

2014 Annual Report



Career Jobs
Talent Strategy Innovation

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

Learn Concept Success
Goals Employee





Greetings!

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Workforce

Connections, Inc., I am pleased to present the 2013-2014 annual report. Thank you for taking the time to read it!

Workforce Connections, Inc. staff have spent the past year working through a number of transitions including the move to our new location, the move of our information technology, and the transformation of some funding streams. Throughout it all, staff

have worked hard to improve the lives of those we serve while partnering with other local organizations to provide excellent services. We are pleased that we continue to impact the communities that we serve.

The organization is ideally poised to move forward into 2014-15, and move towards our dynamic future.

Thank you for the part each of you continue to play in our success!

Teresa Pierce
Executive Director

Wishing best of luck to outgoing board members

Three members of the Workforce Connections, Inc. Board of Directors are retiring from their posts. Rocky Shepherd has served on the board since 2006 and Bruce Ardel and Bob Hillary since 2009.

Workforce Connections, Inc. wishes to thank each of them for their service and dedication to the organization and wishes them well in their future endeavors.

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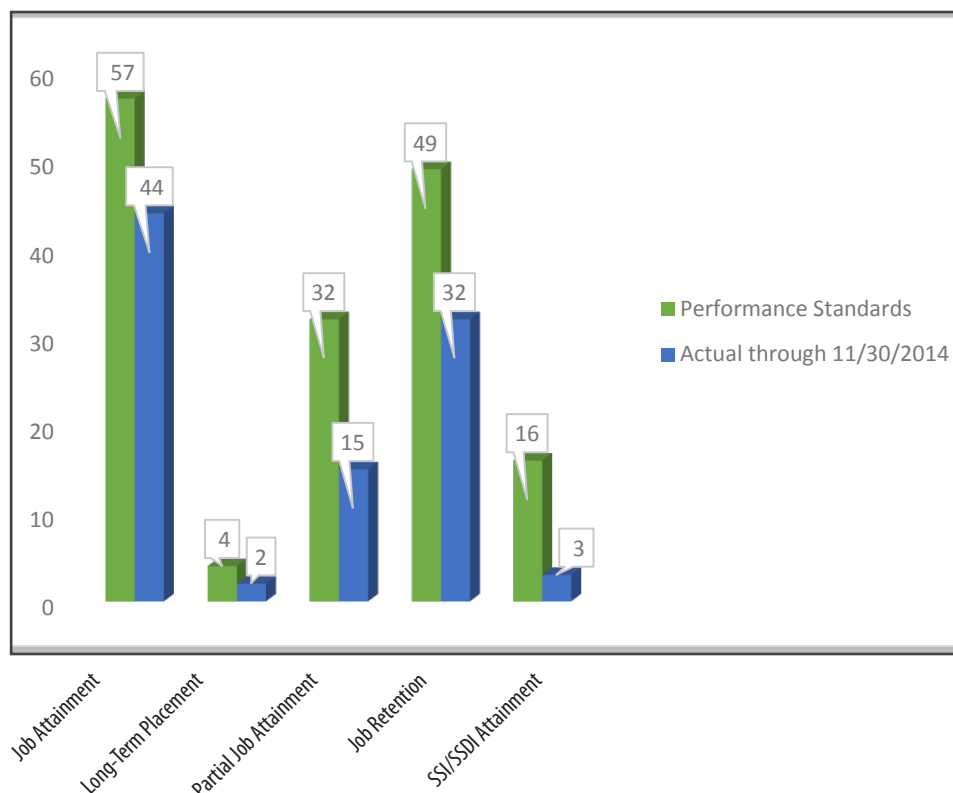
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Wisconsin Works aims to exceed performance standards

The Wisconsin Works (W-2) program has been a mainstay of Workforce Connections, Inc. for more than 15 years. The organization is currently contracted with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families to provide services in Buffalo, Crawford, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe, Pepin, Trempealeau and Vernon counties.

W-2's goal is to provide services to prepare individuals for self-sustaining employment.

From January 1, 2014 through November 30, 2014 Workforce Connections, Inc. staff has served 2,054 individuals and processed 471 emergency assistance payments in a timely manner. The graph to the right shows other areas of performance. W-2 is on track to meet performance through June, 30, 2015.



Helping build the La Crosse Community one home at a time



The Building Opportunities program has been busy at work on two projects over the last year. Participants were responsible for the framing and siding of a house that was completed in the early fall of 2014 (seen below). Program participants also worked on building a garage at a second location

The program's Construction Trainer, says it's been nice to see the participants grow throughout the program. "They'll remember in passing these homes and the areas they helped construct," he says.



On The Job trainings aid local businesses

Bill Potter of The Print Shop in Black River Falls has experienced first hand the benefits of using the On The Job (OJT) Training program. The OJT program is administered through Workforce Connections, Inc. and made possible through the Workforce Investment Act.

OJT funds are available to help Wisconsin businesses train new employees. The training is hands-on, occurring at the place of work while the employee is performing the job. Businesses then receive a reimbursement to help offset training costs.

//The OJT Program has been a great opportunity for our business," Potter says. "The

program is great especially if it's for a position that needs some extensive training because it helps lighten the expense of hiring that person."

Potter says Workforce Connections, Inc. has been really helpful and he would encourage others to check into the program.

Businesses that choose to do an OJT can either have their own applicant to hire or Workforce Connections, Inc. can provide someone to interview for the position.

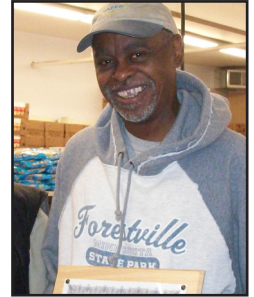
The process of setting up the OJT is simple, requires little paperwork and can usually be completed in as little as a few business days.

Leading older workers throughout Wisconsin

Two individuals who are participants in Workforce Connections, Inc.'s Title V program were honored as 2014 Outstanding Older Workers of the Year.

Willie McGee works at WAFER Food Pantry and is described as the "heart and soul of WAFER." Willie spends his days showing new volunteers the ropes, and tackles any task.

Rose Kasprzyk is at The Parenting Place where she is "friendly and helpful" to all who enter. Rose sets high goals for herself and works steadily to reach each one of them.



Life after prison leads to unbelievable blessings

With a definitive certainty, Duane says he has been blessed and it is nothing short of miraculous how some of the blessings in his life have come to be.

Duane was first released from incarceration in 2009. He came out with a chip on his shoulder and feeling that he should never have been locked up in the first place. Three years later he found himself back in prison, but this time was different. Duane says he had a change of heart and a change of attitude. He was also going to change his life.

Just prior to being released in March 2014, Duane began meeting with a Workforce Connections, Inc. Employment Coordinator who explained to him how the organization could help him. Workforce Connections, Inc., through a Department of Corrections grant, provided Duane with rent assistance and helped him get his driver's license back.

Duane lived with his best friend and was able to find a job within nine days of being released. He

also started focusing on his hobby of body building and preparing for competitions. His friend was right there with him in the gym nearly every day. That all changed in late September when Duane's best friend died of a heart attack.

"He was instrumental in helping me with a lot of things in my life," Duane says. "He was just an incredible man."

Despite the tragedy in his life, Duane kept alive his dream of being a butcher again. That dream came true a short time ago when he was hired at Gordy's County Market as a butcher in La Crosse, Galesville and Arcadia. Duane is also engaged to be married by the end of 2014.

He says alcohol was previously a problem for him and a big part of why he did time in prison, so he is also focusing on his sobriety.

//Sobriety has not been an issue," Duane says. "I have no need, want or desire to drink at all. I have way too much going on."



July marked a big milestone for Workforce Connections, Inc. with the moving of its corporate office from its 8th Street location to the East Ward Commerce Center, located at 2615 East Avenue on the southside of La Crosse (pictured above, left). The 8th Street location was torn down shortly after Workforce Connections, Inc. moved out (pictured above, right).

The East Ward Commerce Center is now home to several employment and training organizations and makes for a collaborative location to serve businesses and job seekers in Western Wisconsin.

Providing support to industry partnerships



Workforce Connections, Inc. has played an important role in the Equipment and Metal Manufacturing Association over the past year. EMMA is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing resources and information to equipment, machinery and metal manufacturers in Western Wisconsin, Eastern Minnesota, and Northeast Iowa.

One of the highlights of the year was a bus tour in October that Workforce Connections, Inc.

assisted with planning and coordination. The bus left the La Crosse area and ended with a tour of McNeilus Steel, Inc., a full-line metals service center located in Dodge Center, Minnesota. More than 30 people took part in the event.

The tour was a great networking opportunity and also included an overview of the roles different agencies play in the Workforce Development System.

Financials

Statement of Activities Year Ended June 30, 2014

	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Revenue:			
Grant and contract revenue	\$ 3,155,363	\$ 0	\$ 3,155,363
Fee for service	52,999	0	52,999
Other income	75,405	0	75,405
Interest income	2,570	0	2,570
Net assets released from restriction through satisfaction of program restrictions	27,235	(27,235)	0
Total revenue	3,313,572	(27,235)	3,286,337
Expenses:			
Program services:			
Adult programs	1,362,664	0	1,362,664
Youth programs	1,004,058	0	1,004,058
Dislocated worker and incumbent worker programs	439,674	0	439,674
Other	106,027	0	106,027
Employer services	85,991	0	85,991
Job center services and support	19,126	0	19,126
Total program services	3,017,540	0	3,017,540
Management and general	382,580	0	382,580
Total expenses	3,400,120	0	3,400,120
Change in net assets	(86,548)	(27,235)	(113,783)
Net assets at beginning of the year	443,552	218,431	661,983
Net assets at end of the year	\$ 357,004	\$ 191,196	\$ 548,200

Unemployment sparks new dream for WIA participant

Angie has set some high goals and expectations for herself. They're goals that a few years back she didn't see for herself. After Angie was laid off from her job, she was devastated and had never found herself in a similar situation.

After meeting with a Workforce Connections, Inc. Workforce Investment Act Employment Coordinator her life was set on a new path. Angie had previous experience in the banking and customer service industries, but

decided she had a desire to help people.

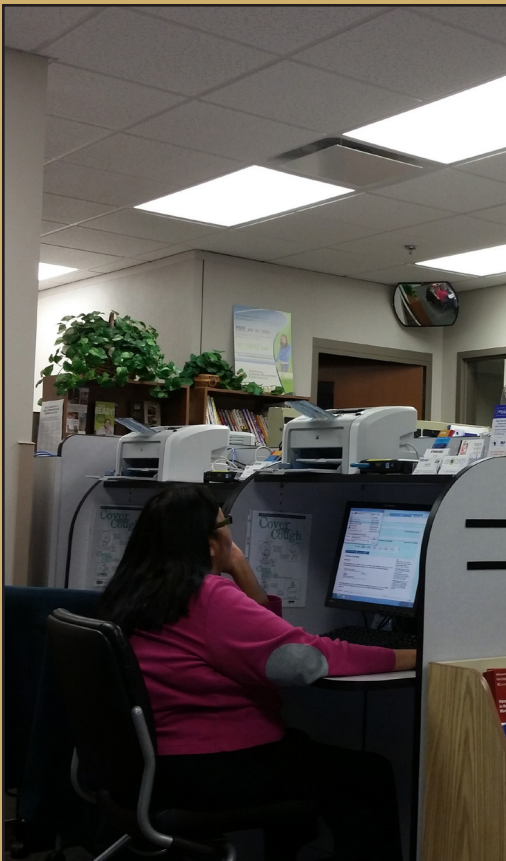
"It was a calling that I was supposed to be a RN," she said. "I love helping people. It's my whole purpose of going to school for it."

Angie started out by becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant and then attended the nursing program at Southwest Wisconsin Technical College in Fennimore. Her first semester she worked full time as a CNA and attended school full time online.

While Angie was in school, Workforce Connections, Inc., through the Workforce Investment Act, provided her with nursing board fees and transportation assistance.

Angie is now a Registered Nurse and employed at Sannes Skogdalen Heim in Soldiers Grove. She also has enrolled at Franklin University to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing and plans to eventually finish her Master's degree so she can become a nursing instructor.

Job Centers: a place of connection and collaboration



Job Centers continue to be an important community resource. They are a place of collaboration that connect job seekers directly to employers through workshops, referrals and other resources.

Workforce Connections, Inc. is a part of two comprehensive Job Centers in Western Wisconsin.

The Job Center located in Tomah had 6,458 walk-ins and phone calls from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014.

The Workforce Development Center of Western Wisconsin, located in La Crosse, had 22,401 walk-ins and phone calls. Staff are looking forward to serving even more people in its new location at the East Ward Commerce Center.



Connecting People, Work, and Training.

Staff

Pamela Amundson

Accounting Coordinator

Autumn Bergerson

Employment Coordinator

Ashley Bermudo

Employment Coordinator

Sharon Bliss

Employment Resource Coordinator

Gina Brown

W-2 Program Manager

Andrea Brownlee

Employment Coordinator

Sarah Felix

Employment Coordinator

Jessie Foss

Accounting Coordinator

Shannon Franek

Operations Coordinator

Amy Gernetzke

Employment Resource Coordinator

Wade Kohls

Assistant Construction Trainer

Shay Mahoney

Construction Trainer

Dolores Marusarz

Employment Coordinator

Jacie Meier

Job Developer

Gina Merrell

Planning Coordinator

Frankie Mezera

Employment Coordinator

Brad Myhre

Website/Database Coordinator

Kelly Norsten

WIA Program Manager

Wanda Palmer

Employment Coordinator

Caitlin Phillips

Employment Coordinator

Teresa Pierce

Executive Director

Sarah Rick

Employment Coordinator

Sarah Robinson

Intern

Amy Scarborough

Operations Coordinator

Della Snyder

Employment Resource Coordinator

Tom Stark

Employment Coordinator

Pam Taylor

Employment Coordinator

Carmin Trillo

Employment Coordinator

Lisa Turnbull

Director of Finance

Sandy Turner

Employment Coordinator

Chong Vang

Employment Coordinator

Emily Vieth

Employment Coordinator

Carol Wagenson

Workforce Development Manager

Sarah Westbrook

Administrative Coordinator