



## Board Report

June 24, 2026

### Participant Service Goals for PY'25

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Carry-In Clients	New in PY'25 (7/1/25-5/31/26)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	535	47	340	387	72%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	102	3	40	43	42%
WIOA Out of School Youth	121	8	46	54	45%
WIOA In School Youth	36	9	7	16	44%

For Program Year 2025 (7/1/25 – 6/30/26), Region 8 is working toward meeting their performance goals. Dislocated Worker and Youth enrollments remain a top priority for the next quarter. Our education, training, and job placement services continue to help participants achieve their career goals, as highlighted in the success story below:

*Joshua Dunbar had been working as a security guard for three and a half years when he decided it was time for a change. Before that, he'd worked as a convenience mart cashier, doing everything he could to make ends meet. He liked his job but felt stuck in a low-wage, dead-end cycle. To move out of his parents' home and build a life of his own, he needed to take action. College felt too expensive and time-consuming, so Joshua explored local resources and discovered Wagler Education and Training Center (WETC).*

*Wagler's CDL-A training stood out immediately, but the program cost felt out of reach. Determined, Joshua researched options and learned how WorkOne could fund short-term training. He took a chance, registered with WETC, and was referred to Daviess County WorkOne. To his relief, he qualified for WRG as well as Out-of-School Youth funds.*

*Joshua began CDL Training on 1/6/26. Joshua balanced his full-time guard shifts by day with evening classes three nights a week. After 8 long weeks, his commitment paid off when he passed his CDL exam on the first try. WorkOne provided tailored job leads, helping him quickly land an entry level position with Total Trim Trucking. Today, Joshua earns more, enjoys his work, and has a career he is proud of.*



## Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	December	January	February	March	April
Brown	2.5%	3.3%	3.8%	3.4%	2.5%
Daviess	2.1%	2.7%	3.3%	3.0%	2.1%
Greene	2.9%	3.5%	4.3%	3.5%	2.6%
Lawrence	2.7%	3.2%	3.8%	3.4%	2.6%
Martin	2.2%	2.8%	3.3%	3.0%	2.3%
Monroe	2.3%	2.8%	3.4%	3.3%	2.4%
Orange	2.6%	3.1%	3.8%	3.5%	2.5%
Owen	2.8%	3.3%	3.7%	3.4%	2.6%

In April 2026, Indiana’s unemployment rate was 3.2%, comfortably below the national average of 4.3%. This trend was even more pronounced in Region 8, where county rates were noticeably lower than the state average. Indiana also continues to outpace the nation in workforce engagement; the labor force participation rate reached 63.2% for those aged 16–24 and 83.6% for the 25–54 demographic. Those remaining outside the workforce primarily consist of students, retirees, and individuals managing health issues or family caregiving needs.

### Dislocated Worker Regional Success – Bloomington WorkOne

When George S. first connected with the Bloomington WorkOne, he was navigating a difficult career transition. George has been laid off from his previous job as a laborer and was selected for the RESEA program. George realized he wanted a stable, high-demand career but needed specialized training and financial support to get there. Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Navigator Jane Ann Wampler identified that George needed additional assistance and referred him to Career Advisor (CA) Kimi Bing to explore training options. George set his sights on obtaining his CDL and was officially enrolled in the WIOA program in January 2026.

George participated in comprehensive career research to ensure this path was the right fit. Thanks to his eligibility for WRG funding, his training costs were fully covered. On February 2, 2026, George began his CDL training at C1 Truck Driver Training in Indianapolis. Throughout the intensive program, George demonstrated immense dedication and a strong work ethic. He successfully completed his CDL-A training by late February and officially passed his CDL-A test on March 11, 2026.

With assistance from Kimi, who provided tailored job search and referral services, George actively pursued opportunities in the Indianapolis area. His hard work paid off on April 16, 2026, when he secured employment earning \$20.00 an hour. Today, George feels confident that his newly acquired skills will provide him with a dependable career for many years to come.

## GRANT UPDATES

### Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant



#### Workforce Ready Grant

**For Program Year 2025 (7/1/25 - 6/30/26)** - Region 8 received an initial allocation of \$900,000 of WRG funding. On 4/4/26, Region 8 was given an additional \$419,000 to support ongoing training in the region. A total of \$131,900 is budgeted for administrative costs, and the remaining \$1,187,100 has been allocated for customer tuition.

As of 6/15/26, 288 customers have been enrolled in training. Thus far, 223 students have completed training and 206 (92.4%) have earned their credential. Of the remaining 65 students, 40 are currently attending training and 25 have dropped out of their class. Region 8 staff are continuing to enroll additional customers in training.

As of 6/15/26, a total of \$1,150,578 (97%) of the allocated tuition funds have been obligated on existing clients. It is anticipated that this funding will be fully expended.

#### Employer Training Grant

Region 8 received \$250,000 of Employer Training Grant funds for Program Year 2025 (7/1/25-6/30/26). A total of \$37,500 is budgeted for administrative costs and the additional \$212,500 will support regional employers. Employer eligibility requirements have changed with this new grant cycle. The major changes are new hire wages (\$19.00 per hour), wage increase expectations (5%) and company specialized training reimbursement (\$1,000 per trainee). To date, the region has successfully disbursed over \$156,000. We remain on schedule to fully utilize the remaining allocation by the 6/30/26 deadline. No further funding will be authorized due to the program's termination.

## POWER UP INDIANA

Power Up Indiana is a new program from the State of Indiana and the Office of Commerce that promotes change in employer practices by supporting those who invest in upskilling their existing workforce. It recognizes and rewards companies that train, retain, and advance talent from within—and builds a culture of lifelong learning across the state. Power Up Indiana reimbursement is open to businesses of all sizes, investing in current employees through the select training of the employer in any industry or business sector. To receive reimbursement of funding put toward training, employers must:

- Provide training to a current employee
- Ensure training is completed and determined satisfactory by the business
- Provide the employee a 25% wage increase
- Maintain wage increase for two consecutive quarters

Region 8 has received an initial allocation of \$300,000 for Power Up Indiana with the opportunity to receive additional funding depending on performance. A total of \$45,000 is budgeted for administrative costs and the remaining \$255,000 will be allocated for employer reimbursement. Due low expenditures throughout the state, this grant will be extended to 6/30/27. To date, \$45,000 in obligations has been paid to employers throughout the region.

## GRANT UPDATES (CONT.)

### Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant

In April 2023, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board received \$547,000 through a DOL sponsored grant acquired by the DWD Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships. The Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) funding is intended to expand the number of programs and apprentices; diversify the industries that utilize Registered Apprenticeship (RAP); and increase access to, and completion of, RAPs for underrepresented populations and underserved communities. The goal for these participants will be a nationally recognized credential. During the course of this grant, Region 8 funded 36 pre-apprentices and 88 apprentices. This Grant has been fully expended.

One of the major recipients of the ABA grant was Electricom. On 4/29/26, WorkOne joined with them to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) with an official site visit from the Indiana Department of Labor. Their programs support nearly 100 active apprentices and boast dozens of program graduates. Picture right: Electricom staff guiding Business Services Manager Gail Mitchell during a simulation training at their Paoli Facility.



### State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) Funding

On April 28, 2026, Region 8 was awarded State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) Funding from a DOL sponsored grant acquired by the DWD Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships. The period of performance for this grant is from July 15, 2025 to May 15, 2028. This initiative aims to scale and modernize Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and Certified Pre-Apprenticeships across the state. Round 2 of the SAEF competitive grant explicitly narrows its focus to driving apprenticeship pipelines in two high-demand economic pillars: Education and Advanced Manufacturing/Logistics. Differing from prior apprenticeship grants, employers were required to be identified as a part of the proposal. Oliver Winery will be work in partnership with Region 8 to develop apprenticeships in Advanced Manufacturing and Industrial Maintenance. If additional employers are interested, future rounds of funding will be available for this initiative.

### Pathways 2 Progress (P2P)- Pathway Home 6 Grant

Through membership with Midwest Urban Strategies, Region 8 is a subrecipient of the Department of Labor's (DOL) Pathways Home 6 Grant, being marketed locally as the Pathways 2 Progress initiative. The region will receive approximately \$474,000 for a grant period from 7/1/25 to 12/31/2029. This program provides reentry services to eligible incarcerated individuals prior to release from local jails and will continue comprehensive services following release. This program has shown potential for breaking the cycle of recidivism by linking participants to the workforce system early—while still in jail—and then immediately engaging them upon reentry into the community.

Region 8 plans to enroll 50 participants over the next 2 (two) years. Greene, Lawrence and Orange County jails have agreed to work with the region to assist in this endeavor. Monroe County Jail expressed interest but was unable to participate. Additional facilities could potentially be added in the future depending on program performance. Because this grant includes a program planning and implementation phase, Region 8 anticipated to start enrolling participants in January, but it was delayed to February. As of March 31, Region 8 has enrolled six (6) participants and has continued to identify additional individuals for enrollment in the near future.

## Business Services Updates

### WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

**Novo Nordisk (Monroe County)**- Region 8 received notification that Novo Nordisk (formerly known as Catalent) in Bloomington laid off 400 workers in May 2026. Business Services made contact with Bradley Jones, Senior HR Manager, who stated that the facility intended to cooperate with WorkOne to provide information to employees in regards to Rapid Response, WorkOne Services, UI information, workshops and local office contact information. Unfortunately, this information was not provided to the affected employers prior to their departure.

### Highlight: Monroe County Job Fair

On 5/20/26, Region 8 hosted a job fair at the Bloomington WorkOne office to support individuals affected by the layoffs at Novo Nordisk. Assistant Business Services Manager Randy Wells led the planning and execution of the event, leveraging community partners such as Economic Development Boards and Chambers of Commerce to attract employer participation. The response from local businesses exceeded expectations, with more employers interested than the venue could accommodate. This allowed the team to be selective, ensuring that all attending employers were well-aligned with job seeker needs. By all measures, the job fair was a major success as all 21 employers who committed to the event were present.

In parallel, Gail Mitchell led the region's social media strategy, providing continuous updates and highlighting participating employers. Community engagement was strong, with followers sharing the event over 57 times, significantly boosting visibility and likely contributing to the high turnout.

Local media outlets were also engaged to ensure the event appeared on multiple community event calendars. These efforts contributed to an impressive 131 registered job seekers attending the fair. This event has led employers to request participation in future events held at the Bloomington WorkOne.



### Business Services Activities

- From July 2025 to May 2026, the Region 8 Business Services Team worked with a total of **87 Employers** to provide WIOA Business Services. **590 Distinct Business Services** were provided to those employers.
- During the last quarter, the Region 8 Business Services Team and local office staff have participated in various activities throughout the region. A few of those included:
  - Buy Indiana Expo in French Lick
  - Electricom National Apprenticeship Event
  - Bloomington High School South Career Fair
  - PeopleReady Mini Job Fair at the Bloomington WorkOne

**JAG 6 of 6**

The JAG 6 of 6 Award is presented to JAG programs that meet or exceed performance measures in 6 (six) graduation, further education and employment standards established by the JAG National organization. Region 8 is proud to announce that the JAG class of 2026 achieved the 6 of 6 JAG program standard. Congratulations to our JAG team and students!

Graduation Rate (90%)		Job Placement including Military (60% goal)		Total in Full Time Jobs (60% goal) *30 + hours		Total in Full-Time Outcomes (75% goal)		Further Education Rate (35% goal)*		Connection Rate (95%)		Of 6
97	100.00%	60	61.86%	37	61.67%	78	80.41%	53	54.64%	93	95.88%	6

**Owen Valley High School**

Owen Valley High School had a senior celebration with a visit to the historic Tivoli Theater in Spencer Indiana. Afterwards, the graduating JAG class of 2026 had a well-earned picnic and hike to reflect on the positive aspects of participation in the program and how it can contribute to their successful transition into postsecondary opportunities and employment.



**Paoli High School**

JAG celebrated their graduating class of 2026 with a senior day at the Paoli Park. After a great day of corn hole, tossing frisbees and a nice cookout, students had the chance to participate in a "JAG Bucks" auction! Through the school year, students earned JAG Bucks by exhibiting exemplary attitudes, positive actions, educational improvement, and participating in community service.

