

**THE DELIVERY OF WORKFORCE TRAINING  
IN  
NORTH CAROLINA**

**North Carolina**



**Career Planning, Training  
& Placement Services**

**A REPORT TO THE  
JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

**MAY 1, 2000**

**The North Carolina Community College System  
The North Carolina Department of Commerce  
The Employment Security Commission of North Carolina**

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JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
May 1, 2000**

JOINTLY PREPARED AND SUBMITTED BY:

The North Carolina Community College System  
H. Martin Lancaster, President

  
Signature

The North Carolina Department of Commerce  
Rick Carlisle, Secretary

  
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The Employment Security Commission of North Carolina  
Dr. Parker Chesson, Chairman

  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **REPORT TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON THE DELIVERY OF WORKFORCE TRAINING IN NORTH CAROLINA**

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 provides the framework for a unique national and state workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of the state's businesses and the needs of job/training seekers and those who want to further their careers. This report will describe North Carolina's system for delivering Workforce Development services within a One-Stop environment, known as the JobLink Career Centers, which is the prescribed delivery mechanism for federally funded workforce development programs. The report will further identify various options for delivering workforce training more effectively and efficiently through local JobLink Career Centers.

The recently enacted Federal Workforce Investment Act (August 7, 1998) prescribes a One-Stop Career Center System for federally funded workforce development programs awarded to the states and to local communities. States must develop and implement this system by, or before, July 1, 2000. In 1995, North Carolina applied for and received a One-Stop Implementation Grant to plan and develop local One-Stop Career Centers where partner agency staff would collocate to provide workforce development services in a more integrated manner. Because of the opportunity made available under this grant for planning and development, North Carolina was in a position to implement the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), effective January 1, 2000.

For several decades, workforce development services within the State have been delivered through a maze of funding streams and independent programs, as identified in the biannual Workforce Development Inventory. Some programs provide training, job preparation and job placement to the general public, while others are targeted toward a specific population group. While coordination between two or more programs has been common, until recently, a true systemic approach to delivering workforce services did not exist. Customers (both clients and employers) often had no choice but to go from one place to another to receive needed workforce development services.

Because of the numerous advantages to our customers resulting from the delivery of North Carolina's workforce development services through the JobLink Career Center System, the State agencies responsible for preparing this report fully support this system as the mechanism for coordinating the delivery of workforce development services in North Carolina. While it is recognized that all access points in the workforce development and human services community must be well informed of their role in delivering workforce training, services and activities, more efforts must be made to link these services together in a cohesive system to provide integrated, user-friendly, services to the citizens of North Carolina.

# THE DELIVERY OF WORKFORCE TRAINING

## IN NORTH CAROLINA

### A REPORT TO THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

#### BACKGROUND TO THIS REPORT

Section 911. (f) of Session Law 1999-237. of the 1999 General Assembly makes the following requirement:

*The Community Colleges System Office, the Department of Commerce, and the Employment Security Commission shall jointly develop a list of options for delivering workforce training more efficiently and more effectively. These options shall include one-stop job placement and career centers. The Community Colleges System Office, the Department of Commerce, and the Employment Security Commission shall report on these options to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee prior to May 1, 2000.*

The recently enacted Federal Workforce Investment Act (August 7, 1998) prescribes a One-Stop Career Center System for federally funded workforce development programs awarded to the states and to local communities. States must develop and implement this system by, or before, July 1, 2000. In 1995, North Carolina applied for and received a One-Stop Implementation Grant to plan and develop local One-Stop Career Centers where partner agency staff would collocate to provide workforce development services in a more integrated manner. Because of the opportunity made available under this grant for planning and development, North Carolina was in a position to implement the Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA), effective January 1, 2000

In addition to Session Law 1999-237, which establishes the basis for this report, the North Carolina General Assembly established a Joint House-Senate Job Training Study Commission (*The Studies Act of 1999, part XIV of HR 163*) which is currently reviewing

workforce development programs in North Carolina and the delivery of many of these services and activities through the North Carolina JobLink (One-Stop) Career Center System. At the February 18, 2000 meeting of this Study Commission, a panel of the State's workforce development agency heads, or their representatives, discussed their agency's endorsement of, participation in, and delivery of services through this local JobLink Career Center System.

This report will describe North Carolina's system for delivering Workforce Development services within a One-Stop environment, known as the JobLink Career Centers, which is the prescribed delivery mechanism for federally funded workforce development programs. The report will further identify various options for delivering workforce training more effectively and efficiently through local JobLink Career Centers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the June, 1994 North Carolina's Workforce Development Inventory, prepared by the Governor's Commission on Workforce Preparedness, it was reported that 48 programs within eight State agencies provide workforce development services to North Carolina's citizens. This inventory included workforce development programs and activities of the public schools, the community college system, the Employment Security Commission, the department of Health and Human Services and other various departments, divisions and programs of State government which have funding streams that assist individuals to receive labor market information, employment and career counseling, educational and skills training, and job placement. Many of these programs and funding streams provide specific services to identified targeted populations, such as welfare recipients, Native American groups, economically disadvantaged adults and youth, dislocated workers, etc., while other programs and funding streams serve a more universal population with labor exchange and job placement services, and educational and training programs of the public schools and the community college system.

The intent behind the generation of the Workforce Development Inventory report was to capture the various resources that were expended in North Carolina to prepare and train the workforce, to begin the process of developing a statewide coordinated workforce development system and to examine areas of unnecessary duplication. Since 1994, the report has been prepared every two years to give an update on the status of job training and workforce development in North Carolina.

During 1995, North Carolina embarked on a major initiative to integrate existing workforce development services to improve and streamline services to individuals needing

training and placement assistance and to employers seeking qualified workers. Through the work of an interagency team comprised of representatives from State and local workforce agencies, the State planned, made application for, and received a competitive grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to implement a one-stop career center system across the State. The purpose of establishing the JobLink Career Center System is to allow customers (job seekers and employers) access to needed services in the most cost-efficient, client friendly manner feasible. Between 1996 and 1998, the Commission on Workforce Preparedness awarded local implementation grants to all twenty-five local Workforce Development Boards which were empowered as the local governance authority by the Governors Executive Order # 90, to plan and implement local JobLink Career Centers to provide services to their geographical area. Additionally, these local workforce development boards were directed to plan for other local centers, as needed, to eventually serve the entire geographical service area.

For several decades, workforce development services within the State have been delivered through a maze of funding streams and independent programs, as identified in the bi-annual Workforce Development Inventory. Some programs provide training, job preparation and job placement to the general public, while others are targeted toward a specific population group. While coordination between two or more programs has been common, until recently, a true systemic approach to delivering workforce services did not exist. Customers (both clients and employers) often had no choice but to go from one place to another to receive needed workforce development services.

### **NORTH CAROLINA'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

The North Carolina workforce development delivery system began with a vision: **To improve North Carolina's workforce and strengthen our state's economy by developing a system of JobLink Career Centers that offers labor market information, provides access to career training and job placement services, and serves as the connection between employers and qualified workers.** In order to deploy a new quality-driven and customer responsive system, the Commission on Workforce Development adopted the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award criteria and process (a private sector model) for the JobLink Career Center chartering process. The Baldrige criteria and process focus on informed decision making for the customer, customer satisfaction, and in obtaining business results. Each local Workforce Development Board developed criteria based on a State vision for each of seven Baldrige categories and used that criteria to approve individual JobLink Career Center's request for



chartering. A charter is the center's license to do business and to display the common logo and signage. Charters are time limited and may be revoked due to poor performance or non-compliance. Inherent in the system is the expectation that when individuals or employers access services in any JobLink Career Center across the State they are assured that a certain set of basic services and processes are followed to ensure that customer needs are met.

Through collocation, local JobLink Career Centers coordinate the delivery of local training and placement services through a single, clearly identifiable location that offers labor market and career development information, provides access to career training and job placement services, and serves as the resource to connect employers with qualified workers. At the local level, Workforce Development Boards that are private sector led and comprised of employers and representatives of publicly funded employment and training entities, have oversight responsibilities for the JobLink Career Centers. Key partners in the JobLink system initially included Community Colleges, the Employment Security Commission, Job Training Partnership Act programs, JobReady (school-to-work) programs, Vocational Rehabilitation, and the Work First program.

### **FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

In August 1998, Congress passed the Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) legislation, which authorized the new Workforce Investment System and replaced the Federal Job Training Partnership Act, and repealed other pieces of federal legislation. This legislation mandates that states implement a One-Stop Delivery System by establishing local One-Stop delivery systems and that federally funded workforce development programs form partnerships to deliver their services and programs through this system. Because of the extensive prior planning and the work accomplished at both the State and local levels, North Carolina was well positioned to implement the Federal Workforce Investment Act on January 1, 2000. On that date, North Carolina had 70 chartered and functioning JobLink Career Centers serving 79 counties, with other centers in the development and planning stages to ultimately provide coordinated services and activities in all 100 counties.

Under Title I, part B of the Workforce Investment Act, the prescribed One-Stop Delivery System is built around a set of core principles. These core principles include universal access, empowering customers, streamlining services, increased state and local flexibility, and increased accountability. These basic core principles are defined, in broad terms, as follows:

**Universal access:** the ability of any citizen to access in one location information and services leading to employment, and any employer being able to list job openings and receive qualified referrals to fill those jobs.

**Empowering customers:** the customer is able to seek appropriate assistance to meet the customer's level of need. The level of services range from self-help to staff assistance in finding a job, education or training. The customer is empowered to select the level of service in person or through the use of technology available either in the center or via the Internet. The customer selects the service level, rather than the specific program or agency, based on the customer's need. The employer customer's range of services include: being able to obtain information about the local labor market, access to a pool of qualified applicants, a centralized resource for listing job openings, the ability to obtain assistance with tax and hiring incentives, and other specific employer needs, such as pre-screening or testing applicants.

**Accountability:** each JobLink Career Center and the WIA service provider will have specific performance measures, which must be met annually. These performance measures will focus on outcomes or business results rather than process. Included in the performance measures will be customer satisfaction measures to ensure that services provided meet the customer needs. Additionally, within the WIA, each training service provider must submit annual performance data, which becomes part of a Consumer Report Card. The Consumer Report Card is a compilation of performance information from training providers, which allows the customer to select programs and services with the best placement and retention results at an acceptable cost. This performance accountability of training providers strengthens the customer choice concept of the WIA.

**Streamlined services:** the JobLink (One-Stop) Career Center delivery system under the Workforce Investment Act requires that federally funded programs must be accessible at not less than one single collocated facility in each local area. These agencies and programs are to offer their services to customers in a seamless, transparent delivery approach. These services are divided into three categories: **core, intensive, and training**. Each agency is to provide its core services, that address individual or employer needs, through the local JobLink Career Centers. Core services include, but are not limited to, the provision of program information, outreach, intake, labor market and career information, training and eligibility information, and job placement assistance. The agencies must either provide or link their next level of services, called intensive services, to the JobLink Career Centers. Intensive services include such functions as eligibility determination, referral to training, in-depth assessment and counseling, case management, and short-term education and training (Human Resources Development program, adult basic education, or literacy training). Training services are normally provided through sponsorship of an individual to attend an institution of higher education (i.e., community college) or training program (i.e., truck driving school). The Workforce Investment Act occupational skills training services are provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (or vouchers), customized training programs with schools and employers, and on-the-job training contracts with employers.

North Carolina's current workforce development system has multiple points of entry for the individual to learn about training in North Carolina. Local JobLink Career Centers

provide customers access to training that minimizes having to visit different organizations to learn about the training. A seamless workforce delivery system where individuals can receive information about training, as well as where they learn how to access it, is crucial to ensure successful participation and completion of training and eventual employment. In this new workforce delivery structure, workforce agencies provide information about training opportunities in their local area through collocation at the JobLink Career centers.

In most cases, when training has been completed, the individual needs to obtain a job. The labor exchange function must be accessible and effective in order to match employers with individuals who have the skills they are looking for. The Employment Security Commission, as the primary provider of labor exchange services, provides these services at JobLink Career Center sites. Other partners that are part of the JobLink system also provide information about employment opportunities for the job seeker, and jobs are posted within the local JobLink Career Centers in order for customers to access them.

The workforce development delivery system's mandated Partner agencies and programs include, but are not limited to the following federally and state funded services.

- **Division of Employment and Training and local Workforce Development Boards:** Workforce Investment Act Title I programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth; Welfare-to-Work; and the North Carolina Employment and Training Grant Program
- **Employment Security Commission:** Wagner-Peyser labor exchange, labor market information, unemployment insurance, NAFTA-TAA assistance, and veterans employment services activities
- **Division of Social Services:** Workforce Investment Act Title I Job Corps recruitment program; TANF Work First program; and Food Stamps employment and training program
- **Division of Services for the Blind and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation:** Workforce Investment Act Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation Act services
- **Division of Aging, local area agencies on aging, and national contractors:** Title V of the Older Americans Act, section 503, senior employment program
- **Community Colleges:** Workforce Investment Act Title II for adult basic education and literacy services, Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education and Applied Technology Act (post-secondary education), HRD, financial aid, school-to-work (JobReady), and new and expanding industries training
- **Office of Economic Opportunity:** Community Services Block Grant employment and training services
- **Local Housing and Urban Development grantees:** HUD employment and training activities
- **NC Department of Labor:** Apprenticeship training
- **Local Economic Development Agencies:** linkages to employers and changing job demands

Local JobLink Career Centers may include partners in addition to those indicated above to ensure they meet local customer needs.

### **DELIVERY OF TRAINING SERVICES**

As previously described, the federal government has prescribed a One-Stop Delivery System for federally funded workforce development and training programs. In North Carolina, the Workforce Development System is comprised of the local JobLink Career Centers and the partner agencies. The primary provider of training services in North Carolina is the North Carolina Community College System with 59 institutions spread across the state and with the various economic and workforce development components within the community college system tied directly to industry/business training needs. However, access to training services will continue to come from many focal points. The public schools will continue to make referrals for training services directly to local community colleges. Employers and the economic development community will continue to contact local community colleges directly for specific targeted training needs and other community-based organizations will continue to make referrals directly to the community colleges. There are a variety of training options within the system from one-on-one referral for training to employer based industry-specific, customized training.

### **COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OPTIONS FOR DELIVERING TRAINING**

In October of 1999, President Martin Lancaster reorganized the Community Colleges' System Office to create an Economic & Workforce Development Division, consolidating the community college non-degree training programs within one administrative unit. A major goal of that unit is to promote "seamless linkages" between community college training programs to promote customer service, and to cultivate even closer ties with other workforce development partners through the JobLink Career Centers. The new organization includes a Workforce Initiatives office, with a major role of supporting the JobLink effort through the community colleges. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 complements the mission of the Economic and Workforce Development Division within the Community College System which is to support North Carolina's community colleges to provide high quality, accessible training and services that: enable North Carolinians to acquire knowledge and skills to obtain and maintain prosperous career opportunities and enhance their quality of life, and; provide North Carolina businesses and

industries with a world-class workforce and a competitive advantage as a result of their presence in North Carolina.

The North Carolina Community Colleges have provided customized training to thousands of companies, meeting the most diverse training needs. Because no two companies are the same, there is no "cookie cutter" approach to training programs. Companies benefit from tailor-made programs that support their specific needs for a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, today and in the future.

The Human Resources Development (HRD) program provides services that promote self-sufficiency and self-valuing on a personal and professional level to enhance the opportunity for success in the workplace. The HRD program is an intensive program to recruit, train, and either place in employment or vocationally train unemployed or under-employed adults. The primary objective of the training component is to help the trainee orient himself or herself to the world of work, appreciate the effects of his or her behavior on others, and develop the basic academic and communication skills prerequisite to obtaining and maintaining employment.

Through customized continuing education programs, training is available in more than 1,500 potential categories for a low registration cost, offered at industry sites or community college training facilities. Occupational Continuing Education training is a primary tool for providing skill development opportunities for North Carolina's workforce. Short-term occupational skill training courses are offered at each of the community colleges across the state to train, retrain and upgrade individuals for current or future job skills. Occupational skill training courses are designed for the specific purposes of training an individual for new employment opportunities, upgrading skills to meet new and changing job requirements and providing training which is necessary to meet certification, re-certification or continuing education requirements. Courses are offered in all occupations and vary in length according to the complexity of the skill and the need of the employee or employer. Most occupational skill training courses are developed and taught on request from a group or an employer. Courses are offered at a time and place convenient to the employee and/or employer.

Options for providing training vary from locale to locale, depending on the specific need identified. However, the community college system is engaged in the development of the variety of strategies for the delivery of training. Some initiatives are under way, and other options are currently in planning stages, which offer significant opportunity for enhancing job training through the JobLink Career Centers. These initiatives and options include:

✓ **Distance Learning Infrastructure**

Distance learning sites located at community colleges across the state provide real-time, interactive training opportunities using the advance; fiber optic-based "North Carolina Information Highway." The systemwide "Virtual Learning Network" provides Internet access to an ever increasing number of on-line training opportunities. Recruitment through JobLink Career Centers, many of which are located on community college campuses, provide employers access to seamless recruitment and career development opportunities. Accessible training locations provide training opportunities to every North Carolina citizen.

✓ **Development of Industry-Focused Short Course Series and Certification Programs Based on Skill Standards.**

JobLink clients require short-term, concentrated training that leads to industry recognized skills. Until recently, options at community colleges have consisted of longer curriculum programs or single occupational extension courses. The community colleges have recently initiated two significant projects to provide concentrated short-course skill programs that will provide clients with recognizable credentials and skills.

The first is the *North Carolina Manufacturing Certification Program*, which will be launched through train-the-trainer programs at colleges around the State starting in April. The program is a competency-based training program, designed to provide training based on industry-defined skill standards and specifications. The program consists of a *Level I: Fundamentals* program, and various *Level II: Industry-specific programs*. The Level I curriculum is an approximately 90-hour program consisting of four core courses, Manufacturing Concepts, Math & Measurement, Teamwork & Communications, Problem Solving, and four electives, Statistical Process Control, Blueprint Reading, the Business of Manufacturing, and Computers and Manufacturing. Objectives for the course were developed through an initial structure based on industry-skill standards defined by the National Coalition for Advanced Manufacturing and refinement through surveys and focus group sessions with North Carolina manufacturers. Completion of the Level I program will feed into various Level II industry-specific programs. Current programs under development include Textiles, Metals, Plastics and Boat building.

The Textiles program is developed and provided through the Center for Applied Textile Technology, the 59<sup>th</sup> community college institution. The Level II textile program is

based on skill objectives developed through a task force of the State's leading textile employers.

The Metals program is being developed through a partnership between Guilford Technical Community College and the Piedmont Triad Center for Advanced Manufacturing (PTCAM) in Greensboro. The curriculum being developed by PT CAM is based on the Level I skill standards of the National Institute of Metalworking Skills (NIMS). Upon completion, PT CAM will provide training for community college trainers so the program can be offered as throughout the state. It is based on a very successful "Metals Boot Camp" program currently offered through PT CAM and the Guilford Workforce Development Board.

Finally, a collection of several coastal area community colleges is supporting the development of a Level II program in boat building. While there are not skill standards in boat building, the program is being leveraged through different New and Expanding Industry Training projects through out the Eastern part of the state. Utilizing funding made available by the General Assembly under House Bill 275; the North Carolina Manufacturing Program will develop new skill areas and work to continuously improve the program offerings.

✓ **Dissemination of Model Programs**

The Plastics program was initiated through a partnership between Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board. Initial funding by the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board and later by the Community College System helped in the development of a Plastic training program for operators and technicians. The program will be refined by Davidson County Community College to provide a building block to the national plastics standards of the Society of Plastics Industries.

✓ **Building Partnerships**

A related initiative is also taking place through the *Joint Partnership for the Biotechnology Workforce*, a partnership between the North Carolina Community College System and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. Included, as part of this initiative is the development of a 96-hour concentrated short course that will enable successful completers the opportunity to gain a Biotech Technician Certification. The program will offer individuals throughout the state a point of entry to a quickly emerging, high tech

industry. Similarly, initial work has begun in the Information Technology area through a joint initiative between the North Carolina Electronics and Information Technology Association, the Community College System, the Department of Commerce and ExplorNet. Information on these programs will also be available at the local JobLink Career Centers.

✓ **Industry Job Analyses and Skill Assessments**

For several years, community colleges have conducted company job analyses and task profiles, used in the design of training and selection of company employees, as part of their New and Expanding Industry Training Program. However, little coordination has existed between these analyses and pre-employment offerings available through the JobLink Career Centers. Current efforts by the community colleges will explore coupling the company job analyses with services offered by community college basic skills and Human Resources Development programs, within the local JobLink Career Centers. A goal of this effort will be to meet the company requirements of providing workers who meet basic skill competencies. An additional benefit will be in providing potential job candidates with clearer indications of the employer's basic skill requirements, a defined pathway for how those skills can be acquired, and direct linkages to employer recruitment efforts.

✓ **Standards-Based Pre-employment Training Programs**

Linking to the standards-based training programs outlined earlier, another effort by the North Carolina Community College System will be to build upon the work by the National Institute for Literacy and the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council, to develop a short course series on crucial employability skills. The program will leverage the current work and resources of the Human Resources Development Program and the North Carolina Literacy Resource Center. The course will be based on the skill standards outlined from the National Institute for Literacy including Communications Skills, Decision-Making Skills, Interpersonal Skills, and Lifelong Learning Skills, as well as the anticipated employability skills from the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council.

Direct tie-ins will be made between this course and the Standards-based courses outlined earlier. As such, it can serve as a feeder and entry point for individuals with little or no employment history into the industry skills training programs which is an ideal for referrals from the local JobLink Career Centers.



## **EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION INITIATIVES**

Through a number of initiatives, ESC is providing service options for North Carolinians. The integration of ESC services into North Carolina's Workforce Development System has been accelerated by the agency's involvement as a full partner in the state's one-stop delivery system, known as the JobLink Career Centers. Currently, ESC hosts 38 of the 71 JobLink Career Centers in the state. Staff in these offices provide full-time employment services to job seekers. In the offices hosted by an entity other than ESC, employment services are provided by out-stationed ESC staff and/or through electronic linkages.

### **✓ Collocation and Partnering with State Agencies**

For many years, ESC has participated in a collaborative relationship with the state's Community College System and other service providers. In many locations, the management and staff of ESC and local community colleges have determined that students and graduates would be best served by having ESC staff members collocated on the college campuses to provide job placement services. ESC currently has staff collocated on 55 community college campuses. Some of the staff are working at JobLink Career Centers which are located on these campuses. Through working relationships with other partner agencies, ESC has provided a variety of employment services to WIA (JTPA) participants. ESC and the State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) have worked together cooperatively to provide the most effective service for persons with disabilities through a "cross referral" agreement.

### **✓ North Carolina's Common Follow-up System (CFS)**

ESC currently serves as the host agency for a cooperative effort between the Division of Employment and Training, Department of Public Instruction, North Carolina Community College System, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Division of Social Services, University of North Carolina, N. C. Department of Labor and the Department of Corrections to conduct follow-up research on completers and enrollees of publicly funded/supported programs. The objective of the system, known as the Common Follow-up System (CFS), is to track the educational, employment, earnings and occupational experience of program participants. The General Assembly established this tracking system during the 1995 legislative session under G.S. 96-32 and ESC reports annually to the legislature on the system. The office of State Budget and

Management receive data from this system to be used in evaluating the effectiveness of job training, education and placement programs through this system. The Consumer Guide module of the Navigator, a by-product of the Common Follow-up System, contains employment and wage outcome information on programs and services offered through participating agencies. Information is available on curriculum programs and employment and training services offered. Users may query data by school, curriculum or service provider.

#### ✓ **Welfare Reform Initiative**

As part of North Carolina's welfare reform initiative, partner agencies have collaborated in the establishment of the First Stop Employment Assistance Program which assists individuals who are receiving or applying for TANF benefits in becoming employed. The State Department of Health and Human Services, the Employment Security Commission, the Community College System and the Department of Commerce have worked to develop an effective program that is succeeding in diverting recipients of public assistance from welfare to meaningful employment.

TANF applicants are required to register with ESC prior to receiving a TANF eligibility determination. Job ready registrants receive appropriate employment services. Registrants who are not job ready may be referred to County Departments of Social Services to have their needs addressed or they may be referred to a community college for job seeking skills or other training.

#### ✓ **Automated Systems**

To accommodate the diversity in ESC's customer community and address the problem of dwindling resources and increasing demand for services, ESC continues to invest some of its resources in automated systems. This emphasis has given employers and job seekers access to services and information sources without staff intervention and it has made staff more available to provide staff-assisted services. These tools and resources are available at ESC local offices, JobLink Career Centers and at many libraries, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, military installations and other entities. Resource centers at ESC and JobLink Career Centers have Internet-connected personal computers that provide job seekers access, in a self-service application, to career planning and occupational information, listings of employers by county and by industry, interview tips and assistance in the preparation of resumes through the North Carolina Navigator. Staff facilitators are available to those customers who may need assistance in the use of the Navigator and other self-service systems.

### ✓ **Career Services**

In addition, the interagency North Carolina State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NC SOICC) currently housed within ESC, develops and delivers occupational and career information products and services to help youth and adults make informed career decisions. NC SOICC supports comprehensive career development programs through such products as NC Careers, an on-line career exploration and information system; NC Career Explorer, a web based, interactive, career development library and services product and a number of career information publications, career videos and CDs.

### ✓ **JobBank**

The extension of North Carolina's Job Bank to the Internet allows customers to review job opportunities from their homes and other locations with Internet access. Employer customers can list their job openings electronically, via the Internet. In doing so, they can exercise the option to display their job listings in an "unsuppressed mode" (with the name, address and telephone number of the employing establishment displayed with the job listing) on the Agency's Job Information Service. This provides interested job seekers with the information needed to make application for job openings without staff intervention. Similarly, job seekers may utilize the Internet to input resumes, which may be reviewed by employers through America's Talent Bank.

### ✓ **Skill-Net**

Through "Skill-Net", an Internet feature, employers may search ESC applicant files for potential workers. In the near future, ESC will implement an application that will provide job-seeking customers the capability to register with ESC through the Internet. Similarly, an Internet capability is being developed that will provide unemployed customers the ability to file an initial claim for unemployment insurance benefits through the Internet.

## **SUMMARY**

The 1999 Session of the General Assembly passed legislation directing the North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development to establish and provide ongoing oversight of the "One-Stop Career Center System" and delegated governance at the local level to local

Workforce Development Boards (NC GS 143B-43810. -11). The North Carolina workforce development system is comprised of local JobLink Career Centers and the local facilities of partner agencies and programs. It is the partner agencies and programs that provide staff for the JobLink Career Centers. In addition to the JobLink Career Centers, there will continue to be the provision of various workforce development services and activities by many of these agencies and programs from multiple points of entry, depending upon the mission of the individual agencies and programs. For example, it is expected that numerous agencies and programs will direct individuals seeking skills training to the community colleges. It is also expected, that referrals will be made to the local Employment Security Commission office, and other numerous programs and agencies, where individuals are seeking labor exchange and job placement services. Additionally, it is expected that the employer community will continue to call upon the community colleges for customized, new and expanding industries training. Over time, as programs begin to integrate services, as more collocation efforts are underway, and as the JobLink name and logo become more familiar around the State, more and more job/training seekers and employers will utilize the centers. The North Carolina workforce development system is more than just a sum of its parts – it is an effort to provide needed services, in a collaborative and cost-effective manner which utilizes the capabilities of each participating agency.

Because of the numerous advantages to our customers resulting from the delivery of North Carolina's workforce development services, through the JobLink Career Center System, the State agencies responsible for preparing this report fully support this system as the mechanism for coordinating the delivery of workforce development services in North Carolina.

While it is recognized that all access points in the workforce development and human services community must be well informed of their role in delivering workforce training, services and activities, more efforts must be made to link these services together in a cohesive system to provide integrated, user-friendly services to the citizens of North Carolina.



## Agencies and Programs

### Department of Commerce

- Employment Security Commission
  - Veterans Employment Services
  - Unemployment Insurance
  - Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance
- Labor Market Information (*on-site*)

- Division of Employment and Training
- Workforce Investment Act

#### • Title I Services

- Adult
- Dislocated Worker
- Youth
- NC Employment and Training Grant Program
- Welfare-to-Work Program (*on-site*)

### Department of Health and

#### Human Services

- Division of Social Services (State/County Departments)
  - Work First Employment
  - Food Stamp Employment and Training
  - Job Corps Recruitment (*on-site*)
- Division of Aging
  - Senior Employment Program (*on-site*)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - Vocational Rehabilitation Services (*on-site*)
- Division of Services For the Blind
  - Placement Services (*on-site*)

# JobLink Career Centers

- Core Services: Job Seekers**
- Eligibility Determination
  - Sponsorship
  - Career Information
  - Labor Market Information
  - Job Placement
  - Work Registration
  - Unemployment Insurance
    - Information
    - Filing of Claims
  - Training Information
  - Assessment
  - Resume Preparation
- Intensive Services:**
- Comprehensive and Specialized Assessments
  - Eligibility Determination
  - Training Sponsorship
  - Career Counseling and Planning
  - Group Counseling
  - Case Management Services
  - Training Information
  - Short-term Pre-Vocational Training
  - Referral to other partners services
  - Individual Employment Plan

- Core Services: Employers**
- Recruitment Assistance
  - Training Information
  - Tax Credits and Hiring Incentive Information
  - Labor Market Information
  - Outreach
  - Single Point for filing and filling Job Orders
  - Rapid Response to Plant Closings and Mass Layoffs
- Training Services:**
- Occupational Skills
  - On-the-Job
  - Upgrade/Retraining
  - Entrepreneurial
  - Job Readiness
  - Customized
  - Combined Workplace
  - Adult Education and Literacy combined with Occupational Skills

## Agencies and Programs

### Community College System

- Vocational and Technical Occupational Training
- Adult Basic Education and Literacy
- Human Resource Development
- Student Financial Aid
- JobReady (School-to-Work) *Linked (joint planning and may be on-site)*

### Department of Public Instruction

- JobReady (School-to-Work) *(joint planning and may be on-site)*

### Programs in Local Communities where available: (Employment & Training Programs)

- Native American
- National & Community Service Corps
- Migrant and Seasonal farmworkers
- Veterans' Workforce Programs WIA Title I
- Community Service Block Grants
- Housing and Urban Development
- Job Corps (*on-site, linked-joint planning*)

### NC Department of Labor

- Apprenticeship (*information & appointments on-site*)

 *Required by the Workforce Investment Act*

 *Required only by Executive Order #90*

North Carolina  
January 10, 2000

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS BY STATE AGENCY (FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS)

