor market at higher rates than their national counterparts. About 90 percent of employed people are nonagricultural wage and salaried workers.

DWS Executive Director Raylene Ireland poses (from L to R) with DWS' and the State of Utah's Manager of the Year Don Avery and runners-up Simone Ongoongotau and Debbi Class along with Deputy Director Jim Finch.

Unemployment Insurance

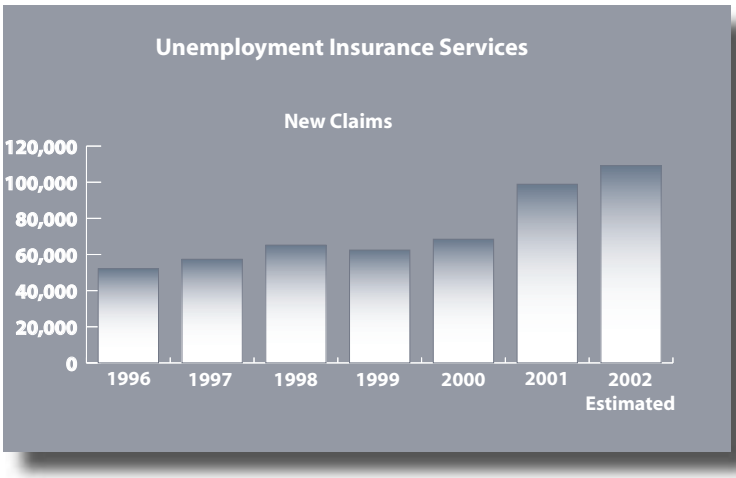
While the 2002 Winter Olympics temporarily masked the general weakness in Utah's economy, dramatic increases in claims for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits were drawing a true picture of our economic outlook.

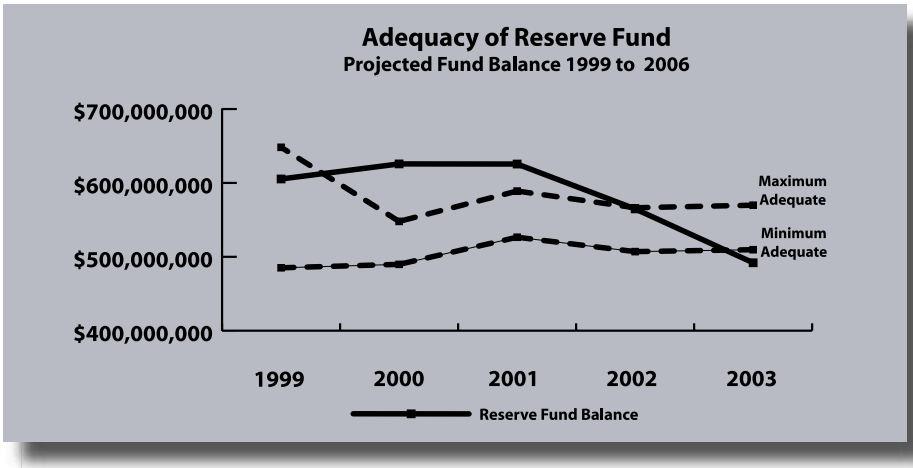
For the second year in a row, the UI Division experienced significant increases in claims for UI benefits. During 2002, UI benefits helped to maintain the purchasing power of Utah's unemployed workers by pumping nearly $250 million dollars into the weakened economy. In 2002, total weeks compensated (paid) increased by 30 percent because of the contracted labor market, when compared to the same time in 2001. This year, in-bound phone calls to the cetralized UI claims processing center increased 26 percent. About 35 full-time staff fielded over 350,000 calls to the center.

A number of factors contributed to a decline in the UI Trust Fund. The fund is supported entirely by employer contributions and used exclusively to pay UI benefits. Claims increased, the maximum benefit amount was raised, the average dollar amount claimed increased to $264 per week, and the average claim duration increased by three weeks. UI employer tax revenues declined slightly.

Because of the increased burden, the UI Trust Fund is projected to dip below the suggested minimum adequacy level in January 2003. This level measures the Trust Fund's ability to pay benefits during a protracted period of high unemployment.

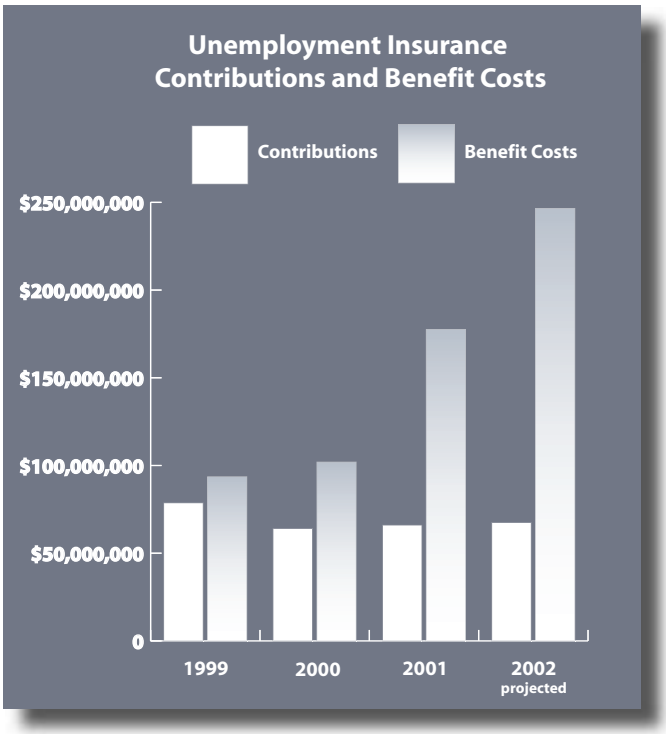
An employer and a job seeker utilize one of our Job Connection Rooms.





In addition, the President's Economic Stimulus Package authorized and funded Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) that provided 13 additional weeks of benefits for claimants who had exhausted regular UI compensation. More than 22,000 TEUC claimants received over $48 million in benefits from the national program.

Our UI Contributions Division continued to lead the way in setting the national standard for effective UI tax operations. Don Avery, Chief of Contributions, was named DWS' and the State of Utah's Manager of the Year.



Also, our award winning Contributions Automated Tax System (CATS) improved productivity in virtually every tax area. Improved collection methods for overdue taxes reduced receivables by 50 percent; employer audits, now conducted using a paperless audit system in the employer's work site, increased by 43 percent; and posting of wage information was completed 2-3 weeks earlier than in past quarters. DWS led the nation in acceptance of direct deposit of UI benefits into checking accounts. In 2002, 35 percent of claimants requested direct deposit and saved the UI program about $300,000 in administrative costs.

This past year reflected the ongoing commitment of DWS to use state of the art technology to enhance e-services. All UI services are now Internet accessible. A claimant can establish an initial claim for benefits, obtain claim status information, file weekly certifications, and complete an eligibility review on the Internet. In 2002, 10-15 percent of claimants filed for benefits on-line with no staff intervention. Utah was the first state to offer extended TEUC filing on the Internet. Last year almost 40 percent of employers registered using the Internet and received a tax account number in "5 easy steps."

In addition, employers reporting new hires benefited from the upgraded Web site. The New Hire Reporting Unit processed over 250,000 new hires each quarter. Furthermore, employers were offered free software (E-Wage) by DWS to manage UI business on their own automation systems. E-Wage interfaces with an employer's in-house payroll system to prepare reports and maintain historical UI records for the business. If the employer wishes, E-Wage can be used to upload to our Web sites. There, the employer is automatically recognized and can take advantage of extensive on-line resources. The introduction of this capability doubled on-line reporting by employers.

Testing began on a similar system for accountants and others who service multiple employer clients. On-line reporting is expected to double again as soon as the new software is released. Such systems offer significant savings and improved report accuracy for employers and DWS.

Rapid Response

Because of Utah's dynamic economy and nature of the global marketplace, businesses and industries are often forced to downsize. The department's Rapid Response

Team serves companies facing these tough decisions, providing free on-site assistance to help employers plan for downsizing. The Rapid Response Team offers the following services to employers:

- Information on the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) – 60 days advanced notice before a layoff or closure
- Assistance with developing a layoff plan
- Help in establishing effective employee-employer communication
- Ideas for minimizing the emotional effects of a layoff

The Rapid Response Team also helps impacted workers adapt to downsizing changes. Programs for employees include:

- Financial and Stress Management
- Labor Market Information
- Assistance with Job Search
- Résumé Preparation
- Interviewing Techniques
- Employment Opportunities
- Unemployment Insurance

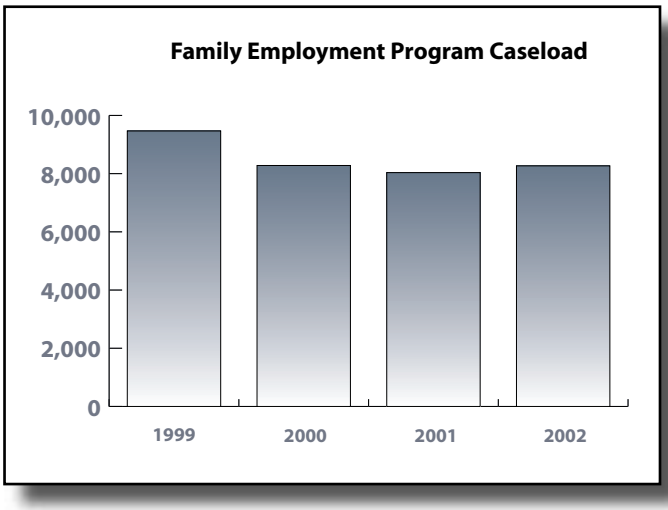
During the period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002 rapid response services were provided to 102 companies impacting 13,138 workers. Of the companies the unit responded to, 60 were the result of company layoffs and 42 were the result of company or unit closures. WARN notices were issued by 38 of the 102 companies. Industry breakout is as follows:

Manufacturing:
32 companies, 5,240 impacted workers
Service:
22 companies, 2,095 impacted workers
Wholesale & Retail Trade:
18 companies, 1,893 impacted workers
Transportation & Communications:
13 companies, 2,262 impacted workers
Finance & Insurance:
8 companies, 727 impacted workers
Public Administration:
3 companies, 519 impacted workers
Mining:
3 companies, 297 impacted workers
Forestry & Agriculture:
2 companies, 90 impacted workers
Construction:
1 company, 15 impacted workers

Family Employment Program

In 1996 the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) was signed into law. The PRWORA law overhauled the federal welfare system with the principal intent of ending adult dependency on public assistance. The law placed a heavy emphasis on employment, mandated lifetime limits on assistance, and held states accountable to minimum work participation rates for families receiving assistance funded by the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant.

The Family Employment Program (FEP) is Utah's TANF funded cash assistance program. The goal of FEP is to help eligible unemployed or underemployed families achieve self-sufficiency through employment and collection of child support. There are two important aspects of the program – assistance is time limited, and families are responsible to participate in negotiated activities that lead to employment. The program provides temporary income while families prepare for work. Each family develops their own customized employment plan. An employment plan may include job search assistance, adult education or job skills training, life skills development, community work, and counseling to deal with mental health or alcohol and drug dependency issues.



•Day 110 (May 24) To assist Utah's emerging workforce, our youth and DWS launched the "Just For Youth" Web site at *jobs.utah.gov*. The youth-focused, occupation and career opportunity information site is a portal that links youth, school counselors, and parents to career information and internship and education opportunities.

International Association of Professionals In Workforce Services (IAPES)

DWS was honored to host the annual IAPES Conference this year in Salt Lake City. Over 525 members from around the United States, Canada, Taiwan, Japan, Mexico and Nigeria attended.

•Day 274 (November 4) DWS unveiled its new on-line job matching system *jobs.utah.gov*. The Internet-based self-service component allows job seekers to register, update their information, and refer themselves to jobs posted on the system. Employers can register, post and modify their job postings, and view the customer database/résumés for referrals to fill current job openings.

This on-line job connection service represents an important step towards fulfilling Governor Leavitt's vision that by 2004, citizens, if they choose, will be able to find every government service they need on-line.

When Utah implemented FEP it also adopted a 36-month lifetime limit on financial assistance. The law allows DWS to extend up to 20 percent of its annual financial assistance caseload past the 36-month lifetime limit for specific hardship reasons. There were 671 Utah families who reached the 36-month time limit in fiscal year 2002. As of July 2002, a total of 288 families were receiving assistance because of a hardship extension. Customers who reach their lifetime limits often continue to qualify for and receive food stamps, Medicaid, training, child care, and/or all employment services we offer.

In addition to funding the FEP program, the TANF block grant funded many other community needs. TANF funds are used to support our child care program, expand training opportunities, job connection activities, and other work related contracted services. These services include substance abuse and mental health counseling, out-of-wedlock pregnancy prevention programs, crisis intervention, and transportation solutions for low-income families.

Other Work Supports for Working Families

DWS has helped numerous families transition from welfare to work over the past five years and continues to provide quality employment related and supportive services to help our customers while they become self-sufficient. To support our "First job - Better job - Career" philosophy, we have made an effort to bolster the network of work supports available to assist our customers.

Research conducted by the Social Research Institute on long-term welfare recipients in Utah indicates that for low-income working families, work supports are a crucial component of success. Families no longer eligible to receive welfare benefits may still have income levels that fall well below the national poverty level. DWS has partnered with other agencies and communities to increase utilization and awareness of important work supports that can help lift working families out of poverty.

One such support is the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). DWS participated in a program to ensure Utah's most needy families were aware of the EITC. The EITC is a tax credit available to working families whose incomes are less than 200 percent of the federal poverty line. In 1999, the EITC helped lift 4.7 million people nationally above the poverty line, including 2.5 million children. The average EITC recipient can earn a refund of more than $1,600. This year DWS joined the West Valley EITC Coalition to bring EITC to our customers. We provided outreach marketing and training to connect families with this valuable work support.

DWS also partnered with additional allied agencies to promote awareness of other work support resources such as housing assistance, health insurance and utility subsidies for low-income working families. In addition, outreach was conducted to connect more working families to food stamp and child care resources.

Child Care

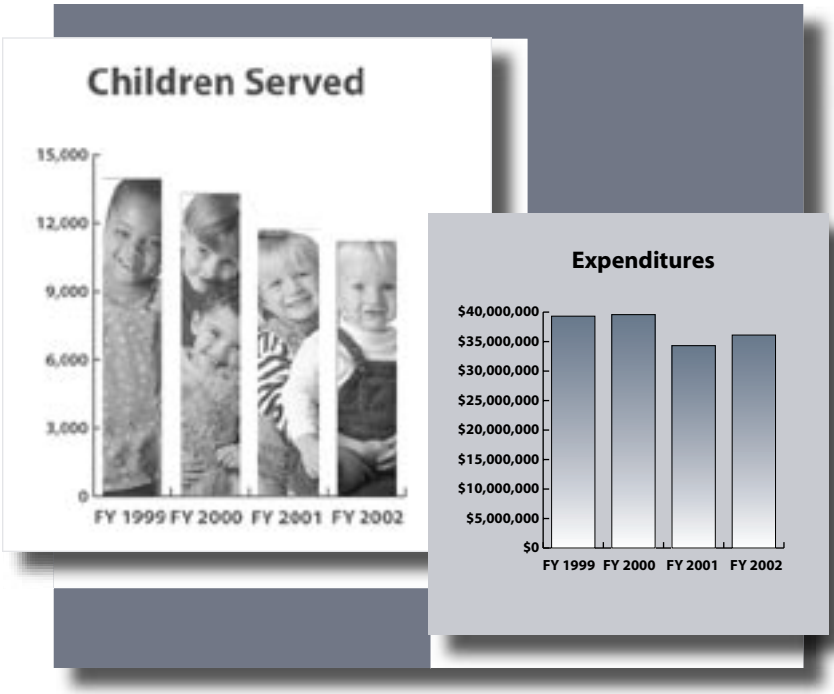
From early childhood through adolescence, children who enjoy high-quality care and supervision are better prepared for school in terms of cognitive skills, health, and behavior. Children in high-quality child care demonstrate greater mathematical ability, greater thinking and attention skills, and fewer behavioral problems than children in lower-quality care. These differences hold true for children from a range of backgrounds, with particularly significant effects for children at risk. (Peisner-Feinberg, et. al., 1999) The mission of the Office of Child Care is to ensure that quality child care is available to every child in Utah who needs it.

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) is the primary source of funding for the office. These federal dollars assist low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and those transitioning from public assistance in obtaining child care so they can work and/or attend an educational program.

A small amount of the CCDF must be used to improve the quality of child care and to offer services to parents such as child care resource and referral, training and professional development, support for out-of-school time programs, quality improvement grants for providers, infant/toddler initiatives, and work/life education. Utah has increased its investment in quality activities over the past several years.

Payment-to-Parent Assisted Child Care Program

The Payment-to-Parent Program provides funding for child care to parents who are employed, or employed and attending school or



Bear River North Regional Council

Lana Powell, Chair
Independent Agent, State Farm Insurance

Harold Hess, Director, North Region

The Bear River North Regional Council has had a very productive year. In addition to distributing TANF funds to various community resources to help support some of our most needy citizens, task forces were organized to address key regional goals.

2001 Milestones:

- Collaborated with the Bear River Association of Governments and the Bear River Youth Council to provide 30 at-risk youths with an opportunity to attend a diversity conference in both Box Elder and Cache counties.
- Participated in a local non-profit project to help low-income families build their own homes.
- Provided TANF funding to the local Boys and Girls Club which provided pregnancy prevention education to 156 youth.
- Established a TANF-funded 4-H after school program, in cooperation with Utah State University, that served 125 rural Box Elder County youth. The after school program focused on projects that help youth become productive adults.
- Created turnover prevention pilot in cooperation with Pepperidge Farms in Richmond, Utah. The pilot resulted in Pepperidge Farms providing "bonus" incentives for employees who remained employed for the entire length of the six-month project.

Thank you council members, and DWS and community partners for these successes.

training, and meet income eligibility requirements. Last year, an average of 5,887 families and 11,232 children were served each month.

One of the most significant improvements to the Payment-to-Parent Program was the implementation of the first phase of an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system in April 2002. The system allows parents to pay providers directly using a point-of-sale machine. Child care funds are placed in a restricted account on their Utah Horizon card. During this first phase, the EBT option was only provided to licensed child care centers. Nearly 80 percent of approximately 285 centers are currently participating in the EBT payment system. This system has improved the accessibility and timeliness of payments. In the future, other types of child care providers will be able to use this new system.

The office also introduced the Provider Help Line in March 2002 to better serve our child care providers around the state. Providers of child care play a strong role in helping parents remain employed. This dedicated hotline allows us to answer provider questions, gather feedback, receive reports of possible misuse of child care funds and to identify areas of confusion or training needs. The Help Line averages about 257 calls per month.

Top 10 Most Family Friendly Companies 2001

- ARUP Laboratories
- Fairchild Semiconductor
- Futura Industries
- Intermountain Health Care
- Nicholas & Company
- NPS Pharmaceuticals
- Redmond Minerals
- Regence BlueCross BlueShield
- Sunshine Terrace Foundation
- Utah Transit Authority

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)

Utah's CCR&R system provides community based child care information and referral services as well as critical training for child care providers. Parents may call a locally based CCR&R and receive free information to assist them in their search for quality child care. Statewide, CCR&R's fielded more than 20,000 provider and 7,100 parent calls last year.

School-Age-Programs

After-school and summer programs keep children safe, help working families and improve student's academic achievement by providing critical opportunities for youths to learn and grow. These programs lessen the worries of parents who cannot be with their children after school. (Source: Afterschool Alliance, www.afterschoolalliance.org)

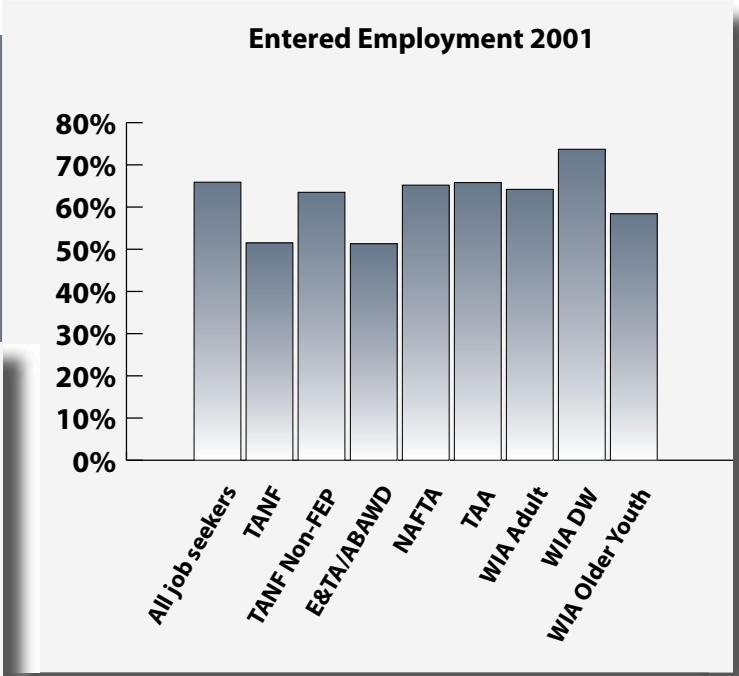
The office contracts with providers to operate before, after and summer school-age programs at 66 program sites throughout Utah. More than $1.1 million in grant money is used to support these programs, which serve more than 7,000 children.

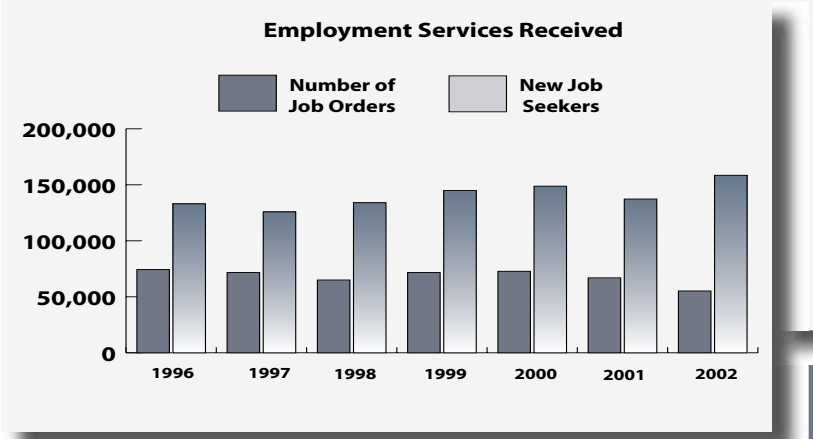
Training and Professional Development

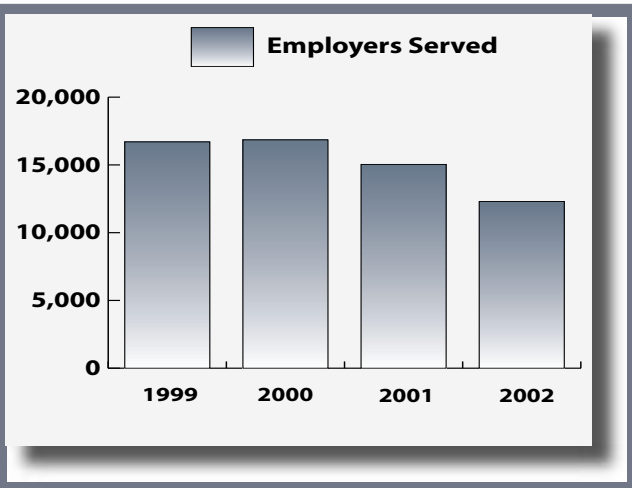
The Early Childhood Career Ladder Program recognizes and rewards child care providers for increasing levels of training in child development and child care. Career Ladder awards totaled $439,900, with

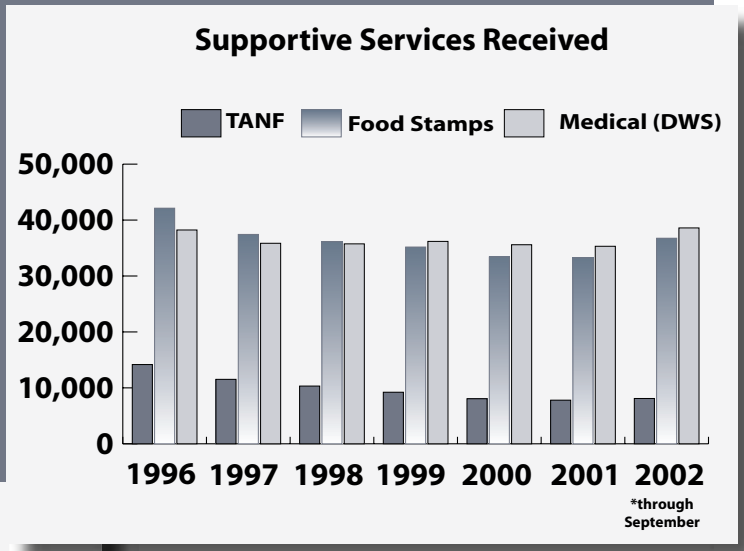
•Day 140 (June 21) The Uintah Basin Regional Council held a retreat at the Roosevelt Senior Center. Members reviewed the work that had been done by council committees with regard to the 1000-Day Plan. The council developed a finished product that identified several activities that the council and partners would undertake over the life of the plan.

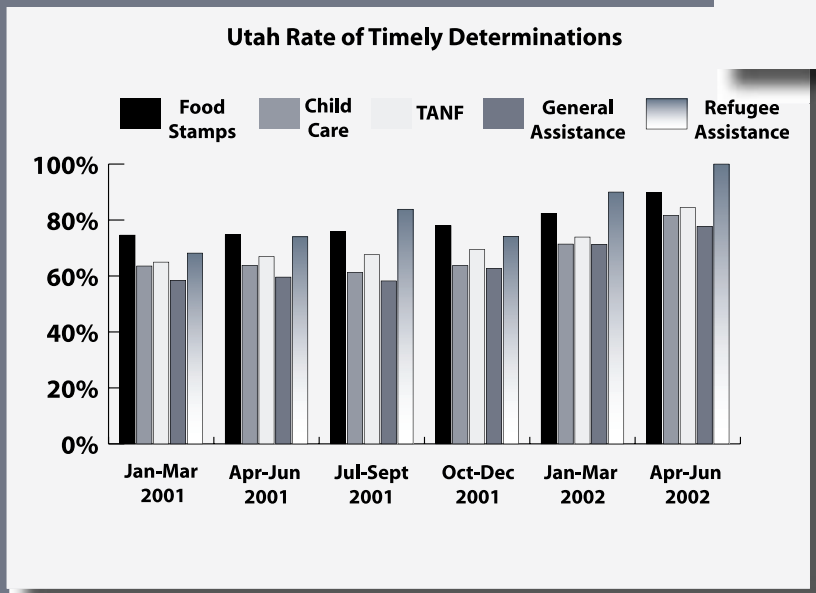
Entered Employment – Ratio of all job seekers that complete "intensive" employment-related services who have wages reported by any employer during the first quarter after completion divided by the total number of job seekers who end "intensive" employment-related services during the quarter. Those who are employed at the time of program enrollment are excluded from the measure.











Utah Rate of Timely Determinations – The percentage of time in which applications for assistance are approved or denied.

1,036 certificates awarded. The Provider Achievement Award Program recognizes providers annually for going above and beyond minimum health and safety requirements. Qualifying providers are rated on a scale of one to 10 stars, depending on their level of training and years of licensed experience. Providers who participate in this program receive an annual cash award. Last year, 239 Provider Achievement Awards were given out totaling $170,000.

The office also sponsors scholarships for providers who are in the process of obtaining or renewing their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Eight CDA Scholarships were awarded, for a total expenditure of $4,900. The office also sponsors national accreditation support projects for center, family, and school-age child care providers. Accreditation support funds, totaling $17,806, were distributed among Utah's four statewide child care provider associations.

Work/Life Training and Development

Work/Life is an emerging field and helps businesses become more successful by creating workplaces that support a diverse workforce, and a culture that recognizes the work/life needs of employees. While work/life programs and policies take many forms, the goal is to ensure that workplace policies support parents in their dual roles of employee and family member. Successful work/life programs impact the bottom line by enhancing recruitment and reducing staff turnover and absenteeism. Each year the office recognizes Utah's Top Ten Most Family Friendly companies. More than 80 local businesses were nominated by their employees last year. Winners of last year's award can be found on page 8.

•Day 143 (June 26) DWS and the Utah College of Applied Technology broke ground on the new West Valley Employment Center, a collaborative effort to provide employment and training services in a one-stop environment in Salt Lake County. This event represents a public-private sector partnership and an opportunity to leverage resources to create a market-responsive, market-fast workforce. On-site training and expanded course offerings will include the course work and competencies necessary for success in a variety of health care occupations. The center will also connect customers to careers in new and emerging technologies.

Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program is the nation's most important food assistance program, especially for children. It provides more substantial nutrition assistance to low-income children than all of the nation's child nutrition programs combined. More than half of all food stamp participants are children and over 80 percent of food stamp benefits go to families with children.

On May 13, 2002, President Bush signed into law the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, more commonly known as the Farm Bill. The nutrition title of the Farm Bill reauthorized the Food Stamp Program for five years. It added almost $7 billion in resources to the program and significantly strengthened the program in many ways. There are four categories of new provisions:

1. **Restoring benefits to ineligible groups.** Significant progress was made in restoring benefits to legal immigrants made ineligible for food stamps under the 1996 welfare law. Over the next year benefits will be restored to

Fourth Annual Utah Employer Conference

At this year's conference, nearly 400 attendees learned from experts on economics, law, and workplace issues while networking to explore "economic realities and the workplace," the theme of this year's conference. Judging from the exit surveys and comments afterward, it was the most successful Employer Conference to date. The *2002 Utah Occupational Wages* was unveiled (available at our Web site *jobs.utah.gov*). An extraordinary look at the Utah economy--past, present, and future was presented as well as the Governor's 1000-day Economic Plan and vision for the state's near future. According to one employer, "this is the best thing I attend each year."

legal immigrants who have lived in this country for at least five years and to both legal immigrant children and individuals receiving disability benefits regardless of the number of years they have been in this country. Also, the asset limit for households with a disabled member will be raised to $3,000.

2. **Improving benefit adequacy.** The standard deduction will be raised for larger households and adjusted annually to reflect inflation. The Congressional Budget Office estimated this provision would provide almost $2 billion in food stamp benefits over 10 years to low-income families with children.

3. **Simplifying the program and streamlining benefit delivery.** States have received 10 new options to deliver benefits more effectively to eligible households, particularly working households. These options can help replace complex benefit computations that must be adjusted each month to accommodate even the slightest changes in a household's circumstances with a benefit that is easier to calculate and remains constant longer. Implementing the new options should make the Food Stamp Program easier for states to administer and much less burdensome for families to use.

4. **Reforming the Quality Control system.** The Quality Control system will no longer set up nearly one-half of the states for failure. Instead, it will be revised to focus on states with persistently high error rates and will include new performance awards for state with superior performance.

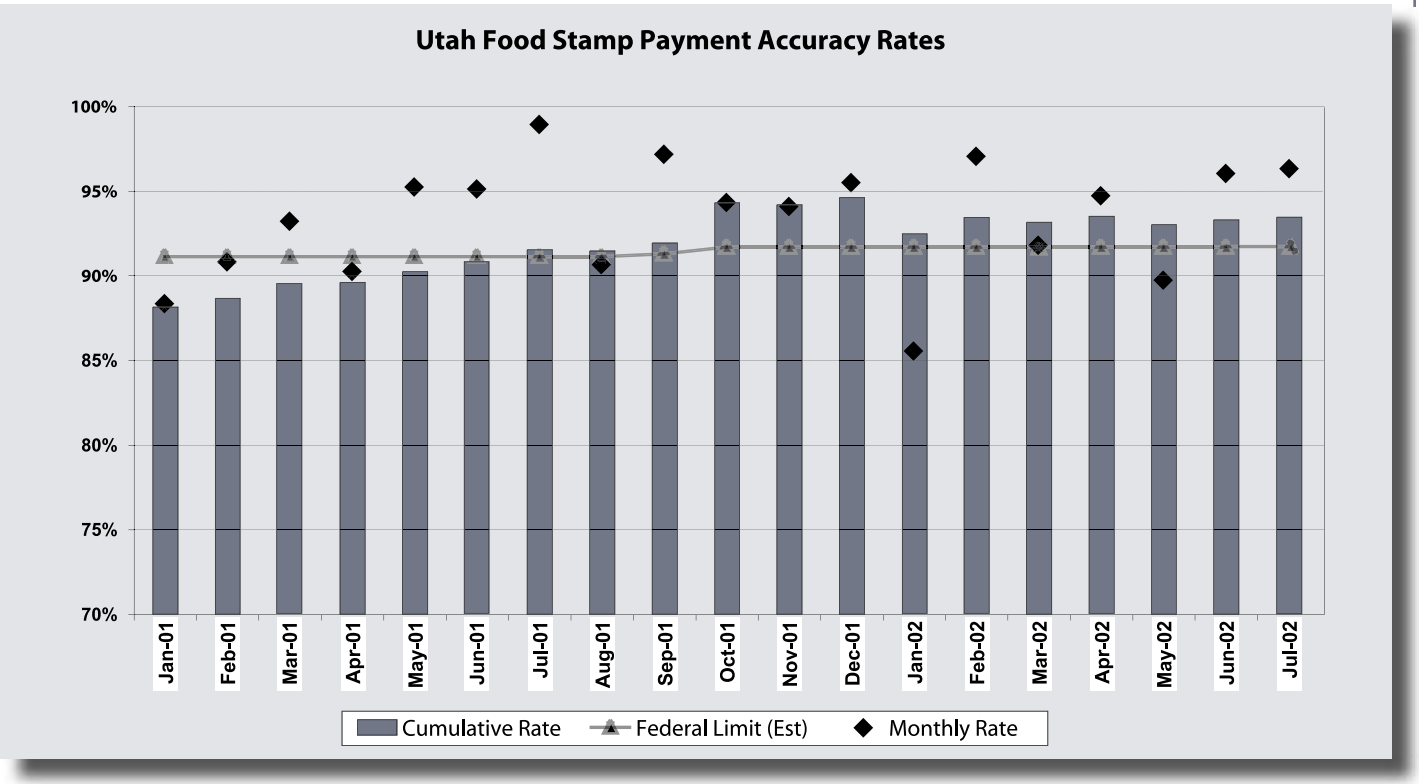
These changes can help create a stronger Food Stamp Program and make a critical difference in the well being of millions of low-income individuals.

Food Stamp Accuracy

In federal fiscal year 2000, which ended September 30, 2000, our food stamp accuracy rate was 85.5 percent. Significant efforts were made to improve and, because of our dedicated staff, the next year our payment accuracy rate increased to 90.96 percent. DWS recently received an award from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for achieving the greatest increase in its payment accuracy rate from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2001. Payment accuracy rates continue to rise and as of July 2002, our cumulative accuracy rate was 93.69 percent.

Access

While the reasons for the decline in food stamp participation among working families are not known with certainty, policy experts and state officials agree that barriers to participation in the program have become more significant in recent years. Utah's share of eligible individuals



On June 26, 2002, Utah was awarded a Certificate of Apprciation for achieving the greatest percentage increase in its Official Payment Accuracy Rate from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2001.

participating in the Food Stamp Program dropped from 78 percent in 1994 to 55 percent in 2000 according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

DWS has been participating in ongoing efforts to reduce this trend. One of this year's accomplishments included the development and distribution of an informational flyer explaining the benefits of food stamps. The flyer was printed in English and Spanish and was sent to over 500,000 school-age children in Utah. More recently, DWS tackled its application for supportive services and will likely be releasing a shortened and simplified version this spring.

Employment Services for Specialized Populations

DWS spent much of the last year focusing on developing employment resources for specialized populations of job seekers. Staff were given additional training specific to assessing and working with individuals with learning disabilities and job seekers with disabilities.

DWS also intensified its collaborative efforts with the Offices of Education and Rehabilitation. The Choose-to-Work Program is an example of how combined efforts lead to improved training and career counseling opportunities for customers with disabilities. Funds were also allocated to prepare non-English speaking students for employment in a program with the State Office of Education.

It is estimated that we will experience at least a 25 percent increase in the number of older workers in the coming decade. In response to this growing population, DWS has begun to focus on employment services for the older worker population. We have developed resources for staff to understand the specific needs and issues of the older worker and have partnered with the State Older Worker Coordinating Council to develop intensive career counseling tools and training for DWS staff to better serve older workers and job seekers over 55.

DWS will continue to provide individual employment services to our customers and will work to develop resources and tools so that all of our job seekers are successful.

•Day 178 (July 31)

The Department's Office of Child Care awarded $308,000 to child care providers throughout the state to expand capacity and serve more working Utah families. The goal of these grants is to provide 25 child care slots per 100 children who need care. A child is deemed to need care if their only parent or both parents are working outside their home. Quality child care is essential for a productive workforce.

General Assistance

The state funded General Assistance (GA) Program serves single adults without dependent children and married couples without dependents who have physical and/or mental health limitations that keep them from substantial gainful employment (earning $500 per month). GA continues to experience increases in caseload. The average caseload for the period between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002 was 1,429 and increased to 1,573 for the period between July 1, 2001 to the present.

DWS continues to make efforts to keep this program within General Fund appropriations. However, current economic conditions and the lack of resources available to this population are resulting in an increase in the number of cases served. It is important to note that many of these customers are also applying for Social Security benefits. However, this process often takes longer than the 24-month time limit available to customers on GA. This means that a customer's financial support may terminate before their application with Social Security is approved. It is anticipated that the caseload will continue to fluctuate over the next year. This population is very vulnerable to the economic conditions in general.

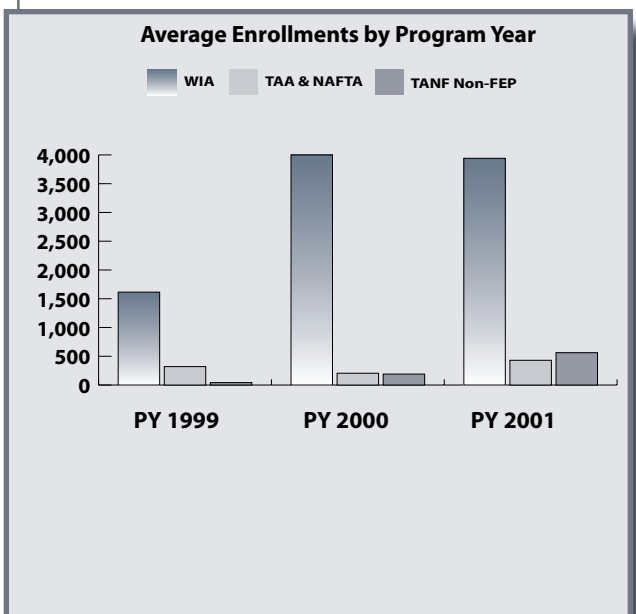
Training Services

The Department of Workforce Services offers a wide array of services to assist job seekers in obtaining employment or increasing their job skills. Job seekers may include Family Employment Program customers, dislocated workers, youth, and customers needing to upgrade their skills. Every customer seeking training services is asked to participate in a thorough assessment with an employment counselor. Based on this assessment, a plan is written with appropriate employment goals for the customer and describes the type of training, either classroom or work site, that best meets the customer's needs. The assessment includes a review of marketable skills, interests and abilities, probability that training will lead to suitable employment, and whether training can be completed within reasonable time and cost limits.

Types of Training and Supportive Services

Classroom Training:

- Funding is determined by need
- Customer must apply for a Pell Grant to ensure all financial resources are tapped
- School or training provider must be an approved provider as designated by the State Council on Workforce Services
- Includes basic skills and occupational skills training



Central Regional Council

Jane Reister Conard, Chair
Legal Counsel, Intermountain Health Care

Brad Maughan, Director
Central Region

The Central Regional Council has witnessed a grand evolution in the delivery of workforce services. We've met our goal of providing services to customers in a true one-stop environment, while developing a strong foundation over the past five years.

Cooperative efforts between some of the Salt Lake and Tooele counties' leading business people, public sector representatives, and DWS staff, led to many accomplishments this past year.

Groundbreaking at the new West Valley Employment Center

2001 Milestones:

- The council endorsed the Midvale Employment Center's recent remodeling and technology upgrades to accommodate a growing customer base. An open house was held in August to celebrate the renovated facility. In addition, a new West Valley Employment Center was opened in December 2002. The West Valley location was chosen based on the growing customer base in that area.

- The Central Regional Council continues to sponsor Supervising Today's Workforce (STW), a revenue generating enterprise that offers supervisory training courses to area employers. Over 170 employees from local businesses attended these classes and higher numbers are expected next year.

Because of the shifting economic climate, rising unemployment rates and growing immigrant populations, it is critical that we continue our work under the rubric of the Governor's 1000-Day Economic Plan. To that end, future goals of the council include the continued improvement of employment center operations, the development of mentoring programs and resources, increased school-to-career and job training opportunities in the medical and information technology industries, improved partnerships with key workforce development stakeholders and the development of strategies that better connect Utah's growing ethnically diverse workforce to employment opportunities.

Work Site Learning:

- Training opportunities provided by an employer at their place of business
- Contract, signed by the employer and the department, is required prior to training
- Includes Summer Employment Opportunities for youth, On-the-Job Training, and paid or unpaid internships in the private or public sector

Supportive Services:

Certain services are available to support successful completion of training and employment services and include child care, family care, transportation, tools, equipment, special work clothing, housing costs, and medical services.

Youth Services

Services were delivered to approximately 1000 youth during the last program year. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires that the following elements of service are accessible at each employment center around the state:

- Tutoring, study skills training and drop-out prevention
- Alternative school services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences
- Summer employment opportunities
- Occupational skills training
- Leadership development opportunities
- Mentoring
- Comprehensive guidance counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse prevention
- Supportive services
- Follow-up services

These elements of service are available statewide in a variety of ways. Youth service providers must be selected by competitive bid and their delivery methods must be designed to meet the needs of local at-risk youth. DWS may provide direct service if there are not adequate services available in local communities.

Services youth receive are determined by their age and school status. Younger youth are defined as those between the ages of 14 and 18; older youth are between 19 and 21. There are specific performance outcome expectations for each of these groups. Being in, or out of school at registration may influence the strategy for service. Although the objectives of the employment plan are individually determined by the needs of individual youth, the services targeted for in-school youth differ slightly from those targeted for out-of-school youth.

Some unique and interesting service delivery processes are evolving around the state. In the Uintah Basin our own employment centers provide youth services. Local employment centers coordinate funds from School-to-Careers, Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, Youth Corrections, Department of Child and Family Services and public education to create holistic strategies for serving young customers.

In the Central Region (Salt Lake and Tooele counties), services are provided by Salt Lake County's Youth Employability Services (YES) program. YES coordinates and/or subcontracts with local Boys and Girls Clubs, public education, substance

Outstanding Employers

The following employers are recognized for their outstanding efforts in their continued commitment to workforce development:

Central Region

Nicholas & Company,

a grocery merchant wholesale company, provides wonderful benefits packages and career advancement opportunities to all staff and provides invaluable feedback to DWS.

Nicole Mouskondis, V.P. of Human Resources

Southeast Region

Miguel's Baja Grill –

Miguel and Carie Valdes, of Miguel's Baja Grill, were nominated for helping the Southeast Region meet the goal of developing jobs in the rural areas, one job at a time.

Miguel Valdes
Miguel's Baja Grill

Western Region

The Spectrum

partnered with DWS to increase awareness in the community of available services to help connect employers and job seekers.

L to R: Brent Low, James English, and Kyle Ashby

abuse treatment programs and mental health care providers. Local employment centers provide services such as registration for work and job matching.

The Mountainland Consortium of School Districts delivers WIA services to both in-school and out-of-school youth. The consortium has done an excellent job creating a program that effectively serves 17 local high schools, and countless community partners in both urban and rural communities. The consortium is currently engaged in a pilot project with the Slate Canyon Youth Correctional facility. The intent of the pilot is to assist youth in prerelease activities that will positively impact recidivism rates. Consortium staff and the Slate Canyon facility work together to provide vocational training and work site learning opportunities.

Futures Through Training and the Bear River Association of Governments (BRAG) work with local employment centers to deliver youth services in the northern part of the state. One of the innovative services Futures Through Training offers to youth in Weber, Davis and Morgan counties is computer-based literacy training. They have also identified a large need for English for Speakers of Other Languages classes and have partnered with local entities to provide these classes to local youth. The BRAG sub-contracts with the Lincoln Center, a local Boys and Girls Club, to provide service to youth in Cache, Rich and Box Elder counties.

Local employment centers provide the framework for youth services in the Western Region. DWS refers youth to Winfield Kids for specific service. Winfield Kids' philosophy is to help youth "Build self-worth, one success at a time." They provide self-esteem workshops in high schools throughout the region, then inspire local youth to take part in worthwhile activities and to keep their focus and attention on a goal or a career path that will set them up for success in the future.

Mountainland Regional Council

Kevin Crandall, Chair
Vice-President
Information Technology,
Switchpoint

Melissa Finch, Director
Mountainland Region

This year has been an exciting one for our council and the DWS staff who work with us. The year was filled with somberness as a result of the tragedies marking the end of 2001, but also with great hope and patriotism as the region helped host the world during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games.

After the Olympics, our focus turned to the economy and we joined with the Governor to develop and execute his 1000-Day Plan. The downturn in the nation's economy has been mirrored locally, putting a strain on DWS and its ability to keep up with demand. We gratefully acknowledge the Governor's and Legislature's role in preserving DWS' capacity to serve in spite of budget cuts.

Under the leadership and structure provided by the 1000-Day Plan, council task forces are increasing services to youth and helping DWS and other agencies strengthen our workforce by providing opportunities for greater education and improved work skills to find beneficial employment.

2001 Milestones:

- Efforts are being made to profile and market Utah's remarkable workforce to businesses everywhere. Businesses that provide great opportunities are being recognized by the council for making good use of our state's greatest natural resources—our workforce.

- The Mountainland Region was significantly impacted by the closure of Geneva Steel. DWS partnered with Utah Valley State College and Geneva Steel to provide layoff vocational testing services, training opportunities and help looking for work.

- One of our regional council task forces organized a series of community planning meetings to review and update customer resource information from public, private, and faith-based organizations. This information is available for both customers and community partners on Utah County's United Way Web site: www.unitedwayuc.org.

- The Mountainland Region was home to a large portion of last year's Olympic events. The council was pleased with the results of the great efforts made by DWS to staff the various Olympic venues and would like to recognize them for their hard work. DWS interviewed over 2,230 applicants for various SLOC positions.

NAFTA/TAA

The North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Trade Act programs are available to assist individuals who have become unemployed as a result of increased imports from, or shifts in production to, foreign countries. The goal of the Trade Act Program is to help trade-affected workers return to suitable employment as quickly as possible.

The U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) must verify that the layoff or threatened layoff was caused by increased imports or shifts in production before impacted workers are eligible for services. Services may include:

- Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA): cash allowance available to workers in training
- Retraining services: On-the-Job Training (OJT) and classroom training
- Reemployment services: job counseling, vocational testing, job development, and supportive service referrals
- Job search allowance
- Relocation assistance

From July 2001 through June 2002, eight TAA petitions that impacted local workers were filed with the USDOL. Six petitions were certified and two were denied. During this same period, seven NAFTA/TAA petitions were filed, five of which were certified. As a result of the approved petitions, 1,050 customers were enrolled in training services last year. Out of the 245 customers who exited the program, 155 obtained employment within that period of time.

Alien Labor Certification

DWS administers the Alien Labor Certification Program (ALC) for the USDOL. The program is available to employers who have had no success finding qualified and available U.S. workers. However, the program's main purpose is to protect U.S. workers, not to help employers hire foreign workers. In addition to processing applications for both nonagricultural and agricultural positions, staff provides prevailing wage determinations for those positions.

In 2001, program staff experienced the result of a temporary reinstatement of Section 245(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which the President signed into law on December 21, 2000. This provision gave certain undocumented aliens a deadline of April 30, 2001, to file the appropriate forms to preserve their eligibility to file for adjustment of status in the United States instead of having to acquire their visa abroad. Under normal conditions, the ALC unit receives an average of 10 applications per month for permanent labor certification. However, during March and April 2001, over 1,300 applications were received.

During this same period, the ALC unit was also involved with processing numerous applications for the Salt Lake Olympic Committee as well as many other employers who were attempting to bring in foreign workers to help during the Olympics. To assist in the processing of this enormous increase in applications, an extra person was added to the team, and an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system was implemented to respond to the increased number of phone calls. Customers who use the IVR are provided with immediate answers and are referred to a Web site to obtain forms and additional information.

Veterans' Services

Veterans and eligible persons are the only group of customers who have preferential treatment in DWS. DWS

Utah Internet Community Resources Search Engine

DWS has worked in partnership with other state agencies as well as the Resource and Referral Network to develop and maintain an Internet Search Engine for identifying Community Resources. The Utah Online Directory of Community Health and Human Services helps citizens find many of the services available. This search engine also identifies potential volunteer opportunities for those who are interested. The search engine can be located in several places on our Web site: *jobs.utah.gov*, as well as at: www.utah.gov/communityservices.

provides employment and training opportunities to veterans and eligible persons with priority given to disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam-era, by giving them preference over non-veterans in the provision of employment and training services available in the department. Services provided include, but are not limited to, registration, counseling, referral to supportive services, job development, and training.

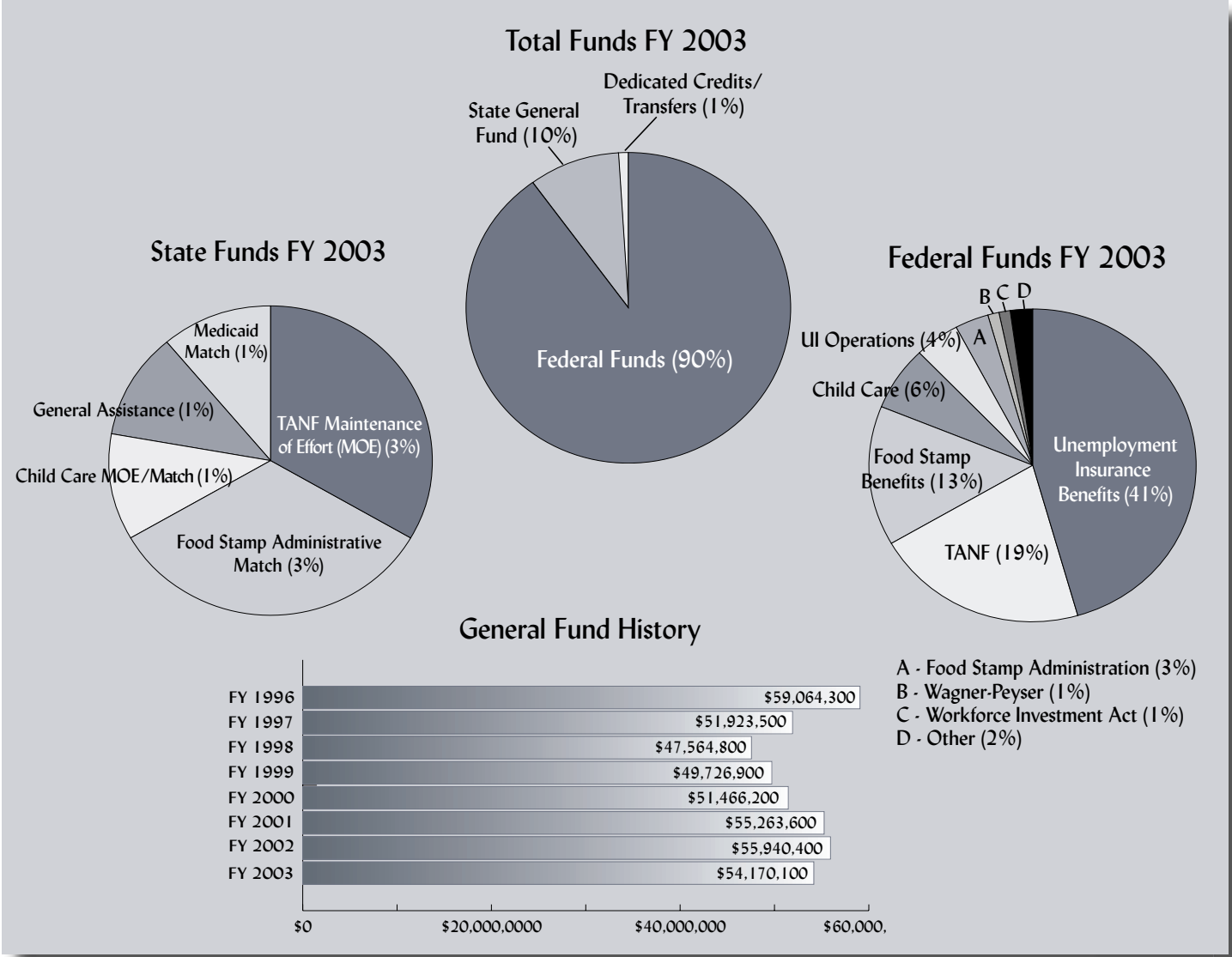
Each of our employment centers has a Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) or Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) assigned to help those veterans that are harder to place on jobs and need additional case management services.

Last year, 22,948 veterans registered for services with DWS. We placed 4,427 veterans in jobs, counseled 7,706, job developed for 3,651, and gave some reportable service to an additional 20,903 veterans.

LVER and DVOP staff in the North Region also provided coverage for the Transition Assistance Program (TAP). This program targets separating retiring military members, and their spouses, who have been out of the job market from 4 to 30 years. TAP is a three-day workshop presented twice a month, and it teaches current job search methods. The workshops also provide current labor market information, identify skills and competencies, provide information regarding licensing and certification requirements for certain career fields and up-to date information regarding veteran's benefits. Last year 659 veterans and spouses attended the workshops.

Budget

The department spent over $600 million in state fiscal year (SFY) 2002. This 42% increase in spending over last year directly reflects the state of Utah's current economy and the resulting public demand for DWS' programs.



Over $448 million in benefits and client service payments were paid out during SFY 2002, a 56 percent increase over last year. Another $152 million was spent internally to operate DWS' programs and provide services to its customers.

Over 90 percent of the department's SFY 2002 funding came from federal sources, and most of its State General Funds were used to meet "matching" or "maintenance of effort" (MOE) requirements in order to receive federal funding, as shown in the accompanying charts.

By maximizing the use of its federal funding the department was able to absorb huge increases in costs during a time of State General Fund cuts and difficult fiscal constraints throughout state government. TANF funding was used to keep child care programs intact in spite of over a $3.5 million reduction in state matching funds. A healthy Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund allowed DWS to cover an increase of $141 million in benefit payments. Workload increases resulting from higher caseloads in several programs were mostly handled with existing staff.

The pending reauthorizations of the TANF and Child Care block grants and WIA are important issues looming on the horizon for DWS. This year a lot of effort went into identifying effective uses of the remaining funding in the six-year block grants, and providing input for congressional reauthorization of these programs. As a result of the uncertainty associated with this effort, the Governor's budget recommendation for SFY 2003 and the resulting legislative appropriation are based on assumptions about congressional funding decisions that have yet to be made.

During SFY 2002 the department invested almost $1 million in efforts to improve the accuracy of food stamp eligibility determinations. This effort is half of a federally required re-investment plan in which DWS is involved. The results of this effort are evident as discussed earlier in this report.

•Day 192 (August 14) In its August 14th meeting, the Uintah Basin Youth Council discussed how to increase the number of technology-related internships and students at the high schools. A key goal is to continue the very successful internship program where DWS and the school districts partner to find and place high school-aged youth on work sites.

•Day 194 (August 16) DWS added $550,000 to the SMART site project from its federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant, nearly half of which (or $250,000) will be used specifically for medical coding training for members of low-income rural families, an important part of the Governor's Rural Health Informatics Ecosystem.

Department of Workforce Services 2002 Award Winners

Manager of the Year:
Don Avery, Chief, Unemployment Insurance Contributions
(Don is also the winner of the State of Utah's Manager of the Year Award)

Executive Director's Pinnacle Award
Kay Heber, American Fork Employment Center

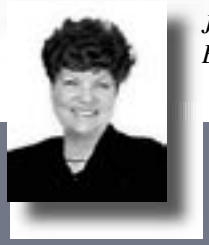
Southeast Regional Council

Norman Johnson, Chair
San Juan County Clerk/Auditor
(picture not available)

The Southeastern Region has experienced phenomenal progress this past year providing service to our customers and modifying the physical locations where our customers are served. Although employee and customer satisfaction surveys indicate an overall satisfaction with progress being made in the region, the council is always looking for opportunities to improve.

2001 Milestones:

- The Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments' Small Business Investment Fund provided grants to needy families and Family Employment Program customers to start up new small businesses. Over the past year, 122 new jobs were created in Carbon, Emery, Grand and San Juan counties.
- The region's first "Employment Center Design" building was opened in Moab this year. The design of this new office provides improved access to our job seeking and supportive service customers. In addition, an older facility was replaced by a new building in Castle Dale and the Price Employment Center was remodeled.



Judy Chambley, Director
Eastern Region

Uintah Basin Regional Council

Irene Hansen, Chair
Duchesne County Chamber of Commerce

The Uintah Basin Regional Council has now completed its fifth year of operation. The council and its subcommittees continued to provide strong coordination and leadership in council responsibilities.

The Regional Council Employer Committees sponsored several excellent seminars for employers during the year on the following topics: Complying with OSHA Laws, How to Market Your Business More Effectively, State Employment Laws, Drugs in the Workplace, Unemployment Compensation, and Federal Employment Law.

The Uintah Basin Youth Council has been very active in coordinating services and recognizing successful youth in the area. Representatives from Youth Corrections, 8th District Court, the Division of Child and Family Services, the Uintah and Duchesne school districts, and the Department of Workforce Services serve on the council and are all involved in working as a team to positively impact troubled youth.

The Regional Council and its Operations and Performance Subcommittee have been very engaged in reviewing and providing oversight to the TANF-funded projects that have been approved. Many of the projects in the Basin have focused on transportation needs. Because of significant transportation barriers in this region, some of these funds were used to purchase large vans and small busses to help customers access training and employment. These are now running regular routes and schedules in the three counties.

Van purchased and operated by the Uintah Basin Applied Technology College to shuttle students between the Roosevelt and Vernal campuses.

Wasatch North Regional Council

Kathleen Alder, Chair
President,
Computer Software Solutions

Harold Hess, Director
North Region

Since its inception in 1997, the Wasatch North Regional Council has been very active in pursuing programs that will benefit the community it serves. We are concerned with what we can do as a community to impact the local economy and support the employers in their quest to find the best employees. We are also concerned with ensuring that we are meeting federal mandates and guidelines, while keeping the well being of each individual in mind, as we deliver the services we are charged with providing.

Our council has embraced the challenge of our 1,000-Day Workforce Development Plan to "Help people become job-ready and employed," "Build partnerships with employers," to "Increase the use of DWS by employers and job seekers" and to "Educate employers on the value of ethnic minority workers." We have responded by setting goals that are attainable within that time frame.

2001 Milestones:

•The Wasatch North Regional Council established the Inventory Partnerships Task Force to identify existing and potential community partnerships for the purpose of collaboration and the establishment of goals and a work plan.

•The Roy City Boys and Girls Club, located in the "enterprise zone" of Ogden City, received additional TANF funds to provide "Smart Girls and Wise Guys" education to over 300 youth.

•The Wasatch Youth Council approved the use of TANF funds to provide after school services to over 300 "at risk" youth at Ogden City schools. The after school programs provided a safe and challenging environment where students received help with their homework, participated in academic, art/cultural, recreational and technology clubs.

Western Regional Council

Karen Alvey, Co-Chair
Alvey Development

Keith Gillins
Co-Chair
President, GNG Dairy LLC

Jan Thompson, Director
Western Region

From its onset, the Western Region Council has embraced the Governor's 1000-Day Workforce Development Plan and has established goals in support of that plan. The goals were established to continue to improve the level of service available throughout our region to employer and job seeker customers. The council believes these goals will develop opportunities to move the state of Utah forward as a leader in economic development.

2001 Milestones:

•New employment centers in St. George and Nephi were opened in 2001. These new centers were designed to provide services to our customers more efficiently. Additionally, the Cedar City employment center was remodeled. An additional 7,000 square feet provided larger job connection rooms with increased computer access for our customers.

•Smart Sites have been a key element of the region's 1,000-day economic plan. Kanab and Cedar City were some of the first areas to establish these high tech sites and they are very successful. Some sites in our region are already looking to expand their operations and create additional partners.

Outstanding Customers

Katee Clements turned her life around while enrolled in the WIA Youth Program. During her time in the program, she earned her high school diploma and completed a veterinary technician course at the Mountainland Applied Technical College. Katee is now enrolled at Utah Valley State College and is working as a veterinary technician assistant.

Katee Clements
Mountainland Region

When 19-year-old Elizabeth Herrera sought services at Futures Through Training (FTT) for assistance in obtaining her Certificate in Cosmetology, she was considered an out-of-school youth. Liz overcame significant barriers and completed her cosmetology training in October 2002. She increased her math and reading levels at the same time. Liz received child care for her 2-year-old, tuition, and tutoring.

Liz Herrera
North Region

Manuel Olmos Jr. saw the need to better himself through training and education. He also needed to support his family. Through the WIA Youth Program, Manuel is successfully completing an automobile mechanic apprenticeship with Tooele City Shops, while continuing his education.

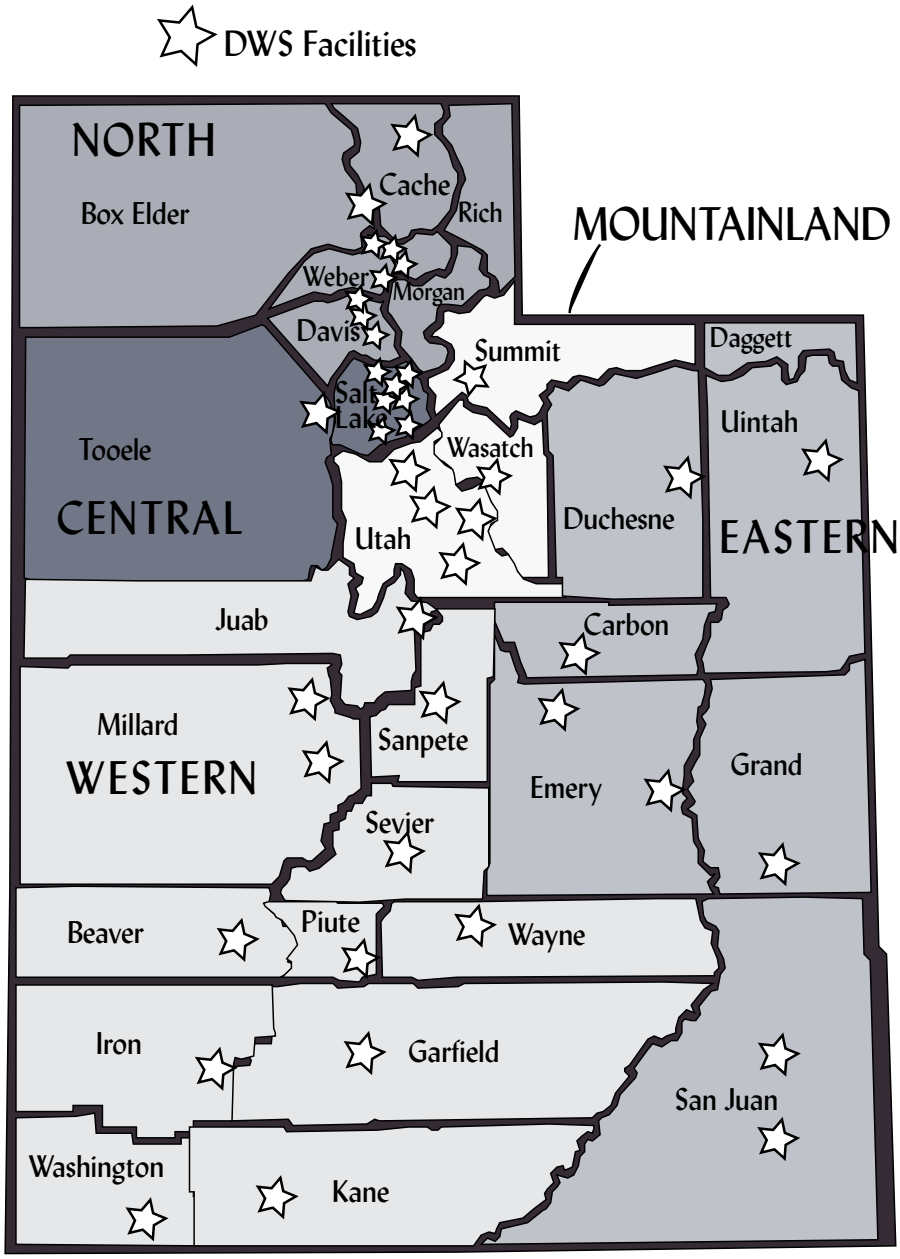
Manuel Olmos Jr.
Central Region

Delalia Dale, a 17-year-old student, was recognized as an outstanding WIA youth participant because of her significant progress in the WIA Youth Program. She began an internship training program at the hospital in Moab and her teachers report seeing "a different girl." Delalia is no longer the troubled youth struggling with substance abuse. Delalia stated that she utilized the skills learned from the Workplace Essential Skills interviewing videos to get the job.

Delalia Dale
Southeast Region

Shelley Touta has successfully transitioned into full-time employment with benefits with the help of diversion and training. Shelley is a 31-year-old single mother with seven children under the age of 10. Shelley completed a Certified Nursing Assistant program and internship and was hired to work on-call at a care center. During this time, Shelley started the prerequisites for the nursing program. She continues to take prerequisites for the nursing program and should be admitted to the nursing program this spring.

Shelley Touta
Western Region



Utah Department of Workforce Services · Utah's Job Connection
140 East 300 South · Salt Lake City, UT 84111 · (801) 526-WORK (9675)
jobs.utah.gov