

	State	Initiative
Focusing on Employers	District of Columbia	<p>In 2003, the District's Office of Employer Services (DOES) deployed Account Executive Teams (AETs), which serve as the primary points of contact between the office and individual employers. The AETs provide technical assistance to businesses as they navigate the District's complex regulatory process. Through the AET's, employers have access to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about business assistance programs. • Help understanding and navigating the licensing system. • Consultation on unemployment taxes, wage and hour standards, and tax credit programs. • Customized training design and delivery.
	District of Columbia	<p>DOES has successfully partnered with CVS Pharmacy, one of the D.C. area's largest employers. The CVS regional training center is now located in one of the District's one-stop centers, improving both customer access and communication between one-stop staff and the employer. The DOES/CVS Pharmacy concept and attendant apprenticeship program has been recognized by the Department of Labor and was awarded the 2004 National Business Partnership award for outstanding business services.</p>
	Florida	<p>The Quick Response Training program provides grants for customized skills training for new Florida businesses or existing companies that are expanding. Since its inception in 1993, the program has infused more than \$60 million into new skills development and has reached about 100,000 workers.</p>
	Florida	<p>Started in 1999, the Incumbent Worker Training program reimburses existing Florida businesses for costs associated with skills upgrading for their full-time employees. It has directed about \$14 million to improving the skills of more than 65,000 workers at 593 businesses.</p>
	Kentucky	<p>Kentucky's "Open for Business" initiative emphasizes the need to support businesses seeking to locate and expand in Kentucky. The state now helps businesses find and develop the right situation for themselves, their employees, and the citizens of Kentucky by directing the state's resources towards increased investment in job creation. The state's broad system of public workforce programs are used to prepare future and current workers for the new economy and create stable, reliable, higher-wage jobs.</p>
	Maryland	<p>The Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) reconstituted itself to be more reflective of the business landscape across the state. New members representing the 13 targeted industry clusters are high-level private sector executives, selected because of their industry expertise, business acumen, ability to influence others and to bring resources to the workforce development system.</p>
	Massachusetts	<p>The Ambassadors Program supports the goal of increasing the system's capacity to meet the needs of employers. The program seeks to engage Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board (MWIB) members and others in a campaign to connect private sector employers with the Massachusetts One-Stop Career Centers, increase awareness of the many services the one-stops offer, and encourage employers to utilize these services in their recruitment and hiring plans. Private sector employers who are members of the MWIB serve as ambassadors and recruit additional employer candidates.</p>
	New Jersey	<p>Business Resource Centers (BRC) are now found in nearly every comprehensive New Jersey One-Stop Career Center. The BRC's purpose is to provide employers with a professional business environment to recruit workers and offer greater access to a full spectrum of valuable resources and services. Each BRC is comprised of one-stop staff who work in partnership with other agencies such as local Chambers of Commerce, WIBs, community colleges, local banks, and community-based organizations, to provide a "single point of contact" for business services.</p>

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	Oregon	Workforce Response Teams (WRTs) bridge the gap left by workforce and economic development efforts to focus on developing and providing training for local jobs. The 15 WRTs, one in each workforce region, work to solve economic, employment and training issues at an operational level while helping employers and worker associations get the services they need. Each WRT utilizes data and examines statewide economic development and workforce policies to determine the appropriate strategic focus for their own regional training funds; develop strategies to work with multiple employers to maximize regional and statewide impacts; and find solutions to the workforce retention and expansion challenges that businesses face.
Encouraging Entrepreneurs	Vermont	Vermont's Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) promotes self-employment and business opportunities for low income Vermonters by offering free, one-on-one technical assistance, business planning classes, workshops and Job Start loans.
Partnering with Faith-Based Service Providers	District of Columbia	The District's Faith-Based Initiative leverages WIA funds to meet the needs of hard-to-serve populations. After the D.C. Workforce Investment Council (DCWIC) received a grant for Faith-based and Community Initiatives, the DCWIC and the Office of Faith and Community-Based Partnerships coordinated their efforts and developed Memorandum of Understanding agreements with local faith-based organizations allowing them to utilize space in One-Stop Career Centers, reserve the Mobile One-Stop, and access other available services for customers seeking job opportunities in their communities. This successful initiative maximized the DCWIC's return on investment by returning customers facing multiple barriers to employment to the workforce and producing a larger and more skilled pool of workers for employers.
	Kentucky	The Office for Faith Based and Community Nonprofit Social Services in Kentucky works closely with community-based organizations and private agencies to greatly increase the outreach of the one-stop system services in the communities that need them most.
Training Healthcare Workers	California	The California Nurse Education Initiative provides additional classes, teachers, and resources to increase the number of nurses in the state and improve the quality of healthcare. The Five-Point Plan includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. \$90 million to expand and increase nurse education opportunities. 2. Partnerships between schools and health facilities to build more education programs. 3. Recruitment of additional qualified instructors. 4. Increased access to nursing careers through high school and college nursing academies and apprenticeships. 5. Additional funding for nurse education from federal and other funding sources.
	Colorado	Colorado's More...Better...Faster... initiative targets healthcare due to a critical shortage in many key healthcare occupations and the industry's willingness to commit significant human and financial resources to initiative goals. Members of the healthcare industry, labor, government and educational organizations meet regularly to identify workforce needs and report on progress in areas such as retention, recruitment, educational capacity and data analysis. The More ...Better...Faster demonstration grant seeks three specific outcomes: 1) Increase the number of workers to fill critical shortage occupations; 2) Improve the quality of these workers; and 3) Reduce the time required to produce these workers. Once the model has been tested and refined in healthcare, it will be replicated in other high-growth industries.

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Partnering with Higher Education	Kansas	Kansas 1st is a comprehensive plan to link public postsecondary schools, and state and federally funded workforce training programs with business finance and incentive programs under one umbrella. Kansas 1st seeks to transform community, technical colleges and technical schools into valuable economic assets used to deliver more of the training needed by employers and job seekers.
Training Incumbent Workers	Arizona	Since 2001, Arizona has had a training tax credit dedicated to information technology (IT). This tax credit is specifically targeted to encourage people to pursue IT careers.
	California	California allows a tax deduction for training expenses if a company has spent a certain percentage of sales on training.
	Georgia	The Georgia Incumbent Worker Initiative sought to avert layoffs, foster job growth, and promote job retention by upgrading existing workers' skills through training and related activities. Grants of up to \$50,000 from statewide WIA funds were available to businesses committed to increasing their productivity and remaining competitive. Seven Georgia WIBs received grants during 2005 to work with companies to design and implement projects. Most of the projects were in the manufacturing and health care sectors, and much of the training was provided by local technical colleges. For example, a textile firm in Southeast Georgia implemented technical training for one of its divisions using a multi-media computer-based curriculum. The training materials were also translated into Spanish for the company's Spanish-speaking workers. Also, the Northwest Georgia WIB worked with several hospitals to enhance the supervisory and leadership skills of hospital workers promoted to managerial positions. The on-line curriculum for this training was developed by a local technical college.
	Maryland	Maryland Business Works is a statewide employer-based training program that targets small businesses, the healthcare industry, and the employers of those in other high-demand occupations. The initiative is designed to help existing Maryland businesses retain and grow their incumbent workforces, encourage the promotion and creation of additional job opportunities, and improve the skill level of the existing workforce. To leverage WIA funds, projects require a \$1 for \$1 match from the employer.
	Massachusetts	The Workforce Training Fund (WTF) provides grants to Massachusetts employers to pay for training to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers. Typically, WTF is a \$21 million annual appropriation of employer tax dollars mandated by state legislation and overseen by the Department of Workforce Development. Since its creation in 1999, the WTF has provided more than \$98 million to over 2,000 companies to train 145,471 workers.
	New York	Building Skills in New York State (BUSINYS) grants have trained over 46,000 incumbent workers in specific, transferable skills designed to grow the careers and increase the wages of participants. Over \$42 million has been awarded to fund this initiative during the past several years. Incumbent worker training grants for manufacturing firms have made an additional \$14.5 million available to train 35,000 individuals.
	Rhode Island	Rhode Island uses a 0.2 percentage point surcharge on employer UI taxes to fund an employer-based training grant program. Most of the training funds go to joint company projects to upgrade the skills of workers in key industrial sectors. The training projects aim to improve company productivity and reduce the risks of layoffs and also to protect workers by providing skills that will help them find a new job if they are laid off.
	Rhode Island	Rhode Island firms that provide training to lower-wage workers can deduct up to 50 percent of training costs on their corporate income taxes.

	State	Initiative
Focusing on Industry Groups	Maryland	Maryland's GWIB is using a cluster-based approach to identify businesses or industries with growth potential that are currently experiencing or projecting worker shortages and determine how to serve their workforce needs. In 2004, GWIB received a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to establish the Center for Industry Initiatives. The five-phase cluster-based industry initiative process guides industry, government and education leaders in collaboratively identifying, quantifying and addressing an industry's workforce issues. The GWIB first targeted the healthcare industry and is replicating the healthcare workforce initiative process in other industries such as aerospace, biotechnology, and hospitality and tourism.
	Michigan	The Michigan Regional Skills Alliances (MiRSA) initiative provides a framework to organize the workforce development needs of the Michigan business community by industry clusters. The primary goals of the initiative are to provide Michigan businesses with a highly skilled workforce and connect Michigan citizens to good jobs with opportunities for career advancement. Michigan offers grants to individual alliances to evaluate local labor market information, identify skills or labor shortages and then to work with employers, training providers, economic development organizations and Michigan Works! Agencies to address the workforce issue. Staff from the Department of Labor and Economic Growth provide technical support to organizations researching the feasibility of forming a MiRSA as well as to new, existing and expanding MiRSAs. As of May 2007, thirty-two MiRSAs have been created with eight industry focuses and over \$2.75 million in grant money has been awarded.
	Montana	Montana has received a WIRED grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to develop a biolubricant and biofuel manufacturing industry to combat poverty in the rural areas of central and eastern Montana. The project is led by a partnership comprised of the State Workforce Investment Board, which has public, private, and tribal representation, and the Montana Department of Labor and Industry. The state seeks to create both high paying manufacturing jobs and a market for higher value oilseed crops. Specialty workforce training will be provided by the tribal colleges, colleges of technologies, and universities.
	New Mexico	New Mexico has identified Arts and Entertainment; Business Services; Communications and Information; Energy and Environmental Technologies; Engineering; Construction and Manufacturing; Health and Biosciences; and Hospitality and Tourism as the 7 strategic market sectors that will serve as the foundation for the state's future economy. These 7 strategic clusters now guide the makeup of education and training programs available in the Workforce Connection Centers, community colleges, GED and adult literacy programs, and through TANF case managers so that workers are prepared for high-demand jobs and employers have ready access to the highly skilled workers they need.
	Oregon	The Oregon Economic and Community Development Department (OECDD) and various workforce partners have convened focus groups of employers in key clusters to identify the types of support the state can provide, including workforce assistance. Within these clusters, more specific focus groups have been created for niche markets with high concentrations in Oregon, such as flat panel displays, specialty agricultural products, recreational vehicles, food processors, and advanced manufacturing including nano- and micro-technologies. OECDD and local partners are working with businesses to develop workforce training programs and build training system capacity based on the needs identified by industry partners.
	Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania's \$15 million Industry Partnerships program brings together multiple employers in the same industry clusters to address overlapping human resources needs. Workers or worker representatives are also included when appropriate. To date, the state has helped support 86 industry training partnerships in different sectors.

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	Washington	Washington has created public-private partnerships between business and labor representatives from a specific industry and the educators serving that industry to devise strategies to close skill gaps. One example is Yakima County's Lean Manufacturing training initiative, which has worked with more than 50 companies and more than 330 employees to help companies understand and implement lean manufacturing practices.
	Wisconsin	Grow Wisconsin has developed workforce training around several key industries in the state. Targeted industries include: health care; construction and apprenticed craft occupations; manufacturing, with special emphasis on high-end, high-productivity, high-wage firms; and biotech research and development firms. The state's workforce development plans are strategically based on these targeted industries.
Supporting Low Wage Workers	Michigan	The low-wage worker strategy developed by Michigan's Council for Labor & Economic Growth has three specific goals: 1) to facilitate community dialogue around the vulnerable workforce and the role of asset building strategies/practices in improving long term workforce stability; 2) to serve as a catalyst for bringing together local employers and key community stakeholders engaged in vulnerable workforce issues and initiatives; and 3) to influence employers' human resources policies and practices. A recent event invited employers to spend a simulated "month" role-playing as low-income families to increase their awareness of the struggles that most vulnerable workers face.. Participants dealt with real-life situations including not having enough money to meet basic needs such as food and shelter, difficulties with transportation and child care, and mounting unpaid bills.
Adopting a Regional Strategy	Indiana	Indiana's Strategic Skills Initiative aims to identify and alleviate present and future shortages of workers to fill critical occupations and deficiencies in specific transferable skill sets within the industries that drive Indiana's economy. The initiative also seeks to instill a lasting, demand-driven approach to workforce development at the regional level. The Department of Workforce Development encourages local and regional partners to work across city and county lines and to focus their efforts toward devising solutions that are useful to the entire region, not just a single county or city.
Utilizing Technology	Iowa	Iowa has committed to leveraging technology to improve timeliness, efficiency and accuracy through electronic transactions and support systems that help staff to be more efficient and effective. Specifically, they have identified the following technology-based goals: 1) deploy information technology strategically to advance specific projects and support all parts of the department; 2) leveraging technology investments through comprehensive strategies that support all parts of the agency; 3) expanding the use of the I-Works computer system by PROMISE JOBS, Workforce Investment Act programs, and others; 4) continuing the long-term unemployment insurance tax redesign project; and 5) beginning a major project to automate records and processes for Workers' Compensation.
	Utah	Utah's Department of Workforce Services continues to design and implement award-winning technological solutions to promote efficiency while maintaining a high level of customer service. DWS Core Services completely redesigned the "Services to Employer" side of jobs.utah.gov to make the system more productive, accessible, efficient, and user friendly. A web-based tool for staff, customers, community partners, and the public to provide information on DWS programs and processes was also developed and deployed.