

Chautauqua

Local Plan

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029

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Strategic Planning Elements

Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) in-demand occupation lists are now maintained on the Labor Market Information for Workforce Planning [webpage](#) under the **Occupations in Demand** section. To submit an updated in-demand occupation list, LWDBs must utilize **Attachment A: In-Demand Occupation List Template**, update the spreadsheet, and submit it to LWDB@labor.ny.gov. The list will then be added to the corresponding region's in-demand occupation list on this webpage.

I attest that the list of the LWDA's in-demand occupations was last updated on [specify date in the text box below].

10/20/2023

How is this information shared with the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)? What was the last date on which it was shared?

The Board reviews the proposed Demand Occupation List and votes to approve or disapprove the proposed Demand Occupation List. The Demand Occupation List is available on our website. Our Demand Occupation List is reviewed and proposed/shared every 18-24 months. It was last shared for approval on 10/20/2023. The next review of the Demand Occupation List is planned for September 2025.

a. Provide an analysis of regional economic conditions, including:

i. Existing and emerging in-demand sectors and occupations; and

The regional economy has been expanding since 2021 following the unprecedented workforce and economic conditions during and immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic. While the number of jobs has increased, the number of available workers in the labor force has declined. An aging, declining labor force combined with increasing demand for labor, particularly in the advanced manufacturing, health services, logistics and leisure and hospitality sectors has created shortages of workers across most occupations. These sectors have been targeted by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council's long term strategy through exhaustive analysis. In collaboration with the Department of Labor's Western New York labor market analyst, the regional demand list was compiled to support these sectors. Part of the overall goals of the regional strategy was to create opportunities for and increase labor for participation rates of segments of the population that have been under represented in the past. Balancing the skills and abilities of the available labor force with the needs of businesses in these sectors requires a diverse approach. Everything from soft skill training, mathematical competency, to highly specialized technical training is currently in demand.

To list a few examples, advanced manufacturing is experiencing growth in Chautauqua County specifically as a result of substantial investment in current manufacturing businesses (ex: Cummins Engine, Wells) as well as the addition of

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new manufacturing businesses (ex: ElectroVaya). Additionally, opportunities exist across the skilled trades and production occupations due to the rapidly aging workforce and the large construction projects in the region (ex: Buffalo Bills Stadium). Recently, the president of the local UAW stated that 80 percent of the skilled trades at his plant could retire today. A similar situation exists among skilled tradesmen in the construction sector.

The health services sector's growth is being fueled by the aging of the population as well, but in a different respect. As people age, they require more health care so demand increases. These demographic changes also affect the labor force of the sector. Growth and replacement needs within this sector will remain high for the foreseeable future. Demand for every occupation from home health aide to radiologists will increase.

Over 50 million people live within a few hours' drive time of Western New York making the region highly desirable as a logistics hub. Many companies already operate large warehouse and distribution centers in the region and the addition of the Amazon Sortation Center will only increase demand for labor by this sector. In Chautauqua County, we are seeing growth in the following sectors: Healthcare-RN,LPN,NP,HHA,PCA,CNA; Advanced Manufacturing-Maintenance Mechanics, Machinists, Supervisors, Welders, Assembly; Hospitality and Tourism-Customer Service Reps, Marketing Manager, Marketing Analysts & Specialists, HR Manager, HR Specialists; Transportation-CDL-A drivers, CDL-B drivers; Skilled Trades; Finance and Accounting-Personal Financial Advisors, Accountants & Auditors, Financial Specialists; Computer-Computer Software Engineers, Network & Computer System Administrators, Computer Programmers; Human Services; Engineers; Child Care Workers. Our Demand Occupation List is in line with these growth areas.

ii. The employment needs of businesses in those sectors and occupations.

The employment needs of businesses in those sectors vary based on time of year, contract obtainment, retention, etc. Employment opportunities in all areas referenced above are posted on a regular basis which is the reason for them being on the Demand Occupation List. When reviewing the Demand Occupation List, the Workforce Development Board's Training Committee is provided statistical analysis by the NYSDOL Labor Market Analyst and real time feedback regarding open jobs unfilled due to a lack of trained job seekers by local American Job Center staff. The Committee members review and discuss the information provided to ensure that the proposed Demand Occupation List is meeting the employment needs of the local community.

b. Describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to meet the employment needs of businesses, including those in in-demand sectors and those employing individuals in in-demand occupations.

For many employment opportunities, a minimum of a high school diploma or high school equivalency is required. For health care, the required certification or license is required

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for each position listed above. For advanced manufacturing, the required certification for positions listed is needed and in many cases some experience. For hospitality and tourism, many customer service positions require a HS diploma or HS equivalency, however many management and supervisory positions require an associate degree. For transportation, the required license is needed. For skilled trades, the required certification is needed and in many cases some experience or acceptance into an apprenticeship program. For finance and accounting, any required certifications are needed and in many cases an associate or bachelor's degree. For computer-related positions, any required certifications are needed and in many cases an associate or bachelor's degree. For human services, an associate or bachelor's degree. For engineers, an associate or bachelor's degree. For child care workers, a HS diploma or HS equivalency, any required certifications and/or experience.

The region has been experiencing rapid growth in the leisure and hospitality sector. Most occupations in this sector do not require educational attainment beyond high school and can provide excellent advancement opportunities. These positions require a high degree of soft/success skills in order to be successful

c. Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including:

i. Current labor force employment and unemployment numbers;

In Chautauqua County, as of April 2025, the unemployment rate stood at 3.6%, the number of employed was 50,000, and the number of unemployed was 1,900.

In the Western New York (WNY) Region, the number of employed increased from 637,100 in April 2024 to 642,100 in April 2025. This was an increase of 5,000 or 0.8%. The number of unemployed decreased from 24,000 in April 2024 to 22,200 in April 2025. A decrease of 1,800 or 7.5%.

ii. Information on any trends in the labor market; and

Private sector jobs in the Western New York region rose over the year by 200, or 0.0 percent, to 534,800 in April 2025. Job growth was centered in private education and health services (+2,100), professional and business services (+700), mining, logging and construction (+300), trade, transportation and utilities (+200), and other services (+100). Losses were greatest in manufacturing (-1,500), leisure and hospitality (-1,000), financial activities (-500) and information (-200). Government sector jobs increased by (+3,000) over the year.

The shortage of labor in the WNY Region has limited some businesses' ability to grow and expand. Which has, in turn, stunted economic growth to a degree in some industries. The shortage is acute in the in-demand occupations and sectors. which usually have high turnover ratios.

iii. Educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

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Educational Attainment: Chautauqua County (2023, 1-years estimates) (Population 25 years and older): No high school or equivalent degree: 11.1%; High school or equivalent degree: 32.7%; Some college, no degree: 16.0%; Associate degree: 15.7%; Bachelor's degree: 12.9%; and Graduate or professional degree: 11.6%

In Chautauqua County, the percentage of the population that lives in poverty stands at 16.9% in 2023. A breakdown by age group shows that people under 18 are at 24.1%, for the 18 to 64 group it is 16.3%, and those 65 and over it is 11.8%.

- d. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region.
- i. Identify strengths and weaknesses of these workforce development activities.

We have many excellent training providers in our area who provide a wide array of training programs from HS equivalency, ESL, certificates, licenses, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees in all of the identified Demand Occupations. Our training providers are open to feedback when additional training needs are identified. Training providers and their programs are viewed as high quality and effective. Due to our large geographic area and limited transportation, some training provider locations are not easily accessible for individuals without reliable transportation. A need for local (less than an hour away) electrician training has been identified and local training providers are working on developing and providing such trainings. Success skills (soft skills) continue to be identified by businesses as their greatest need. All training providers are aware of this information and have incorporated success skills components in all of their training programs. Additional resources to support training in Demand Occupations is vital to the continued development of a skilled and prepared workforce. Additionally, funding and funding flexibility is forecasted as critical in assisting businesses in training incumbent workers in the high skilled areas where pending retirements are looming without succession planning training completion due to the cost. A new program was developed and implemented as a result of the critical need for success skills: Goodskills Career Builder provided by Goodwill of Western New York. Goodwill developed this program in collaboration with other partner members of the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Coalition. The Chautauqua WDB is also an active member of the WNY Manufacturing and Tech Coalition. Through this membership and partnership, the Chautauqua WDB in partnership with the Catt-Allegany WDB successfully secured funding from Empire State Development and the Ralph C Wilson Jr Foundation to implement a Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program. This 2-year Program just passed its 6-month point. Through this Program, more than 200 businesses have been engaged, more than 20 participants have been enrolled and have either started training or are in the process of starting training, and more than 20 training provider representatives have been engaged with this work. The Program staff work in collaboration with the American Job Center staff ensuring seamless service delivery, effective braiding of funding, and efficient access to all available services.

We align our initiatives and strategies with the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council's (WNYREDC) priorities. Through our collaborative efforts, we strive to further the WNYREDC's Implementation Agenda including fostering a culture of entrepreneurship through referrals to the Small Business Development Center, implementing smart growth through our support of such projects, preparing our

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workforce through career guidance and training opportunities utilizing our Demand Occupation List which is focused on WNYREDC identified areas such as Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, Tourism, Retail, and Professional Services. Tourism is supported through customer service training initiatives as well as career pathway development and sector partnership building which is an ongoing process. Additional work is planned in career pathway development and sector partnership building. We are also in the initial steps of implementing a NRF Customer Service and Sales Certification Training to build these skills in our Youth participants and provide the first step on this Tourism sector career ladder.

The still relevant impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to highlight the workforce shortage that our region, State, and country are facing. We continue to see disproportionate access to services and training opportunities for underserved populations despite our continuous efforts to minimize this. The workforce development system strategically and holistically addresses this issue. Additional federal funding needs to be made available so that we can continue in our commitment to lead efforts in collaboration with partners, including businesses, to develop service delivery and program plans that minimize barriers to employment increasing the number of people participating in the labor force. Access to family sustaining wage jobs with career pathway opportunities is essential to economic prosperity for our entire community.

Clean Energy is a growing sector with unique workforce and skill needs. The Chautauqua LWDB is gratefully participating in the OJET (Office of Just Energy Transition) RETI (Renewable Energy Training Initiative) initiative which provides dedicated staff time and training funding to identify specific workforce needs, training opportunities, and strategic partnership development with potential job seekers and eligible businesses. The Chautauqua LEDB is just gaining momentum in this work and hope that funding will continue beyond November 2025.

- ii. Does the local area have the capacity to address the education and skill needs of the local workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of businesses? Please explain.

We believe that we have the capacity to address most of the education and skill needs of the local workforce. As the weaknesses stated above illustrate, there are areas where continuous improvement is needed and is being worked on. Including but not limited to: transportation issues, access to and funding for childcare, access to broadband and equipment necessary for virtual work and training, some health care trainings capacity, local Electrician trainings, job retention assistance, including critically important Success Skills in all education and training programs, outreach to underserved populations.

Additionally, the three barriers to employment experienced most are childcare, transportation, and access to broadband. The Chautauqua LWDB supports and collaborates on childcare related funding opportunities and initiatives. The childcare crisis involves two issues: access to and the ability to pay for childcare for workers and a childcare worker shortage. Career pathways in the childcare field are being explored. Close partnerships with childcare organizations are ongoing. The Chautauqua LWDB employs a Mobility Manager through a grant with the NYS Department of Transportation. The Mobility Manager and stakeholders identify transportation gaps and needs and develop and implement strategies to address these issues. The Chautauqua LWDB

partners with local partners to identify potential funding to expand broadband availability and access.

The Chautauqua LWDB has pursued and will continue to pursue funding opportunities that provide the flexibility to assist individuals with these barriers to employment.

- e. Describe the LWDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

The local Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce is to pull all resources in the community into a systematic approach to help employers (current and future) become competitive in a global economy and help individuals attain life skills necessary for employment in family sustaining jobs. Our goals are to connect regularly with local businesses to identify their current and future employment needs. This is accomplished through surveys, roundtables, one-on-one meetings, job order analysis, labor market data analysis, and data sharing with other agencies gathering similar information. Another goal is to identify through a thorough initial assessment and continuous assessment as services are provided of job seekers' skills, career goals, and skills gaps. This information will be used to develop Individual Employment Plans that clearly define the steps needed to reach career goals. Further, using job seeker provided information to assist job seekers in determining their best steps to meeting career goals with a favorable labor market outlook in the area. The local Board's vision and goals strive for a workforce prepared to meet the employment needs of area businesses ensuring businesses and employees who are successfully contributing to the area economy. Talent Attraction and Retention are critical to our economic recovery. We are working closely with our economic development partners to develop strategies to address this need. Resulting from this partnership and work, is a robust recruitment and talent attraction initiative. New marketing materials and campaign have been finalized and implemented. More information is available at the following websites: Live CHQ: <https://www.choosechq.com/live-chq/> Choose CHQ: <https://www.choosechq.com/>

- i. How do the local area's workforce development programs, including programs provided by partner agencies, support this strategic vision?

All of the local area's workforce development programs are designed to support this strategic vision. All staff and partner agency staff are focused on referring qualified job seekers to fill the employment needs of businesses. Additionally, all staff and partner agency staff strive to fill skills gaps of job seekers with the goal of employment. All WIOA Titles have the same Performance Measures which all focus on obtaining Employment and, if identified as needed, obtaining the skills required to obtain employment. The 2017 and 2020 MOU and MOU processes have strengthened this coordinated effort and clearly define these shared goals. MOU Partnerships remain strong and aligned.

- ii. How will the local area, working with the entities that carry out the core programs, align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals?

The local area continues to utilize the MOU process as a resource to strengthen relationships and collaboration with partners. Through these efforts, resources are identified and defined and opportunities for sharing and/or braiding resources are being explored. For example, TANF funded Employment Services provided at the American Job

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Centers has targeted training funding which can be utilized in partnership with WIOA training funding to ensure that training needs are met and work readiness and employment are attained. The same braided funding model is used with other programs as well; including, but not limited to, our Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program.

Active membership and participation in the Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth is designed to reach this exact outcome: identify programs and projects that align with the local area's strategic vision and goals and identify resources available and potentially available to implement the program or project. One project that resulted from this partnership and work is the Live CHQ Choose CHQ Talent Attraction Strategy.

- f. Describe the LWDB's goals relating to performance accountability measures. How do these measures support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency?

Meeting the employment needs of businesses and work readiness needs of job seekers successfully will lead to positive performance measure outcomes. Obviously, meeting these goals will support economic growth and self-sufficiency. When employment needs of businesses are met with a prepared workforce, businesses are profitable and contributing to a healthy economy. When job seekers are prepared and obtain employment, individuals become self-sufficient and actively contribute to the economy. These outcomes: economic growth and stability and self-sufficiency are exactly why we do the work that we do.

Local Workforce Development System

- a. Identify the programs, whether provided by the Career Center or any partners, that are a part of the local area's workforce development system, including:

- i. Core programs;

WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, Trade Act, Wagner-Peyser, RESEA, C3E, Veterans Services (DVOP and LVER), ACCES-VR, NY SCION Disability Resource Coordinator, WIOA Youth, TANF Employment Services Programs, Job Corps (currently pending), Erie 2 BOCES Adult Basic Education and Training Programs, Jamestown Community College Credit and Continuing Education Non-Credit Programs, Manufacturing Training Institute (MTI) Training Programs, SUNY Fredonia, Erie Institute of Technology, Probation Job Search Program, Chautauqua Opportunities Inc. workforce readiness programs, OTDA funded Youth Employment Program (YEP) and Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), and ESD and Ralph C Wilson Jr Foundation funded Manufacturing & Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program.

- ii. Programs that support alignment under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006; and

WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, Trade Act, Wagner-Peyser, RESEA, C3E, Veterans Services (DVOP and LVER), ACCES-VR, NY SCION Disability Resource Coordinator, WIOA Youth, TANF Employment Services Programs, Job Corps, Erie 2 BOCES Adult Basic Education and Training Programs, Jamestown Community College Credit and Continuing Education Non-Credit Programs.

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- iii. Other workforce development programs, if applicable.

N/A

- b. Describe how the local area will ensure continuous improvement of services and service providers.

Continuous improvement is ensured through leadership team meetings consisting of the WDB Executive Director, Department of Labor Manager, and One-Stop Operator; monthly All Staff Meetings, and, as needed, sharing of information between the Leadership Team. Performance Measures and Customer Service Indicator reports are discussed and potential improvement plans are brainstormed, developed, and implemented as a team. Customer surveys are available in the Resource Rooms at both locations. Completed surveys are reviewed and discussed. If suggestions are made which could result in service delivery improvement, implementation is discussed and completed. Additionally, NYSDOL statewide customer satisfaction (job seeker and business) survey results are shared and reviewed with all American Job Center staff. Potential areas for improvement are discussed and, if determined as needed, changes implemented. Monitoring is completed on files as well as OSOS.

An example of the process for continuous improvement of eligible providers is reviewing job placement upon completion of trainings. Customers and/or employers are contacted to verify employment. If a customer who has completed training is having difficulty finding a job, additional job search assistance is provided. The Leadership Team may discuss these cases; following up with training providers and area businesses identifying the skill set as desirable or needed for successful employment. Additional placement information may be requested from training providers. The Leadership Team will review provided information. If a concern continues to be identified, the concern will be brought to the attention of the WDB Training Committee for discussion and possible action in recommending removal from the Eligible Training Provider List.

- c. Describe how service providers will meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers, and jobseekers.

Eligible training providers must adhere to the Demand Occupation List. The Demand Occupation List is reviewed every 18-24 months by the WDB Training Committee utilizing labor market data, job order data, America's Job Center staff job seeker data, local economic development data, and training employment outcomes data. Exceptions can be made by the LWDB Executive Director if a demand is identified during the period between Demand Occupation List review processes.

- d. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the Career Center partners.

All co-located partners pay rent to the LWDB as leaseholder. Common space costs are included using the same formula methodology. American Job Center co-located partners' roles are determined by their services provided. Coordination and collaboration occurs constantly. Resource Room staffing is provided by the two partners with the greatest presence and array of services provided: WIOA and NYSDOL Wagner-Peyser.

The Chautauqua WDB in collaboration with the Chautauqua One Stop System Operator will have at least one partner meeting per program year. The attendees will include entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs including

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those authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Every effort will be made to include all partners who fit this definition. We have been developing an information sharing mechanism resulting in the most informed system possible. Through the MOU process, a Partner Agency Contact List was developed and approved (2017), reviewed, updated, and approved (2020), and reviewed and updated in 2025. We use this List to share information with the expectation and instructions that the information be shared as appropriate with agency staff. Our goal will be alignment of services, collaboration and coordination, and the reduction of duplication of services.

Workforce Development and Career Pathways

- a. Describe how the LWDB will facilitate the development of career pathways, including co-enrollment in core programs when appropriate.

The Chautauqua WDB will facilitate the development of career pathways in the same manner that it has been. The LWDB will plan and host or collaborate to plan and host sector specific roundtable discussions to gather information from sector businesses regarding industry specific skill needs and employment tracks, identify currently available trainings and resources that meet the industry needs, identify the gaps, map the various career pathways, and develop simple tools for career guidance with job seekers. All steps in the Career Pathways development process will include stakeholders input. Check-ins to determine how the system is working will be completed at a minimum annually. Co-enrollment is and will continue to be a common practice whenever appropriate. This will be checked during monitoring.

The Chautauqua WDB has always and will continue to work with various partners including businesses and training providers to develop clear career pathways in high demand sectors. We focus on sectors identified on the Chautauqua County Demand Occupation List as well as the Western Region Demand Occupation List. Our most in demand occupations are Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, Travel & Tourism and Hospitality, Transportation, and Finance. Additional occupations are in demand and can be found on both Demand Occupation Lists.

The Chautauqua WDB will take the lead and/or collaborate with other partners taking the lead in convening partners in the development and implementation of career pathways in the local area and throughout the region. Through the career development process, Jamestown Community College recently developed and implemented Industrial Maintenance Technician (IMT) program designed with input from industry partners (manufacturers) specifically to meet the needs of these local businesses. This is an example of an entry level training and the first step in a career pathway in manufacturing. Many IMT graduates enter employment and may be eligible to utilize WIOA funding for an On the Job Training (OJT), some may move on to additional training opportunities such as Welding; both are the next steps in their career pathway. The American Job Center staff may refer job seekers to these training opportunities and WIOA training funding may be used based on eligibility.

We will continue to facilitate and host career pathway development initiatives on an ongoing basis. Career pathway information will be shared and made available to all Chautauqua Works and partner staff. Career pathways are and will continue to be discussed with all job seekers pursuing training opportunities and conducting an active job

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search. Co-enrollment in academic and training programs is and will continue to be an integral part of our service delivery process.

- b. Describe how the LWDB will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials.

The Chautauqua WDB will continue to build upon our strong partnership with postsecondary partners as well as foster an environment of open communication and information sharing regarding program offerings, availability, and labor market needs. This information will be shared with American Job Center staff as well as training providers. The Chautauqua WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce is to identify job seeker skills gaps based on business skills needs as defined in job orders and the Chautauqua Demand Occupation List creating seamless access to training opportunities in those areas culminating with job matching and ultimately employment.

The Chautauqua WDB dba Chautauqua Works has two locations at either end of Chautauqua County. In North County, the location is in the City of Dunkirk at a central point in the community. In South County, the location is in the City of Jamestown at a central point in the community. Staff work closely with all job seekers through the Initial Assessment process at which point barriers to employment are identified and appropriate referrals are made. Additionally, skill levels are identified and training needs are determined resulting in referrals and future appointments.

Partnerships have been created with all area training providers to ensure that referrals are appropriate and result in the best possible outcomes. Training providers are also part of skills gap discussions with the goal of development of training programs to meet the identified skills gap needs. Adults with low literacy skills, are English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent are referred to Adult Education opportunities in the community.

We have worked extensively with area training providers to ensure that multiple levels of English as a Second Language (ESL) trainings are available. The result of this work are four tiers of ESL training offerings, truly providing all of the levels of training needed to be successful in employment obtainment and retention.

Chautauqua Works has two Youth Navigators working in both locations as well as throughout the community at other agencies and locations where youth are known to frequent. The Chautauqua WDB is focused on providing services to out of school youth. An ongoing assessment of youths' needs occurs, and referrals, training opportunities, and potential work experience opportunities are explored along with access to all 14 Youth Program Elements. Barriers to training and employment are determined and addressed through an Individual Service Strategy.

- i. Are these credentials transferable to other occupations or industries (i.e., "portable")? If yes, please explain.

Most credentials are specific to a certain occupation or industry. However, some credentials such as Welding Certifications are transferable to multiple types of opportunities in the same industry.

- ii. Are these credentials part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time (i.e., "stackable")? If yes, please explain.

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Yes; some credentials are stackable. For example, in the health care industry, a CNA can pursue an HHA and/or PCA to become more marketable in additional areas of the industry. Then, an LPN may be pursued followed by an RN, then BSRN or NP. In the hospitality and tourism industry, we have been working regionally on developing career pathways, identifying industry recognized stackable credentials, and training American Job Center staff on these career pathways. Businesses from the hospitality and tourism sector, training providers, and regional partners have all been integral parts of this ongoing process.

Access to Employment and Services

- a. Describe how the LWDB and its partners will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

We plan to continue to work with our partners to identify and develop solutions for any access issues. Through the MOU processes, Partner Agency Contacts have been provided and updated which assist in providing seamless service delivery for shared customers. The Chautauqua WDB will continually seek out and explore new partnerships throughout its geographic area and the region's geographic area. We also continuously pursue expanding access to services through our website and the use of technology.

Partners agree to:

- Participate in a customer focused referral system that seamlessly accesses resources from involved partners to increase quality outcomes. Partners agree to communicate regarding the status of interagency referrals.
- Offer customers information on how to apply for a partner's services and/or arrange an appointment for the customer.
- Continually develop agreed-upon standards and protocols for making quality referrals between program partners.
- Identify a partner referral liaison for each System partner.
- Provide ongoing training to all partner frontline staff in partner services and eligibility.
- Consistently strategize to improve referrals toward a standard of real-time referrals to all applicable local program partners.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how critical virtual services and access to them are to maintain engagement and participation in training and services. In response to this, we obtained and have maintained a YouTube Channel, may provide workshops virtually, may provide FaceBook Live events, increased and improved our FaceBook content, and may complete appointments via Zoom.

Recognizing the positive outcomes of our use of our FaceBook page, we created a Social Media Workgroup who developed a Social Media Marketing Strategy. The implementation of this Strategy has increased our views, visits, and reach by more than double in all metrics.

- b. Describe how the local area will facilitate access to services though the One-Stop delivery system, including remote areas, though the use of technology.

Access to services through the One-Stop delivery system through the use of technology includes our website with links to partner websites. As mentioned earlier, we have a

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YouTube Channel and extremely active and effective FaceBook page providing access to program and service information. Additionally, we may offer virtual workshops, FaceBook Live events, and Zoom virtual appointments. Collaboration with partners and pursuit of funding opportunities are always a priority.

- c. Describe how Career Centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake case management information system.

We continue to design, update, implement and transition to an integrated technology-enabled intake case management information system through strong partnerships where intake processes are identified and shared with the intent of coordination and use of common intake forms. Database sharing is explored and discussed remaining a common goal. Intake forms, organization specific databases, information sharing, and technology options are included in ongoing discussions. This work toward a shared vision and goals will continue. Collaboration and potential funding sources will be a continued priority.

- d. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of programs and services provided to Adults and Dislocated Workers (DWs) in the local area.

- Eligibility for Title I Services – Determination of whether a customer is eligible to receive services from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs.
- Outreach, Intake, and System Orientation – Outreach is intended to promote awareness of the availability of the System services to/for individuals and businesses that may need these services. Intake and System orientation is the process of gathering basic information to determine the program(s) appropriate for the customer, and providing the customer with information on the services available to determine if he/she is interested in pursuing those services.
- Initial Assessment – The collection and assessment of information on a customer's skill levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency; work history; employment barriers; employment goal(s) and occupational knowledge; supportive service needs; and whether referrals to other programs are appropriate or necessary.
- Labor Exchange Services – Providing job search and placement services to the customer, including but not limited to, information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and non-traditional employment, when appropriate; development of a work search plan; placement in workshops; posting jobs on the state job bank; providing job matching and referrals; and advising how to maintain a record of job search.

In some instances, programs may require their customers to maintain and submit a log detailing the amount of time spent on job search activities including identifying, applying, and interviewing for potential jobs, and time spent preparing and sending follow-up material to businesses.

Labor exchange services also include appropriate recruitment and other business services, which may include, but are not limited to, customized screening and referral of qualified customers in training services to businesses; customized services to businesses, business associations, or other such organizations, on employment-related issues; customized recruitment events for businesses and targeted job fairs; human resource consultation services which may include writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks, developing performance evaluations and personnel policies, creating orientation sessions for new employees, honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance, analyzing employee turnover, creating job accommodations and using assistive

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technologies, and explaining labor law to help businesses comply; and customized labor market information for specific businesses, sectors, industries, or clusters.

- **Referrals to Programs** – Referrals and coordination of activities with other appropriate programs and services that meet specific customer needs, assist them in overcoming barriers to employment, and provide services to gain/retain employment. These other programs and services may include, but are not limited to, employment and training services; treatment for alcohol, substance abuse or mental health issues; Unemployment Insurance benefits; Workers' Compensation; NYS Disability Insurance; and vocational rehabilitation services.
- **Labor Market Information** – Staff provides workforce and labor market employment statistics to assist job seeking customers in the development of employment goal(s) and businesses in the development and implementation of sector partnerships and career pathways. The employment statistics include local, regional, and national labor market conditions; career counseling and career exploration services; characteristics of industries, occupations, and the workforce area; business-identified skill needs; short and long-term industry and occupational growth and salary projections; worker supply and demand; and high-growth and high-demand industries.
- **Performance on the Local Workforce System** – The provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's NYS Career Center System.
- **Performance and Program Cost of Eligible Providers** – The provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of provider.
- **Referrals to Supportive Services** – Staff provides customers with referrals to supportive services that enable the customer to participate in authorized WIOA activities. Based on various partners' programmatic rules and regulations, these supportive services may include, but are not limited to, transportation; child care; dependent care; housing; needs related payments; interpreter services; reasonable accommodation for youth with disabilities; legal aid services; assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire; assistance with books, fees, and school supplies; payments and fees for employment and training related applications, tests, and certifications; and tools or instruments. Depending on the program, when appropriate, information may also be provided to customers on how to continue these supportive services after program services are completed.
- **Unemployment Insurance (UI) Information and Assistance** – Career Center and UI staff provides information and meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation. Meaningful assistance means providing assistance on-site using staff that is well trained in UI compensation claims filing and the rights and responsibilities of claimants or providing assistance by phone or via other technology as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff within a reasonable time.
- **Financial Aid Assistance** – Providing assistance in establishing eligibility, accessing, and applying for programs of financial aid for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.
- **Comprehensive Assessment** – Staff conducts a specialized assessment of a job seeker's barriers to employment, occupational and employment goal(s), educational and skill levels, and personal circumstance to determine his/her service needs. This may include

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diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools, and in-depth interviewing and evaluation. Under WIOA Title I, the comprehensive assessment is used to develop the Individual Employment Plan (IEP), while under Title IV; it is used to develop the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

- Individual Employment Plan (IEP)/Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) – The IEP/IPE identifies the appropriate employment goal(s) chosen by the customer. The initial and comprehensive assessment is used to develop the IEP/IPE in consultation with the customer. The plan outlines the necessary services to be provided to achieve the planned goals; steps and timelines for achieving the goals; and the terms, conditions, and responsibilities associated with the plan. The IEP for Title I Adult/DW/Youth programs also includes information about eligible training providers, when applicable. The IPE for Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation Programs must also include those specific rehabilitation services needed to achieve the employment outcome, including assistive technology devices and services, when applicable.

- Career Planning and Counseling – One-on-one or intensive career planning and counseling with a professional counselor uses initial and comprehensive assessments and the IEP/IPE, and aims at enhancing job seeking and retention skills and career advancement of customers by:

- i. Helping the customer analyze and understand career information, and gain a better understanding of his/herself using career information gained through assessment tools and counseling strategies to more realistically choose or change short and long-term occupational goals; and

- ii. Preparing service strategies to assist in the achievement of occupational goal(s) and to ensure customers have access to necessary workforce activities and supportive services, which may include, but are not limited to, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referrals to partner programs appropriate to the needs of the customer.

Counseling may also include notification of available training in entrepreneurial skills which may include, but is not limited to, taking initiative; creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities; developing budgets and forecasting resource needs; understanding options for acquiring capital; and communicating effectively to market oneself and ideas.

- Short-term Pre-Vocational Services – Development of skills customers need to live independently and enter the workforce fully prepared to engage in employment. These services may include academic education and job readiness trainings for development of work readiness skills, including but not limited to, learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, higher-order reasoning, problem-solving skills, work attitudes, and professional conduct.

- Internships and Work Experience – Based on partners' programmatic rules and regulations, the work experience is a planned, structured learning experience, in most cases linked to a career, that takes place in a private for-profit, non-profit or public sector workplace. For most partner programs, work experiences may be in the form of internships, work-study, externship, on-the-job training, apprenticeship, summer employment for youth, and/or other work placement opportunities. The purpose of a work experience is to provide the customer with an understanding of the work environment and job responsibilities, specific work skills, and experience on how the

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customer performs in the work setting. WIOA Title I Youth work experiences also include an academic and occupational education component. Partners follow all applicable work experience requirements for their respective program's State and Federal rules and regulations.

- **Out of Area Job Search and Relocation Assistance** – Staff provides information on labor exchange activities in other local areas, regions, or states and whether businesses the customer may be interested in offer assistance with relocation. Allowable relocation expenses may be paid to eligible customers by the appropriate program.

- **Financial Literacy Services** – Educate and support customers to gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high quality relevant learning strategies. The learning, where possible, may include, but is not limited to, creating a budget; initiating checking and/or savings accounts at banks; learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt; learning how to protect against identity theft; and benefits advisement. These services may also include opportunities to put financial literacy lessons into practice, based on the needs of the customer.

- **English Language Acquisition and Integrated Education** – Adult Education staff provides an integrated program of services that incorporates English literacy and civics education concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation/sector for the purpose of educational and career advancement of customers. These services allow customers to attain economic self-sufficiency and are designed for partnerships among adult education programs and postsecondary educational institutions, training providers, and/or businesses. Other partners provide direct linkages and information on how to locate and enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes.

- **Workforce Preparation** – Activities to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, training, or employment and other employability skills that increase an individual's preparation for the workforce. For Adult Education these activities are incorporated into all literacy instruction.

- **Follow-Up Services** - Depending upon the individual partner's programmatic rules and regulations, follow-up services may include counseling regarding the workplace for customers in adult or dislocated worker programs, who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

Assessment of services will be completed through analysis of Performance Indicators as well as partner meetings which will take place a minimum of once per program year.

- e. Describe how workforce activities will be coordinated with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Workforce activities are coordinated through referrals to partners and organizations with expertise in specific areas such as transportation. We have a Mobility Manager who provides staff training as well as customer training related to public transportation use and coordination. Additionally, the Mobility Manager works directly with local businesses to determine the transportation needs of employees, develop innovative solutions, and identify potential funding opportunities. Referrals and follow-up are made to partners and

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agencies who provide supportive services with the common goal of assisting customers in accessing all potential resources available and avoiding duplication of services. When appropriate, we coordinate with our local Department of Mental Hygiene and Social Services to ensure mutual customers are accessing all available resources. Additionally, recognizing the need for and high cost of transportation needs, we included Transportation as an item which can be funded through our Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program as needed by program participants.

- f. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements in place to enhance the quality and availability of services to people with disabilities, such as cross training to staff, technical assistance, or methods of sharing information.

The 2017 and 2020 Service Delivery MOU provides the following agreements to ensure quality and availability of services to all people including people with disabilities: Partners agree to serve all individuals, especially youth and individuals with barriers to employment, by offering all specific program services provided as needed. Partners agree to provide seamless, appropriate, and comprehensive referrals to partner program services.

Partners agree to provide program access with no physical barriers.

Partners agree to provide access to all services through a variety of methods including a referral system that includes:

- A “warm handoff” with a personal introduction by a staff member when two partners are in the same center,
- An immediate phone call while the customer is still at the staff person’s desk to set up an appointment with another partner organization that is not located in the Center,
- Access to a private location for a customer to talk by phone, videoconference, Skype, or Zoom to staff at another partner organization not located in the Center.
- A referral sheet indicating which agency or agencies they are being referred to, accompanied by a brochure that lists the services that are provided by the agencies.
- Follow-up with referral agencies regarding the referral, especially for youth and customers with barriers to employment, will be made, following all confidentiality requirements.

In addition, the partners agree to follow the spirit and intent of the language below.

In a Comprehensive Career Center, at a minimum, staff will provide direct linkage (i.e., direct connection within a reasonable time by phone or real-time web-based technology to program staff that can provide program information to the customer).

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 188 of WIOA, partners will provide individuals with disabilities with physical and programmatic accessibility to facilities, programs, services, technology and materials, including appropriate staff training and support.

Partners commit to periodically reassess program accessibility and adjust strategies to improve access as needed.

The partners recognize that NYS Human Rights Law prohibits discrimination or harassment against any employee, applicant for employment or customer due to age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, or domestic violence victim status of any individual.

The partners understand that the NYS Human Rights Law affords protections from employment discrimination for persons with prior conviction records, or prior arrests, youthful offender adjudications, or sealed records.

In addition partners provided Partner referral Liaisons to provide technical assistance, cross training, share information, and answer questions.

- g. Describe the direction given to the One-Stop System Operator to ensure priority for Adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The Operator is provided a Priority of Service policy which complies with WIOA. All Adult files will include gathered data regarding receiving public assistance, low income, and/or basic skills deficiency. Data will be entered in OSOS as well. During Monitoring this data will be reviewed for completion and accuracy ensuring that the Priority of Service Policy is being followed. This is an area where we are striving for continuous improvement and seeking innovative opportunities to implement best practices from other workforce areas.

- h. Describe how One-Stop System Operators and One-Stop partners will comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding:

- i. The physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, and services;

In our 2017 and 2020 MOU, partners:

Agree to serve all individuals, especially youth and individuals with barriers to employment, by offering all specific program services provided as needed. Partners agree to provide seamless, appropriate, and comprehensive referrals to partner program services.

Agree to provide program access with no physical barriers.

Will provide individuals with disabilities with physical and programmatic accessibility to facilities, programs, services, technology and materials, including appropriate staff training and support, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 188 of WIOA.

Commit to periodically reassess program accessibility and adjust strategies to improve access as needed.

Recognize that NYS Human Rights Law prohibits discrimination or harassment against any employee, applicant for employment or customer due to age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, or domestic violence victim status of any individual.

Understand that the NYS Human Rights Law affords protections from employment discrimination for persons with prior conviction records, or prior arrests, youthful offender adjudications, or sealed records.

Will meet a minimum of once per year to assess program accessibility and determine any adjustments needed followed by implementation and status follow-up to all partners.

ii. Technology and materials for individuals with disabilities; and

Technology and materials for individuals with disabilities is assessed regularly with the Disability Resource Coordinator (DRC) providing leadership with this initiative. Staff provide the DRC with any identified needs. The DRC explores potential technology and/or materials and determines cost as well as availability at partner sites. Accessibility processes are created for partner located resources. Through this model, the American Job Centers have Magic Eye, large print keyboards and mouse, and Dragon Naturally Speaking.

iii. Providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The DRC and partners who specialize in working with individuals with disabilities such as ACCES-VR and Commission for the Blind will provide on-line and in person trainings to American Job Center staff and partners. The DRC develops and provides a monthly resource letter and reviews the information with all American Job Center co-located partners on monthly virtual All Staff Meetings. The DRC makes themselves available for additional training and/or questions.

iv. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners related to the nondiscrimination requirements of WIOA (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

As noted above, partners such as ACCES-VR who have expertise in providing services to individuals with disabilities will provide on-line and in person trainings. A local partner, Southwestern Independent Living Center has and will provide accessibility assessments, suggestions, and guidance.

Business Engagement

a. What strategies and programs, including training programs, will be used to facilitate engagement of businesses, including small businesses and businesses in in-demand sectors and occupations?

Our Regional Business Services Team meets quarterly to discuss strategies and trends as well as coordinate business outreach efforts.

Below are the goals of our WNY Regional Business Service Team:

At a minimum, the RBST must support alignment of sector strategies and strategic long-term planning. It is important to note that the RBST is intended to

- Align business services provided at the local level with regional sector initiatives/strategies and regional labor market information (LMI);
- Strengthen existing partnerships and/or business relationships that are working effectively and build upon them;
- Enhance Local Workforce Development Agency partnerships with entities in other regions to address specific workforce needs (e.g., partnering to respond to solicitations to meet workforce needs, etc.); and

- Identify and disseminate information regarding services that will benefit businesses.

Note: The RBST is not intended to provide direct services or become a policy-making body. The RBST will also share and/or coordinate workforce intelligence including:

- Initiatives/strategies for stable or emerging and retracting sectors in the region;
- Relationships relevant to advancing workforce strategies in the region's sectors, including but not limited to NYS, regional, county, and local economic development entities; business associations and partnerships (e.g., Manufacturing Extension Partnerships); labor organizations; chambers of commerce; and businesses investing in economic development and/or workforce development.
- Talent pipelines and career pathway opportunities, including but not limited to pipeline development for alignment with difficult to fill occupations and engagement with the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY) educational systems, and training providers;
- Services to business customers, including job postings, career fairs/customer recruitments, LMI, developing workforce intelligence, human resource consulting, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Apprenticeship, Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), as well as layoff aversion and turn around solutions (e.g., Shared Work); and
- Information through the use of the One-Stop Operating System (OSOS) as a shared database to chronicle business contacts and services.

We work closely with our NYSDOL partners to plan and host monthly in-person Mini Job Fairs at our Chautauqua Works locations or locations nearby. These events are coordinated in partnership with NYSDOL. These events are designed to assist with recruitment as this is an ongoing need reaching.

Virtual Career Fairs are planned monthly by our partners at NYSDOL. We refer any businesses hiring to consider participating in these events. Western New York Virtual Job Fairs are the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Free to participate.

We host 1-2 Business Seminars per year covering various topics. Our Business Seminars have consistently increased in attendance at every event. Seminars typically have more than 90 attendees. Our last Seminar had more than 100 business representatives in attendance. Business feedback has been extremely positive and businesses unanimously request more. Businesses of every size are invited and encouraged to attend all events. Pre-pandemic, monthly "mini job fairs" were offered alternating at each Chautauqua Works location.

Businesses are engaged through our Youth Work Experience Program, Summer Youth Employment Program, Youth Employment Program, internship programs, OJTs, coordination with Temporary Employment Assistance Program (TEAP), as well as tax incentive programs. We work closely with our businesses to ensure that resources are made available to them to assist with their hiring needs.

We assist with many recruitment events. Businesses utilize the American Job Centers for open interviews, scheduled interviews, group information sessions and interviews, application completion, skill assessment, and posting job orders.

Business tours are attended by as many staff and partners as possible when available to ensure that a comprehensive understanding of local businesses is achieved.

Business roundtables are held to ensure that business feedback and needs are provided and understood.

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Through our Manufacturing and Tech Workforce Ecosystem Development Program, more than 200 businesses have been contacted with more than 50 engaging with the program staff just since the Program began in December 2024.

Curriculum development and Career Pathways development are on-going with many sectors but particularly Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Hospitality and Tourism. Businesses are active and integral parts of these processes. Recently, Jamestown Community College developed and is starting a Buildings and Automations program and Robotics program in direct response to local business needs and input. Staff and partners are provided with information to assist in business outreach efforts regarding specific grant programs including Sector Based Grants, CFA Grants, and Safety Training Grants to help businesses keep costs down and expand their businesses.

- i. If applicable, describe the local area's use of business intermediaries.

N/A

- b. What strategies or services are used to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area?

Coordination of business outreach and follow-up through a partnership built on collaboration among all American Job Center partners engaged in business service activities. As described above, collaboration and resource sharing is another strategy used by partners of the local workforce development system to ensure that businesses are able to access the most comprehensive resources possible.

Surveys are completed by many partners and coordination and information sharing is encouraged and practiced. Partner coordinated assessment of the data followed by identification of potential services and resources available to meet the businesses' identified needs are a common practice.

- c. Describe how the local area's workforce development programs and strategies will be coordinated with regional economic development activities.

Workforce Development programs and strategies are coordinated with economic development activities through on-going communication regarding local labor market trends. Economic Development staff attend RBST meetings, Job Fairs, Business Seminars, and regularly include the Chautauqua Workforce Development Board Executive Director in current as well as new potential businesses in the local area to coordinate service delivery efforts and ensure that all potential resources are utilized. Economic Development staff, the Chief Local Elected Official, and the Workforce Development Board Executive Director work closely together when businesses are moving to the local area as well as when businesses are experiencing lay-offs or closings. Bi-weekly conference calls are common when the area is experiencing such business activities. Coordination of services is also occurring with the Fredonia Technology Incubator to provide services as appropriate and needed to start-up companies located there.

Additionally, the Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth was created to streamline initiatives and strengthen partnerships. The LWDB Executive Director is the Chair of the Workforce Readiness and Development Workgroup. This Workgroup is identifying needs, developing strategies to meet the needs, designing projects, and

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identifying potential funding opportunities. Project implementation and outcomes are the focus.

- i. Describe how these programs will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The knowledge of the workforce development services through our on-going partnership and coordinated business interactions has created an environment where Economic Development colleagues think early and often of workforce development so that businesses are receiving the best possible access to all potential services. Since many entrepreneurial businesses and potential businesses begin with their work with Economic Development, referrals to workforce development to assist in engagement to entrepreneurial skills trainings occurs naturally. Additionally, the same happens in reverse with workforce development staff referring early and often to Economic Development staff and programs.

Coordination and partnership with as well as referrals to the Small Business Development Center promote all things entrepreneurial.

- d. Describe how the LWDB will coordinate its workforce investment activities with statewide rapid response activities.

The LWDB has and will continue to work very closely with statewide rapid response activities through the regional staff. We have and will continue to coordinate any needed rapid response sessions, workshops, and information sharing efforts. We will assist and support in rapid response activities.

The local WDB reviews the talent pool of rapid response customers with partners through the local business services partners and regional business services team as well as leadership team meetings with the Operator and NYSDOL Manager to assist in work with businesses that may employ people with similar skill sets. Recruitment events for rapid response customers is a strategy that has been used successfully. Rapid response customers are also considered for OJTs and potential grant opportunities

Program Coordination

- a. How do the local area's programs and strategies strengthen the linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

The local area's programs and strategies strengthen the linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs by focusing on obtaining the skills needed to be competitive in the labor market and/or obtaining employment. All workforce partner programs strive to eliminate barriers to employment and obtaining employment. The local partners connect through shared customers resulting in follow-up and additional referrals when needed. Further, performance indicator assessments will assist in identifying areas where best practices seem to exist as well as areas where opportunities to improve exist. A minimum of one partner meeting per year will include performance indicator review, assessment, and agreed-upon strategies for continuous improvement. Additionally, all NYSDOL staff working directly with UI claimants work literally right along side WIOA program staff ensuring seamless coordinated

service delivery as well as immediate access to all potential programs and resources. Chautauqua Works is truly a “One-Stop”.

- b. Describe how education and workforce investment activities will be coordinated in the local area. This must include:

- i. Coordination of relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs;

The workforce system includes our education partners. Our education partners include Erie2CCBOCES, Jamestown Community College, SUNY Fredonia, and all county school districts. The Workforce Development Board’s Executive Director serves as President of the Chautauqua County Education Coalition (CCEC) which includes all of the education partners. Through the CCEC, initiatives and goals are identified and outcomes are defined. Members create and agree upon activities that will achieve the outcomes desired. It is believed that this model is a best practice for coordinating workforce activities with all education partners. An example of this model in practice is the development of a Maintenance Technology Certification Program. A need for a Maintenance Technology Certification Program was identified after information was gathered from businesses at a Chautauqua WDB-hosted business manufacturers roundtable and a Dream It Do It and Education Coalition-sponsored manufacturing business survey. The Education Coalition hosted curriculum development meetings including educators, workforce development representatives, and manufacturing business representatives. All invested partners contributed and the curriculum was finalized and implemented.

- ii. Activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies and enhance services; and

The workforce system coordinates strategies and enhances services through the following initiatives: Erie2CCBOCES coordinates directly with services provided at the American Job Centers. BOCES staff may provide workshops and short term trainings onsite. BOCES staff are also available to discuss training programs with interested job seekers. Jamestown Community College (JCC) is co-located at the American Job Centers. JCC is now offering 4 levels of ESL training. The need for ESL trainings was identified by businesses, workforce development staff, and DMHSS Employment Services program staff working directly with job seekers. JCC developed curriculum with valuable input gathered by workforce development partners from businesses, DMHSS staff, and workforce development staff. These courses include workplace language skills emphasizing the goal of successful employment obtainment and retention.

- iii. A description of how the LWDB will avoid duplication of services.

The local Board will use Leadership Team meetings, MOU partner meetings, and Operator partner meetings to identify duplication of services, develop plans to reduce and ultimately eliminate such situations, and timelines for implementation. Follow-Up will be scheduled and completed by the Workforce Development Board Executive Director to assess progress and areas where opportunities to improve exist. Continued follow up will occur.

- c. Describe plans, strategies, and assurances concerning the coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

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Wagner-Peyser staff are co-located at both Chautauqua American Job Centers. Leadership meetings occur regularly and all-staff meetings are held monthly. These opportunities are used to identify any duplication of services, develop plans to eliminate such duplication, and determine implementation timelines. The Chautauqua Leadership Team consists of the Workforce Development Board Executive Director, NYSDOL Manager, and Operator Program Manager. All three members work to coordinate services as efficiently as possible. Business recruitments are examples of when the plans are implemented best. Each organization's staff members have specific roles in the process and all are provided with the overall process to ensure that the plan will be carried out effectively and efficiently. Using a shared database, OSOS, also assists in eliminating duplication of services. Staff are able to review OSOS comments and assist job seekers with what they need at that point in their job search. MOU partner meetings and Operator partner meetings will be used to coordinate services and eliminate duplication of services.

- d. Provide a list of executed cooperative agreements that define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local Career Center System. This includes agreements between the LWDB and entities that serve individuals eligible under the Rehabilitation Act. If no such agreements exist, provide an explanation why this is the case and/or progress towards executing such agreements.

Chautauqua has completed a 2017 and 2020 WIOA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all mandated system partners.

Chautauqua continues to complete Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) with non-mandated partners who are referral sources and resources. Entities that serve individuals under the Rehabilitation Act are included in the MOA process where applicable.

Title II Program Coordination

- a. Provide a description of the LWDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, specifically addressing how to improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, as well as other strategies for serving out-of-school youth (OSY) and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent.

The Chautauqua WDB's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce is to identify job seeker skills gaps based on business skills needs as defined in job orders and the Chautauqua Demand Occupation List creating seamless access to training opportunities in those areas culminating with job matching and ultimately employment.

The Chautauqua WDB dba Chautauqua Works has two locations at either end of Chautauqua County. In North County, the location is in the City of Dunkirk at a central point in the community. In South County, the location is in the City of Jamestown at a central point in the community. Staff work closely with all job seekers through the Initial Assessment process at which point barriers to employment are identified and appropriate referrals are made. Additionally, skill levels are identified and training needs are determined resulting in referrals and future appointments.

Partnerships have been created with all area training providers to ensure that referrals are appropriate and result in the best possible outcomes. Training providers are also part of skills gap discussions with the goal of development of training programs to meet the identified skills gap needs. Adults with low literacy skills, English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent are referred to Adult Education opportunities in the community.

We have worked extensively with area training providers to ensure that multiple levels of English as a Second Language (ESL) trainings are available. The result of this work is an additional four tiers of ESL training offerings truly providing all of the levels of training needed to be successful in employment obtainment and retention.

Chautauqua Works has two Youth Navigators working in both locations as well as throughout the community at other agencies and locations where Youth are known to frequent. The Chautauqua WDB is focused on providing services to Out Of School Youth. An ongoing assessment of Youths' needs occurs and referrals, training opportunities, and potential work experience opportunities are explored along with access to all 14 Youth Program Elements. Barriers to training and employment are determined and addressed through an Individual Service Strategy.

- b. Provide a description of how the LWDB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services provided through the NYS Career Center System for Title II participants with barriers to employment.

We plan to continue to work with our Title II partners to identify and develop solutions for any access issues. Through the MOU process, Partner Agency Contacts have been provided which will assist in providing more seamless service delivery for shared customers. The Chautauqua WDB will continually seek out and explore new partnerships throughout its and the region's geographic area. We are also continuously pursuing expanding access to services through our website and the use of technology. Additionally, we are actively exploring the use of AI and how it can best be utilized to enhance services, service delivery, and access to services.

- c. Identify how the LWDB will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in academic training programs.

The Chautauqua WDB has always and will continue to work with various partners including businesses and training providers to develop clear career pathways in high demand sectors. We focus on sectors identified on the Chautauqua County Demand Occupation List as well as the Western Region Demand Occupation List and the WNY REDC. Our most in demand occupations are Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, Travel & Tourism and Hospitality, Transportation, and Finance. Additional occupations are in demand and can be found on both Demand Occupation Lists.

The Chautauqua WDB will take the lead and/or support other lead organizations in convening partners in the development and implementation of career pathways in the local area and throughout the region.

We will continue to facilitate and host career pathway development initiatives on an ongoing basis. Career pathway information will be shared and made available to all Chautauqua Works and partner staff. Career pathways are and will continue to be discussed with all job seekers pursuing training opportunities and conducting an active job

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search. Co-enrollment in academic and training programs is and will continue to be an integral part of our service delivery process.

- d. Provide a description of how the LWDB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including those authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to support service alignment.

The Chautauqua WDB in collaboration with the Chautauqua One Stop System Operator will have at least one partner meeting per program year. The attendees will include entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs including those authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Every effort will be made to include all partners who fit this definition. We plan to develop an information sharing mechanism resulting in the most informed system possible. Through the MOU process, a Partner Agency Contact List was developed and approved. We will use this List to share information with the expectation and instructions that the information be shared as appropriate with agency staff. Our goal will be alignment of services, collaboration and coordination, and the reduction of duplication of services.

Youth Activities

- a. Provide contact details of Youth Point(s) of Contact for your local area including: Name of organization, name(s) of Youth Point(s) of Contact, title, address, phone number, and email address. Youth Point(s) of Contact details are primarily used to refer young adults, parents, and partners about youth programs.

Chautauqua Works, Clara Swanson, Program Manager, 4 East 3rd Street, Suite 102, Jamestown, NY 14701, 716-487-5110, cswanson@chautauquaworks.com

- b. Provide the number of planned enrollments in Program Year (PY) 2025 for new Out-of-School Youth (OSY), carry-over OSY, new In-School Youth (ISY), carry-over ISY, and work experience. *

- i. New OSY

35 New

- ii. Carry-over OSY

35 Carry-over

- iii. New ISY

0 New

- iv. Carry-over ISY

0 Carry-over

- v. Work experiences

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***Note:** PY 2025 enrollments will provide the baseline estimate for the remaining three (3) years of the Local Plan.

c. In Attachment G, Youth Services, identify the organization providing the Design Framework, which includes Intake & Eligibility, Objective Assessments, and Individual Services Strategies (ISS), and 14 Youth Program Elements and whether the provision of each element is contractual, with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or provided by the LWDB.

d. Explain how providers and LWDB staff ensure the WIOA elements:

i. Connect back to the WIOA Youth Program Design Framework, particularly the Objective Assessments and ISS; and

The youth staff (Youth Navigators) continually update the ISS throughout their work with Youth. Emphasis is placed on goal attainment and next steps. Any referrals for WIOA elements related services are reviewed and outreach is conducted to referral sources for feedback and follow-up.

ii. Are made available to youth with disabilities by describing specific program practices, tools, and services that are tailored to serve youth with disabilities.

Through the MOU process, partners agree to serve all individuals, especially youth and individuals with barriers to employment, by offering all specific program services provided as needed. Partners agree to provide seamless, appropriate, and comprehensive referrals to partner program services.

Partners agree to provide program access with no physical barriers.

Partners agree to provide access to all services through a variety of methods including a referral system that includes:

- A “warm handoff” with a personal introduction by a staff member when two partners are in the same center,
- An immediate phone call while the customer is still at the staff person’s desk to set up an appointment with another partner organization that is not located in the Center,
- Access to a private location for a customer to talk by phone, videoconference, or Skype to staff at another partner organization not located in the Center.
- A referral sheet indicating which agency or agencies they are being referred to, accompanied by a brochure that lists the services that are provided by the agencies.
- Follow-up with referral agencies regarding the referral, especially for youth and customers with barriers to employment, will be made, following all confidentiality requirements.

In addition, the partners agree to follow the spirit and intent of the language below.

In a Comprehensive Career Center, at a minimum, staff will provide direct linkage (i.e., direct connection within a reasonable time by phone or real-time web-based technology to program staff that can provide program information to the customer).

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 188 of WIOA, partners will provide individuals with disabilities with physical and programmatic accessibility to facilities, programs, services, technology and materials, including appropriate staff training

and support. The Chautauqua DRC is available to assist and coordinate service delivery as needed. Often, the Chautauqua DRC will develop an Integrated Resource Team (IRT) for a youth participant with a disability that includes the Youth Navigator, the DRC, and all other appropriate service providers involved in the youth's coordinated service delivery. Partners commit to periodically reassess program accessibility and adjust strategies to improve access as needed.

The partners recognize that NYS Human Rights Law prohibits discrimination or harassment against any employee, applicant for employment or customer due to age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, military status, sex, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, familial status, marital status, or domestic violence victim status of any individual.

The partners understand that the NYS Human Rights Law affords protections from employment discrimination for persons with prior conviction records, or prior arrests, youthful offender adjudications, or sealed records.

- e. Describe successful models for youth services from your local area, including but not limited to virtual work experiences, OSY recruitment. and engagement strategies.

Successful models for youth services include a tremendous amount of time spent on developing relationships with the youth and creating an engaging service delivery environment. Consistent communication and expectations seem to result in the most positive outcomes. Patience and firm expectations with consistent consequences work best. We feel that our Youth Navigators are successful because they clearly define what steps need to be accomplished to meet their goals both Short term and Long Term and engage the youth participants in the development of their goals as well as any changes which may occur. Regularly updating the ISS with the youth participant confirms progress and provides guidance throughout the service delivery process. The youth program links education progress to work experiences and work readiness skills further emphasizing the importance of achieving all goals within their identified and agreed upon Career Pathway.

- f. Does your local area plan to serve ISY and/or OSY using the "Needs Additional Assistance" qualifying barrier for eligibility?

☐ Yes (Attach a Needs Additional Assistance policy that defines reasonable, quantifiable, evidence-based, and specific characteristics of ISY and OSY as described in Technical Advisory (TA) #[19-02](#).)

☒ No (Not required to attach a policy).

- g. Attach a Basic Skills Deficiency policy of youth program as described in the in TA #[19-02](#).

Administration

- a. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s) (CEO(s)) or Governor.

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- b. Describe the competitive process to be used to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities in the local area.

WIB/WDB issues written RFP based on guidelines, regulations and intent of original funding source. WIB/WDB and Youth Council (soon to be Special Populations Committee) strategy and/or priorities are incorporated as appropriate. RFP availability is announced through emails, website posting, public notice and other means as appropriate. A RFP distribution list is maintained by the WIB/WDB office.

RFP will include, but is not limited to:

- RFP Summary
 - Program Design
 - Responsibilities of the Contracted Program
 - Responsibilities of the One-Stop Operator or other relevant partners
 - Eligible Participants
 - Eligible Proposers/Contractor Competency
 - Contract Period
 - Funds Available
 - Selection Criteria
 - Rating Criteria
 - Project Narrative
 - Performance Measures and Program Outcomes
 - Project budget
 - Monitoring Requirements
 - Submission Requirements
 - o Bidders Conference Date/Details if appropriate
 - o RFP Due Date
 - o RFP Open Date
 - o Target Contract Start Date
 - o Submission address/email address
- Public Notice of RFP will be:
- Sent to local newspapers
 - Published on the Chautauqua Works website
 - Sent to other venues if deemed appropriate

Responses to RFP will be rated using Proposal Evaluation Worksheet which will be distributed to the reviewing bodies prior to selecting awardees. The reviewing bodies for WIOA Title I services will be a Committee of the Board as appointed by the Chair. At least three members will be present for a review to proceed. Staff will have the responsibility to review responses to determine if they met RFP requirements. Staff do not vote on the recommendation. Members of the reviewing body will independently rate each proposal and then enter into a discussion to develop a consensus on its recommendations. The groups' recommendation is forwarded to the full Board for approval.

Once WIB/WDB votes on proposals, Award/Denial letters will be sent to proposers.

Contracts will be written and negotiated with successful proposers and start dates will be established for the programs.

Files will be maintained and will include:

- RFP
- Public Notice Distribution Lists

- Bidders Conference Attendance List
- Bidders Conference Q&A
- Proposal/Response List
- Proposals/Responses
- Proposal Summary
- Proposal Evaluation Worksheets for each Response
- Results
 - o Response List
 - o Awarded to List
 - o Denial Letters
 - o Confirmation Letters
- Responses to RFP
- Youth Council Minutes (if youth funds are utilized)
- WIB/WDB Minutes reflecting decision.

Any potential bidders who are interested in being added to the RFP distribution list maintained by the WIB/WDB office are instructed on the Chautauqua Works website (www.chautauquaworks.com) with the following statement located on the WIB tab:

“All potential bidders interested in being added to the WIB’s distribution list for any RFP released by the WIB, please e-mail or mail contact information to the WIB.”

- c. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the LWDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (when applicable), service providers, and the One-Stop delivery system, in the local area.

The following are the PY25 Negotiated Performance Indicators levels that have been approved for Chautauqua WDB:

Performance Indicator	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	68.0%	67.0%	62.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	65.0%	68.0%	63.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,500	\$7,750	\$3,600
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	60.5%	55.5%	56.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.5%	54.0%	53.5%

- d. Describe the actions taken toward becoming or remaining a high-performing LWDB, consistent with factors developed by the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). The LWDB will be defined as high performing if it meets the following criteria:
- i. It is certified and in membership compliance;
 - ii. All necessary governance actions and items have been accomplished, including executing a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), selecting a One-Stop System Operator, and implementing all required local policies, etc.;
 - iii. All One-Stop Career Centers in the local area have achieved at least an 80% score in the most recent Career Center Certification process; and
 - iv. The local area meets or exceeds all performance goals.

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The Chautauqua WDB's philosophy is to strive for continuous improvement, provide high quality services to all of our system customers, and create and foster strong partnerships. We plan to obtain all four criteria listed above. We will comply with rules and regulations as determined by USDOL and/or NYSDOL. We will work closely with all One-Stop System partners to ensure collaboration, coordination, and MOU compliance. We will continue to comply with all governance actions and items. Specific strategies include but are not limited to increased co-enrollment, improved information sharing and program training, braiding resources, improved service coordination, stronger referral follow up processes, increased use of technology, and increased program accessibility at all partner agencies. We will work with all partners to continuously meet or exceed all performance goals utilizing training opportunities and peer mentoring to assist partners who may be struggling to meet performance goals.

The Chautauqua WDB's mission statement is:

To pull all resources in the community into a systematic approach to:

- Help employers (current and future) become competitive in a global economy
- Help individuals attain life skills necessary for employment in family sustaining jobs

We will continue to be guided by our mission statement resulting in high performance.

Training Services

- a. Describe how training services will be provided in the local area. This may include incumbent worker, on-the-job, and customized training programs.

Training services are provided by Career Specialists (WIOA Title I Service Providers) in both LWDB American Job Centers. All partners may refer any individual who may need training services. Career Specialists and the customer complete an Initial Assessment, Comprehensive Assessment, Career Research including Demand Occupation List review, Training Program and Provider research, any required applications, any pre-training skill level assessments required, IEP, and any other needed activities. If the customer was referred, follow-up with the referring entity will occur. If applicable, braiding of funding for training costs is explored and utilized.

- b. Describe how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

ITAs are issued for approved trainings in Demand Occupations and provided by eligible training providers. Career Specialists complete all required steps and paperwork. Once complete, the customer file is presented to the Program Manager for review and approval. Upon approval by the Program Manager, the ITA is submitted to the WDB finance department for review and payment upon receipt of training providers' invoices.

- c. Describe how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how training services are provided.

All customers with ITAs self-attest to their training provider chosen being their sole decision. The customer's choice of training program is ensured to be informed based on the required steps in the process and the documentation present in the file and indicated on OSOS. The local Board confirms the completion of all steps and required documentation during monitoring.

Public Comment

- a. Describe the process used by the LWDB to provide a period of no more than 30 days for public comment and input into development of the plan by representatives of business, labor organizations, and education prior to submission.*

The Local Plan will be posted on the Chautauqua Works website for a 7-day public comment period in compliance with the required "no more than 30 days" per TA #21-02.1. This posting will be announced in both local papers in Chautauqua County. Prior to posting for public comment, the plan will be provided to the LWDB for review and comment. The LWDB is comprised of business representatives, labor organizations, and education representatives.

***Note:** Per WIOA §679.560(e), comments representing disagreement with the contents of the Local Plan must be submitted with the Plan.

List of Attachments

Please complete all attachments listed below.

Attachment A – In-Demand Occupation List Template

Attachment B – Units of Local Government

Attachment C – Fiscal Agent

Attachment D – Signature of Local Board Chair

Attachment E – Signature of Chief Elected Official(s)

Attachment F – Federal and State Certifications

Attachment G – Youth Services Chart

Original signature pages for Attachments D, E, and F must be delivered to NYSDOL in one of the following two ways:

- Electronic signature (if the LWDB has the capability for it) – Note that electronic signatures must follow the requirements and guidelines of the Electronic Signature and Records Act ([ESRA](#)). LWDBs choosing to submit signature pages via electronic signature may submit these pages via email with the Local Plan.
- Mail original versions – Hard copies of traditional signature pages may be sent to:

Attn: Local

Plan

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**New York State Department of Labor
Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions
W. Averell Harriman State Office Campus
Building 12, Room 440
Albany, NY 12226**

All other attachments must be submitted via email with the LWDB Local Plan Template.

In addition to these attachments, LWDBs must provide copies of the agreements listed in Part [\(d\)](#) of the Program Coordination section of this template. If possible, it is preferable to provide a list of hyperlinks to these agreements available on the LWDB website.

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