

# Workforce Alliance Five Year Plan September, 2012

## I. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

### A. Workforce

#### 1. Describe the profile of the area's workforce based upon consideration of educational levels, demographics, etc.

According to the 2011 Department of Labor Information for Workforce Investment Planning publication, Census, a total of 735,677 individuals reside in the thirty cities and towns now known as the South Central Connecticut Workforce Investment Area. The gender breakdown of those individuals is 51.9% are female, and 48.1% are male. Of this population, approximately 60% are between the ages of 16-65, and may be considered potential labor force participants. The largest age group within this subset are those individuals between the ages of 35-44. There are approximately 200,000 individuals age 21 and under in the region. They represent the emerging workforce.

The racial distribution of the region is as follows: 76.8% are White; 10.6% are African-American; 8.2% are Hispanic; 2.4% are Asian and 2% are classified as "Other." The largest concentrations of African-Americans reside in New Haven (35.7%) and Hamden (14.8%) and the highest concentrations of Hispanics live in New Haven (21.4%) and Meriden (21.1%). Of the Hispanic population, the greatest number of individuals list Puerto Rico as their country of national origin.

Educational attainment is a major factor in assessing the workforce of the region, and we have chosen to look at this profile by breaking down this variable by age. Among younger workers, age 18-24, 19% in this subgroup do not have a high school diploma. An additional 26% have a diploma or GED as their highest educational attainment, 39% have some college but no degree (it is safe to assume that they have dropped out of college); 3% have an Associates' degree, and 11% have a Bachelors' degree or higher.

Educational attainment data among established workers, age 25+ in the region, reveal the following: 15% with no high school diploma; 29% with a diploma or GED; 18% with some college but no degree; 6% with an Associates' Degree; and 32% with a Bachelors' degree or above. The larger number of better educated individuals in this subgroup is attributable to the large number of degreed workers employed in high tech industries, colleges and universities, health care and bioscience areas.

According to the Economic Policy Institute's Basic Budget Calculator, for a family to access a two-bedroom apartment at fair market rental value and live in a basic self-sufficient manner in the region, there must be a combined hourly wage of \$26.17 an hour.

The region accounts for 21.3% of all TANF recipients in CT. Their classification is as follows:

- \* Total Adult TFA recipients - 2861
- \* Total Exempt Cases - 1372 (approximately 6-7% are voluntarily engaged w/CT Works)
- \* Total Time Limited Cases - 1405
- \* Total JFES Cases (including exempt and post TFA recipients) - 1493

The region has an unusually high number of incarcerated individuals who list their home addresses as within the region. It is safe to assume that when they are released from prison, they will be returning to the region to live and also to work. According to CTDOL, the region listed 10,813 adult probationers, a 21% share of the state.

## **2. Describe the workforce investment needs of the following:**

- a. Job Seekers**
- b. Dislocated workers**
- c. Incumbent Workers**
- d. Youth**

**Jobseekers:** For the purposes of this discussion, jobseekers are those individuals who need and want employment right away. They may have extensive work histories or they may be new entrants into the labor force. They may be on time-limited public assistance, or they may have been recently released from a period of incarceration. They may be as young as sixteen years old, or they may have been retired and forced to reenter the labor market due to economic reasons. However they may present themselves, the workforce investment system is charged to serve them all.

Jobseekers needs jobs. They need information about themselves - their skills, aptitudes and interests - and they need to know how to apply that information in a clear, organized manner, which will result in not only a job to satisfy their immediate needs, but a *career plan* to attain economic self sufficiency. Jobseekers need tools and resources from the system such as labor market information, assessment of skills, job development and placement, resume assistance , and training and support services as needed.

**Dislocated workers:** Key to the workforce development needs of dislocated workers is a comprehensive skills assessment, to determine the current marketability of those skills. Too often, dislocated workers present themselves to the system with a multitude of skill sets, only to learn that their skills are outdated. This is especially true in the areas of manufacturing and financial services. Because many dislocated workers have a long and solid work history, in many cases skills remediation is their most pressing workforce development need, however the system has long neglected the emotional needs of the dislocated worker- the issues of loss of self esteem and self value which so often accompany being laid off from their jobs. Job clubs and support groups have been somewhat effective for this group, but more one on one services are needed, particularly as the duration of unemployment becomes extended and other services such as Unemployment Compensation runs out.

**Incumbent Workers:** The ability to effectively serve incumbent workers is one of the most critical challenges to the workforce investment system today. There are very limited resources to serve this group, and without intervention from the system many incumbent workers who need skills upgrade may face economic dislocation as well.

There are two profiles of incumbent workers which the system must consider. The first is the incumbent workers who is currently working in a low wage job, who needs skills

upgrade to get a better job on a path to self sufficiency. Many in this group are former TANF recipients, or are workers in industries who want to pursue careers in other industries which offer better wages and more viable career paths. This group needs assessment, career planning and development, labor market information and skills upgrade from the workforce development system. The second profile of this group are workers who need skills upgrade *only* to remain with the same company or industry.

**Youth:** First and foremost, youth need to become attached to the workforce development system, and be made to realize that the system is there to serve them at whatever critical juncture in their lives may dictate career planning, career development, training and education, job search and job intervention.

Youth need the workforce investment system to support the educational infrastructure of the region. For in-school youth, they need programs and activities that complement what is being taught in school, in an effort to keep them in school and to be successful. They need a variety of world of work experiences, and they need labor market information to assist them in making good career choices and in selecting the appropriate courses to support their plans. But, first and foremost, they need to see the relationship between education and labor market success.

For out of school youth, they need to be engaged in the system. They need a plan. They need to recognize the value of a high school diploma or GED and be strongly encouraged to attain at least that educational level. They need extensive career planning and career development services, supplemented with supportive services as needed. They need work experience and labor market information to become socialized as workers. They need financial literacy to understand the economic impact of work and money on their lives. And they need to be comfortable enough with the workforce development services, especially the One-stop, to be able to access services throughout their lives.

The categories listed above are not mutually exclusive. For example, a high school dropout, female TANF recipient, age 20 and in an entry level job may fit into at least three of the above categories. It is important to realize that the workforce investment system is not, and should not be a prescriptive system, but one which is flexible enough to offer customized workforce activities and services depending on how the person who accesses those services presents himself or herself.

## **B. Labor Market**

### **1. Identify the current and projected occupational/employment opportunities in your area based on DOL data and regional sources.**

Occupational Projections for the South Central CT Area, according to data supplied by the Connecticut Department of Labor, reveal the following:

- Education, Professional and technical positions have the largest number of openings.
- Health care related fields continue to be a large growth area with excellent placement potential.

- The Service Sector will also see a large amount of growth – potential for placement, wages vary.
- 35% of all job openings will require college degrees;
- Low wage workers and workers without updated skills will continue to struggle.
- All of the job titles require some level of customer service. It should be considered a core requirement.

Labor Market Information issued by the Connecticut Department of Labor and analyzed by Board Staff has driven the workforce development strategies for the board to employ.

The table below illustrates occupations in South Central CT ranked by *annual openings*. These ten occupations show jobs that are the most currently available for job developers to pursue. They are today’s “Hot Jobs” for those who need immediate employment.

**Top 10 Readily Available Occupations – South Central Region**

	Job Title	Annual Openings
1	Office, Administrative Support	1,416
2	Sales and Related	1,252
3	Food Preparation	1,190
4	Education, Training and Library	1,055
5	Retail Sales Occupations	823
6	Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians	822
7	Food/Beverage Servers	773
8	Managers	722
9	Personal Care	629
10	Transportation and Material Moving	530

The table below illustrates occupations with the greatest *annual growth*. These jobs range in skill and education requirements and are considered “safe bets” for training because they will produce a sustained increase in employment each year. Therefore, they may be viewed as target occupations for skills training and customized training models for the Board for the next five years.

**Top 10 “Safe Bet” Occupations – South Central Region**

	Job Title	Annual Growth
1	Education, Training and Library	440
2	Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians	359
3	Personal Care/Home Health	332
4	Other Personal Care Workers	310
5	Health Care Diagnosing/Treatment	308
6	Health Care Support	238
7	Office/Administrative Support	237

8	Primary, Secondary and Special Education Teachers	208
9	Nursing, Psychiatric and Home Health Aides	197
10	Food Preparation	176

**2. Describe the job skills necessary to obtain the current and projected employment opportunities.**

As indicated above, the manner in which the occupational projections are classified gives us a clearer picture of strategies to employ and skills needed to fill today’s jobs and employment opportunities of the future.

Before addressing the occupational skills issue, it is important to address three critical program components which must be in place whether we talk about today’s jobs, or those of the future.

The first program component is what is referred to in the workforce development industry as *“soft skills,”* the interpersonal, social skills which define workplace behavior, cooperation and expectation. Workers must possess those skills, either prior to, or integrated with, skills training.

The second program component is *removal of barriers to employment.* The focus group participants stressed that jobseekers today present themselves with a myriad of barriers which must be addressed, sometimes before even considering training or employment.

The third program component is *targeted job development.* The workforce development system has moved away from this type of job development in recent years, and has migrated to a more “job matching” system. We believe that if the system is investing in skill-building, then we must revert to more targeted job development in order to put the skills that have been learned to use. We also need to be more attuned to job developing for a more educated population, and we’ve started to do this with the Step-up and Technical Skills Training Initiatives.

**C. Resources**

- 1. Provide a description of the resources including programs and services, to meet the workforce development needs of:**
  - a. employers**
  - b. job seekers**
  - c. incumbent workers**
  - d. dislocated workers**
  - e. youth**

The table on the following pages illustrates the menu of programs and services currently available through the Region’s One-stop Career System. Major funders for these activities are WIA, TANF, Wagner-Peyser, Step-up, USDOL H1-B Technical Skills Training Grant, Department of Social Services and State Department of Education.

## Program Menu

Name of Program	Target Population	Service Delivery Model/Program Description	Outcomes
<b>One-stop Computer Lab</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible (5,000 + users each year).	Labs which operate like outplacement centers. Internet access, resume prep and mailed for jobseekers.	Resumes, cover letters, job search tools, job leads.
<b>One-stop Career Library</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible.	Resource materials on job search/career development, business development available for perusal or loan.	Enhanced knowledge about area of research.
<b>One-stop sponsored Job Fairs (</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible (3-4 times a year).	Large scale event where jobseekers and employers are brought into One-stop or elsewhere to market themselves and job openings.	Job leads, job offers, experience in on the spot interviewing.
<b>One-stop Career Workshops</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible (varies by month)	Short term instruction on job search and related topics. Usually half day in duration.	Enhanced knowledge about topic of workshop.
<b>Assessment</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible.	Test instruments administered and interpreted that measure academic achievement, aptitude and /or career interests.	Results of assessment used in career planning.
<b>Career Counseling/Case Management (all locations)</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible.	Assistance, guidance, information, support, tracking and follow-up of participants efforts provided.	Guidance and support attained through the education/training/e employment process.
<b>Direct Job Placement (all locations)</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible.	Job Matching and referral through the One-stop.	Individuals placed in jobs.
<b>Information services (all locations)</b>	Universal Access – everyone eligible.	Labor market info, financial aid info, training info, support services information and referral.	Enhanced knowledge about topic of information to assist in career development.
<b>Individual Training Accounts (ITA's)</b>	WIA-eligible adults and dislocated workers, TANF recipients	Customers select training options from the state-approved provider list of vendor institutions. Services are arranged through the One-stop.	Successful completion of training; placement into training-related employment, 6-month retention in employment.
<b>Contracts for Training</b>	WIA-eligible adults and dislocated workers, TANF recipients	Customers select training options from the contracts with qualified service providers,	Successful completion of training; placement

		procured through the LWIB. Services are arranged through the One-stop	into training-related employment, 6-month retention in employment
<b>On the Job Training (OJT)</b>	WIA-eligible adults and dislocated workers, TANF recipients, Step-up eligible adults and older youth, H1-B eligible jobseekers.	Individuals who are job ready but who lack specific occupational skills are likely candidates for OJT. One-stop Job Developers match jobseekers with employers who are willing to provide the skills training, and are reimbursed for a specific period to offset training costs.	Entry into unsubsidized employment upon completion of the training. Six-month retention in employment.
<b>Customized Training</b>	Varies by funding source.	Employer or consortium of employers design curriculum and agree to interview and/or hire successful program graduates.	Placement into full-time employment at participating company. “Win-Win” situation for employers and jobseekers.
<b>In-school Youth Programs</b>	WIA-eligible youth (14-21) who are matriculating in school.	Vendors procured through RFP to deliver year round services as prescribed. Youth Council selects vendors.	Increase in basic skills, work readiness, employability, job exposure.
<b>Out of School Youth Programs</b>	WIA-eligible youth (14-21) who are dropouts or high school graduates.	Vendors procured through RFP to deliver year round services as prescribed. Youth Council selects vendors.	Increase in, work readiness, employability, job exposure, employment.
<b>Rides to Work</b>	Low income individuals, TANF recipients.	Transportation to and from work provided through distribution of bus passes and fixed route enhancements of transit companies.	Elimination of transportation barrier to employment for participants.
<b>Next Steps</b>	Ex-offenders.	Case management, training, placement and follow-up services	Entry into unsubsidized employment.
<b>Unemployed Professionals Initiative</b>	Long term unemployed professional individuals.	Specialized workshops delivered in the respective communities, targeted towards job search strategies for “white collar” long term unemployed individuals	Attendance, increased awareness of job search strategies.

#### **D. Analysis**

##### **2. Based on the Board's analysis of the environmental scan, identify the gaps between the available jobs, projected industry growth, existent workforce and resources available to fill these gaps.**

- The skills gap - that term used to describe the educational attainment /skill attainment of the population in the region and the education and skills necessary to fill available and projected jobs – continues to remain at the forefront of challenges to the system, and is a critical factor in the disconnect between people and good paying jobs. As indicated previously, education and training is readily available in the region for all twenty-five of the highest ranking growth occupations in the region, however, the good jobs require a degree. In analyzing educational attainment of the region's population, it is clear that we desperately need to increase the number of residents in the region accessing a diploma and college degree if they are going to take advantage of those high skill, high paying jobs. The Adult Literacy Plan which was crafted by the Boards was an important step to begin real work on this issue. We need to take it further.
- Incumbent workers - another gap in service is the provision of services to incumbent workers, both the low wage workers who need to enter a new phase in their career development, and the existing workers who need skills enhancement to not only retain their employment with their current employer, but support their company's efforts to be competitive. We have seen a reduction in funding for this population at a time when it has become increasingly needed.

##### **3. Outline the Board's recommendations to address any disparities.**

Our recommendations to address the gaps outlined above are as follows:

- Since we have reason to believe that all Workforce Investment Areas in the state face the same issues with incumbent workers we recommend that a statewide development effort be launched to draw attention to these issues and that together the Boards seek both private and public funding to support this effort.
- As indicated in our Adult Literacy plan, We recommend that the Board and all partners work diligently with the Community Colleges to implement the I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) model to more fully address the basic skills gap. Early work out of Washington State and Maryland has been very promising. This is an ideal program model not only for adults, but for Older Youth “without a plan.”

- We recommend that the Board convene groupings of employers in target industries which demonstrate growth, to develop more sectorally-based approaches within the respective industries to workforce development. It is important that the employer community be brought into the system as a partner and as a participant, rather than an “end-user.” We recommend that Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Officials assist us in this effort.

**4. Describe what initiatives the Board will undertake to secure additional financial resources to address the gaps identified in the analysis. Identify specific sources of potential funding the Board will pursue and identify specific activities for which the additional funding would be used.**

The Board will continue to pursue any relevant Request for Proposals that may be issued by the state or federal government. We will also proactively collaborate with and support other WIBS, partners and agencies in their development efforts. In the spirit of cooperation, wherever a statewide need is determined, and where it is beneficial to do so, we would support collaborating with any or all of the other WIBS in the state to submit statewide grant proposals or requests. In addition, we will research any private funding opportunities and foundations for funding opportunities. The Annie E. Casey Foundation has been very helpful in this area, however they will be physically leaving the state of Connecticut and it is our hope to continue that relationship as will allow.

## **II. LINKAGE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**1. What is the existing or proposed economic development strategy in your region as established by local and regional economic development agencies? Specifically describe strategies for the recruitment of new and expansion of existing businesses? What are the priorities? Identify the key industries that support your regional economy; identify emerging or growth industries.**

According to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)<sup>1</sup> plan for the region (updated in 2011), “The vision guiding this plan is that South Central Connecticut will have an economically vibrant economy at the regional level, with strong creative core cities, competitive economic clusters and a sustainable quality of life.”

Four strategies are associated with the realization of this vision:

- Strengthen the region’s economic base by supporting key industry clusters.

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that the CEDS plan for South Central Connecticut does not cover the entire Workforce Investment Area, however it does cover the major municipalities in the region. Representatives from the balance of the area have been involved in the crafting of this section of the plan and concur with its theme.

- Sustain a competitive human capital base and provide education, career development and employment opportunities to residents.
- Build an effective civic infrastructure that collaborates effectively and is driven by a common vision.
- Promote lifelong learning as a key quality of life factor in the region.

## 2. How does the industry cluster initiative impact your regional economy? Which clusters have high concentrations of companies in your region?

- **Knowledge-based employers, most notably educational and healthcare institutions, are critical economic drivers in the regional economy.** Nonprofit activities in educational services and healthcare dominate the region's economic base. This segment of the economy is important for a number of reasons. First, the major institutional employers provide economic stability, particularly during economic downturns. Second, these are knowledge-based employers who bring highly skilled residents into the region and provide opportunities for spinning off other commercial activity that builds upon the knowledge base.
- In addition to the jobs in the large knowledge-based institutions, the region has a small core of **private technology-based companies, many in the information technology, telecommunications, engineering, and consulting industries.** While there have been some losses in recent years due to the recession and the decline in telecommunications and Internet-based businesses, this segment of the economy still represents one of potential economic growth in the region.
- **Manufacturing remains one of the most important economic engines in the region.** While the structural shifts in the national and state economies from manufacturing to services are well documented, this is sometimes misinterpreted to mean that manufacturing is no longer a critical and viable sector. In the South Central region, while there have been losses in manufacturing over the past three decades, there are still about a significant number of jobs in the manufacturing sector. Not only are there a large number of jobs in the region's economy, but also since these jobs tend to be of higher quality, they account for about 20 percent of the payroll generated in the region. The manufacturing base in the region is also diverse. There are small, mid-sized, and large companies that encompass a wide range of industries—producing steel, chemicals, and pens, to name a few of the products. One area of particular strength in the manufacturing sector as currently defined is the printing and publishing industry. This industry has a high concentration in the region and has seen some recent employment growth.

- **The region’s strong bioscience cluster has been one of the most important areas of economic growth.** The region’s unique niche among bioscience regions comes from the co-location of world-class research facilities at Yale and Yale New Haven Hospital and the presence of large pharmaceutical firms. The cluster in the region has four components: research facilities (at Yale and Yale New Haven Hospital), large pharmaceutical firms, biotech firms, and medical device firms. In addition, there are supplier companies and educational institutions like Gateway and Middlesex Community Colleges. The total size of this cluster has been estimated to include about 13,000 jobs and continues to grow with the expansion of Alexion Pharmaceuticals returning to New Haven.
- **The distribution/logistics cluster, while difficult to define, is an important component of the regional economy.** The definition of this cluster for the South Central region focuses on those activities that are located within the region because of the transportation and locational advantages. There are a number of activities and firms in the area that may constitute distribution cluster activity but that do not fall into the traditional definitions. These industries come under separate industrial classifications, but actually house distribution-oriented jobs, and use similar resources and infrastructure. These include: third-party logistics and warehousing industries, or IT intensive supply chain management providers and professional services in supply chain, or logistics management that provides not only warehousing facilities, but also management services to clients in the region and nationwide; software firms creating supply chain management software and providing consulting services; and food manufacturers such as Raggiozino’s, that locate within a region for its distributional advantages. The distribution cluster in the region employs more than 20,000 people in the region.

**3. What are the specific workforce development needs associated with the economic development priorities identified in #1? For example, companies may be seeking services including recruitment/assessment/referral of job applicants.**

First, because of the high concentration of small businesses in the region and the desire by the economic development officials to retain and grow those businesses, the need to better market available workforce/economic development tax credits and hiring incentives to these businesses has emerged. The advent of the state’s Step-Up program which targets small manufacturers, could not come at a more needed point in time.

Second, our stakeholders wholeheartedly support the need for the WIB to be a point of contact for coordination of workforce development services and activities. Getting the word out about programs and services in a more generic, easily understandable format has become a pressing need.

**4. Identify how the Board will address the workforce development needs as they pertain to the economic development strategy of the area. Describe programs and services available to support economic development recruitment and expansion priorities.**

Our plan is to adopt a centralized approach to the provision of business services. We would develop a menu of clearly articulated services, including Step-up and our new H1-Technical Skills Training initiative. We will be responsible for coordination of all partners who are at the table. We will not over promise, but rather deliver what the system can provide.

Employer services in the workforce development system that may be available to support economic development recruitment and expansion priorities are:

- Employee recruitment
- Employee evaluation and screening
- Training subsidies
- Customized training
- Job fairs
- Office space for interviewing
- State and National Job Banks
- Talent Bank
- On the job training
- Step-up Program
- Technical Skills Training Initiative
- Classroom Instruction
- Transportation to and from work
- Tax credits

**5. Identify the economic development professionals and organizations involved in the development of this component of the plan.**

This plan was developed with the assistance of REDFO, the Regional Economic Development Forum, comprised of municipal economic development officials in the region.

**6. Describe how the Board will establish and maintain relationships and lines of communication with the economic development entities in its region.**

Workforce Alliance staff regularly attend REDFO meetings and relationships with local economic development entities are long-standing.

**III. VISION AND GOALS**

1. Describe the area's strategic economic and workforce development vision for the next two years based upon Sections I and II of your plan.
2. Identify the strategic goals developed to achieve that vision and identify how they relate to the priorities identified in the CETC Annual Plan.
3. For each strategic goal, describe the specific objectives/action steps to achieve the goal and the corresponding deliverables and target dates. Also identify the Board Committee with oversight responsibility for the goal. See the attached template for providing this information.
4. Identify the measures to be used to track progress toward these goals.

The following goals were adopted by the mayors in 2011 as part of a large-scale planning effort (attached), and are valid for the next five-plus years. All of these goals are developed with oversight and input from the Workforce Alliance Planning Committee, Executive Committee and Youth Council. Progress updates are articulated *in italics* after each goal, as of July, 2012.

### **Strategy Goal #1: Effective Communications Regarding Programs the Workforce Development System Offers**

#### **Immediate (within 1 year):**

1. Create an elevator speech that highlights the activities and purpose of Workforce Alliance – communicate the information to all stakeholders  
*Completed elevator speech and distributed to all staff and board members.*
2. Post Monster Inc. data on Workforce Alliance’s website and update on a regular basis.  
*Data Quarterly and Monster real-time data reports now on website and updated regularly.*
3. Create an area of the website where feedback can be received.  
*Active Facebook page, featuring links to all media reporting, as well as self-generated news and updates. All printed materials now feature the Q box that links smart phones directly to website.*  
  
*Youth Council Mentoring program blog provides communication links for college and high school youth involved in mentoring project.*
4. Hold regular meetings in the county outside of the Regional Economic Development Forum (REDFO) region to include additional stakeholders from Middlesex County  
*Joined the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS).*

5. Hold regional meetings to convene area business executives and make them aware that Workforce Alliance can support them with any workforce issue (startups, retraining, internships, on-the-job training, expansion, closing down, etc.) along with sharing the businesses the Monster Inc. and workforce data.  
*Coordinating with the New Haven EDC, elected officials, economic development professionals and United Way to inform of products and updated labor market information. About to enter into subcontracts with Chambers of Commerce to increase business outreach.*
6. Develop communication materials on 'success stories' from businesses that have hired 'at risk' employees. Share these materials at regional meetings.

**Near term (within 3 years):**

7. Create fact sheets of all workforce development services offered by Workforce Alliance and its partners.  
*Fact sheets are completed and included in the business services packet.*
8. Cultivate "Business Ambassadors" to spread the word and alert other business that Workforce Alliance can help with any workforce issue.  
*Developing a cadre of board members who are comfortable with "elevator speech." In process of identifying satisfied employers who have successfully used workforce development products.*
9. Gather businesses along the Route-9 corridor to understand present and future workforce needs.  
*Business Services Representative hired to specifically service the Route 9 and shoreline corridor.*
10. Hold meetings with businesses that work with 'at risk' populations to market the possibilities.

**Strategy Goal #2: Provide Job Readiness Standards**

**Immediate (within 1 year):**

1. Expand basic and remedial education options – many employers cited a deficiency in the current labor force.  
*Basic Skills academies established in New Haven and Meriden have served a total of 66 people. Outcome evaluation on initial cohorts is currently in process.*

**Near term (within 3 years):**

2. Offer technology skill courses targeted towards Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) careers.  
*Continue to support STEM individual training accounts and incumbent worker training projects throughout the region. Awarded \$4.975m, 4-year USDOL competitive discretionary grant to provide training in manufacturing, engineering and information technology sectors. Will continue to use the STEM portal for career blueprints.*

3. Outreach to youth on types of manufacturing jobs available and involve New Haven Manufacturing Association.  
*Member of New Haven Manufacturer's Association Workforce Development Committee. Created materials for youth and employers. Initiated teacher externship program. Sponsored workshop for guidance counselors, math and teachers to interact with manufacturers at Gateway Community College. Continued plant tours for high school students.*
4. Create targeted programs for ex-offenders and work with potential employers so training matches employment possibility.  
*Expanded in-house program and served 225 ex-offenders. Partnered with Emerge Enterprises to conduct transitional work crew employment program for additional 59 (to date) ex-offenders.*

**Long term (within 5 years):**

5. Work with stakeholders (community colleges, vocational technical schools, businesses, K-12 system) to establish job readiness 'standards'  
*Attended conference sponsored by the state's P-20 Council on College and Career Readiness. Examining toolkit and investigating WorkKeys tool for fuller implementation in the One-stop.*

**Strategy Goal #3: Streamline Client Management**

*Action steps:*

**Immediate (within 1 year):**

1. Engage state agencies to support a pilot client management system that could be a model for other regions.  
*Connecticut Department of Labor has assembled an advisory group ( of which Bill Villano is a member) and has since gone out to bid for a more improved , more integrated client management system.*

**Near term (within 3 years):**

2. Set up meetings with partner organizations to understand each partner's area of expertise and how they can fit into Workforce Alliance's enhanced client-centered service approach
  - a. In particular, understand all the partners in the system that work with 'at risk' populations and the strengths and services offered by all the partners. Create a centralized system that streamlines all the paperwork to ensure timely hiring.  
*Continued participation on steering committee sponsored by United Way, in an effort to streamline client flow for economically disadvantaged families.*

**Long term (within 5 years):**

3. Streamline existing client management systems so that a record is created for each client that the workforce serves similar to an electronic medical record. Research if other areas of country have successful way to do client management or model it after the ePulse system which is used in economic development organizations.  
*Workforce Alliance will be required to use the new state client management system when it is implemented.*

## **IV. WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

### **A. Role in Vision/Goals/Strategies**

- 1. Describe what the Board views as its role as it relates to achieving the region's economic and workforce development vision and goals and how this role will be carried out.**

Board views its role as one of broker and relationship-builder in achieving this vision. Relationships continue to be established and nurtured. The Board must be able to deliver what it has promised, and do it well, and prove itself of value to the economic development system. The Board must be in a position to effectively deliver services in a clear, timely and professional manner.

- 2. Describe how the Board will engage a broad array of economic and workforce development entities in the achievement of the vision and goals.**

We are well into this process through our memberships in REDFO, trade associations, Chambers of Commerce and regional economic development processes such as the CEDS. Our plans and strategies complement each other and we are highly dependent of each other to create a more seamless system, and to get the word out.

- 3. Describe the role of the Board in each strategy outlined in Section III above.**

The Board assumes a leadership role in the first two strategies. Because the state has taken the lead in integrated client management, the Board plays a support role to that effort.

### **B. Planning Process**

- 1. Describe how the Board consulted with and provided an opportunity for public input on the local plan.**

Four focus groups which initially crafted the plan in 2011 were representative of the many stakeholders, public and private entities and interested parties. They reviewed and commented on drafts of the plan, which were integrated into the final document.

- 2. Submit, as an attachment, any comments received as part of the public input process.**

N/A

**C. Additional Functions**

**1. Describe what the Board views as its primary role as it relates to the region's economic and workforce development activities and how this role will be carried out.**

The Board's primary role one of convening the necessary partners in economic and workforce development necessary to "do the deal" when the issue of new and/or expanding business is addressed at any time, within the South Central region. This often comes as a result of an initiated effort from a municipality or education entity. The board's role is a broker , relationship builder, and coordinating entity.

**2. Attach a diagram of the Board's committee structure and describe each committee's function.**

- Organization / Finance – this committee is responsible for the organizational structure of the RWDB, staffing issues, employee evaluation process, wages and benefits, as well as fiscal/budget issues, including review of expenditures, development of an operating budget and financial monitoring.
- Planning– this committee is charged with developing the Board's strategic plan and monitoring its implementation. The committee would also oversee any procurement of services (other than youth training), and also make recommendations to the full board on how the system can potentially be improved.
- Youth Council - has the responsibility of coordinating the area's youth activities and plays a key role in planning youth programs, determining eligible youth providers, and recommending funding for various programs. Youth Council members are called upon to serve as advocates for local youth and to ensure the provision and coordination of workforce training activities to youth.

**B. Board Support**

**1. Provide a diagram depicting the staff support to the Board.**

This is on file with the Connecticut Department of Labor WIA Division.

**2. Describe how administrative support will be provided to the Board. Include the number and type of staff that are directly funded by the Board.**

This is on file with the Connecticut Department of Labor WIA Division.

## **V. ONE-STOP DELIVERY SYSTEM**

**1. Please provide a description of the one-stop delivery system to be established or designated in your local area, including:**

- **A description of procedures your local Board will use to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants; and**
- **A copy of each Memorandum of Understanding between your local Board and each of the One-Stop partners concerning the operation of the One-Stop system in the local area.**

A copy of the system, monitoring tools and ITA evaluation process that we implement is on file with the Connecticut Department of Labor. Our MOU's are continuous renewal, and are also on file with CTDOL.

**2. A description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and Chief Elected Official to be used to measure the performance of the local area, the local fiscal agent (where applicable), eligible providers, and the local One-Stop delivery system.**

The Connecticut Department of Labor has not initiated negotiations for WIA PY12 at this time. The WIA Common Measures are used at the subrecipient level.

**3. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. This information must include a description of the local Individual Training Account (ITA) system, with procedures for ensuring that exceptions to the use of ITAs, if any, are justified under WIA Section 134(d)(4)(G)(ii) and 20 CFR 663.430.**

See Program Menu chart above. The description is a part of our WIA plan and is on file in the WIA Unit of the CTDOL.

**4. A description of how the local Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with statewide rapid response activities.**

The Board and One-stop are a part of the Rapid Response Team, and should there be a mass layoff or plant closing, the Board will work with CTDOL to investigate the suitability for an NEG grant, specialized workshops, job fairs or other services

for dislocated workers. CTDOL( as authorized by the federal government) takes the lead on rapid response activities.

- 5. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth activities in the local area, including identification of successful providers of such activities (and the criteria and procedures used by your Board to identify successful and unsuccessful providers).**

A listing of youth providers and activities is a part of the WIA plan, and is on file with the Connecticut Department of Labor. Our Youth Council establishes priorities and when necessary, issues an RFP (which includes evaluation metrics) to procure additional providers and/or services.

- 6. Identification of the fiscal agent, or entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the CEO or the Governor.**

Workforce Alliance is the WIB and fiscal agent for the area.

- 7. A description of the competitive process to be used by the Board to award grants and contracts, including the process to be used to procure training services that are made as exceptions to the ITA process referenced in WIA Section 134(d)(4)(G).**

We have a procurement policy in place, which is on file with the Connecticut Department of Labor.

- 8. A description of the criteria used by the Governor and the local Board, under 20 CFR 663.600, to determine whether funds allocated to the local area for adult employment and training activities under WIA Sections 133(b)(2)(A) or (3) are limited, and the process by which any priority will be applied by the One-Stop Operator.**

We employ a “Priority of Service” tool for WIA customers who wish to access training.

- 9. In view of declining resources, please describe how the Board will integrate WIA, TANF and any other funding to support the operations of the one-stop system.**

We have closed the Middletown One-stop and are offering services to that segment of the region more remotely, at other agencies in town. We currently integrate all funding sources to support the system, and have done so for several years. Should resources decline further, we would consider offering more services remotely.

**10. A description of coordination of efforts across LWIBs: Examples of OJT efforts, apprenticeship, Reemployment of Long-Term Unemployed etc.**

The “second in command” staff of the LWIBs across the state meet regularly to address coordination issues, share information and best practices, and discuss strategies for improved service. We expect to continue this practice, as it has worked very well for us.

**11. In order to increase jobseeker and employer awareness of workforce development resources available across the country, the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA) strongly encourages states and local workforce investment areas to implement the American Job Center brand in accordance with state plans. Please describe some ways the local workforce investment area may begin using the American Job Center brand immediately.**

**NOTE: USDOL strongly encourages the use of the American Job Center brand. In the future, the Department intends to work closely with states and localities to move to a requirement to use the brand.**

We have implemented this brand as directed, and promoted the brand in electronic and hard copy publications. Any additional guidance from the State of Connecticut would be most welcome.

**VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

**Please show evidence of sign-off on the plan submission by the Chief Elected Official(s) identified in your local area's Chief Elected Officials agreement and the Board Chair.**

The Executive Committee of the Chief Elected Officials approved the plan on May 27, 2011. It is in effect, beginning on July 1, 2011, for five years.