A Note from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS)

We are pleased to present the 2023 WIOA Annual Report, which summarizes a remarkable year for New Mexico's workforce system. This year, we have begun to see the positive effects of changes we have made to our services, and we have charted a new path for the next four years of workforce development in our state.

Since the pandemic receded, our state, like much of the country, has grappled with low labor force participation rates. Our efforts to address these have included increasing visibility of our America's Job Centers, lowering barriers to entry, innovative programs to reach communities facing re-entry and housing stability challenges, and youth initiatives. We have also focused on partnerships, renewing strong relationships with our local workforce development boards and initiating projects with other government agencies, community organizations, and educational institutions.

These efforts have yielded some wonderful accomplishments, including increased participation in TANF work, apprenticeship, Title I Adult, Title I Youth, and RESEA programs. We also celebrated the expansion of the Be Pro Be Proud tour to include tribal communities and correctional facilities and saw a significant increase in participant customer satisfaction.

After a comprehensive participatory process, the 2024-2027 WIOA State Plan features a vision, goals and strategies that are a marked departure from the plans of the past. While continuing to align to the state's forward-looking economic development goals, the Plan emphasizes the immediate needs of New Mexico communities to build and improve infrastructure and to take care of each other. The plan also recognizes that the rapidly changing nature of work – both with advancements in technology and the emergence of new industries – means that we need to prepare our workforce for a future we cannot fully envision yet. We prioritized reaching populations in our state that are less engaged in the labor force, while also recognizing that the workforce system needs to engage in larger efforts to attract more people to New Mexico. The plan also includes cross-goal and alignment strategies that will enable stronger case management, more coordinated business engagement, and strengthen our partnerships with education and training providers.

On behalf of the entire Department of Workforce Solutions, I extend my most sincere gratitude to our core partners for their extensive contributions, to the State Workforce Development Board for being a key part of a strong community engagement strategy, and to everyone who played a role in making this a great year for WIOA in New Mexico.

Sincerely,

Sarita Nair, Cabinet Secretary

New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions

Combined State Plan Goals and Strategies

New Mexico's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) 2020-2023 Combined State Plan went into effect on July 1, 2020. This report highlights work aligned with the 2020-2023 Combined State Plan's Goals for Program Year (PY) 2023. Core WIOA programs – including Adult, Youth, Dislocated Worker, Adult Education, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation – play a key role in strengthening New Mexico's workforce.

The 2020-2023 Combined State Plan Goals were:

1. Work across public and private partnerships to create a workforce development system that builds sector strategies that are responsive to employers.
2. Make lifelong learning a reality so that New Mexico's workforce is able to attract economic development that results in high-paying jobs.
3. Cultivate community colleges a driver of workforce and economic development.
4. Grow apprenticeship opportunities across sectors to systematically build and sustain a high skilled workforce.
5. Identify and remove barriers to employment and training.
6. Stop New Mexico's brain drain by creating viable economic opportunities for veterans, youth, and young adults.

New Mexico's workforce development system is a collaborative network of state, regional, and local agencies, organizations, and the public. This network offers employment, education, training, and support services to New Mexico's diverse population, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, dislocated workers, adults, and youth. Operating in 33 counties, the system reaches over 2.1 million residents through New Mexico Workforce Connection Centers, which serve as one-stop hubs within the American Jobs Center Network, offering job seekers and employers seamless, collaborative services.

As New Mexico's WIOA 2020-2023 Combined State Plan draws to a close, this report presents both the accomplishments from the past plan and a preview of the strategic direction for the 2024-2027 planning period, which officially began on July 1, 2024.

In June 2023, New Mexico's workforce system embarked on an ambitious journey to develop the 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan, reinforcing the workforce system as a cornerstone of the state's economic vitality. The Department engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including industry leaders, government agencies, non-profit organizations, school-to-career programs, and educational institutions, working collaboratively to meet the evolving needs of the state.

The 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan's goals are designed to address needs and challenges and guide New Mexico's workforce development efforts in an evolving labor market. The goals are:

1. Collaborate with employers to expand the workforce that supports the safety, health, and well-being of New Mexican families and the modernization of New Mexico's infrastructure.
2. Build and empower the workforce to thrive in the face of changes to the state and national economy and the way we work.
3. Increase year-over-year labor force participation rates and economic prosperity for disengaged and difficult to reach New Mexicans.

4. Attract out-of-state workers to New Mexico and improve retention of New Mexicans within the State, particularly in rural communities.

The 2024-2027 WIOA Combined State Plan outlines strategic components to meet these goals, including sector-specific guides essential to shaping effective workforce development initiatives. Through these initiatives, NMDWS aims to ensure that New Mexico's workforce system remails agile, inclusive, and capable of fostering economic growth and opportunity across all communities.

WIOA Strategies and PY2023 Activities

The following are notable activities and accomplishments on goals and strategies from the 2020-2023 New Mexico's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan that occurred during the reporting period (Program Year 2023):

Goal 1 – Work across public and private partnerships to create a workforce development system that builds sector strategies that are responsive to employers.

Renewable Energy

The State of New Mexico is investing millions of federal and state dollars in expanding and improving the energy transition and climate resilience workforce. The rate and pace of clean energy investments across New Mexico is straining the existing workforce and inflating costs, while the accelerated transition to clean energy and electrification in buildings, appliances, and the transportation sector is creating significant demand for new jobs and skills. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) has taken the lead on many of the State's energy transition and climate resilience workforce initiatives such as the Energy Transition Act (ETA) and the Governor's Executive Order "Building New Mexico's Workforce to Foster the Clean Energy Transition, Infrastructure Investments, and Resilient Communities."

NMDWS is coordinating with the following state agencies on infrastructure and climate-ready workforce training activities to encourage workforce planning that is integrated across programmatic and sector needs and aligns with the state's existing workforce development and education systems: Department of Transportation; Environment Department; Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department; Public Education Department (including WIOA Title IV); Higher Education Department (including WIOA Title II); Regulation and Licensing Department; Economic Development Department; Office of Broadband Access and Expansion; Governor's Office of Housing; and the Office of the State Engineer.

Coordinated infrastructure and climate-ready workforce strategies will ensure climate-ready employment pathways lead to good-paying, high-quality jobs that protect worker safety, promote worker voice, and support workers and their families throughout their careers; and prioritize equity in workforce policies and programs to expand opportunities for all workers, particularly those from rural, underrepresented and/or underserved communities and those disproportionately impacted by climate change and the energy transition.

Broadband

In PY23, NMDWS prioritized broadband as its first sector strategy, leading a variety of engagement activities to support the New Mexico workforce in this industry. With 16% of New Mexico residences and businesses unserved or underserved by broadband access, especially in the remote, rural and tribal

communities of the state, it is critical that the state has a sufficient workforce to carry out the needed expansions to provide universal coverage, a top concern of Governor Lujan Grisham. The state is currently administering the dissemination of $675 million in federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) funding – in addition to an existing $1 billion in state funds - to expand broadband coverage. NMDWS' efforts to identify the necessary occupations and related capacity gaps will help maximize this effort.

NMDWS began its broadband sector strategy by convening an industry session at the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce Broadband Summit in December 2023. At the session, broadband industry leaders, representatives from several state agencies, state legislators and staff, and congressional staff identified a wide range of occupations needed to support broadband expansion and access across New Mexico. NMDWS then compiled this list, and analyzed wages, employment numbers, and projections for each occupation in a report published in April 2023. The publication, *Building a Strong Broadband Workforce in New Mexico, Part One: The Jobs*, covered this information for the universe of broadband professions, ranging from fiber splicers, telecommunications line workers, trenchers, and utility locators to engineers, drafters, permit experts, and procurement specialists to diesel mechanics, computer network experts, and drillers. NMDWS staff presented these findings in PY 2023 to several broadband industry audiences, participated in multiple statewide broadband meetings, and planned for further engagement in PY 2024, such as conference presentations and industry and higher education collaborations.

Toward the end of PY 2023, NMDWS conducted a statewide survey of all higher education institutions and related training providers on their broadband-related programs, for which professions, and whether they result in degrees, certificates, industry credentials, or licenses. These results provided the basis for a NMDWS analysis of how extensively these programs support the necessary broadband professions, where there are gaps, and how well they may meet projected growth and need in those occupations. In PY 2024, NMDWS is planning on publishing these findings in Part Two of the *Building a Strong Broadband Workforce* report. This information will help inform the state's education and training institutions on how to address gaps in skill building and ensure necessary qualifications for the state's broadband workforce.

Goal 2 -Make lifelong learning a reality so that New Mexico's workforce is able to attract economic development that results in high-paying jobs.

New Mexico Longitudinal Data System (NMLDS)

To achieve this goal, the State identified the need to share learning and longitudinal data to develop concrete innovative strategies around lifelong learning that reorient systems to meet the workforce needs of today while becoming ready and relevant for the needs of the future. The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) together with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department (NMECECD), the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED), and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), completed Phase 1 and is now in the planning stage of Phase 2 for executing the project.

The purpose and goal of NMLDS is to provide easy access to linked education (early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary) and workforce data, also known as P-20W data. Linking these data points allows state leaders, state and local education agencies, policymakers, early childhood practitioners, educators, workforce developers, external researchers, the public, and other stakeholders to make informed data-

driven policy, practice, and funding decisions. Ultimately, these decisions will drive improvements in New Mexicans' educational and economic outcomes. NMLDS links P-20W data originating from ten source systems owned by NMECECD, NMPED, NMHED, NMDWS, and DVR.

Historically, P-20W data in New Mexico was housed in multiple, unaligned data systems which struggled to communicate with each other to share or aggregate information. As such, the process for longitudinal data analysis required a researcher to request, standardize, and aggregate data from source systems before analysis could begin. This was time-consuming and limited the capacity of the State to make data-driven decisions regarding education and workforce funding, policies, and practices.

NMLDS combines academic and workforce data from ten interdepartmental source systems to derive meaning and insights that will inform and guide decision-makers as they seek to better serve New Mexicans. To maximize security, privacy, scalability, cost, and efficiency, a cloud-native system (Google Cloud Platform) has been implemented. Current data ingested into and reported through NMLDS includes information such as student demographics, enrollment, dual-credit status, remediation status, educational program participation, financial aid, educational interventions, teacher preparation and certification/licensure, and information on employment including industry, earnings, and participation in workforce training initiatives. Initial visualization for public consumption has been produced and will be made available on the Research Informing Success in Education New Mexico (RISE NM) website. RISE NM's mission is to expand the accessibility and usability of statewide educational and workforce cross-agency data. This tool will help drive informed decision- and policy-making that produces positive impacts to the education and workforce outcomes while protecting individual privacy and confidentiality. For more information see https://rise.nm.gov/about-us.

Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI)

The WDQI grant is being used to support a Workforce Longitudinal Data System (WLDS) project which is strongly aligned with the New Mexico Longitudinal Database System (NMLDS) that was already underway and is now in the execution phase. The initial project sought to establish a Workforce Longitudinal Data System (WLDS) that was complimentary to the evolving NMLDS. The target architecture of the WLDS was expected to be an on-premises Oracle DBMS which used additional Oracle tool sets for data integration, master identification matching and quality reviews. As work on the NMLDS progressed this past year, the use of the Google Cloud Platform, TAMR, and LOOKER tools combined with the ability to migrate our necessary data sets to this platform shifted our solutions to using the NMLDS as our targeted architecture. This work has allowed us to focus on supporting the NMLDS while at the same time building out the WLDS using shared resources. Through our direct partnership with the NMLDS team and our contribution to the NMLDS, we have achieved the core goals of the WLDS project with remaining funds still available to address specific gap areas. NMDWS aligned our resources to address the specific gaps related to data governance and security over the past year. We secured professional services to successfully conduct security assessments and secured services to kick off a data governance project initiative. Additionally, significant data analysis has been done on our WIOA service codes and quality improvements have been made through the purging of data and the documentation of processes for consistent use within our Workforce Connection On-Line system. We are planning to complete these efforts by June 2025. We are also working to ensure internal user training to enable staff to start using the Google Cloud Platform and its related toolsets for modeling and visualizations.

Eligible Training Provider Activities

The State Administrative Entity began the process of updating the state Eligible Training Provider Policy focusing on implementing the program performance standards that will need to be met beginning in PY24. The policy will also guide the providers on additional benchmarks for both initial and continued eligibility. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) continued to maintain 492 training programs annually. The training providers consisted of 21 public and private New Mexico colleges and universities. The ETPL continues to focus on in-demand occupations and the state's priority sectors. The Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) identified programs that were accessible to the rural communities. The LWDBs discussed finding providers with short-term industry recognized credentials to meet the needs of individuals wanting to enter the workforce in six months to a year. As the state continued to expand apprenticeship opportunities, the ETPL reflected apprenticeship programs that requested to opt-in.

Goal 4 – Grow work-based learning experiences, apprenticeships, and internships opportunities across sectors to systematically build and sustain a high-skilled workforce in in-demand occupations.

Apprenticeships

As of June 30, 2024, there were approximately 2564 active registered apprentices (an increase of approximately 2.89% from FY23) and 52 registered program sponsors training apprentices in approximately 84 occupations. During FY24, approximately 261 apprentices completed their apprenticeship and approximately 1141 new apprentices were registered. The starting wage for the newly registered apprentices ranged from $12.00 to $43.88 depending on the occupation, with a median starting wage at approximately $16.54. Their exit wage upon completion ranged from $16.85 to $43.89 depending on occupation, with median exit wage at approximately $32.03. The apprenticeship team provided technical assistance and guidance in the development of 6 new registered apprenticeship programs which included the registration of new occupations: project management specialist, teacher, early childhood educator and fourdrinier-machine operator and an animal trainer.

The NMDWS apprenticeship staff participated in numerous outreach events, including community events, conferences, business meetings events, job/career/resource fairs, individual/group business meetings, and community and agency presentations. Outreach events were utilized to provide awareness and education regarding registered apprenticeship programs as an alternative career pathway. Some of those outreach events included: Apprenticeship Day at the Roundhouse and Higher Education Day at the Roundhouse during the 2024 legislative session; the 3rd Annual Women in the Trades Summit hosted by Central New Mexico Community College; the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) Apprenticeship Council-High School Grades to Skilled Trades event; the Early Care & Education Pathways to Success (ECEPTS) Conference; the Gallup Film & Media Expo; the Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) Ingenuity Building Open House; and the CNM Career Center Grand Opening.

The Department conducted various events and activities during National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) to highlight registered apprenticeship, including a recognition ceremony for Women in the Trades during the State Apprenticeship Council meeting, an apprenticeship career fair, and a proclamation issued by the Governor. Additionally, the apprenticeship team engaged in numerous NAW webinars, participated in a Trades Day event, provided support at events hosted by program sponsors and local workforce connection centers, and hosted apprenticeship events.

The Department established and strengthened multiple partnerships via networking and communication activities. Some of those partnerships include: collaboration with the New Mexico Workforce Connection Center – Central Region (Albuquerque) via in-person weekly apprenticeship presentations at Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) outreach; coordination with the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce in collaboration of the Be Pro Be Proud initiative; collaboration with the Albuquerque Public Schools Apprenticeship Council; collaboration with the Local 412 Plumbers & Pipefitters in development of a quality pre-apprenticeship program; and collaboration with the University of New Mexico Valencia campus.

In FY24, the NMDWS apprenticeship team began developing a Program Sponsor Handbook. Once finalized it will be a valuable resource for new and existing sponsors by providing a reference regarding the apprenticeship system, the state apprenticeship agency, their role as a registered program sponsor, funding and incentive information, partner resources, and a desk-reference guide for utilization of the Public Works and Apprenticeship Application (PWAA).

NMDWS was the recipient of a U.S. Department of Labor formula grant and began implementation of the grant (State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula-SAEF 1) which aided in increasing our apprenticeship staffing and providing support services to registered apprentices. NMDWS also applied for and was awarded the SAEF 2 competitive (approximately $5.9 million) and formula grants, implementation of which began in July 2024. These grants will enable continued expansion and development of pre-apprenticeship programs, registered apprenticeship programs, and increased partnerships and collaboration to continue to support apprenticeship expansion statewide.

Pre-Apprenticeship

The state-funded Pre-Apprenticeship Program had great success with tremendous response from individuals and local businesses interested in participating during PY2023. Pre-Apprentices received case management services, education, and training from skilled workers that supported their long-term career goals. They learned foundational skills necessary to enter the general workforce, along with industry specific knowledge.

The pre-apprenticeship program partnered with a local union affiliate to provide curriculum and classroom instruction for OSHA 10 and MC3 certifications. These courses extended to seven weeks of on-the-job training to develop skills and meet program requirements for registered apprenticeships. At the end of PY2023, in partnership, this collaboration transitioned 41% of participants into a registered apprenticeship program with trades including plumbing, pipefitting, HVAC, and electrician.

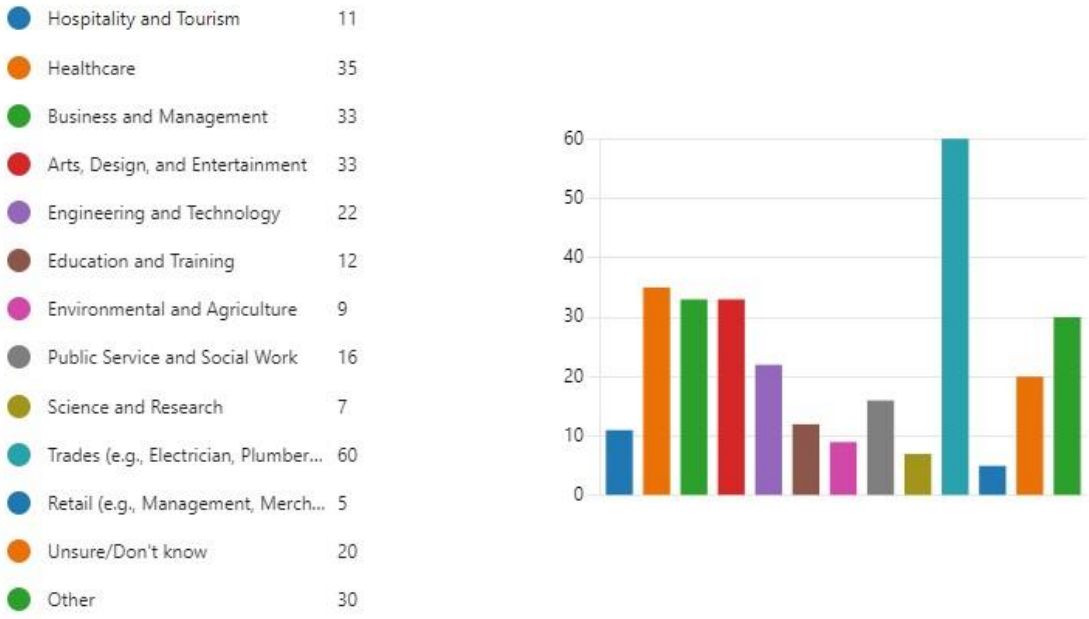
Pre-apprentices worked individually with high school career consultants who provided quality support. This began with a consultation to discuss the program and completing a set of assessments that helped guide potential pre-apprentices towards career interests, budgeting tools, and workplace values. High school career consultants assisted with registering an account in the Workforce Connection Online System. In PY2023, high school career consultants registered nearly 700 participants for the program. Of those registered, 480 were enrolled, and about 20% were hired by the business where they worked, or by another employer, for permanent employment.

During the program, pre-apprentices received case management services working with their high school career consultants and learned about basic skills including financial literacy, such as budgeting and how

to read a paystub. They attended work readiness workshops where they learned to develop timeless skills such as problem solving, teamwork, time management, and work ethics. They also received support services like resume writing and interview preparation.

High school career consultants worked to recruit and match a business with the career interests of the pre-apprentice. This included facilitating an orientation to review program responsibilities, expectations and assisting with account registration in the Workforce Connection Online System. Similarly to the pre-apprentices, not all businesses who registered participated in the program for differing reasons including no response to follow-up, or limited staffing to provide mentorship. High school career consultants recruited and registered nearly 280 local businesses in PY2023 to provide learning opportunities with support in professional development and personal growth for young people in their communities.

Pre-apprenticeship career aspirations and fields of interest:



Goal 5- Identify and remove barriers to employment and training across the lifespan.

The New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (NMDVR) overarching goal is to support participants throughout their vocational rehabilitation journey, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to navigate life successfully. By recognizing their potential and the value of employment, individuals can thrive in competitive, integrated workplaces. The commitment to removing barriers to employment and training continues to drive NMDVR's initiatives and partnerships across New Mexico.

The following are some of NMDVR's key initiatives and achievements:

1. **Educational Outreach**:

- NMDVR has conducted numerous presentations across various agencies, community providers, and local schools to increase awareness of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program. This outreach ensures that more students are informed about the extensive services and support available.

2. **Project SEARCH Expansion**:
   - In 2025, NMDVR will open two new Project SEARCH sites in Central Consolidated Schools and Deming, increasing the total to ten statewide. This work-based learning model has proven effective in achieving positive employment outcomes for youth.
3. **Community Engagement**:
   - NMDVR actively participates in Individualized Educational Planning meetings, parent education events, transition fairs, and community events to foster engagement and support for participants.
4. **Employer Partnerships**:
   - NMDVR has been proactive in reaching out to employers to create more work-based learning opportunities for students and adults with disabilities. The Business Outreach Unit provides crucial education on the hiring process, accommodations, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), highlighting the value of hiring individuals with disabilities.
5. **Performance Success**:
   - NMDVR has exceeded all negotiated performance levels set by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, demonstrating effective engagement and support for participants to achieve their educational and career goals.
6. **WIOA Funding**:
   - The division has fully utilized its WIOA funding to support students with disabilities, ensuring that essential services are provided.
7. **Fee-for-Service Pre-Employment Transition Services**:
   - NMDVR has established fee-for-service Pre-Employment Transition Services through qualified providers, broadening access for students who may not have otherwise participated in work-based learning programs. This model enhances collaboration between VR and vendors to support student experiences.

TANF, NM Works, Education Works, Wage Subsidy, and CareerLink Programs

In December 2021, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) took oversight of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) New Mexico Works Program (NMW), Wage Subsidy Program (WS), CareerLink Program (CL), and Educational Works Program (EWP), fully integrating these programs by December 2022. In July 2023, the New Mexico Human Services Department (NMHSD) reinstated the Transition Bonus Program (TBP) to encourage TANF recipients to transition off benefits through increased employment income.

The NMDWS NM Works team actively engages TANF participants from their initial referral using various contact methods (calls, emails, texts, and mail). They aim to schedule intake appointments within 15 days and engage new participants within 6 business days using the One and Done method, completing assessments and referrals to Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for EWP, WS, or CL opportunities. Routine follow-up appointments focus on providing work opportunities that can lead to permanent employment.

NMDWS conducts monthly reviews of Unsubsidized Employment participants to track those gaining employment through the NMW, reporting these figures to NM Works & Family Support Bureau of NMHSD

(WFSB). NMDWS notes 937 TANF participants who should have closed due to over income status due to new employment vs 432 TANF participants reflecting closed due to new employment in the ASPEN System. With the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) updates on the horizon, NMDWS began tracking additional employment exit data to assess new outcomes and identify participants who did not report new income.

The agency has improved federal reporting performance and aims to meet FY25 goals while effectively managing the TANF caseload and generating employment success stories statewide. Training and standardized procedures have been prioritized for compliance with state and federal requirements. A Quality Assurance (QA) Team established in July 2024 has led to a decrease in case errors, with new enhancements coming in PY25. To boost Work Participation Rates (WPR), NMDWS focuses on re-engaging non-compliant individuals, improving non-engagement rates from an average of 55% in PY23 to 47% in PY24, with a target of 30% by PY25.

NMDWS has launched several initiatives to enhance participant engagement and support the post-COVID workforce. This includes Effective Case Management (ECM) training and workshops with Deloitte to adopt best practices. DWS streamlined referral processes between TANF and Wagner Peyser staff to allow for direct appointment scheduling, and revamped virtual Job Readiness courses that are designed to improve skill development. The Department strengthened collaboration at Workforce Connection Centers, which will be rebranded as America's Job Centers, to prioritize TANF services.

NMDWS aims to promote self-sufficiency by removing barriers and re-engaging participants, while actively collecting feedback to address service delivery challenges. In PY24 (PY23), based on the federal disaggregate process, 32% of reviewed two-parent households did not meet requirements due to non-cooperation, and 17% due to limited participation.

Additional Accomplishments for PY24:

- **Career Link Enrollment:** Increased enrollment, with exits to employment rising from 5 to 22. The addition of a Quality Assurance Analyst facilitated improved referral and exit quality metrics.
- **Wage Subsidy Program Success:** 40% of participants were excited to unsubsidized employment, thanks to strengthened partnerships and prioritized services.
- **Enhanced EWP Participation:** The EWP program saw an average increase of 10 participants monthly, with compliance metrics improving by 20%-51%.
- **New Hire Support Improvements:** Quality Assurance audits provide feedback to new hires and supervisors during onboarding, increasing new hire performance from 64% to 76% on average.
- **Positive WPR Metrics:** A 3% increase in expected disaggregation rates for two-parent households, with goals aligned to meet Federal WPR requirements of (0% all family rate and 8.2% 2phh rate). NM TANF programs are actively working toward the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) metrics, specifically WPR metrics of 37.5% all family rate and 60% 2phh rate.

Challenges and Strategies:

- **Database Issues:** Efforts to develop a new Workpath database were unsuccessful; a manual Case Management Spreadsheet is now tracking unrecorded actions in the current system.
- **New Reporting Requirements:** Starting in PY25, the new Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) metrics will supplement standard WPR. NMW is collaborating with HCA partners to address reporting gaps and submitted an application to be a pilot state for the new FRA initiatives.
- **HCA Backlog:** Reporting challenges have skewed closure reasons, indicating only 3% of closures were due to income. With HCA operations normalizing in PY25, better closure data is expected.

PY24 TANF Programs Improvement Plan Results

- **Overall Caseload Reduction:** The total caseload decreased from an average of 5,733 to 4,097, representing a reduction of 1,636 cases on average.
- **Wage Subsidy (WS) Quality Improvement:** Although WS placements declined from 90 in PY23 to 81 in PY24, referrals also decreased from 258 to 130. This led to an improvement in referral quality, increasing from 34% in PY23 to 62% in PY24.
- **WS Participants Transitioning to Unsubsidized Employment:** The number of WS participants transitioning to unsubsidized employment rose from 22 in PY23 to 33 in PY24. With 111 program terminations in PY24, employment transition rates increased from 25% in PY23 to 30% in PY24.
- **Career Link (CL) Enrollment Growth:** CL enrollments improved significantly, rising from 46 in PY23 to 94 in PY24. Referrals also decreased from 230 to 121, resulting in a referral quality improvement from 20% in PY23 to 78% in PY24.
- **CL Participants Transitioning to Unsubsidized Employment:** Participants transitioning to unsubsidized employment increased from 5 in PY23 to 22 in PY24, reflecting a 440% improvement rate. With 54 program terminations in FY24, this transition rate improved from 16% in PY23 to 40% in PY24.
- **Employment Work Experience (EWP) Enrollment Growth:** EWP enrollments rise, averaging 48 in PY22, 50 in PY23, and reaching 55 in PY24. Historically, the EWP program has had annual decreases in enrollments: PY19 (-10.67%), PY20 (-8.68%), PY21 (-25.44%), and PY22 (-37.07%). However, in PY23, enrollments increased by 3.95%, followed by an 8.93% increase in PY24.

These results illustrate the effectiveness of the PY24 TANF Programs Improvement Plan, demonstrating notable progress across multiple metrics.

The TANF program has made significant advancements in PY24, driven by enhanced partnerships, improved participant services, and a commitment to data-informed decision-making. While challenges remain, particularly in database management and reporting, NMDWS is dedicated to supporting participants in their journey toward self-sufficiency and ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements. Ongoing efforts will continue to address the complex needs of TANF recipients and measure program success effectively.

Month	Total Caseload	Wage Subsidy		CareerLink Program		EWP Program	ACCE Program	
		Placed	Gained Unsubsidized Employment	Placed	Gained Unsubsidized Employment	Placed	Referred	Graduated with HSE
Jul-23	3922	2	3	5	1	9	54	0
Aug-23	4044	6	1	5	0	9	43	0
Sep-23	3807	1	2	19	4	10	68	0
Oct-23	3775	7	5	10	0	13	22	0
Nov-23	3595	3	3	4	2	5	29	1
Dec-23	3603	10	3	6	1	9	18	0
January 2024	3865	5	2	5	1	12	39	1
February 2024	4258	10	1	4	3	6	38	0
March 2024	4489	12	2	22	4	7	31	3
April 2024	4489	15	3	4	2	7	31	2
May 2024	4642	6	5	7	2	4	24	4
June 2024	4677	4	3	3	2	4	19	5
Totals	**AV: 4097**	**81**	**33**	**94**	**22**	**95**	**416**	**16**

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Vocational Training (TANF-VT)

The TANF-VT program offered by NMDWS in partnership with the Healthcare Authority (HCA) of New Mexico and the Work and Family Support Bureau (WFSB) plays a crucial role in empowering individuals receiving TANF Cash Assistance. By providing tuition assistance for vocational training, the program equips participants with essential skills and certifications needed for success in the workforce.

With 16 dedicated VT case managers positioned in one-stop offices across the state, NMDWS ensures that both in-person and virtual services are accessible, particularly to those in rural areas. This tailored approach, alongside referrals between Title III and Title I staff, enhances the support available to participants, promoting co-enrollment and access to additional resources.

In Program Year 2023, the impact of TANF-VT is evident: 429 individuals were referred for vocational training, leading to 117 enrollments and 46 program completions that resulted in industry-recognized credentials. Notably, 20 graduates secured employment in their new fields, while 4 ventured into entrepreneurship, highlighting the program's effectiveness in fostering self-sufficiency and economic stability.

STEP Up! Program

The STEP Up! program is a collaborative initiative between the New Mexico Child Support Services Division (CSSD) and the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions (NMDWS) aimed at assisting parents who are unemployed or underemployed in finding better job opportunities to support their children. The program offers a range of services, including job search assistance, resume writing, interview preparation, and career counseling.

Parents identified as non-custodial and struggling to meet their child support obligations due to low income can voluntarily join the STEP Up! program by contacting their CSSD caseworker. Additionally, CSSD may refer individuals to the program as an alternative to enforcement actions, such as license suspension or bench warrants for unpaid child support.

Custodial parents seeking to enhance their employment situation can also choose to enroll in the STEP Up! program voluntarily. The program is designed to help participants achieve their career goals while ensuring they can provide for their children. In Program Year 2023, CSSD conducted 299 interviews with non-custodial parents, resulting in 104 successfully placed better job opportunities.

Housing Stability

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions is aiding in housing stability to make a difference in the lives of New Mexicans by combining workforce services development approach with employment security. Our housing stability services for at-risk communities and assistance to renters navigate housing obstacles in New Mexico are being served by providing employment services case management, providing job training opportunities, as well as assisting in tangible resources such as job interview clothing, laptops, and gas cards. Through our services, individuals experiencing housing insecurity can have greater success in job training and employment. In our partnership with homeless coalitions across the state, NMDWS

reached out on a grassroots level, for greater impact and improved outcomes. These coalitions include UNM Pathways-Statewide, 100% Otero, Community of Hope-Las Cruces, and the Gateway Center & Family Navigation Center in Albuquerque. During PY23 Housing Stability Program received a total of 375 referrals across all partners, with a total of 137 individuals participating in Career Services with 21 individuals reporting employment. NMDWS has issued 39 laptops, $29,975 in gas cards, and $26,375 in gift cards to purchase items that help get participants ready for work.

Career Transition Specialist (CTS) Program

Career Transitional Specialists were designed and implemented within the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions after being awarded a grant from the USDOL in 2022. The Equity Grant was designed to serve Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants with direct assistance and move those unemployed into reemployment or to self-sufficiency.

The UI and Employment Services Divisions have continued to work collaboratively on the CTS initiative, integrating it into the front-line work conducted through the UI Call Center and the state AJC locations. With that partnership in place, the CTS team has assisted in adding more than 3,000+ referrals to the AJCs throughout New Mexico. With the success of the CTS team, NMDWS has aligned the CTS program as part of our ongoing services to New Mexicans.

When assisted by CTS, the claimant discusses their UI claim, but then transitions immediately into a conversation about their job search, job referrals, and Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) referrals. A more detailed assessment of the claimant's re-employment needs culminates in a scheduled appointment at their local AJC with a Career Consultant or a Title I referral. The claimant ends with, at minimum, their registration in WCOS, details of current employment events and/or services.

The CTS positions created another career path for the traditional call-center employee, who can now take a step up to the CTS position within the UI Division and/or work within the many AJC locations, where they provide UI and other services to walk-in customers, in areas where there are large populations of the underserved. The CTS staff also continue to travel for Rapid Response events and to identified remote locations on certain days of the week to meet customers face-to-face who need help from a layoff or have transportation barriers, to assist them with their UI claims and reemployment services.

This hybrid position and approach has proven to be very successful in serving the "whole customer." We will continue to push forward for the future as this role will continue to improve overall employment and reemployment for New Mexicans.

ARPA UI Navigator Grant

PY 2023 was the second year of the ARPA UI Navigator Grant. The grant and the scope of work for New Mexico was to improve access and knowledge of Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits and application process to New Mexico workers living in remote/ rural locations and tribal communities across the state. It was designed to provide training to local community health workers (CHWs), aka "navigators", statewide, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to share information about UI and employment services (ES). In partnership with CHW's individuals in the following communities were provided the resources and referrals to access UI benefits and employment services while attending

outreach events: Santa Domingo Pueblo, Hatch, Anthony, Chaparral, Silver City, and Farmington. Training the CHW's in the various communities provided an opportunity to build stronger relationships with the Workforce Connections Offices and various internal and external WIOA partners. As the grant rolls into the next year, the Department will implement approved modifications to continue improving on UI access and community engagement and training.

Goal 6- Stop New Mexico's brain drain by creating economic opportunities for youth and young adults.

K-12 Activities under Work-Based Learning

In PY 2023, NMDWS substantively contributed to career-connected learning for students and other young people in New Mexico public education in several important ways. These approaches included providing staffing resources in collaboration with the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED); administering a system of high school career consultants; and supporting educator preparation through Registered Apprenticeship Programs. NMDWS will maintain and expand this public school system engagement in PY 2024 and beyond.

Throughout PY 2023, NMDWS and NMPED jointly employed a Youth Work-Based Learning Program Manager, who helped advance career and technical education and work-based learning initiatives by providing training and technical assistance to public schools throughout the state. This effort focused on best and promising practices in career readiness, job exploration, and strategies to enhance collaboration and coordination with local workforce development boards, state and regional businesses, and industry organizations to facilitate and implement meaningful work-based learning opportunities for youth participants.

One of the key roles of the joint NMDWS-NMPED Program Manager has been to coordinate the activities of high school career consultants, who provided outreach to young people, usually ages 16-24, in schools, workforce connections offices, and communities to recruit them to participate in pre-apprenticeship programs. The high school career consultants, who worked in five high schools, as well as in higher education institutions and with community partners, supported students with onboarding and orientation, and helped them identify their interests and match them with businesses and case management. The New Mexico state legislature appropriated $1.7 million for the high school career consultants in PY 2023 but eliminated this funding for PY 2024. DWS remains committed to this approach going forward for several high school career consultants, identifying alternative funding sources in the coming year.

NMDWS also supported the New Mexico public education system in PY 2023 through sustained support, engagement, and promotion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in educator preparation. During PY 2023, NMDWS approved a new RAP in the Hobbs School District to sponsor apprenticeships for educator preparation in early childhood through 3rd grade. NMDWS continued support of another RAP at Santa Fe Community College, established in the previous year, specifically focused on preparing early childhood educators in state-funded preschool, childcare and Head Start programs. Because decades of research have found significant benefits of quality early childhood education on later K-12 outcomes, this initiative will certainly have positive impacts throughout New Mexico's public education system.

In PY 2023, NMDWS also coordinated with NMPED, and its educator preparation partners on the development of a teacher residency apprenticeship, including supporting PED's successful federal grant application for the DOL Apprenticeships Build America (ABA) grant, a $4 million initiative to support educator preparation apprenticeships. NMDWS and NMPED have begun discussions on how to coordinate this effort with DWS' federal apprenticeship programs and formula funds in PY 2024 and beyond.

Looking forward, NMDWS is also expanding this involvement in supporting public education in New Mexico by serving on the new state Career and Technical Education Advisory Board, co-leading with NMPED a new work-based learning community of practice initiative for school districts and workforce partners and assisting NMPED with outreach and recruitment of business representation on school district and school advisory committees.

Be Pro Be Proud

Be Pro Be Proud is a state-funded partnership between the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions and the New Mexico Center for Economic Opportunity, the charitable foundation of the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce, spearheading the movement to bring a new generation of pride, progress, and professionals to New Mexico's skilled workforce. Be Pro Be Proud is a national workforce development initiative focused on attracting students and young adults to technical careers through exciting simulation experiences, then connecting them to post-secondary opportunities to include registered apprenticeships and careers. The Be Pro Be Proud New Mexico mobile workshop unit makes tour stops at local middle schools, high schools, and community organizations.

The Be Pro Be Proud initiative is addressing a pressing national challenge. Over 23% of current skilled professionals are at or near retirement age. The next generation of new talent is not sufficient to meet the demand. The initiative targets many key audiences including high school and nontraditional students, current skilled professionals, legislators, parents, teachers, career coaches, and employers to dispel the myths about skilled trade professions. The mobile workshop is customized to skilled professions that are most relevant to the industry needs in New Mexico. The professions selected for Be Pro Be Proud New Mexico are Automation/Robotics, Carpenters/Construction, Commercial Trucking Driving, Diesel Technician, Electricians, Fiber Optics, Healthcare/Medical Technicians, Heavy Equipment Operators, HVAC, Line workers, Plumbers, and Welders.

Since the first launch in Arkansas in 2016, there have been over 394,600 visitors and over 95,135 individuals who have joined the movement nationwide. The Be Pro Be Proud initiative is currently in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas. Be Pro Be Proud New Mexico launched on November 9, 2023, and has had over 7,100 visitors with over 3,000 individuals joining the movement. The Be Pro Be Proud NM mobile workshop made a total of 61 tour stops throughout the State of New Mexico in PY23.

Set-Aside Fund Investments

Because federal funding has remained flat while the State legislature has instituted mandatory pay increases, New Mexico uses its set-aside to fund core operations. State set-aside funds support the following ongoing costs that support statewide systems/operations to support and enhance workforce development activities:

***New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System*:** NMDWS used set-aside funding to sustain a virtual system available 24/7 to support access to services and supports including, unemployment benefits, career exploration/readiness tools, resume development, links to labor market information and access to career professionals to provide one-on-one assistance and career counseling. The New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System also manages and reports performance, accountability, and case management work statewide.

Personnel Costs of WIOA Program Coordinators and Monitoring. NMDWS uses set-aside funding for staff assigned to provide ongoing support to each of the four LWDBs, including consultation for local board and chief elected officials on best and promising practices; Title I program implementation for youth, adult, and dislocated workers, fiscal compliance, policy development, local/regional planning, sector strategy and career pathway implementation, and partnership engagement at federal, state, and local levels.

***New Mexico Performs Data Dashboard/System*:** The dashboard system is licensed from FutureWork System. The *NM Performs* system performance monitoring data views and reports are designed to provide timely and accurate data on activities and outcomes to assist NMDWS leadership, including SWDB and LWDBs, to set priorities, target resources, review, and report on program goals.

***Career Solutions and Why I Work*:** NMDWS uses set-aside funding for online tools and resources designed to support career readiness/exploration for youth and young adults. The Career Solutions tools also include a curriculum that can be utilized by schools to support classroom instruction. These two tools have quickly become recognized and valued for their ability to connect.

Evaluation & Quality Improvement Activities

The following is a list of research and evaluations that the NMDWS Economic Research & Analysis Bureau conducted in PY 2023. These studies informed and guided state and local planning for the Combined State Plan, and LWDB local plans. Research included focused data studies and publications which were used to facilitate discussions for economic recovery and workforce planning. Additional agencies benefitting from evaluation/research documents included Department of Health, Economic Development, Senior Employment, and legislative staff and representatives.

2024 State of the Workforce Report. The online version of this report and can be found at: Manual (state.nm.us)

July 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Union Membership. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Union_Membership_08_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

September 2023: Highlights from the New Mexico 2023 State of the Workforce. The online version of this report and can be found at: highlights_nmsotw_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

September 2023: Tribal Population and Employment Status Data. The online version of this report and can be found at: Tribal_population_Employment_status_data_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

September 2023: Job Creation at New Establishments in New Mexico. The online version of this report and can be found at: Job_Creation_New_Establishements_NM.pdf (state.nm.us)

October 2023: Highlights from the 2023 Veterans Profile. The online version of this report and can be found at: Highlights_2023_Veterans_Profile.pdf (state.nm.us)

October 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Youth. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_DataFocus_Youth_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

November 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Child Care. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Child_Care.pdf (state.nm.us)

December 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Multiple Jobholding Rate. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Multiple_Jobholding_Rate.pdf (state.nm.us)

December 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Seniors (65 years and Older) . The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Seniors_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

December 2023: New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Job_Openings_and_Labor_Turnover_Survey_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

January 2024: Revised Employment Growth After the 2023 Benchmark Review. The online version of this report and can be found at: 2023_Benchmark_Review.pdf (state.nm.us)

January 2024: New Mexico's Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Alternative_Measures_Labor_Underutilization_2024.pdf (state.nm.us)

February 2024: New Mexico Exports and Jobs Supported. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Exports_and_Jobs_Supported.pdf (state.nm.us)

February 2024: New Mexico Data Focus: Union Membership. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Union_Membership_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

March 2024: The Gender Wage Gap. The online version of this report and can be found at: Gender_Wage_Gap.pdf (state.nm.us)

March 2024: New Mexico Data Focus: Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_Job_Openings_and_Labor_Turnover_Survey_2024.pdf (state.nm.us)

April 2024: Tribal Population and Employment Data. The online version of this report and can be found at: Tribal_Population_Employment_Status_Data_2024.pdf (state.nm.us)

April 2024: New Mexico Occupational Employment and Wages Statistics (OEWS) 2023 at a Glance. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_OEWS_2023.pdf (state.nm.us)

May 2024: New Mexico Data Focus: 2023 Employment and Unemployment for New Mexico's Municipalities. The online version of this report and can be found at: NM_Data_Focus_2023_Employment_Unemployment_NM_Municipalities.pdf (state.nm.us)

June 2024: 2022–2032 Occupational Employment Projections. The online version of this report and can be found at: 2022-2032_Occupational_Employment_Projections.pdf (state.nm.us)

June 2024: Industry Spotlight: Retail Trade. The online version of this report and can be found at: Industry_Spotlight_Retail_Trade.pdf (state.nm.us)

Major Employment Developments (MED). Every month ER&A sends the MED report to over 100 people. The MED lists business activities driving either the creation or loss of 50 jobs or more throughout the state. Information is gathered from published articles, government documents, private- and public-sector news releases, and reports from local Workforce Connection offices. A shortened version is included in the Labor Market Review. The most recent MED report can also be found at the following location: MED_0624.pdf (state.nm.us)

New Mexico Health Care Workforce Committee 2023 Annual Report. NM DWS staff from ER&A contributed to this annual report, published in October 2023, which focused on a demand analysis for select health care professionals. The data used were 2022-2032 long term projections; employment and wages; and the number of advertised job openings made available from WCOS https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmhc_workforce/11/

Specific Evaluation Projects

Customer Satisfaction

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions distributed the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) on February 12, 2024, to 7,390 participants that received services from NMDWS Workforce Connection Centers (NMWCC) or who interacted with the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) during calendar year 2023. Approximately 6.2 percent (458) of the emails bounced because the email address stored in the participant record in WCOS was not valid. This is slightly lower than the 6.3 percent that bounced in the survey that was sent out in 2023.

The overall level of customer satisfaction in 2023 significantly improved compared to customer satisfaction in 2022. About 71.3 percent responded positively when asked about their level of satisfaction with the services they received while visiting a New Mexico Workforce Connection Center in 2023. This was a marked increase (12.7 percentage points) from the 58.6 percent that participants reported for 2022. (For full report see Appendix I)

Performance Accountability & Integrity

In program year 2023, New Mexico extended career services to 1,891 adults at an average cost of $2,163 per participant. Moreover, the state also delivered training services to 1,654 adults at an average cost of $4,051 per participant. Notably, the participation in additional training saw a 23.5 percent decrease when compared to the figures for program year 2022.

The Dislocated Worker Program provided career services to 627 participants, with an average cost of $3,497 per participant, and training services to 444 participants, with an average cost of $4,011 per participant. There was a 13 percent reduction in Dislocated Worker program participation in New Mexico when compared to program year 2022, reflecting New Mexico's strong economy.

The Youth Program provided career services to 1,035 participants with an average cost per participant of $2,739, and training services to 520 participants with an average cost per participant of $3,501. These numbers reflect a decrease in services in the youth program of 20 percent from the program year 2022.

The WIOA Title III Employment Services program served 26,517 participants with an average cost per participant of $214. Title III saw 14 percent increase of participants served in comparison to Program Year 2022. The workforce system anticipates a continued gradual rise in individuals seeking reemployment services in the upcoming program year considering elevated inflation and other economic factors.

The WIOA Adult program met five of the primary indicators of performance and failed none. The WIOA Dislocated Worker program met five of the primary indicators of performance and failed none. For the youth program the state met four primary indicators of performance and failed one. The youth program experienced challenges in credential attainment. The WIOA Title III Employment Services program met three primary indicators of performance and failed none. During the program year, New Mexico provided multiple technical assistance opportunities to the local areas and service providers.

Data Analysis

To assist the state, local boards, and service providers in better understanding the regional workforce data including the primary indicators of performance, the agency continues to utilize the FutureWorks System. This software is a data analytic tool that allows the state and local areas to isolate specific performance measures and explore the data to better understand populations and circumstances affecting the primary indicators of performance.

This tool provides multi-faceted insight into the workforce system in terms of progress towards state and local area performance measures, as well as providing a focus on the demographics of the populations served (ethnicity, education level, priority populations, barriers to employment).

To determine areas of opportunities for PY2023, New Mexico analyzed customer flow, demographics and performance of Title I and Title III programs.

In Appendix II, Tables 1-5 contain numerous data views which provide a more in-depth understanding of how citizens were served. Table 1 reflects how New Mexico performed as a state with priority performance metrics. Tables 2-5 reflect how each Local Workforce Development Board performed with priority performance metrics. Notably, Table 6, Priority Participants demonstrates that although NM has returned to pre-pandemic capacity levels, the service to priority participants (low income, veterans, disability, English language learners) has exceeded pre-pandemic levels.

Data Validation

The agency, in accordance with USDOL federal requirements, established and finalized the data validation policy for the six core WIOA programs meeting the approval of the State Workforce Board. Data validation is intended to enhance data integrity and authenticate that workforce services and funds are being provided to eligible individuals by verifying that the performance data reported by local workforce development boards to the State and to USDOL are valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across

programs. The process includes verifying relevant source documentation defined by the code of federal regulation and Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGLs).

The workforce system benefits from establishing data validation policy and practices as it will enhance the agency's ability to identify anomalies in the data and resolve issues that may cause inaccurate reporting, identify allowable source documentation required for common data elements, and improve program performance accountability through the results of data validation efforts.

Data validation has been occurring in Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) as well as the Trade Adjustment Assistance program prior to the establishment of the upcoming data validation policy. As such these programs may experience few if any changes to data validation practices.

WIOA Title III Employment Services as directed by the Wagner- Peyser act is now required to conduct data validation and will be required to establish processes and procedures to conduct data validation as Title III programs have not been required to conduct data validation in the past.

The agency will continue to provide training and ongoing technical assistance to all six core partners in conducting data validation as needed as the policy is enacted.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers

This indicator is shared across many core programs and cannot be attributed to any one program within the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. TEGL #03-23 guides NMDWS to establish outreach activities for effectiveness in serving employers. Specifications for measuring effectiveness in serving employers are measured by Employer Penetration Rate and Repeat Business Customers, remaining the same as it was for PY22. The employer penetration rate currently stands at 12.2%, below the goal of 15%, but improved from the PY 22 rate of 11.5%. The number of employer business customers for PY 23 increased by 62 (7,562 employers in PY22 and 7,624 in PY 23).

Information and support services that are delivered to businesses through mass messaging in the online system or other follow up contact such as brochures or events are not reportable services. State and/or Federal Tax Credits activities were not included in the employer penetration or repeat business percentages. Our department plays a critical role in connecting talent with opportunity, connects diverse customers to employment and training opportunities, and helps employers recruit skilled employees that match their employment opportunities.

Outreach actives can include attendance at, facilitation of, collaboration with, or participation in job/career/community fairs, rapid response events, one-stop centers/mobile one-stops, community access points, high school/college career day, podcasts and more. Formal presentations at economic development agencies, chamber of commerce, governor conferences, and other city & county functions are important events for our agency to attend. Concentrated business efforts often include conducting more specific business needs and specialized recruitment for business such as:

- Targeting & adding out-of-area or out-of-state candidates.
- Conduct proactive outreach to underserved communities, such as rural, refugees, low income, lack of transportation, and individuals with disabilities.
- Providing employers with workspace at the WFC offices for screening & interviewing.

- Faster response and supported efforts to search for qualified candidates, more one-on-one communications.
- Providing labor market workforce information on regional & local market conditions, occupations, skills the business needs, local employment dynamics, (supply & demand), turnover rates, and other community resources that would support their workforce needs.
- Providing extended employer training in the online system so employers can manage the candidate search tools and make changes to their job descriptions as necessary.
- Industry awareness campaigns and specific sector strategies.
- Individual hiring events target one business at a time: usually larger companies.
- Outreach to out-of-state employers seeking remote workers.
- Outreach in multiple languages.
- Communications with influencers that have large following and use various media platforms.
- Concentrated efforts on follow up of self-registered employers.
- Media strategies are used to conduct outreach to the public.
- Quick response codes (QR codes) are added to promotional materials.
- Email communication to existing partners as well as potential partners.
- Internal websites as well as business, community, & partner websites.

Rapid Response and Trade Adjustment Act

Throughout PY23, 25 companies received Rapid Response services, and 2,085 employees were reported as layoffs. This is 20 fewer companies requesting services as compared to 45 for PY22 and 84 fewer employees. Various industries were impacted with the majority being in: Manufacturing, Transportation, and Healthcare. New Mexico's four regions (Central - 1640, East – 82, Northern – 69, Southwest – 294) were all impacted, and most employers received Rapid Response services. In the Central region, UNM Sandoval Regional Medical Center filed a WARN notice; however, they did not require Rapid Response Services for 641 individuals, as it was an acquisition by UNM Medical Center.

The Rapid Response program built a cohesive partnership by adding new services such as economic development information, healthcare information, local business involvement, and one-on-one services for unemployment services. When Rapid Response is notified of an impending layoff or closure, the program coordinator is notified to begin research and provide information to state, local, & county government as well as the regional board members. When and if the company shows signs of foreign impact, the TAA coordinator files a petition for review with USDOL. Currently Congress has not reauthorized the TAA program, but individuals on previously approved petitions are still eligible to receive trade benefits and trade case managers are providing services to those individuals. Working together with partners enables benefits information to be dispersed to individuals sooner and leads to more participants/enrollments in all benefits. This collaboration contributes to more participation in the programs.

In addition to employment and business services activities provided in the workforce connection offices to individuals identified through rapid response, DWS provides information regarding layoff aversion to employers. With information received through the WARN process as well as through the state's use of the bridge report, the Rapid Response coordinator has been able to provide outreach and coordinate onsite employer visits to provide information to impacted workers. DWS hosts many employer events

held in the one stop centers and other locations around the state to connect dislocated workers with new job opportunities.

Energy Transition Act (ETA) Displaced Worker Assistance Fund

The Energy Transition Act (ETA) of 2019 established critical support for individuals and communities impacted by the closure of facilities like the San Juan Generating Station in Waterflow, New Mexico. This legislation created the state-funded Displaced Worker Assistance Fund, aimed at helping those who lost their jobs due to the station's closure, which affected not only workers at the facility but also contracted employees. The act identifies "affected communities" as counties within a 100-mile radius of the closure site, which includes San Juan, McKinley, Rio Arriba, and Sandoval counties, along with tribal lands such as the Navajo Nation and the Jicarilla Apache Nation.

NMDWS has developed a structured funding plan consisting of two phases. They established eligibility criteria, an online application system, and procedures for fund disbursement. Initially, it was estimated that over 350 individuals were affected, but this number has since risen to more than 500.

In Program Year 23 (PY23), over 550 individuals received Phase 1 direct payments. Phase 2, launched in November 2023, expanded support to include training, registered apprenticeships, and further direct payments. So far, over 230 applications for Phase 2 have been processed, with checks distributed to eligible working individuals. Additionally, DWS has enrolled 33 participants in post-secondary education programs statewide, providing them with monthly living stipends during their training. Co-enrollment in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs enhances support for these participants, offering additional services and resources.

Wagner - Peyser

State Rapid Hire Events and Business Services

The New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions recognized that many state agencies experienced difficulties when recruiting for positions that are critical to the effective operation of that agency. With the approval of the NM State Personnel Office a Hiring Events Program was designed to assist agencies when the standard recruitment efforts are unsuccessful.

Employment Services and the Workforce Connection offices assisted with many Rapid Hires throughout the state in PY 23. The Workforce Solutions staff aid in facilitating, organizing, finding a venue, signage, marketing, scheduling, screening, and interviewing prospective candidates, completing reference checks, and providing supplies necessary for Rapid Hire Events. State agencies began to adopt these practices, needing less assistance or our services.

Rapid Hires for state agencies PY 23 included:

- **August 15, 2023-** Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD) Albuquerque – included multiple state CYFD offices, virtual services as well as in person
- **January 13,** Health Care Authority, 150 positions
- **January 18, 2024-** CYFD Roswell
- **January 24, 2024 -**Albuquerque Police Department Transit Security positions

- **April 26, 2024-** TANF Career Consultant positions
- **May 2 & 3-** DWS Unemployment Customer Service Positions
- **June 16 & 17, 2024 -**DWS Labor Relations Investigator positions

The Rapid Hire events have sparked businesses and employers to follow this model, making it very popular with job seekers as well. Rapid hires shorten hiring time and get individuals into career opportunities faster.

State-wide offices held employment events throughout the program year. The Central Region held 62 employment events with over 2,500 participants. The Eastern Region held several events and had over 600 job fair attendees. The Northern Region held several events and had over 700 job fair attendees and the Southwest Region had over 100 participants attending their events.

For the past 4 years our agency has partnered with the NM Environment Department, Water Authority Division. The Workforce Connection Offices host the exam site for the Water Operator position. DWS staff state-wide administer and proctor the Water Utility Operator testing. The test allows NMED staff advancement and helps to fulfill NMED's need to have certified water testing operators across the state. Water Testing Operators are crucial to protect public health and the environment. This partnership has educated our community and businesses of the type of services we provide and has empowered NMED's staff to increase their wage earnings. State-wide there have been 678 NMED employees who have completed the water utility operator testing at our offices.

In March 2024 our employment services re-launched their Corporate Training Services. The corporate training services are designed to assist our New Mexico employers with the challenges they face regarding retention, employee skills, employee productivity and internal promotions. This service is critical to ensure that employees are competent and able to meet the company's goals. In a short time frame our corporate training services have trained 200 employees from various employers such as Presbyterian, Kirtland AFB and Office of Federal Investigations.

Training has been a key focal point in administering our Wagner-Peyser Services. DWS has partnered with Deloitte to deliver staff training and over the course of 3 weeks, field staff completed a series of training courses titled, the *Future of Wo*rk. The training focused on how to help our job seekers navigate through life's disruptions. With an emphasis on the fast- paced technology such as A.I. along with the preparing for jobs that are being reinvented and helping to prepare staff in creating the "unleashed workforce"-where work is redefined to create new value and meaning for organizations, employees, stakeholder, and communities. The series of training for all 109 staff state-wide has opened a broader holistic approach to assisting our job seekers.

Local Workforce Board Activities

Central Workforce Development Board

During Program Year (PY) 2023, the WCCNM Adult and Dislocated Worker Program achieved remarkable success by exceeding all negotiated performance measures. This accomplishment stemmed from the

integration of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives, which prioritized maximizing grant funding for participants to secure sustainable employment. The program enrolled 478 new job seekers in classroom training and 275 in work-based learning opportunities, including on-the-job training and apprenticeships, ensuring a focus on in-demand occupations.

WCCNM is actively enhancing sector strategies in IT/tech and healthcare while leveraging a newly awarded $2 million, five-year H1-B Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs grant from the Department of Labor. This initiative aims to develop partnerships with employers and educational institutions, targeting key sectors such as broadband, transportation, and renewable energy. By fostering collaboration, WCCNM is dedicated to creating robust career pathways and addressing workforce gaps for historically marginalized and underserved populations.

To further strengthen these efforts, WCCNM is establishing a sector advisory council that includes key representatives from various industries, aiming to gather insights into workforce needs and skill gaps. This council will facilitate the development of tailored training programs and career pathways aligned with employer demands, ensuring that participants are equipped with the skills necessary for success in high-priority occupations. Through these comprehensive strategies, WCCNM is committed to driving economic growth and workforce competitiveness in the Central Region.

Eastern Area Workforce Development Board

In Program Year (PY) 2023, the Eastern Area Workforce Development Board (EAWDB) made significant strides through strong partnerships and focused strategies in healthcare, hospitality, and construction. Collaboration between the Board, Title I and III partners, and the One-Stop Operator helped align workforce, education, and training services to meet the region's needs.

The healthcare sector saw 289 participants in training, including 30 in behavioral health, addressing critical skill gaps. In hospitality, EAWDB partnered with the Inn of the Mountain Gods Casino for incumbent worker training, creating career advancement opportunities. In construction, efforts focused on strengthening career pathways and addressing workforce shortages.

EAWDB also hosted a Workforce Business Summit, bringing together employers to discuss recruitment, retention, and key resources like the Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit and WIOA services. Additionally, career fairs and community hiring events across the region connected job seekers with employers. The Board's commitment to improving service delivery, especially in remote areas, is helping create a more adaptable and resilient workforce in the eastern region.

Northern Area Workforce Development Board

In Program Year 2023, the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board (NALWDB) achieved key milestones, supporting over 1,250 individuals and exceeding state targets with a 78% credential attainment rate and an 82% employment rate. Title 1 Adult Services served 418 participants, with high job placement in healthcare and transportation, while 86% of dislocated workers secured employment. Youth Services helped 70% of participants transition to further education or employment.

The Business Services team expanded employer partnerships, establishing 50 new relationships with businesses in high-demand sectors like healthcare, IT, and trades. Over 300 job seekers were connected with employers through recruitment events, boosting collaboration on workforce development. Customized training programs, such as CDL training and a 3D printing bootcamp at SFCC, addressed critical skills gaps and improved workforce readiness.

The 2024 NALWDB Conference brought together over 200 stakeholders, fostering new collaborations and aligning workforce development with regional economic goals. NALWDB also supported small businesses with resources for workforce planning and recruitment, helping them attract qualified talent and reduce hiring costs.

Additionally, NALWDB partnered with correctional facilities to offer training for incarcerated individuals, reducing recidivism and creating employment pathways. Moving forward, the board will focus on improving participant retention and expanding digital services in rural areas.

Southwest Area Workforce Development Board

During Program Year (PY) 2023, the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board (SAWDB) made notable strides in workforce development, positively impacting the seven-county region it serves. The SAWDB exceeded expectations by fostering strong partnerships among workforce partners, aligning efforts to deliver effective employment services, and adapting to the regional labor market using data from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions. These initiatives supported the Region's economic growth and ensured continuity in services.

A standout achievement in PY23 was the increase in funding allocation to $5,103,726, marking a $707,710 rise from PY22 and the first year with such growth since PY20. Additionally, the SAWDB reported the lowest carry-over funds over five years, indicating a more efficient use of resources. The Board's commitment to collaboration was evident through more than 20 employer-focused events, including job fairs and roundtables, enhancing engagement between job seekers and businesses.

The SAWDB's Pre-Apprenticeship Program provided opportunities for youth to explore careers, benefiting from partnerships with employers such as the U.S. Forest Service and local agencies. The Dislocated Worker program served a five-year high of 197 individuals, with increased participation from those holding high school diplomas. While the Adult program experienced a decline in participants served, this shift reflects strategic efforts to extend participant support and transition them to additional services, such as On-the-Job Training.

In summary, the SAWDB's emphasis on strategic partnerships, targeted outreach, and adaptive program delivery has strengthened its role in fostering workforce readiness and regional economic resilience.

Waivers

New Mexico did not have any waivers during Program Year 2022.

Appendices

Appendix I: Adult Customer Satisfaction Survey

Evaluation of Aggregated Statewide Adult Customer Satisfaction Survey Results for Participants Receiving Services in 2023

Executive Summary

The Department of Workforce Solutions distributed the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) on February 12, 2024, to 7,390 participants that received services from NM DWS Workforce Connection Centers (NM WCC) or who interacted with the Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS) during calendar year 2023. Approximately 6.2 percent (458) of the emails bounced because the email address stored in the participant record in WCOS was not valid. This is slightly lower than the 6.3 percent that bounced in the survey that was sent out in 2023.

The overall level of customer satisfaction in 2023 significantly improved compared to customer satisfaction in 2022. About 71.3 percent responded positively when asked about their level of satisfaction with the services they received while visiting a New Mexico Workforce Connection Center in 2023. This was a marked increase (12.7 percentage points) from the 58.6 percent that participants reported for 2022. This could be related to survey construction. The question for 2023 participants was moved to the beginning of the survey and all participants responded, but last year the question was at the end of the survey and only 55.0 percent of respondents answered it. Additionally, 2023 participants were presented with more granular response options than 2022 respondents which may be responsible for the 13.9 percentage point (67.1 percent) drop in 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' responses.

It may be concerning that less than half of pre-apprenticeship participants (43 percent) and apprenticeship participants (45.5 percent) indicated they were satisfied with these programs.

Less than half of participants also reported that they were satisfied with on-the-job training (45.7 percent), transitional jobs (45.9 percent), customized training (47.2 percent), and job shadowing (45.5 percent).

The percentage of respondents who reported contacting NM WCC to fulfill the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) requirement for accessing benefits or assistance increased from 28.7 percent of respondents in 2022 to 33.5 percent last year. In 2022, 39.1 percent of respondents contacted NM WCC for job search/job referral assistance, however last year 38.0 percent of respondents did so.

The percentage of respondents indicating they completed training offered by NM WCCs continued to increase, although fewer than 4 out of 10 respondents (35.5 percent) reported doing so in 2023, compared with 30.6 percent in 2022. This was an increase of 4.9 percentage points, after the differences in the percentage of participants still in training was accounted for. This high non-completion rate has a negative impact on participants' ability to increase their jobs skills and earning potential, and on the State's limited financial and human capital resources.

Other than health care (15.9 percent) and IT and cyber security (8.4 percent), participant interest in careers in the Economic Development Department Economic Priority Sectors remained weak, although 5.0 percent of respondents expressed interest in education, tourism and recreation, and film and digital media.

A large percentage of WCOS records contained incomplete data about participants, thus limiting the analyses contained herein. Although NM DWS respects the rights of participants not to disclose their race and ethnicity, this continues to challenge the Department's ability to analyze the equity of services delivered to People of Color.

Job coaching remained the most valuable service received by respondents in 2023 in helping them meet their employment-related goals, just as it was in 2021 and 2022

Recommendations

Conduct a series of focus groups with former pre-apprenticeship participants to understand why less than half of pre-apprenticeship participants indicated they were satisfied with their respective program.

NM DWS should study non-completers to better understand the challenges they face successfully completing training provided by the NM WCC.

NM DWS staff should complete a quality review of all training provided by NM WCC staff. If deemed appropriate, based on findings of the training review, the NM DWS Senior Leadership team should work with Workforce Board Region CEOs, Chairs, and Operators to discuss the quality of training provided by NM WCC, and third-party vendors, at NM WCC locations.

NM DWS should investigate further and develop plans on ways to further improve participant satisfaction with specific services offered by NM WCC.

The percentage of participants who indicated staff availability was a challenge in 2023 was greater than the percentage that noted this as a challenge in 2022. The NM DWS Senior Leadership team should work with Workforce Board Region CEOs, Chairs, and Operators to develop a strategy to increase funding from both the New Mexico Legislature and external sources.

NM WCC staff should substantially elevate their focus on emphasizing the importance of the Economic Development Department's priority economic sectors to growing the state's employment and economic base, and both the career growth possibilities and the wage levels for positions in these sectors.

The WIOA partners have already defined new priority sectors in the 2024-2027 Statewide WIOA Plan, which engaged a wide variety of stakeholders. In future surveys, NM DWS should use these sectors to gauge whether the workforce system is responding to the needs of New Mexicans.

Introduction

To enhance the WIOA participant experience, and fulfill a requirement of the WIOA Program Plan, NM DWS developed and distributed a customer satisfaction survey. The WIOA Customer Satisfaction Survey was sent to a random sample of 7,390 adult participants who used NM DWS services in calendar year

2023.[1] The survey was open from February 12, 2024, and closed on March 18, 2024. This document reviews and analyzes the findings received from that survey.

Methodology

The sample was drawn from participants with records in the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System (WCOS). WCOS is "New Mexico's official online portal to virtual job matching services, employment resources, the Unemployment Insurance Tax & Claims System, and much more" (https://www.jobs.state.nm.us/vosnet/Default.aspx). Individual New Mexicans can access the system online and enter their personal information via a secure connection, or NM DWS staff can enter the participant's information into the system.

The sample for the adult customer satisfaction survey was drawn from adults, as defined in note 1, who accessed NMDWS services in calendar year 2023. To ensure participants were selected at random, the sample only included participants whose SSN ended in "3" or a "4".

In 2022, 320,330 (15.9 percent) New Mexicans between the ages of 18 and 64 spoke Spanish at home.[2] Additionally, the Census defined 39,881 (16.1 percent) of the 246,575 Spanish speaking New Mexican households as 'limited English-speaking households.

The Census also noted that 105,055 residents between 18 and 64 spoke English 'less than very well'.[3] This is 8.4 percent of all New Mexicans in that age range, but 32.8 percent of New Mexicans who speak Spanish at home.

To reduce response bias, participants who identified Spanish as their primary language in WCOS were sent a survey in Spanish. Although 8.4 percent all New Mexicans speak Spanish at home, only 3.9 percent of the 2023 sample identified Spanish as their primary language in WCOS (Exhibit 1).[4]

Increasing the sample size from only 10 percent of participants to 20 percent of participants, and offering the survey in both English and Spanish, more than doubled the number of responses received for 2023 (498) compare with those for 2022 (202). The response rate, however, declined slightly from the previous year. In 2022, 6.7 percent of selected participants responded to the survey, in 2023 the response rate was 6.5 percent. Broken out by language, 6.6 percent of the sample sent English language

[1] The definition of adult and minor used for this survey differ from the standard WIOA definition. Legal minors (participants under 18) were not included in the survey because a parental/legal guardian consent would have to be obtained. Although some 23- and 24-year-old participants still qualify as youth, the numbers of participants fitting that criteria is very low so all participants in this age range was sent the adult survey. The question in the two surveys essentially overlap each other, however the youth survey includes questions related to educational attainment/enrollment and transportation to the NM WCC if they visited in-person.

[2] ACS 1 Year Table S1603. 2022 is the most recent data available.
[3] ACS 1 Year Table S1602 and Table S1601. 2022 is the most recent data available.
[4] Of the 38,230 unique participants that received services in 2023, 1,532 (4.0 percent) had Spanish recorded as their primary language in WCOS. The percentage of survey participants whose primary language is Spanish (3.9 percent) is in line with that percentage in WCOS.

surveys responded, however only 4.3 percent of participants receiving the survey in Spanish did so (Exhibit 2).

1. Number of Surveys Distributed			
	English	Spanish	Total
Number of Delivered Survey Emails	6,836	269	7,105
Numbers of Undeliverable Survey Emails	458	29	487
Number of Participants that Opted Out of the Survey	96	1	97
Total Number of Survey Emails Sent	7,390	299	7,689

2. Survey Response			
	English	Spanish	Total
Number of Participants Responding to Survey	485	13	498
Number of Participants Not Responding to Survey	6,905	286	7,191
Total	7,390	299	7,689

Findings

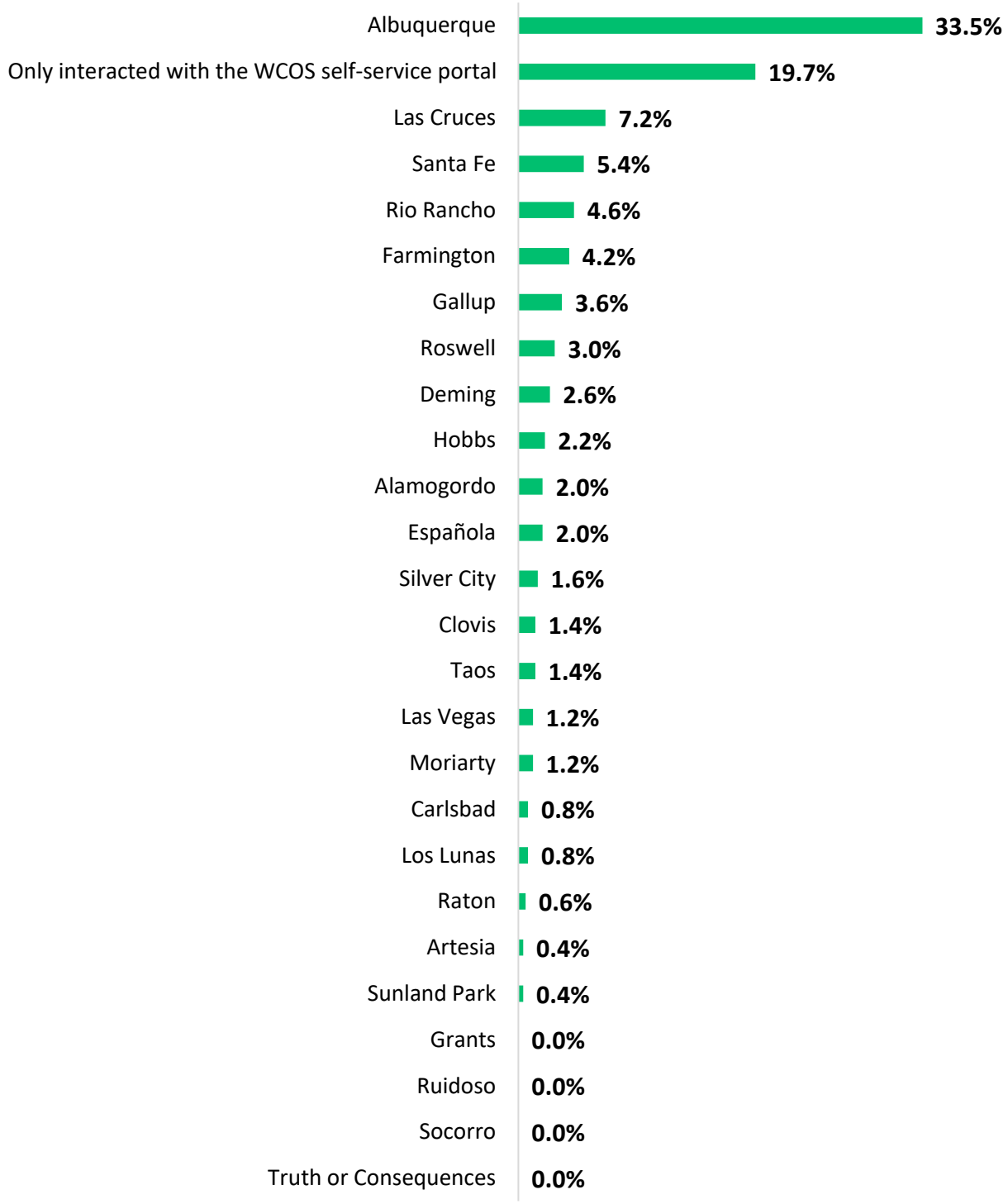
Adult Customer Satisfaction Survey

Overview – Aggregated state data

Respondents by NM WCC Office

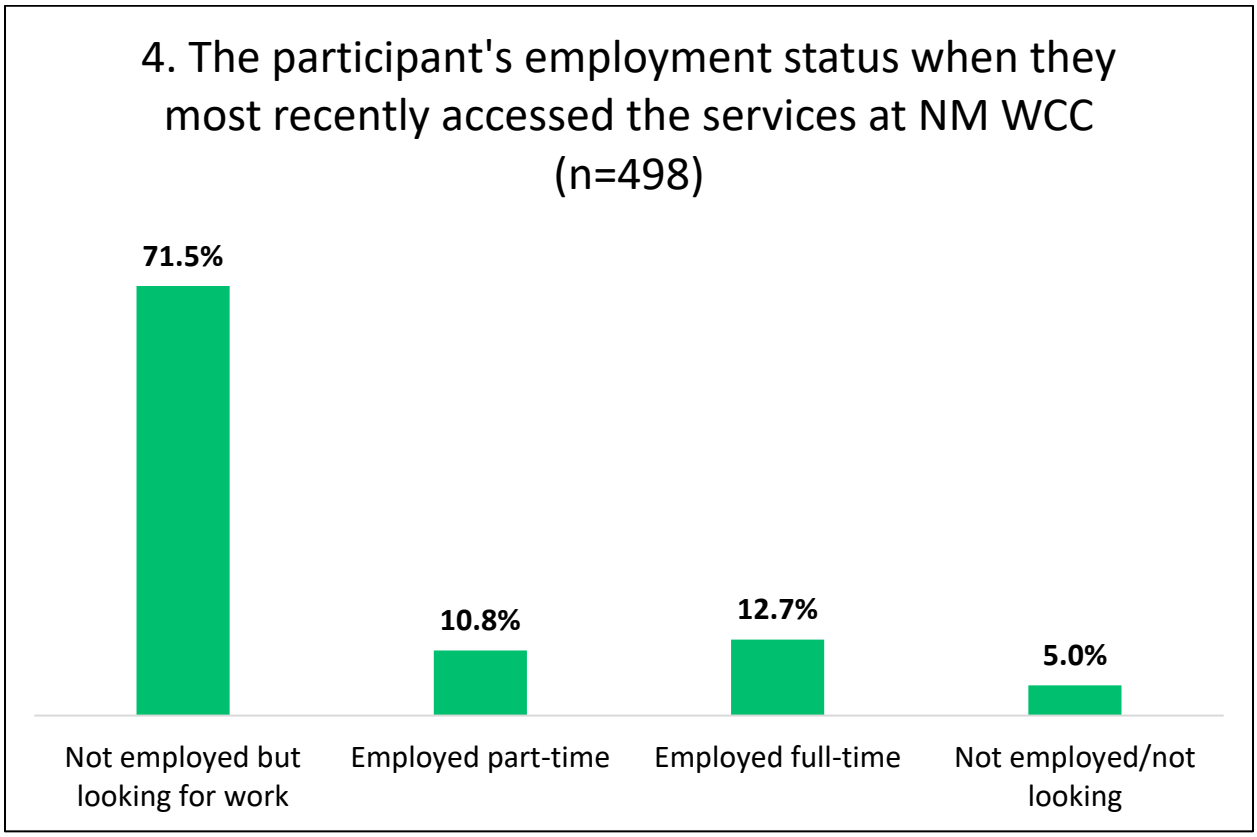
Slightly more than one-third (33.5 percent) of the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) respondents reported the NM WCC office they most recently visited or contacted was in Albuquerque (Exhibit 3). This was a 0.3 percentage point increase for the office in New Mexico's most populous city. Participants reported Las Cruces and Santa Fe were, respectively, the second and third most frequently visited or contacted office although relatively fewer participants reported visiting these offices in 2023 (7.2 percent and 5.4 percent) than was the case in 2022 (8.9 percent and 6.9 percent). The percentage of respondents reported visiting or contacting the NM WCC office in Rio Rancho, the third largest city in the state, increased from 2.0 percent in 2022 to 4.6 percent in 2023. The percentage of respondents who only interacted with the WCOS self-service portal declined from 21.3 percent in 2022 to 19.7 percent in 2023.

3. Percent of respondents reporting the NM WCC office they most recently visited or contacted (n=498)

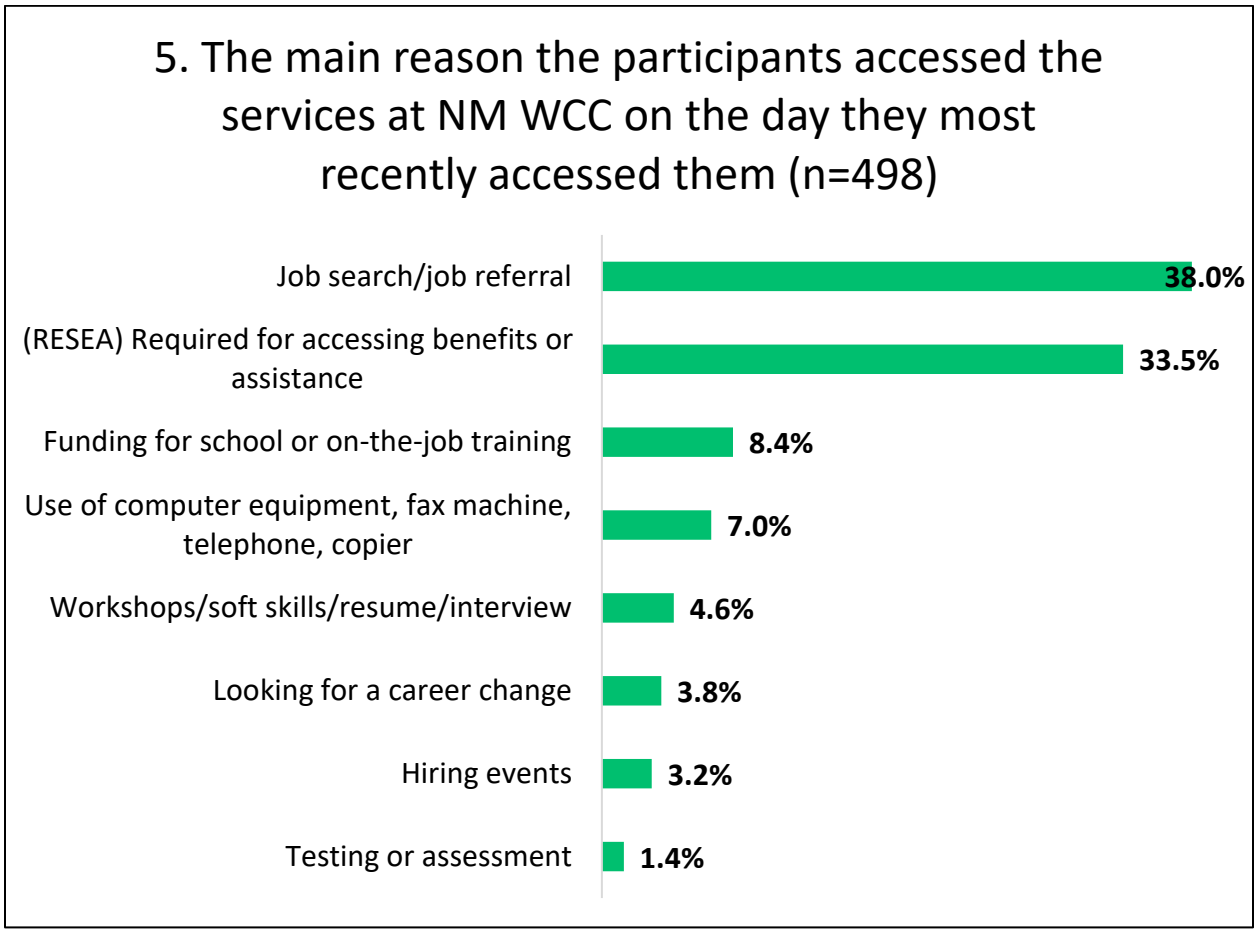


Respondent Employment Status and Reason for Contacting the NM WCC

More than seven out of ten (71.5 percent) respondents indicated they were not employed and were looking for work when they most recently accessed services at NM WCC (Exhibit 4). This is 1.2 percentage points higher than participants reported for 2022. Slightly fewer respondents reported being employed part-time in 2023 (10.8 percent) compared with 2022 (11.4 percent). This was also the case for respondents not employed and not looking for work in 2023 (5.0 percent) compared with 2022 (5.9 percent). In 2023, 12.7 percent of respondents reported they were working full-time compared to 12.4 percent reporting that in 2022.

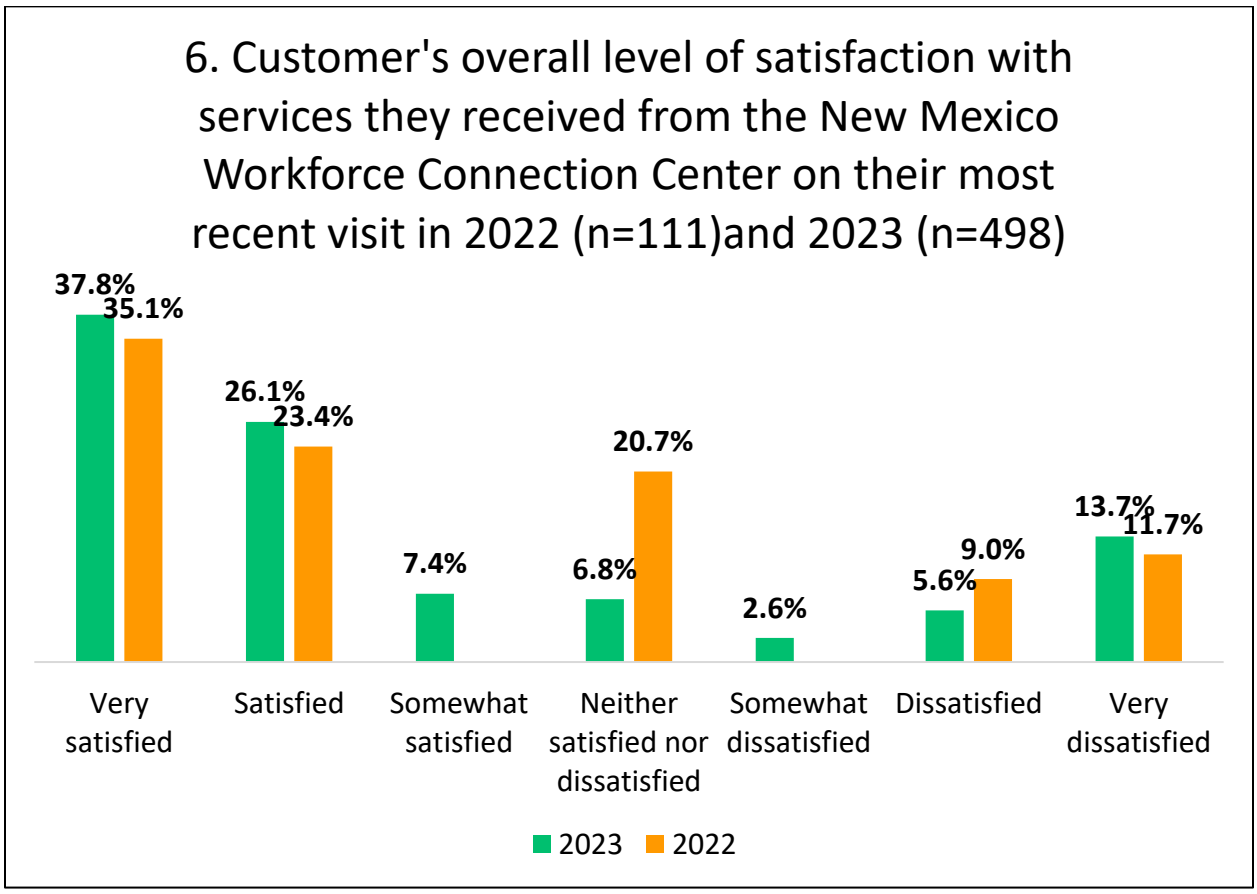


In 2023, the main reasons participants reported they most recently accessed the services at NM WCC were to conduct a job search or obtain a job referral (38.0 percent, compared to 39.1 percent in 2022), or because they were required to do so to fulfill their RESEA requirements (33.5 percent in 2023 versus 28.7 percent in 2022). These were also the top two reasons given in 2022 (Exhibit 5). There were 27.3 percent (3.0 percentage point) fewer participants reported contacting NM WCC about educational funding in 2023 (8.4 percent) compared with 2022 (11.4 percent). Use of computer equipment, fax machines, telephones, and copiers by respondents in 2023 fell to 7.0 percent from 8.9 percent in 2022.



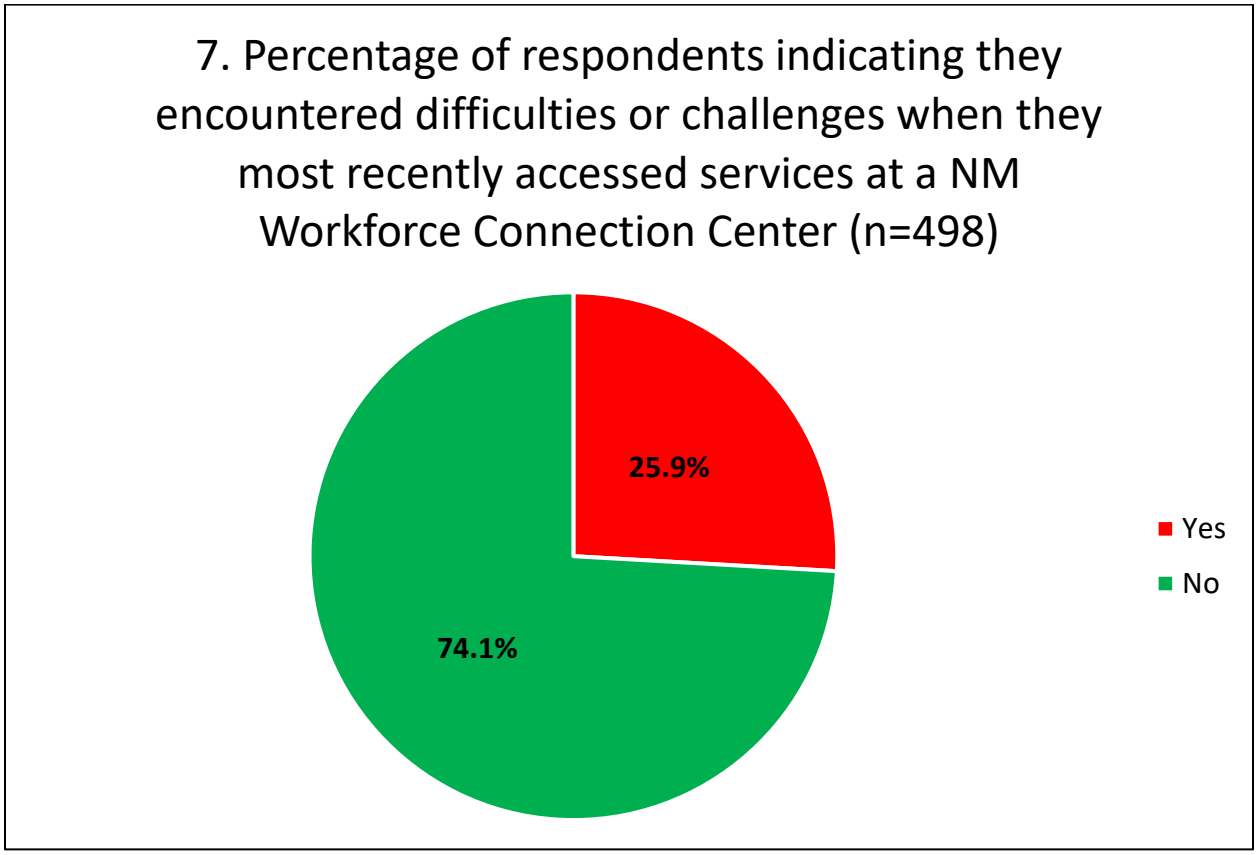
The overall level of customer satisfaction in 2023 seems to have increased significantly since 2022 (Exhibit 6).[5] More than seven out of ten respondents (71.3 percent) responded positively when asked about their level of satisfaction with the services they received while visiting a New Mexico Workforce Connection Center in 2023. This was a marked increase (12.7 percentage points) from the 58.6 percent that participants reported for 2022. There was an increase in the number of respondents that were very satisfied with the services they received in 2023 (37.8 percent) compare with 2022 (35.1 percent) as well as those that were "satisfied" (26.1 percent in 2023 compared with 23.4 percent in 2022).

There was also an increase in the percentage of respondents who responded negatively, but the increase was much smaller (1.2 percentage points), increasing from 20.7 percent of respondents in 2022 to 21.9 percent in 2023. Unfortunately, the percentage of respondents that were very dissatisfied increased from 11.7 percent in 2022 to 13.7 percent in 2023. The percentage of respondents indicating they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" fell from 20.7 percent in 2022 to 6.8 percent in 2023.

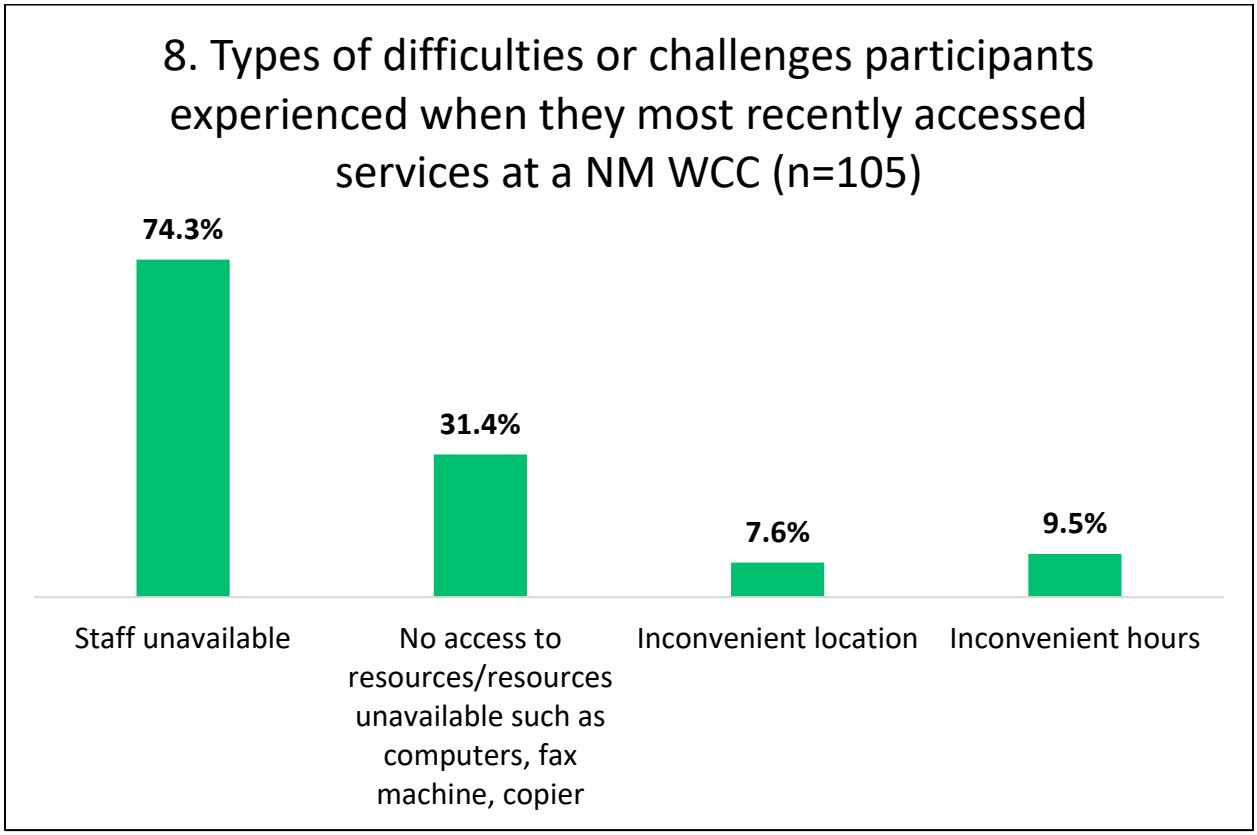


[5] This, however, may be related to several differences between the surveys. In the survey of 2023 participants, the question was moved to the beginning and all 489 respondents answered it. In the previous survey it was the last question and received just 111 responses (55 percent of all survey respondents). Additionally, respondents were offered the opportunity for more nuance in their responses about their level of satisfaction in 2023 than they were about satisfaction in 2022, which may have contributed to the significant decrease in the percentage of "Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" responses.

More than a quarter (25.9 percent) of respondents indicated they encountered difficulties or challenges when they most recently accessed services at a NM Workforce Connection Center (Exhibit 7).



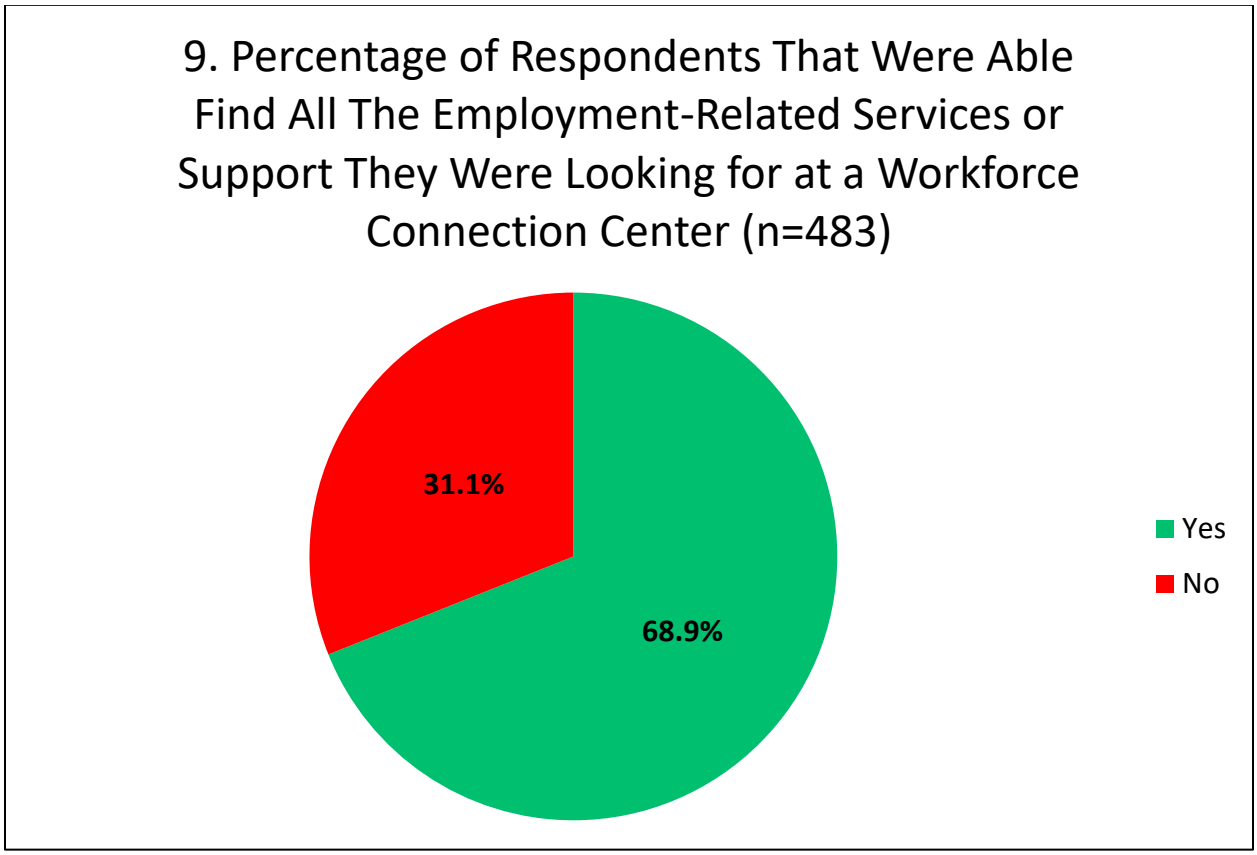
Similar to 2022, staff availability was a top issue. In 2023, 74.3 percent of respondents stated it was an issue, slightly higher than the 2022 figure of 73.8 percent (Exhibit 8).[6] A smaller percentage of respondents reported difficulty accessing resources in 2023 (31.4 percent) than in 2022 (38.1 percent) and that only 9.5 percent of respondents reported inconvenient hours in 2023 compared to 14.3 percent in 2022.



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because participants were able to select more than one response.

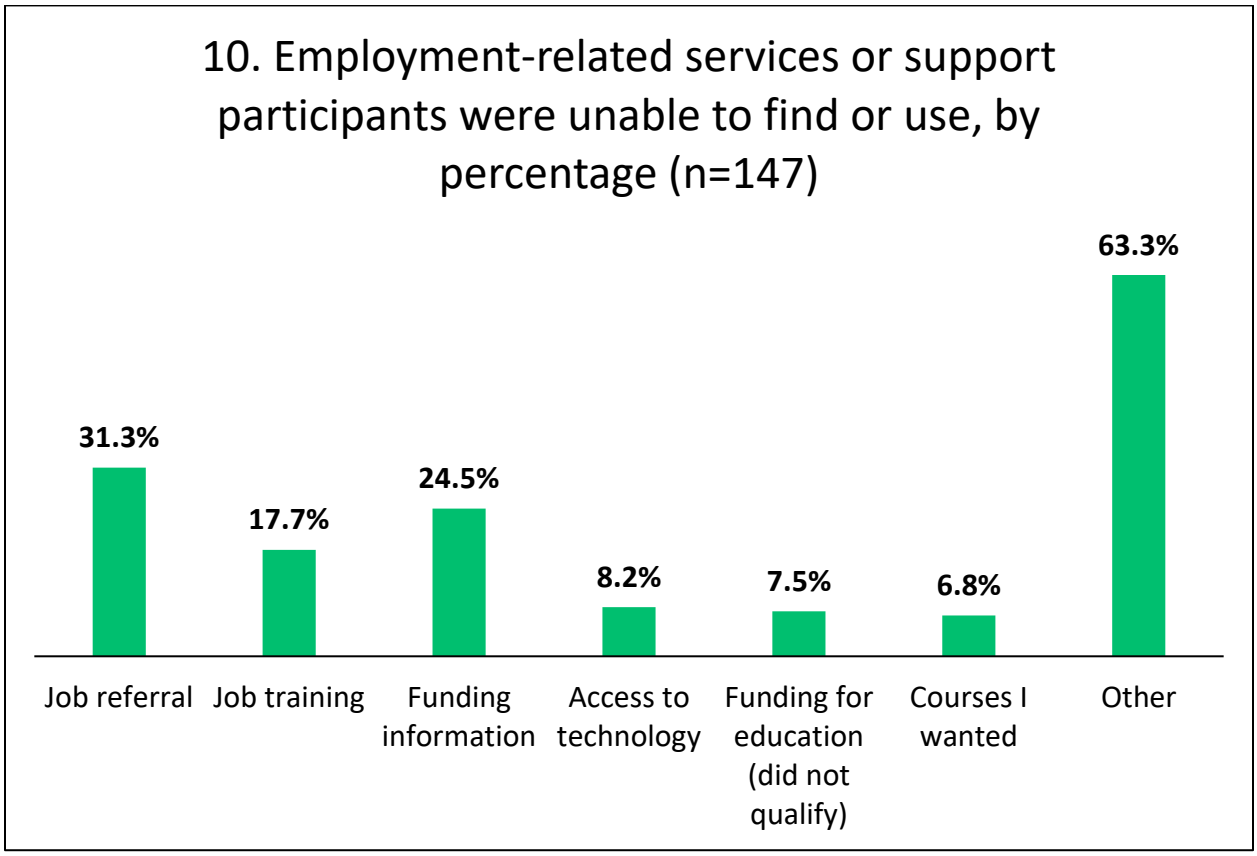
[6] Total exceeds 100 percent because participants were able to select more than one difficulty or challenge.

Almost a third (31.1 percent) of respondents were unable to find all the employment-related services or support they were looking for at NM WCC (Exhibit 9). This is a 2.9 percentage point (10.3 percent) increase from the 28.2 percent of respondents reporting they were unable to find all the employment-related services or support they were looking for in 2022.



In 2023, 93 respondents selected 'other' to indicate the specific services or supports they were unable to find, or use, were not listed on the survey; 50 of those participants provided additional details and those comments are included in the Appendix (Exhibit 10).

The percentage of respondents indicating they were unable to obtain a job referral increased by 53.6 percent, from 20.4 percent unable to obtain one in 2022 to 31.3 percent who were unable to do so in 2023. Alternatively, in 2023 only 7.5 percent of respondents indicated they were unable to obtain funding for education, compared with 16.7 percent in 2022. This was a 9.2 percentage point improvement. New Mexicans' increasing awareness and availability of the Opportunity Scholarship may have contributed to this change.



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because participants were able to select more than one response.

Although there was an overall increase in customer satisfaction between 2022 and 2023, the percentage of participants that were either satisfied or very satisfied with specific services generally declined between those two years (Exhibit 11). In 2022, only three services (on-the-job training, transitional jobs, and pre-apprenticeship training) were viewed as favorable by less than half of respondents. In 2023, the number of services viewed unfavorably by more than half of respondents doubled to six.

The largest absolute decline was in the participants' ability to use equipment and facilities, which declined from 73.3 percent favorable to 66.6 percent favorable. The largest relative decline (11.6 percent) was in registered apprenticeship training, which was at 51.4 percent favorable in 2022 to 45.5 percent favorable in 2023.

Although there was an increase in the percentage of respondents reporting they were unable to obtain a job referral in 2023 compared with 2022, there was a 13.8 percent improvement in favorably for this service. The percentage of respondents who respondents viewed the delivery of job and work readiness training favorably also increased by 7.2 percent between 2022 and 2023.

11. Percentage of participants indicating they were either satisfied or very satisfied with services offered and facilitated by NM WCCs in 2022 (n=147) and 2023 (n=383)

Service (and n's for 2023)	2022	2023	Percentage Point Difference, 2022 to 2023	Percent Change, 2022 to 2023
Referrals for resources or training (n=277)	53.6%	61.0%	7.4	13.8
Job/work readiness training (n=270)	55.6%	59.6%	4.0	7.2
Hiring events (n=271)	58.8%	57.2%	-1.6	-2.7
Transitional Jobs (n=220)	48.1%	45.9%	-2.2	-4.6
Job search assistance (n=303)	67.0%	63.7%	-3.3	-4.9
Pre-Apprenticeship (n=200)	45.7%	43.0%	-2.7	-5.9
On-The-Job training (n=232)	48.8%	45.7%	-3.1	-6.4
Work Experience (n=250)	61.6%	56.8%	-4.8	-7.8
Career counseling (n=252)	58.1%	53.6%	-4.5	-7.8
Usage of equipment/facilities (n=311)	73.3%	66.6%	-6.7	-9.2
Customized Training (n=218)	52.6%	47.2%	-5.4	-10.2
Job Shadowing (n=198)	50.7%	45.5%	-5.2	-10.3
Registered Apprenticeship (n=209)	51.4%	45.5%	-5.9	-11.6

In 2022, only one service offered by NM WCCs, referrals for resources or training, was viewed unfavorably by more than 20 percent of respondents. Although less than 20 percent of participants viewed it unfavorably in 2023, four other services (transitional jobs, customized training, career counseling, and job search assistance) were viewed unfavorably by more than 20 percent of respondents (Exhibit 12).

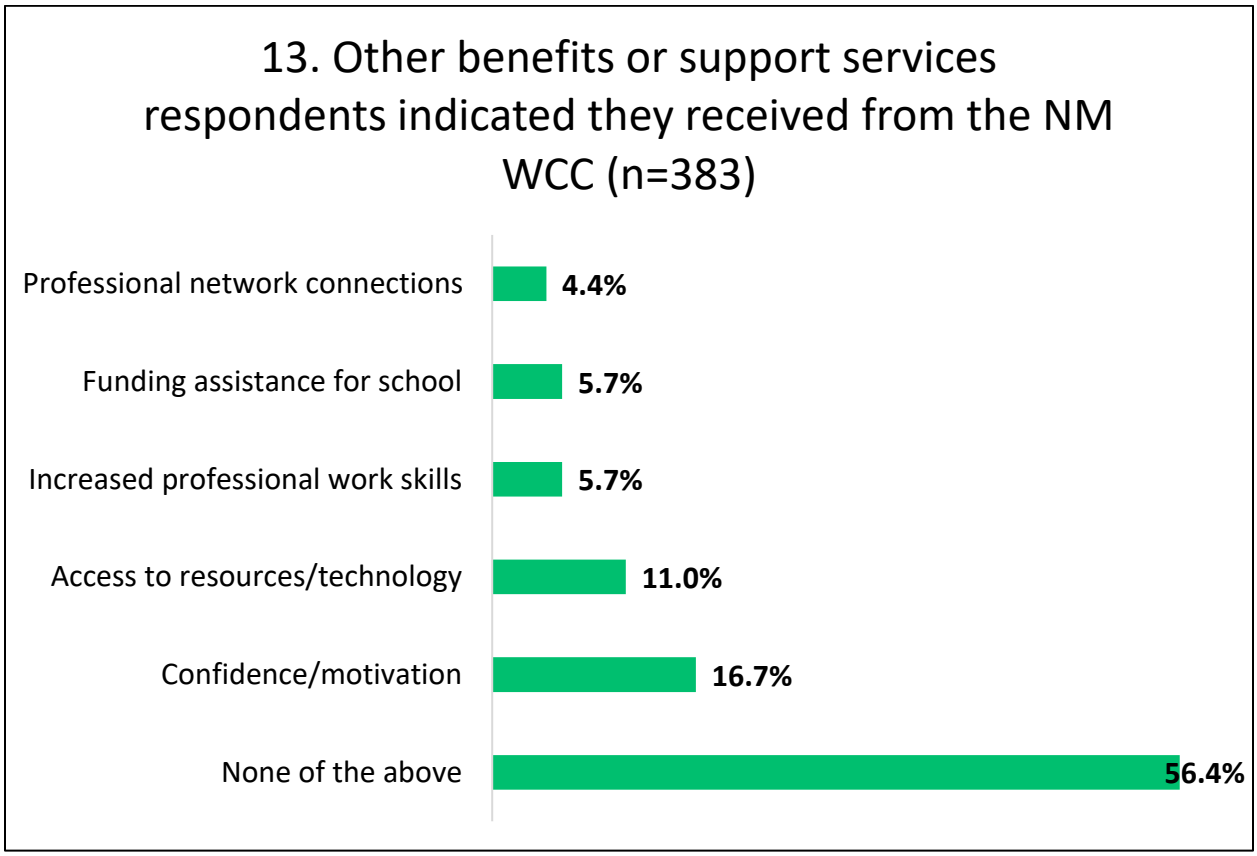
The largest absolute and relative increase in services respondents viewed unfavorably was job shadowing. In 2022, 10.1 percent of respondents indicated they were dissatisfied with this service, however, in 2023, 18.2 percent reported this was the case. This equated to an 8.1 percentage point increase in dissatisfaction.

12. Percentage of participants indicating they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with services offered and facilitated by NM WCCs in 2022 (n=147) and 2023 (n=383)

Service (and n's for 2023)	2022	2023	Percentage Point Difference, 2022 to 2023	Percent Change, 2022 to 2023
Job Shadowing (n=198)	10.1%	18.2%	8.1	80.0
Work Experience (n=250)	12.1%	17.2%	5.1	42.1
Registered Apprenticeship (n=209)	14.3%	19.6%	5.3	37.2
Pre-Apprenticeship (n=200)	14.3%	19.0%	4.7	32.9
Job/work readiness training (n=270)	14.1%	18.1%	4.0	28.7
Customized Training (n=218)	16.7%	20.6%	3.9	23.6
Transitional Jobs (n=220)	17.7%	21.8%	4.1	23.3
Career counseling (n=252)	18.3%	21.8%	3.5	19.3
Job search assistance (n=303)	17.4%	20.1%	2.7	15.7
Usage of equipment/facilities (n=311)	15.8%	13.8%	-2.0	-12.5
Referrals for resources or training (n=277)	22.7%	19.9%	-2.8	-12.5
Hiring events (n=271)	21.6%	19.2%	-2.4	-11.2
On-The-Job training (n=323)	15.9%	17.7%	1.8	11.1

A larger percentage of respondents reported NM WCCs improved or increased their confidence and motivation in 2023 (16.7 percent) compared with the 15.7 percent that reported this for 2022 (Exhibit 13). This was also the case for access to resources and technology (4.8 percent in 2022 compared with 11.0 percent in 2023). The percentage of respondents indicating that they did not receive any of the specific benefits listed decreased by only 0.1 percentage points, from 56.5 percent in 2022 to 56.4 percent in 2023.

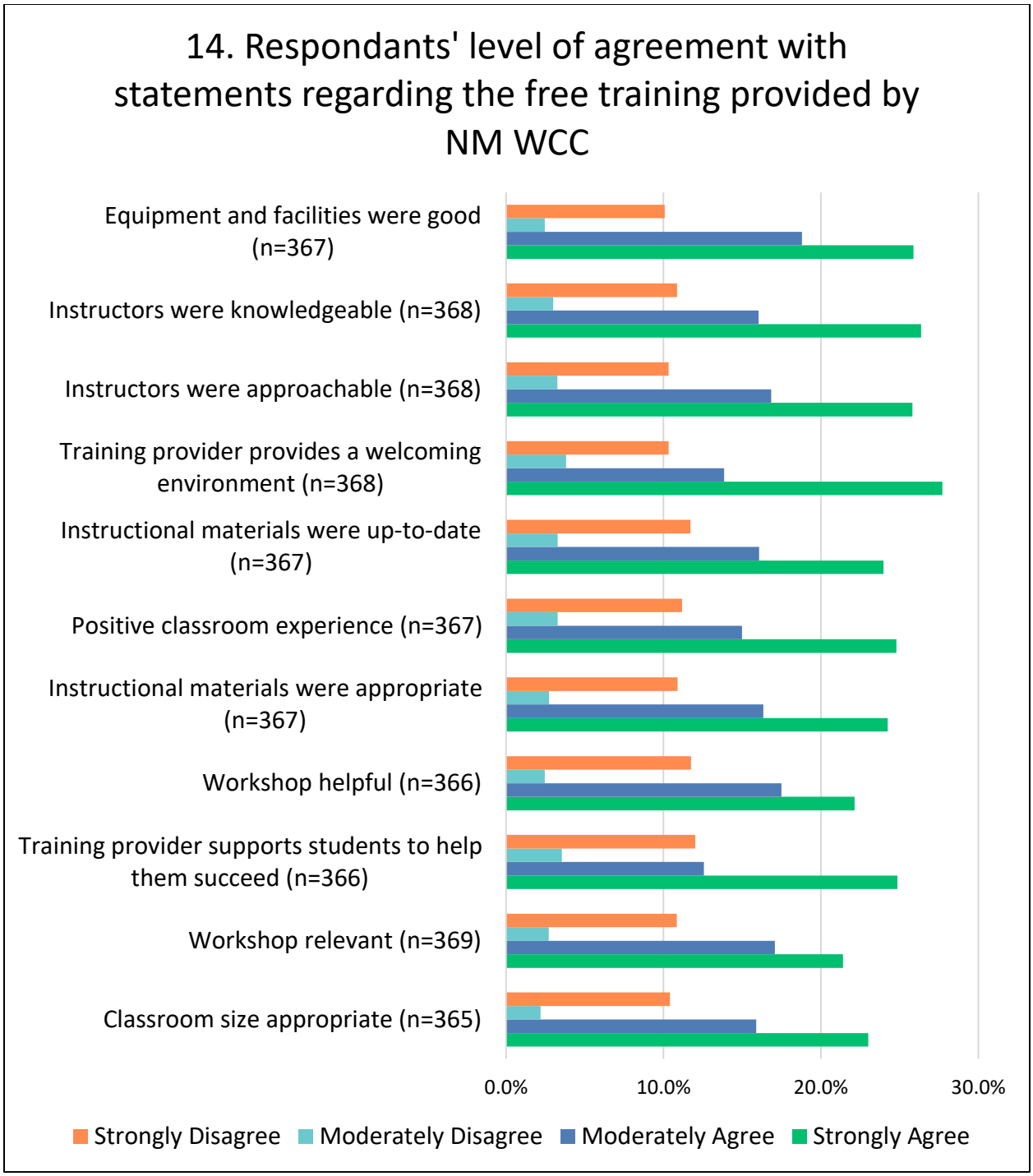
A smaller percentage of respondents reported NM WCCs improved or increased their professional network connections in 2023 (4.4 percent) compared with the 8.2 percent that reported this for 2022.



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

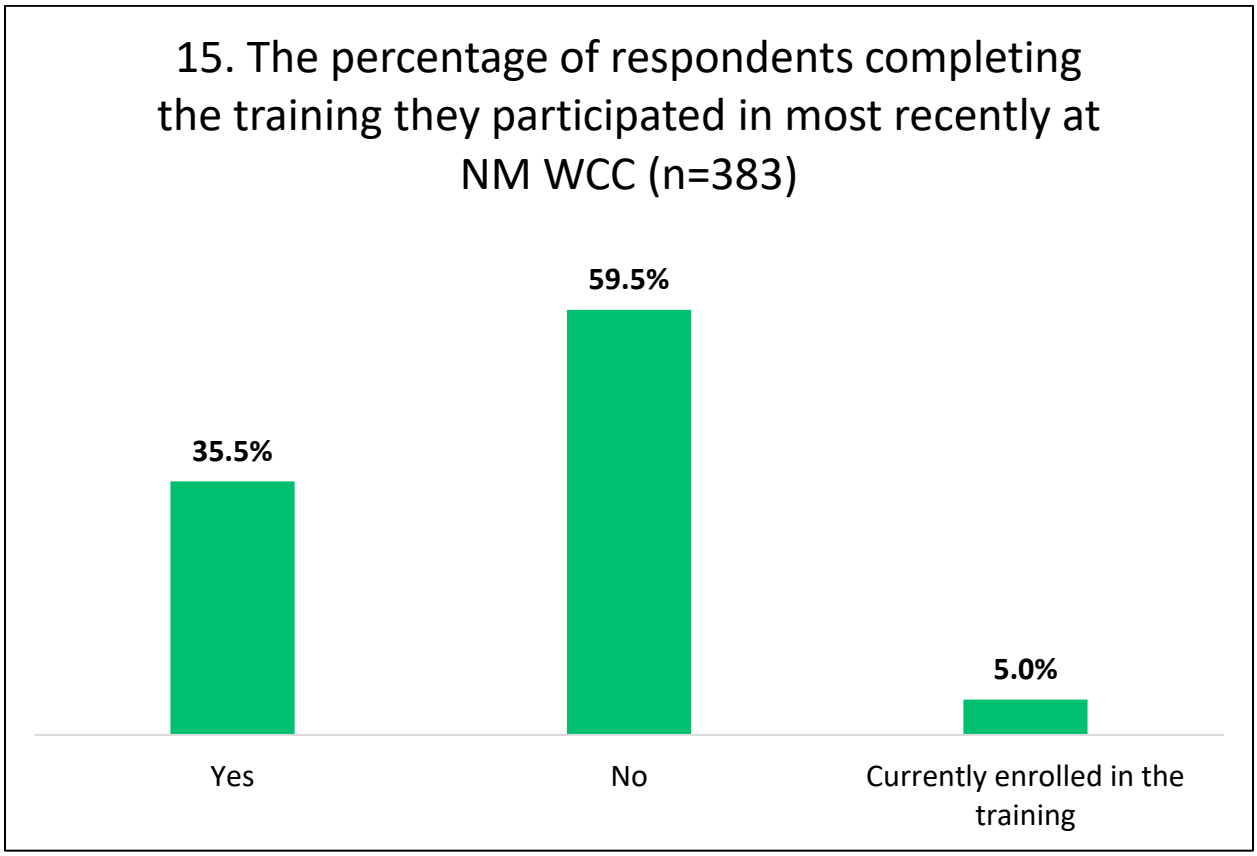
Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with several statements concerning training courses they attended at NM WCCs (Exhibit 14). In nine out of 11 instances they viewed the training they received in 2023 more favorably than respondents who received training in 2022. The two areas with the largest absolute and relative increases focused on the learning environment. There was a 16.3 percent increase in respondents agreeing that the quality of the equipment and facilities were good and a 20.2 percent increase in respondents agreeing that the size of the classroom was appropriate. There was also an increase in the percentage of participants who disagreed on both of these points, however they constituted no more than 12.6 percent of respondents.

Except for the relevance of the workshop, and the currency of instructional materials used, respondents participating in training offered by the NM WCCs in 2023 viewed their training experience more positively than participants in training in 2022. Of respondents participating in workshops in 2022, 40.4 percent found them relevant, however only 38.5 percent of 2023 workshop participants agreed. This was a 4.8 percent decrease in the percentage of participants that agreed that the workshop they attended was relevant to them.



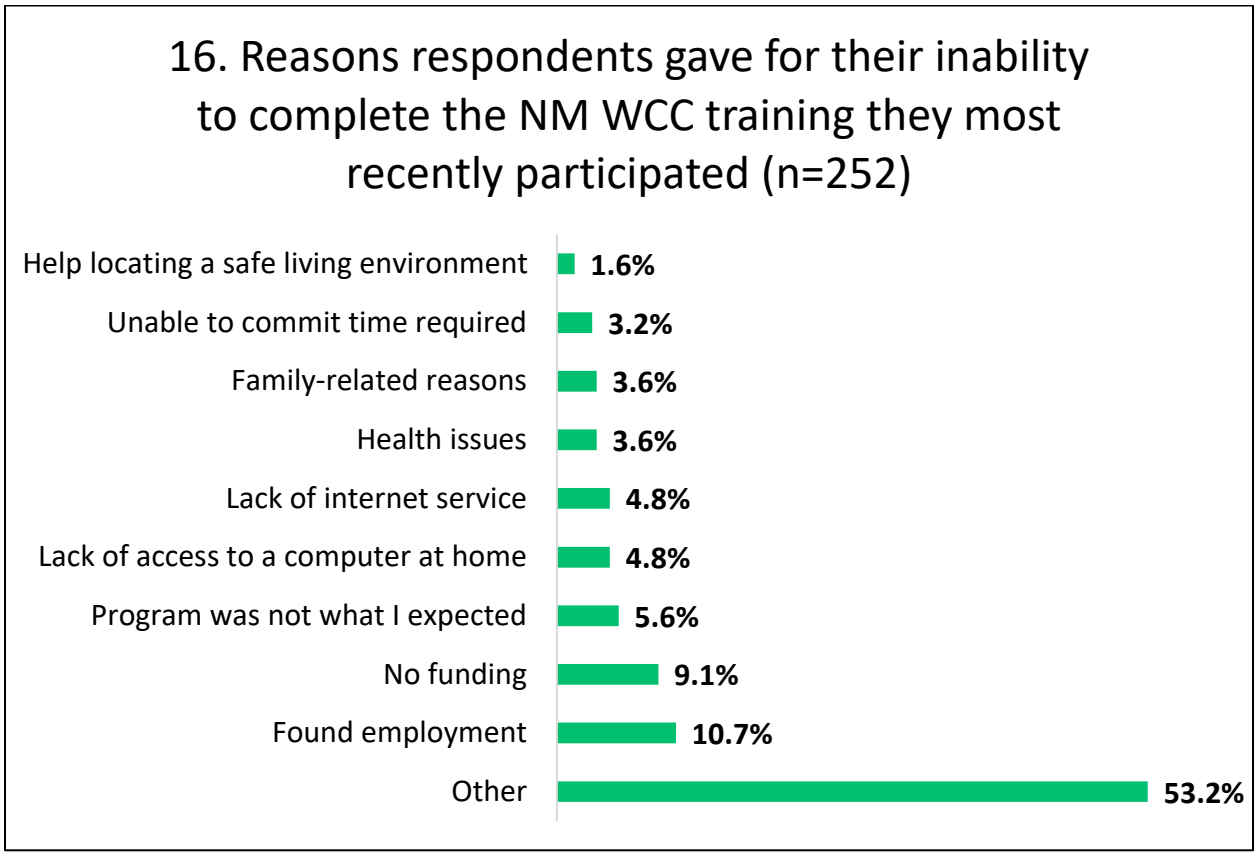
Note: For clarity, the "neither agree or disagree" category was removed from the graph. Respondents selected it between 42.8 percent and 48.5 percent of the time.

More than a third (35.5 percent) of respondents reported completing the WCC training they were enrolled in in 2023 (Exhibit 15). This equates to a 16.0 percent increase from 2022. This is in part attributable to the 3.8 percent decrease in the percentage of respondents reporting not having completed their training.



In 2023, 1.6 percent of respondents indicated they were unable to complete their NM WCC training because they needed help locating a safe living environment (Exhibit 16). This was an improvement over 2022, when 2.4 percent of respondents reported this.

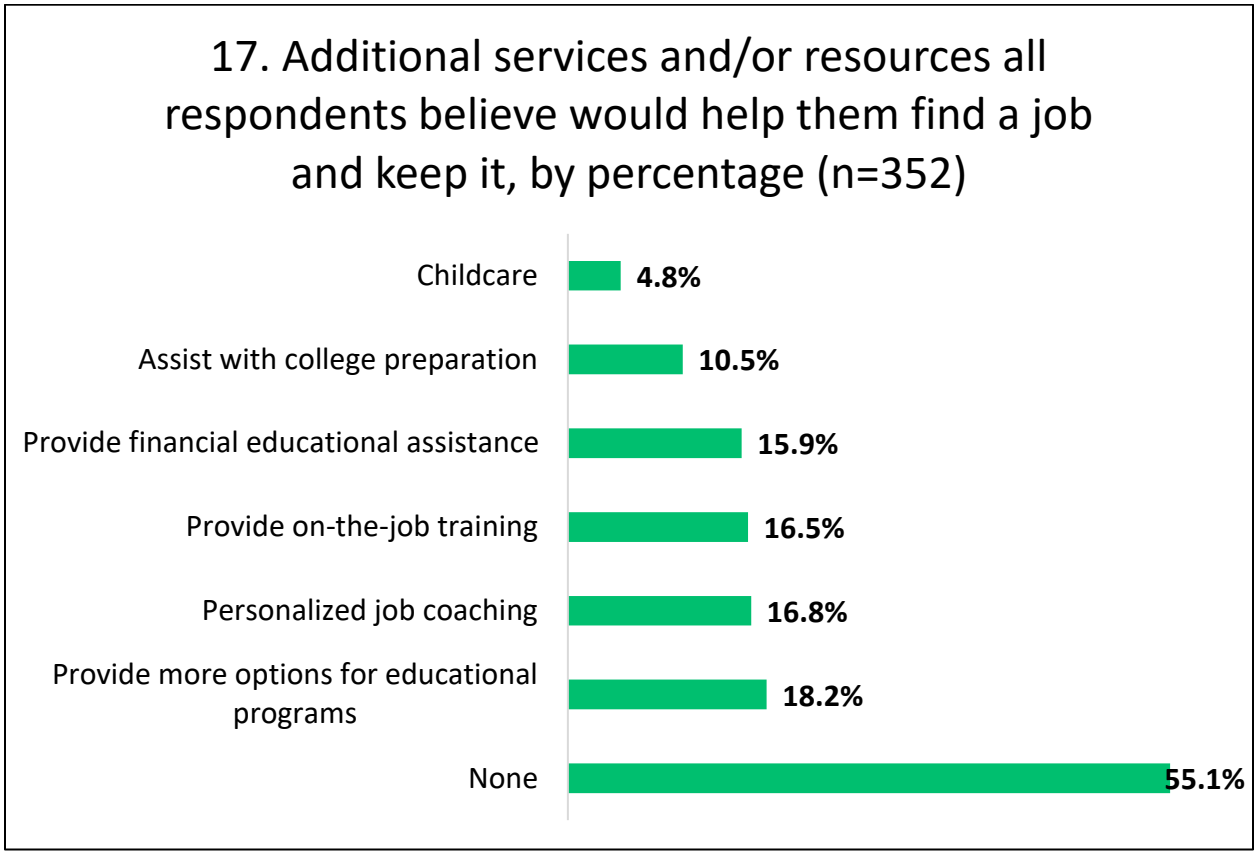
A smaller percentage of respondents enrolled in NM WCC training in 2023 were unable to complete it (10.7 percent) because they found employment. This was less than half of the share in 2022 (23.2 percent).



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

More than half of the respondents (55.1 percent) indicated that there were no additional programs or services they needed to reach their education or career goals in 2023 (Exhibit 17). This was a 10.3 percent decrease from the 61.4 percent that indicated they did not need additional services in 2022. Interestingly, 44.2 percent fewer respondents indicated they needed childcare in 2023 (4.8 percent) than reported this in 2022 (8.7 percent), most likely due to the expansion of subsidized childcare across the state.

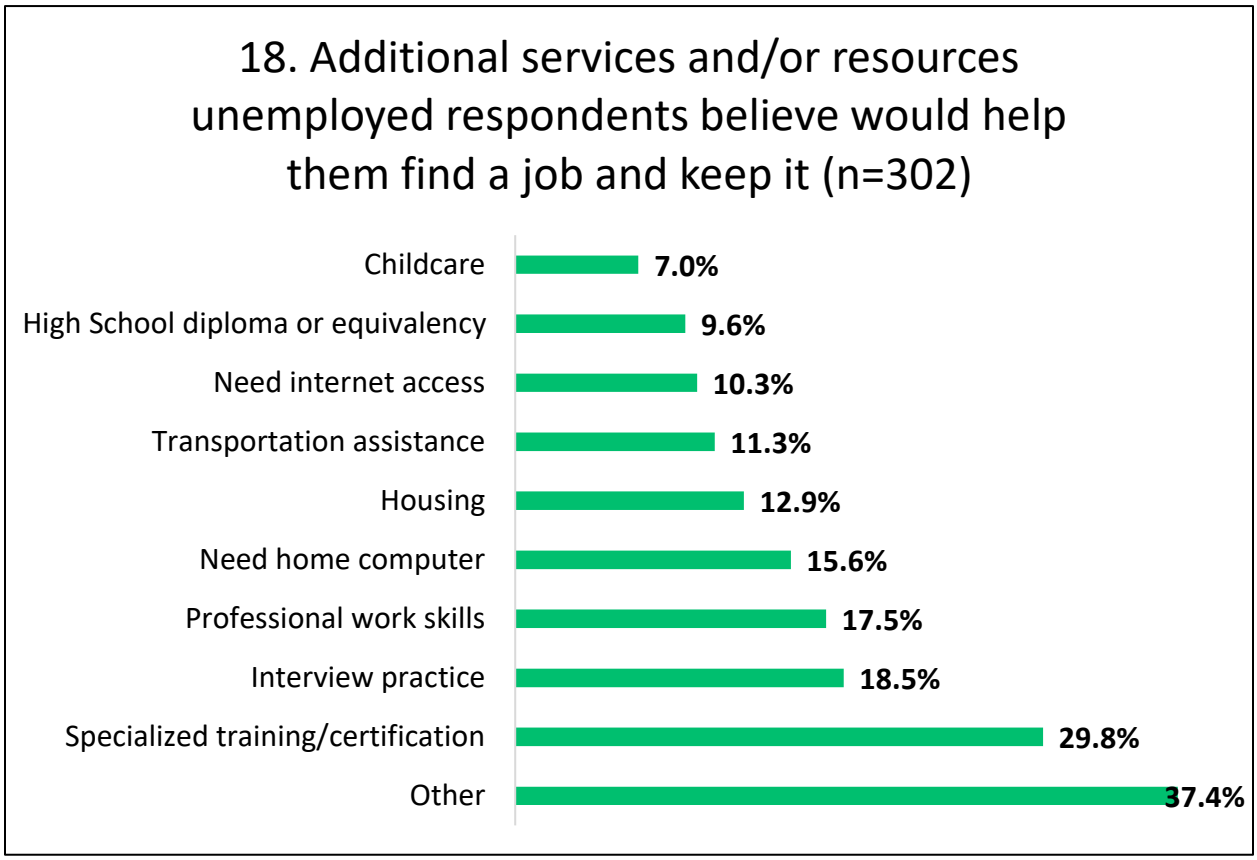
There was an increased interest in personalized job coaching (16.8 percent in 2023 compared with 11.0 percent in 2022) and on-the-job training (16.5 percent versus 13.4 percent). Participants also had an increased interest in obtaining assistance with college preparation (10.5 percent in 2023 and 8.7 percent in 2022) but less interest in WCCs providing financial assistance for their education (15.9 percent in 2023, down from 18.9 percent in 2022).



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because participants were able to select more than one response.

In 2023 unemployed respondents indicated that specialized training and certification, interview practice, professional work skills, and a home computer were the four most important services or resources they believed would help them find and keep a job (Exhibit 18). These are the same four services unemployed respondents identified in 2022. The need for specialized training and certification remained the top need, but 12.4 percent fewer respondents mentioned it (34.0 percent in 2022 and 29.8 percent in 2023). Likewise, there was a smaller percentage of respondents indicating they needed a home computer in 2023 (15.6 percent) than in 2022 (20.4 percent).

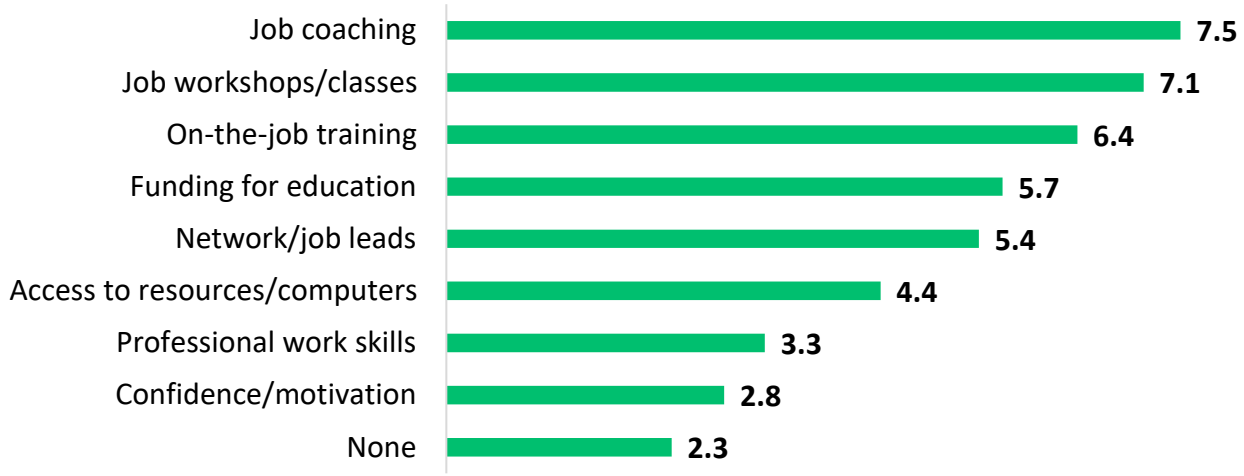
On the other hand, the perceived need for interview practice increased from 15.5 percent of respondents in 2022 to 18.5 percent in 2023. A greater percentage of respondents also indicated the importance of professional work skills in 2023 (17.5 percent) than was the case in 2022 (13.6 percent).



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because participants were able to select more than one response.

Job coaching remained the most valuable service received by respondents in 2023 in helping them meet their employment-related goals, just as it was in 2021 and 2022 (Exhibit 19). The next three most important skills remained the same as in the previous two years as well, and were related to enhancing the respondents' skills: job workshops and classes, on-the-job training, and funding for education.

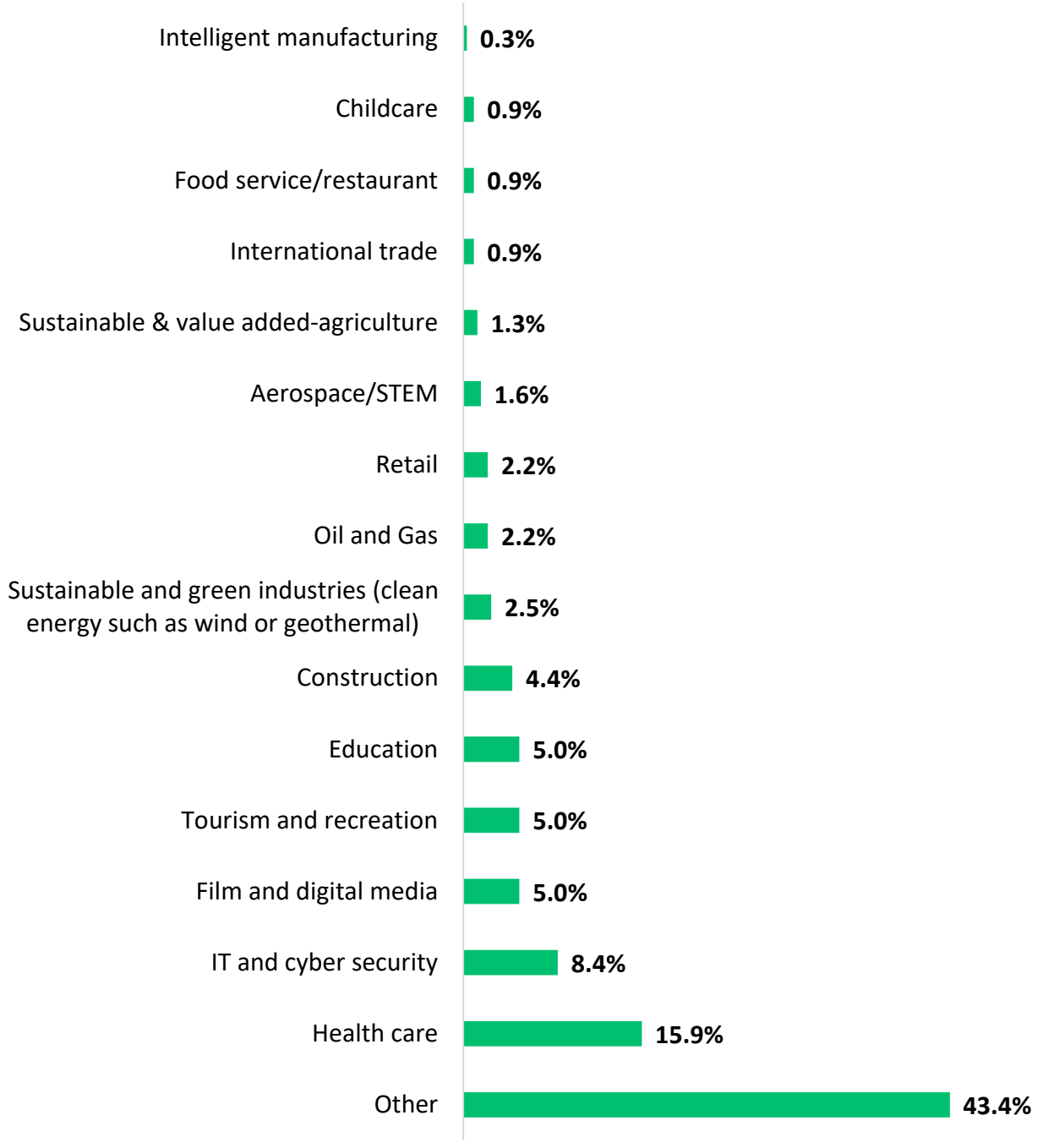
19. Weighted importance of services respondents accessed at the career center related to helping them achieve their employment-related goals, from the most valuable to the least valuable (n=325)



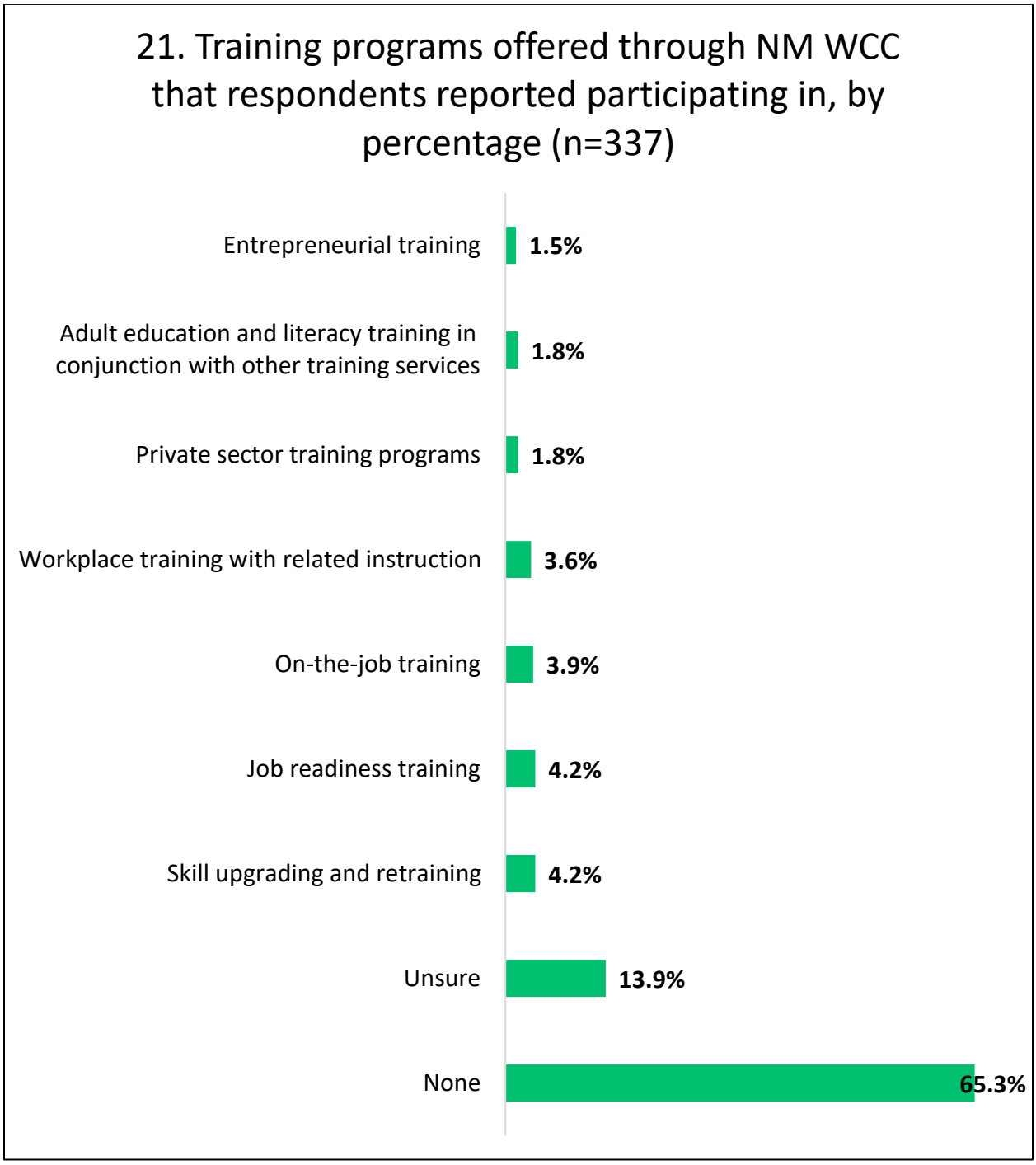
When asked which of the Economic Development Department's Economic Priority Sectors they were interested in working in, 15.9 percent of respondents indicated an interest in working in health care (Exhibit 20). At least five percent of participants indicated an interest in careers in four other of the Economic Development Department's Economic Priority Sectors, IT and cybersecurity (8.4 percent), film and digital media, tourism and recreation, and teaching, (all 5.0 percent) in the future. Interest in pursuing film and media increased in 2023 after declining from 7.8 percent of respondents in 2021 to only 4.5 percent of respondents in 2022. Similarly, interest in pursuing employment in sustainable & value-added agriculture recovered a bit, increasing to 1.3 percent in 2023 from 0.9 percent in 2022, however that is still far less than the 5.2 percent of respondents in 2021 who indicated an interest in this field.

Participant interest in some of the other sectors the Economic Development Department has designated as Economic Priority Sectors for the state remains low, with only 0.3 percent interested in intelligent manufacturing, 0.9 percent interested in international trade, and 1.6 percent noting an interest in Aerospace/STEM careers.

20. Employment fields respondents would be interested in for their future, by percentage (n=320)



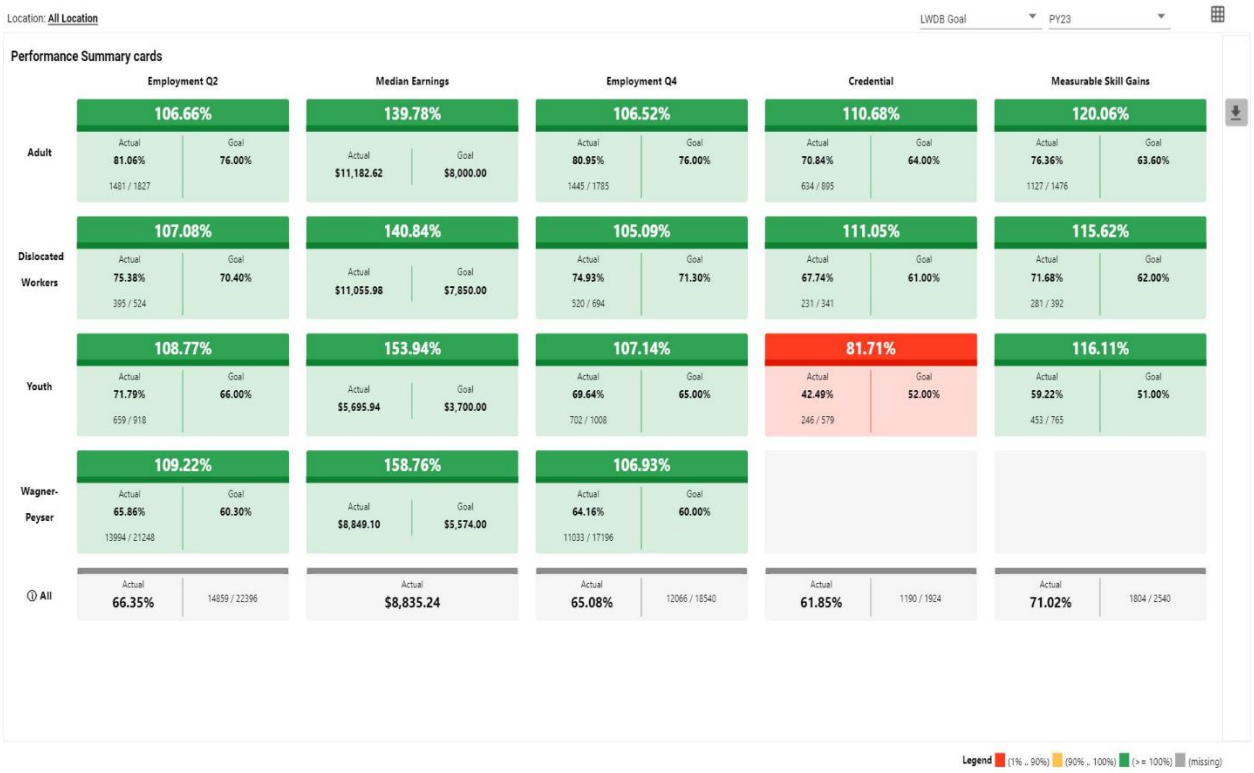
More than 6 out of 10 (65.3 percent) respondents reported not participating in any training programs offered through NM WCC, and another 13.9 percent were unsure whether they had participated in one (Exhibit 21). The three most attended training courses offered by NM WCC were skill upgrading and retraining (4.2 percent), job readiness training (4.2 percent), and on-the-job training (3.9 percent).



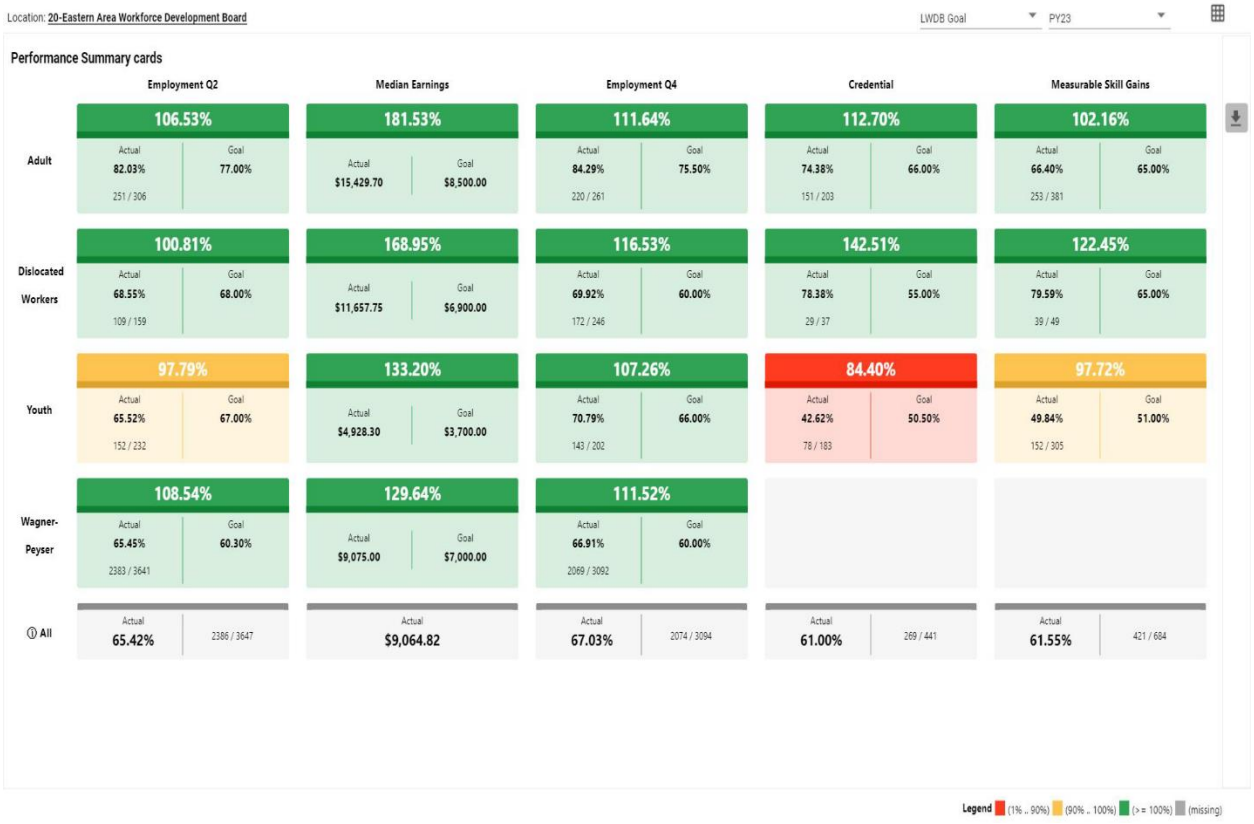
Note: Percentages do not add to 100 because participants were able to select more than one response.

Appendix II: Data Analysis

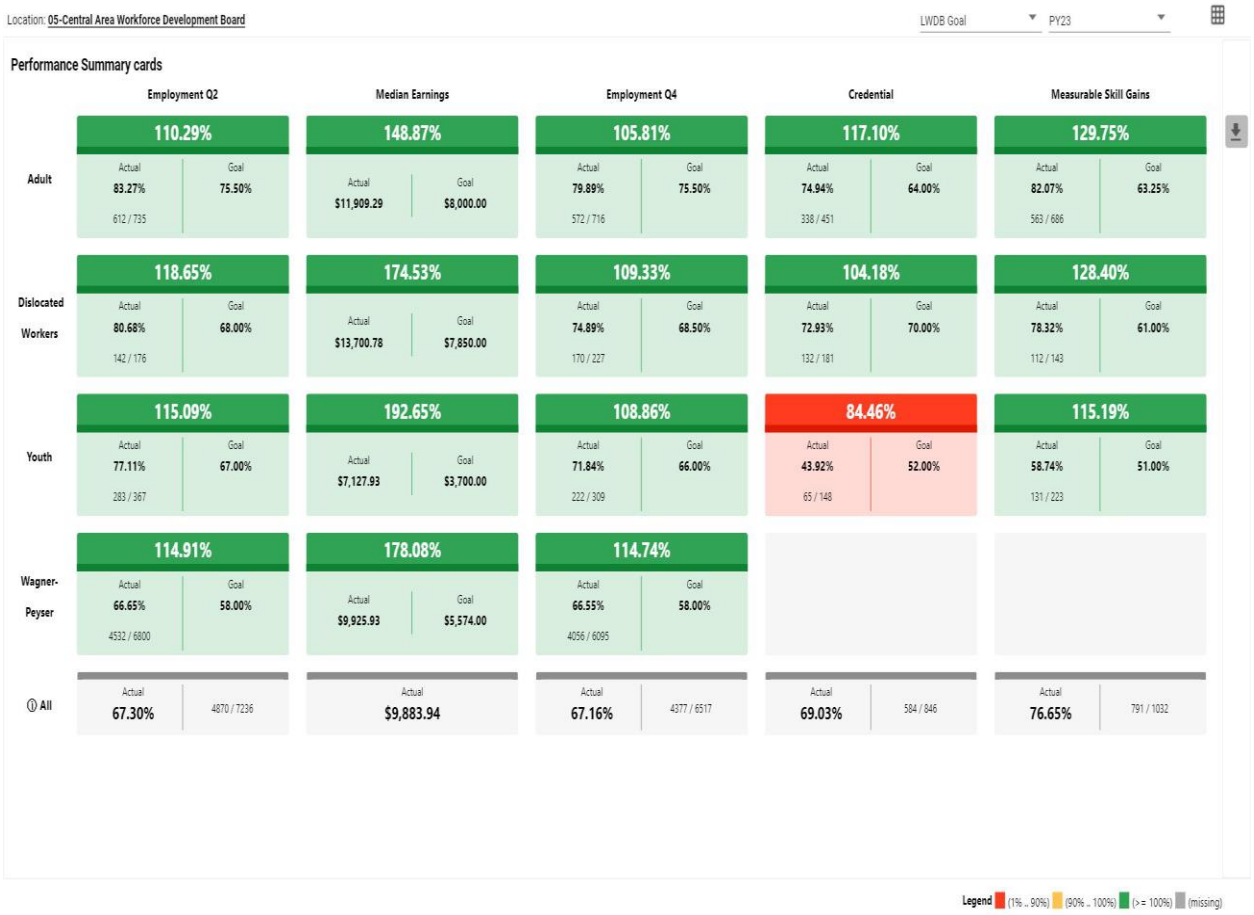
Statewide Performance



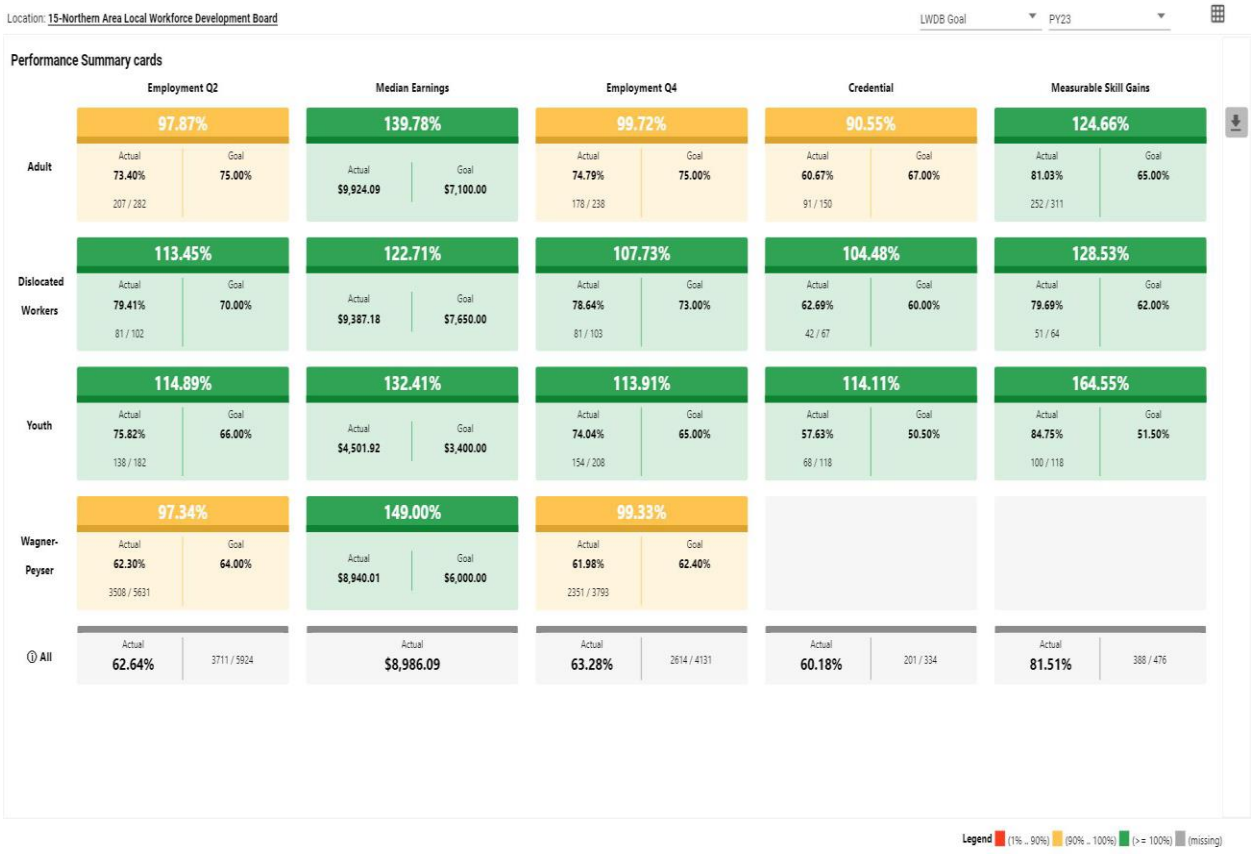
Eastern Area Workforce Development Board



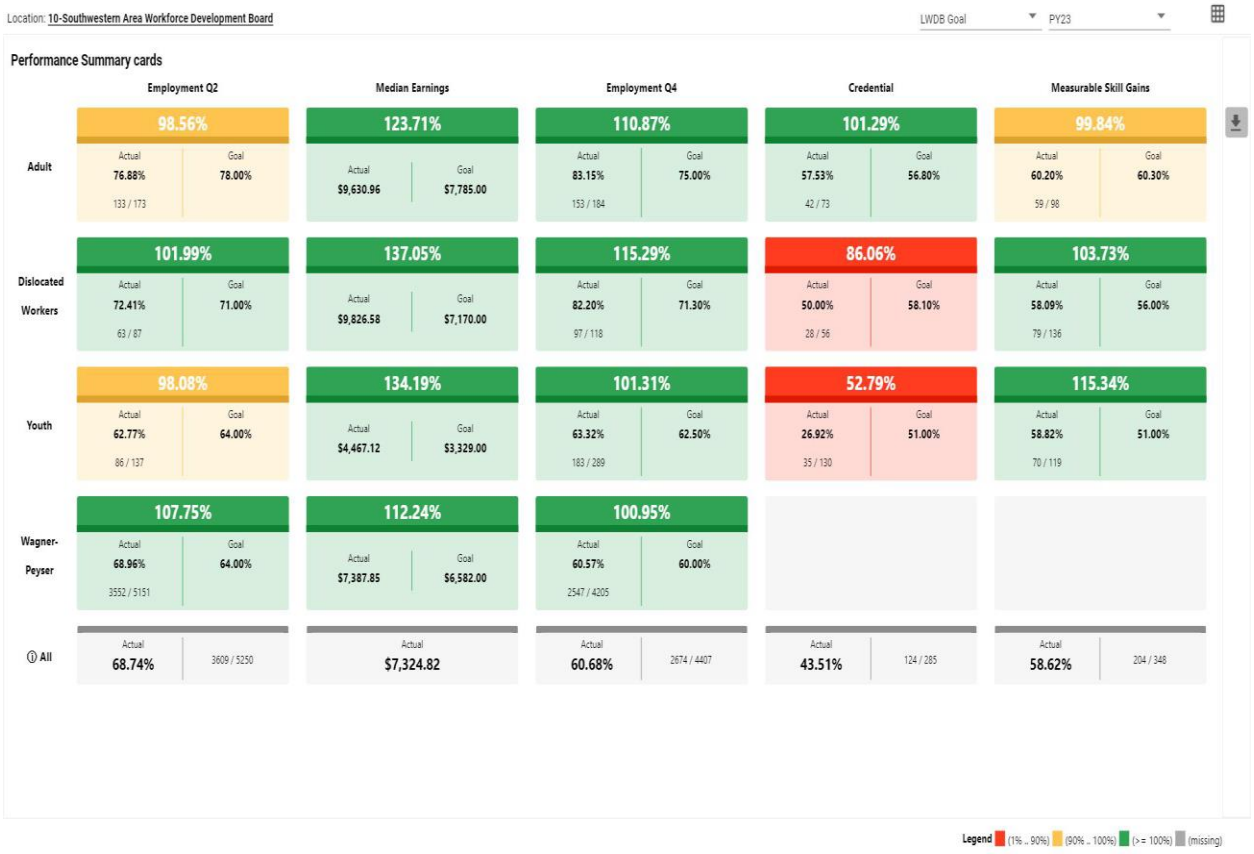
Central Area Workforce Development Board



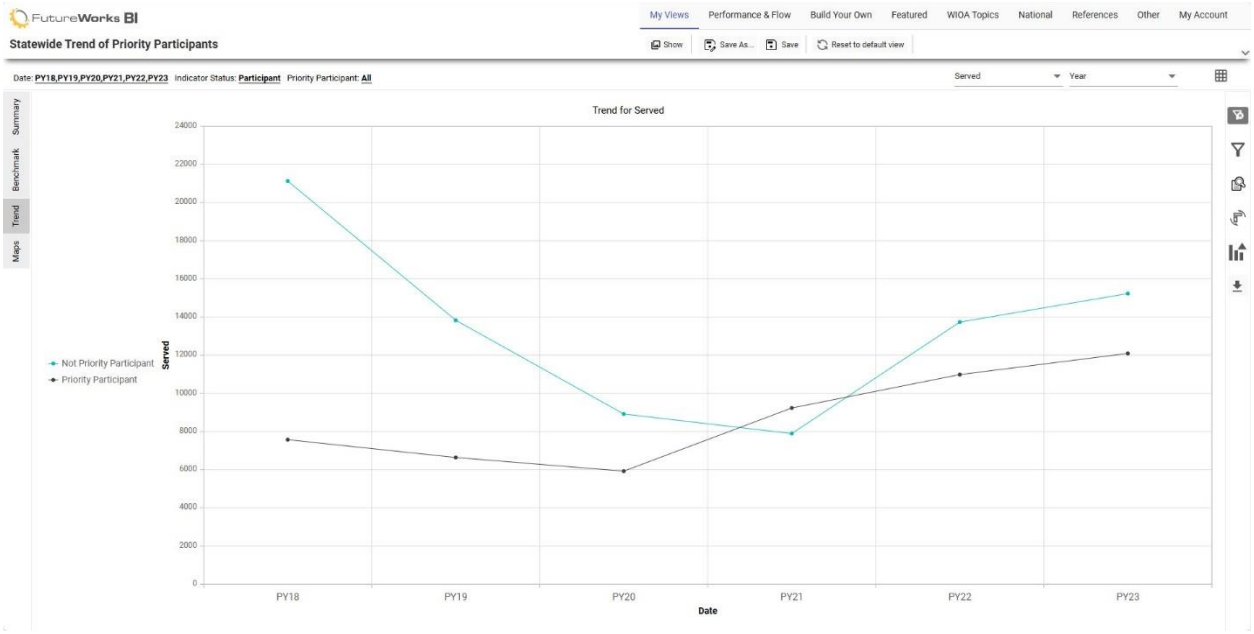
Northern Area Workforce Development Board



Southwest Area Workforce Development Board



Statewide Trend of Priority Particpants



Appendix III: Success Stories

Adult Participant from the Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board

Soriah Martinez

Soriah Martinez, 20-year-old, came into the Raton Workforce Connection Center to inquire about job training. WIOA Community Support Advocate (CSA), Joshua, met with her to explain the eligibility and enrollment process, then spoke about a plan to address her needs once qualified for WIOA services. Since completing High School, she worked various part-time jobs including as a barista at a local coffee shop and making dough for a pizza restaurant. Soriah shared that she was looking to find work experience training in an office setting as she was starting to think more about her future and long-term job potential.

After she was determined to be eligible, she was enrolled and provided a Transitional Jobs Training (TJT) activity. Soriah was placed at The Center for Community Innovation where she would learn skills as an office clerk for their Hi-Set program and Skill Sharp program. During her training, site supervisor Bianca Patterson noticed that Soriah had done murals, art, music, and other creative elements in High School and throughout her life. Bianca mentioned to Soriah that there was an opening at The Center for Community Innovation to oversee the tourism for Colfax County which would include taking pictures, posting on social media, and keeping up with events.



Metrix Learning

Certificate of Completion

Soriah Martinez

HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED

Adobe Photoshop Elements 13: Adding Shapes & Text to Photos

On Friday, Feb 16, 2024

skillsoft

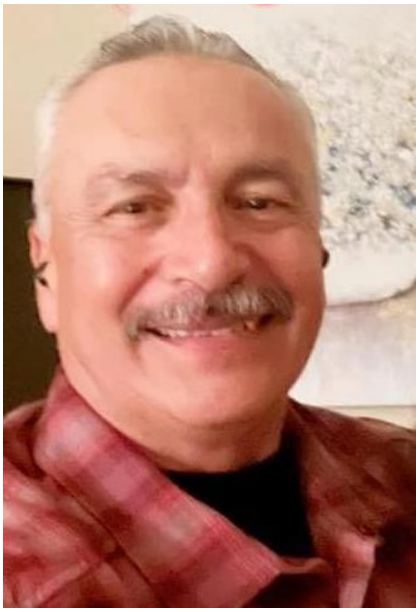
Through this potential and her past experiences, she was able to take Skill Soft classes to get certified in web design, adobe photoshop, and graphic design. Soriah was assisted by the Center for Community Innovation to create her portfolio. Since then, she has been offered to continue her training and has started an On-the-Job Training activity on April 16th, she is now



earning $14 an hour while receiving additional training. Soriah is performing well as she trains and is on the path to finding full-time employment.

Dislocated Worker Participant from the Eastern Area Local Workforce Development Board

Armando Frias



Armando's journey is the true definition of commitment and desire to improve someone's own life, showcasing how individuals can overcome challenges and reinvent themselves, even at the age of 61. After finding himself unemployed following a brief stint as a supervisor at a local car wash, Armando was at a crossroads. Having relocated to Alamogordo from California to care for his mother-in-law, Armando and his wife found solace in the serene and tranquil lifestyle of the area, with its proximity to the mountains and its favorable weather.

Despite his varied work experiences in construction and customer service, Armando felt unfulfilled, viewing his past jobs as a mere means of earning a paycheck. With his children grown and gone, he yearned for a more meaningful career. Encouraged by his brother, a truck driver, Armando saw an opportunity in obtaining his Commercial Driver's License (CDL), envisioning a future where they could drive together or even start their own trucking company.

However, navigating the process of obtaining his CDL seemed daunting, especially while unemployed. It wasn't until December 2023, that he attended a re-employment services meeting (RESEA) after filing for Unemployment Insurance, that Armando learned about the services offered by WIOA and the Alamogordo Workforce Connection Center. Upon discovering the CDL program at Mountain View Vocational Institute (MVVI), he seized the opportunity and sought guidance from his career coach on what steps he needed to take to pursue this CDL training opportunity.

With determination, Armando embarked on his journey to obtain his CDL. Despite facing challenges, including transportation costs to attend classes in El Paso, he remained steadfast. With the support of WIOA, Armando successfully completed the program on February 29, 2024, obtaining his Certificate of Completion and passing his road test. Armando's hard work paid off when he secured employment as a Concrete Truck Driver with a local concrete company on March 25, 2024, earning $19.60 an hour. Armando's story exemplifies the success of programs like WIOA, demonstrating how individuals can leverage available resources to overcome adversity, pursue their passions, and achieve their goals. Through perseverance and determination, Armando has not only secured employment but has also regained his sense of self-worth and confidence, paving the way for a brighter future.

In-School Youth Participant from the Southwest Area Local Workforce Development Board

Clair Apachito is the Senior Class President and Student Council President at Alamo High School at the Alamo Navajo Reservation in Socorro County. While visiting the school counselor to discuss her future, Ms. Apachito shared that she is interested in a career in the military and took the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery). She said that if she scores well enough, she wants to enlist in the Army for a healthcare career. The school counselor told Ms. Apachito about the benefits of the Youth Services program, and she enrolled.

Ms. Apachito's extracurricular activities include volleyball, basketball, track, and cross-country sports. Teachers have complimented her on her work ethic and communication skills when working with other students.

Ms. Apachito earned $1,584 in incentives for completing various Youth Services program activities.

"I am very thankful to have had the opportunity to participate in the WIOA Program. Being in the program has taught me responsibility, time management, communication skills, and the importance of what it's like to have a job. I want to thank everyone for giving me the chance to be able to participate in this program and for all the encouragement I have received."
– Clair Apachito

Out-of-School Youth Participant from the Central Region Workforce Development Board

20-year-old Isaac enrolled in the WIOA Youth Program as a high school dropout in December of 2020. He was encouraged to enroll in an HSE program prior to receiving additional program elements to help support Isaac's overall employability and success.

Isaac successfully completed BEST Training and Financial Literacy and was placed at Multi Services Construction as General Laborer in January 2021.

During the course of his employment, Isaac was trained by the business owner, Mike Navarro, in the following trades: electrical, plumbing, heating, roofing, concrete, remodeling, flooring and general construction. "Isaac learned the basics from the bottom on up on how to build a home. He was an eager and quick learner. He never complained when asked to do a chore and was always on time for work. I honestly feel that he will someday have his own construction business." Stated Mr. Navarro.

In February 2022 Isaac Coronado earned his High School Equivalency. This was a proud moment and achievement for this young man. He knew it would open doors for his advancement in his field. During his involvement with WIOA, he earned a credential, incentives, supportive services, and work experience.

Isaac completed 450 hours of work experience in May 2021. He was then retained by his WIOA job site with a pay raise.

Currently, Isaac is a student at Central NM Community College majoring in Computer Science. "I eventually want to be a civil engineer. I may eventually return to construction in a different avenue." He is also employed part-time by FED X at the Albuquerque International Airport and states, "I personally want to thank the WIOA Youth Program and Youth Development Inc. for guiding me in my life. I needed that support and platform at that time in my life. I will forever be grateful."

Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Name: Julio Torres

School: Clayton High School

Career goals: Welder or Mechanic

Education goals: Trade School

Pre-Apprenticeship position: Welder

Employer: Emery Welding

How is Pre-Apprenticeship helping you reach your career goals?
I have learned so many welding skills that will help me through my career, this has been the best experience. Time management, I have matured, I have learned to work with others. I am one to just want to work alone, do my thing. This has taught me to appreciate co-workers, learning from them and building comradery. I want to be a good employee; I want to be a better person.

Why are you interested in this career path?
My boss, Bobby, has been welding for over 40 years. When he told me, I am in the top 5 of the welders that he has come across, I felt so happy & proud. I love welding and mechanical work. This will definitely be my future; I do want to learn more about mechanics too.

Name: Natasha McAuliffe

School: Clayton High School

Career goals: Welder

Education goals: Trade School

Pre-Apprenticeship position: Welder

Employer: Emery Welding

How is Pre-Apprenticeship helping you reach your career goals?
Having this job has been such a learning experience, I have learned patience, how to accept constructive criticism and a taste of real life. What it's like to work full time. I have learned so much and improved my welding skills. Having this opportunity shows me that yes, I want to be a welder and there is still more to learn.

Why are you interested in this career path?
I have always had an interest in welding and now I do know it is my passion, so I will continue to learn, and they have hired me. I will be a senior next year, I will learn as much as I can, go to a welding school and keep doing what I love.

NM Corrections Department

Adult/Culinary Arts Training Program

Northern Area Local Workforce Development Board's (NALWDB) partnership with New Mexico Corrections Department, for the implementation of WIOA-supported vocational programming has not only impacted our prisoner population, but it has also brought joy and excitement to prison Wardens and staff.

Chef Fernando Ruiz discovered his passion for cooking behind bars. Twenty-five years later, Ruiz wants to help build confidence in others who have been incarcerated.

The New Mexico Correctional Facility has partnered with NALWDB to train 9 incarcerated individuals with a four-week culinary course, using a curriculum developed over the last year.

The Northern Board, Department of Workforce Solutions and Service Provider of the Northern Board had the opportunity to meet these individuals and discuss the opportunity that has been given to them and their future upon release of New Mexico Santa Fe Penitentiary.

