



Board Report

June 25, 2025

Participant Service Goals for PY'24

Program	Regional Plan Goals	Carry-In Clients	New PY'24 Clients (7/1/24-5/31/25)	Total	Goal %
WIOA Adult	544	110	315	425	78%
WIOA Dislocated Worker	106	30	32	62	58%
WIOA Out of School Youth	139	20	47	67	48%
WIOA In School Youth	35	11	24	35	100%

For Program Year 2024 (7/1/24-6/30/25), Region 8 increased customer enrollments and we are working towards meeting the new PY24 goals. This was largely due to enrolling more clients from the RESEA, QUEST and WRG Programs. Our education, training and job placement services have also helped multiple participants successfully achieve their career goals, which is reflected by the recent success story highlighted below:

Ed Fogarty dreamed of a new beginning because the last few years had been hard for him. He lost his job, his marriage dissolved and he faced legal challenges. Ed found work as a waiter and enjoyed it, but he quickly realized that he needed employment that provided an opportunity for future advancement.

Ed had heard about short-term training and knew that earning a certification would provide new job opportunities for him. He learned that WorkOne could help him find a career that suited his specific needs. Ed contacted the Daviess County WorkOne and met with Career Advisor (CA) Crystal Venters. With the assistance of CA Venters, Ed completed career research and decided becoming a truck driver would best suit his interests and abilities. Ed chose to attend QUEST-funded CDL training at Wagler Education and Training Center. When testing day came, Ed was ready and was very excited to pass on his first try. Ed continued to work with CA Venters to update his resume and receive job referrals. As of 3/3/25, he is a gladly earning \$21.50 per hour with full benefits.



Region 8 County Unemployment Rates

County	December	January	February	March	April
Brown	3.9%	4.7%	4.5%	3.3%	2.6%
Daviess	2.8%	3.5%	3.4%	2.5%	2.1%
Greene	4.9%	5.4%	5.0%	3.7%	3.0%
Lawrence	4.6%	5.0%	4.6%	3.4%	2.9%
Martin	3.0%	3.7%	3.8%	2.7%	2.2%
Monroe	3.8%	3.7%	3.8%	3.0%	2.4%
Orange	4.6%	5.0%	4.8%	3.5%	3.0%
Owen	4.6%	5.0%	4.7%	3.7%	3.1%

As of April 2025, Indiana's unemployment rate was 3.9%, which was lower than the national average of 4.2%. All of the Region 8 counties were lower than the state average for the month of April. In addition, Indiana's labor force participation rate of 63.7% was higher than the national rate of 62.6%. This rate is the percentage of Hoosiers ages 16 years and older who are either working or actively looking for work. Those not in the labor force primarily include students, retirees and other non-working populations, such as individuals unable to work due to a disability or illness, or adults responsible for their family's childcare needs.

Region 8 staff continue to answer basic UI questions and help customers use WorkOne computers to file UI claims as needed. Customers who need additional assistance are required to call or email the UI Contact Center at DWD. Customers at the Bloomington and Linton WorkOne locations have the option of using a designated phone to speak directly with an Unemployment Specialist at the UI Contact Center. Customers have the option to file by phone if they do not have access to a computer or smart phone to file online.

GRANT UPDATES

Next Level Jobs: Workforce Ready Grant and Employer Training Grant



Workforce Ready Grant

For Program Year 2024 (7/1/24 - 6/30/25) - Region 8 received a total allocation of \$925,000 of WRG funding. A total of \$92,500 was budgeted for administrative costs, and the remaining \$832,500 was allocated for customer tuition assistance. As of 5/31/25, the region has enrolled 192 students into training programs and approximately \$770,000 of tuition funds have been obligated. 19 students are currently still attending training and 24 failed to complete their class. Of the 149 students who have completed training, thus far 141 have earned a certification resulting in a 94.6% certification rate. Due to delays with grant processing, DWD extended the ending date of the grant from 6/30/25 to 9/30/25. The remaining \$62,144 of available tuition funds have been obligated on customers scheduled to start training in June, July and August. Region 8 anticipates spending all PY'24 WRG grant funds before the 9/30 ending date.

Success Story:

Robert C. really wanted to find a way to advance his career. He was employed at a local Construction Company and loved working there, but Robert wanted to earn better wages and have the opportunity for advancement. He met with his employer to discuss ways to improve his current position within the company. His manager told him that the best way to advance and earn better wages was to obtain his CDL-A license. Robert met with Career Advisor Kathy Qualkenbush at the Bedford WorkOne to determine if he qualified for training assistance. He was eligible for WRG-funded training and started his CDL Classes at Wagler Education and Training Center on 01/16/2025. Robert obtained his CDL-A on 03/01/2025 and as promised, his employer offered him a new position and increased his pay to \$28.00 per hour.

Employer Training Grant

Region 8 received \$750,000 for Program year 2024 (7/1/24-12/31/24). A total of \$75,000 is budgeted for administrative costs and the additional \$675,000 will support regional employers. To date, approximately \$650,000 of those funds have been obligated and will be reimbursed to employers; however, the remaining funds will be unspent due to employers being unable to complete the training or retain their employees as anticipated.

DWD announced the next round of ETG funding and Region 8 received \$250,000 for Program Year 2025 (7/1/25-12/31/25). 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).

Businesses who would like more information about how to apply for ETG funding should contact Gail Mitchell (gmitchell@vinu.edu) or Randy Wells (rwells@vinu.edu). Employers are expressing the need for future funding efforts for this grant.

CHE Intermediary Capacity Building Grant

In June 2024, Region 8 received \$240,000 from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) to serve as an intermediary to increase and strengthen student /school connections with employers and postsecondary institutions. Region 8 collaborated with Regional Opportunity Initiatives and Southern Indiana Education Center to serve the 27 school districts throughout the region. WorkOne Career Advisors are providing individual and small groups of students with informative and productive Career Discovery Meetings. Students receive a packet that contains information about their areas of interest as well as career planning tools, websites and organizations that can serve as resources as they make college and career decisions. Students also have access to WorkOne Career Advisors to provide additional information or career guidance as requested. Region 8 provided 951 students with Career Discovery Meetings. Staff will continue to meet with students and provide services as requested until the end of the grant period in June of 2025. This grant has also provided the opportunity for regional staff to develop strong relationships with our high schools and has expanded our ability to present post-graduation services to students throughout the region.

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.

RAP and certified Pre-Apprenticeship participants can receive funding for Related Technical Instruction (RTI), On-the-Job Learning (OJL) and Supportive Services (SS). Due to program requirements and other circumstances causing unintentional competition among entities within the region, it was difficult to enroll individuals as anticipated. In August of 2024, DWD requested to move a portion of this grant to another region that needed additional funds. Region 8 agreed to move approximately \$296,000 to assist in this process. To date, Region 8 has funded 36 pre-apprentices and 50 apprentices. Region 8 has continued to enroll new apprentices and should be able to fully expend this funding prior to or by 5/15/26.

Business Services Updates

WARN/Non-WARN Notices and Rapid Response Activities

There were no WARN notices issued in this quarter.

Business Services Activities

- From July 2024 – May 2025, The Region 8 Business Services Team worked with a total of **180 Distinct Employers** to provide WIOA Business Services. **1,493 Business Contacts** were made with 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 mini job fairs hosted by the following employers:
 - Simtra BioPharma Solutions (Bloomington WorkOne)
 - Mitchell Manor (Bloomington and Bedford WorkOne)
 - Rescare (Bloomington WorkOne)
- Staff also attended, made presentations, or participated in various Chamber Events/Meeting in Daviess, Greene and Monroe Counties.

Highlight: Martin County Job Fair

WorkOne South Central co-hosted a job fair in Martin County alongside the Martin County Alliance for Economic Growth, KCARC and Shake Broadcasting. Approximately 10 employers participated and 21 jobseekers were in attendance. Although the numbers were lower than anticipated, a lot of positive feedback was received from both the employers and job seekers. The Martin County Sheriff's Department shared that it was the best job fair they have attended as they found several viable candidates for three positions they had struggled to fill by any other method.





Since 2008, Region 8 has worked hard to ensure the success of the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. This established program has shaped the lives of hundreds of students across the eight county service area and thousands of students across the state.

On 04/25/2025, the Indiana Legislature approved the FY26/27 biennium state budget bill which transitioned state funding for school dropout prevention programming into a new fund within the budget for the Department of Education (DOE). This change eliminated funding that had historically been given to the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) for Jobs for America's Graduate (JAG) programs.

DWD and DOE met on 5/21/25 to determine if JAG would continue under their administration. While DOE supported potential solutions such as "leveraging current staff, incorporating JAG and its curriculum into Preparing for College and Careers courses, "investments from school corporations, philanthropic organizations and/or employers", DOE would not provide additional funding to support JAG programming.

Region 8 has attempted to identify additional grant opportunities, reaching out to partners, and trying to work with schools to identify a way to support these programs. Unfortunately, these measures have not been successful. Due to these legislative changes and no additional funding, Region 8 has been forced to layoff of the majority of the JAG staff as of June. JAG management continues to work with schools and we are in discussions to potentially fund 4 to 5 programs during the 2025-2026 school year.

We are committed to ensuring the remaining JAG programs are as impactful as previous years despite the dramatic decrease in funding. It is important to celebrate the great success and accomplishments this program has provided youth in Indiana. Students found hope, a brighter future, and a lifechanging career path because of the opportunities JAG provided to them.

During the 2024-2025 School year:

- **100%** of students stayed in contact with follow-up after graduation last year.
- **99.05%** (209) of our students graduated
- **49.76%** of our students went on to further their education during follow up
- **77.99%** of our students had employment during follow up
- **86.50%** of our students had full time jobs during follow up
- **91.87%** of our students had full time outcomes including post-secondary education and employment during follow up