

## **Aiken Technical College**

### **Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee**

**Question One: What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?**

**Part A.** Currently, too much duplication of effort occurs among various agencies relative to education and training leading to employment. The technical colleges have both the capacity and expertise to provide basic to advanced training for a wide variety of jobs. Funds used by other agencies to do essentially the same work as a sideline to the agencies' core missions is an inefficient use of funds. For example, WIA One-Stop Centers should refer clients to technical colleges or other approved education/training providers rather than spending WIA funds on training at One-Stop Centers. Most technical colleges also have extensive experience with WorkKeys® profiling and assessment. These services should not be duplicated in regions where colleges have the expertise and capacity for providing this service. In several states, the two-year colleges are designated as the preferred training provider, thus discouraging the duplication of training effort across agencies.

Additionally, adult education should focus its efforts across the state on achieving mastery of secondary level academic skills to prepare individuals for more advanced training and education provided by technical colleges. Closer alignment of adult education programs and services and technical college programs and services will benefit clients and reduce costs.

Reliable information is needed at both the state and local levels to better predict current and projected employment opportunities. The State WIA plan and the local plan needs to be fully aligned and widely communicated across the state to assure workforce development efforts are coordinated while still meeting the unique needs of regions and employers.

As new employment sectors emerge, state set-aside funds should be made available to the technical colleges to develop programs of study to fully prepare students to enter into well-paying and rewarding work. Ultimately, the state will be better served by creating a workforce with more post-secondary education up to and including an associate degree. Data consistently indicate that the earning power of associate degree holders and above is substantially more than those with less education. South Carolina would be well served by encouraging K-12 students and young adults to pursue a post-secondary credential in a field where employment demand exists.

In examining the notes posted on this Ad-Hoc Committee's website, I noted that discussion is occurring to combine the Employment Security Commission and the Workforce Investment Board functions under a newly formed Department of Workforce. I respectfully suggest that this name is somewhat misleading or unclear relative to its function. Perhaps a title such as the Department of Employment Services would more fully represent its mission.

Part B. Aiken Technical College has enjoyed a very positive working relationship with the WIA staff at the Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG), the local fiscal agent for WIA. Care is taken not to duplicate efforts in the Aiken area and this is achieved through close communication and collaboration. However, the region is very large (includes six counties) with very diverse economic opportunities and challenges, and diverse populations. Both the distance between locales in the region and the diversity of the region results in less than optimal Board participation and communication. Client service processing can also be too slow, which increases the time before clients re-enter the job market or enter training. To rectify this in our region, I recommend that the LSCOG remain the fiscal agent for all six counties in its region, but that three "working" regional committees of the LSCOG Workforce Investment Board be formed within the region in accordance with the service areas of the technical colleges of the region (Aiken Technical College, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, and Denmark Technical College) to better facilitate Board membership identification, participation, and local planning and execution. An annual meeting of all "working" regional committees of the LSCOG Workforce Investment Board could be convened to share evaluation data and develop a coordinated plan of work for the next year. Each regional subcommittee of the Board would be responsible for oversight of the work in the respective regions of the technical colleges. Many details would need to be considered before implementing such a model, but consideration of this or a similar possibility is prudent to improve Board performance.

In much the same manner, the Lower Savannah Regional Education Center should also be divided to mirror the service area of the three technical colleges as is the case in most areas of the state. This would again facilitate Board membership and participation, and plan development and execution. Also, the Education and Economic Development Act provisions should be examined and compared to WIA legislation to determine where better synergies could exist. A very robust student database has been developed and continues to be improved with the use of EDDA funds. It is currently capturing high school student data. This database should be examined to determine if it could become the common database for all workforce and education related information. This would be a huge undertaking, but may be more efficient and effective than eliminating existing systems and beginning from scratch. Further study would be required to determine the feasibility of database management using this approach.

**Question Two: What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?**

Aggregate data is available regarding the percent and number of unemployed, but this is not linked to specific training needs or training experience. The information is collected for individual WIA clients and is used to assist each client with his/her specific needs. Although helpful to the individual, this data does not assist agencies in predicting patterns of need and thus designing programs or services for patterns of client training and education needs.

**Question Three: What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statues, etc.)?**

Per the responses above, spotty coordination and duplication of effort lead to inefficient use of training funds.

Question Four: Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

Numerous students have obtained training or graduated from diploma or degree programs and have since gained employment. For example, a woman that lost her job when Avondale Mills closed in Graniteville returned to Aiken Technical College. Her academic skills were weak, so she began with development studies. Her goal was to enroll in and graduate from the Surgical Technology program. She did complete her developmental studies and the pre-requisite academic courses for admission into the Surgical Technology program. She was admitted, completed and graduated from the program, and is now employed at a local hospital.

# Central Carolina Technical College

## Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1. What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

My statewide recommendations would center around a more collaborative effort that takes advantage of the wide array of training programs offered through the Technical College system in SC. The technical College system is being underutilized for the delivery of training to the vast number of unemployed and underemployed residents of SC.

On the local level the current system is broken. The delivery of training services to local residents of the four county area of Sumter, Lee, Clarendon, and Kershaw counties is at best ineffective and at worst extremely inefficient in the use of federal dollars. The local one stops have referred a total of ten individuals to Central Carolina in the last 6 months for training. We serve over 4,000 residents of the four county area through our credit programs but individuals in need of training dollars are told on the local level that the local one stop is in the business of job placement not job training. The extremely high rate of unemployment means many individuals would benefit from training but funds are not available from the local one stop for this vital training.

2. What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs?

The unemployment rates for three of the four counties in our service area (Clarendon, Lee, and Sumter) are consistently well above the state average. A cluster study recently completed by the Santee Lynches COG noted the metal working industry as one of the areas of emphasis for development in this area. Central Carolina has an excellent track record of producing well qualified structural and pipe welders through its' training programs.

3. What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

The biggest barrier is the inefficient operation of the local one stop for this service area. The operation of the One Stop does not lead to individuals being trained for the well paying careers that are available. The funds are spent on advertising and operation of the local one stop and no funds are available for the much needed training of individuals in this area.

4. Please provide one (anonymous student case history from your campus that describe the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

A young man from the Bishopville area came to the College as an unemployed individual in need of training for a career. After 19 weeks of training the individual was a certified pipe welder and was employed by a local company at an hourly rate of \$28 per hour. This change in job status changes not only the life of the individual but also the life of his family.

Central Carolina stands ready to provide the high quality training necessary for the global economy of today but we need partners in the process that are equally committed to high quality service to the residents of our four county area.

## **Florence-Darlington Technical College**

Response to the Ways and Means Committee  
Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

Stronger connections to inform training providers, particularly the continuing education and credit programs at Tech colleges, about needs of local industry. What kind of training is needed? What type of skills are lacking in the workforce or how do changes in production/manufacturing or service provision impact training needs? 2. More short term training programs that directly support voiced needs of local business.

Tech's pipe welding academies illustrate a positive model of this. It was an industry waiting for workers and continuing education built a short term program that provided employees for the employer and gave un- or under-employed workers a short term and beneficial training opportunity.

WIA staff needs to have more awareness about services/programs at the technical colleges. They are typically more cost effective than some of the private providers of training. If WIA is not integrally connected to the college, other training providers who have resources lure clients in (the example of the truck driver training group that has students walking into WIA requesting them). Tech system doesn't have that kind of communication ability.

At FDTC, there has been an issue related to position of job developer. In the past, it reported to WIA but it now reports to ESC. With it under ESC, it is the impression of WIA that the role of job creation has suffered.

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience? ?

Increasing numbers of unemployed create lengthier waiting lists for funding or service.

3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

Need more intuitive programs that remediate an unemployed person's specific deficiencies rather than a cookie cutter program that provides a mixture of some needed skills and some s/he already has. Short term fast paced remedial programs would be beneficial.

Need a better way to inform community/constituents about existing needs in the workforce so they might have a better awareness about options that fit their skills or interest.

Need to do a better job about informing the unemployed about upcoming workforce opportunities (i.e., green jobs or digitizing medical files). If workers have a year or so of training benefits, they may want to train for the emerging jobs rather than the vanishing ones.

If Tech was the primary provider, this would allow for more cooperative endeavors between the colleges to provide training options that are, at present, too costly for an individual college. This would be especially advantageous in the more rural areas.

4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

"My obtaining my R.N. is nothing short of a miracle given my circumstances. WIA was one instrumental factor in making it happen. I am grateful for this program and to my caseworker who went above and beyond to see that I had every available resource and served as a source of encouragement as well.

When I had finished my pre-requisites by the end of August 2005, I was a single mother. I had five children who were then 13, 10, 9, 7 and almost 2. I was newly homeless also. I had a 4.0 GPA and wanted to apply for the nursing program at FDTC. Because of a misunderstanding with regard to their requirements, I spent my first semester of clinicals at CCTC in Sumter. Being homeless, issues with what to put in the "address" box were worked out, and thankfully my church family at Sandhurst soon helped me get an apartment, a new job at McLeod and I finished my first semester of clinicals.

With the encouragement of some dear friends, I was able to transfer into Florence-Darlington Tech which was a five minute drive instead of an hour and a half. I found out about WIA in my third semester when a girl in 5th semester named Lee told me about it. She called Kaye Stone for me and I met with Kaye within days. She and Connie Mason had me approved probably more quickly than anyone in the history of the program! I was so amazed at the resources it provided and so very relieved. I was working full-time at night while going to school, but still did not make near enough to make ends meet. With all of the resources available to me, I often fell short no matter how hard I worked and I learned to rely on God completely as I lived in poverty for quite some time.

No matter what happened to me through those years, I would not give up on school. WIA helped me afford my books, uniforms, supplies, fees, and at one point the allowances for gas that literally got me there. During my enrollment in the ADN program, we were allowed to take our LPN boards after the 3rd semester. WIA paid all of the fees that enabled me to take my boards. My pay doubled.

In this short span, I cannot possibly convey the extent of difficulty, heartache, trials and roadblocks that I encountered during this program. Among them, the homelessness, divorce, eviction, bankruptcy, custody battles, poverty and all that go accompany such; little things like coming home to do your

homework and the internet service is cut off, or better yet, the electricity. The concern of whether or not you will be able to afford the home you are in from month to month, budgeting for food on a miniscule budget and unscrewing light bulbs so you can have a little heat to needing three people to help you get your children to daycare and school and back in a day so you can get to clinicals on time at 6:30 a.m. All of this on three to four hours of sleep a night. Every night. For two years, while enduring an exceedingly difficult program like nursing school. With God on my side, though, all I had to do is show up and do my best. Many good and amazing things would happen. Lots of people helped and prayed and God provided in every way. Right on time. And one of those ways was WIA completely alleviating my concerns about funding for school.

This past May I finished the R.N. program. I don't have to think about bills anymore, about being hungry, or sleep deprived, or about anything being cut off. And our home is comfortably climate controlled. I was hired in October 2007, before I even finished the program, as an emergency room nurse. My new husband and I will work in the same ER. He is a nurse in the pediatric ER and I will work in the main ER. We only work three days a week, the rest of the days are devoted to family. Jobs look for me.

The sense of power and accomplishment that goes along with having an education is unparalleled and well worth what it took to obtain it. The resolutions to any remaining struggles are left up to God. I have done all I can to help myself and my family. But I didn't do it alone. I truly love this profession and will enjoy this privilege of serving others, in the hospital and abroad in the mission field, until I am no longer able. I will be forever grateful and it will be reflected in the way I live my life."



# Greenville Technical College

## Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

- WorkKeys® should be mandatory when a person files for unemployment to assess their skills. If the person does not attain a gold certificate, they should immediately be placed in a program that will allow them to achieve as high a career readiness certificate as possible.
- Could such a program be mandated? i.e., the person has to have the WK certificate or not be eligible for UI compensation. The problem in SC (and Greenville) is low educational/skills attainment. If the person does not have the basic skills, they are not able to enter a college level program. An unemployed person can receive a check for 12+ months while "looking" for employment. At the end of that time, they may still be unemployable if they haven't developed a good skills foundation.
- Every person filing for unemployment should be given info immediately about training services provided through WIA. This would seem to be a "common sense" activity, but it does not necessarily happen on a consistent basis. We should assume that every unemployed person without a certificate or degree automatically be placed into some training program (could be work-ready training, basic skills, etc.).
- WIA should proactively contact the unemployed to offer services.

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

- We have access to the number of unemployed and the kind of job they were displaced from. We have data of individual training needs and experience, but lack that same data in aggregate form.

3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

- Confusion exists between DOC (WIA) and ESC. In Greenville, the WIB has a One Stop website; so does ESC. How does the prospective client not get confused?
- Efficiency would be greatly enhanced if there were a single database (or compatible databases) so that One Stop partners (at least WIA and ESC) could access client info.

- We need a consistent, high quality work-readiness program and we should expect all UI recipients to go through this program (could award a certificate). Employers continue to bemoan that the workforce lacks these soft skills (teamwork, dependability, work ethic, etc.).

The following is a link to an article (pasted below) illustrating how the system can work.  
<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/article/20100103/BUSINESS/1030307/1003/BUSINESS/Graduates-of-Greenville-Workforce-Collaborative-feel-better-prepared-for-job-search>

United Way provided funding for job coaches, WIB provided support services (child care, transportation, etc.) for those who meet their low income definition as well as tuition, GTC provided training (one of our QJ grant programs), ESC and Greenville Works have worked to build employer support.

Despite the new production skills they've learned, graduates of the Greenville Workforce Collaborative's first eight-week manufacturing skills course realize that finding a job may take weeks or months because of the weak economy.

But the graduates — who are now certified production technicians — also think that when companies are hiring, they are likely to be the first in line because of the skills they've gained.

"I've resigned myself that it's going to take a while," said Dena Ramey, a Greenville County resident who has worked in the textile industry in the past. "I know it could take six months to a year" to find a job using the skills learned in the program.

James Williams, a Greenville resident who also is a graduate, said, "I think by having this training, and everybody backing us up, we will have a better chance of getting a decent job. I think I have a pretty good chance of getting a job around the first of the year."

Mary Carter, who left the work force in 1995 and needs to return because her husband is disabled, said, "I realize things are difficult, but I think I'm going to find a job."

The Greenville Workforce Collaborative partners' "goal is to have employers who are interested on the front end of the training," said Laura Harmon, workforce development project manager with the United Way of Greenville County. "We had that this time. One employer was interested in interviewing 10 students for a continued apprenticeship program."

Economic conditions caused that possibility to collapse, she said.

The advanced metal working firm pulled out of the plan because "that apprenticeship training is on hold due to the economy," she said.

"Since the company told us, we have been working on other employment options," she said. "We've had some companies interested in seeing resumes. Some graduates have applied for jobs through a recruiter. Some have applied through the Employment Security Commission office."

- 4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

The student, age 44, had worked in a variety of jobs and found herself unemployed in mid-2008. She decided to go into healthcare and was sponsored by WIB to take our Unit Secretary program, a 159-hour program (over 5 weeks) that is conducted online. The program also requires an 80-hour externship, which she completed at Greenville Hospital System. She was hired by GHS and continues to work there. The WIB has continued to sponsor additional training for her; she completed the Medical Receptionist program in Spring 2009 and Medical Billing – Compusystems in Summer 2009.

Unit Secretary is a program we developed a number of years ago at GHS's request. Graduates of the program are qualified to sit for the National Association of Health Unit Coordinator designation.

# Midlands Technical College

## Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

- Better communication about the services available through the One Stops directed toward both the unemployed and the employers
- Better communication between colleges and the One Stops on available programs and the details involved
- Ensure more uniformity around the state on schedules and timelines regarding when money is available for training and when it is not
- Offer in-depth and uniform training for WIA case workers
- Ensure communication between case worker and client is ongoing - from enrollment, throughout training, to obtaining a job
- Work with high schools and adult education to train youth workers before they become unemployed
- Make in-depth employability skills training mandatory for all WIA clients
- Offer training support for individuals who want to become entrepreneurs and not work for another employer – this is often a problem because of the lack of benefits even though SC has been in support of small business
- Ensure that all individuals who apply for unemployment compensation know that training dollars may be available through the Dislocated Worker or Adult and Youth funding sources

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

- Other than company layoffs and closings and our own individual customer contacts, we have no systematic way of tracking unemployment data at the college.

3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

- Lack of ability to market the services of the One Stops to the general public and to employers looking to hire employees with hard-to-find skills keeps the One Stop a well kept secret from many who need these services
- Coordination and communication of the many details between the Technical Colleges and the One Stops – especially with the large case worker turnover
- Dealing with the influx of unemployed seeking services through the One Stops without a significant increase in personnel keeps case managers from spending appropriate amount of time with each client to really help them understand and explore their options and serve as an advisor throughout the training

- Lack of motivation within some individuals who are attending class just to ensure they continue to receive financial benefits. Other than a better opportunity to go to work, there is no incentive or requirement for successful completion.
- Life barriers such as child care and transportation
- Lack of basic educational skills including literacy, math, reading, communication and computer skills
- Lack of how to look for a job once training is complete and how to keep a job once they get one
- Maximum allowable expenses funded by WIA sometimes prevents students from entering certain programs where jobs and where their skill sets exist
- Limited college capacity – in some programs students may have to wait for space due to predetermined schedules and facility limitations
- Knowledge of the needs of all companies hiring in the area
- Many individuals we speak to simply do not know how to navigate the system and don't really understand what they can and can't do related to their training dollars. Some of this is caused by the volume of people who have needed benefits in 2009.

4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

- One WIA student was laid off from a large newspaper company. With over 20 years experience in print, he found it difficult to enter the workforce as the news print industry is on the decline. Though his years of experience within the print industry were impressive, the biggest obstacle he faced was a lack of experience with Web design and development. The student entered our Web Design Tools certificate program. Shortly after his completion of the program, he obtained a job within the print industry. Upon his hiring, it was stated the Web Design Certificate program on his resume made the difference.
- One WIA student in the summer 2009 phlebotomy class in Winnsboro was hired by a blood drawing laboratory within 2 weeks of finishing her phlebotomy class. Also, Lexington Medical Center just hired another WIA phlebotomy student who completed the clinical rotation in December 2009.
- WIA welding students have been hired by American Spiralweld, Aerotec Staffing, B&D Boilers, American Fab and Weld, Prosperity Fabrication, Midlands Technical College and WEC Welding and Machining Institute.
- A middle aged WIA student had been laid off. He took several of our CAD and Quality classes and secured a job in his field after upgrading his skills.
- A WIA student completed the Audio Engineering Certificate in March of 2009. After participating in an internship through the program, the employer hired the student in a full time position.

# Northeastern Technical College

## Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1. Our recommendations for this item involve:
  - a. Resolving problems with funding from WIA, TAA, and other agencies associated with ESC.
  - b. The college is not included in the group that visits with closing businesses/industries. Both efficiency and effectiveness would be improved if the college could be included.
  - c. Case workers don't have adequate knowledge about programs and don't send their clients to the college for counseling.
  - d. The Technical Colleges should be the first choice for training. In our region, we are sometimes the second, third, or fourth choice.
2. No data are readily available to NETC from the agencies in the area. We even have difficulty getting employment data after the students have completed their training. ESC has the data but does not share.
3. The biggest barriers to achieving excellence in training programs are:
  - a. Communication, or lack of it (we have a difficult time getting information such as pass rates on EMT graduates).
  - b. Counseling/placement issues.
  - c. Funding like TAA creates many issues for students. The most immediate one is that when a student is placed in a program, he/she cannot deviate from the curriculum and cannot change programs even if he/she discovers that his/her current program is not the preferred one.
4. Here is our student case history for an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training program at NETC:

A gentleman had been a production employee at West Point Stevens when the plant closed. He enrolled in NETC's nursing assistant program in January 2008 and obtained his state nursing assistant certification. He then entered the phlebotomy program and completed the phlebotomy program in July 2008 and became a national certified phlebotomist. He gained employment with CareSouth Carolina in July 2008 as a certified phlebotomist and worked as phlebotomist through December 2008. He was then promoted to Outreach Coordinator for CareSouth Carolina on January 5, 2009.

He sent this e-mail to an NETC employee...

"I have a new job! I am the new Outreach Coordinator for CareSouth Carolina in the Darlington/Marlboro County region. I am so happy. I start on January 5th (2009). I will be making more than I ever did at West Point Stevens, and I really did well there."

# Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College

## Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1. Statewide recommendations—The system to access “training programs for the unemployed” is disjointed and does not represent a realistic understanding of current, local training needs for the long-term sustained growth of economic development. The S.C. Technical System should be recognized in statute as the state agency for workforce training and the provider of choice for state and federal programs and funds. The S.C. Technical System should become the fiscal agent for WIA funds; however, this alone will not solve the problems with our current frustrations. Part of the long term solution is re-authorization at the federal level, but much can be accomplished with re-organization of the state and local WIBs. WIBS should be re-constructed with members that reflect current employment opportunities and an understanding of the skill-sets needed for industry for the state and the different locales. If the S.C. Technical System is selected as the “agency in charge” input from the State Board, the System President and Colleges should be incorporated in thinking about accountability, flexibility and efficiency. There are many FTEs involved in the administration of the programs. In order to promote efficiency, all aspects of the system should be examined and determination of where FTEs need to be positioned would be considered. For example, grants that our college has had have been reviewed by as many as 3 auditors before we receive funds but with a provision to fall under the single audit act, time and funds could be saved. Currently, we have FTEs sitting in offices over the state but in rural areas, we need more people in the field for case management and job placement. Therefore, the current FTEs may need to be re-trained and serve in new functions. In order to be able to create a new spirit and work ethic, it is recommended that current employees of the WIA not be required to move to the college system and new employees be temporary grant positions as the system transitions and changes.
2. In my region, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College is in the same COG as Aiken and Denmark and serves 6 counties. While we have many similar concerns, the job mix for Aiken is very different from that of Orangeburg. I recommend that each local WIB be reflective of the technical college service areas and that MOAs between the colleges be utilized to guarantee appropriate training for all areas. The local WIB should be re-constructed with the understanding that it should be knowledgeable and reflective of local employment opportunities. Term limits should be enforced. OCtech has strong relationships to the local industry and to the local Economic Development Commission. Locally, we have a Workforce Transformation organization, a strong Society of HR Managers, strong program advisory groups, strong ties to the local Chambers of Commerce and run the Adult Education programs for our areas. The college already has knowledge of the job market, information on “ability to benefit” and those eligible for PELL and other financial resources. When we send them to the One Stop, we generally know what they are eligible for but they still have to go through the hoops. Often they become frustrated and drop out before getting any service.

3. Institutional data is available regarding unemployed is available through the ESC, however, a more realistic view of the current and long-term needs is more reliable through the local Economic Development Commission and our relationship with current business and industry through both formal and informal partnerships. Currently, we are working with Shaw Industries regarding needs for positions at the proposed nuclear sites as well as SCE&G and Santee Cooper for their future needs. These positions are not ones that will be trained for in 6 months but will need longer training. The Brightside of the current unemployment is that now is an opportunity for us to get good people to get better training and be prepared for new jobs that will be coming. Not only will new jobs be coming, but in our area with 28% of jobs being advanced manufacturing, we know that many retirements will produce many vacancies over the next 5 years.
4. Barriers—a. Federal and state rules as interpreted by the current WIBs. We do know that many of the rules are subject to interpretation and often are used incorrectly by current personnel. This is seen as a lack of motivation for change and often a lack of understanding of the rules; B. Poor communication between program managers and case managers even in the same One stops and COGs; C. Long intake process in One Stops causing frustration; D. performance success definitions which often require persons with very low skills to be trained and employed within short periods and to be employed within short period even in recession.
5. We have many case studies with success in putting people back to work. Our frustration is with the ones with such low skills that they need more than short term training.

Our greatest successes have been in healthcare such as phlebotomy and Certified Nursing Assistance because they are short term and there are many jobs. We have place graduates from these programs at Palmetto Richland, all area nursing homes, home health care and the local hospitals. Many of these have potential for moving up the "health" ladder which is also our goal. We need to be able to get them an initial job but have funds for additional job training so that they can reach their potential.

In summary, I believe that the premier training arm of S.C. is the technical colleges and it has been cited time and time again by economic development publications and industries. We need to take full advantage of our strengths. Without a review, I cannot give all of the specifics of how a new system would be organized but I believe within a short window of time and access to the various state training budgets a more effective system can be devised. Currently, our training dollars are too fragmented and often wasted so that they can be spent quickly to meet some irrelevant goal. We must take this economic down time and re-tool for the recovery.



## **Piedmont Technical College**

Response to the Ways and Means Committee  
Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

In the past fiscal year, there have been multiple incidents where WIA has run out of money. At that point, they stop taking applications. That certainly is not an effective way to help the unemployed into job training programs.

One recommendation to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs on the local level would be to provide Adult Education with funding to pay a case worker to work with Adult Ed. Students to assist with career planning, goal setting, college applications, placement testing and college enrollment. An ideal funding source for such a position would be to eliminate the REC Directors across the state. Speaking for our service area, the REC position has not accomplished what was originally intended, and there could be a much better usage of the funds provided for salary and supporting expenses.

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

Piedmont Technical College does not have individual institutional data regarding the unemployed. However, we requested information from the local WIA office and determined that between 2006 and 2008, those unemployed who sought assistance were marginally lower in educational attainment than the statewide average. The averages for this period were as follows:

25.4% unknown

2.1% had less than high school

1.6% had some high school

17.4% did not complete high school

34.5% had a high school diploma or equivalent

15.7% had at least one year of college or post secondary training

3.3% had a college degree

3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

It is quite difficult to accomplish excellence in training programs at state supported institutions, when the state only funds 17% of its obligation under the Mission Resource Requirement.

In order to better serve the unemployed, and all the residents of South Carolina, the General Assembly needs to re-examine its priorities with regards to higher education spending. Spending priorities should be re-adjusted to better support higher education programs that actually put graduates to work. The fastest growing demographic student at Piedmont Technical College is the "reverse transfer student" or the unemployed who happens to be a graduate of a four year university who has come to a technical college to get the skills necessary to get a job. Life Scholarships for university students are good politics, but how many college graduates with majors in theatre, communications, psychology, history, and political science does the state really need?

4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

Two students stand out. One was laid off from Fuji because of the changing technology with the move from film to digital. He came to Piedmont Technical College completed an Industrial Electronics and Mechatronics Degree, and has since been hired at Carolina Pride as a Mechanical Electrician. The second student was laid off from Torrington Corporation in Clinton. He came to Piedmont Technical College and enrolled in the Mechatronics Certificate program. This student will graduate this May, but has already been hired by Kraft Foods in Newberry as a Mechanical Electrician.

These student stories are important because not only do they highlight the importance of unemployed students coming back for training, but they also demonstrate the changing nature of jobs within our service area. Both students moved from the declining manufacturing sector and are now employed in an agri-business field which is increasing its workforce demands.

Certainly the recruitment of Boeing was the great success for our state in 2009. However, the General Assembly needs to continue to recognize that there is considerable job growth in the agri-business sector in our state. In 2009, the corporations adding jobs within our service territory have all been in agri-business production: SPF, Carolina Pride, and Kraft to name a few.

## Technical College of the Lowcountry

Response to the Ways and Means Committee  
Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

- 1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

**\*\*If the state and local employment commission/one-stop could provide the system/colleges with a specific list of jobs that are listed/available on a monthly or quarterly basis. This would allow the colleges in determining trends, thus, developing/improving training programs.**

**\*\*comprehensive data and analysis for each region of job growth projections e.g. sectors, employer projections, training needs, etc. There is no continual tracking or forecasting that can be used in planning.**

- 2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

**\*\*\*unemployment data is received directly from COG; however, the data is basically unemployment numbers. Training needs are not available from specific WIBs or One-Stops; the colleges determine training needs through environment scans/surveys/employer interviews-forums to determine the needs. It would be excellent to have a comprehensive study available on an annual basis of training needs. There is no continual analysis regarding workforce issues and without proper data and analysis.**

- 3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

**\*\*\*\*All listed. In our area we have an excellent relationship with the One-stops, COG and WIB, however, because of individual organizational structures and agency reporting and regulations, coordination and communication can be lost. While all agencies are "doing more with less," the sheer volume of individuals seeking jobs has placed a burden on all agencies and the colleges. There is little time for planning, developing needed programs, and coordination.**

- 4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

**\*\*\*We have had several unemployed individuals come to TCL for certified nursing training and be placed after passing their state exams.**

## Tri-County Technical College

### Response to the Ways and Means Committee Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

- 1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?
  - a) **Statewide Recommendations:** It is essential to consolidate some of the overlapping services now provided to SC citizens. It would be more effective and efficient to have the DOE give up all Adult Education functions to the Technical College System for restructuring and incorporation into the SBTCE System. This would give each community one voice in addressing local workforce needs and basic skills training for those beyond high school age. At present, the local Adult Education programs continually offer programs that are really the responsibility of the Technical College System. If this change was made it would be imperative to give the SBTCE the ability to pare down the staff of each Adult Education provider to correspond to local needs. A second recommendation would be to move all functions of the local WIBs under the respective Technical Colleges for streamlining of services to local needs.
  - b) **Local Recommendations:** The moves suggested above would greatly increase the ability of the Technical Colleges to meet local needs.

- 2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

The local WIB has conducted surveys and gathered data to assess the needs of the unemployed in the area. Additionally, Tri-County Technical College has engaged independent consultants to assess local workforce activity, areas of oversupply and areas of need. This information is used by the College when engaged in conversations with local business and industry leaders when determining areas of emphasis in non-credit and credit training.

- 3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

I see the primary barrier as lack of understanding on the part of the average citizen in regard to how to negotiate the system we have constructed in SC. Restructuring agencies to give a true "One-Stop" approach would greatly enhance the ability of the person in the street who needs direction, support and training for employment.

- 4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

We have had numerous students come to Tri-County the past several years through WIB programs and then achieve employment in their desired field. This year we had a former textile worker complete the Industrial Mechanics program who then found employment in manufacturing. In addition to his regular employment, this former student has returned to the College as a part-time instructor in the field in which he studied. Additionally, we have had several WIA funded students graduate this year from our nursing program that previously lost their jobs in the textile field.

# Williamsburg Technical College

Response to the Ways and Means Committee  
Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

A more seamless process involving all the principals (the technical college, ESC and WIA), especially at the local level, would reduce duplication, speed communications and improve efficiency. Ensuring that all staff are well versed in the nuances of the regulations, especially allowable expenses would help. These programs have very complex regulations; it requires some expertise to fully understand them. More flexibility in the use of funds would improve effectiveness, but that may be constrained by Federal Regulation.

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

The college depends on the local ESC office to provide unemployment data for the area and to identify specific training needs for these unemployed individuals. The college works closely with ESC to structure training programs that will meet those defined needs.

3) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)? A barrier for WTC is lack of funding for program implementation or expansion, as opposed to tuition reimbursement. Coordination across large geographic areas can also become a barrier. The local WIB requirement for specific WorkKeys® scores for program placement is a barrier to training many unemployed individuals in the College's service area. We have been led to believe that the use of these scores was a local decision.

4) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

The story of a 2007 nursing (LPN) graduate. Jane Doe was a stay at home mom whose is married and has three children. Her income fell out of the range for Pell so she needed assistance from WIA to pay for tuition and books. She attended WTC three semesters and graduated at the top of her class. Upon graduation WIA also paid for her to take state boards for nursing which was several hundred dollars. She is now a school nurse for the Williamsburg County school district. Her quote is that she "literally could not have attended college without assistance from WIA".

# York Technical College

Response to the Ways and Means Committee  
Employment Security Commission Ad Hoc Study Committee

1) What a) statewide recommendations and b) local recommendations do you have to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of training programs for the unemployed in SC?

Statewide Level – Continue to keep the lines of communication open with the Department of Commerce, Employment Security Commission, Catawba Council of Government and York Technical College. This includes distributing policies and procedures for WIA Programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Trade and Older Youth) as soon as possible to better serve the WIA participants. An efficiency improvement would be to align procedures across the WIA Programs, as much as possible, to simplify and promote consistency for participants and counselors.

Local Level – Maintain the strong working relationship that has been developed between the local ESC Offices (Chester, Lancaster and York Counties), Catawba Council of Government and York Technical College. This includes continuing the positive partnerships and discussing future planning strategies for serving WIA participants into fiscal years 2010 and 2011. Effectiveness can be improved by establishing a baseline for counselor case load that is connected to a systematic series of steps that each participant follows.

2) What individual institutional data is available regarding the unemployed in your area and their training needs and training experience?

A local data base system maintained in the WIA Services Department at York Technical College is used to access information on the WIA Participants, as well as the VOS (Virtual One Stop) computer system used by ESC, Catawba Council of Government and York Technical College WIA Services Department. The local ESC Offices provide information regarding the unemployed WIA participants in York, Chester and Lancaster Areas.

The following reflects statistics released by the ESC for November 2009:

## Unemployment Rates

State	12.3%	(266,330)
#4 Chester	21.2%	(3,303)
#7 Lancaster	18.2%	(5,297)
#20 York	14.5%	(15,566)

Out of 46 counties

December 2009 statistics will be available on January 19, 2010.

York Technical College WIA Services Department currently has 1,914 WIA participants receiving training and 1,119 WIA participants receiving follow up after their completion of training.

2) What are the barriers to achieving excellence in training programs for the unemployed in SC (e.g. organizational, communication, coordination, statutes, etc.)?

Barriers include addressing "Waiting Lists" for limited enrollment programs deemed to be in high demand. Additional funding for technical colleges would be beneficial to make programs like Nursing, Radiologic Technology, and others available to more students, many of whom are WIA participants.

Continue to improve communication with ESC, Catawba Council of Government, York Technical College WIA Services Department, and especially participants in reporting employment data. This information is vital in monitoring training providers and determining program success.

3) Please provide one (anonymous) student case history from your campus that describes the experience of an unemployed person that successfully re-entered the workforce directly as a result of training and or certification programs that met the need of a specific employer.

Stacy Eudy is a WIA participant from Lancaster SC, who became unemployed from Springs Industries. He entered the WIA Program classified as a TRADE participant and received services, including childcare supportive services. While participating in training through York Technical College, he completed an Associate Degree in Heating and Air Conditioning. Stacy then obtained employment in the field.

Mr. Eudy was on the Dean's List several times due to academic excellence and received a state-wide WIA participant award. As a heating and air conditioning employee, Stacy returned to the Lancaster ESC Building to repair their air conditioning system.

Mr. Eudy is considered a success.