



Workforce *connections*
Inc

2005-2006 Annual Report



Connecting People, Work, and Training

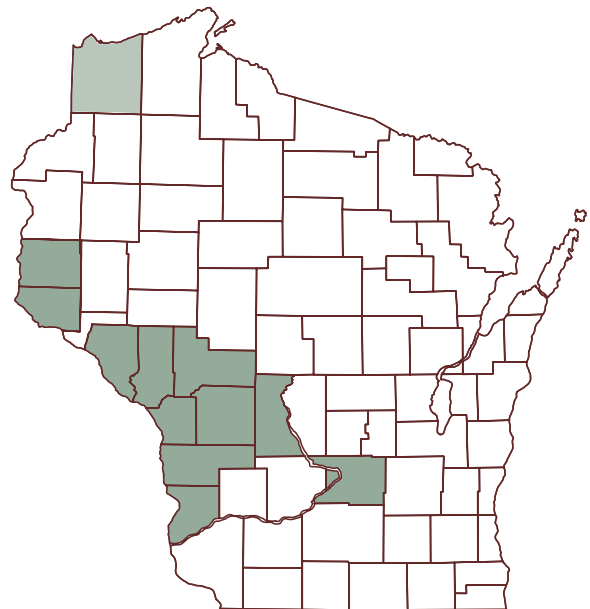
WHO WE ARE

Workforce Connections, Inc. is a professional, knowledgeable, responsive and customer-focused leader in connecting people, work and training. In serving as an inextricable partner in Job Centers, Workforce Connections, Inc. provides accountable, valued services for job seekers, businesses, governmental units and the workforce development system.

We provide a variety of workforce development services in 12 counties in Wisconsin. Most of our services are offered in conjunction with partners in the Wisconsin Job Center System, with the majority of our staff located in job centers in each county. In partnership with the correctional system, several staff members are placed at State correctional facilities in our area to offer employment re-integration services to individuals nearing release.

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Workforce Connections, Inc. services are funded either wholly or in-part by grants from the State of Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, the United States Department of Labor, the Wisconsin Corporation for Community Services, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections and the Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.

Workforce Connections, Inc. provides equal opportunity employment and programs.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to persons with disabilities.

Dear Readers:

We are pleased to share our accomplishments over the past year in our 23rd Annual Report, focusing on the value added services we deliver to employers and job seekers. Each year we look back on our accomplishments to evaluate our services to help us improve. Internally, we evaluate our organizational performance based on the following:

Program Performance: We strive for excellence in delivering services funded by taxpayers. We have again met or exceeded the performance standards for all of our grants and contracts.

Financial: In spite of cuts in government funding, we had a successful year financially. We worked diligently to increase our funding sources. Several new projects, including our X-treme Opportunity – Youth Offender program as well as two W-2 contracts, helped to boost our budgets. We are in sound financial position.

Organizational Integrity: We have completed 13 consecutive years of unqualified, no-finding audits as performed by an independent auditing firm. We had no internal or external distractions that may have challenged our integrity. We are proud of our unblemished record.

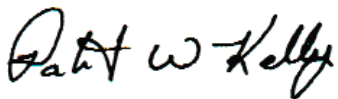
Human Resources, Training and Development: Our people are our greatest asset. We take our investments in training and development seriously to produce a highly trained, certified staff. We are pleased that our clients, partners and the Local Elected Officials view our staff as professional and competent.

Strategic Development: Our strategy in targeting the economically disadvantaged, the ex-offender population, and clients with barriers to employment has served us well. We have expanded our Wisconsin Works (W-2) services to Trempealeau and Douglas Counties and have increased our reach to include young offenders. We have partnered with our sister agencies in Minnesota and Iowa to develop regional workforce development strategies targeting manufacturing, health care and diversity as goals to pursue.

We are happy to report that the year was successful and look forward to more good years to come.

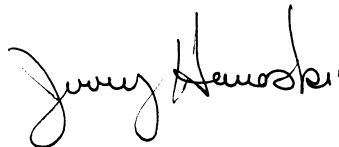
Thank you for your interest in Workforce Connections, Inc.

Sincerely,



Pat Kelly

Chairman of the Board



Jerry Hanoski

Executive Director

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Preparing for High Demand Occupations

With the pending retirement of the Baby Boomer generation, most employers will have greater challenges finding qualified workers. This will be especially true for occupations that have either high growth potential or high demand, especially those in manufacturing and health care. We are working to ward off the challenges by training individuals to meet the demand, and by reaching into previously untapped labor pools to expand the workforce supply.

Training in Demand Occupations

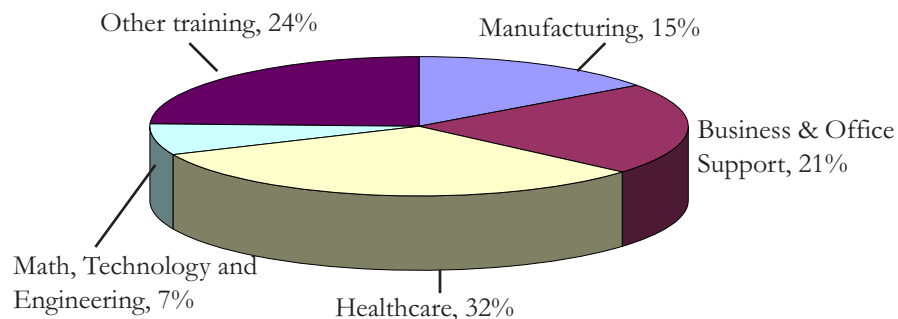
Health care and manufacturing are important industry sectors for our regions. Both require high skill levels and rely on science, technology and math skills. Our research also shows that these two industries are increasingly demanding new and replacement workers, with the peak employment expected to occur around 2015. We try to be proactive training our clients for occupations with high demand.

OUR SERVICES

Workforce Connections, Inc. provides a myriad of programs most designed to prepare a skilled workforce for our area employers. The following are a few indicators of our success:

- In Workforce Investment Act programs we assisted 1,081 individuals; 177 were in training programs, 51% of the adults and dislocated workers completed the program. At least 90% of those completing were employed.
- In our Wisconsin Works (W-2) program we have helped 485 individuals, and provided 236 with a placement in the W-2 program. Of these, 57 found unsubsidized employment.
- We helped prepare 58 clients housed at the Prairie du Chien Correctional Facility and the Jackson Correctional Facility to re-integrate with society and prepare for employment. We are proud to report the recidivism rate for these clients is well below the norm.
- In our X-Treme Opportunities program we assisted 200 young people who had been adjudicated in adult court. Sixteen clients entered training in manufacturing, construction or health care. Fifty-five successfully found employment.

Training in demand occupations PY 05-06



SUCCESS STORIES

Health Care

Cindi was a single mother who was facing financial challenges due to lack of child support and mounting medical bills as she provided care for family members. She was working full-time as a Licensed Practical Nurse



but found that she could not support herself, her child and her mother on her income. She made the decision to pursue her dream of completing her Associates Degree in Nursing (ADN) degree with the full support of her employer. In order to

achieve her goal of becoming self-sufficient, she sought assistance with transportation and educational-related expenses. Working collaboratively with Workforce Connections, Inc. and Western Dairyland's Renew Skills Enhancement and Wheels for Work programs, she was able to attend the Registered Nurse program at Minnesota Southeast Technical College. She anticipates receiving her Associates Degree in Nursing in May 2007, and maintains current employment as a Licensed Practical Nurse.

Manufacturing

Ron was a young adult who had been through the court system. He came to the X-treme Opportunities program looking for help in turning his life in a positive direction. He had completed his high school education, had participated in high school internships programs, but had no real work experience. He wanted to explore careers that would use his manual dexterity skills. Ron and his Employment Coordinator discussed enrolling in a welding course that Workforce Connections, Inc. had contracted from Western Technical College. Although he was one of the youngest students, Ron enrolled and earned an Introduction to Welding Certificate. After completing the course, he worked with his Employment Coordinator to apply at several local welding facilities. He was hired by a local company and began his career earning \$10.74 per hour. With the help from the X-treme Opportunities program, he is now working

to reinstate his driving privileges and rent an apartment in La Crosse.

Manufacturing

Todd is currently a welder at a local company. In June 2006, he started his employment at a local company earning \$10.00 per hour. He has received several pay raises, is now earning \$12.00 per hour and reports that he is extremely happy with his job and his new life.

Todd's story was not always so bright. For two years he had been incarcerated at the Prairie du Chien Correctional Institution for alcohol-related offenses. Prior to release he worked with our Employment Coordinator at the facility to prepare for his life after incarceration. He gained experience in interviewing and filling out job applications and discussed possible careers. He left Prairie du Chien with only the clothes on his back, limited welding experience, and appointment with an Employment Coordinator in La Crosse.

Todd and his Employment Coordinator decided he would be a good candidate for the summer welding program. While attending the program, he excelled at the manual welding skills, but struggled with the math. He completed the program with excellent recommendations on his welding ability. He applied for several jobs and was hired immediately.

He is successfully employed, rents his own apartment, and has reduced his mandatory meetings with his parole officer to once a month. Todd has turned his life to positive outcomes.



Welding Class



AMERICORPS

Local

In addition to assisting our employers with access to highly qualified workers, we also value our community involvement. Our YES AmeriCorps program successfully completed its 11th year of operation. AmeriCorps Members volunteer time to *Get Things Done!* Members tutor children in our area schools, mentor at-risk youth, help with community gardens and food pantries, and train volunteers to help with disasters.



Helping Out at the Community Garden

AmeriCorps Contributions

- Provided 47,839 service hours to the community.
- Tutored and mentored over 587 youth.
- Served 71,2006 meals at free meal sites.
- Distributed 6,705 bags of groceries at food pantries and 6,955 pounds of produce.
- Trained 1,339 residents in disaster preparedness.
- Recruited 1,090 volunteers and 3,620 hours.

The YES AmeriCorps program serves western Wisconsin, but it is also “on call” to lend a helping hand when disaster strikes elsewhere. Several of our Members traveled to Louisiana to help with the clean-up and recovery efforts from Hurricane Katrina.

Helping Out In Time of Need

“I went to New Orleans for the second time to help with the rebuilding process. I thought that it would be easier for me, emotionally and physically. Little did I know that this sort of devastation only gets harder to deal with as time goes on. Almost 11 months after Katrina there were still houses on top of houses and cars in trees. There were far fewer volunteers than needed and still much work to be done.

After we were taught how to gut houses and what to watch for (like brown recluse spiders and foot long rats), I met the team who would assist with gutting houses. We suited up in our personal protective equipment and went inside. There were pieces of furniture everywhere, mold growing on everything. Everything was torn to bits. We started to remove the bigger items like couches, mattresses and appliances. At first it seemed pretty standard, but once we got to shoveling the debris it was harder to deal with. I remember shoveling up things like shoes, wedding pictures, jewelry and family heirlooms and thinking, ‘How horrible it must be to live through a storm and come home to find everything gone.’ I could not even imagine what that must be like. This house was under 11 feet of water for nearly three weeks, and it was a small miracle that anything could be salvaged.

Later that day the owner came to visit. She was so emotional and felt bad that we were ‘wasting our time on this.’ But we all were there by choice. It was sad to see her in so much agony. We finished gutting the house down to the cement floor and studs that day. It was a great feeling of accomplishment. I enjoyed this work so much, despite the 100 degree heat and humidity.

That week we finished four houses; all together Habitat for Humanity had completed 1,514 houses up until that point. I am glad that I got to contribute to that grand total.”

- Reflection by Kate Kantowski
2005-2006 AmeriCorps Member

BUSINESS SERVICES

Our Workforce Development Unit offers a variety of services to help businesses recruit, train and retain a quality workforce. We customize our services to fit individual company needs and provide services in a timely and efficient manner.

Recruitment Assistance

Our Workforce Development professionals work hand-in-hand with management at local companies to develop applicant pools by recruiting, screening and referring potential applicants for employment. Here is an example:

Due to increased business, Pacal Industries, LLC, a manufacturing company in La Crosse, needed welders and manufacturing workers. The company routinely posts job openings on the JobNet, however its human resource department is located in a major city, three hours from La Crosse. The company needed ongoing assistance to screen and interview applicants locally.

Jeff Kroes, General Manager, contacted Workforce Connections, Inc. to inquire about services. The Workforce Connections, Inc. Workforce Development Manager met with Jeff to discuss his needs for recruitment and application assistance.

Pacal entered into a contract for staff to handle the recruitment process. Jeff discussed the company's skill and work ethic requirements and outlined expectations for new employees. Workforce Connections, Inc. has access to an office at Pacal where they develop ads to recruit applicants, accept and screen applications according to Pacal's established criteria, and interview potential employees. If an interviewee meets the requirements, Workforce Connections, Inc. refers them for employment.

“Workforce Connections, Inc. does an excellent job screening candidates. Almost everyone who is referred is hired. We appreciate their excellent work.”

**Jeff Kroes
Pacal Industries**

Employee Opinion Surveys

Workforce Development professionals met with several businesses to develop surveys targeted to their specific employees. The businesses were able to find out employee opinions on matters such as supervision, communication, training, benefits, and other retention matters. Companies received a customized report to assist them in developing strategies to retain their workers.

“Workforce Connections, Inc. has proven to be a valuable resource and tool for competitive organizations striving to be the employer of choice. Workforce Connections assisted our organization by conducting an employee survey, discussing the results, and suggesting improvements. We have also had Workforce Connections dynamically present ideas and perspectives to our employees. The presenter had a unique ability to open the minds of listeners and to help create self-realization. I would highly recommend Workforce Connection’s services.”

**Sarah Fecht
Director of Human Resources
Community Credit Union**

Other Business Services

- Communication Skills Training
- Occupational Skills Training for Current and New Workers
- Career Transition Service (in the event of downsizing or relocation of businesses)
- Leadership and Supervisory Training
- Customer Service Training
- Professional Correspondence Workshops
- Microsoft Office Training
- Sexual Harrassment Training



FUNDING SOURCES

We would like to acknowledge our funding sources, which make our work possible.

State of Wisconsin – Department of Workforce Development

- Wisconsin Works (W-2) Programs
- Wisconsin Employment Transportation Program
- Title V Employment Programs for Older Workers
- Growing Regional Opportunities for Wisconsin
- Children First

State Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration

- X-treme Opportunities Program for Youth Offenders
- National Emergency Grants for Plant Dislocations

Western Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.

- Workforce Investment Act Programs for Adults, Dislocated Workers (DW) and Youth

Wisconsin Department of Corrections

- Window to Work Program at Prairie du Chien Correctional Institution and Jackson Correctional Institution

Wisconsin National and Community Services Board – Department of Health and Family Services

- AmeriCorps

The Honorable Herb Kohl and the United States Department of Labor

- Project Upgrade, Worker Training for Manufacturing Employees

Southwest Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.

- Future Fields Program for Farmers

South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board, Inc.

- Administrative Agent for Columbia County Job Center

And our Community Partners:

- Xcel Energy – AmeriCorps Member
- La Crosse Community Foundation – AmeriCorps, Women of Worth Program
- Wal-Mart – Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin Employment Transportation Program
- Marshall Fields

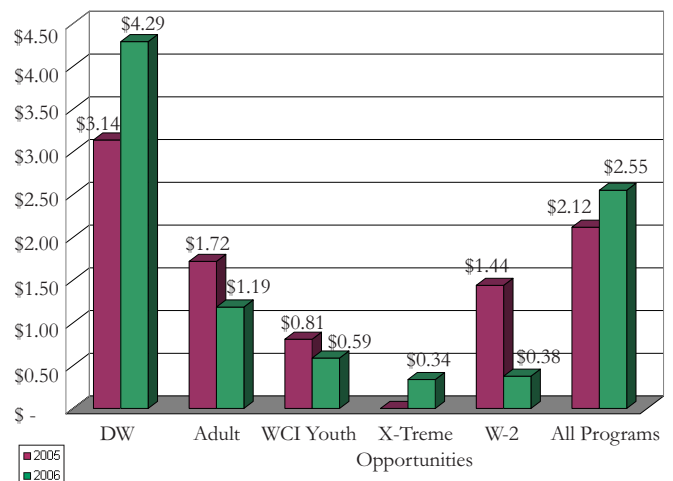
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

We take our fiscal responsibilities very seriously. We understand by receiving taxpayer money, we need to generate a return on their investments.

Return on Taxpayer Investment through Workforce Connections, Inc.

• Additional Wages to Local Economy (Approximately)	\$7.5 million
• Additional Tax Revenue Generated	\$1.47 million
• Additional Tax Revenue Generated Per Client Served	\$924
• Averted W-2 Payments (Averted W-2 payments are also a savings to taxpayers)	\$1.7 million
• AmeriCorps Contributions (Total value of services by volunteers based on minimum wage)	\$275,103

Additions to Local Economy for Each Federal Dollar Spent



Note: To calculate the additions to local economy, a calculation of total wages earned by participants placed in employment divided by the total expenditures of federal dollars spent was done. Total expenditures also included expenditures on participants who were still enrolled in the program at the year's end.

The formula was:

$$\text{Addition to Local Economy} = \frac{\text{Sum of all participants wages earned during period}}{\text{Total Program Expenditures}}$$

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - (2005-2006)
Revenue
Grant Revenue

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)	\$2,449,221
Wisconsin Works (W-2)	1,419,020
AmeriCorps	346,644
Transportation Assistance Program	100,164
Department of Corrections	104,512
Title V	31,460
South Central Workforce Development Board	240,400
Extreme Opportunities - Youth Offender	355,415
Other Contracts	10,555
Total Grant Revenue	<u>\$ 5,057,391</u>
Contributions	119,310
Interest Income	16,729
Other Revenue	<u>95,479</u>
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 5,288,909</u>

Expenses
Operational Expenses

Salaries, Wages, and Benefits	\$ 3,083,108
Staff Travel and Development	133,791
Equipment and Vehicles	18,965
Depreciation Expense	6,104
Rent	150,722
Office Administrative Expenses	507,304
Job Center Expenses	-
Board, Youth Council and LEO Expenses	4,908
Subcontractor Expenses	<u>650,963</u>
Total Operation Expenses	<u>\$ 4,555,865</u>

Participant Expenses

Wages and Benefits - Work Experience	27,802
Tuition, Customized Training, OJT's, and Assessments	309,650
Participant Support	367,845
Total Participant Expenses	<u>\$ 705,297</u>

Total Expenses
\$ 5,261,162
Change in Net Assets
\$ 27,747

**There is an additional \$384,865 associated with W-2 benefits that Workforce Connections, Inc. is contractually liable for but are not included in the Workforce Connections, Inc. accounting system. These benefits are accounted for on the statewide payment system.



WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patrick Kelly, Chair

Hanover Direct/The Company Store, La Crosse

Donald Knapp, Vice-Chair

Lori Knapp, Inc., Prairie du Chien

Kathryn Sexauer, Secretary/Treasurer

Badger Corrugating Company, La Crosse

Bruce Corning

Northern Engraving Corporation, Sparta

Jerry Freimark

CESA #4, West Salem

James Hill

La Crosse Area Development Corporation, La Crosse

Kevin Manley

State Bank of Arcadia

Rick Mickschl

International Association of Machinists and
Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), La Crosse

Retiring Members

Barbara Prindiville

Western Technical College, La Crosse

Al Spinelli

City Brewing Company, La Crosse

Thomas Weston

Citizens First Bank, Viroqua

Newly Appointed Members

Denine Rood

Western Technical College, La Crosse

Rocky Shepherd

Freudenberg - NOK, Necedah

WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIRS (FORMERLY WESTERN WISCONSIN PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL)

James Workman <i>The Trane Company</i>	1983 - 84	Dennis Stephenson <i>Union Bank of Blair</i>	1994 - 95
Jerry Freimark <i>Fountain City Ford, Inc.</i>	1984 - 86	Shon Doyle <i>Webster Industries</i>	1995 - 96
Mike Dougherty <i>D&S Manufacturing</i>	1986 - 89	Ann Brandau <i>Brandau Law Offices</i>	1996 - 97
Jeff Scheel <i>G. Heileman Brewing Company</i>	1989 - 92	Dick Fox <i>Century Telephone</i>	1997 - 98
Bruce Norgaard <i>State Bank of La Crosse</i>	1992 - 93	Anita Genrich <i>Morrow Memorial Home</i>	1998 - 99
Lyle Quillin <i>Quillin's, Inc.</i>	1993 - 94	Patrick Kelly <i>Hanover Direct/The Company Store</i>	1999 - Present

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

Del Twidt, Buffalo County

Barb Semb, Trempealeau County

Don Evenson, Jackson County

James Ehram, La Crosse County

Dennis Hubbard, Monroe County

James Barrett, Juneau County

Tom Spenner, Vernon County

Ron Leys, Crawford County

HUMAN RESOURCES

Our staff members are our greatest resource. We are pleased to have a cadre of highly experienced, knowledgeable and productive people working to deliver high quality services for our businesses, our funding sources and our job seekers.

Central Office

Jerry Hanoski	Executive Director
Rebecca Grapes	Director of Admin. Support Serv.
Melissa Bechtel	Director of Finance
Teresa Pierce	Director of Program Operations
Beth Sullivan	Director of Planning and Mktg.
Bob Briggs	Director of WIA Program
Julie Dodge	Marketing Coordinator
Carrie Dunston	Accounting Coordinator
Sarah Grosskopf	Planning Coordinator
Betty Hendrickson	Accounting Coordinator
Gina Merrell	Workforce Consultant
Brandy Niedfeldt	Accounting Coordinator
Amy Scarborough	Operations Info. Coordinator
Carol Wagenson	Workforce Dev. Manager
Heather Walley	Administrative Coordinator
Linda Zimmerman	AmeriCorps Director

Wisconsin Job Center - Columbia County

Jane Considine	Employment Coordinator
Rachel Hudson	Employment Coordinator
Deanna Schulz	Employment Resource Coord.
Tricia Frye	Emp. Resource Specialist

Wisconsin Job Center - Jackson County

Gina Brown	W-2 Programs Manager
Lisa Burnham	Employment Coordinator
Leigh Kinyon	Employment Coordinator
Robyn Niederkorn	Employment Coordinator
Carmen Olson	Employment Resource Coord.
Julie Stowe	Employment Coordinator
Marianne Torkelson	Workforce Consultant

Wisconsin Job Center - Juneau County

Sheri Butler	Employment Resource Coord.
Shannon Franek	Operations Coordinator
Shane Gesler	Employment Coordinator
Linda Gratz	Employment Coordinator
Jessica Hoehn	Employment Coordinator
Donna Miller	Employment Coordinator
Carmin Trillo	Operations Coordinator

Wisconsin Job Center - La Crosse County

Pam Bendel	Employment Coordinator
Kathy McArdle	Employment Coordinator
Chris Magnuson	Employment Coordinator
Kathleen Metille	Employment Coordinator
Vicki Miller	Employment Coordinator
Wanda Palmer	Employment Coordinator
Chong Moua Vang	Employment Coordinator
Lisa Zanon	Community Resource Coord.

Wisconsin Job Center - Monroe County

Heather Larson	Employment Resource Coord.
Laura Falkner	Employment Coordinator
Kristin Maurer	Employment Coordinator
Margie Jahn	Employment Coordinator
Judi Rogness	Employment Coordinator

Wisconsin Job Center - Vernon County

Julia Barth	Transportation Coordinator
Sharon Bliss	Employment Coordinator
Kathy Neidert	Employment Coordinator

Wisconsin Job Center - Trempealeau County

Pam Taylor	Employment Coordinator
Angela Cole	Employment Coordinator
Lisa Dietsch	Employment Coordinator

Wisconsin Job Center - Superior

Elaina Johannessen	Employment Coordinator
Andrea Sengenberger	Employment Coordinator

St. Croix Valley Job Center - River Falls

Stacey Schradle	Employment Coordinator
Gail Winship	Employment Coordinator

Prairie du Chien Correctional Institution


Denece Udelhoven	Corrections Programs Mgr.
Lynette Kansier	Employment Coordinator

Jackson Correctional Institution

Amanda Meinke	Employment Coordinator
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New Lisbon Correctional Institution

Sandy Turner	Employment Coordinator
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