



Cape & Islands

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FY'09

To say that 2009 has been a challenging year would be an understatement.

The highest unemployment rates in 25 years drove unprecedented numbers of clients into our Career Opportunities Centers. Cutbacks and uncertainty over the state budget have made planning difficult. The current view is that reduced state funding will extend well into 2010, continuing to strain our resources.

Adding to our challenge is a reduction in our region's federal funding for next year. Because Massachusetts has not fared as poorly as many other states as far as unemployment goes, we received reduced allocations from a level funded federal budget for workforce development activities.

Additional federal funding, through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, will allow us to expand training opportunities for a short time and provide a one-time summer program. But the increased federal funds will not support the core activities that are being challenged by reduced state and federal investment in our local workforce development system.

One immediate impact of reduced state funding is that our 55+ initiative was eliminated in its entirety. This very successful program was providing services to over 50 individuals on an annual basis. We had just initiated a new training component of the program, adding QuickBooks training as an option for participants. In the two full years that we were able to operate the program we were able to place some 70 individuals in a wide variety of jobs. Though we had to cease our cohort approach to providing services to the 55+ participants, we are still servicing a number of older workers at Career Opportunities. The skills gained by the Career Opportunities staff are still being put to use with the 55+ population.

We continued to operate two very successful training programs through the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund. The Southeast Massachusetts Health Care Partnership, which is scheduled for completion in December of 2009, is training Health Unit Coordinators, Certified Nursing Assistants (dementia training), IT personnel at Cape Cod Health Care in project management, and a cohort of clinical personnel from CCHC in Medical Informatics. Most of the training for this project is being provided by Cape Cod Community College, the project management training was delivered by another vendor.

The second program that we are operating is a cross sector management program, the Cape Area Management Program (CAMP). This program provides early career managers with training in

general management theory, teamwork, continuous quality improvement, and project management. We have two training partners on this grant. The National Graduate School of Quality Management in Falmouth is providing classroom training, and Ernie Oliveira of DEO Associates is providing practicum sessions for the program. We have delivered two cycles of this training and are in the process of planning our third cycle in the Falmouth area.

As of now we are uncertain that these grants will continue to their conclusion. It is possible that, due to state budget shortfalls, funding may be eliminated from the Workforce Competitive Trust Fund which provides the support to these two training initiatives. We will know the outcome when the dust clears from state budget negotiations.

The WIB continued to be the local contact for a number of state programs. We continued our support of the states' Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI), conducting a series of meetings across the region to provide long term care and home care providers the information needed to successfully compete for available state funding. The WIB has led a very successful effort to bring these funds into our region, in fact, we have the highest percentage of long term care facilities participating in ECCLI in the state. We also continued our efforts with local businesses by promoting the Workforce Training Fund and supporting applicants to the WTF.

The WIB was very successful in our promotion and publicity efforts this year. We have successfully placed over 50 print and radio articles detailing our efforts. We also appeared on several local cable television shows in the region.

We continued to develop and refine our Weekly Update electronic newsletter. We currently push the newsletter to over 400 recipients and receive quite a bit of positive feedback on the usefulness of the information that we include.

We continue to partner with the Barnstable Patriot to provide a monthly column on current workforce development issues. This forum is a great chance to reach an audience that would not ordinarily receive info on our efforts. We have been writing this column for over six years, providing continuity and reinforcement of our message and brand in the mid-Cape region.

One of our youth activities, our efforts to increase local high school graduation rates, received significant coverage. We were featured in a local NPR series on youth initiatives and subsequently were interviewed by NPR Boston station WBUR on the same subject. A separate report on our youth activities is included with the meeting materials for this annual meeting.

This year the WIB worked closely with the Cape Cod Foundation providing input in the development of their Understanding Cape Cod publication. The document provides an extensive overview of several important subject areas to the region's residents. We consulted on the workforce and employment section, working closely with the Foundation's staff.

The WIB was a part of the recent Barnstable County CEDS process. CEDS is a Comprehensive Economic Develop Strategy document that is provided to the federal Economic Development Administration every 5 years. We chaired a subcommittee on Workforce Development initiatives and participated on the business development committee. Projects included in the CEDS

document can seek EDA funding because they have already been recognized as priorities in the region.

The WIB continued our involvement with the Regional Technology Development Corporation. As a founding director of the organization we have been providing support and input as the group seeks to develop commercial opportunities based on technologies being developed in the Woods Hole Marine Science and Technology institutions. We consider these efforts as a leading opportunity for job creation in the region, job creation that will develop family sustaining wage positions in our region.

The Executive Director continues to be involved in community activities in the region. Recently I joined the Board of Directors of Independence House in Hyannis. I am continuing my involvement with the Hyannis Rotary Club, the Southeast Economic Development District (SEED), Housing Assistance Corporation, Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce and the Regional Technology Development Corporation.

Operations at our One Stop Career Opportunities Centers required the full attention of the JTEC and WIB staff and our Board this year. Our Planning and Evaluation Committee considered a wide variety issues created by the economic downturn. The large number of UI claimants and the extended need for unemployment services created demands that required us to extend hours, develop new workshops, redeploy staff and redesign customer flow, especially in our Hyannis office. We opened a new location in the Falmouth area and continued to provide full services at our Orleans Career Opportunities Center.

The recent announcement of federal ARRA funding to augment our federal allocation is allowing us to provide a summer program for at-risk youth. The funding will also permit us to provide training opportunities to our adult clients over the next 12-18 months. The increased funding and activity will place some additional workload on our staff, but should greatly benefit our unemployed and underemployed clients.

The WIB collaborated with a large number of organizations on projects this year, including:

- Barnstable County
- Barnstable Patriot
- Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce
- Cape Cod Foundation
- Cape Cod Times
- Cape Business Magazine
- Sustain Cape Cod
- Housing Assistance Corporation
- Dennis Yarmouth School District
- Barnstable School District
- Cape Cod Regional Technical School
- Upper Cape Tech
- Cape Cod Community College
- National Graduate School of Quality Management

Regional Technology Development Corp. of Cape Cod
Cape Cod Tech Council
Falmouth Chamber of Commerce
Martha's Vineyard Chamber
Martha's Vineyard Commission
Nantucket Community School
ACCESS Program
Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council

On a personal note, I want to thank the members of the WIB Board of Directors for providing encouragement and support as I attended the Leadership Development program at the Gestalt International Study Center. The 10 month training program provided a rigorous curriculum that allowed me to refocus and further develop the management skills that I have attained through education and work experience.