



LITTLE ROCK WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Annual Report July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014



Submitted: March 2015

Photo of Little Rock Skyline
courtesy of Mike Anderson.

Bringing People and Jobs Together

LRWIB Annual Report

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014



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LRWIB Annual Report: FY2014

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Little Rock Workforce Investment Board Members (*Executive Committee Members)

BUSINESS

Eric Tate, Chair*
Dassault Falcon Jet – Little Rock

Brian Itzkowitz, Vice-Chair*
Goodwill Industries of Arkansas

Joey Dean, Secretary/Treasurer*
Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce

Mike South, Immediate Past Chair*
Flake & Kelley

James McCarther*
Global Janitorial Services, Inc.

James E. (Jim) Nickels (Business and Union)*
ALFCIO

Mary Parham
JKelly Referrals & Information Services, Inc.

Claudia Barone (Business and WIA Service Provider)
UAMS

Ginny Hensley
Arkansas Children's Hospital

Douglas L. Murphy Ph.D.
UAMS

Mark Beach
CDI Contractors

Staff
W.J. Monagle, Executive Director
Janet Davis, Office Manager
Marie Boyce, Administrative Asst./Internal Monitor

PUBLIC SECTOR

Mayor Mark Stodola, CEO (ex-officio, non-voting)
City of Little Rock

Linda Kindy (Adult Education)*
Little Rock Adult Education Center

Donnie Frier (Labor Org)
Laborers International Union of North America

Charles Mobley (Juvenile Justice)
Pulaski County Juvenile Services

Lois Bethards (American Indian)
American Indian Center of Arkansas

Debra Coleman (Services for the Blind)
AR DHS, Division of Services for the Blind

Cassandra Norman-McGhee
Metropolitan Career Technical Center

Jo Keegan
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services

Bentley Wallace
Pulaski County Technical College

Rodney Forte (Housing, HUD)
Metropolitan Housing Alliance

Korey Adams (Job Corps)
Little Rock Job Corps

Mission Statement

The Little Rock Workforce Investment Board is committed to building a comprehensive regional workforce development system that is extremely positive and responsive to the needs of its customers, job seekers, businesses and incumbent workers and is highly accessible, sensitive, flexible and accountable.

– Mayor Mark Stodola



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Little Rock Workforce Center Partners*

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

Arkansas Department of Career Education (ADCE)

- Arkansas Rehabilitative Services Division (ARSD)
- Little Rock School District (LRSD) – Adult Education
- Pulaski County Special School District – Adult Education

Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (ADWS)

- Career Pathways (TANF/TEA)
- Career Readiness Certificate (CRC)
- Employment Services (ES)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/TEA)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- Unemployment Insurance Division (UI)

Business Advisory Team (BAT)

Central Arkansas Development Council (CADC)

Little Rock Job Corps (LRJC)

Little Rock Workforce Investment Act (LRWIA)

- ResCare, Inc. dba Arbor E & T (Arbor)
- Little Rock Workforce Investment Board (LRWIB)

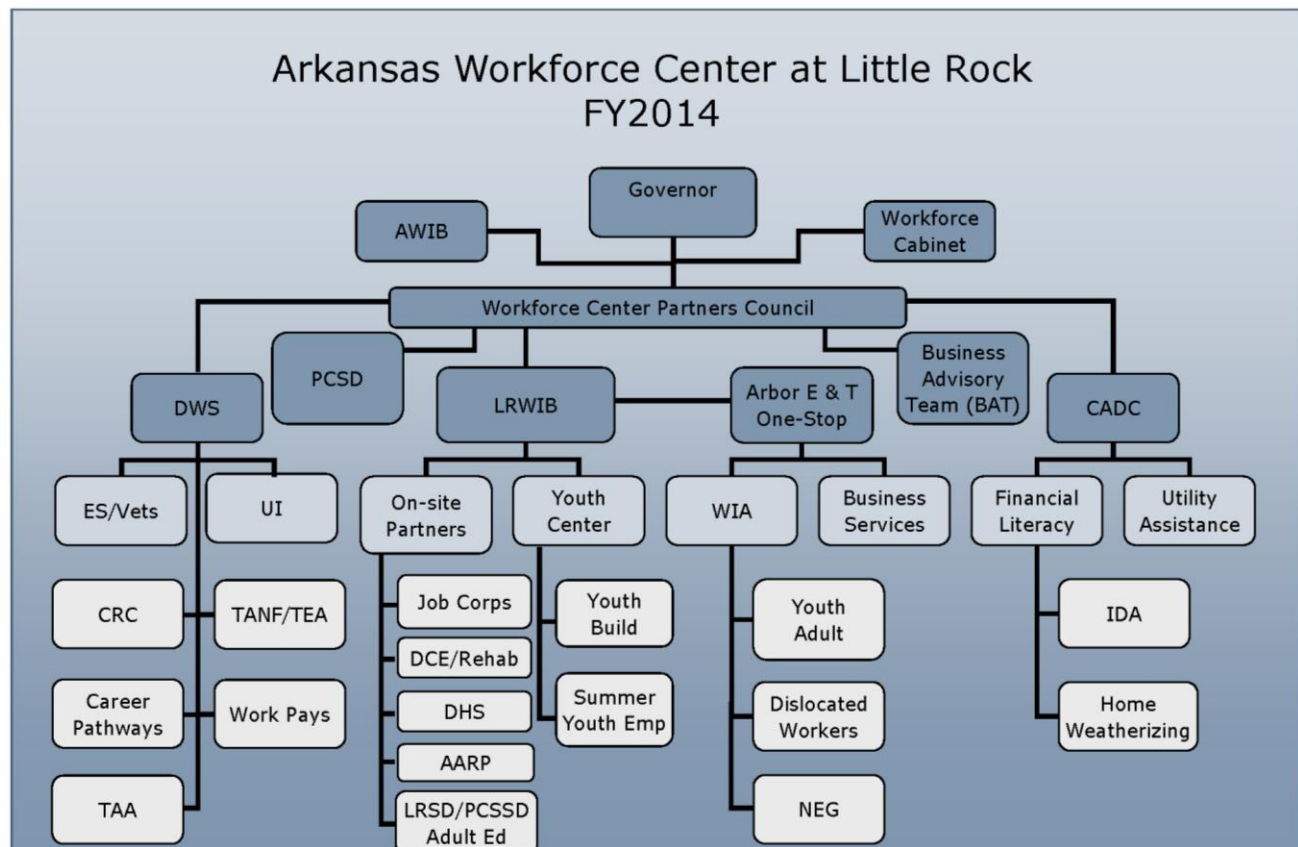
National Emergency Grant (NEG)

Pulaski County Sheriff's Department (PCSD)

Summer Youth Employment and YouthBuild (YB)

Veteran's Administration (VA)

* Refer to this page for acronyms, which designate Little Rock Workforce Center partners, in the remainder of the annual report.



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Executive Summary

Economic Environment

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

During FY2014, the LRWIB experienced unprecedented success in achieving performance goals and serving special populations despite an economy still recovering from a 5-year recession and a confidence shaking government shutdown of 21 days in October.

The unemployment rate for the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area (LRMSA) increased from 6.7% to 6.8% between 2012 and 2013(1). The number of unemployment insurance visits to the Arkansas Workforce Center at Little Rock actually dropped to 31,208 from 35,562 in PY2013. While this is an indication that unemployment rates are moving in a positive direction going into PY2014, the LRMSA unemployment rate rank among other MSAs has increased from 105th in 2012, 155th in 2013, and 159th in December 2014, which indicates that the LRMSA is not recovering as quickly as other MSAs from the recession of 2008-09.

Searching for more localized information, the data for only Pulaski County reflects an unemployment rate that has remained steady at 6.9% for 2012 and 2013. Data is not yet available for 2014.

Performance Measures

For the first time in its 15 year history the LRWIA met or exceeded all 9 of the common measures and all 4 of the local measures as contracted by the LRWIB.

The LRWIB also proactively adopted and aggressively pursued 16 additional goals to intentionally address the employment and training needs of Little Rock's special populations, achieving 12 of them.

Government Shutdown

The Government shutdown of October 2013 proved to be a useful learning tool, requiring the LRWIA to prepare for closure even though that outcome did not occur. It proved that the LRWIA could operate its programs for one full month after which reductions in staff and programs could extend services for up to three months.

Business Advisory Team

Another innovation created by the LRWFC partnership was the creation of the Business Advisory Team (BAT), which brings together key agency managers from six areas within the center to coordinate and delivery high quality responses to its business customers. This resulted in an uptick in attendance at outside job fairs and hosting individualized job fairs and hiring events at the LRWFC.



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LRWFC Statistics

Workforce Center Utilization and Partners: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

In May 2014, the LRWIB and its Little Rock Workforce Center partners celebrated the five-year anniversary of providing services from the newly renovated workforce center at 5401 S. University Avenue.

A work environment that is welcoming, professional and state-of-the-art continues to positively impact the LRWIB's ability to provide high-quality services to job-seeking customers and market itself to the public and business community.

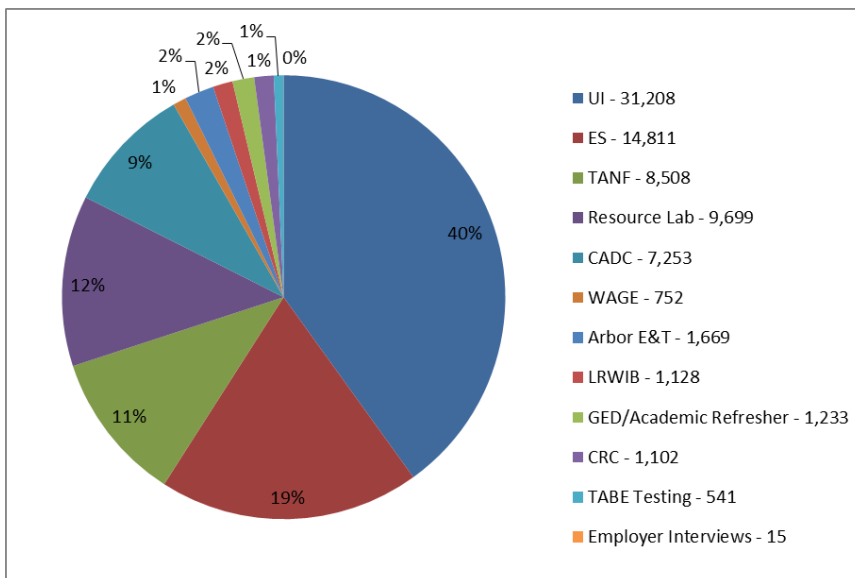
As the chart below illustrates, the Little Rock Workforce Center welcomed almost **78,000 separate visits** in July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014 with visits spread over a variety of service types.

The Little Rock Workforce Center (LRWFC), a certified comprehensive center, integrates the services of **15 partner organizations**, representing grant programs; local, state and federal government; and non-profit and for-profit corporations.

The LRWFC uses a “demand driven” concept, leveraging strategies like an Employer Toolbox and Business Advisory Team, to enhance partnerships with local employers.

In the present economy, the Unemployment Insurance division continues to be a key driver in creating customer flow. However, each partner generated its share of innovative outreach efforts to meet the many needs of Little Rock residents - by offering community and business meeting space, utility payment assistance, financial literacy and family budgeting programs, mini-career fairs, youth employment programs, and other services.

The partners at the LRWFC understand that no single organization can come close to offering all the services and information that customers want and demand, but that by taking proactive steps and supporting each other's work, they have created an extremely resourceful One-Stop Center to better serve our constituents.



LRWFC Utilization: FY 2014

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Common Measures

Arbor Education and Training

Arbor Education and Training is the Little Rock Workforce Investment Area (LRWIA) Title I provider and the LWIA one-stop operator. Arbor E&T's delivery model is customized to the LRWIB's local requirements. As a one-stop operator, Arbor has implemented internal training and monitoring systems to ensure that projects meet and exceed WIA performance measures.

Performance "O": Common Measures: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

The table below provides an overview of performance outcomes against the nine Common Measures for July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014. These metrics, which focus on services for youth, adult, and dislocated workers (DLW), serve as a streamlined performance measurement system for assessing accountability for Arkansas workforce centers.

For the first time in its history the LRWIA achieved or exceeded all of the performance goals for each of the 9 Common Measures, including:

- 1) Placement Employment/Education - Youth
- 2) Attainment of Degree or Certification - Youth

- 3) Literacy - Numeracy Gain - Youth
- 4) Entered Employment Rate - Adult
- 5) Entered Employment Rate - DLW
- 6) Retention Rate - Adult
- 7) Retention Rate - DLW
- 8) Average Earnings Rate - Adults/DLW
- 9) Earnings Gain (OY) - DLW

Negotiated Performance Goals

In the months before the end of the 2013 fiscal year on June 30, 2013, the DOL indicated to the ADWS that it would entertain negotiations to lower the historically high performance levels for the State of Arkansas since the inception of WIA in 1999. The ADWS advised each local WIA of the DOL proposed performance levels, and asked each area for input on whether those levels were reasonable given the local economic environment. The AWIB approved the final changes in early July 2013 and those new performance levels are reflected in the FY2014 annual report. DOL's concessions came with the state's assurance that it would focus attention upon, and achieve higher enrollments of, the "Harder-to-Serve" populations of persons with disabilities, homeless, ex-offenders, out-of-school youth, and veterans.

Common Measures: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Placement Emp/Ed- Youth	Attainment Deg/Cert - Youth	Lit/Num Gain - Youth	Entered Employ Rate Adult DLW		Retention Rate Adult DLW		Average Earnings Adult/DLW
Neg, Level	83.00%	80.00%	70.10%	89.00%	89.00%	90.00%	94.00%	\$11,772
Actual Level	83.00%	81.60%	75.00%	100.00%	96.97%	96.970%	100.00%	\$12,568
	Achieved	Exceeded	Exceeded	Exceeded		Exceeded		Exceeded

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Local Performance Goals

Local Board Measures: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

The LRWIB and Arbor ET&T achieved all 4 of the **Local Board Measures** for July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014, including:

- 1) Enrollment Rate - Adult
- 2) Enrollment Rate - Dislocated Workers
- 3) Enrollment Rate - Youth
- 4) Ten Key Elements of Youth Development

Targeted Population Goals: July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

The AWIB approved changes to negotiated performance levels for the 9 Common Measures in July 2013 based on the state's assurance that the LRWIB would focus attention upon, and achieve higher enrollments of, the "Harder-to-Serve" Populations of persons with disabilities, homeless, ex-offenders, older persons, out-of-school youth, ESL and Hispanic persons, and veterans.

The LRWIB and Arbor E&T staff also achieved 12 out of 16 Targeted Populations goals as of 6/30/14 - as outlined in the table below.

Targeted Population goals July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	DLW - 80% Avg. Earnings	DLW Enrollment	DLW – 100% Avg. Earnings	Adult – Average Earnings	Adult Enrollment	Disabilities Enrollment	Co. Hiring Disabled Workers	Older Youth Enrollment
Goal	\$10,400	70	\$13,000	\$11,772	50	21	2	30
Actual	\$14,082	70	\$14,082	\$12,276	63	21	1 Potential	30
	Exceeded	Achieved	Exceeded	Exceeded	Exceeded	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Achieved

	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Credential Ed./Emp. Partners	Ex- Offender NWOTC/ FBP	Goodwill Referrals	Ex-Offender Enrollment	Ex-Offender Certifications	Homeless Enrollment	Co. Hiring Homeless	HAZ-MAT Train/Emp. - Homeless
Goal	2	1	150	6	12	6	2	10
Actual	2	1	101	32	N/A	6	7	7
	Achieved	Achieved	Partially Achieved	Achieved	Pending*	Achieved	Exceeded	Partially Achieved

* Work opportunity tax credit frozen during FY2014 (as of January 1, 2014).

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Innovative Programs and Partnerships

The LRWIB initiated and continued a number of groundbreaking partnerships and initiatives between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014.

Little Rock Workforce Investment (LRWIA)

The LRWIB continued to serve the city limits of Little Rock, with a No Wrong Door Policy for other customers. The organization's programs are credited with reaching over **20,240** low to moderate income adults and youth as well as dislocated workers. Programs also focused on needs of the local business community, major employers in the area and other customers as required by funding.

Youth Build (YB)

During FY2014, the LRWIB received notice that the YouthBuild Little Rock program will be refunded to serve 40 older out-of-school youth in acquiring a GED and industry recognized and accredited certifications in highway construction, commercial truck driving, weatherization technology, certified nursing assistantship, and, of course, construction apprenticeship. At least 75% of the youth in this program are high school dropouts; the other 25% are low-income, basic skills-deficient, or face other significant stated barriers.

Summer Youth Employment

The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) was a success. On 6/14/14 the program began with a 25-hour orientation week in job readiness and soft skills training. Innovatively, local HR professionals, volunteering their time, delivered the curriculum to 52 youth. Over 90% of the clients successfully completed the work readiness goal. As a result of the SYEP, four clients were offered permanent positions with their worksites.

EPA Grant

During FY2014, the LRWIB and Arbor E&T continued a partnership with the Arkansas Construction Education Foundation (ACEF), the lead partner in a grant funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), with the objective to recruit, train and place homeless residents of Central Arkansas in environmental careers with skills needed to safely handle hazardous materials.

National Emergency Grant (NEG)

For the first time, the LRWIB received a small grant due to a natural disaster: the severe winter storms of December 2012 and January 2013 that covered much of central Arkansas in ice and caused power outages and much damage to trees, lines, and property. Once FEMA aid and relief was gone, the LRWIB entered into a partnership with the City of Little Rock's Parks and Recreation Department to continue repair and cleanup of the city's park system. From July 2013 through March 2014, 23 long-term unemployed individuals were hired and trained to safely cut and remove over 5,000 branches and trunks from the public areas of more than 15 parks. The program targeted long-term unemployed and other harder-to-serve populations: three NEG participants were homeless; two were veterans; two were dislocated workers; one was ESL; and 15 were ex-offenders. By the end of the program, nine participants found full-time employment, some with other departments at the City of Little Rock.



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Workforce Center Events

The Little Rock Area Workforce Center hosted a variety of events at its new location during July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014. Highlighted events include:

Citizenship and DACA Renewal Workshops

Continuing its efforts to reach out to the Hispanic and ESL community, the LRWIB and its LRWFC partners provided space and staff support to enable state community coalitions to conduct Citizenship and DACA renewal workshops in July 2013 and January, March and June of 2014. More than 250 persons attended over the four events. The partnership includes direct coordination with Arkansas United Communities Coalition and the Arkansas Coalition for DREAM, with support from The Walmart Foundation, LULAC, Catholic Charities of Arkansas, Arkansas Interfaith Alliance, and the Consulate of Mexico.

Income Tax “Super Saturday”

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition hosted its 11th annual “Super Saturday,” a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance event for qualifying employees and all eligible working individuals and families on Saturday, February 1, 2014. A record 226 tax returns were filed. Volunteer certified tax assistance experts from the IRS, ACO and AARP helped working families or individuals complete and file tax returns, maximize tax refunds, obtain free credit reports, and avoid scams and fees lying in wait for them.

The theme of the event was enrolling more uninsured Arkansans into affordable health care.

Over 50 volunteers from business and community organizations - like AARP, CADAC, United Health Care, ACO, AmBetter of AR, IRS, Little Rock Workforce Center, LRWIB, Regions Bank, Entergy, Mayor Mark Stodola and the City of Little Rock - helped to make the event a success.

Christmas Caravan

On December 22, 2013, the LRWFC hosted a Christmas Caravan for the Homeless. The center-wide staff Christmas project included gathering winter clothes, non-perishable goods, and children's toys and attending the event with a DWS mobile unit and employment information. Hundreds attended and received gifts and services, such as dental care and applying for affordable health care.

Career Fairs

The most demonstrable way that the Little Rock partnership has of meeting employers at the point of demand is attendance at career fairs. In FY2014, 10 career fairs were created, hosted, and attended by local partners and staff from the agencies located at the LRWFC, including: Watershed Ex-Offender Job Fair, “Put Arkansas Back to Work” Job Fair, and Tele Tech job fair.



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Success Stories

The Little Rock Area Workforce Center produced several success stories between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. Success profiles range across the spectrum of customers, including youth, adults, dislocated workers, and NEG Disaster Project participants. Examples include:

Youth Success

Darnell Britt was referred to the WIA Youth program by the Young Adult Opportunities Center. He informed his Youth Counselor that he enjoyed working with his hands, despite the fact that one of his hands is permanently disabled from a gunshot injury. While pursuing a GED and gaining work experience under Affordable Upholstery, Darnell was recognized by My Brother's Keepers. He is projected to obtain his GED in spring 2016.

At the age of 16, **Alyssa Hood** had never worked prior to participating in the WIA Summer Employment Youth Program. Alyssa was recognized by Making a Difference Camp XL as their most valuable Tutor for her ability to provide a nurturing, fun and exciting environment while teaching kindergarten children to read.

While participating in the WIA Younger Youth Program, **Michael Terry** completed two Summer Employment assignments: Workforce Center's TEA program and UALR Office of Student Transfers. As an active member of the McClellan High School Band, he received a full scholarship to Bell Haven College in Mississippi. He plans to enlist into the Marines to complete a Master's Degree.

Adult Success

Stephanie Eskridge enrolled into the WIA Adult Program in 2012 to receive tuition assistance. She

began her medical career as a part-time nursing assistant with Sandalwood Nursing & Rehab. During 2014, Ms. Eskridge was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), passed the NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination), and began employment as a Registered Nurse with the University of Arkansas For Medical Sciences.

Ronald Sterling enrolled into the WIA Adult Program in 2011 to receive tuition assistance and was admitted to the Business Management Program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. In December 2013, Mr. Sterling was awarded a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from UALR. On February 12, 2014, the client obtained employment with Accenture as a Business analyst.

Dislocated Worker Success

Mark Fox enrolled into the DLW Program in 2013 due to a reduction in force from ConAgra Foods, Mr. Fox requested assistance with overcoming the barriers of having an offender background and lack of occupational skills. In 2014, Mr. Fox was awarded a Technical Certificate from Pulaski Technical College in Machine Shop/Computerized Numerical Control and began employment with Apex Machining, Inc., in Little Rock as a Machinist.

NEG Disaster Project Success

After Tyree Smith's employment with the City of Little Rock Park and Recreation ended, finding employment was difficult due to his felony conviction in 2002. In July 2014, Mr. Smith obtained full-time employment as a Construction Worker with Redstone Construction Group Inc. in Little Rock.

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Financial Summary

Funding Streams

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

As of June 2014, the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board reported that the LRWIB served **20,240** customers through funding streams across a variety of adult, youth and dislocated worker programs.

The LRWIB expended a total of **\$1,302,632** to serve these customers compared to \$1,662,433 in FY2013.

The LRWIB All Funding Streams Summary, which illustrates funding streams, expenditures and financial balances as of year-end 2014 in greater detail, is available upon request.

Note: Financial procedures established by the Board of Directors require that the LRWIB maintain cash reserves equal to one (1) month of operating expenses.

Budget Statement

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

During this period, the LRWIB approved an operating budget totaling **\$344,700**.

Shared costs (with the designated One Stop Operator) for the Little Rock Workforce Center facility maintenance and utilities equaled **\$65,280**.

The Board of Directors also approved a WIA program budget totaling **\$897,694** for the One-Stop Operator, Arbor Education and Training.

In addition to the annual WIA allocation, program-related funds were also budgeted in the following amounts between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014:

- National Emergency Grant (NEG): **\$140,001** (expired on March 31, 2014)
- YouthBuild: **\$63,520** (expired May 31, 2014)

The LRWIB Budget for July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014 and monthly financial statements, which illustrate planned and actual expenditures in greater detail, are available upon request.

Financial Monitoring

The LRWIB performs regular financial oversight, activities, including:

- Monthly review of allowable expenditures
- Annual WIA financial monitoring of programs
- Annual financial audit by independent auditor
- Annual financial monitoring by Arkansas DWS

Beginning in October 2014, BKD, Inc. conducted its annual financial audit of the LRWIB. BKD reviewed the LRWIB accounting system and financial reports, and for the 3rd year in a row issued an audit report for the period July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014 with an unmodified opinion that the organization's internal financial controls showed no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. The organization further qualified as a low-risk auditee, as that term is defined by OMB Circular A-133. The LRWIB has received an unmodified audit opinion for the previous five years in a row. The financial audit of the LRWIB for the period ending June 30, 2014 is available upon request or at www.lrwib.org.