



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Labor and  
Workforce Development

Office of the Commissioner

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November 5, 2021

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh  
United States Secretary of Labor  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Walsh,

On behalf of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board, we are pleased to submit Alaska's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Annual Performance Report for Program Year 2020. The report highlights the success of Alaska's workforce development system, the benefits received by program participants, and the vision, strategies and goals outlined in the 2020 Alaska WIOA Combined State Plan.

From the coastal fishing communities of Southeastern Alaska to the oil fields of the North Slope, Alaska is a vast landscape with many unique challenges. Reaching job seekers living in sparsely populated areas, the seasonal nature of many of the state's primary employment sectors, and the ongoing changes brought on by COVID-19 – these realities are indeed opportunities to re-energize workforce services across the broad spectrum. Our goal is to better assist Alaskans in overcoming skill barriers and to obtain meaningful employment. Alaska offers many options: apprenticeships, retraining, reskilling, internships, on-the-job-training, entrepreneurship, and more which connect Alaskans to sustaining family wage employment while meeting critical industry workforce needs.

WIOA funds are a significant contribution to our public workforce system. WIOA helps us to focus on smart investments which can revitalize our economy in the face of rapid change. WIOA programs help individuals and families – they bolster local economies by better equipping, educating, and training for current and future jobs.

We appreciate and value this important federal/state partnership. Thank you for your continued support to the people of Alaska.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tamika L. Ledbetter".

Dr. Tamika L. Ledbetter  
Commissioner

**State of Alaska**  
WORKFORCE  
INNOVATION AND  
OPPORTUNITY  
ACT



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
NARRATIVE**

Program Year 2020

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**Assurances:** The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development assures that all required elements for the Program Year 2020 WIOA Annual Report are reported uniformly. All WIOA title programs, I – IV, coordinated in the development of this report.

## Alaska's Program Year 2020 WIOA Overview

PY 2020 continued to supply Alaska with the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, those inherent to serving a small population spread over a vast area, and the vicissitudes of changing economic and environmental factors. By remaining flexible in the face of change, maximizing technology, and leveraging WIOA and other state and federal programs, Alaska was able to achieve its vision of providing multiple pathways to high skill, high wage jobs and careers, and access to the education, training, and support services needed to prepare for and participate in high-demand occupations that pay family-sustaining wages.

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) implements WIOA and state training programs to build clear routes to support and grow learning opportunities for workers at all stages of life; serve individuals with disabilities; prioritize veterans and transitioning active service members and their families; and meet the skilled workforce needs of employers. With input from industry partners, Alaska provided workers for in-demand, high-growth occupations including healthcare, construction, maritime, oil and gas, alternative and renewable energy, transportation, technology, education, and mining. The department engages workforce strategies, sector partnerships, and cross-program data to expand registered apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and work-based learning approaches; demonstrates innovation in delivery of Alaska Job Center services; and prioritizes services to target populations. [\*Information on Strategic Vision, Goals, Sector Strategies and Career Pathways is located in the Alaska WIOA Combined State Plan PY 2020-2023.\*](#)

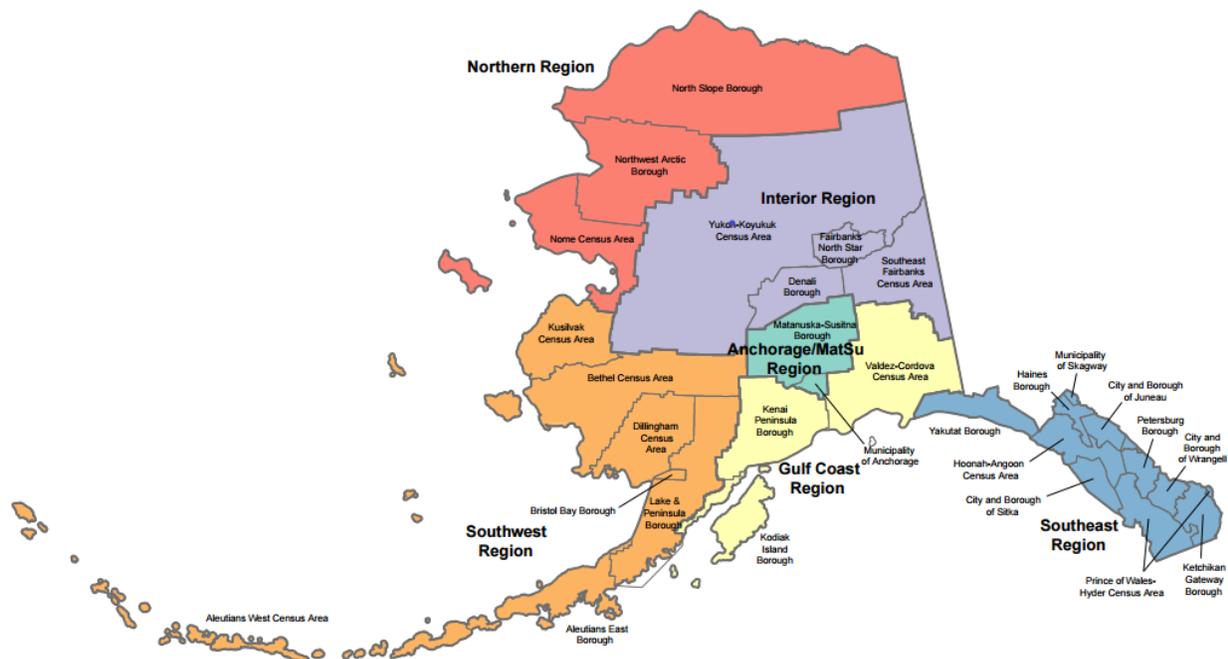
After pandemic-related job center closure to the public on March 17, 2020, the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) addressed the needs of job seekers and businesses by adopting virtual tools and techniques. Our job centers opened to public access in June 2021, since that time we have incorporated best practices in virtual and distance delivery to expand access to rural areas and for the segment of the population that prefers virtual services. During PY 2020, the department also completed implementation of [AlaskaJobs](#), its new online labor exchange and case management system, to enhance user experience, co-locate data, and provide a single sign-on between WIOA Title I, II, III programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the Unemployment Insurance program. AlaskaJobs allows individuals to enter core information into one location when applying for multiple programs and benefits, supports common WIOA participant federal reporting, increases self-service options for external users, and allows staff the ability to provide improved services to customers.

While Alaska met most of its performance goals in spite of a year of challenges and changes, PY2020 will certainly be remembered as a year of contrasts, and especially for the dedication and commitment of internal and external staff and partners, state leadership and local communities all working together to adapt and create solutions.

## Economic Overview and Planning Regions

Operationally, Alaska has six state-defined economic regions, which the state uses to collect and analyze labor market information and to inform strategic planning.

- **Anchorage/Mat-Su Region** - The population center of the state and mix of employment and industries in the region is roughly reflective of those across the state.
- **Gulf Coast and Southeast Regions** – These coastal areas benefit from fishing and other maritime activity, but strong healthcare growth has occurred wherever there are stable or growing populations. Tourism is also a key economic driver in these parts of the state.
- **Interior Region** – This part of the state, which includes Fairbanks, has a mix of resource industries including large coal and gold mines, a large military presence, the state’s main university campus, and is also home to Denali National Park, which generates a large number of seasonal jobs.
- **Northern Region** – This region is home to most of the state’s large oil and gas industry as well as one of the world’s largest zinc mines.
- **Southwest Region** - Heavily dependent on the fishing industry, this region supplies a large percentage of the nation’s total commercial fish harvest by both poundage and value. Bristol Bay sockeye salmon, Bering Sea crab, and pollock caught in the region represent some of the largest salmon, crab, and whitefish fisheries in the world.



Alaska ranks 48th among states by population — only Wyoming and Vermont have fewer people — but it is by far the largest in area. With an area of 570,641 square miles, the state accounts for 16 percent of the total land mass of the United States. The state has experienced negative net migration for the last eight years, with actual population loss for the last four. Alaska’s 2020 population was

728,903 with a working-age population – ages 16 to 64 – of 470,501, a loss of 4,337 from the prior year. Alaska was slowly emerging from an economic downturn precipitated by a drop in oil prices when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country in early 2020. While all states, including Alaska, reported dramatic job losses from February to April of 2020, Alaska is one of only five states that has so far recovered less than half of the jobs lost at the beginning of the pandemic.

The state's largest economic drivers are oil and gas, the federal government including a significant number of military bases, tourism, commercial fishing, and mining. Looking beyond the short-term disruptions directly resulting from the pandemic, those drivers remained fundamentally sound, with the possible exception of oil and gas. Alaska continued to face the ongoing challenge of transitioning away from reliance on oil production to fund its state government. Most states will face significant budget deficits as a result of revenue loss and additional COVID-related costs, but Alaska's budget deficits begun prior to the pandemic are likely to put overall downward pressure on state spending and employment for the next several years.

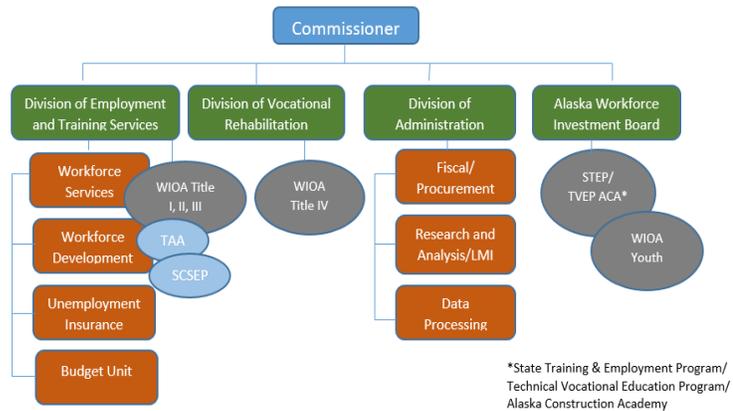
## **WIOA State Board and Single Planning Area Waiver**

Alaska's waiver to WIOA Section 107(b) allows the State Board, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), to carry out the roles of a Local Board, and effectuate a single regional planning area. The modified role of AWIB and single planning area are essential to offset excessive administrative costs, thwart inconsistencies in services, and improve overall performance in a large state whose small population is nevertheless dispersed over a vast area of economically distinct regions.

Alaska has made significant progress towards the goals outlined in the approved waiver. Functioning as a single regional planning area under one State Board has streamlined the process and timeliness of awarding grants by the elimination of multiple layers of administrative entities, has allowed consistent eligibility standards across the state, and improved both visibility and accountability of workforce investment programs. Operating under the waiver, the AWIB draws representation from all areas of the state and from diverse interest groups such as organized labor, business and industry, state agencies, native organizations, educational institutions, individuals experiencing disabilities, and other relevant groups. Similarly, by ensuring the diversity of representation on the AWIB, the interests of a wide range of at-risk and priority populations are served, such as veterans, low-income youth and adults, dislocated workers, and rural residents. The AWIB continues to engender local participation and points of view, consulting local elected officials from Alaska's boroughs and cities in regional and statewide planning efforts, and inviting these stakeholders to participate in Regional Advisory Councils. For example, the Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement Committee provides oversight for training and employment programs that are delivering education and training relevant to local employer needs. Additionally, the waiver allows the AWIB to foster regional collaboration among job centers, educational institutions, labor, and non-profits, and to work with employers to determine local or regional hiring needs that informs responsive training programs to ensure that sector needs are met and all geographic regions are served.

## Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development

As the state’s lead entity for workforce development, the department, through the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS), administers WIOA Title Ib Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, Title II, Adult Education, and Title III, Wagner Peyser program. Title IV is administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Alaska Workforce Investment Board component manages state funded employment and training programs and the WIOA Youth program through a competitive granting process.



### Alaska Workforce Investment Board

The vision of the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) is to build connections that put Alaskans into good jobs. AWIB uses labor market data and regional and sector stakeholder input to guide continuous improvement of Alaska’s workforce system.

As the Governor’s lead workforce policy entity, the AWIB develops a statewide workforce investment policy framework and drives coordination and collaboration among programs and agencies to ensure that Alaska is ‘Open for Business’, with a useful, accessible workforce system for all customers. This includes businesses seeking qualified workers, unemployed Alaskans looking for jobs and career training, and incumbent workers upgrading their skills to meet the demands of a changing work environment.

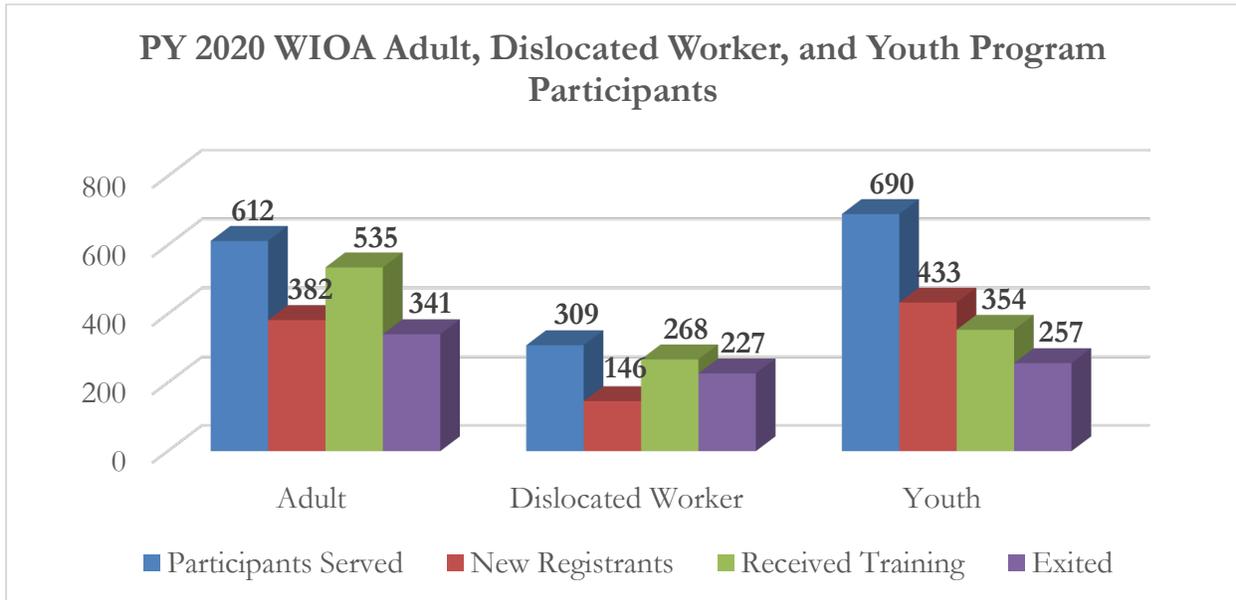
PY 2020 highlights include board approval of the Alaska Maritime Education Consortium Action Agenda in October 2020, completion of the Mat-Su Job Center One-Stop Certification process, progress towards growth of Registered Apprenticeship Programs through leveraging federal apprenticeship grants with other state and federal funding, and the award of a \$3.9 million State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity and Innovation grant in June 2021, adding a fourth grant to those implemented under its Alaska Apprenticeship Plan.

### Division of Employment and Training Services

The mission of the division is to provide labor exchange services, employment and training services, and unemployment insurance to Alaskans and Alaska businesses to advance opportunities for employment and provide economic stability for communities in Alaska.

The division administers WIOA formula funds through job centers and national dislocated worker grants through subawards to employment and training organizations.

## WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs



Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) case managers in one-stop job centers provide support for Alaska’s WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and National Dislocated Worker Grant programs. CSTS staff work with participants to determine the appropriate set of goals, programs, and assistance to address individual needs via comprehensive assessments, career evaluation, and labor market analysis. Staff develop an individual employment plan, and provide referrals for any necessary additional resources. Eligible individuals may receive pre-vocational, vocational, apprenticeship, on-the-job, and incumbent worker training, as well as support services to help meet costs of housing, transportation, tools, clothing, books, and supplies while participating in program services.

Across all titles, WIOA programs prioritize special populations, in particular focusing on supporting veterans, their eligible spouses, and other displaced homemakers, individuals with barriers to employment including, but not limited to, low-income individuals, older individuals, ex-offenders, youth in or aged out of foster care, long-term unemployed, and other groups determined by the Governor to have barriers to employment. Job center staff also collaborate with Registered Apprenticeship programs to promote and enhance the use of apprenticeships. Staff understand the value of apprenticeship as a work-based opportunity for jobseekers, how to establish new apprenticeship programs, and ways to blend and braid WIOA funds into Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

Alaska continued to strengthen WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs in PY 2020 as evidenced by meeting or exceeding most program year performance indicators, introducing a new integrated data and case management system, fostering inter-agency and external partnerships, and supporting incumbent worker training (IWT) in multiple industries to enhance competitiveness of employers by building a skilled workforce. After developing effective strategies to allow participants better access to technology, safe transportation, program testing, secure document signature and transmission, and training via online delivery in high growth sectors due to pandemic-related closures,

job centers re-opened to public access on June 1, 2021 better able to serve Alaskans across the state, now and in the future.

CSTS, DETS, and AWIB staff coordinate WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Rapid Response, and National Dislocated Worker Grant programs to maximize outreach and participant funding in accordance with the department's [Co-enrollment Policy 07-505](#).

## Adult

The goal of the WIOA Adult program is to improve the quality of Alaska's workforce, reduce reliance on public assistance programs, and create a pathway to the middle class by helping individuals build and maintain skills needed to achieve self-sufficiency. Staff work with job seekers who are at least 18 years old and experience barriers to employment, offering priority of service in accord with department [policy 07-517](#).

Throughout its one-stop job center network, case managers actively worked with 612 Adult participants, of which 382 were new registrants. Program exits increased from 284 in PY 2019 to 341 in PY 2020, as case managers continued to prioritize timely exits.

Career fairs, workshops, and recruiting events were predominantly held online in PY 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Under the WIOA Adult program, Alaska's job centers served more males than females with the majority in the 25-44 age bracket, the majority of individuals served were Caucasian or of American Indian/Alaska Native descent, and most individuals were low-income and longer-term unemployed.

	Adult	
PY 2020 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	77.5%	74%
Employment Rate (Q4)	76.5%	76.8%
Median Earnings	\$7,700	\$10,679
Credential Rate	63.5%	63.7%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	79%	83%

## Dislocated Worker

Per policy [07-524](#), Alaska's WIOA Dislocated Worker Program provides employment and training services to individuals who have lost their job through no fault of their own or received a layoff notice, employees who have received notice that they will lose their job unless they complete additional training or acquire additional credentials, displaced homemakers who have relied on the income of another family member and no longer receive that support, and relocated active military spouses. Self-employed individuals who have experienced income reduction or were compelled to close their business due to economic conditions in their community or natural disaster may also be dislocated workers.

Dislocated Worker PY 2020 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	81.9%	85.4%
Employment Rate (Q4)	75%	84.6%
Median Earnings	\$10,800	\$11,120
Credential Rate	63.5%	53.1%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	65%	88.1%

The COVID-19 pandemic caused continued business closures in PY 2020, leading to thousands of layoffs across the state. As most of these layoffs were temporary, with an unknown timeline, health mandates and advisories in effect, and enhanced UI benefits, the dislocated

worker program saw reduced enrollments from the prior year. As with WIOA Adult, the Dislocated Worker program served more males than females with the majority in the 25-44 age bracket. The majority of individuals serviced were Caucasian or of American Indian/Alaska Native decent; and most individuals were low-income and longer-term unemployed.

## Rapid Response

Alaska's Rapid Response Coordinator leads a team of Business Connection and CSTS specialists housed in six job centers throughout the state to provide proactive customized strategies, support, and assistance to businesses, communities, families and individuals to avoid or minimize the impact of job loss and business closures. The Rapid Response team receives notification of potential layoffs and business closures via workers filing unemployment insurance claims, direct contact from impacted employers and workers, media announcements, fluctuations in employer tax contributions, and Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices. Worksite Rapid Response meetings are tailored to each dislocation, and may include information on unemployment insurance, job search and placement assistance, labor market information, on-the-job training, classroom training, and/or referral to basic and remedial education. Due to continued pandemic-related closures in PY 2020, the Rapid Response team provided employers with Rapid Response overviews by phone, and offered larger employers web calls in lieu of in-person worksite meetings. The team also provided employers with a Rapid Response packet via email including essential information, [links to online resources](#), and videos to share with their workers.

With the continued impact of COVID-19 in PY 2020, the program worked with 73 employers impacting up to 3,458 workers, and received seven WARN notices totaling 2,015 layoffs, with no Trade Adjustment Assistance eligible layoffs. This was a decrease over the prior year, primarily due to employer-adjusted business models, federal employer assistance, and a moderate resumption of business and social activities due to normalizing of community COVID-19 restrictions. During PY 2019, Alaska experienced 85 rapid responses impacting 7,231 workers, and 19 WARN notices were filed. In contrast, there were 23 rapid responses in PY 2018 and 34 in PY 2017, with only two WARN notices filed in PY 2018, and eight in PY 2017.

## National Dislocated Worker Grants

### Trade and Economic Transition Dislocated Worker Grant (TET)

In response to statewide economic downturn due to loss of revenue from the oil and gas industry, Alaska received \$3.35 million in October 2018 to focus on expansion of dislocated worker training and employment programs in three of Alaska's fastest growing industries - maritime, healthcare, and construction. In July 2020, Alaska received a no-cost period of performance extension for the TET program through September 30, 2021.

As Alaska's population of skilled workers continued to face higher layoff rates due to COVID-19 in PY 2020, TET funding continued to assist with creating a continuous, qualified, sustainable workforce to serve the healthcare needs of Alaska's growing elder population, as well as focus on quality pre-apprenticeship and specialized training programs leading to National Center for Construction

Education & Research (NCCER)-recognized credentials, employment, or indenture in construction trades, and outreach and recruitment of dislocated workers for apprenticeships leading to employment serving as Merchant Seamen and other maritime occupations. Providers altered in-person class sizes and schedules, and adapted suitable material to online delivery to limit the need for travel and allow adherence to health mandates and policies to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus. Similarly, the department conducted deskside monitoring of three TET DWG subrecipients in April and May 2021. During PY 2020, 195 new individuals for a total of 670 participated in the TET DWG program, exceeding expectations.

#### National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Demonstration Grant (NHE)

In July 2018, Alaska received a \$1.2 million demonstration grant to help combat a pervasive and escalating statewide opioid crisis. A no-cost period of performance extension granted in June 2020 extended the program through the end of PY 2020. Flexible grant funds were used to provide training and support services to any Alaskans affected by the crisis, as well as workers who could help recognize, prevent, or provide services for substance abuse and mental health issues that often lead to addiction.

All components of the grant continued to be impacted by COVID-19 during PY 2020. Wherever possible, training providers converted training opportunities from in-person to online courses, allowing several components to exceed expectations.

Below is a snapshot of the 10 NHE program component enrollments. The 1,037 program participants served underscore the severity of the opioid crisis in Alaska.

	Transition Camp Youth	IWTs	Opioid-affected Individuals	RADACT Teacher Training	RADACT Counselor Training	ASHNHA Emergency Room Nurses	DVR Career Exploration	Kodiak Police Department	Nome Police Department	The Addictions Academy
<b>Participant Goal</b>	240	159	279	100	30	200	85	13	10	20
<b>Participants enrolled through 6/30/20</b>	159	79	208	48	28	50	14	13	0	0
<b>Participants enrolled through 06/30/21</b>	239	79	263	48	28	323	14	13	10	20

#### National Emergency Dislocated Worker Grant

In response to a magnitude 7.1 earthquake in Southcentral Alaska on November 30, 2018, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development received an award for up to \$4.5 million in disaster funding for temporary jobs to assist with the cleanup, repair, and reconstruction of damaged public structures and facilities. In addition to facilities repair, this grant provided work experience to dislocated workers, with the goal of permanent employment.

The department worked with Alaska Works Partnership, Inc. (AWP) as the project operator and the Anchorage School District as the worksite to implement recovery activities at identified earthquake

damaged facilities. Worker job classes included carpenter foreman, carpenter journeyman, carpenter apprentice, electrical apprentice, asbestos, laborer, and laborer apprentice. The project served 22 participants at two recovery sites in the school district. The Eagle River Elementary School site placed eight participants, while the Gruening Middle School site placed 16 workers. The project reimbursed participant wages up to a maximum of \$37.00 per hour, for a total of \$272,781 wages paid. Program activities concluded on December 31, 2020.

## Youth

Alaska's WIOA Youth program is delivered by organizations around the state identified through a competitive solicited grant process led by the grants unit within the Alaska Workforce Investment Board. AWIB strives to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of WIOA Youth partners to provide employment, vocational, academic, and support services to eligible disadvantaged and disconnected In School Youth (ISY) and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) ages 14 – 24. The program's primary target demographic is OSY.

In PY 2020, AWIB awarded \$3,706,201 to 13 subrecipients for delivery of comprehensive Youth services. Of the award, 83 percent was expended, of which 77 percent was expended on OSY activities, and 32 percent supported work experience activities. The program provided services to 690 youth experiencing barriers to employment and training and including:

- 504 OSY served (28 percent decrease)
- 186 ISY served (7 percent increase)
- 175 youth with disabilities served (25 percent of total)
- 160 homeless youth served (23 percent of total)

Alaska's At-Risk Youth Initiative team continued its work towards assessing resource and networking gaps in the Youth workforce system. During the year, the group hosted several youth employment workshops, improved collaboration between youth service organizations, and performed outreach to partner programs.

The pandemic continued to test the resiliency and innovation of the state and Youth subrecipients, demanding adaptation to social and environmental impacts. One innovative project currently supported by the WIOA Youth program addresses the need for local work experience in rural areas. In response to recent steep declines in area fisheries, the Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (YDFDA) in Emmonak began constructing greenhouses to grow produce for local families. This has created continued work experience activities for local youth, expands skills training beyond normal fishery related occupations, and supports the health and welfare of the community.

<b>Youth PY 2020 Performance</b>	<b>Negotiated</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Employment Rate (Q2)	54%	55.8%
Employment Rate (Q4)	52%	55.2%
Median Earnings	\$2,700	\$3,698
Credential Rate	50%	56.4%
Measurable Skill Gains Rate	66%	67.7%

With the state returning to a level of normalcy late in PY 2020, businesses reopened and service delivery and activity levels improved. The void created by a lack of ready, willing, and able adult workers provided an opening for youth to gain employment and receive work

experience opportunities, many of which led to permanent employment. Despite challenges posed by the pandemic, Alaska exceeded all performance measures for PY 2020.

## Statewide Activities

Statewide activity funds are a vital part of Alaska’s workforce development system. These funds support all required activities outlined in WIOA including Alaska Workforce Investment Board oversight, disseminating the Eligible Training Provider List, providing Labor Market Information, providing additional assistance to local areas that have high concentrations of eligible Youth, operating a fiscal and management accountability information system, conducting monitoring and performance evaluation projects, and staff training, capacity building and technical assistance. All of these activities support the operation of the one-stop delivery system. Statewide funds also offer the flexibility to increase the state’s capacity to serve Alaskans through grant awards.

In addition to the required activities as outlined in 20 CFR Part 682.200, Alaska used statewide activity funds to support an ongoing partnership with the Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness and Youth Housing Development Program, with a goal of leveraging housing placement activities with workforce development services.

Statewide funding also continued to support Alaska’s Helmets to Hardhats (H2H) program provided through Alaska Works Partnership for life changing training, skills development and employment placement assistance to military veterans returning to civilian life. The project served 78 veterans during PY 2020, helping 22 of them gain acceptance into registered apprenticeships in construction fields.

## WIOA PY 2020 Funding

<b>Program</b>	<b>Available</b>	<b>Expended</b>	<b>Percent Expended</b>	<b>Available Balance</b>
<i>WIOA Youth</i>	\$5,076,190	\$3,963,968	78.1%	\$1,112,222
<i>WIOA Adult</i>	\$4,769,805	\$3,820,927	80.1%	\$ 948,878
<i>WIOA DW</i>	\$8,455,610	\$6,845,642	81.0%	\$1,609,968
<i>Totals</i>	<b>\$18,301,604</b>	<b>\$14,630,538</b>	<b>79.9%</b>	<b>\$3,671,067</b>
<i>Subsets from Data Above</i>				
<i>Local Admin</i>	\$1,513,358	\$ 600,974	39.7%	\$912,385
<i>Rapid Response</i>	\$ 422,781	\$ 128,120	30.3%	\$294,661
<i>Statewide</i>	\$1,830,161	\$1,803,144	98.5%	\$ 27,016
<i>Totals</i>	<b>\$3,766,299</b>	<b>\$2,532,237</b>	<b>67.2%</b>	<b>\$1,234,062</b>

## WIOA Title II – Alaska Adult Education

Housed within DETS, Alaska Adult Education (AAE) is a statewide program for adults to enhance their postsecondary education skills in order to transition into the labor market, collegiate level academia, or vocational training. The AAE office manages Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds to forge partnerships to provide students the educational advantages they need. AAE programs are funded according to their capacity to conduct basic adult education, literacy, family and workplace education, English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, and integrated education and training. In PY 2020, AAE awarded over \$2.6 million to 13 regional adult education grantees and an integrated correctional system to deliver federally mandated adult education and literacy activities, and a grant for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE). The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact adult education, especially by limiting traditional face-to-face instruction. Through creativity, flexibility, and persistence, adult education programs have adopted synchronistic and asynchronistic learning environments and blended learning service delivery to continue to deliver quality instruction.

- Basic skills & pre-secondary education is instruction comparable to first through eighth grade educational levels and is designed to prepare students for secondary education courses. During PY 2020, 65 percent of full time students tested at or below eighth grade educational functional level.
- Secondary education & high school equivalency preparation provides instruction to improve students' skills for transition into higher education, training, or employment. The curriculum is rigorously aligned with the functional level of high school ninth through twelfth grade students. Pre-testing determined only three percent of incoming students tested in the ninth through twelfth grade range.
- AAE measures achievement of educational functioning level (EFL) gain from pre to post-testing using standardized proctored testing, as well as attainment of a high school diploma or equivalent, to demonstrate measurable skill gain (MSG). In PY 2020, 49 percent of students achieved EFL in at least one area, and 20.2 percent achieved MSGs, a 10.4 percentage point increase over the previous year. Alaska awarded 460 alternative high school diplomas in PY 2020, a drop of six percent from the previous year due to the continued closure of testing centers.
- The Alaska English as a Second Language program assists students to improve their reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language. In PY 2020, 32 percent of full time students assessed were ESL students.

## WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser

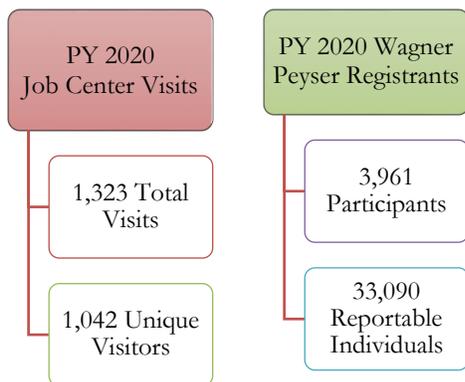
Alaska’s Wagner-Peyser labor exchange services are delivered through 14 Alaska Job Centers collectively known as the Alaska Job Center Network (AJCN). The AJCN collaborates with partner agencies to provide universal access and services under one roof to employers, job seekers, and workers. Self-services are available via AlaskaJobs, Alaska’s a no-fee job bank connecting job seekers with Alaska employers at <https://alaskajobs.alaska.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>.

Job seeker services include job search assistance, referral, and placement. Additionally, job center staff provide assessments of skill levels and abilities, aptitude testing, and career guidance. Many job centers offer regular workshops including job seeking tips, resume writing, cover letters, interviewing skills, employment after incarceration, and annual free IRS-certified tax services provided through My Free Tax Initiative. AJCN staff routinely provide referrals to partner agencies, veteran’s representatives, and WIOA Title I programs for assistance with training and support.

The Alaska Career Ready program includes WorkKeys® assessment and provides job seekers opportunities to earn National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRCs). In PY 2020, 73 job seekers underwent WorkKeys® assessments to earn 63 NCRCs. Although Wagner-Peyser job seeker participation dropped due to COVID-19, all services not requiring in-person interaction (such as WorkKeys® Curriculum online courseware and virtual job fairs) continued to be available telephonically or electronically.

While job center services were provided via remote delivery for most of PY 2020 in observance of statewide and local COVID-19 health mandates and advisories, job centers reopened to the public in June 2021.

Wagner Peyser			
PY 2020 Performance		Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)		58.8%	59.5%
Employment Rate (Q4)		57.2%	58.4%
Median Earnings		\$5,650	\$6,273



Alaska continued to exceed negotiated targets for the Employment Rate (Q2) and Median Earnings performance indicators, even though the Employment Rate (Q4) is more difficult to attain due to the highly seasonal nature of employment in the state from seafood processing, tourism, construction projects, and other factors. After two years of performance improvement, however, Alaska saw a 1.6 percent decrease in the Employment Rate second quarter after exit performance indicator for PY 2020, likely due to the impacts of the pandemic

Along with federal common performance indicators, Alaska has state-identified performance targets: connecting employers with qualified job seekers; increasing the number of job seekers receiving staff assisted services; and increasing the number of employers using the online labor exchange system.

Further demonstrating impacts of the pandemic, Alaska experienced a decrease in the number of job seekers who received a staff-assisted service in PY 2020, with 9,223 job seekers receiving 29,899 staff-assisted services. The AlaskaJobs labor exchange system saw strong use where 27,361 job seekers received 393,616 self-services, and an average of 63,445 users per quarter accessed the website for an average of 166,585 sessions per quarter. Nearly half of users accessed AlaskaJobs from a mobile phone.



Job center staff are also trained to serve employers, with dedicated Business Connection staff at the state’s five largest job centers. Alaska’s approach to serving employers emphasizes proactive, staff-initiated outreach designed to establish long-term relationships to meet employers’ current and future employment and training needs. Staff assist employers with special recruitments, ensure job applicant suitability, conduct job fairs, make referrals for Incumbent Worker Training, and provide information that helps ensure compliance with state and federal laws. The AJCN also houses apprenticeship specialists who support employers in sponsoring Registered Apprenticeship programs, which allow employers to establish their own standards of proficiency while developing a local and loyal workforce.

The number of employers using the online labor exchange is an indicator of the market share of all active employers in Alaska. In PY 2020, 3,406 employers used the AlaskaJobs labor exchange system. Employers placed 25,156 job orders for 44,233 job openings and viewed 33,134 resumes in AlaskaJobs in PY 2020.

PY 2020: Employers placed 25,156 job orders in the online labor exchange system for 44,233 job openings

The AJCN is often the first line for information about labor market conditions and employer activity including layoffs and business closures. Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Assistance staff foster a statewide team approach throughout a layoff, closure or dislocation process. Job centers and AlaskaJobs are also sources of information on valuable hiring incentives such as on-the-job training wage reimbursement, Fidelity Bonding for at-risk job seekers, the Alaska Veteran Hire Tax Credit, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program (WOTC).

In August 2020, The Work Opportunity Tax Credit program applied for and received a \$100,000 award from Employment and Training Administration to address its backlog. By leveraging the enhanced capacity of the AlaskaJobs WOTC module and with the help of two additional non-permanent technicians, the program processed 18,886 applications, and issued a record 7,521 certifications for up to \$23,300,200 in tax credits. In PY2020, a total of \$50,000 in Fidelity Bonds were issued to employers who hired justice-involved individuals.

## Veterans Services

Alaska is home to approximately 65,200 veterans who make up 12.2 percent of the state’s adult population, the highest per capita veteran population in the nation. Veterans receive priority for services in all job centers, and veterans and eligible spouses are offered specialized programs and opportunities to maximize training potential, employment, and retention. Using a team approach to providing services to veterans, all job center staff receive training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and other legislation that impacts veteran priority, preference, and employability. When job seekers indicate veteran status upon initial entry to a job center, they are also evaluated for eligible Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs). The state follows all Special Grant Provisions, Veterans’ Program Letters, USDOL/VETS Law 107- 288, and United States Code Title 38.

Those veterans experiencing SBEs are assisted by specialized staff funded through the Jobs for Veterans Statewide Grant (JVSG). These Disabled Veterans’ Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans’ Employment Representative (LVER) staff are housed in job centers located in areas with the highest veteran populations. JVSG staff also work with employers to recruit, hire, promote, and retain veterans in meaningful employment.

Outreach is provided in places such as U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs medical and veteran centers, homeless shelters, civic and service organizations, Veteran Stand Down events, veterans’ job fairs, and military installations. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges to the JVSG program during PY 2020. Since in-person outreach methods were not available for most of the year, staff adjusted to virtual outreach.

The annual Veterans and Military Spouses Job Fair was conducted virtually over a three week period in November 2020. Approximately 64 employers, education, training, and apprenticeship providers attended the event, which served 981 participants. In PY 2020, a total of 2,141 veterans received services. Alaska exceeded five of the six JVSG performance targets.

<b>Veterans Services</b>		
<b>PY 2020 Performance</b>	<b>Negotiated</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Wagner-Peyser Services to Veterans</b>		
Employment Rate (Q2)	56%	59.4%
Employment Rate (Q4)	55%	58.4%
Median Earnings	\$5,697	\$6,292
<b>JVSG Funded Services</b>		
Employment Rate (Q2)	53%	54.3%
Employment Rate (Q4)	50%	47.4%
Median Earnings	\$7,200	\$7,313

## Senior Community Service Employment Program

Alaska values mature workers for their commitment to Alaska, lifetime of transferable skills, and mentorship abilities necessary to be assets in any workplace. With program staff located in five job centers around the state, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) assists low-income Alaskans 55 and older to prepare for and secure employment. All SCSEP participants are Wagner Peyser registrants and use employment services for self-service applications and tools, to gain customer service skills, and improve their computer, clerical, and soft skills to better prepare them to

SCSEP PY 2020 Performance	Negotiated	Actual
Employment Rate (Q2)	48.0%	49.0%
Employment Rate (Q4)	40.5%	44.1%
Median Earnings	\$ 4,095	\$ 4,495
Barriers to Employment Service Level	2.76	3.33
	N/A	N/A

re-enter the workforce. As an integral part of participants' skills training, SCSEP staff work with partners to develop individual training plans which include the WorkKeys Curriculum, Customer Service, Business Communication, Working with Others, and Work Ethics

components. Many SCSEP participants are co-enrolled with WIOA Title I, II, or IV programs for further enrichment. During PY 2020, SCSEP served 124 participants. In spite of the challenges imposed by the pandemic, Alaska SCSEP exceeded all negotiated performance measures.

In partnership with the Alaska Commission on Aging, the department also continued its campaign to "Strengthen Alaska Workforce by Employing the Older Worker" in PY 2020 to raise awareness of the valuable resources older workers provide. This campaign fosters innovative strategies to assist seniors to obtain employable skills and find suitable work in today's job market.

## Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance Benefits				Unemployment Insurance Collections		
Total Benefits Paid	Average Weekly Benefit	Total Number of Recipients	Average Weeks Claimed	Fraud Overpayments	Fraud Penalties	Non-Fraud Overpayments
\$865,738,138.70	\$368	92,665	20.4	\$1,752,824	\$680,954	\$5,535,157
Automated System Claims				Unemployment Claim Center Call Responses		
Weeks Filed 99%				589,780		
Initial Claims 49%						

### PY 2020 Unemployment Insurance Highlights

Business closures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an unprecedented level of unemployment claims during PY 2020. To address the extraordinary number of claims as well as multiple UI programs enacted by Congress and the state legislature, Alaska's UI program hired 245 short-term non-permanent staff during PY 2020, over 400 since the beginning of the pandemic, to process claims and eligibility determinations, and paid over \$865 million in UI benefits to out of work Alaskans. As businesses re-open, the UI program is doubling its efforts with Workforce Services and Development partners to implement strategies to speed unemployment insurance claimants' return to work.

## Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment

The RESEA program launched in January 2016 and continues to be a priority for Alaska. Six regional job centers participate in RESEA, with the UI program as an active partner. After filing their first bi-weekly claim, claimants living in areas with full service job centers, including recently separated veterans and those deemed most likely to exhaust their benefits, are selected. The program connects participants with in-person assessments and re-employment services to reduce long-term unemployment in Alaska's workforce. Participation is mandatory for continued UI eligibility.

In PY 2020, 963 claimants participated in RESEA, significantly fewer than the 2,761 PY 2019 participants due to UI availability waivers related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Toward the end of the fourth quarter, Alaska began increasing selectees required to participate as businesses around the state reopened fully and UI availability waivers no longer applied.

## Registered Apprenticeship

Registered apprenticeship (RA) programs in Alaska have enjoyed steady growth since the creation of its first trade apprenticeship in 1947. In 2015, Alaska received the first of a series of apprenticeship expansion grants which have led to an even greater increase in apprenticeship opportunities, especially in health care, aviation, and construction careers, as more employers have become aware of how apprenticeship can make their businesses more competitive. The department uses a two-tier approach to apprenticeship expansion. Apprenticeship Specialists working in Alaskan Job Centers work with employers to promote apprenticeship and to assist apprentices with the costs of apprenticeship, while the AWIB assists sponsors and intermediaries with funding to expand the infrastructure of apprenticeship, including pre-apprenticeship and multi-employer sponsorship.

In PY 2020, the department continued to work with two of these grants focused on health care. The first is the American Apprenticeship Initiative grant for \$2.9 million, which ends September 30, 2021. This project increases career awareness, strengthens existing career pathways, introduces new career pathways, and helps employers fill entry-level positions in high-demand health care sector occupations. The six year project has added over 680 Registered Apprentices to the Alaskan workforce as of June 2021. The second is a three year, \$1.5 million State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) grant to support the implementation of health care apprenticeships in six occupations – direct service provider, electronic health records technician, community health worker, clinical medical assistant, medical administrative assistant, and medical biller/coder – under the sponsorship of the Alaska Primary Care Association (APCA). While the SAE program ended April 30, 2021, APCA and the AWIB also collaborated in the creation and implementation of a Community Health Worker program funded by Providence Hospital, with apprenticeship related technical instruction supplied by APCA. This pilot project has placed Community Health Workers in four Anchorage neighborhoods, with more planned. APCA has 28 member clinics across the state and as of June 2021, has sponsored approximately 264 registered apprentices with over 20 employers.

In July 2019, the department received a \$1 million Apprenticeship State Expansion award to promote apprenticeship in construction occupations, which ends June 2022. While COVID-19 has limited travel, distance delivery to market apprenticeship to construction employers has continued. This grant also provides funding for technical instruction, tools, and other items required for apprenticeship, leveraged with appropriate WIOA funds. Alaska received a new \$3.99 million apprenticeship expansion grant, State Apprenticeship Expansion, Equity, and Innovation (SAEEI) in June 2021 for promotion of apprenticeship in a wide variety of occupational fields such as; construction, healthcare, IT, mining, and others.

Expanding Registered Apprenticeship opportunities has had significant impact on Alaskan apprentices' earnings. Those who complete an apprenticeship can earn three times more on average than they did the year before they entered apprenticeship. Those participating in an RA program had an average wage of \$52,281, 35% higher than all other workers. As of June 2021, Alaska had approximately 1,950 registered apprentices training in a wide variety of occupations.

## **PY 2020 Monitoring Activities**

### **Federal Employment and Training Administration Monitoring**

In PY 2020, Alaska participated in one federal monitoring process. Staff from the United States Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) conducted a virtual program review of the department's Adult and Family Education unit from May 19-21, 2021. One finding resulted from this monitor, indicating that the department's management information system doesn't meet National Reporting System (NRS) requirement to calculate the denominator of the postsecondary component of the credential indicator based on a participant's enrollment in both adult education and postsecondary education followed by the participant's exit from the postsecondary program. The department demonstrated the corrected system to OCTAE as requested; OCTAE accepted the department's corrective action in August 2021 and closed the finding.

### **State Monitoring**

In PY 2020, AWIB evaluated the activities of 13 WIOA Youth sub-recipients as well as the sub-recipients of the State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE) and American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) grants. DETS evaluated three Trade and Economic Transition National Dislocated Worker Grant subrecipients. The goal was to identify if the sub-recipients were adhering to the vision, strategies, and procedures for their programs as mandated by both the US DOL Employment and Training Administration and the State of Alaska.

The comprehensive reviews ensure sub-recipients are operating in compliance with federal and state laws and regulations; the terms and conditions of their grants; the state's policies and procedures; participant program eligibility; and performance accountability. Monitor guides include questions, reviews, and observations as necessary to ensure staff are following written data validation and source documentation procedures. Appropriate corrective action is spelled out in monitor reports if data

validation procedures are not being followed, and follow-up reviews are conducted to ensure corrective actions are properly implemented. Additionally, staff conducted work experience employer and participant interviews to help identify areas of program strength as best practices as well as those areas in need of improvement.

### Organizations Evaluated in PY 2020

Program	Organization	Date
WIOA Youth	Alaska Seeds of Change	February 11, 2021
	Alaska Primary Care Association	March 12, 2021
	Alaska Vocational Technical Center.	April 23, 2021
	Alaska Works Partnership	March 4, 2021
	Boys & Girls Club	March 11, 2021
	Cook Inlet Tribal Council	January 22, 2021
	Division of Juvenile Justice	May 7, 2021
	EXCEL	January 21, 2021
	Literacy Council	March 25, 2021
	Nine Star Enterprises	April 22, 2021
	Northwest Arctic School District	February 19, 2021
	Southeast Regional Resource Center	May 5, 2021
	Yukon Delta Fisheries Association	April 23, 2021
State Apprenticeship Expansion	Alaska Primary Care Association	March 31, 2021
American Apprenticeship Initiative	Alaska Pioneer Homes	March 30, 2021
	Alaska Primary Care Association	March 25, 2021
Trade and Economic Transition DWG	Alaska Vocational Technical Center	April 19, 2021
	Alaska Works Partnership	May 4, 2021
	Northern Industrial Training	May 17, 2021

## Common Exit Policy

Per department policy [07-539](#), common exit applies to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Wagner Peyser; and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs. Common exit occurs when a participant who is enrolled in two or more applicable programs has met the exit criteria for each program, has not received qualifying participant-level services from any of those programs for at least 90 consecutive days, and has no future qualifying participant-level services planned. The date of exit is automatically determined and applied retroactively to the participant record by the participant information management system based on the completion date of the last qualifying participant-level service.

## Performance Accountability System

<b>PY 2020 Negotiated Performance Levels and Results</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>Adult</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	77.5%	74%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	76.5%	76.8%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$7,700	\$10,679
Credential Attainment Rate	63.5%	63.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	79.0%	83%
<b>Dislocated Worker</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	81.9%	85.4%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	75.0%	84.6%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$10,800	\$11,120
Credential Attainment Rate	63.5%	53.1%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%	88.1%
<b>Youth</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	54.0%	55.8%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	52.0%	55.2%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$2,700	\$3,693
Credential Attainment Rate	50.0%	56.4%
Measurable Skill Gains	66.0%	67.7%
<b>Wagner - Peyser</b>		
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	58.0%	59.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	57.2%	58.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after Exit	\$5,650	\$6,273

Alaska uses performance accountability measures in accordance with the strategic vision and priorities of the department to evaluate the effectiveness of the workforce investment framework and individual core programs, with the goal to ensure participants who exit our systems are work-ready and obtain and retain self-sufficient wages.

Alaska's policy on common exit includes the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance programs; the date of exit is automatically determined and applied retroactively to the participant record by the participant information management system based on the completion date of the last qualifying participant-level service. Data entry quality control is ensured through monitoring, data validation, logical validations, and the use of quarterly report analyses as described in the Data Integrity section of this report and covered in detail in the department's data integrity policy [07-541](#) and procedures.

During PY 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted Alaska's WIOA performance outcomes. For instance, although some training programs were able to convert to online delivery, many requiring in-person attendance were cancelled or postponed. This will continue to impact participant completer data and potentially the over-all performance of training programs. In some cases, participants withdrew from programs to attend to family issues or for their own health reasons. Similarly,

continued widespread business closures resulted in more mass lay-offs, which will impact future employment outcomes.

Alaska met the majority of the negotiated levels of performance in PY 2020 but fell short in the employment 2nd quarter after exit for Adults, and credential rate for Dislocated Workers. Adult exiters likely faced challenges finding work quickly in the constrained environment created by the pandemic. The Dislocated Worker credential attainment rate is impacted by serving a large number of apprentices whose apprenticeships extend beyond the metric's period of performance and who are therefore not achieving an apprenticeship credential during that period of performance. Alaska is analyzing our business practices to better address the unique needs of this population.

## Data Validation Methodology

Alaska implemented Data Integrity policy 07-541 in accordance with TEGl 7-18 and TEGl 23-19 to cover data integrity, logical validations, standard data validation, monitoring, and the use of quarterly report analyses (QRAs) to ensure data is valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across programs. The policy is supplemented with data integrity procedures.

Data validation is conducted quarterly, concluding by mid-September prior to certification of annual performance reporting, with records selected to ensure that all organizations' records are sampled and validated each year. An annual assessment of the data validation process is conducted within 90 days of the conclusion of fourth-quarter data validation. Revisions to the data validation policy and procedures are considered based on error rates, trends in data accuracy, and identification of issues during monitors.

TEGL 23-19 Attachment II is used without modification for allowable source documentation. Sample sizes are based on readily available population proportion sample size calculators using a 95% confidence level, a 50% population proportion, and a 15% confidence interval. The sampling frame consists of program participants enrolled during the previous 24 months and, if exited, exited during the previous 18 months. Participants are selected using stratified probability sampling, with 75% active and 25% exited participants selected.

Failure scores are assigned to each data element as follows:  $DE\ Failure\ Score = \frac{Count\ of\ DE\ Failures}{Records\ including\ DE} \times \frac{Count\ of\ DE\ Failures}{Total\ Errors}$ . This method prevents an element with a high failure rate but low frequency from appearing to have more impact than an element with a lower failure rate but high frequency. A threshold of 5 is set for highest scrutiny, but all failures are reviewed for process improvement. Validation worksheets identifying failed data elements are sent to case managers. All errors are corrected, and error correction documentation is returned within 30 days of receipt of the validation worksheets. The validation worksheet and error correction documentation including the end result of the correction; steps taken to correct the error; a determination of why the error occurred; and the steps that will be taken to preclude the error from occurring again, are attached to the participant file.

Case managers and staff associated with data entry or validation are provided annual refresher training that includes an overview of validation results and corrective actions from the previous program year, identification of trends, a summary of the effectiveness assessment, an explanation of any changes to the data validation policy or procedures, and a reinforcement of the importance of their roles in ensuring valid, reliable data. An analysis of records managed by each case manager is reviewed for trends that are unique to that case manager. Policy and procedure changes are included in the annual refresher training, as is case manager feedback. Procedures are reviewed to ensure the case manager has the necessary resources for case management. Process changes made as a result of the annual refresher training are shared as quickly as possible and included in future training.

The following are maintained in accordance with the department's records retention schedules: electronic copies of data validation records, including frozen quarterly wage records; records of errors, missing data, and other anomalies, along with associated correction documentation; records identifying error rates and trends in common data accuracy issues; records of corrective actions taken; and records of individualized and system-wide training.

Data integrity reviews consist of local QRA calculations (monthly); comparing local results to the ETA QRA results (quarterly); analysis of local results and QRA results by program managers for alignment with internal expectations and ETA-established targets (monthly); evaluation by data analysts and program managers of feedback provided by ETA (as received); and routine evaluation by management and case managers of participant information for alignment with expectations.

## **Title IV – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

Partnering with other WIOA programs, school districts, and tribal vocational rehabilitation programs, the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides career services, training services, other supportive services, and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to Alaskans who experience disabilities and want to work. DVR services are also collocated in four job centers to better identify potential referrals and coordinate resources available for co-enrolled participants, thus creating a seamless system that allows for an individual to leverage multi-program resources. Additionally, DVR leadership continues to work closely with WIOA partners to carry out department priorities and initiatives such as At-Risk Youth, Senior Employment, and Re-entry Coalitions.

In PY 2020, 606 individuals applied for services and 1,785 individuals received services under the VR program. DVR also provided Pre-ETS to 543 students with disabilities. The majority of individuals served by DVR experienced cognitive impairment (34%) as their primary disability, followed by psychosocial impairment (30%), physical and orthopedic impairment (22%), and blind/deaf/communicative impairment (15%). Employment numbers were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Although DVR was only able to assist 251 in obtaining employment, the average hourly wage of those employed increased to \$16.16 per hour. DVR also provided employer services to 182 unique employers.

## Effectiveness in Serving Employers

For PY 2020, Alaska continued to use the Retention Rate (*how many workers continue to work for the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit*) and Penetration Rate (*how many employers being served compared to how many employers are in the state*) as measures for determining Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Alaska includes data from the Division of Vocational rehabilitation and WIOA Titles I, II, and III for these rates.

**The Retention Rate** is intended to indicate how well Alaska matches job seekers to employers, and is determined by aligning core program data with wage information. Factors that influence the Retention Rate include Alaska’s economic climate, the high rate of seasonal and transitional workers, challenges stemming from geographical barriers, and one of the highest ratios of nonresident to resident workers in the nation.

	PY 2019	PY 2020
Retention Rate	64%	61%
Penetration Rate	19%	15%

Additional factors in PY 2020 include a population decrease and a heavily-impacted economy during the entire year due to COVID-19. Notably, recruitment services only dropped by 483 from PY 2019 despite temporary or permanent business closures and reductions in staffing needs due to the pandemic. Additionally, the Retention Rate only dropped by three percent from the previous year. This demonstrates the outstanding work Alaska, especially Alaska Job Center staff, continued to perform during the pandemic when matching qualified applicants with hiring employers.

**The Penetration Rate** continued to illustrate a marginalized economy and significantly lower number of recruitments by Alaska employers. Although the Penetration Rate was four percent lower than that of PY 2019, the fact that it did not drop lower during the pandemic reflects the continued diligence and hard work of Alaska program staff in establishing and maintaining long-term business relationships with Alaska employers. Once the pandemic abates, the rate is expected to increase as Alaska begins to resume pre-pandemic levels of business and job center staff can focus on the whole array of comprehensive services to employers.

As reflected in PY 2019 data, PY 2020 data confirmed that over 95 percent of employer services were provided under the Wagner-Peyser program, primarily in the Workforce Recruitment Assistance and Employer Information and Support Services categories. The remaining 5 percent was shared by the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth programs; Adult Basic Education; and Vocational Rehabilitation. Charted data reflect nearly 50,000 statewide job losses in the reporting period, largely due to COVID-19. Industries tied to tourism and the areas that rely on it saw the biggest declines in 2020, but new hires fell in nearly every part of the state and in every industry except state government. The state hired additional temporary staff to respond to the pandemic.

## Customer Satisfaction

Alaska measures participant customer satisfaction quarterly by requesting exited WIOA Title I program participants to complete a survey administered through Survey Monkey, with a series of reminders to encourage a maximum rate of return. The participant survey contains eight questions broken into two parts: satisfaction with employment services, including assessments and support services; and satisfaction with training services. Participants are encouraged to submit additional feedback and provide ideas for improvements to the program. The table below reflects cumulative responses to individual survey questions to derive overall satisfaction rates.

### Customer Satisfaction Survey – Individual Question Response Trends

Program Year	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Neutral	Total Response Count	Satisfied excluding neutral response	Satisfied rate with neutral response
2017	652	114	185	951	68.6%	88.0%
2018	1563	85	238	1887	82.8%	95.0%
2019	651	105	110	866	75%	87.9%
2020	1157	65	87	1309	88.4%	95%
<b>Training Satisfaction Rate</b>						
2017	385	56	127	568	67.8%	90.1%
2018	928	44	161	1133	81.9%	96.1%
2019	437	61	76	574	76%	89.3%
2020	468	27	24	519	90.2%	94.8%
<b>Employment Services Satisfaction Rate</b>						
2017	267	58	58	383	69.7%	84.9%
2018	630	25	78	750	84.0%	94.4%
D2019	292	44	44	380	76.8%	88.4%
2020	689	38	63	790	87.2%	95.2%

Of the 1,192 participants invited to take the survey during PY 2020, 173 participants responded, a 14.5 percent response rate and an increase over previous years. The department saw a 13 percent increase in overall satisfaction from the previous year.

Alaska reintroduced employer satisfaction surveys during PY 2020 to establish baseline results. Employer satisfaction is measured similarly, using a survey containing five questions related to job orders plus optional additional feedback. The overall employer satisfaction rate for employers that were assisted by job center staff in placing job orders was 83.8 percent. Of the 1,653 invited to take the survey, 288 employers responded for a 17.4 percent response rate.

Measuring customer satisfaction allows the state to better understand the effectiveness of statewide service delivery. Survey results are presented to the AWIB, Alaska State Legislature, DETS program managers, and job center staff to improve services to better meet the needs of businesses and job seekers.

Please see [Appendix II](#) for participant and employer survey results by question.

## Alaska's Evaluation Projects and Products

As described above, Alaska reviews information and data to evaluate the performance of WIOA programs and assess areas identified for improvement. These measures include quarterly and annual reviews of overall program performance, annual monitoring and data validation of job centers and sub-recipients, measuring effectiveness in serving employers, conducting Wagner Peyser self-appraisal reviews, engaging participants through customer satisfaction surveys, and actively participating and learning from federal monitor reviews.

With a portion of statewide funds set aside by the Governor, DETS and AWIB, through its Assessment & Evaluation committee, partner with the department's Research and Analysis unit, other Labor divisions, national, state and local agencies, trade unions and organizations, training providers, and other non-profit and private entities around the state to evaluate WIOA program performance via a variety of products and projects. The Research and Analysis unit (R & A) collects national, state, and local data in addition to working with WIOA program leaders and partners to conduct and publish longitudinal studies regarding Alaska's demography and economy as they relate to the workforce, to ensure that the state is on a continuous path of improvement and excellence in providing targeted training and support to the state's employers and job seekers.

R & A's Occupational Database and other proprietary information systems providing participant data and rich labor market information create a platform for deep, long-term evaluation of workforce programs. Examples of work from PY 2020 include worker residency analysis, new hires/hiring patterns analysis, Technical and Vocational Education Program (TVEP) evaluation, the Training Program Performance Report, COVID-19 impact analysis, gender wage gap analysis, unemployment insurance claimant analysis, and labor market analysis for other special topics. For a list of highlights of R & A's PY 2020 evaluation projects and products including links, see [Appendix III](#).

### Quality Pre-Apprenticeship

During PY 2018, training provider Alaska Works Partnership worked with the Federal Office of Apprenticeship, the state's apprenticeship program, the DETS TET DWG program, and construction trade unions and employers to develop the state's first [seven construction Quality Pre-Apprenticeship \(QPA\) framework courses](#), per [policy 07-525](#). After federal approval, training delivery began in PY 2019, with five more constructions QPAs under development in PY 2020. During PY 2020, DETS laid groundwork to evaluate the effectiveness of QPA training as more participants complete the courses and gain indenture or employment. During PY 2021 through 2023, DETS will combine forces with AWP and R & A, as well as consult with state and federal offices, apprenticeship providers, employers, and participants to gauge satisfaction with the QPA framework, as well as compare the rate of indenture, employment and wage outcomes of QPA completers with other types of construction training from providers across the state including programs leading to NCCER credentials. The results of this study will inform further development and use of the QPA framework in construction and other trades in Alaska.

## **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment**

Alaska initiated RESEA evaluation according to the requirements of TEGL 06-19 to conduct evidence based analysis to determine and deploy optimal interventions and service delivery during PY 2020. The DETS RESEA Coordinator worked with the division's Unemployment Insurance office and with R & A as the third party evaluator to establish elements for evaluation including:

- The number of benefit weeks claimed by RESEA claimants compared to non-RESEA claimants
- The amount of dollars spent against the UI Trust Fund claimed by RESEA claimants compared to non-RESEA claimants
- Employment rate in the second quarter after completing participation requirements
- Employment Retention in the fourth quarter after completing participation requirements

RESEA evaluation will continue through PY 2021 and beyond.

## **JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store**

In PY 2018, Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) and school district staff began working with DVR to [evaluate the effectiveness of JOBZ Club and S'Cool Store](#) in increasing graduation rates and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities. As PY 2018 was the first year of collecting data at the student level, this has been an on-going evaluation. DVR will also be providing data to Alaska DEED on employers who provide opportunities for high school students with disabilities. DVR has been extremely successful in providing statewide services to transition age students in urban, rural, and remote locations. This has been accomplished through partnerships with school districts, specialized Pre-Employment Transition Services Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs), and other organizations that assist with coordinating transportation and enrollment.

## **Federal Evaluations – National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grant**

During PY 2020, the US DOL and Social Policy Research Associates (SPRA) partnered to conduct virtual site visits for evaluation of Alaska's National Health Emergency (Opioid) Dislocated Worker Grant program. All grantees were interviewed to determine grantees' experiences, challenges, and successes. The Alaska NHE Coordinator's interview took place in December 2020.

In April 2021, evaluators from the Chief Evaluation Office at the Department of Labor shared preliminary information and lessons learned during their site visits and evaluations of the grants over the past year. Participants of the webinar included grantees, sub-grantees, and regional Federal Project Officers (FPOs).

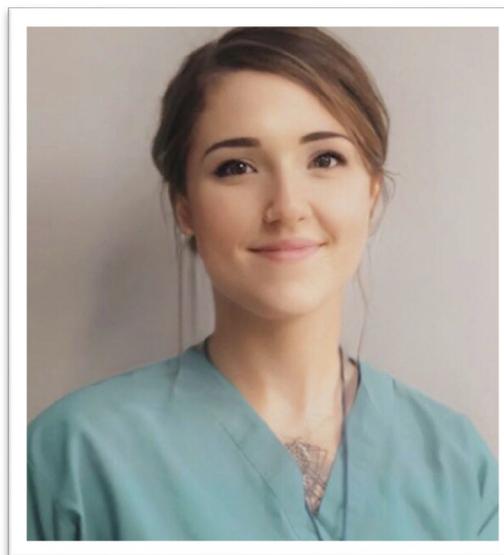
## Appendices

### Appendix I – Alaska’s Success Stories

#### WIOA Adult Program

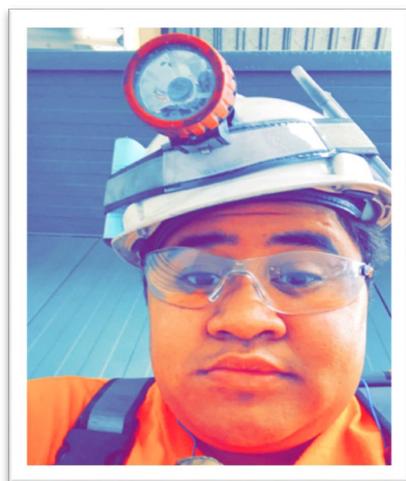
##### Helping Dreams Come True for an Alaskan Family

Deva is married, with one child, was living in a cabin without running water, and working without benefits three days per week as a per diem Certified Nurses Aide. She wanted to make a sustainable wage to support her family and improve her living situation, and came to Career Support and Training Services looking for assistance to help obtain her long time career dream of becoming a Radiologic Technologist. She was one of the two candidates accepted into the Radiologic Technologist program at Kachemak Bay campus through University of Alaska Anchorage.



Deva was determined eligible and suitable for the WIOA Adult program funds for books, fees, and rent during school. The State Training Employment Program grant funding was utilized for her final year of tuition. Deva successfully completed the two year training program, graduated Cum Laude, and is now employed by South Peninsula Hospital, making an hourly wage of \$33.80 with benefits.

##### Certification Leads to Success for a Non-Traditional Worker



Titiula “Ula” Nauer had been working two full time jobs, one at Home Depot and the other with Aero Fuel delivery, to support her family. She had a conditional job offer from HECLA Mining Company requiring Mining and Petroleum Training Service (MAPTS) certification in order to be able to begin work as an Underground Miner and earn a family-sustaining wage. Ula came to the Juneau Job Center, where she was determined to be eligible and suitable for WIOA Adult funds to cover her costs for the four week certification training program, room and board, supplies, fees, and necessary gear to work in an underground environment. She excelled in the training program and began her new job shortly after completion of the program on May 29, 2021, earning \$23.25 per hour with full benefits. Ula, a female working in a typically male

dominated occupation, is a non-traditional worker who enjoys her new job.

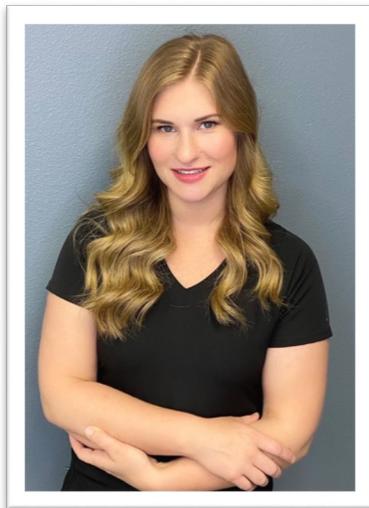
## WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

### Overcoming Challenges

Connie had been working in the tourism industry as a bus driver for Holland America in Skagway, earning \$10.25 per hour, when she was laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She was offered a seasonal truck driving position in Valdez with starting pay of \$27.75 per hour, conditioned on her obtaining a CDL-A with HAZMAT endorsement. She contacted her local job center to apply for assistance to pay for CDL training in order to accept her new position. Connie drove from Skagway to Kenai in her conversion van, which supplied a home during training. Dislocated Worker funds covered her training costs for the 24-hour CDL-A training at Kenai Peninsula Driving Instruction in Kenai, as well as vehicle repairs, meals, work gear and licensing fees. She excelled in the training program and began her new job shortly after completion of the program on July 11, 2020. She worked the season with Samson Tug and Barge, and then got a full time, year round job with Delta Transport Services, earning \$24.00 per hour plus benefits. Connie is considered a non-traditional worker since this type of work is typically performed by males. She has been overcoming the challenges of being one of the few females in her position and is enjoying her new job.



### Coordination Leads to Success



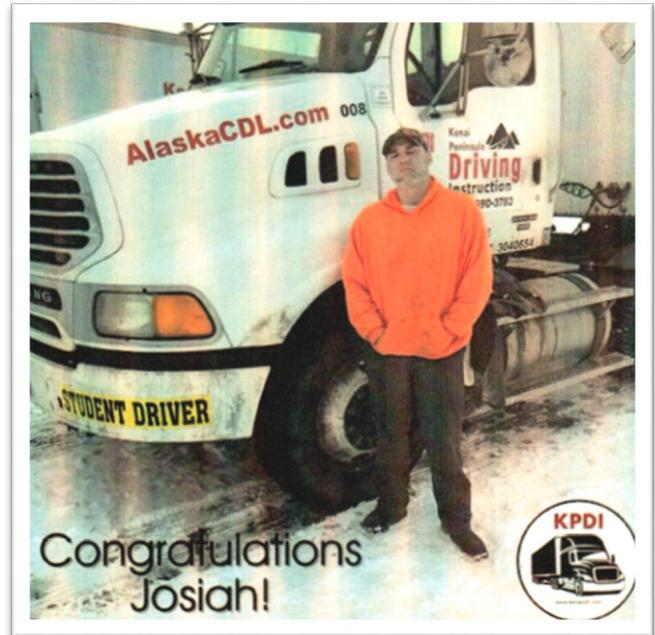
Dislocated worker Mary Kate was referred to Career Support and Training Services (CSTS) by her Division of Public Assistance (DPA) case manager. Initial assessment identified several barriers to employment including transportation problems, child care needs, single parent status, and receipt of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Mary Kate had identified Massage Therapy as her career goal and used the services provided by DPA, CSTS and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to complete her occupational training after unsuccessful past attempts. She graduated from Alaska Career College, obtained her professional license for massage therapy, and started her full time position as a Massage Therapist with Altair Integrative Wellness Inc. Her starting wage is \$45 per massage and \$15 per hour for office duties.

## WIOA National Dislocated Worker Grants

### National Health Emergency Dislocated Worker Grant (NHE DWG)

#### Partnership and Co-enrollment Help a Reentering Veteran Reach His Goals

Josiah was a reentering veteran when he came to CSTS. DVR and CSTS partnered to help Josiah obtain a CDL-A to expand his employment opportunities. Josiah received NHE, Adult, and Dislocated Worker funding for his CDL-A training tuition, fees, licensing fee, housing, meals, and transportation. Josiah successfully completed his training and gained employment as a Fuel Truck Driver earning \$32.00 per hour. Josiah now works a rotational schedule with 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off, 84 hours per week, which gives him a considerable amount of overtime.



#### Testimony from Police Chief Timothy Putney, Kodiak Police Department, after NHE DWG funded “Trauma Responsive Community” training for officers and community members:

The Kodiak Summit Community Coalition has worked for the last five years to build connections and bridge gaps in Kodiak across behavioral health services with an emphasis on substance use disorders. Through an NHE Opioid grant awarded to the Kodiak Police Department, the community was able to host training conducted by Hazeleden/Betty Ford. The first training event “Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Recovery” was held in Kodiak on February 25, 2020. The second training event “Trauma Responsive Community” was previously scheduled for April 2020, but due to Covid-19 it was put on hold. The second event was finally rescheduled as an in-person event and held June 8-10, 2021.

In part, the mission of the Kodiak Police Department is to ensure safety through leading and coordinating efforts within the community. It only made sense to get involved with the Kodiak Community Coalition to further collaboration and cooperation between the criminal justice system, healthcare providers, school district, and other concerned citizen groups. Police officers, corrections officers, and public safety dispatchers all benefited from attending this training alongside healthcare professionals and other community members. One of the specific

goals of this training was to engage decision makers and organizational leaders so real change could be instituted at the policy level. We are excited to see where the new energy gleaned from these training events will take the community.

The Summit has a saying: “If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.”

Tim

Timothy Putney  
Chief of Police  
Kodiak Police Department

### Trade and Economic Transition Dislocated Worker Grant (TET DWG)

#### Alaska Works Partnership, Inc. Construction Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Framework



Dislocated worker Misa applied to the Ironworker’s Apprenticeship program in September 2020. They recommended he take Alaska Works Partnership's Trades Basic Ironwork & Welding Quality Pre-Apprenticeship training to gain more experience. After completing training, he interviewed again and was ranked #1 on the list to be accepted after successful testing in June. Misa passed the test, was accepted into the Ironworkers apprenticeship program, and started 1st year training.



Playing on the metal beams.

Getting ready to climb the beam!

## WIOA Youth Program

### Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association Youth Employment Project (YEP)

Subsidized by WIOA Youth grant funds, the YEP provides work experience, high school completion, supportive services, and post-secondary education and employment placement to youth in six villages in Alaska's Yukon Delta region. Work experience training centers around fishery related occupations and occupations in support of fishery activities. The YEP has become a vital asset to community stability and local workforce development, continuing to grow through innovation and community support:

#### Green Innovation



Yukon Delta's Kwik'pak Fisheries, the only commercial fish processor on the Yukon, sells salmon around the world. After the Delta's primary salmon species started dwindling to record lows last year, Kwik'pak had to pivot to stay afloat. With support of the AWIB, the fishery successfully applied for Rasmussen Foundation grant funding to construct food stability greenhouses. If the community couldn't catch food, they could grow it.



The greenhouses enabled the project to provide work experience opportunities for WIOA youth, and produce for community members. The successful implementation of the project was made possible by subsidized youth workers supporting their community while gaining vital employment skills and experience.



#### Community Member Testimonial

“The youth program has positively impacted our community by engaging our youth with employment experience and skills necessary for academic and professional success. It helped reduce teen crime in our village. I've noticed a positive change in our youth with this program and I hope it continues throughout the coming years. It has definitely sparked an interest in employment for our youth.”

Darlene M. Pete, Nunam Iqua, Alaska

## Alaska's Veterans' Program

### Todd's Story

After 14 years of employment, Air Force veteran Todd was laid off from Ravn Air due to COVID-19. Upon entry to the JVSG program, he worked one-on-one with a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist. He received assistance with career planning, resume writing, labor market information, and interviewing skills.

Todd was actively engaged in completing his career goals and accessing resources. He has accepted a full-time position with Everts Air Cargo as an AP Mechanic in Palmer, AK at \$30 an hour, with benefits.



### Rick's Story

Army veteran Rick joined the DVOP program after being contacted by a DVOP as a result of "cold calling" during the COVID-19 pandemic. Rick qualified for the program through a service connected disability. He was previously working in engineering for a telecommunications company but was laid off from his employer in September 2019. Rick is also a private pilot, and decided to pursue a career change and obtain his commercial pilot license and private pilot instructor license while still on severance pay. He was in the middle of schooling when the pandemic shut down a large portion of the aviation industry.

Given the uncertain future of his new career, and that it had been many years since he had written a resume or interviewed for a job, Rick decided to participate in the DVOP program to prepare him for obtaining employment in either aviation or to return to his previous career field in telecommunications. Rick was able to obtain his commercial pilot license, however the aviation industry remained unstable and uncertain during the pandemic. He decided to return to employment in telecommunications. Through his hard work and diligence in pursuit of employment, Rick obtained a position as a System Engineer 4 with GCI earning \$62.50 an hour.

# Alaska's Apprenticeship Program



★ *Working Together For Jobs*

## ALASKA WORKS PARTNERSHIP

Construction Education & Training

alaskaworks.org

### Career Success Matthew Voshell



Transitioning from Army service after 16 years, Matthew Voshell began searching for a new career. Spending the last few years as a Senior Leadership Development Instructor, Matt was already experienced with taking on tasks that needed development into a finished product; the future leaders of tomorrow's Army. Learning of Alaska Works Partnership through the SFL-TAP program, Matt began attending Alaska Works Partnership with an open mind and a natural lean toward the carpentry trade. Matt completed a two-week training in Building Maintenance, covering a multitude of tasks, including framing with metal studs and sheetrock work. This confirmed Matt's love for and desire to work in carpentry. Matt returned to Alaska Works to complete his Quality Pre-Apprenticeship with Power Tools and First Aid certifications. With these training opportunities freshly under his belt, Matt applied to the Carpenters' apprenticeship program and was accepted on the spot. Training began in Spring 2021.



Alaska Works Partnership's programs are funded by grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The following Alaska Works programs are 100% federally: TET DWG, WIOA Youth, and WIA SWP Adult. They are currently: 50%, 30%, and 20% of the awarded amounts to AWP. The following Alaska Works Programs are 100% State funded: Construction Academies, and STEP Women in the Trades. They are currently: 70%, and 30%, of awarded amounts to AWP. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.



# Alaska's Helmets to Hardhats Program



## Caleb Burton Career Success



Caleb Burton was a U.S. military infantryman, set to transition back into civilian life in early 2021. He learned about Alaska Works Partnership through our Helmets to Hardhats program. He had his sights set on finding a career as a mechanic. Caleb was selected to participate in Alaska Works Partnership's Heavy Duty Mechanics training with the Alaska Operating Engineers in August of 2020; he excelled in the training, and applied to the apprenticeship program. Caleb was accepted into the Alaska Operating Engineers' apprenticeship program as a heavy duty mechanic in November of 2020.

Alaska Works Partnership's programs are funded by grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, and the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The following Alaska Works programs are 100% federally: TET DWG, WIOA Youth, and WIA SWP Adult. They are currently: 50%, 30%, and 20% of the awarded amounts to AWP. The following Alaska Works Programs are 100% State funded: Construction Academies, and STEP Women in the Trades. They are currently: 70%, and 30%, of awarded amounts to AWP. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.



## Appendix II – PY 2020 Customer Satisfaction Surveys by Question

### Participant Survey Questions

Survey Question	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
<i>Service related questions</i>			
Satisfied with the overall services I received	90.8%	3.4%	5.8%
The services met my expectations	90.2%	5.2%	4.6%
The services provided were ideal for my needs	89.6%	5.2%	5.2%
<i>Training related questions</i>			
Overall, the training met expectations	88.6%	8.2%	3.2%
The amount of training time was adequate	86.1%	8.8%	5.1%
I received adequate support from the training organization	86.1%	8.2%	5.7%
I'm confident the training will increase my employability	88.6%	7%	4.4%
Would recommend this training to others	86.7%	7.6%	5.7%

### Employer Survey Questions

Survey Question	YES	NO	Agree	No opinion	Disagree
Did you receive assistance from an Alaska Job Center staff member in placing one or more job orders between 7/1/2020 and 6/30/2021?	156	132	N/A	N/A	N/A
I am satisfied with the overall support from the Alaska Job Center in assisting me with placing my job order.	N/A	N/A	84.1%	9.7%	6.2%
I am satisfied with the responsiveness of the Alaska Job Center when there is a need to post a job order for my business.	N/A	N/A	84%	11%	5%
Alaska Job Center staff are knowledgeable about AlaskaJobs and the process of placing job orders.	N/A	N/A	85.5%	12.4%	2.1%
Alaska Job Center staff are friendly and approachable.	N/A	N/A	93.8%	5.5%	0.7%
I am satisfied with the overall function and features of AlaskaJobs for placing job orders and reviewing applicants.	N/A	N/A	71.5%	14.6%	13.9%

## Appendix III – PY 2020 Research and Analysis Evaluations Products Highlights

### *Training Program Performance Report*

[https://awib.alaska.gov/2019\\_TPRR.pdf](https://awib.alaska.gov/2019_TPRR.pdf)

The TPRR report details the employment and earnings for participants of several WIOA training programs in Alaska. These include adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs, to name just a few. R&A uses ODB data to compare trainees' occupations and earnings the year before training to the year after. This comparison is mandated by Alaska Statute 23.15.580, which requires the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development to evaluate state employment-related training programs. The employment and wage outcomes R&A produces are delivered to the Alaska Workforce Investment Board each year and the outcomes are intended to guide training program development and workforce needs.

### *Technical and Vocational Education Program Report*

[https://awib.alaska.gov/PDFs/TVEP\\_SF2020.pdf](https://awib.alaska.gov/PDFs/TVEP_SF2020.pdf)

The Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP), established by legislation in 2000, distributes training funds to technical and vocational education entities across Alaska's six economic regions. TVEP funds come from a percentage of employee unemployment insurance contributions, allocated to specific institutions per AS 23.15.835. R&A produces employment and wage outcomes for TVEP program participants and helps develop the annual report.

### *Nonresidents Working in Alaska Report*

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/reshire/nonres.pdf>

It's critical to prepare Alaska workers for occupations and specialties with high rates of nonresident hire. Nonresidents Working in Alaska examines the industries, occupations, and regions with high percentages of nonresident workers. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board and other policymakers use this information to identify where to develop training programs that will prepare more Alaskans for high-paying jobs.

### *New Hires Analysis*

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/jun21art3.pdf>

R&A publishes regular analyses on new hires and hiring patterns in the state. For this purpose, we define new hires as people who did not work for their current employer in any of the four previous quarters. The data does not differentiate between openings created by new positions and those resulting from workers vacating existing positions.

By looking at new hires, we can identify hiring trends and quantify the state's job opportunities. New hires can suggest an industry is expanding, but they can also indicate high turnover.

Our recently published work on the topic examined how the pandemic changed Alaska’s typical hiring patterns and identified the industries actively hiring.

### ***Gender Wage Gap Analysis***

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/apr21art1.pdf>

R&A periodically analyzes wage differences between men and women. The most recent study, published in April 2021, detailed how the Alaska recession of 2015 to 2018 affected working men and women differently.

### ***Analyses of Unemployment Insurance Claimants***

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/may21art3.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/aug20art2.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/jun21art4.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/feb21art2.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/may20art3.pdf>

During the pandemic, claims for unemployment insurance benefits in Alaska reached unprecedented heights. To better understand the impacts of the elevated claims load and educate policymakers, R&A published several analyses of claims patterns and the structure and health of the UI system.

### ***Special Labor Market Topics***

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/sep21art3.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/feb21art1.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/apr20art1.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/may21art2.pdf>

<https://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/trends/split/dec20art1.pdf>

R&A published multiple articles over the past year on the pandemic and its effects on the economy and labor market, ranging from impacts on specific industries to shifts in broad employment trends.