

ANATOMY OF A ONE-STOP: BALTIMORE CITY EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER

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CHAPTER 1

THE BALTIMORE CITY MAYOR'S OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT, EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER: RESEARCH DESIGN AND CONTEXT¹

INTRODUCTION

This study probed beyond what many national, regional and state decision-makers already know about the delivery of workforce development system services supported wholly or partially from U.S. Department of Labor revenue streams. This report includes findings from on-site observations conducted in the Baltimore City Eastside Career Center (ECC), one of four One-Stops managed by the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED), interpreted in a broad context of local, state and national events and decisions.

Negotiation of performance standards for and within states receiving U.S. Department of Labor funds has typically given limited attention to differences in the level and mix of business hiring activity, service area job seeker attributes, and presence of other intermediaries serving some or all of the same businesses and job seekers. Our findings can improve the knowledge base among regional and state performance standard negotiating teams about context issues we think should be considered in the negotiation process. Others, including legislators, legislative committee staff members, and staffs in organizations representing workforce development constituencies can gain a new appreciation for the complexity, diversity and frequent reinvention of One-Stop operations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

We began the design of a plan for ECC observations and related data collection by defining questions to be answered—working backwards from what performance standard negotiators should know about One-Stop operations to assure a knowledge-based outcome from standard-setting deliberations.

The *opportunity* for a One-Stop to perform depends on the level, mix and timing of individual customers and businesses requesting One-Stop help, whether in-person or by remote communication.² Therefore, two basic questions to be answered are:

¹ Our on-site observations in the Eastside Career Center (ECC) of the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) and other data collection activities occurred in 2004-2005, so our description of state and local organizations, responsibilities, and program-specific titles and mission statements, does not align precisely with some features of the mid-2006 organizational structure and portfolio of program offerings and priorities. These differences are welcomed as further evidence that the Baltimore and Maryland public workforce development systems are dynamic—responding to new opportunities and challenges as these are recognized. Both the Baltimore City and State of Maryland entities are downstream partners affected by recurring statutory, regulatory and fiscal decisions that begin with the Congress and flow through the U.S. Department of Labor and other Federal agencies. At any defined time reinvention is underway in some aspect of service delivery to customers and/or performance accountability practices.

- Who seeks what type(s) of One-Stop help?
- Why do some residents and local businesses not seek One-Stop help?

Given an opportunity to serve through personal appearance or other communication of need, the *likelihood* that successful One-Stop performance will follow depends on whether and how customer expectations are recognized and acted upon. So, two additional questions to be answered are:

- What happens within a One-Stop after a customer arrives or communicates remotely—are the facility, resource materials and staff expertise appropriate and available when needed to satisfy or modify customer expectations?
- Are exiting customers satisfied with their One-Stop experience(s); and, if not, why and with what consequences?

ONE-STOP OBSERVATION AND DATA COLLECTION APPROACH

Having defined four questions to be answered, we met with the MOED management team to agree when and how ECC observations, staff and customer interviews, administrative record data collection, and business community surveys would be completed. The MOED headquarters management team and ECC manager agreed to open door access so *Anatomy* project staff could:

- Conduct interviews with ECC staff members.
- Observe staff interactions with customers and self-service use of ECC resources by some customers.
- Talk with a representative sample of customers at the time of entry into the ECC and just prior to their intended departure.
- Be given authorized access to confidential administrative records consistent with the active data-sharing agreement previously negotiated between MOED and The Jacob France Institute.
- Collect information about business manager perceptions of ECC operations, covering both business users and non-users of ECC services.

Mutual agreement was quickly reached that our on-site observation timing and actions would be scheduled to avoid interference with routine staff and customer activities. ECC staff was assured that contact with customers would always be on a voluntary and anonymous basis.

² Our University of Missouri-Columbia partners in conducting the *Anatomy* project accepted responsibility for the remote customer communication aspect of the overall study.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

Topics covered are presented in the following sequence:

- The remainder of Chapter 1 introduces historical context about the delivery of workforce development services in Maryland and Baltimore City.
- Chapter 2 follows with a brief overview of today's ECC services.
- Chapter 3 describes some basic features of the Baltimore economy and ECC neighborhood.
- Chapter 4 offers an overview of ECC staff responsibilities defined by U.S. Department of Labor and other funding streams.
- Chapter 5 follows with detailed insights about customer and ECC staff interactions based on our observations within the ECC, and describes selected outcomes based on available administrative records.
- Chapter 6 reports our findings from pre- and post-ECC service delivery interviews conducted with customers and staff, and delivers findings from our survey of business users and non-users of the ECC.
- Chapter 7 summarizes highlights from our intensive observation and analysis of ECC operations and relates these findings to the performance standard negotiation process.

THE STATE AND LOCAL CONTEXT FOR ECC OPERATIONS

We begin by describing two components of the Maryland public workforce development system:

- The state component, including the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, the Governor's Workforce Investment Board, and seven other state agency partners.
- A local component, which in our case is the Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment Development and four One-Stops that comprise the MOED network of neighborhood access to self-service resources and staff assistance when needed—the ECC being one of the four.

The State Level

The Governor's Workforce Investment Board

The appointed members of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board (GWIB) are delegated responsibility for collection, analysis and public release of workforce information of strategic interest to state and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, current Maryland businesses and targeted out-of-state and international business communities, educators, adults and youths making career or career-change decisions, and other state residents and prospective arrivals.

The GWIB defines eight state agency members responsible for 32 workforce development programs that in Fiscal Year 2005 received nearly \$2.5 billion for public workforce development activities—60 percent of these funds flowing from State of Maryland sources.

The eight state agencies comprising the Maryland public workforce development system are:

- Maryland Association of Community Colleges
Technology Enhancement Consortium.
- Maryland Department of Aging
Senior Employment Program
- Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
Maryland Industrial Training Program
Partnership for Workforce Quality
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Community Development Block Grant
Community Services Block Grant
- Maryland Department of Human Resources
Food Stamp Employment and Training and Able-Bodied Adults without
Dependent Children
Child Care/Purchase of Care
Maryland Fatherhood Initiative Grant Program
Job Access/Reverse Commute
- Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation
Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program
Employment Service/Job Service
Veterans' Services
Labor Market Information
Maryland Business Works
MetroTech
Skills-based Training for Employment Promotion
Trade Adjustment Assistance Services

Unemployment Insurance
Work, Not Welfare Tax Credit
Work Opportunity Tax Credit/Welfare-to-Work Tax Credit
Workforce Investment Act Title I

- Maryland Higher Education Commission
 - Community Colleges
 - Public Colleges and Universities
 - Private Career Schools
 - Non-Public Colleges and Universities
 - Student Financial Assistance and Institutional Grants
- Maryland State Department of Education
 - Adult Education and Literacy Services
 - Career and Technology Education
 - Correctional Education
 - Division of Rehabilitation Services

The GWIB guides Maryland public workforce development policy. More than half of the defined member slots are filled with appointees from the business community. The GWIB members are charged by the Governor to ensure that the workforce system is aligned with the economic and educational goals of the State, resulting in prepared workers and competitive businesses.

Until 2003, the GWIB operated as an independent agency. In 2003, the Governor placed the GWIB within the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR). The reconstituted GWIB has an expansive vision of responsibility beyond the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, encompassing the State's entire public workforce development system. The GWIB has a mandate from the Maryland General Assembly to "identify inefficiencies within the State's own workforce development system" for the purpose of improving the system and reducing cost.³

The stated GWIB mission is:

To guide a nationally recognized workforce development system that is aligned with the economic and educational goals of the State of Maryland and that will result in a qualified workforce available to employers in the State of Maryland.⁴

To this end, four strategic goals defined by the GWIB are to:

- Create a demand-driven workforce development system that connects employers to the best educated and most highly skilled workforce in the world.
- Develop a labor market system that provides employers, students, job seekers, incumbent workers, ex-offenders, out of school youth, and other at risk and special

³ Governor's Workforce Investment Board Annual Report, March 2004.

⁴ Governor's Workforce Investment Board Annual Report, 2003.

populations with the labor market information, support and technical assistance and training they need.

- Implement a governance system that focuses on unified planning, eliminating duplication, maximizing resources, continuous improvement, and accountability for results.
- Ensure universal recognition of Maryland's success in developing a world class workforce development system.

Ten areas for improvement of the workforce development system in Maryland have been defined by the GWIB:

1. Identify businesses or industries with growth potential that are currently experiencing or projecting worker shortages and determine how to meet their needs using the industry cluster-based approach. This demand driven model connects specific industry needs to the workforce development system. This is currently being used in the healthcare industry and there are plans to replicate the effort for the fields of aerospace, biotechnology, and hospitality/tourism.
2. Identify interagency collaboration for the Maryland career cluster system to align workforce preparation in all education and training levels. Career clusters are groupings of interrelated occupations that represent the full range of career opportunities in Maryland and include a common core of academic, technical and workplace knowledge and skills.
3. Execute a plan to market local workforce investment areas to businesses. Many Maryland employers are unaware of the One-Stop System. A plan has been developed to bring together education, economic development and workforce development to devise a new marketing strategy.
4. Eliminate duplication and reduce costs through improved consolidation and coordination of Federal and State workforce dollars and programs. The Division of Workforce Development within DLLR has been reorganized and WIA and Wagner-Peyser staffs have been integrated.
5. Improve connections with Maryland's business community and job seekers by updating and integrating the workforce management information system. The new Maryland Workforce Exchange system was launched in March, 2004, and will be available to job seekers and employers on the Internet. Access will also be created for other workforce development system partners.
6. Identify opportunities for the Department of Social Services and local Workforce Investment Areas to combine resources to improve customer service to low-income individuals. Combining TANF and WIA resources has been recognized as a gap in the workforce development system that needs to be addressed. A joint plan and policy for improved coordination is being developed.

7. Fully integrate adult education with Maryland's workforce development system. Maryland is participating in a national project with the U.S. Department of Labor and six other states to enhance the alignment of the services provided by adult education programs and the One-Stop Centers. In addition, a plan is being developed to strengthen relationships between state and local adult education agencies and workforce development partners. Models of integrated services are being identified, and professional development and technical assistance is being offered to locals.
8. Expand support for transitioning ex-offenders into the Maryland workforce. Removal of employment barriers needs to be addressed, as well as a reallocation of resources for programs and services offered to ex-offenders.
9. Increase job opportunities for the disabled. Local Workforce Investment Boards and One-Stops throughout Maryland are working to become more accessible to disabled customers.
10. Build capacity by expanding the role of the Maryland Institute for Employment and Training Professionals (MIETP) to include training that encourages cooperation among partners. MIETP is a non profit staff development and networking organization that helps train frontline staff, supervisors and administrators.

The GWIB sub-cabinet is led by the Executive Director of GWIB and is comprised of high-level government personnel including deputy and/or assistant secretaries, and executives from community based organizations, who are charged to continuously monitor and look for opportunities to improve the current workforce development system. GWIB sub-cabinet member communication flows to the GWIB leadership and to local Workforce Investment Area management teams.

Participating State agencies, in addition to the eight already named, are:

- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Maryland Department of Juvenile Services
- Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation

Overall management responsibility for the State's public demand-driven workforce development system has been assigned by the Governor to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR). Within the Department, the Division of Workforce Development manages programs supported from U.S. Department of Labor and some other funding streams.

Programs managed by the Division of Workforce Development include:

- *The Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program:* The Maryland Apprenticeship and Training program staff partners with employers, labor unions and training providers to design apprenticeship programs. The Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council is the State's official apprenticeship certification organization.

- *Employment Service/Job Service*: The Employment Service offers on-site and remote access self-service resources and staff assistance on behalf of individual job-seekers, groups of recently terminated or about to be terminated workers, and employers seeking qualified candidates to fill job openings.
- *Veteran Services*: Funds received from the U.S. Department of Labor Veterans' Employment and Training Service support Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outplacement Program specialists (DVOP) located in a One-Stop assist eligible veterans, their spouses, and employers, with job placement, training and other support services. This Office also provides employment information to separating active duty personnel and maintains an incentive award program for staff assisting veterans.
- *Labor Market Information*: The Office of Labor Market Analysis & Information receives funds from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor to manage multiple cooperative programs collecting and analyzing data about employment, unemployment and other factors relating to labor supply/demand in Maryland.
- *Maryland Business Works*: A statewide program developed in October 2003 to support existing Maryland businesses in the retention and growth of their workforce by increasing employee skill levels.
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Services*: TAA provides job training, out of state job search assistance, relocation assistance, and travel allowances for training to displaced manufacturing workers when the layoff or plant closure has been officially defined as caused by foreign competition.
- *Work, Not Welfare Tax Credit – The Employment Opportunity Credit (EOC)*: Designed to assist welfare recipients with employment. Employers receive state income tax credits if they hire these individuals.
- *Work Opportunity Tax Credit/Welfare to Work Tax Credit*: Designed to help social service recipients, persons with disabilities, youth, and low-income individuals who have numerous barriers to employment. Employers are given a financial incentive in the form of federal income tax credits to hire these individuals.
- *Workforce Information and Performance*: This Office was created in 2005 to consolidate responsibilities previously exercised in other administrative units within the Division of Workforce Development. This Office has primary responsibility for completion of performance reports prepared for delivery to the U.S. Department of Labor for programs supported from the Department's funding streams.
- *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)*: U.S. Department of Labor funds support a wide range of One-Stop services delivered to adults and youth ages 14 to 21. WIA services are administered through twelve Workforce Investment Areas having a total of 24 One-Stops and 15 satellite offices.

The Transition from JTPA to WIA in Maryland: A Brief History and Context

Maryland's transition from the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) was supported by a One-Stop early implementation grant received from the U.S. Department of Labor in 1995. Forty CareerNet centers were designated involving partnerships of local workforce investment boards, the Maryland Job Service, and public community colleges. The planning process for integrated delivery of services began a year before federal funding was received. In contrast to the delivery of services under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), a customer-driven approach for delivery of services was designed including early intervention services for UI recipients identified under the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services Program.

The State CareerNet One-Stop steering committee defined six broad performance outcome goals in anticipation of the official transition from JTPA rules to WIA expectations. These goals included increased

- Individual customer use of One-Stop services;
- Employer use of One-Stop services;
- Individual and employer customer satisfaction;
- Labor market penetration;
- Life-long learning; and
- Inter-agency participation/coordination.

The Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment Development CEO and the General Manager of the Baltimore One-Stop Career Center Network were members of the State JTPA-WIA transition steering committee, as well as participants in various state One-Stop work groups that met monthly. The ECC was designated to become a replicable model of integrated service delivery. The steering committee encouraged local reorganization approaches emphasizing local strengths, needs and opportunities.

The statewide CareerNet system went beyond what became a minimum WIA statutory mandate to designate a local agency or consortium of agencies to host the system and coordinate referrals among WIA, ES/UI, and community college partners through electronic linkages. In the MOED ECC local JTPA staff invited ES/UI partners to co-locate staff and participate in the integration of services for all customers.

In their 1995 One-Stop application to the State, Baltimore CareerNet partners proposed several outcome goals—they wanted to see a 10 percent increase in the number of customers served by more than one program, an increase in the number of similar services offered by different sites and agencies, maintenance of existing service levels for JTPA and Job Service customers, an increase in the number of services received by each individual or business customer, a 5 percent increase in the number of jobs available in the Job Bank, an increase in the number of customers from the general public (not eligible for JTPA or other programs) amounting to 15 percent of the individual customer base, and services delivered to at least 2 percent of not currently employed individuals.

The Baltimore Career Centers agreed to monitor the following customer outcomes: Number of job placements; daily traffic flow; number of enrollments in the Job Bank;

and number attending a JTPA employment preparation seminar, self-paced training, GED training, or skills brush-up class.

The Current Maryland One-Stop Career Center Model

Maryland One-Stop Career Centers have adopted a common approach for the delivery of mandated services:

- Each Center is required to have a large self-service area with Internet connected computers.
- A receptionist must be available to explain services and triage customers into the appropriate areas.
- A self-service resource center with computers to assist customers with resumes and cover letters is required.
- Individual customers are to have access to office equipment including telephone, facsimile and copier.
- Employment-related literature is to be available to assist customers with their job search.
- Referral and testing for training candidacy are required at least once weekly.
- Veterans' services must be available.
- Each One-Stop must be accessible to all individuals.

In addition to common-core required services, Maryland One-Stops are encouraged to provide job related workshops, outreach to specific populations including ex-offenders and persons with disabilities, and to seek partnership agreements with faith-based and other community organizations.

Defined self-service and staff-assisted core services under WIA are available to all One-Stop customers. Defined core services include:

- Outreach intake and orientation to available services
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs
- Eligibility determination for partner employment and training programs
- Job search assistance, career information and counseling
- Job matching and referral
- Local, regional, and statewide labor market information
- Information on financial aid, including Unemployment Compensation
- Information on certified education/training providers and One-Stop activities
- Orientation to personal computers for access to self-directed services
- Coordination of information/services with school-to-careers activities

If a customer needs help beyond the core tier of service, they may progress to intensive services. One-Stop partners review customer information such as skills assessment, literacy level, supportive service needs, barriers to employment, and job referral history to make this determination. Adults and dislocated workers may access intensive services if they are unemployed and deemed unable to obtain a job through core services. Adults and dislocated workers who are employed but have been determined to need intensive services to retain or find new employment assuring self-sufficiency are

also eligible. Defined intensive services include: Customized assessment of knowledge, skills, abilities and interests by use of various non self-service tools; development of an individual employment plan; group counseling; individual career planning; case management; and short-term pre-vocational and stand-alone services—including adult basic education, English as a Second Language, GED, basic computer literacy, interviewing skills, and soft skills.

Maryland state officials encourage an increase in the number of local training slots made available throughout the State, but few revenue sources are available for such slots. Innovative training strategies the State has used to fill skills gaps include the July 2001 Skills-Based Employment Promotion (STEP) program; a statewide incumbent worker training program; and the Maryland Business Works program. Maryland received a \$1.5 million award of federal funds for its “Teach for the Health of It” initiative to increase the number of faculty in the state’s nursing programs and consequently increase the number of nurses.

Wagner-Peyser/WIA Consolidation

The DLLR Division of Workforce Development mandated integrated local One-Stop WIA and Wagner-Peyser staffs in 2004 to achieve administrative efficiencies. Prior to this reorganization all State policy guidance had been delivered separately to WIA and Wagner-Peyser staffs. Duplication of staff positions and responsibilities has been eliminated, and common fiscal, personnel and performance monitoring tasks have been integrated.

The 12 Local Workforce Investment Boards in Maryland have responded with a new level of cooperation between Job Service and WIA partners. Overlapping activities continue to be identified and eliminated, job orders are shared, and recruitment job fairs are coordinated. All Maryland Wagner-Peyser and WIA staffs are now co-located.

The State’s staff development provider, the Maryland Institute for Employment and Training Professionals (MIETP), has recently developed a curriculum targeted to all Business Services employees in multiple agencies, including WIA, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Economic Development. Graduates receive a toolkit of business services resources.

Now a business service representative with a thorough knowledge of Maryland’s business support resources works with each employer contacted. This single point of contact eliminates the previous onerous practice of multiple organizations contacting employers.

Evolution of the Maryland Data System for Workforce Development Management and Reporting

The Maryland CareerNet System

The timing and content of MOED One-Stop network development was influenced by the availability of automated services through the statewide technology-based CareerNet system, as well as strong support for workforce and economic development

activities by local officials and City agencies. Because the technology component was already developed and in place, local efforts could and did focus on the design and delivery of One-Stop services, including self-service options.

The statewide CareerNet system included 3 service clusters: A labor exchange cluster—the automated job bank and other on-line job search assistance; a career exploration cluster (LMI); and a customer development cluster (education and training opportunities).

CareerNet technology allowed customers to search for jobs, create a resume, research labor market information, and access information on training and education programs. The CareerNet system was originally used to track Job Service customers. When WIA replaced JTPA in Maryland CareerNet was adopted in the newly designated Maryland One-Stops.

A total of 83 CareerNet customer self-service workstations and 63 One-Stop staff workstations were installed at five Baltimore locations by the end of the second implementation year. The City's Empowerment Zone initiative adopted CareerNet resources in six satellite Village Centers staffed by neighborhood residents.

During the 1990s DLLR led the State's planning for introduction of a wide area network. Soon, however, adoption of an Internet-based management system was substituted as a more efficient way to promote collaboration among partner agencies. Maryland joined a four state consortium (MD, PA, VA and WV), named the Mid-Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC), to develop an Internet system that would link WIA state agencies to local areas. In April 2000 the MACC partners agreed that Pennsylvania had designed the best Career Link communication model for a state's One-Stop delivery system. This approach was adopted by each of the four MACC partner states.

The four states pooled design resources, while retaining flexibility to customize the common system to their individual state specifications. In 2001, the U.S. Department of Labor awarded the MACC partners \$500,000 for continued system development. The MACC partners, in turn, subcontracted with Covansys, Inc. to improve the system's performance capabilities. Web-based case management and a parallel management reporting system were high priorities in designing and testing the new system. The customized Maryland design was named the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE). *The Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE)*

Universal access to job orders is available through the MWE. The MWE uses Application Service Provider technology featuring a secure password-protected Internet modality.

Employers and partner agencies have authorized direct access to the MWE. DLLR convened business focus groups to refine the MWE before public access was offered. Employers are now able to manage the recruitment process on-line and job seekers can submit their resumes to employers.

The MWE was designed to include:

- A comprehensive case management system to track job seekers
- Access for Maryland employer and job seeker community via the Internet
- Ability for enrolled employers to post job orders, sign up for workforce events, match potential employees to their job orders, access labor market information, and create a website advertising their business.
- Ability for job seekers to independently enroll in the system, create multiple resumes, perform job searches by industry or occupation, perform an automatic job match, apply for jobs, manage job referrals, sign up for workforce events, and research careers, employers, and training
- The Maryland State Approved Training Provider list, which offers information about vendors' courses and program performance
- Required Federal and internal management reports can be generated, as well as case management reports and other real time performance and management reports.

The MWE case management and reporting system features are not fully operational and real-time data are not available as of mid-2006. MOED responded to the continuing delay by creating an *ad hoc* MOED data system allowing timely completion of required and other management reports.

Through the MWE, unemployment insurance recipients, students in career and technology programs, community colleges, and four year colleges and universities are included in the pool of available Maryland job candidates. The State also uses EmployOn, a spidering tool that provides access to more than 4.5 million positions from 100,000+ on-line sources. This system is optimized by skill-based job searches allowing customers to see how their current skills may be transferable to other careers.

When fully operational, MWE One-Stop partners will share common customer data so customers do not have to repeat information. One-Stop staffs will be cross-trained so appropriate referrals to needed services are assured. Routine on-line updates about customer-specific services received and referrals made will ensure that the information is current and accurate.

Through the use of the Maryland Workforce Exchange, job seekers can locate and contact employers who are seeking their skills, review current job listings, complete and submit on-line resumes, assess their personal skills and determine how to upgrade them, access a list of State approved training providers and review their past performance, locate resources for training, and locate support services.

The MWE Welcome Menu lists available services, allowing the customer to:

- Create a Personal Folder (store resume(s), update contact information, save job openings)
- Build/Update Resume
- Create/Edit Job Preferences
- Search for Jobs and Employers
- Look for Training Providers

- Find a Service Location
- Access Career Resources
- File an Electronic Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claim
- Access the UI Information Line
- Access Electronic Licensing (obtain/renew occupational/professional/financial regulatory licenses)

Different levels of MWE service are offered to self-service versus enrolled employers—self-service employers can browse the talent bank while enrolled employers can retrieve resumes directly from applicants. The initial timeline for an operational MWE was 2003, but delays resulted in limited staff access being offered in 2004 and public access to the MWE becoming available in late 2005. The case management and reporting functions of the MWE for state and local staff use are still being tested and refined in mid-2006.

Within Maryland, participating partner organizations agreed to absorb some of the Maryland Workforce Exchange cost based on individual organization shares of the number of staff using the system.

DLLR Performance Report Generation

The new DLLR Office of Workforce Information and Performance within the Division of Workforce Development has consolidated the reporting, performance and selected labor market information analysis functions. State WIA performance reports are prepared and delivered to the U.S. Department of Labor quarterly.

Maryland UI wage record information can be extracted directly from the Maryland Automated Benefit System managed by DLLR, or from The Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore that archives Maryland UI wage records for authorized use including support of the Department's own reporting needs.

DLLR and The Jacob France Institute also cooperate in a regional quarterly exchange of UI wage record extracts with Delaware, the District of Columbia, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia; and in the Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and managed by DLLR, which delivers needed information about federal civilian and active duty military employment status and earnings, and about U.S. Postal Service employment and earnings.

The DLLR Office of Information Technology creates a State extract from the Maryland Workforce Exchange system, the data sources described in the previous paragraph, and the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) that offers restricted use for authorized purposes. The State extract is then processed using data validation software designed by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the U.S. Department of Labor and its state affiliates. This step is intended to detect invalid codes and/or missing information prior to final production of required Federal reports.

DLLR Monitoring/Compliance Activities

One-Stop Monitoring

DLLR monitors Maryland One-Stops in two ways:

- Desk monitoring
- On-site monitoring

The combination of desk and on-site monitoring is designed to:

- Ensure that Maryland One-Stops are in full compliance with WIA statutory and U.S. Department of Labor regulatory requirements.
- Be confident that delivered services are of a consistent high quality.
- Promote awareness and dissemination of best practices for delivery of high quality services.

Desk monitoring is scheduled quarterly, and examines fiscal, programmatic and performance monitoring of WIA and Wagner-Peyser services. A typical monitoring team includes field staff, DLLR programmatic monitors and fiscal specialists.

On-site monitoring takes place annually, and includes WIA data validation, an in-depth review of One-Stop operations, an Equal Employment Opportunity review, procurement and fiscal audits, and grantee sub-recipient reviews.

The DLLR Workforce Investment Field Instruction (WIFI) System

The DLLR Workforce Investment Field Instructions (WIFI) system was introduced to provide uniform awareness of policy decisions and rules among State and local staffs, and to promote consistent integrated delivery of services in all Maryland One-Stops.

Recent examples of WIFI topics include funding for disability accommodations, guidelines for the Veterans' program incentive awards, entrepreneurial training, limited English proficiency policy requirements, and promotion of the Disability Navigator Program funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, Office of Disability Programs.

DLLR engaged three new Regional Representatives to support the 12 Local Workforce Investment Boards. These DLLR Regional Representatives have been cross-trained to understand the full range of One-Stop operations. They attend local board meetings, provide direct assistance, and conduct regular monitoring activities for all One-Stops.

DLLR Office of Labor Market Analysis & Information (OLMAI)

The Office of Labor Market Analysis & Information supports State and local professionals in government, education, and business, as well as job seekers and employers using the State's network of One-Stop resources. At the state and local level, LMI is used for strategic planning and program development. At One-Stops, LMI assists

job seekers in their job search, and also helps staff guide training services customers into targeted, high-growth, high-demand industries and occupations.

The alignment of multiple systems including America's Career InfoNet, Career Voyages, Virtual LMI, Local Employment Dynamics (LED) database, and the Maryland Workforce Exchange system provide valuable information to Maryland's workforce.

DLLR Employer Programs Used by One-Stops

Rapid Response

Rapid Response is a coordinated, comprehensive approach to support businesses and employees affected by layoffs, closures, or reductions in the workforce. The State Dislocation Services Unit (DSU) within DLLR's Division of Workforce Development is responsible for Rapid Response services in Maryland. The unit works with Chief Local Elected Officials and Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBs), and funds are allocated to local areas as needed. Rapid Response funds also support the State's two day Early Intervention Workshops which serve dislocated workers likely to exhaust unemployment benefits.

The DSU is responsible for contact with the local WIA Rapid Response team regarding dislocation events and support for the Employer Transition Team. Services can take place on-site or directly through the local One-Stop center. Participants receive an orientation to One-Stop services, seminars, counseling, and resume workshops.

One-Stop Business Services staff organizes job fairs designed to showcase the skills of the displaced workers and match them with employers in need of those particular skills. Transitional services are a component of many Rapid Response events, including mental health and financial assistance. Other programs of interest include entrepreneur training and business incubator projects.

Maryland Business Works

Maryland Business Works was created in October 2003 using \$1 million of a \$1.9 million incentive award received by the State from the U.S. Department of Labor in 2002. Maryland Business Works was designed to support businesses in the retention and growth of their existing workforce. It provides funding to employers that allows them to train incumbent workers in specific skills needed by the business or industry. Priority is given to small businesses and businesses in healthcare or other high growth industries, and a special effort is being made to reach minority and women owned businesses. Both public and private sector employers are eligible for the program.

Employer-based training projects require a dollar for dollar match from the employer. The focus of the project is businesses with 50 employees or less, or organizations in the following targeted high-growth industries: healthcare, bioscience, information technology, business services, construction, and hospitality/tourism. All applicants for funding must be headquartered or have at least one facility located in Maryland.

Training funded through Maryland Business Works must be specific to the worker's current job and related to the company's strategic goals and objectives. Classes designed to improve workplace literacy such as English as a Second Language (ESL) are encouraged. The worker acquires either transferable skills or an industry recognized certification or credential.

Local Workforce Investment Areas oversee the Maryland Business Works contractual process and training offered. The maximum training cost per employee is \$3,000 with a grant allocation cap of \$25,000 per business. Priority is given to projects targeting employees at the lower end of the wage range.

Teach for the Health of It Program

In 2004 Maryland received \$1.5 million in federal funding to increase faculty in the state's nursing programs, which resulted in the Teach for the Health of It program. The GWIB developed the grant application and the DLLR Division of Workforce Development administers the funds.

Initial funding for the Teach for the Health of It Program was for two years. The first component committed \$400,000 to allow forty or more qualified Registered Nurses to move into faculty teaching positions, and the second component committed \$400,000 to aid nursing students in completing their degree as quickly as possible to fill the vacancies created in the program's first component. The final tier commits the remaining \$700,000 to businesses for training incumbent healthcare workers in occupations with projected workforce shortages. Employers must provide matching funds for the upgrade training activities.

DLLR Support Services for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Recipients

From the beginning of Maryland's workforce development system under WIA it was decided that TANF/Public Assistance services were to be provided separately due to high customer volume and mandated services. Under Maryland's continuing welfare reform effort, job search and work experience are the two primary services emphasized for TANF recipients. Job search assistance efforts will be more important following June 29, 2006 issuance of Interim Final Regulations defining work requirements by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (*Federal Register*, Vol. 71, No. 125, pp. 37454-37483).

In Maryland, the welfare and workforce systems are managed in different cabinet-level departments. The TANF program is administered by the Maryland Department of Human Resources. The level of cooperation and communication varies by jurisdiction. Local TANF program managers are members of Local Workforce Investment Boards to promote appropriate attention to the needs of their customers. The GWIB sub-cabinet encourages TANF and WIA officials to determine how they can join forces on behalf of the TANF population.

The Local Level

Local Workforce Investment Boards

There are 12 local workforce investment areas and boards with majority private industry representation. The local boards are charged to coordinate workforce and economic development activities consistent with local area needs and priorities for action. Board members are responsible for the direct delivery of employment and training services in their local area.

Local workforce investment boards in Maryland coordinate their efforts with local Job Service offices, 24 Departments of Social Services, 16 community colleges, state rehabilitation service facilities and providers of adult literacy programs. The Maryland GWIB monitors the local boards through a biennial board recertification process.

The Maryland Workforce Development Association (MWDA) represents Maryland's twelve regional workforce areas. In collaboration with their Workforce Investment Boards and public/private partners, MWDA agencies provide professional workforce services that enhance career opportunities and support economic growth in Maryland. Member agencies include:

- Anne Arundel Workforce Development Association
- Baltimore County Office of Employment and Training
- Lower Shore Workforce Investment Alliance
- Division of Workforce Investment Services, Montgomery County
- Southern Maryland Works, Inc.
- Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board
- Mayor's Office of Employment Development, Baltimore City
- Frederick County Job Training Agency
- Mid-Maryland One-Stop Employment Resource Center
- Prince George's Workforce Services Corporation
- Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.
- Western Maryland Consortium

Local workforce investment boards are also responsible for the One-Stop delivery system in their local area. One-Stop operating funds flow mainly, but not exclusively, from federal WIA and Wagner-Peyser revenue streams. Until now, partner agencies have not been required to assist financially with the operation of the One-Stop system, but that practice is under review.

Local workforce investment boards, with the concurrence of their chief local elected official, select the One-Stop operator through a competitive process, agreement between the LWIB and a consortium of entities specified in the Law, or grandfathering of an existing One-Stop operator.

As we mentioned earlier in this report, DLLR conducts annual programmatic, performance and fiscal monitoring to ensure compliance with State and Federal regulations, to determine if One-Stop partner resources are maximized, and to determine

if services are integrated and available to all populations. Local WIA directors review the annual reports and technical assistance is provided, if needed.

Local workforce investment boards in Maryland have been given substantial discretionary authority and flexibility to make decisions about the operation of their area One-Stops, which enables them to be design a local delivery system that will be responsive to local needs, contingent upon an adequate revenue stream to carry out the strategic vision.

We have already said that Maryland was awarded a \$1.9 million incentive grant for meeting all the WIA performance measures for the period July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. Maryland's 2003 performance was also among the top five nationally for eight of the WIA performance measures, so the State received another \$750,000 in federal WIA performance incentive funds.

In recent years, local workforce investment boards in Maryland have lost substantial funding for delivery of One-Stop services. State reserve funds helped to sustain local delivery capacities in Program Year 2004 and Program Year 2005. Some of these funds were earmarked for the delivery of training in high-growth, high-demand occupations. State reserve funds also supported innovative One-Stop projects, professional development, maintenance of the State's training provider list, and continued development/enhancement of the MWE.

The Baltimore Workforce Investment Board

The Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) is charged by the Mayor to "provide overall guidance, strategic planning, and coordination for the workforce development system in Baltimore".⁵

The BWIB oversees the operations of Baltimore's One-Stop Career Center Network. It also coordinates efforts for Baltimore youth through its Youth Council.

The BWIB performs the following functions:

- Facilitate a coordinated workforce development strategy, identifying approaches that promote skills development and decrease barriers to employment. BWIB sponsors seminars, hosts nationally recognized workforce experts, and establishes networks with local and regional partners.
- Identify priorities for local productivity enhancement initiatives. This is accomplished through analysis of local workforce challenges and opportunities. Employers are assisted with the development of viable pathways for employees, and activities include school-to-work initiatives, business-designed customized training, and skills upgrade education for incumbent workers.
- Promote an effective City-wide public workforce development system by connecting residents to employment through streamlined and enhanced communication among businesses, employment and training organizations, and job seekers.

⁵ Workforce Investment Act 5 Year Extension, Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development, May, 2005.

BWIB membership includes representatives from area businesses, community organizations, education and training institutions, and human service agencies and providers. The members are appointed by the Mayor with concurrence from by the GWIB. BWIB staff works closely with the GWIB sub-cabinet members.

The recent BWIB organizational structure included an:

- Executive Committee
- Industry Sectoral Steering Committee
- Marketing Committee
- Public Policy Committee
- Workforce System Effectiveness Committee
- Youth Council
- A Building Linkages with Baltimore's School System Task Force
- A Connecting Target Populations to Jobs and Career Advancement Task Force

During the summer of 2001 the BWIB Planning Committee began a formal decision-making process to select defined industry sectors for targeted workforce development investments in Baltimore—including surrounding counties as potential employment destinations, not just Baltimore City alone. The BWIB committee members reviewed information based on the following industry-specific criteria: recent employment trend, documented unmet need for qualified workers, human and financial resources available to carry out a targeted investment strategy, employee earnings mix, and potential for within-industry career advancement with special emphasis on documented opportunities for entry-level workers to advance.

The BWIB selected five industries for priority attention in April 2002:

- Business Services
- Construction
- Health Care/Life Sciences
- Hospitality/Tourism
- Information Technology/Computer Related Services

A Targeting Industry Strategy presentation to the Sectoral Advancement Strategies Subcommittee of the BWIB on March 10, 2004 included the following targeted industry profiles:

Business Services

Business Services is the second largest employment industry sector in Baltimore City, employing 45,000 or 12% of the workforce in July 2003. From 1990 to 2002, this sector grew 9.3% in Baltimore City, and wages have increased 50.9% after inflation in Maryland. There are six high growth occupations in this industry projected through 2006.

Construction

In July 2003, there were 12,300 and 74,200 construction related jobs in Baltimore City and the Baltimore Metropolitan area, respectively. Construction represents 3% of Baltimore City's and 5.3% of the Baltimore Metro Area's total employment. Average wages have increased 46% between 1990 and 1999. This industry is important for workers without an education credential.

Health Care/Life Sciences Sector

Health Care/Life Sciences is the largest employment industry sector in Baltimore City. The sector employs 67,200 or 17.34% of the workforce. In Maryland, this industry grew 23.3% from 1990-1999. It is one of three Baltimore City sectors to show growth from 1990-2002 (9.3% increase), and wages have increased by 26% from 1990-1999 after adjusting for inflation. The industry has high vacancy rates and career ladders are easily identifiable. In addition, career pipeline strategies are in place.

Hospitality/Tourism

In July 2003 there were 30,300 jobs in this industry sector in Baltimore City, and this is likely an underestimate of the entire tourism industry. Hospitality/Tourism represents 8% of Baltimore City employment. During 1990-2002, employment decreased by 8.2%. Eleven occupations in this sector listed among the 50-projected growth occupations in Baltimore City through 2006.

Wages in Hospitality/Tourism are relatively low but had increased 36% during the 1990s statewide after adjusting for inflation. There are numerous entry-level jobs for low-skilled workers. Career ladders have been developed for the Hospitality/Tourism sector.

Information Technology and Computer Related Services

This sector employed 21,296 Core Information Technology workers in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region in 2001. Between 1991 and 1999 the sector increased by 10% in Maryland. It also pays the highest weekly wages in Baltimore City. Wages have increased by 47% in Maryland after adjusting for inflation. Six occupations have been projected to experience high growth through 2006 in Baltimore. The skills associated with this industry sector have broad applicability across the workforce. Career ladders have been established for the Information Technology/Computer Related Services sector.

In late 2003, the BWIB separated Health Care and Life Sciences, so the final targeted industry designations became:

- Bioscience
- Business Services
- Computer, Internet, and Data Services
- Construction
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Hospitality/Tourism.

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED)

Baltimore City Career Center History

Initial Funding

In 1995, a One-Stop Local Learning Laboratory grant of \$350,000 received from the U.S. Department of Labor was used to expand Baltimore City One-Stop services to the general public. Additional funds that contributed to this activity included a \$780,000 Title III national demonstration grant and a \$318,000 State grant to test Career Management Accounts as a method of providing retraining assistance to dislocated workers and customizing training responsive to each person's need.

MOED development of One-Stop capabilities drew upon multiple sources of financial and in-kind support, including the State's CareerNet hardware/software supported by Maryland's One-Stop Implementation grant, a small planning grant from the State, and the Local Learning Laboratory grant described in the previous paragraph. Baltimore's local planning team also received \$10,000 from the City government as a contribution to development of system-wide electronic communication.

Initial Planning for Integrated Services

MOED initiated a planning process for integration of service delivery in 1994, years before the WIA mandate for consolidation of organizational components. Local partners planned to integrate JTPA and Job Services in a way that could provide a standardized set of services offered throughout Baltimore City. Although the state required the One-Stop System to link electronically to coordinate referrals, co-location of JTPA and Job Service staffs was not required.

Key transition actions included:

- Services were to be available to the general public.
- Priority would be given to self-service versus staff-assisted activities.
- Collaboration among partner organizations would be emphasized, rather than referral of customers between partner agencies.
- There would be a broad range of service options determined by customer choices.

The chair of the local JTPA Private Industry Council (PIC) joined with the PIC Business Services and Training Subcommittees to serve as the planning team for the Baltimore One-Stops. The planning team also included three employer representatives and high-level representatives from the Mayor's Office of Employment Development, the Job Service division of DLLR, Baltimore City Community College, and representatives from the Urban League and the AFL-CIO. The issue of provider service integration was examined prior to the development of the One-Stop grant application. Baltimore City's local plan requested that they be considered as a first round CareerNet participant.

Programs initially offered at the ECC included JTPA Title IIA services for economically disadvantaged adults and JTPA Title III services for dislocated workers.

ECC administrators managed the transition from a JTPA One-Stop Center to a WIA mandated One-Stop Career Center by focusing on the use of CareerNet technology and services. To supplement self-service options, computer assisted learning software and a multi-media library were purchased and made available to all customers.

The MOED Early One-Stop Implementation Plan

Three objectives were included in the Implementation Plan for the Baltimore Career Center Network in 1995:

- Promote coordination of job development efforts among local One-Stop partners by convening a cross-agency Job Development Protocol Workgroup to design a job development protocol. This protocol outlined how partner services would be marketed without duplication of effort. The team also developed procedures needed to monitor system-wide job development goals. The Workgroup developed a shared marketing brochure and created an informational website for employers. Initial employer services included free listings on the computerized job bank, free screening/referral of employee candidates, availability of tax credits, and assistance from an individual account executive.
- Provide universal access to employment and training services through establishment of electronic referral system allowing staff to schedule customers at all One-Stops.
- Integrate staff responsibilities, which required cross training of staff on all One-Stop services. Integrated staff assignments included assisting customers in the CareerNet room, teaching resume writing workshops, assisting in the resource library and laboratory, working with Job Club participants, and leading the Information sessions. Job Service staff provided more intensive services to the general public using Wagner-Peyser funds.

Each of the Baltimore One-Stops assembled a site-specific mix of on-site partners. The ECC and Southwest Career Centers were staffed and managed by MOED. The ECC facility was designed with an open floor plan to encourage collaboration among service components. The other two Career Centers were initially subcontracted to the Baltimore Urban League and the AFL-CIO Baltimore Metropolitan Council. The Job Service maintained 3 staff members at the ECC beginning in February 1996.

Initially, there was no cost sharing of One-Stop operations in Baltimore. MOED provided free rent and telephone service for partners co-located at the ECC.

Early Marketing

An Employ Baltimore campaign was initiated in July 1995 as a way to market new Career Center Network services to local employers by distributing printed material, providing public speakers, and using media such as television and radio. The Job Development Protocol Workgroup designed a common approach for delivery of employer services.

A unified brochure was created which outlined all One-Stop services for customers at all centers, and resource libraries were developed in each One-Stop. In addition, all One-Stops coordinated their efforts with local youth activities.

For job seekers, marketing took place primarily through community outreach events and the distribution of printed materials detailing One-Stop services. There was no aggressive marketing to the public until program managers were confident that quality services could be delivered.

Services initially offered to job seeking customers included automated CareerNet services, job match/referral services, occupational training options, skills assessment, career counseling, use of the resource library and laboratory, Job Service assistance, various workshops and seminars, and GED courses.

Current Baltimore One-Stop Career Center Operations

Under the WIA grandfathering option permitted, the Mayor selected the existing Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) to be the City's management entity for delivery of services receiving WIA funds. MOED now manages three of the four Baltimore One-Stop Career Centers. Management of the fourth One-Stop, known as the Baltimore Works Center continues to be provided by the local AFL-CIO affiliate under a sub-contract from MOED. MOED provides funding, staff (other than AFL-CIO management staff members in the sub-contracted Baltimore Works location), buildings and services for all four Baltimore One-Stops, and performance management, reporting systems, and customer tracking capabilities as described earlier.

Current mandated MOED One-Stop partners include:

- MOED (Authorized under Title I of WIA)
- Maryland Job Corps (Authorized under Title I – Job Corps)
- Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services (Authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)
- Baltimore Commission on Aging, Experience Works, Maryland Office on Aging, National Caucus of Black Aging (Authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965)
- Baltimore City Community College and Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Career and Technology Education (Authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, programs authorized under Title II of WIA)
- Housing and Community Development, Community Action Centers (Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (Employment and training activities)

The MOED One-Stop Career Center Network is one component of Baltimore's public workforce system. One-Stop funding in 2004 was \$9.1 million, compared with the City's overall public workforce budget of \$90.3 million including the Baltimore City Public Schools System. This total has declined 21 percent from \$114.6 million just four years ago.⁶ Funding was reduced again in 2005 and an additional 5 percent cut is expected in 2006. MOED reports that funding has declined approximately 35 percent since WIA implementation.

The current stated mission of the Baltimore One-Stop Career Center Network is "to provide effective employment and training services to the entire Baltimore community through comprehensive integration and coordination of services among sites and funding sources, a customer service approach, and state of the art technology." The MOED CEO is appointed by the Mayor and accepts all administrative responsibilities associated with MOED operations.

MOED Division Leaders include:

- Division Director for Youth Opportunities
- Executive Liaison for the Workforce Investment Board
- Executive Assistant for Systems Implementation
- Assistant Director for Workforce Operations
- Assistant Director/Comptroller
- Public Information Officer
- Executive Office Manager
- Communications Director
- Executive Assistant Resource Development and Legislative Affairs

Workforce investment activities are closely coordinated with economic development strategies in Baltimore. An MOED staff member serves as a Workforce Liaison to the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC). The BDC is the City's official economic development entity. The assigned MOED staff person joins with BDC staff to design an appropriate combined response when a potential business expansion or other workforce development need comes to either agency's attention. This joint response approach allows MOED to inform employers about the entire portfolio of available workforce development services. In addition, MOED staff serves on multiple Mayoral cabinets, including Public Works, Housing, and Planning.

MOED Job Seeker/Incumbent Worker Services

The Career Center Network

Four community-anchored One-Stop Career Centers offer employment preparation, job search/placement/assistance, skill training opportunities, educational support, and access to computers/computer training. In addition, special support is provided to veterans, disabled persons, senior citizens, youth, and ex-offenders. On an

⁶ Christopher Thompson and David Bosser (2004), *The State of Workforce Training in Baltimore*, Baltimore Workforce Investment Board, December 2004.

annual basis, approximately 18,000 city residents use One-Stop services. During the period from July 2004 through June 2005, a total of 5,000 job seekers were placed in positions with an average wage of \$9.59 an hour, 1,650 displaced workers received employment services and referrals, and 600 businesses were assisted with their employment needs.⁷

The Workforce Reception Center

A full service career center designed specifically for Baltimore residents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), this facility offers job readiness seminars, “dress for success” workshops, and supported work experiences to help move customers from welfare to work. Customers must be referred by the Baltimore City Department of Social Services.

Digital Learning Labs

Self-paced computer training labs are located in all Baltimore One-Stop Career Centers and the Workforce Reception Center. They offer a wide range of services for both novice and experienced technology users. Between July 2004 and June 2005, a total of 5,000 customers received computer literacy training through the Career Center Network’s Digital Learning Lab.

Rapid Response

In Baltimore, Rapid Response events are coordinated through the MOED Employ Baltimore strategy. Company layoffs and closures are discovered in many ways, including through DLLR contacts, the Mayor’s office, and news/media resources. Rapid Response teams work with employers and affected employees to provide access to new employment, skills training/retraining, unemployment services, and other services provided through the MOED One-Stop Career Center Network, DLLR, and other agencies. Baltimore Rapid Response re-employment services include employee orientation, career assistance through the One-Stop Career Center Network, employment opportunities, and individual skills inventory.

When a Rapid Response event occurs in Baltimore, an initial meeting takes place with the employer to determine employee skill levels and current wages. This allows staff to customize the Rapid Response event to meet the employer’s specific needs. The Rapid Response team includes staff from the MOED Business Services division, as well as the DLLR Dislocated Worker and Unemployment Insurance units.

Rapid Response employee customers participate in a 2 ½ hour orientation session which offers an overview of services. Next they attend a re-employment session, which is led by MOED staff. Employee information is gathered and entered into the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) system, and detailed information on how to access services is provided. At this point customers are registered to receive One-Stop services.

⁷ Source: MOED

Staff ask about specific employee needs and goals, and refer them to services provided by either the One-Stop or other agencies, as needed. Mini Job Fairs are organized for employees, and Business Services staff provides job matching using Employ-On software. Training resources are outlined for employees, and assessments are conducted onsite. Rapid Response team members are responsible for contacting employees with possible job leads. During the first eleven months of fiscal year 2003, the Rapid Response team assisted 24 companies and more than 3,000 workers.

A Rapid Response event was observed in December 2003 with a recently laid off group of Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) employees. Facing a \$58 million dollar deficit, the school system laid off over 700 employees in November 2003, most of which were administration staff members at school headquarters or temporary school workers. An additional 100 employees were laid off in February 2004.

There were approximately 40 participants in this particular Rapid Response event, many of whom had between 20 and 30 years of tenure with BCPSS. The group was primarily from the Information Technology (IT) field. They expressed interest in going into customer support, PC maintenance, web services, and distance learning. Nearly everyone wanted to stay in the IT field.

An MOED staff member presented information on the Metro Tech program, which assists IT professionals who have been laid off. Training funds were available for this group if employment was found. It was requested that employees e-mail their resumes to MOED so that a database of resumes could be created. The resumes would then be matched with potential employers in the area.

In addition, participants received a marketing letter describing the Metro Tech program for use in upcoming MOED job fairs. A training seminar with various assessments was being offered that month at the Southwest One-Stop Career Center. The company New Horizons gave a presentation on the various IT training certifications they offer, and each participant was given a voucher for a free, one day PC application class.

The training application process was described for individuals interested in a career change, as well as other One-Stop services. If training was an interest, the customer completed the necessary paperwork during the session so that the approval process could begin. Customers were urged to keep in contact with the One-Stop as their job search progressed. The session ended with a tour of Eastside Career Center.

MOED Employer Services

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development's (MOED) Employ Baltimore strategy provides businesses with a pipeline to qualified, skilled job candidates and supports businesses in retaining and developing their employees. Business Service Representatives offer customized workforce solutions including outreach/recruitment, applicant prescreening, assessment/testing, tax credit information, training funds, and human resources support.

Approximately 600 Baltimore area businesses are assisted with their employment needs annually. In PY 2004, the WIA employer customer satisfaction rate was 87.2%⁸ It is important to note the dates for each of the programs; while all were operational when the Anatomy research began, some have subsequently ended due to a loss of funding.

Employ Baltimore

For over 20 years, Employ Baltimore has been the Business Services arm of MOED. The Employ Baltimore initiative ensures that area businesses have access to qualified Baltimore City residents. In addition, assistance is provided to employers in the training, development and retention of current employees, with activities such as recruitment, prescreening, assessment, referral, customized training, and general human resource support. All services are offered free of charge. MOED is the primary coordinator and directs the city of Baltimore's workforce development initiatives.

Employ Baltimore uses such strategies as database searches, specialized recruitments, job fairs, and mass hiring. Trained Business Service Representatives (BSRs) customize the appropriate mix of services for each employer.

As a first step, Employ Baltimore staff typically search databases with information on Baltimore Career Center Network job seeking customers. They look for customers with the specific job requirements requested by the employer. Candidates are pre-screened by staff and then referred to the employer for an interview. Citywide recruitments are also held for special populations such as displaced workers, youth, or older workers that may be requested by some businesses. Job fairs are another method of recruitment, and can be organized at the business site or at one of the local One-Stop Career Centers. Employ Baltimore staff also works with over 100 Baltimore workforce development partners to identify and pre-screen potential applicants.

Employer customers are referred to Employ Baltimore if they meet one of the following criteria: the request involves at least 10 jobs, the jobs are in the high technology sector, or the request comes from an employer with a good existing relationship. Employ Baltimore staff must make an appointment with the employer within one business day, post the information on the MWE, and notify partners via the "Hot Jobs" list. If the employer wants to place a job order, information about the job is entered into Maryland's Job Bank. Job order information is emailed by occupational title to Employ Baltimore staff to be included in the Job Order public folder.

The MOED Employ Baltimore staff also assist businesses awarded City contracts or companies that have been awarded development projects through the Baltimore Development Corporation with their recruitment and pre-screening needs. All available positions must be registered through the First Source Hiring Agreement to ensure qualified city residents can be referred for priority interviewing.

On the Job (OTJ) and Customized Training

⁸ Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (2005), *Annual Report – Maryland Workforce Investment Act Title I-B*.

When businesses hire new staff for difficult to fill or newly created positions, they can apply for training cost support through Employ Baltimore's customized training program. Employers pay for half of the training costs, and the requirements for positions are that they be permanent, full-time, include health benefits, and meet the minimum salary requirement of \$10 an hour.

There must also be opportunities for advancement or the development of transferable skills. Sponsoring businesses must agree to hire those who complete the training, which can be administered by the employer (on the job training) or through a qualified vendor (community colleges, consultants, or other occupational training providers). Although Employ Baltimore staff provides assistance in the recruitment and prescreening of applicants, employers must establish the minimum qualifications and criteria for participants and be fully involved in the interview and selection process.

Some employers have reported difficulty in writing out their OTJ plans. They lack the curriculum development expertise and find the application process lengthy and complicated. MOED staff provides technical assistance with the development of employer applications, and offer examples of successful employer plans. The plans must include job descriptions, specific skills needed, how training will be provided, and what measure will be used to ensure that competency has been achieved. Some companies have hired professional consultants to develop their employer plans.

Past performance is used for renewal of employer contracts. During the sixth month after the completion of training, MOED confirms the employment status of participants trained under the WIA agreement. Employers who haven't retained at least 75% of the newly trained employees (adjusted for voluntary quits and general layoffs) are ineligible for another WIA agreement.

In February 2004 Baltimore's Good Samaritan Nursing Center completed its first customized training program with MOED. A total of 15 women graduated from geriatric nursing assistant training, an intensive month long course conducted at Baltimore City Community College. The curriculum includes 86 hours of classroom instruction and 40 hours of clinical training. All graduates were employed with Good Samaritan upon completion of the program.

According to Elliott Cahan, executive director of the Good Samaritan Nursing Center, "This is how you help solve a nursing shortage. It has to be a joint effort between the public and private sectors. We are bringing people into the exciting and growing field of health care. This is not a dead-end job. It is an entrée into a field where people can make six figure salaries. Nurses are the backbone of the health care system, and working with seniors is especially rewarding because of the relationships you can build. Our nursing assistants have the most day to day interaction with our residents. They serve such an important function – promoting residents' independence and dignity and helping them get back to the fullest level of functionality possible".

MOED is working with the City fiscal authorities to streamline the contracting process, which can take up to 2 months to complete. It is difficult for employers to plan so far in advance, and it isn't always possible for them to wait 2 months for contract approval if they have immediate needs.

Maryland Business Works

Maryland Business Works was created in October 2003 to support businesses in the retention and growth of their existing workforce. It provides funding to employers that allows them to train incumbent workers in specific skills needed by the business or industry. Priority is given to small businesses and businesses in healthcare or other high growth industries, and a special effort is being made to reach minority and women owned businesses. Both public and private sector employers are eligible for the program. To date, the program has trained a total of 245 employees for over 35 Baltimore area businesses.

A successful example of a Maryland Business Works Baltimore customer is Advance Defense Technologies (ADT), which is a small manufacturing operation with 27 employees. The company needed to train and certify technicians in standard cable and wire harness fabrication and installation. They only had the budget to train one employee; however, funds from the Maryland Business Works program allowed ADT to train and certify two staff for the price of one. Additional training needs that have been met by the program include information technology training, customer service training, and wire electrical discharge machining.

Metro Tech (ended July 2005)

This initiative, originally funded by the U.S. Department of Labor in 2000, was designed to address the shortage of qualified workers in the technology and biotech fields within Maryland, Washington D.C. and Virginia. Most program participants were dislocated workers. Under the guidance of MOED, recruitment for these additional participants took place at Rapid Response events, Baltimore One-Stop Career Centers, the Employ Baltimore Network, and through other workforce development partnerships coordinated by BWIB.

Metro Tech was an employer driven program; employers committed jobs prior to the initiation of training. Employers specified their needs including specific training requirements and certifications, and then chose the training vendor. Employers worked directly with MOED to develop their proposal, which was reviewed by the Metro Tech management team. Upon approval, employers interviewed and selected the candidates to be trained and hired. MOED assisted with marketing and outreach to potential job candidates. Training costs could not exceed \$5,000 per participant and could be 100% reimbursable.

Skills-based Training for Employment Promotion (STEP; discontinued July 2005)

In May 2001, the DLLR funded, 5 year competitive grant Skills-based Training for Employment Promotion (STEP) program was authorized. The legislature provided \$1 million annually in competitive grant money for local areas. Baltimore City, Prince George's County, and Montgomery County were awarded grants for their pilot programs. Funding for the program was cut to \$500,000 in fiscal year 2004, and funding ended in July 2005. However, the training model created for the program will continue. It led to the creation of Maryland Business Works and the Teach for the Health of It program.

The program was designed to assist incumbent, low-wage (below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level), entry-level working parents in the high demand healthcare field. Employees were trained and transitioned into higher-level positions with an increased chance of advancement within the field of allied health/nursing. The employer paid half of the training costs with the STEP program, so employees were able to progress within their current organization. In addition to the provision of training, participants were given financial assistance for training materials, childcare, and transportation.

At the end of training, Baltimore participants saw an average of \$5,777 in additional annual income⁹. Baltimore's MOED was initially awarded a \$575,000 grant with a second year grant of \$437,013. In year two of the grant there were 80 workers employed with such as institutions as University of MD Medical Center and Johns Hopkins Health System.

Incumbent workers received training through Baltimore City Community College for positions with critical labor shortages, and salaries are expected to increase 21-108 percent upon completion of training. The average training cost ranged from \$1,600-\$5,500.

In regard to the STEP program, John Ashworth, Chief Operation Officer of the University of Maryland Medical Center states "Our chokepoint in the future is going to be the constricted labor market. As we considered where and how we were going to attract employees, especially in technical categories, the STEP program became very attractive. It gets to be expensive, especially when we have to back up employees while in classes. But there is an investment payoff in the future. We've created a stable workforce, somebody who is loyal to the organization because we grew him. We're also contributing to our community. It's a great formula".

Other MOED Business Services

Employer Tool Kit

The Employer Tool Kit (www.EmployerToolKit.com) is a website launched in March 2004 for employers. The site provides information on more than 500 low or no cost human resource services, made available by over 200 public and nonprofit organizations in the Baltimore area. Some of the information provided includes: tax credits, training, labor market information, employment law, recruitment/screening, and retention services. It is hoped that this comprehensive list of resources will lessen the duplication of services between organizations. The site currently receives about 15,000 hits per month.

⁹ Maryland Governor's Workforce Investment Board, see <http://www.mdworkforce.com/lib/pdf/mdstep.pdf>

MOED Youth Services

Youth Opportunity (YO)

In February 2000 the U.S. Department of Labor awarded MOED funds to address unemployment among out-of-school and at-risk youth. Nationally, 36 communities were selected to receive funds from a five-year \$1.375 billion Youth Opportunities (YO) revenue stream.

The \$44 million MOED YO! Strategy presented a blueprint for building a Citywide circle of support to help young people address multiple challenges that are barriers to educational and employment success. The plan emphasized community partnerships, employer linkages, work experience, and college preparation. U.S. Department of Labor financial support for the YO! Program ends June 30, 2006.

Building on the effectiveness of the One-Stop concept, two full-scale Youth Opportunity Community Centers were established—one each on the east and west sides of the Baltimore Empowerment Zone. Staffed with trained and credentialed youth development specialists, (Employment Advocates) the Centers provide young people with a comprehensive range of on site academic, career planning and personal support services. Additionally, three Satellite Centers are linked to each Youth Opportunity Community Center, providing convenient locations for all Empowerment Zone youth to participate in career development and employment readiness activities.

To strengthen the role of neighborhoods in the YO! Program, the Centers and Satellites are operated by strong community and/or non-profit organizations. Formal connections have been made with the MOED and Empowerment Zone One Stop Career Centers to take advantage of existing employment preparation and referral resources.

In addition to the five YO! Sites, four Baltimore City public high schools became part of the YO! System when they implemented the FUTURES program. FUTURES is a year-round multi-year dropout prevention program for at-risk students. The program uses personal coaching and other support services to improve students' academic success.

A report¹⁰ from the Baltimore Youth Opportunity program management team indicates that between 2000 and 2005 more than 4,300 Baltimore youth were engaged in Youth Opportunity Grant funded activities. More than 2,000 Baltimore City jobs offered by 600 employers were filled, and YO! Participants earned 35 percent more and were employed at a 42 percent higher rate than non-participants.

More than 1,600 participants earned educational credentials (high school diploma/GED/vocational skill, post-secondary degree). Out of school YO! Participants achieved their GED at twice the rate of non-participants, and the dropout rate was half that of the general population at the four targeted Empowerment Zone schools.

¹⁰ YO! Baltimore: Changing Minds, Changing Lives. Baltimore Youth Opportunity System, 2005.

Members were also one third less likely to be arrested and convicted than non-participants, and they were half as likely to be arrested for a violent crime. Finally, female YO! Members are 25% less likely to become pregnant and give birth than non-participants. Prior to the YO! Program, there was no comprehensive system for the city's out of school youth.

Baltimore is seeking additional public (federal/state/local) and private funds to sustain the YO! Program. City officials are attempting to maintain and possibly increase the current level of collaboration between partners and service providers. The vision is to eventually be able to serve all youth in Baltimore City.

Additional youth services offered through MOED auspices and supported by various revenue sources include:

Baltimore Academy for College and Career Exploration

MOED partnered with the Sar Levitan Center in the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, and with Baltimore City Community College, to create the Baltimore Academy for College and Career Exploration (ACCE) (www.accebaltimore.com). The Baltimore City Innovation Public High School is in session year round, and the curriculum combines academics with internships, work and college experience. The school opened in Fall 2004 with 153 ninth grade students. By Fall 2007 the school will reach its full capacity with a total of 400 students grades nine through twelve.¹¹

In the summer of 2005, ACCE students got hands-on experience through their work with the Biotechnical Institute of Maryland, Inc. The program taught 16 students basic scientific principles through laboratory experiments, interactive lectures, and visits from biotech employers. Students work to apply their classroom knowledge to real life historic and current events based on summer coursework involving "medical mysteries". They also analyzed a potential business opportunity based on their lab work.

Youth Outreach

MOED awards WIA funded grants to nonprofit organizations for youth development programs in Baltimore City. MOED's youth development partners provide education, career exploration and training for in-school and out of school youth through the Career Academy at Harbor High School, Bon Secours Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Program, Healthcare Careers Alliance, the South Baltimore Career Center, and the Youth Empowerment Program at the Baltimore City Community College Harbor Campus.

YouthWorks Summer Job Program

YouthWorks is a program for Baltimore teens aged 14-21. The program goal is to raise enough funds to find six week summer employment for 5,500 youth. In May 2005

¹¹ Source: Baltimore Academy for College and Career Exploration

over 7,000 youth registered for the YouthWorks program. Employers are solicited for participation in the program in early spring. They can offer jobs directly, or choose to make a financial donation. A \$1,000 donation provides a six week summer job at a nonprofit or city agency for local youth.

In the summer of 2005, nearly 5,000 youth were employed at more than 400 public and private sector locations across the city. Students worked at 21 city agencies, including the Departments of Recreation and Parks, and Public Works and Transportation. In addition, they were employed at 73 local businesses and many nonprofit organizations, including local hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions, health institutions, day care centers, summer camps, and retail stores. One example of a YouthWorks project is the “Hilton to Milton” beautification initiative, where students painted murals, doors and windows on vacant homes and cleaned and mulched vacant lots.

An Independent MOED Targeted Population Project

Ex-Offender Employment Initiative

A total of 9,000 inmates were released from Maryland prisons and returned to Baltimore City neighborhoods in fiscal year 2000, with an additional 20,000 returning to the community through Parole and Probation. Approximately 33% were expected to recidivate within three months of release, and 51% overall.¹² The ex-offender population faces numerous challenges to entering or re-entering the workforce, including low levels of education, lack of basic skills, and a limited number of employers willing to hire them. Funding for transition services is extremely limited. In addition, it is legal for Maryland employers to discriminate against an applicant based on their criminal record, even if the charge is not related to the job the ex-offender is seeking. It is also difficult under Maryland law for a person’s record of arrests to be expunged, even without a conviction.

MOED facilitated the Baltimore Ex-Offender Task Force in October 2002. The task force included a coalition of more than 70 government agencies, service providers, foundations, advocacy groups, and faith leaders. MOED and Baltimore One-Stop staff provided assistance to the Governor’s Advisory Council and the Ex-Offender Task Force, as well as the Mayor’s Offender Steering Committee. The Task Force grew to more than 100 government agencies and community partners, and a comprehensive report with recommendations and findings was issued from MOED in December 2003.

Baltimore’s Ex-Offender Initiative began its second phase in March 2004 as the Citywide Ex-Offender Task Force was succeeded by a Mayoral appointed Ex-Offender Employment Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is charged with reviewing and prioritizing the recommendations from the MOED report and to work to secure funding.

Baltimore’s Initiative was honored in the first annual Recognition of Excellence program coordinated by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration during the 2004 Workforce Innovations Conference. Specifically, Baltimore’s program was singled out due to the establishment of the Baltimore City-

¹² Baltimore’s Choice: Workers and Jobs for a Thriving Economy, Baltimore Job Opportunities Task Force, 2003.

Wide Ex-Offender Task Force, the securing of foundation funding to create a career agent position dedicated to serving ex-offenders in the One-Stop system, establishing a partnership that links Parole and Probation and One-Stop Career Center services, and organizing two employer appreciation breakfasts to encourage more support from businesses in hiring ex-offenders.

One-Stop staff is currently being credentialed to deliver specialized training to One-Stop partners regarding strategies and services for ex-offenders. Within the Baltimore One-Stop system, there is one full-time foundation grant-funded staff member and a full-time parole and probation agent that work with the ex-offender population. These positions are shared among the One-Stops. At Eastside, one of the Career Development Facilitators (CDF) is credentialed to work specifically with ex-offenders. In March 2004 she completed a three week Offender Workforce Development Training sponsored by the National Institute of Corrections. Participants from Iowa, Utah, Kansas, Maryland, and Ohio were able to share best practices and learn what other states and cities are doing to assist ex-offenders in their transition back to the community.

In her own words, “In the past I have worked one on one with ex-offenders, and the training showed the importance of working as a team with the offender’s support system, which may include family, clergy, and other community groups”. Subsequent to training, she developed a four module workshop for ex-offenders to assist them in their transition to employment.

The presence of a Parole and Probation office a few doors down from Eastside has greatly increased the number of ex-offenders customers. MOED is currently working to include Parole and Probation as a partner in the MWE system. In July 2005, a community resource coordinator for ex-offenders was hired and is housed at Eastside. Baltimore One-Stop staff routinely travels to institutions to conduct Career Fairs and Exit Orientations. They often coordinate their efforts with correctional education staff from MSDE.

Eastside staff report that local employers are becoming more receptive to hiring ex-offenders, although there is still a great deal of room for improvement in this area. Employer incentives such as tax credits and bonding programs are currently being offered to businesses willing to hire ex-offenders.

There is an annual Employer Appreciation Breakfast to honor businesses and others who support the employment of ex-offenders. In December 2004 more than 250 guests participated in the event which honored four local businesses for their commitment to the successful employment of ex-offenders. Two ex-offenders were also recognized for their personal and professional achievements.

During the breakfast, it was announced that \$446,400 had been secured for fiscal year 2005 under Senator Barbara Mikulski’s Omnibus Appropriations bill. These funds will support the efforts of MOED, the Catholic Charities Re-Entry Partnership program, and Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake to assist ex-offenders with employment and support services.

The Baltimore Ex-Offender initiative is one of ten cities chosen to receive part of a \$5 million U.S. Department of Labor revenue stream to local workforce investment boards to partner with local faith-based and community based organizations to provide employment assistance to disadvantaged individuals. Baltimore received \$500,000, which will be administered by MOED to assist ex-offenders.

The majority (70%) of the awarded funds will be competitively sub-contracted to grassroots community and faith-based organizations that serve ex-offenders. The funds also support the new Reentry Center, a facility within the Northwest One-Stop Career Center that provides the comprehensive services ex-offenders need during their transition back into society. The Reentry Center provides occupational skills training and job search assistance to ex-offenders. MOED has partnered with the Maryland Division of Parole and Probation to assist ex-offenders with employment and support services.

One ex-offender success story highlights the progress of a young man who had been incarcerated for 11 years. He was having difficulty obtaining employment due to his criminal background when he arrived at Eastside Career Center for assistance. He was encouraged to pursue his dream of working in the dental field by his Career Development Facilitator (CDF). The CDF collaborated with a local dentist to create a dental assistant training program. The customer was hired by the dentist and has been employed for over a year as a dental assistant earning \$11.00 an hour. He maintains a 3.7 GPA in the dental hygienist program at Baltimore City Community College and he plans to continue his education.

In July 2003 National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" came to MOED to tape a segment on the ex-offender employment initiative, giving the program national exposure.

TANF New Beginnings Program/Workforce Reception Center

When Maryland One-Stops first began operating under WIA in July 2000, TANF-funded staff was already co-located at the ECC. However, MOED decided the specialized needs of the TANF population would be better served in a separate center, so in October 2003 the New Beginnings Program and the Workforce Reception Center began service to TANF customers. MOED operates these programs as a sub-contractor for the Baltimore City Department of Social Services (DSS).

In its first year, the New Beginnings Program assisted nearly 2,000 Temporary Cash Assistance customers with job readiness workshops, educational opportunities, training, and life management skills. Under the program, TANF applicants are referred to a three week, thirty hours per week job readiness workshop conducted onsite at the DSS district office.

MOED Career Development Facilitators work in eight citywide Baltimore City Department of Social Services Family Investment offices. The curriculum includes Application Preparation, Resume Writing, Money Management, Interviewing Skills, Communication Skills Retention, Career Exploration/Labor Market Information, Internet Job Search Techniques, and Earned Income Tax Credit Workshops.

Upon completion of the New Beginnings program, customers are referred to DSS job placement vendors, including the MOED Workforce Reception Center (WRC). The WRC offers comprehensive employability services including vocational assessment and skills enhancement through computer learning. Upon enrollment in the WRC, customers are triaged for placement in community service, transitional subsidized employment, or regular employment, depending on their skill level and prior work history.

The WRC maintains partnerships with numerous community organizations, including the Baltimore Employment Exchange, Baltimore Gas and Electric Company, Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, the Johns Hopkins Women's HIV/OB Program, Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service, Partners in Recovery, Universal Mental Health, Women Entrepreneurs of Baltimore, and Young Fathers/Responsible Fathers.

An employment continuum is offered to assist customers with support services and mastering basic skills to make the transition to work. Over 70% of WRC customers have completed the New Beginnings program and come to the center after passing job readiness tests, receiving comprehensive assessments, and creating a resume. During the first month of the program, various employers come into the WRC to meet with customers and discuss potential jobs. The Digital Learning Lab is no longer funded for the Workforce Reception Center, and although there is MWE system capability available, the system is not yet operational.

If a Baltimore One-Stop customer is a TANF recipient, staff must determine if they have been referred by the WRC. If so, the CDF reviews the customer's folder to see if they are being referred for intensive services. If four or more welfare recipients are referred at one time, customers participate in a Transition Workshop to orient them to One-Stop services. If they are being referred for informational/assisted service, they access information independently through the MWE system, workshops, or other self-service activities. If they are being referred for intensive services, the CDF provides these services. If the customer has not been referred by the WRC, they are handled like a new customer. On a weekly basis, WRC customers and staff come to Eastside to utilize the High Tech lab for resume preparation.

Welfare customers are tracked in a different database than One-Stop customers, a process mandated by DSS. The Work Opportunity Management Information System (WOMIS) database currently does not interface with the MWE system. Communication must take place by telephone or email between Baltimore CDFs and Department of Social Services case workers regarding customers. If a TANF customer completes an activity at a Baltimore One-Stop, they will not automatically get "credit" for the activity unless it has been verified and entered into the system by their DSS case worker.

A number of Baltimore One-Stop staff began their career through the subsidized work experience portion of the New Beginnings program for TANF recipients. They completed an internship at the One-Stop and were subsequently hired as a staff member.

MOED Transition to the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) System

We have previously noted that an interim capability was needed while development of the new MWE incurred delays. Necessary modifications were made to

the existing DataFlex system that had been relied upon from July 2000 through March 2004 to track WIA customers and create management reports. Case management was accomplished through a JobPoint system.

In March 2004 MOED and the Baltimore One-Stop Centers ended their use of DataFlex and Job Point. The old CareerNet system was taken off-line and stored information was migrated into the new MWE system. CareerNet had not been an administrative record system for WIA use, but primarily a job bank for customer use and Wagner-Peyser data management.

Some difficulties were encountered by MOED staff during and soon after the migration process. No WIA core service customers were transferred from the DataFlex system, erroneously thinking they were included in the CareerNet system. Another vexing problem was an inability to alter data fields or correct data entry errors. Once data has been entered and confirmed, MOED lacked a capability to make changes. Requests had to be submitted to DLLR in writing, and DLLR staff then made approved changes.

Problems emerged in accessing data to create management reports. MOED staff was told they would have this capability in June 2004, yet it was still not operational as of October 2005. A programmer at DLLR has been hired to create the standardized reports and test them using the MWE system. In the interim, DLLR agreed to provide weekly data files to MOED and to partially fund a Covansys programmer to write queries to link to MWE data. MOED was able to provide management reports using the ad hoc system beginning in February 2005, but no reports existed between March 2004 and January 2005. This was a difficult transition for an agency accustomed to weekly management reports.

Report templates developed under the MWE system included a Goals Report, a Demographic Report, and a Program Status Report. The data for production of reports using these templates reside in the server, which is updated weekly. The report is currently in pdf format so that further analysis is not possible. The State is working on this issue, and the system is still evolving.

In February 2005 training for certain staff in the field began (managers, supervisors, MIS staff). It has been a challenge to train staff in the use of the new MWE system. Currently One-Stop staff is trained by MOED staff. Training is on-going, and also occurs on an "as needed" basis.

Employees participated in numerous training sessions long before the system was in place, so repeated training sessions were needed once the system was up and running. Ultimately it will be a better, more integrated system, but it will take time to work out the kinks and for staff to feel comfortable and capable of using MWE to its potential.

Another problem is that a number of now expired job orders were imported from the old system into MWE, and these need to be purged. This can be a particular source of frustration for the job seeking customer. DLLR is overseeing the process of updating and modifying the new system. MOED staff report that One-Stop customers who could

navigate through the CareerNet system are still able to search for jobs fairly easily on the new system.

Tracking and managing customer services will take place through the MWE. All customer services will be tracked including self-service, partner services, supportive services, intensive, training, and job services. Again, the comprehensive case management portion of MWE is not yet fully operational; however, Career Development Facilitators are now able to enter their case notes into the system.

MOED Performance Reports

MOED performance reports were created and reviewed weekly prior to the implementation of the MWE system. The reports were extremely detailed and comprehensive. All data were broken out by individual One-Stop Career Center, and stratified by WIA tier of service and WIA title.

Recent MOED performance measures include:

- One-Stop Pre-Registrations (progress toward annual and YTD goals)
- Highest WIA Tier of Service
- Total Exits
- Credentials (by type of credential earned)
- Total WIA Job Placements (progress toward annual/YTD goals, average wage, benefits)
- One-Stop Unduplicated Placement Count (WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker).

Overall system performance was measured monthly. This included the number of unduplicated placements from all sources—TANF, the YO! Grant, FUTURES, Youth, WIA Adult/Dislocated Worker, Employ Baltimore, Rapid Response and MetroTech placements).

Progress towards an MOED Call Back strategy was measured by each One-Stop Career Center. A separate WIA Youth Performance Report was also distributed, as well as a report from the Workforce Reception Center (TANF customers), MOED service to the homeless population, and placements for Empowerment Zone residents.

As of October 2005, the MWE system was not able to provide performance management data. MOED has set up an ad hoc database that uses imported data from the MWE system. This allows them to provide weekly performance management information to staff. The extraction of MOED performance data from MWE is still evolving.

MOED One-Stop Monthly reports

On a monthly basis, each One-Stop is required to complete a report with monthly and year to date totals that reflect the following:

- Total New Registrants
- Total Number of Placements

- One-Stop Activities (workshops, recruitments, assessments, etc.)
- Credentials

Totals are disaggregated by WIA tier of service. The monthly report has a section entitled One-Stop Highlights, Business Services, and Staff Development for each Center documenting individual job seeking customer achievements, employer events, and staff development activities.

The MOED One-Stop monthly reports conclude with “Operations Plan Achievements” and “Challenges” sections. These detail One-Stop operational challenges faced and proposed solutions.

The MOED/ECC Swipe Card Transactions Documentation System

The ECC swipe card transactions documentation system was introduced in April 2003. First-time registering customers received a swipe card that could be used at any of the four MOED One-Stop locations.

Many operational difficulties were soon encountered with the new swipe card:

- The cards were often lost or forgotten by returning One-Stop customers, which resulted in time consuming and expensive issuance of multiple cards resulting in difficult to interpret entries in the transactions documentation process.
- The swipe cards were used in a haphazard manner by customers within the ECC and other MOED One-Stop locations. ECC staff encouraged uniform use of cards and tried to monitor customer compliance on a time available basis, but when units within the ECC were crowded many customers did not use their cards or used them upon entry but not as they used additional ECC services.
- Problems were encountered with the swipe card technology itself. For instance, one ECC swipe card service point terminal was never activated resulting in what ECC staff describes as an unknown but presumed to be substantial amount of lost transactions data.
- All transactions data recorded by the swipe card technology had to be uploaded on a daily basis or it would be lost.
- Incomplete documentation of ECC services utilized beyond a particular swipe card terminal entry point occurred.
- For the reasons described in the previous five dot-points, the quality of resulting transactions counts was subject to question and ECC staff had no backup way to link the swipe card transactions counts to the overall performance management system used by MOED.

Despite the difficulties enumerated above MOED staff concluded that swipe cards had initially been useful in tracking customers between One-Stops within the City, in showing which services were used most often and when during office hours, and

therefore in monitoring and deciding whether and how to modify customer traffic flows. MOED ended swipe card use in March 2005 and has no current plan to renew swipe card use. Had continued funding been available, some MOED staff say they could have overcome the early test phase challenges encountered.

The MOED Financial System

MOED uses the Baltimore City Integrated Financial System for fiscal accountability and financial management tasks. MOED also maintains its own Internal Financial Management Information System that complements the City government system and is relied upon for WIA reporting purposes. The two systems allow MOED to track obligation/encumbrances, expenditures, assets, program income, stand-in costs, and excess revenues and/or expenses.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE STATE AND LOCAL CONTEXT FOR EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER OPERATIONS

This introductory chapter has covered more than a decade of change in the delivery of workforce development services in Maryland, Baltimore City and the eastside neighborhood location of the ECC. The often heard phrase “transition from JTPA to WIA” fails to capture the essence of the organizational dynamics that have occurred in Maryland and Baltimore City.

A simplistic from-to perspective would be misleading. There was not JTPA on June 30, 2000 and then WIA on July 1, 2000. Instead, during the waning years of JTPA, beginning in the mid-1990s, state and local officials understood the basic changes that could be expected in new legislation. Anticipatory changes began then, which limited the abruptness of organizational and staff stresses coincident with the July 1, 2000 event alone.

The breadth and depth of coverage in this chapter has been necessary to convey a focused appreciation for the complexity, interwoven features and continued reinvention of the Maryland, Baltimore City and Eastside public workforce development delivery system components. We have described the Maryland, Baltimore City and Eastside entities as downstream partners; each receiving mandates and rules for action from upstream authorities. We do not want this characterization to leave an impression that we think the State and Local partners simply carry out orders from above. Throughout this chapter we have described independent actions taken at both the State and Local levels to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their participation in the delivery of public workforce development services.

Next, in Chapter 2, we provide a brief overview of ECC activities. This introduction is then followed in Chapter 3 by a similar overview of the neighborhood demographics and local economy that together determine the opportunities the ECC has to serve its customers.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF THE EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER

The ECC began as a JTPA service center located in rented office space on McElderry Street in East Baltimore. When One-Stop planning began in 1995 that location was deemed too costly to renovate. State funds were used to rehabilitate a nearby warehouse on Madison Avenue. The Eastside One-Stop Career Center officially opened for business on January 1, 1996. This facility is currently rented on a year to year lease.

The front of the ECC building is landscaped. Both U.S. and Baltimore flags are displayed. The ECC is Baltimore's largest One-Stop, with a total of 28,000 square feet. In comparison, the Northwest Center is 12,000 square feet.

The external façade of the building displays a large sign: *CCN/ Career Center Network. Creating Careers Now in Baltimore City. Eastside One-Stop Career Center.* There is also a sign encouraging voter registration and a sign indicating the location of the disabled entrance.

On the same City block as the ECC there is a church, a building that houses the church's ministry services, a Police Athletic League Center, and a Parole and Probation office. There are traditional Baltimore City row homes nearby. Within two miles are Johns Hopkins Hospital and the main Baltimore City Detention Center. Public transportation to reach the ECC is described as adequate, with a bus route one block away and free parking available on the street.

The ECC staff hosts a monthly Madison East End Improvement Association meeting that has proven to be a good source of neighborhood referrals. All neighborhood organizations are familiar with ECC and its portfolio of available services. The ECC is accepted as a valuable community resource.

ECC STAFF

The ECC began with 25 to 30 staff members, mostly MOED employees. Three Job Service staff relocated to the ECC in February 1996. They included a supervisor, a Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services representative, and a Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER). Three MOED divisions were included—Property/Procurement, the Contracting Unit, and ECC staff.

In the early years, ECC staff shared common assignments in addition to their own defined job duties. These included assisting customers in the CareerNet room (Resource Lab), teaching workshops, and leading Group Information Sessions (orientation).

Specialized units included:

- A Clerical Pool: Responsible for providing reception services, information, and technical assistance to customers
- A Program Development Unit: Managed on the job and individual classroom training services funded under the Learning Laboratory Grant from DOL
- An Employment Development Specialist Unit: Responsible for case management and core services
- The Job Service Unit: Responsible for the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services and Veterans' Services; provided job search assistance to all customers
- A Final Unit: Developed the local resource laboratory, responsible for job development in coordination with Employ Baltimore staff, provided onsite GED and skills brush up classes and facilitated the onsite Job Club.

Services available on the Resource Laboratory computers included a resume writing program, self-paced GED instruction (PLATO), job search instruction, career exploration (Oasys), a typing tutorial (Mavis), and a word processing tutorial (Word Perfect).

Initially, the ECC was open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday for traditional daytime hours. Night hours until 8 o'clock were available on Wednesdays.

The ECC was managed through a team structure prior to WIA implementation. Center plans and daily staff assignments were developed by teams comprised of all onsite partners. Overall management of the Career Center Network was provided by the ECC General Manager. The first General Manager was an MOED employee located within the ECC. There was also a Center Manager on-site.

Daily ECC operations management duties were shared by two MOED supervisors, the local Job Service supervisor, and a Program Operations Specialist. The management team met monthly and subcommittees met bi-weekly. Subcommittees included a team working on the local resource library and a team developing protocol for job development activities across local partners.

ECC staff worked closely with partners who were not physically housed in the center, including welfare-to-work, school-to-work, and economic development partners. MOED was contracted by the Department of Social Services to provide services for welfare-to-work customers at two "Project Independence" centers. Each of these centers received CareerNet hardware and software. CareerNet automated services equipment was also installed at youth services sites and youth were encouraged to use the One-Stops. From the start, the system was designed to work with economic development partners in services to both job seekers and employers. Economic development was closely tied to Baltimore's Empowerment Zone initiative, which in turn was coordinated with the development of the city's One-Stop system.

When planning began for ECC operations in 1994, staff participated in several retreats designed to discuss the One-Stop design and to facilitate cooperation and communication. ECC implemented regular staff meetings and frequent informal lines of communication between staff, but email was not initially available. Staff utilized an electronic scheduling bulletin board which was accessible from all service sites. This activity was funded by the local One-Stop planning grant received from the state.

Funding for ECC design and development was also dependent upon the co-location of staff and integrated staff functions supported by multiple agencies and multiple funding streams. MOED administered the funding streams for ECC operating costs. Services provided by Job Service staff were supported by Wagner-Peyser and Veterans' Employment and Training Service funding.

When the ECC first opened, there was no integrated Management Information System, nor had arrangements been made to share partner data. JTPA maintained its own system. In an effort to move forward, MOED and Job Service both produced monthly performance reports summarizing statistics across the individual program.

ECC Staff Development

During the first year of operation, staff development provided by the Maryland Institute for Employment and Training Professionals (MIETP) focused on the use of technology, including the role of resource specialists and the use of the software programs within the CareerNet system. Eastside Center managers attended an orientation session for One-Stop local managers. Additional training efforts included technical skills (Internet use, office software use), and problem solving skills. Resources from the Learning Laboratory Grant were used to train Village Center staff in satellite locations.

NETWORK OPERATIONS

ECC Services

ECC One-Stop Career Center currently offers the following services:

- Computerized Job Bank
- Computerized Job Matching System
- Employer Referrals and Job Placement Assistance
- Resume Preparation
- Internet Access
- Veteran Services
- Special Services for Youth ages 15-18
- Green Thumb Services for ages 55 and above
- Telephone Access for Job Search
- Job Corp Recruitment and Placement Staff onsite
- Career Development and Placement Staff onsite
- Career Development and Placement Staff for the Disabled

Individual Career Development including:

- Career Counseling
- Skills Identification and Assessment
- Workshops and Seminars
- Financial Aide Guidance

Training Opportunities including:

- Customized Training
- Class Size Training
- Individual Training Accounts (Information Technology, Health Care, Cosmetology/Barbering, Business/Office Technology, CDL Certification Courses)

Basic Skills Training including:

- GED Preparation
- Adult Basic Education
- Skills Brush-Up Workshop
- Typing Clinic
- Computer Software Tutorial (QWIZ)
- Pre-Vocational Opportunities
- Digital Learning Lab

We turn next, in Chapter 3, to a brief overview of the demographic mix and economic circumstances that determine who seeks ECC help and what mix of services is needed to satisfy customer needs. Just as Chapter 1 highlighted the pervasiveness of organizational reinvention since 1995, Chapter 3 describes a Baltimore City population and economy that differ in important ways from their earlier features.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT FOR EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER OPERATIONS

BALTIMORE CITY DEMOGRAPHICS AND ECONOMY

Baltimore City's 2000 population was ranked 17th among U.S. cities despite a 17 percent decline from 1980 to 2000.¹³ Almost 40 percent of Baltimore City families with children were defined as living in poverty, and one in five children lived in a household with no employed parent. Other challenges, including a low rate of adult literacy, a beleaguered public education system, a high rate of substance abuse, and a large ex-offender population, combine to impact and be impacted by the regional economy.

Recent 2004 estimates from the Census Bureau American Community Survey are that one in four Baltimore City residents live in poverty, which gives Baltimore the sixth-highest poverty rate in the U.S. among 236 similar sized areas¹⁴. The City's poverty estimate rose from 20.9 percent in 2003 to 23.9 percent in 2004. In contrast, Maryland was the third wealthiest state in the U.S. in 2004.

Baltimore faces many typical urban challenges, including an unemployment rate that is nearly twice as high as the surrounding metropolitan region and the State of Maryland. The unemployment rate between January 2001 and August 2003 in Baltimore ranged from a low of 7.2 percent to a high of 9.0 percent, compared to the State rate that fluctuated around 4.0 percent. The May 2005 Baltimore City unemployment rate estimate was still 7.0 percent, which translates to 19,341 individuals out of a workforce of 275,235.¹⁵ Between 1990 and 2000 the Baltimore City civilian labor force declined by 17 percent.¹⁶

The Baltimore City Economy

Manufacturing employment within Baltimore City fell dramatically in recent decades—from 20 percent of total employment in 1970 to 8 percent in 2000. Today, more than one out of every four Baltimore City jobs is in health, education, and social services; many requiring education and work experience levels beyond the reach of many local youths and adults. In 2000, 29 percent of all local jobs were defined as requiring a post-secondary certificate or degree. During the 2000-2010 decade experts estimate that 42 percent of job growth will require this qualification. Of those ages 25 and older resident in Baltimore City, 37 percent do not possess a post-secondary degree.¹⁷

¹³ 2000 American Community Survey, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

¹⁴ Based on Census 2004 Community Survey Data, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

¹⁵ Labor Force Estimates by WIA, Office of Labor Market Analysis and Information, Maryland Dept. of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/laborforcewia/wiacity.htm>

¹⁶ Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Office of Labor Market Analysis and Information.

¹⁷ Based on Census 2000 SF4 data, from Cynthia Taeuber, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Major employers in Baltimore City include:

Table 1 Major Baltimore Employers Ranked by Number of Employees [1]			
Company	Number Employed	Product/Service	Industry
Johns Hopkins University	24,440	Higher Education	Educational Services
Johns Hopkins Health System	14,734	Medical Services	Health Care
University of Maryland Medical System	10,737	Medical Services	Health Care
Constellation Energy/BGE	6,600	Energy Products/Services	Utilities
Verizon	6,150	Telecommunications	Information
Lifebridge Health	5,747	Medical Services	Health Care
Sinai Hospital	3,242	Medical Services	Health Care
M&T Bank	3,017	Financial Services	Finance and Insurance
Mercy Health Services	2,906	Medical Services	Health Care
St. Agnes Healthcare	2,900	Medical Services	Health Care
Bank of America	2,400	Financial Services	Finance and Insurance
Kennedy Krieger Institute	1,880	Health Services for disabled children	Health Care
Good Samaritan Hospital	1,800	Medical Services	Health Care
United Parcel Service	1,796	Mail/Package Delivery Svc.	Transportation/Warehousing
Legg Mason	1,764	Financial Services	Finance and Insurance
Baltimore Sun	1,605	Newspaper Publisher	Information
Harbor Hospital Center	1,500	Medical Services	Health Care
YMCA Central Maryland	1,500	Non-profit, Health/Human Svcs.	Other Services
Maryland General Hospital	1,400	Medical Services	Health Care
W.R. Grace Chemicals	1,300	Specialty Chemicals	Manufacturing
Provident Bankshares	1,246	Financial Services	Finance and Insurance
General Motors	1,100	Vans, autos	Manufacturing
T. Rowe Price Group	1,079	Financial Services	Finance and Insurance

[1] Sources: Economic development agencies statewide and Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, October 2004.

Transportation is a problem for many Baltimore City residents. Entry-level employment opportunities have increased in the inner suburbs, but bus and light-rail public transit routes and schedules do not align well with many of these clusters of employment opportunity. One out of three City households does not own a car.¹⁸

Baltimore City Eastside Neighborhood Demographics

According to 2000 Census figures, the immediate ECC neighborhood (ZIP code 21205) had a population of 18,440.¹⁹ Most residents are African American (75.4 percent) and female (54.2 percent). Only 56.5 percent of the neighborhood residents have received at least a high school diploma or its equivalent, and 34.4 percent are defined as living below the federal poverty threshold. The estimated median household income in this neighborhood of Baltimore City was \$21,922 in 1999, and only 50.3 percent of the

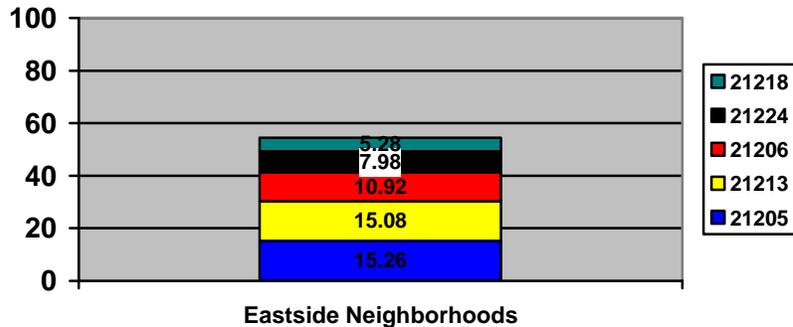
¹⁸ Baltimore Sun, "Baltimore Isn't Working Because its People Don't". Hopkins, J.S. March, 2004.

¹⁹ Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Fact Finder, 2000.

population aged 16 or older was defined by the household respondent as employed or unemployed.

Based on a file of ECC core customers provided by MOED (N=1,704) that registered between January and June 2003, a total of 15.3 percent of ECC customers lived in the 21205 neighborhood. This is the largest percentage of customers in the ECC core population.

Figure 1:1 Eastside (21205) and Surrounding Neighborhoods, Percent of One-Stop Traffic



An additional 15.1 percent of ECC core customers lived in the nearby 21213 neighborhood. Census figures show that this neighborhood has more than twice the 21205 neighborhood population—38,442 residents. The 21213 neighborhood has a higher percentage of African Americans (88.5 percent), approximately the same percentage of females (54.8 percent), and slightly more (60.3 percent) having received at least a high school diploma or equivalent. Fewer (26.4 percent) individuals were below the poverty level, the median household income was higher (\$26,801) and slightly more 21213 residents were reported to be in the labor force (52.9 percent).

Another 10.9 percent of ECC customers were from the 21206 neighborhood, which had an even larger population of 50,154. Fewer residents were African American (53.8 percent), a similar percentage were female (53.2 percent) and more possessed at least the equivalent of a high school education (76.4 percent). There were fewer individuals living below the poverty level (13.8 percent), and this neighborhood had the highest median household income (\$36,360).

These three ZIP codes—21205, 21213, and 21206—account for 41.3 percent of the ECC core cohort. An additional 8 percent lived in the 21224 neighborhood and 5.3 percent lived in the 21218 ZIP code, which brings the total up to 54.6 percent from these five ZIP codes. There was a wide range of customers from other areas, including 10.4 percent from numerous ZIP codes outside of Baltimore City. However, there were no other large concentrations of One-Stop customers by ZIP code.

We conclude that the majority of ECC customers live in the immediate and surrounding neighborhoods. The top five ZIP codes range between one and three miles from the ECC location that has adequate public transportation availability from these nearby neighborhoods.

Figure 1:2 2000 Census Population of Eastside (21205) and Surrounding Neighborhoods

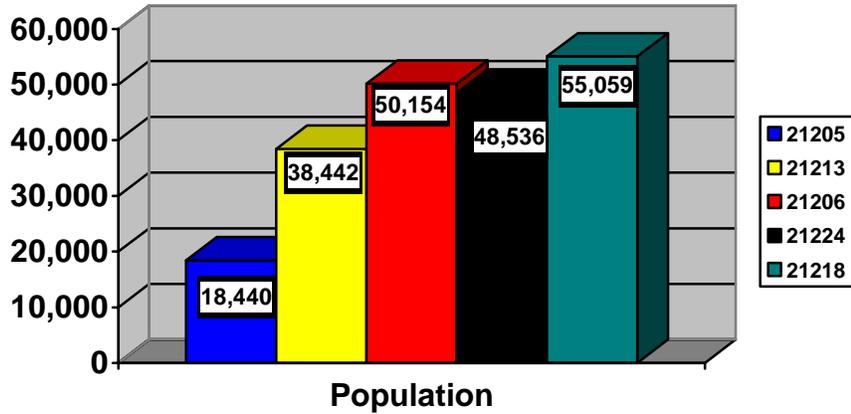


Figure 1:3 2000 Census Percent of Population with High School Education or Above, By Eastside Neighborhood

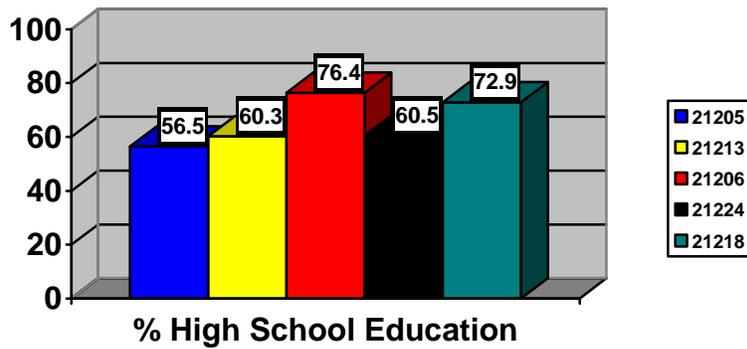


Figure 1:4 2000 Census Race Figures, by Eastside Neighborhoods

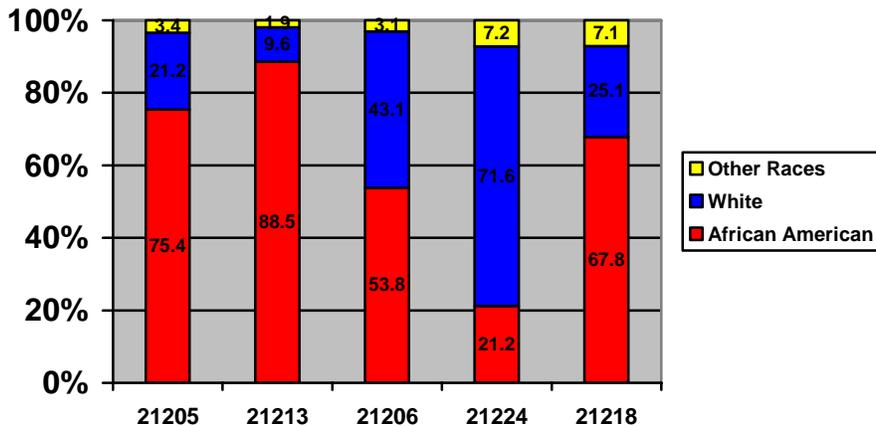


Figure 1:5 2000 Census Gender Figures, by Eastside Neighborhoods

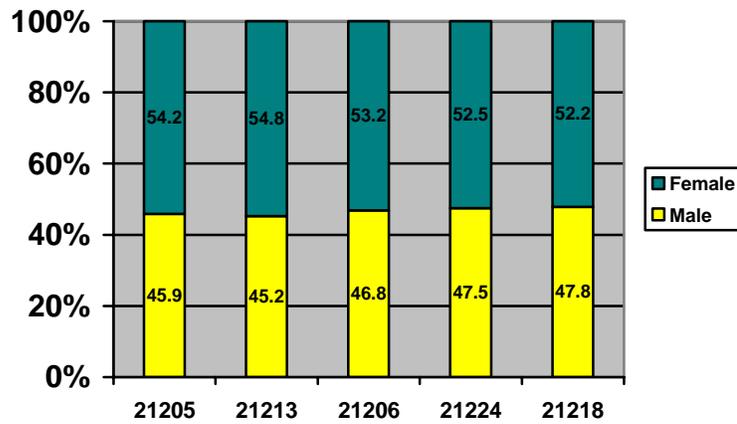


Figure 1:6 2000 Census Figures, Percent of Individuals Below Poverty Level, by Eastside Neighborhoods

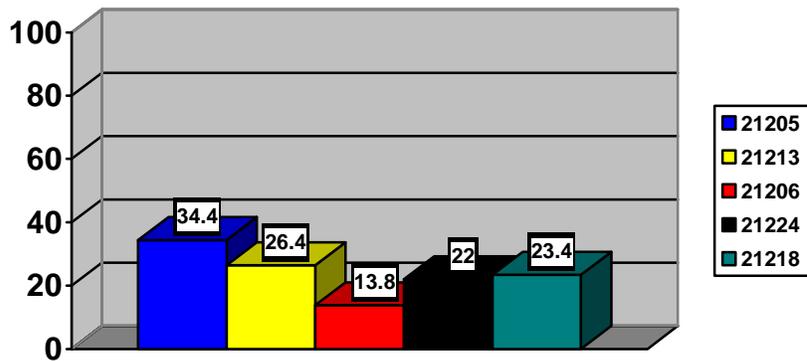
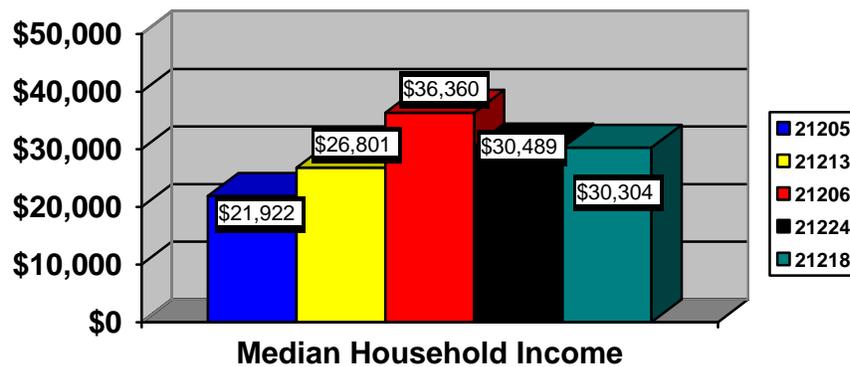


Figure 1:7 Census 2000 Median Household Income, by Eastside Neighborhoods



The ECC Customer Base

The ECC core customer file includes the demographics of gender, race, and education level. We compared these demographics to Census data and derived an estimate of the ECC customer base in comparison to the surrounding neighborhoods.

In the ECC immediate neighborhood of 21205, the MOED core cohort file had a much larger percentage of African Americans (90.8 percent) than the Census figure (75.4 percent). Fewer females were in the MOED file than appear in the Census data (47.7 percent versus 54.2 percent). And more of the MOED cohort customers reported having at least a high school education (69.2 percent) than the Census data (56.5 percent).

Figure 1:8 2000 Census/2003 MOED Core Customers: Comparisons by Race, Surrounding Eastside Neighborhoods

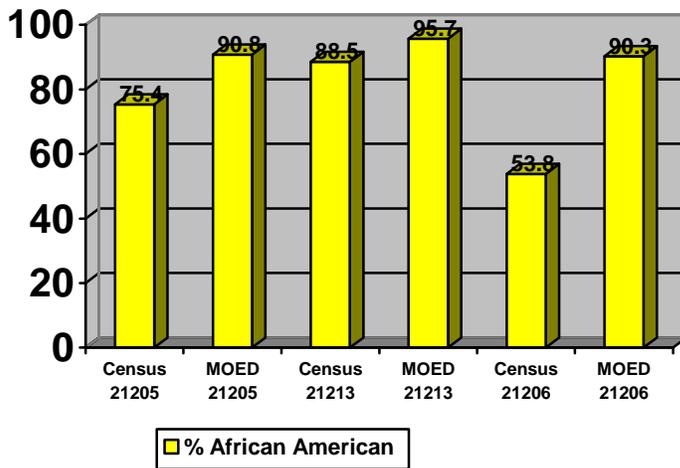
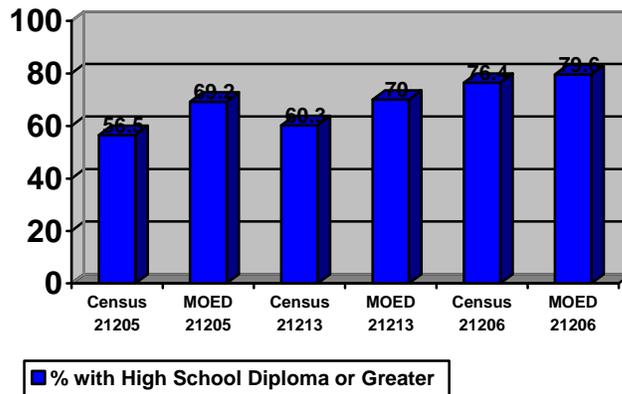


Figure 1:9 2000 Census/2003 MOED Core Customers: Comparisons by Education, Surrounding Eastside Neighborhoods



When the 21213 neighborhood was examined, the MOED file had a higher percentage of African Americans than the Census data (95.7 percent versus 88.5 percent) and a similar percentage of females (56 percent versus 54.8 percent). More of the MOED file customers had at least a high school education (70 percent) than in the Census data (60.3 percent).

In the 21206 neighborhood, the percentage of African Americans was much higher than the Census figure (90.3 percent versus 53.8 percent). There were slightly more females in the MOED file (59.7 percent) than in the Census data (53.2 percent), and slightly more who reported at least a high school education (79.6 percent versus 76.4 percent).

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT LOCAL DEMOGRAPHICS AND THE ECONOMY

We conclude from the above comparisons that African Americans from surrounding neighborhoods dominate the flow of ECC customers to a greater extent than would be expected based on neighborhood demographics alone. One explanation for this disparity is a recent and continuing influx of Latino residents in the Eastside neighborhoods, most said to be self-reliant on work recruitment channels other than the ECC, including word-of-mouth exchange of job availability information within the Latino community and use of community-based organizations that serve this subpopulation of neighborhood residents. Communication (language) challenges are also described as an important barrier to greater use of ECC services.

The regional economy has changed in recent decades from a manufacturing base to a combination of services and distribution. Short-term visitors to Baltimore City often see a thriving Inner Harbor economy, including Federal Hill, Fells Point, Canton, and most segments of the North Charles Street corridor extending to the Homewood campus of Johns Hopkins University. The east-side Johns Hopkins medical institutions and the west-side University of Maryland professional schools are growing and each is developing a biotechnology capacity. Today, the incumbent employees in many of these jobs commute from suburban homes.

Up to this point we have described many facets of the organizational, demographic and economic context in which the ECC staff and customers interact. Next, in Chapter 4, we turn to what occurs inside the ECC, beginning with a description of the facility itself that determines how customers and staff have an opportunity to engage.

CHAPTER 4

INSIDE THE EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER TODAY

THE ECC FACILITY

The ECC Entrance/Reception/Waiting Area

The ECC has an open floor plan that is easy for customers to navigate. The overall appearance is professional, with adequate lighting and attractive furniture in the reception area. New carpeting was installed in January 2003, and new furniture arrived in July 2004. The ECC is not a traditional old-style government facility.

Customers enter the ECC through a breezeway that features a pay telephone, a sign showing ECC business hours, and a sign displaying Digital Learning Lab hours. There is a separate entrance with a ramp for disabled customers located in the rear of the building. They must ring a buzzer for access, which the security guard provides.

Customers next enter the ECC waiting area and are asked by a security guard to sign in. Registered customers can then proceed to any self-service unit within the ECC. Customers who remain in the waiting area for an appointment or a job interview are called when it is their turn for service. The waiting area also serves as a lounge where friends/relatives can wait for customers receiving services.

A video describing MOED One-Stop Career Center Network services plays continuously in the waiting area and job related publications are available. A copy of the MOED publication *Job Ready Standards* is available for customer reading. A framed copy of the ECC mission statement is prominently displayed on the wall.

The ECC has one main phone line that rings at the security guard's desk and two greeter desks. Calls are routed to other ECC staff members by these individuals. There is no voice mail system and no direct staff lines. Other staff members assist when the ECC is short-staffed or extremely busy.

ECC staff describes Monday mornings to be the peak time for customer arrivals, with Fridays having the least traffic. The customer count also drops off in the winter months after the holiday season, but rises again in May (summer employment) and from September through November (holiday employment).

The ECC does not impose a strict dress code, but men are asked to remove their hat while in the building. Children are not allowed beyond the reception/waiting area. The security guard is the first point of contact for customers. Everyone is required to sign in before proceeding. Each customer, on someone acting on their behalf, writes their name, date, time and purpose for their visit. They are not required to sign out when they leave. If there are many customers entering at the same time, such as on a Monday morning, they must wait to sign in.

Beyond the Waiting/Reception Area

The ECC manager's office is located directly behind the security guard's desk. This office is partially enclosed by glass, which gives the manager a sweeping view of many customer and staff activities. This positioning of the manager's office allows for easy staff and customer access.

Just beyond the waiting area is a large reception/clerical area accommodating two greeters, a fax machine, a copier, a printer, and a refreshment area with complimentary coffee and water. Greeters assist customers with specific questions regarding service, conduct the group information sessions, assist with scheduling, and enter data in to the MWE system. Above one of the greeter's desk is a digital display of various ECC workshops and special events. There is also an "In/Out" board to track staff schedules. Staff mailboxes are located in this area.

The reception/clerical area also features information on a variety of supportive services (childcare, housing, substance abuse, financial workshops), as well as a listing of current job recruitments, copies of Baltimore's weekly Employment Guide, the ECC monthly calendar of events, a Language Interpretation Poster for customers needing assistance with English, and a carousel with currently available "Hot Jobs" postings (updated bi-weekly) and apprenticeship opportunities. Hot Jobs are created by Business Services staff and consist of difficult to fill, immediately available jobs. This job listing is also sent out to One-Stop partners and community based organization staff. It is the Business Services staff's responsibility to keep the list updated and to close out jobs that have been filled. Customized training opportunities are also listed on the "Hot Jobs" alert. Some examples of "Hot Jobs" include electrician, geriatric nursing assistant, carpenter, and personal recruiter.

Beyond the reception/clerical area are cubicles and offices for staff, a small kitchen/lunchroom area, a staff meeting room, a large multipurpose room, and the Digital Learning Lab. The Multipurpose room is used for workshops, testing, seminars, and various meetings, including Rapid Response events and mini Job Fairs.

Throughout the ECC notices of available services and upcoming events are posted, workforce related publications are displayed, and bulletin boards highlight specialized services—such as for veterans, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities. ECC bulletin boards and displays are changed regularly. There is also a suggestion box located outside the Maryland Workforce Exchange Career Lab for customer use.

From our on-site observations, it is easy to imagine what could become a chaotic scene on a busy day. However, ECC staff members have been cross-trained to accept a range of responsibilities, including answering the main telephone and properly directing calls. All ECC staff members are able to assist customers who ask questions as they move about within the ECC. There is a sense of common responsibility—ECC staff has worked hard to become a team, dispensing with a "That's not my job" attitude. Everyone pitches in, especially when traffic is heavy, which is frequent.

The ECC Digital Learning Lab

MOED established Digital Learning Labs in each of the Baltimore One-Stops. The mission of each lab is to provide all Baltimore City residents the opportunity to: Gain no cost basic computer literacy skills; learn/upgrade skills in the latest software packages; access desktop computers, high speed internet resources and email; and develop employability skills to increase competitiveness.

The first 3 lab sites opened in October 2001, including the ECC lab and the Southwest Career Center and Workforce Reception Center (serving TANF customers) labs. The Northwest Career Center and Baltimore Works (operated by AFL-CIO) added Digital Learning Labs in February 2002.

The lab course structure includes:

- Self-paced computer literacy software with a mouse tutorial
- Self-paced Microsoft Office 2000 software
- Instructor led classes for Microsoft Office Suite applications
- Module length of 8-12 hours per application and 5 hour for computer literacy
- Certificates awarded after completion of the computer literacy module as well as after each Office application (assessment based on QWIZ software – 80% or higher is considered proficient)

The instructor led classes focus on the applications of Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and Access. Self-paced curriculums include computer literacy (basic skills, computer basics, files/folders, the Internet, basic word processing, intermediate word processing) and applications (PC fundamentals, Word 2000, Excel 2000, PowerPoint 2000, and Access 2000). Basic computer skills courseware is provided by Teknimedia (<http://www.teknimedia.com>) and application software courseware is provided by Discoverware (<http://www.educationtechnologyinc.com/discoverware.html>).

In January 2005 MOED announced that Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3) training was available through the One-Stop Career Centers' Digital Learning Labs. This certification ensures that the customer has sufficient knowledge and skills required for the basic use of computer hardware, software, networks, and the Internet. IC3 certification is available through an industry standard computer literacy training program which is provided to the customer at no cost. Customers are able to study for the IC3 certification exam and be tested in the IC3 certified testing and training center.

The most recent MOED data (2004) regarding usage of the Baltimore Digital Learning Labs indicate a range from a low in November (N=352 customers) to a high in July (N=1,807 customers). The average monthly figure of customers served is (N=924)²⁰. Employers can utilize the Digital Learning Labs at no cost to upgrade their current employees' computer skills. Agencies such as the Departments of Social Services and Corrections staff have used the Digital Learning Labs, and word is spreading to the private sector.

²⁰ Source: MOED's One Stop Career Center Network Digital Learning Lab Handbook

Approximately 5,000 customers annually receive computer literacy training through Baltimore's Career Center Network Digital Learning Labs. Self-paced classes are considered a core service, and instructor led classes are considered an intensive service.

The ECC operates the Digital Learning Lab Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 4:00pm. Initially Eastside's Digital Learning Lab was closed on Mondays, and open Tuesdays and Fridays from 9:00am-4:00pm, 1:00pm-8:00pm on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and 8:30am-2:00pm on Saturdays. Due to budget cuts, staffing issues, and peak usage times, the current schedule was determined. There are 8 seats in the ECC Digital Lab, filled on a first come first served basis. Also located in the Digital Learning Lab is a printer and television, as well as a large white board for instructional purposes.

The Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) Career Lab

The Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) Career Lab (formerly CareerNet Lab) is located directly off the reception area and is easily visible and accessible to customers. The Career Lab houses eighteen computers, two of which are designated for staff use. Two Career Lab assistants are available to assist customers. The Career Lab supervisor is currently out on medical leave, but plans to return. The Career Lab is currently staffed by State Job Service employees. Prior to this, MOED funded System Facilitators worked in the Career Lab, but these positions were eliminated during the July 2004 reorganization.

To register in the MWE system, the job seeking customer is asked to list contact information, their work history, military service, educational background, certifications held, and additional skills/licenses. The customer then creates a logon name and password. Within the system, customers can conduct a job search, use the resume builder, access Labor Market Information, research training, file a UI claim, use various career exploration resources, and research education and financial aid information. In addition, information on support services such as childcare, healthcare, and housing can be accessed, and online registration is available for job search workshops, employer seminars, and job fairs.

In the ECC Career Lab customers can access two printers that are usually used to "print screen" specific jobs. Although customers can self-refer for most jobs listed on the MWE system, Career Lab staff has additional details on specific job orders which can be helpful.

Some employers want ECC staff to do the initial screening, choosing not to list their name on the job order. Career Lab staff pre-screen prospective employees and referrals are given for the job order if staff decides the customer is qualified. After this process, customers apply directly to the employer. Usually customers leave with at least three job referrals per visit. There is no time limit in the Career Lab.

ECC staff estimate that between 120-200 customers utilize the Career Lab each month. Job orders are posted and updated on a daily basis, and customers are encouraged to check the website frequently. Many jobs can be applied for online, and multiple resumes can be built and saved in the customer's account.

The following job/career resources have links in the system:

- America's Job Bank
- Apprenticeship and Training
- Baltimore Sun Classified
- Maryland State Government Careers
- Careers in the Military
- Federal Jobs Digest
- Health Care Careers
- HotJobs.com
- ITCareers.com
- Jobs in the Federal Government
- Licensed/Certified Occupations in Maryland
- Professional Outplacement Assistance Center
- Monster.com
- Washington Post Classified.

Software that is accessible in the Career Lab includes:

- Internet Explorer
- Acrobat Reader 5.0
- Mavis Beacon 5 (typing tutorial)
- Winway Resume for Windows
- Novell Client for Windows 95/98
- Symantec-Norton Anti-Virus
- Outlook Express.

Several print publications are available, including Nursing Spectrum, Government Computer News, Newsweek, Federal Computer Week, GI Jobs, and Military Transition. Staff in the Career Lab has access to the following resources:

- Webster's Dictionary, Roget's Thesaurus
- Fastest Reading Self-Taught
- Six Weeks to Words of Power
- Instant Vocabulary
- Excel 97 in a Glance
- Using the Internet and the World Wide Web in your Job Search
- Government Job Finder
- The Electronic Federal Resume Guide Book
- The Gregg Reference Manual
- MOED Resource Directory
- Vocabulary Builder
- Creating your High School Resume
- Federal Applications that Get Results
- Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

High Tech Lab/Resource Library

Connected by a doorway to the Career Lab is the High Tech Lab. Here customers work on resumes and cover letters and are able to access self-assessment instruments and tutorials, including career exploration and word processing. Email access is also available. Occasionally, there is overflow from the Digital Learning Lab, and headphones are available to accommodate these customers in the High Tech Lab. There are a total of twelve computers in the room, which are arranged in a horseshoe fashion so that staff are better able to circulate and assist customers. In addition, there is a printer and two typewriters. Available software includes:

- Microsoft Windows NT Workstation for 4.0
- Adobe Reader 6.0
- Microsoft Office Suite Applications
- Citrix ICA Client
- Discoverware for the Office 2000
- Lavasoft Ad Ware (virus protection)
- Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing (deluxe version 2)
- Microsoft Office Small Business Tools
- Net G SB Courseware
- QWIZ 7.x
- Teknimedia Virtual Learning Center
- Winzip.

A portion of the High Tech Lab houses the Resource Library, which contains videos, job search resource books, resume and cover letter books, training brochures, and community resource handbooks. Publications cover topics such as effective interviewing, career exploration, enhanced written and verbal communication, teamwork, and employment applications. In addition, software resource publications are available, including Outlook 97, Front Page 97, Using the Internet and the WWW in your Job Search, Test Originals Typing, Easy Excel 5 for Windows, and Master your Computer, Word 97, Windows 95. There is a TV/VCR player to view the video materials.

PLATO Lab

Connected directly to the right of the Career Lab is the PLATO lab, which can be separated by a sliding partition for privacy if needed. Customers work with self-guided GED software and occasional GED or pre-GED instruction is provided in this room. The PLATO lab was funded by a Literacy grant. Available software includes PLATO Pathways, Quick Time, Internet Explorer, Norton Anti-Virus, Roxio Easy CD Creator, and Outlook Express. There are also PLATO course files and a GED administration manual located in the room. There are a total of sixteen computers available for use in the PLATO lab.

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) staff provides pre-GED instruction on-site within the ECC. There are numerous pamphlets describing both BCCC and Community College of Baltimore County courses.

Staff Areas/Phone Bank/Conference Rooms

Outside the Career Lab staff offices are open to the general use areas and are arranged according to staff functions. Each staff cubicle has a personal computer and telephone, as well as storage space and file cabinets. Two work tables are located in the central hallway of the staff area for customer use. Four classrooms/conference rooms are used for a variety of purposes, including employer recruitment sessions, meetings with agency partners, GED/pre-GED instruction, and workshops. These rooms can be merged or partitioned, as needed.

Outside the conference rooms there is a phone bank with eight phones to assist customers with job related calls. In order to use the phones, customers must get a pass from the security guard. There is a 15 minute time limit for phone use. Each phone is separated by a partition for privacy, and although the room has a door, the front wall is Plexiglas so that staff can monitor customers. The phone bank was added in 2002. There are restrooms for customers located across from the phone bank. Separate facilities are located in the reception area for staff use.

THE ECC STAFF

Program Manager Craig Lewis has overseen ECC operations since January 2001. Other ECC staff positions and each person's funding source(s) include:

- Office Assistant (2) (WIA)
- Office Assistant/Greeter (WIA)
- Systems Technician (WIA)
- Business Services Representative (WIA)
- Business Resource Representative (Wagner-Peyser)
- Instructor (Baltimore City Community College)
- WIA Supervisor (WIA)
- Career Development Facilitator (4) (WIA)
- Job Service Supervisor (Wagner-Peyser)
- Job Service Interviewer (Wagner-Peyser)
- GED Instructor (WIA)
- Senior Placement Specialist (National Caucus and Center on Black Aged)
- Technological Trainer (WIA)
- Technical Specialist (DORS)
- Custodian (MOED)
- Security Guard (MOED)

Some ECC staff positions, including the Disability Navigator, Ex-Offender Career Agent, Follow-Up staff, Local Veterans Employment Representative, Assessment Facilitator, and Micro-Computer and Network Support Analysts are shared among the Baltimore One-Stops.

Other MOED division/unit leaders and their staff who are currently stationed at ECC include:

- Supervisor, Follow-Up Unit
- Senior Program Development Specialist, Rapid Response
- Business Liaison of Employer Operations

The backgrounds of ECC staff are diverse, ranging from Religious Studies and Social Work to Business Administration and Workforce Development. Tenure ranges from less than 1 year to 25 years. Wagner-Peyser funded staff has the most tenure with an average of 22 years. WIA funded staff's tenure averages seven years. Overall, the average ECC staff tenure is nine years.

The MOED management team meets twice per month. The ECC management team meets either weekly or bi-weekly, depending on the need. Each One-Stop manager meets with their staff weekly, as does the Business Services staff and their director.

Business Services Staff

In July 2004 MOED reorganized the Business Services staff. As a result, MOED Business Services Representatives (BSRs) relocated from MOED headquarters to three of the four Baltimore One-Stops. Several Business Services staff formerly located at DLLR headquarters (Business Resource Representatives or BRRs) also moved to the Baltimore One-Stops. Consequently, MOED and DLLR Business Services staff work side by side and have engaged in a great deal of cross training.

Business Services staff will soon be organized within the Workforce Exchange Division of MOED. The General Manager of this division will be responsible for the One-Stop Career Center System as well as all employer services. The manager is assisted by a senior program development specialist. It is evident that Maryland is making a concerted effort to streamline and consolidate Business Services staff and their job functions.

An MOED Business Liaison now works within the Baltimore Development Corporation headquarters, which is Baltimore's economic development agency. This ensures a strong link between economic development and workforce development activities in Baltimore.

MOED continues to work on their consolidation model for Wagner Peyser and WIA services. A commitment has been made to cross-train staff, and partners are jointly developing a comprehensive operating plan which will be agreed upon by all partners.

Since the integration, Business Services staff reports that they have a better feel for the One-Stop customers and have a closer working relationship with other staff. In the past, Business Services staff felt somewhat disconnected from the One-Stop staff, but communication is more frequent and open now. All Business Services staff has regular meetings with the One-Stop managers and the Career Development Facilitators. This ensures that everyone is "on the same page" in regard to goals, outcomes, and processes.

The more experienced BRRs have been partnered with less tenured BSRs. Most BRRs have between 15-20 years of experience.

Business Resource Representatives (DLLR State Funded Staff)

As state employees, it has been challenging for Business Resource Representatives (BRRs) to assimilate into the One-Stop MOED Business Services staff. For instance, one BRR formerly had supervisory status, but after being transferred to the ECC had no supervisory duties. BRRs are still responsible for their state performance appraisal, which includes state goals (100 contacts per month) that are different from the MOED Business Service Representative (BSR) goals. In addition, both the state supervisor and the One-Stop Manager have input into the performance appraisal process.

The duties of the BRR are to make employers aware of the various public workforce services that are available and to encourage them to place job orders. This requires a great deal of time in the field meeting with potential employer customers. It has also been challenging to integrate the job orders BRRs typically receive, for example, a request for an immigration paralegal, with the ECC customer population. At the present time, there is not much interaction between BRRs and job-seeking customers.

BRRs are working jointly with MOED Business Services staff to market the customized training program to area businesses, and they also assist with employer follow-up services. In addition, there have been collaborative efforts with Veterans' Representatives in their work with the local business community. The integration of state and local staff has been challenging, but progress continues to be made.

Business Service Representatives (MOED Locally Funded Staff)

Business Service Representatives (BSRs) are charged with two essential functions:

- Recruiting/connecting businesses to services of MOED by marketing all agency resources (customized training, on-the-job training, subsidized employment, tax credits, summer jobs, recruitment services, etc.) and
- Developing employment and training opportunities which lead to permanent, full-time positions with benefits and self sufficient salaries for area job seekers.

Current ECC BSR duties include seeing customers at least three times per week (more, if needed), presenting job openings at group information sessions, working with EI Workshop Facilitator, helping with job fairs, and assisting employers with recruitment efforts. The BSR also is responsible for marketing to employers, but has observed that many employer customers come to the One-Stop as a result of recommendations from other employers. BSRs stay with the employer through the entire process, from initial consultation, to the development of interview instruments, pre-screening of applicants, the hiring process, and follow-up.

BSRs provide service to employers and employees even after the hiring process. They are available to act as a type of liaison between the employer and newly hired employees to solve problems before they result in job loss. For example, if an employee is having attendance problems, the BSR can try to resolve the issue by creating a “contract” between the employer and employee regarding punctuality.

When working with job seeking customers, BSRs encourage them to consider a broad range of jobs. For instance, nearly all job seekers want to work daytime hours, Monday-Friday. Many of the available jobs are afternoon/evening shifts, or on weekends. Many want office/clerical work, but lack the technical skills. These customers are encouraged to go the Digital Learning Lab for certification before applying for a job. The BSR often must bring the customer “back to reality” if they are considering a job that is beyond their skill level.

Certain customers, especially those with a criminal background, must be willing to work their way up to a more desirable position. Customers that typically succeed are the ones with realistic expectations.

Customers who do not succeed are those who expect a high paying job for which they aren’t qualified. Also people who are forced to come to the One-Stop, for example, an ex-offender by his/her probation officer, may not be the most successful customers.

One of the BSR’s duties is to refer job seekers to appropriate resources if they lack the necessary skills for a job. These could include the Digital Learning Lab, a job readiness workshop, or other educational resources. Barriers to employment are addressed as well, with referrals made to appropriate community resources.

BSRs work under the direction of their Business Services Supervisor as well as the ECC Manager. Some examples of their duties include thorough knowledge of local/regional Labor Market Information, identification of business employment and training needs, job matching/job development, marketing of all business services, and the creation of employer profiles through the Maryland Workforce Exchange system. Minimum education and experience is a bachelor’s degree in Marketing, Economics, Business, Public Administration, or a related field, and 2 years sales experience with 1 year in employment or job training related fields.

BSRs are assigned various goals for their work. In FY 2006, on a monthly basis they are required to market MOED services to 25 businesses, have face to face meetings with 8 new employers, develop 10 job orders, conduct 2 employer/industry recruitment sessions, track and report their progress, and coordinate job match placements with Career Development Facilitators for job seekers enrolled in training. In addition, they are required to obtain 15 placements per month, conduct an employability workshop monthly, and provide on-going service presentations. Finally, they are required to participate in at least 2 staff development activities annually and to do one community outreach activity per quarter.

Business Services staff meets monthly to discuss activities and provide updates. Certain business services staff has special assignments including working with disabled customers, ex-offenders, and veterans. Staff work primarily with employers in the targeted industries, and the majority of customers are small to mid size businesses.

Before contacting an employer, Business Services staff checks the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) system to make sure there have been no prior contacts. They also research the employer's business and related labor market information. Staff has been trained through MIETP regarding employer contact and relations. They report that marketing to area businesses is an important part of their job, and that the majority of new contacts are unaware of the presence of One-Stops in Baltimore or what services are available to them. It is often difficult to find the correct contact within a company's Human Resource Department. Creating and maintaining contacts takes a great deal of time and networking. Several meetings are necessary to get companies involved with the One-Stop system.

Once employer contact has been established, the Business Services staff member must complete a job order form, ensure that the contact is a valid employer in the state of Maryland, and enter the information into the MWE system within 48 hours. Recruitment information is sent to all Baltimore One-Stops.

Staff enters all referrals into the MWE system and updates them on a regular basis. After the pre-screening process, the employer is contacted and Business Services staff schedule interviews for prospective job candidates, either on-site at the ECC or at the employer's worksite.

After interviews take place, staff follow-up with the employer to get the results, which may vary from too many referrals to not enough. Once the interview process has been completed, employment verification is gathered and the information is entered into the MWE system. Staff then completes all necessary forms to exit the customer from the management information system and forwards copies to appropriate staff. Finally, a thank you note is sent to the employer for using ECC services and they are invited to use services again, as needed.

Staff members are responsible for keeping information updated as needed. BSRs meet with the ECC manager and their supervisor to review open job orders on a weekly basis.

When asked what employers typically expect from the ECC, staff said prompt service, quick turnarounds, responsiveness to their needs, and a pool of applicants that meet their required skill level(s). Business Services staff work cooperatively with staffing agencies and other community based organizations such as Goodwill. Baltimore One-Stops maintain an open door policy regarding their resources with these organizations and they all frequently refer customers to one another.

ECC staff said that they cannot afford to advertise their services to businesses. They would like to see the U.S. Department of Labor provide a means to do so either on a national level or by providing funding that would allow local advertising.

Career Development Facilitators

In April 2004, ten Career Development Facilitators (CDFs) from the ECC, Northwest, Southwest, and Baltimore Works One-Stops graduated from Maryland's first Global Career Development Facilitator class. They were required to complete 120 hours of class time, maintain a journal, write papers, and attend career counseling conferences. The program was administered by Loyola College in Maryland at their Graduate Center. Currently, all four ECC CDFs have their Global Career Development Facilitator certificate.

CDFs currently maintain a caseload of 150-200 customers. Ideally, the caseload should be between 100 and 125 to provide adequate service, but with limited funding for additional staff, more work has fallen on the current CDFs.

In addition to their duties in providing one on one service to job seeking customers, it is the Career Development Facilitator's responsibility to reference the industry report book for current positions, make referrals against the job orders for their customers, record referrals on services records, enter referrals into the MWE system, follow up with customers regarding hiring information, verify employment with the employer, and complete a weekly report for their supervisor.

Several interviews were conducted with CDFs. Their observations of job seeking customers are invaluable. They spend the most time with customers and usually get to know them quite well. In their experience, many customers enter the One-Stop thinking they know exactly what they want, but often they are not willing to take the necessary steps to ensure their success. CDFs try to portray a realistic idea of a job, a career, and what it takes to succeed.

Staff members report that many customers request ITA level training services. If their TABE test scores are too low for eligibility, they must first attend a Skills Brush-Up Class before re-taking the TABE test.

Even if they are successful on their TABE test, customers must also complete a comprehensive and lengthy training application, requiring time and research on the part of the applicant. This is not to say that there is no support along the way; CDFs are willing and able to assist customers through each step of the application process. However, many are unwilling to take these steps. They walk in the door, and want to begin training immediately. CDFs have to work a lot with customer attitudes and teach them how to be patient. Many need nurturing and look to the CDF as a counselor, older sibling, or parental figure. This requires a delicate balance of being supportive, but firm. In their estimation, about 50 percent of customers are willing to do what it takes to succeed, for instance, taking a lower paying job or one that requires evening and/or weekend hours in order to work their way up to a better position.

Another challenge CDFs face is to get customers to think in terms of a “career” versus a short-term “job”. Many are simply looking at a way to pay their bills, but not thinking about a long-term solution (e.g., a higher paying job with growth potential). CDFs estimate that 95 percent of customers come in looking for a “job” rather than a “career”. It is their duty to change the customers’ mindset and counsel them on how to be “career-minded”. Customers who simply move from job to job in a similar position are frustrated when they don’t advance. CDFs try to get customers to think about applying for different types of jobs and using them as stepping stones within a company or an industry. In addition, they encourage them to pursue educational goals such as getting their High School diploma or GED in order to further their career.

CDFs also felt it was important to immediately engage customers after the group information session with the appropriate resources. It was suggested that CDFs add preliminary assessments to the information session so that it could be seen what customers’ immediate needs were. Then further assessments and/or services could be scheduled that day, rather than relying on the customer to return and request them. Of course, this would require staff time and resources, both of which are in short supply currently.

One staff member remarked that if they saw a customer twice, they felt there was a good chance of success. In other words, if the customer was interested enough to come back after the initial meeting, the CDF felt that they had the potential to succeed.

In addition to employment services, CDFs are working to meet customers’ most basic needs, including food, clothing, childcare, and shelter. Many also lack fundamental social skills needed to succeed in the workplace. CDFs must assist them with these issues, as well. Many need to be counseled on how to dress appropriately, how to communicate with others, the importance of being on time, and basic work ethics.

CDFs feel that the bottom line is that there are opportunities available through the One-Stop for those who want them. It is their job to instill confidence and provide assistance to customers willing to take the necessary steps to succeed. However, this is not to underestimate the difficulty in assisting those hardest to serve (e.g., TANF customers, homeless, ex-offenders). Multiple barriers to employment must be fully addressed and removed if there is to be any successful outcome for these customer populations, and there are simply not enough resources to do so. Staff feel that they do the very best they can with the resources they are given.

Follow-Up Unit

The Follow-Up Unit is shared by all four Baltimore One-Stops. Their hours of service range from 8:30am to 7:00pm and they rotate depending on each One-Stop’s after business hours schedule. They are at Eastside on Mondays from 8:30am-4:30pm, Thursdays from 11:00am-7:00pm, Fridays from 8:30am-4:30pm, and Saturdays from 8:30am-4:30pm. There are two full-time staff and two contractual state interns that work in the Follow-Up Unit. The unit was created in October 2001.

The Follow-Up Unit is charged with contacting by telephone, core customers who have received services from the One-Stop Career Centers to determine their employment status. In addition, they informally ask them about their One-Stop experiences and determine if there are any problems that can be resolved. Feedback from customers is provided to each One-Stop Center manager. Follow-Up staff attempts to reach the customer within 30 days of their last service. Each One-Stop compiles an updated list of core customers for Follow-Up staff. The Follow-Up staff also contacts intensive and training customers that CDFs have been unable to reach.

If the customer is unemployed, an attempt to re-engage them is made. They are sent information about job fairs, upcoming recruitments, and are encouraged to use the Career Lab for a job search. The list of customers who report that they have found a job is forwarded to the unit supervisor for employment verification, then to the WIA Supervisor for entry into the MWE system. Each staff member's goal is to reach 50 customers by direct contact per week and to provide appropriate follow-up services. Of the contacts, the goal is to document 25 percent of customers in job placements and to reconnect 50 percent with service.

If they are unable to obtain direct contact with the customer after three consecutive attempts, the customer's wage record is pulled from the UI wage records in an attempt to verify employment. MOED has a contract with DLLR that allows the Follow-Up Unit staff to verify employment in this manner.

Information is collected on the 50 core customers contacted monthly and WIA exit surveys are completed on all placements at the time of contact. Placements are then contacted in the first month of the following quarter. If they are still employed and meet the targeted wage criteria, the customer is exited as a WIA Staff-Assisted placement. Customers employed in the first quarter after exit (including intensive and training customers) are asked to complete a quarterly survey for the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters following exit. The Follow-Up Unit has a goal of a 60 percent minimum contact rate. The customer's IEP is updated electronically, and a copy of the exit and placement system is sent to the System Technician within 24 hours for entry into the system. A daily follow-up report is completed and submitted to the supervisor for review. Follow-Up staff must participate in 2 staff development training sessions quarterly.

ECC Staff Reorganization Revisited

There has been a 35 percent reduction in funding for the Baltimore One-Stop System since WIA was implemented. This is a very fluid organization and innovative changes are implemented frequently. In addition, to meet the challenges of a customer base with a large number of ex-offenders, youth, TANF, and low literacy individuals, creativity is not only encouraged, it is described by staff as a necessity.

Due to WIA funding cuts staff was reorganized in July 2004. The ECC lost a system facilitator in the Career Lab, a position which touched all customers. Also lost were a data clerk position, the Youth Development Specialist, and an Assessment Facilitator. CDFs must now administer assessments to their customers. Finally, the Follow-Up Unit lost 2 of their 4 clerks.

The ECC did gain two DLLR Business Resource Representatives (BRRs) who have been assigned to work directly with MOED Business Service Representatives (BSRs). Also gained was an Office Assistant II (greeter). The former General Manager of the One-Stop System was promoted to the Assistant Director for the Division of Workforce Exchange, and the former Manager of Business Services was given additional duties as the new General Manager of the One-Stop System.

ECC DAILY OPERATIONS

The Baltimore Career Center Network, and therefore the ECC, uses the Triage Model of customer flow. First time customers must attend a scheduled group information session to orient them to One-Stop and partner services. New customers are also required to enroll in the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) system before they access additional services.

When the *Anatomy* project first began, ECC offered information sessions on Mondays and Wednesdays at 8:45am; however, small groups and occasionally individuals were registered throughout the day until 2:00pm. This process took a great deal of the greeters' time and was determined to be an inefficient use of resources.

Currently, information sessions take place Monday through Friday at 9am and 12pm. Customers who come into the center during other times who want to register are given a formal appointment slip to encourage them to attend the next information session. The ECC offers the most information sessions of Baltimore's four One-Stops with a total of 10 weekly. The other three centers offer sessions 2-3 times per week.

Orientation typically lasts 30 minutes and includes the completion of necessary paperwork, a review of One-Stop services, a tour of the facility, and a question/answer session. A welcome packet is provided to each registrant with details about services. In order to register, participants must provide three forms of ID: a photo ID, their Social Security card, and one other identification form.

Upon the conclusion of the information session, customers are registered in the Maryland Workforce Exchange system and perform a job search. Once registered, they are free to use the center's resources at any time. They may also access core services at any of the other Baltimore area One-Stops. However, once they are assigned a Career Development Facilitator (CDF), they must access intensive and training services at the One-Stop where they are registered.

Customers who request to speak with a CDF are given an appointment within three business days, and they can be given a TABE test immediately after the information session. Results are forwarded to the appropriate CDF and the instructor by the end of the day.

At the end of the business day, the greeter transfers all customer folders to a designated staff member for data entry into the MWE system. Data must be entered into the system by the conclusion of the next business day. The greeter is also responsible for coordinating the schedule of appointments for the CDFs using the appointment log on the staff shared computer drive.

The CDFs request their customer folders the day prior to appointments. They ensure that the folders have been updated and that the data has been properly entered into the system. At the conclusion of the appointment, they update the customer folders and return them to the designated staff member for data entry. CDFs meet with customers on Mondays and Wednesdays. Other duties, including case management, meetings and collaboration with other staff, and outreach are performed the rest of the week.

Staff is assigned to each area of the center on a rotating basis to assist customers. If a customer requests intensive or training services, they are assigned a CDF to assist them with their options. Although all staff can provide core services, Wagner-Peyser funded staff work primarily with core customers. They ensure universal access to core services, including self-service, facilitated self-help, and staff-assisted services.

A Job Corps admissions representative holds regular hours at each One-Stop to provide outreach, intake, and orientation sessions. Early Intervention workers are out-stationed at each One-Stop to provide services to profiled UI claimants. Senior Aide workers are out-stationed at each One-Stop site to provide service to older customers; however, all partners share responsibility for providing these services and all staff are cross-trained regarding the services available under the Older Americans Act.

Additional Eastside Services/Activities

Early Intervention Workshops

Early Intervention (EI) workshops are held at each of the local Baltimore One-Stops. Participants receive notices about job fairs and employer recruitment events from One-Stop staff. Participants who need additional training are assisted through WIA programs. EI Workshop Leaders are now funded with Rapid Response dollars, so MOED is now able to hire their own staff. There are usually about 30 individuals in the two day workshop, and they take place three weeks out of the month.

Although the workshop is required, individuals are able to get an exemption or to re-schedule their time, if needed. The Workshop Facilitator reviews these requests and makes the final decision. The Facilitators' speculation is that because the process is mandated, many individuals come through the door with a negative attitude. They feel that they already know how to get a job. These individuals are typically apathetic or angry, and they may even sleep through the workshops. They rarely take advantage of One-Stop services.

In contrast, characteristics of individuals who usually take advantage of One-Stop services include those that are receptive of information, those who take notes, and those who arrive with a professional demeanor. Of course, there have been numerous examples of participants with a negative attitude who become more receptive to One-Stop services as the workshop progresses. The facilitator works to reach all participants.

One difficulty shared by instructors is the removal of barriers to employment. Many customers have a history of keeping a job for a short period of time, but then losing it and re-applying for unemployment benefits. These individuals have difficulty thinking beyond their immediate financial obligations and responsibilities to a longer term goal of education and a successful career.

Job Fairs

Two large scale job fairs are conducted annually by MOED. Previously there were four, one at each Baltimore One-Stop. Each was attended by approximately 250-400 job seekers and had 20-30 employers present. The decision was made to consolidate efforts and job fairs now take place at Baltimore's War Memorial Plaza building, a much larger facility than the One-Stop locations.

Job Fairs take place each October and April, and the most recent event was attended by 750 job seekers and had 82 employer participants. There were more than 5,000 interviews conducted during the event. Industries represented included healthcare, transportation, information technology, construction, and business services, with the majority of employers in business services or healthcare.

Job seeking customers came from several MOED programs, including the One-Stop Career Center Network, the Workforce Reception Center that serves TANF recipients, and the Youth Opportunity (YO! Baltimore) program. MOED employer partners include organizations such as Access Nursing, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Yellow Transportation, KCI Technologies, Aramark Corporation, Holiday Inn, Bank of America, M&T Bank, MCI, Sinai Hospital, Stop Shop and Save Supermarkets, and several federal, state and local government agencies.

Job seeking customers who are already in the MWE system are targeted and the event is not advertised. Staff work together to ensure customer participation with fliers, posters, and word of mouth. Each One-Stop is responsible for registering job seeking customers for the event, and entrance passes are distributed to customers. This is an attempt to provide employers a pool of candidates who are "job ready" according to the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board's "Job Ready Standards".

These standards ensure that customers understand what employers expect in terms of:

- Basic work habits and behaviors
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Basic skills
- Life skills.

If the customer is not considered to be job ready they are given further assistance prior to their participation in the job fair.

MOED Workforce Exchange Division Business Services staff secures employer participation. Each staff member is required to bring in at least 10 employers. Since the change in format, many new employers have been connected with Baltimore One-Stops. The job fair is offered at no cost to employers, and they are provided with lunch. Participation in a job fair organized by the local Baltimore newspaper (Baltimore Sun) costs employers between \$2,000 and \$3,000.

Staff follows-up with employers at ten, thirty, and sixty day intervals. Employer satisfaction is assessed and is typically very positive. Employers have commented that job seekers seem well prepared, are dressed professionally, and had resumes with them. Staff also solicits employers' thoughts as to improve service.

All job seekers are contacted by the One-Stop Follow-Up Unit staff, and Career Development Facilitators follow up with their customers. Periodic mini job fairs are offered based on customer interest.

Baltimore One-Stops also hold an annual Customer Reunion. Fliers are sent to customers inviting them to participate in the 2 day event. On the first day issues that can be considered barriers to employment including childcare, housing, etc. are discussed and resources made available. On the second day, there is a job fair.

Additional ECC Services

Financial Aid and Labor Market Information is available through the Maryland Workforce Exchange, as well as other internet sites. A financial aid counselor is available at each One-Stop one day per week.

All customers registered in MWE are provided follow-up services by One-Stop staff. In addition, WIA intensive or training customers who have been in service for a minimum of one year and WIA customers who discontinue One-Stop services without employment are provided follow-up services. These services may include job fair invitations, support services, special recruitments, and recognition events. These efforts are an attempt to keep the customer engaged in the system until a positive outcome is achieved. Customers are contacted at minimum every 30 days.

WIA TIERS OF SERVICE AT THE ECC

WIA Self-Directed Core Services

All adults seeking ECC services begin with Universal Self-Directed Core Services. These services include job search, labor market information, information session, and computer services. Customers are fairly independent at this stage and staff contact is minimal, although there is always staff on hand to answer routine questions.

At this point, customers have attended an orientation/information session and are typically conducting independent job searches, accessing labor market information, developing resumes, taking computerized assessments, or using the equipment within the One-Stop (computers, telephones, copier and fax machine). Anyone from the public can access One-Stop core services; there are no eligibility requirements as there were under JTPA. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in the number of people receiving services, without a corresponding increase in the number of staff available to help them. A study conducted in 2002 showed a total of 81% of adults using Baltimore One-Stops accessed self-directed core services as their highest tier of service.²¹

A series of seminars and workshops are offered to ECC WIA Core customers on a regular basis, including:

- Resume Writing
- Advanced Job Search Techniques Seminar
- Communicating to Get the Job
- Principles of Career Success Seminar
- Creating an Empowering Mindset
- Developing Positive Employability Skills
- Workplace Communication and Conflict Resolution
- Changing Directions (for Ex-Offenders)
- Career Ready Seminar
- Interviewing Techniques

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) presented the “FDIC Money Smart Alliance Partner of the Year New York Region” award to MOED in April 2005. Introduced in 2001, the FDIC Money Smart classes are taught in partnership with the Maryland Bankers Community Reinvestment Group at the four Baltimore One-Stop Career Centers. This gives One-Stop customers learn to manage their earnings as they learn about checking and savings accounts, home ownership, managing credit card debt, and more.

Providers of core services include MOED, One-Stop Career Centers, Baltimore City Public School System, Goodwill Industries, AFL-CIO, Baltimore City Community College, Department of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, Department of Social Services, and Baltimore Reads.

WIA Staff-Assisted Core Services

If a customer is having difficulty with Self-Directed Core Services, a staff member meets with them to discuss their progress. If it is determined that there are significant barriers to employment (e.g., limited work experience, poor work history, substance abuse, mental health problems), the barriers are documented in the customer’s service record and the customer is referred to the appropriate resource(s).

²¹ WIA Customer Flow, Phase I, Customer Flow and Demographics, D. Safley, Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, City of Baltimore, May 30, 2002.

Once the barriers have been removed, the customer can return for employment and training services. Staff must follow up with the customer regularly during this process. Jobseekers that require direct non-information services assistance from lab facilitators are entered into WIA Staff Assisted Core Services. Additional services include placement assistance, assessments, career counseling, retention, and referral services.

WIA Intensive Services

Customers who do not secure employment and need further assistance progress to Intensive Services, which include additional assessments and counseling, the development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS), job readiness training, Adult Education/literacy, and case management. Prior to receiving intensive services, the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) evaluates the customer's folder regarding their eligibility for WIA and the documentation of the core services that have been received. During the first meeting, the CDF interviews the customer regarding their personal and professional goals, schedules a TABE test if one has not already been taken, completes the WIA application, begins the ISS, and schedules the customer for additional assessments. Intensive services also include educational services and English as a Second Language instruction.

The TABE test assesses customers' reading and mathematics levels, and vocational interests are assessed via a number of different testing instruments. The customer's ISS contains at a minimum their reading and mathematics levels, vocational interest, employment goals, potential barriers, education, and training needs. If the customer is a welfare recipient and has been referred by the Workforce Reception Center (WRC), the CDF updates their WRC plan on their ISS.

If a customer is a no-show for an appointment, the CDF first attempts to phone them. If a message is left, the customer is given 2 days to respond. After two phone attempts, a letter is sent to the customer offering to re-schedule the appointment. The customer is given 7 days to respond. If there is no communication from the customer, the folder is returned to Core filing system and further attempts to reach the customer come from the Follow-Up Unit staff. All information is documented in the customer's folder and entered into the MWE system.

Intensive service providers include MOED, One-Stop Career Centers, Catholic Charities, GI Tech, and the Genesis Group.

WIA Training Services

If a customer is unsuccessful in obtaining employment at the intensive level and requests training services, a referral to appropriate training options can occur. In addition to reading, mathematics, and vocational assessments, the customer's suitability for training is evaluated taking into account issues of transportation, childcare, finances, legal issues, attendance, housing, and substance abuse. If the customer does not have the necessary skills and aptitudes to complete training, they are referred for remediation (an intensive service).

Appropriate remediation providers are determined by the customer's reading level. If they score 8.9 or higher, they begin the GED program provided onsite at the One-Stop. If the score is lower, they complete a basic education class onsite. If there is no space in the classes, customers are referred to the appropriate partner resource. Baltimore City Community College also offers pre-GED instruction during the evenings for customers who cannot attend a day class.

Enrollment in remediation is verified by the CDF and the information is entered into the MWE system. Upon completion of remediation, the customer's reading level is reassessed and if they are eligible, they enter into Training Services. A priority of service for training resources has been in effect since 2003.

Two types of training are available through Baltimore One-Stops:

- Customized/On the Job Training
- Individual Training Accounts

Customers can either use Individual Training Account (ITA) vouchers to access training from one of the vendors on Maryland's list of eligible providers, or they may participate in customized training. Training resources are being focused on Baltimore's targeted industries of healthcare/hospitals, bioscience, business services, computer/internet/data/software related services, hospitality/tourism, and construction. During FY 2004, there was an annual total of 20 training slots to each of the four Baltimore One-Stops (10 ITA, 10 Customized Training) for a total of 80 training slots.

Individual Training Accounts

Those who ask to be considered for training paid for with WIA funds must first pass through core and intensive tiers of service without finding employment.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission maintains a list of eligible training providers throughout Maryland, which can be accessed through their website. Occupational training programs include: allied health professionals, information technology, business management/administrative services, trades, engineering/related technologies, child development/education, tourism/hospitality/culinary arts, design/applied arts and communications, law enforcement/legal studies, cosmetology/barber, and pre-vocational adult education and literacy training.²² In total, more than 800 occupations offered by over 90 institutions (community colleges, 4 year colleges/universities, private career schools, and other training providers) can be accessed through the website. The State List also identifies over 50 prevocational Adult Education and Literacy activities overseen by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Overall performance information by training provider is listed on the website, as well as a separate listing for WIA customers. Contact information and a description of the program are also displayed. MHEC reports that many training vendors are hesitant to have performance measures posted on a website and have chosen not to serve WIA participants.

²² <http://www.mhec.state.us/WIA/WIASearch/WIATypeTrain.asp>.

Some vendors find the approval process to be lengthy and cumbersome. However, the list does give the state a means to declare unlicensed and illegal training providers ineligible.

The State List of Occupational Training eligible for WIA funding is updated weekly. Each training provider is responsible for notifying MHEC of changes to the information displayed in the web listing. Local Workforce Investment Boards (LWIBS) can deny WIA funding for programs with inaccurate program information displayed on the Maryland WIA State List.

To be added to the provider list, vendors must be nominated by a Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB). Next, a training survey is given to them by the LWIB to determine if they are exempt or nonexempt from obtaining MHEC's approval. The provider must then verify that it meets the performance standard of 61% employment rate for participants and agree to the data collection process.

Providers may submit SSNs to verify employment by entering into an MOU with University of Baltimore's Jacob France Institute, which matches them against the Maryland UI wage records. Finally, the WIB submits a letter to DLLR stating that the provider has met the qualifications.

The WIB collects and submits performance data and DLLR approves the course within 45 days.²³ During the first year, 19 of the 147 approved providers were dropped from the list due to poor performance, despite the opportunity to appeal the decision. Through the ITA vouchering program, MOED is currently working with over 25 training providers offering more than 100 courses. Some examples of Baltimore eligible training providers include Baltimore City Community College, All-State Career, Goodwill Industries, Maryland Beauty School, Medix, Broadcasting Institute, American Red Cross, and the Community College of Baltimore County.

The ECC Individual Training Account Process

The ECC training process has a number of steps. After seeking job assistance through core and intensive services and demonstrating WIA eligibility, the customer would speak to their CDF about their interest in training. Assessments would be administered and an employment goal would be agreed upon. Staff uses the "guided customer choice" approach during the ITA process. Although counseling is mandatory, customers make the final decision regarding their choice of training program. The only requirement is that the program be on the state's list of approved providers.

After the training program is chosen, the customer must then attend the ITA Workshop, which explains the application and selection process. There is a local Board approved training cap of \$5,000 and applicants must apply for any additional financial aid for which they might be eligible. These funds would then be reimbursed to the training program, if approved. MOED has a priority of service policy in effect when funding is insufficient for training, which gives priority to public assistance or other customers who meet income eligibility requirements. This policy is currently activated.

²³ Workforce Investment Field Instruction (WIFI) No. #5-00, State Provider Training List

Next, the ITA application must be completed, including a thorough labor market information review, research on the training provider using the MHEC eligibility list, a comprehensive listing of all the costs and requirements, and at least one interview with someone employed in the field of interest. The training must project at least a 20% growth in Maryland, and must be completed within one year. Upon completion of the training packet, the customer schedules a CDF appointment to review the application before it is submitted. Staff reports that it is possible for a customer to complete the entire ITA application process within one week. The customer is guaranteed to receive the application results within 2 weeks of submission. If the packet is not approved, corrections can be made.

An ITA review panel rates the completed applications; the panel consists of the ITA Coordinator, a Senior Budget Analyst, and a Career Center Manager. Customers who receive an 80% or higher rating are approved. Upon approval, the packet is forwarded to a contract specialist for processing. If funds are not available, the One-Stop is faxed immediately. If the packet is approved, the request for payment process begins and the One-Stop is emailed. When the notice of payment is received by the One-Stop, the CDF contacts the customer with the training start date. Enrollment is verified by the CDF and entered into the system. The time period between ITA approval and vendor contact is approximately two weeks. Once the customer begins training, they are entered into the WIA training tier of service in the system.

Upon approval and the start of training, customers are required to contact their CDF monthly with progress reports. If training is less than 30 days, contact must be made weekly. Attendance reports are required monthly from the customer. Completion certificate/license copies must be made available to the CDF within 2 weeks of the course completion, and an exit interview with the CDF is scheduled within 2 days of the course's completion. Customers must also participate in a job search 30-60 days prior to the completion of training. CDFs follow up with the customer until 30 days after program exit.

Finally, employment information must be shared with the CDF including employer contact information, job title, start date, earnings, benefits and the relation of the job to training. The customer must also agree to provide follow-up information to determine employment retention and earnings in the future, and to complete the WIA Exit Survey. The One-Stop's Follow-Up Unit gathers this information. While the majority of participants complete training, it is often difficult to verify employment. There are several strategies in place to collect this information. Staff can request Maryland UI wage records to verify employment, and they often contact the training vendor for updated information.

If a training customer finds employment, One-Stop staff must verify the information with the employer and enter it into the MWE system. If the customer's job search is not successful, they enroll in the One-Stop's Job Club. If employment is still not secured, the customer meets with the CDF to determine if additional training is needed. In addition, the CDF provides individual job search assistance to the customer.

If the customer is not working and refuses further services, they are contacted again in 90 days. If they are still not engaged, a “soft exit” is recorded on the customer’s record. Those who exit from service due to incarceration, deceased, or health/medical reasons are excluded from WIA performance measures.

Staff is currently working to ensure that customer Individual Employment Plans include employment as the final goal, rather than simply the completion of training. Most customers tend to perform to the level of staff expectations; if the final expectation is to complete the training process, they will do so and then flounder. If securing employment is built into their IEP, they realize that expectation from the start of the process and understand that the end of training isn’t the end of their One-Stop experience. Their ultimate goal is to find a job in their chosen field, and CDFs must assist customers in the fulfillment of this goal.

Staff also mentioned that more assistance is needed from job placement offices at community colleges and training vendors. Most of these organizations feel that it is their responsibility to educate, but not to secure their students’ employment. There seems to be a more aggressive effort made to place students from proprietary schools, and less so from community colleges. A closer partnership and increased communication between the One-Stops, training vendors/community colleges, and area employers would be helpful.

Finally, MOED has worked to streamline the ITA application process for customers. The application has been reduced from fourteen pages to seven as of July 2005. In addition, a staff person has been designated to review all applications for errors before they are submitted to the ITA Review Panel. This enables CDFs more time to work with their customers rather than reviewing paperwork.

Table 2 ECC WIA PERFORMANCE GOALS

<i>Adults</i>	PY 2004 WIA Performance Results²⁴	FY 2006 Baltimore WIA Performance Goals²⁵
Adult Entered Employment Rate	83.4%	72%
Adult Employment Retention Rate	87.6%	82%
Adult Earnings Change	\$4,707	\$3,475
Adult Employment and Credential Rate	78.1%	63%
<i>Dislocated Workers</i>		
Dislocated Worker Entered Employment	91.2%	75%
Dislocated Worker Employment Retention	92.1%	88%
Dislocated Worker Earnings Change	\$116.58	\$98
Dislocated Worker Employ/Credential Rate	84.1%	61%
<i>Older Youth (19-21)</i>		
Older Youth Entered Employment Rate	94.4%	65%
Older Youth Employment Retention	97.3%	78%
Older Youth Worker Earnings Change	\$4,898	\$2,750
Older Youth Employment/Credential Rate	69.5%	51%
<i>Satisfaction</i>		
Program Participant Satisfaction Rate	88.0%	69%
Employer Satisfaction Rate	87.2%	67%

It is evident from the figures above that in PY 2004, Baltimore exceeded all performance measures. The performance goals listed are for FY 2006, and the PY 2004 results exceed these goals.

ECC SPECIAL-NEEDS CUSTOMERS

The needs of special populations and those with multiple barriers to employment are met either at the ECC or by referrals to appropriate partners. Some of the ECC services these customers might receive would be workshops, basic computer skills, seminars, and job matching and placement services.

²⁴ Annual Report – Maryland. Workforce Investment Act Title I-B. DLLR, September 30, 2005

²⁵ Source: MOED, Workforce Investment Act Five Year Extension, May 1, 2005.

Special training arrangements are available to targeted groups with severe barriers to employment (e.g., ex-offenders, substance abusers, limited English speaking, high school dropouts, older workers, and workers with disabilities). This could include computer assisted training programs and contractual agreements with training providers.

Youth

The ECC provides space for the Youth Works application process. High School students routinely do career exploration in the ECC, and the ECC serves as an intern site for Job Corps participants. Business Services staff assists with the Youth Summer Job Fair. In addition, space has been dedicated for youth employers at the 2 annual Baltimore One-Stop Career Center Network job fairs held at the War Memorial Plaza.

The Baltimore One-Stop management team regularly works with Baltimore City Public Schools to provide instruction for their students. For example, the ECC manager has provided conflict resolution/negotiation skills workshops to youth. MOED offers schools assistance with special programs, such as books drives. Digital Learning Lab staff has traveled to schools to provide technical assistance in their resource labs. In addition, BWIB sponsors externships for Baltimore City Public School teachers, with stipends paid by local businesses.

Older Workers

Maryland data from the Census Bureau Local Employment Dynamics (LED) program shows that the State workforce is aging. In 1990, 75 percent of Maryland workers were 14-44 years old, but by 2002, the only 66 percent were in this age group²⁶. Moreover, in 1990 15 percent of workers were 45-54 years old; in 2002 the figure had risen to 21 percent.

Baltimore One-Stops, as well as other partners, offer services to individuals 55 and older through the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. They specialize in providing jobs, training, and workforce information to their customers. The ECC has a Senior Placement Specialist on staff. Eligible customers are referred to the senior aide by the greeter after the group information session. The aide works with the customer to connect them with employment opportunities. Although there is not a large population of senior customers at the ECC, many have taken advantage of services such as GED instruction and the Digital Learning Lab.

The Senior Placement Specialist is also available to work with those from the ECC neighborhood being displaced as a result of the East Baltimore Development and Biotechnology Park initiative. This initiative is a revitalization effort which will include a new life sciences park and mixed-income housing. ECC staff has been working with the East Baltimore Development Initiative staff to assist neighborhood residents, many of which are seniors.

²⁶ A Profile of Older Workers in Maryland. N. Carroll, C. Taeuber, U.S. Bureau of the Census, August 2004.

Senior customers face numerous obstacles, including limited income, health issues, transportation, and the challenge of finding suitable employment. Many senior referrals to the ECC come from nearby churches, friends, and community agencies. Most seniors are able to find employment in fields such as janitorial or security. Many have expressed interest in the clerical field, and they are encouraged to obtain their GED and to take courses in the Digital Learning Lab. While observing ECC operations it was evident that a great many Digital Learning Lab users were seniors.

A Senior Customer Profile

An interview was conducted with a senior customer, a 61 year old African American male who was widowed and living alone. He had recently been laid off from his job in shipping/receiving, which he had held for three years. Prior to this job, he worked for large companies in the manufacturing industry. He was upset by the layoff, and felt singled out as an older employee. He came to the ECC by way of the EI Workshop and was able to get a part-time job with help from the Placement Specialist.

He has used the Career Lab to do job searches and the Hi Tech Lab to create a resume, and has been coming to the ECC for about six months. In addition to meeting with the Senior Placement Specialist, he has received assistance from a Career Development Facilitator. He plans to continue to use the resources at ECC until he finds a better job. He feels there are a lot of jobs available, but he has to keep searching for the right one. He has been pleased with the assistance he has gotten and continues to get from ECC staff and maintains his confidence that the right job is just around the corner if he keeps trying.

Persons with Disabilities

A 2002 American Community Survey Profile conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau found that 52.4 percent of working-age (21-64), disabled Marylanders were employed, compared with 81.2 percent of non-disabled individuals²⁷. Research indicates that approximately two-thirds of disabled persons are willing and able to work, if given the opportunity. Barriers to the disabled include limited education/work skills, lack of public transportation, and lack of adequate funding.

Maryland offers services to persons with disabilities in many ways, including the RISE Program, a self-employment and entrepreneurial program for persons with disabilities, Rehabilitation Technology Services, a Workforce and Technology Center that offers assistive technology solutions, and the Governor's QUEST program for paid internships in state government for persons with disabilities.

One-Stops and local workforce investment boards are required to prioritize employment for disabled customers both in their employer contacts and in One-Stop operations. Disability Navigators have been established for each Local Workforce Area. They provide direct services and possess an expert knowledge on the resources available to persons with disabilities. They also work with One-Stop management and partners to ensure access for disabled persons.

²⁷ 2004 American Community Survey. U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The Maryland Department of Disabilities has convened an “Employment Services Transformation Task Force” to support disability employment systems. The manager of One-Stop services and the lead Disability Navigator are members of the task force.

Baltimore One-Stops share a Disability Navigator, who has provided staff development, physical assessment of One-Stop buildings, and direct service to disabled customers, although now staff has been trained to provide services themselves. A Business Forum was also conducted to help area employers better understand disabilities and hiring issues. All Business Services staff received training as well, and can better market disabled customers to employers.

Baltimore’s Disability Navigator has assisted customers with One-Stop resources and services, community-based disability service providers, advocacy groups, information regarding benefits, planning, and Medicaid services, assessment/evaluation services, job development/placement services, supported employment services, appropriate training, assistive technology, and transportation. Disabled One-Stop customers can arrange to meet with the Disability Navigator by calling either MOED or any of the One-Stop Career Centers.

In July 2005, MOED placed a full-time Maryland Department of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) counselor at the ECC. They are working to place additional DORS staff at the other One-Stops. Prior to this date, customers were referred to other locations for DORS services.

If it is determined that a customer has a mental or physical handicap, the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) schedules an appointment with a DORS staff member. DORS provides the necessary service, and notifies the CDF of the customer’s progress. The CDF also follows up with the customer monthly to ensure services are being received and to determine when the customer can return to the One-Stop.

Baltimore One-Stop staff has been cross trained on how to identify customers who may be disabled and the services available to this population. Additional auxiliary aids and materials are available through MOED.

A Disabled Customer Profile

A visually impaired male customer came to one of the Baltimore One-Stops to work in the Digital Learning Lab. When he began his class in February 2004 he had difficulty working with the keyboard and viewing the monitor due to his disability.

DORS and MOED have worked together since November 2003 to integrate their services. DORS introduced an accessible workstation at the Southwest Career Center in March 2004, which enables individuals with a wide range of disabilities to use a personal computer.

The computer table can be easily adjusted to be used while sitting or standing, and other features include a ZOOM TEXT feature that assist those with vision problems, a Braille translator has been installed for Windows, a voice input system, screen reading software, a document scanning/reading system, slip on typing aids, large-print keyboard, word prediction/abbreviation expansion, alternative pointing devices, standard and Braille printers, Internet access, Digital Learning Lab software, typing instruction, resume writing software, and access to the MD Workforce Exchange system. Utilizing this workstation, the customer was able to complete his Digital Learning Lab courses.

Veterans/ Services

The Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) staff at each One-Stop is responsible for the development of an employer outreach plan in coordination with the Business Services unit. They work with employers to promote hiring veterans, share information on services for disabled veterans, and informing employers of One-Stop services. Veterans who are registered at the One-Stop are provided job development services by the representative. Outreach services are provided to employers, faith and community based organizations, and Veterans service organizations. LVER staff also makes recommendations to the One-Stop Labor Exchange administrator on improving service to veterans.

The Maryland Workforce Exchange system was designed to flag eligible veterans for referral, and LVER staff monitors job orders and services to ensure priority for veterans. Veterans Representatives throughout the State attend a week-long conference annually to keep them aware of current developments in services to their customers.

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) staff provides case management, assessment, registration, referral and Core services to veterans. Veterans with barriers to employment receive Intensive services. DVOP staff provides technical assistance and assists LVER staff in training One-Stop staff on the priority of service to veterans.

Two Veteran Services Representatives are shared amongst the Baltimore One-Stops. MOED ensures that all eligible veterans are given priority for all available services. Veteran status is informally documented during the customer's initial assessment and registration. If a veteran advances to intensive or training services, they must supply formal documentation such as their DD214. The priority of services is as follows: First served are low-income customers who are veterans, second low-income non-veterans, and finally among customers who are not low-income, veterans receive priority over non-veterans.

Veteran staff in Baltimore One-Stops participates in One-Stop workgroups and organizational teams. In addition, they receive integrated Business Service training through MIETP and are part of the One-Stop's Business Services Team. It was recently determined that Veterans' staff can provide "support" to customers other than veterans. For example, they can assist in the Career Lab, but there must be a non-Veteran staff member present.

During an interview with a Veterans' Employment Classification Specialist, position duties included assisting veterans with employment services, referrals to other agencies and other resources, assisting with issues such as housing and healthcare, and removing barriers to employment. These staff seek out resources for their customers; they contact employers, participate in job fairs, present at EI Workshops, provide outreach to community based organizations (for example in church sponsored Family Resource Centers), and conduct seminars and training sessions regarding veterans benefits. A network of 30 veteran service providers has been developed and they can be easily contacted via email. There are plans to create a network for veterans themselves so that they can be similarly contacted. Veterans can set up email accounts at any local One-Stop.

Many veterans are referred to the Digital Learning Labs to brush up on their technology skills. Many also lack a resume, so they are assisted in the Hi Tech Lab. Veterans Representatives work closely with BSRs and BRRs during recruitments to ensure priority for qualified veterans.

When it is determined that a first time customer is a veteran, the greeter immediately notifies the Veterans' Representative and most customers are seen that day. If the Veterans Representative is unavailable, the customer is given an appointment to return and discuss the available services.

Adult Education Customers

When WIA was implemented, Maryland grandfathered in the Private Industry Council structure, which didn't allow for local Adult education leadership to the LWIBs. In most cases, adult education officials were not part of the planning process for Maryland's workforce services and products. In addition, there is limited state funding for Adult education instruction, with 4,000-5,000 on a waiting list for services annually.

In Baltimore One-Stops, GED services are provided onsite by Baltimore City Community College staff. There are also partnerships in place with community providers for off-site services.

One ECC example from the "Highlights" section of a monthly MOED One-Stop report delivered to MOED is a story about a woman who took part in an ECC Rapid Response event after being laid off from her job with a financial institution. She attended the Digital Learning Lab and received all available certificates. She then enrolled in the Individual Training Account program and obtained a certificate as a computer specialist. She is now employed by the State of Maryland as a lead administrator specialist. She earns \$14.90 an hour with full benefits.

Another example documented is the story of a male, homeless veteran who came to ECC for assistance in getting his GED. Despite numerous barriers to employment, he enrolled in the GED program and began attending the Digital Learning Lab. He passed his GED exam and obtained all Digital Learning Lab certificates. He now has a job as an electrician earning \$14.50 an hour with full benefits. He registered for college to begin in September 2005.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Customers

There is a large and growing Hispanic population in Baltimore. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the 2004 Baltimore Hispanic population reached 13,500. This figure was up from approximately 11,000 in 2000, despite the city's slightly declining overall population.²⁸

There is a well established network of services within Baltimore's Hispanic community, most notably the Educational-Based Latino Outreach program. Few Hispanics frequent Eastside; this population tends to utilize their neighborhood community centers rather than the One-Stop. However, community centers are provided resource materials regarding employment and services offered by Eastside.

Baltimore One-Stop written materials are available in Spanish if requested. In addition, some activities are offered in Spanish, including an English as a Second Language class, and a financial literacy workshop. Meeting space is provided for Hispanic community groups, as well as other community based meetings.

One-Stop staff has worked to increase their outreach efforts to this population, but they feel that there may be a perceived communication barrier. Staff is available at MOED to assist with translation, but arrangements must be made in advance.

ECC PARTNERSHIPS

Community Organizations

The ECC maintains relationships with the following community organizations:

- McElderry Park Community Association, Inc.
- Ellwood Park Improvement Association
- Patterson Park Neighborhood Association
- East Baltimore Development Inc. (EBDI)
- Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Inc. (HEBCAC)
- Human Service Center District 1 & 2
- Community Action Center
- Global Tech
- Operation Safe Neighborhood
- Saint Francis Academy
- Lifeline Foundation
- Saint Michael Outreach Center
- Refugees and Immigration Services
- STRIVE
- Workforce Transportation & Referral Center
- Alliance, Inc.

²⁸ Based on Census 2004 Community Survey Data, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

- Center for Father's Families and Workforce Development
- Fathers Without Partners

In general, the ECC provides information, outreach, and meeting space to these organizations. All are located in the ECC neighborhoods of East Baltimore.

Stronger relationships have evolved with some organizations. For instance, counselors from several substance abuse centers in Baltimore routinely bring their patients to the One-Stop centers for services.

As another example, the ECC provides job readiness training and gives job placement assistance to customers of East Baltimore Development, Inc (EBDI), Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition, Inc. (HEBCAC), and the Community Action Center.

EBDI is a non-profit organization charged with leading and managing the \$800 million dollar revitalization of an 80 acre portion of East Baltimore. HEBCAC is a nonprofit partnership, based in the community, designed to enhance the quality of life for those who live and work in East Baltimore. The organization was founded in 1994 as the result of a two year planning process that included neighborhood associations, business owners, Johns Hopkins Medical Institution representatives, and government officials. The master plan called for action on three fronts: community development, physical development, and economic development.

The Community Action Center provides information, assistance and/or referrals to customers for energy and crisis intervention, health services, education and literacy, jobs, housing, substance abuse, and programs for youths and seniors.

Baltimore Mayor Martin O'Malley sponsors various "open forums" in Baltimore communities. When these occur, all agencies, including MOED, are represented and provide information to the community. During these dialogs with city residents, many types of issues are encountered, but when someone says "I need a job", One-Stop staff is available to offer immediate resources.

Baltimore has more than 18,000 residents who are eligible for the federal Earned Income Credit tax benefit but fail to claim it, resulting in more than \$29 million in unclaimed tax refund dollars. MOED is one of 14 community based organizations that offer free tax preparation through a partnership with Baltimore CASH Campaign. The Campaign is coordinated by a group of nonprofit organizations, businesses, government agencies and foundations working together to ensure families in Baltimore know and take advantage of tax credits. The service was offered at the Northwest Career Center from January through March 2005, with both evening and weekend hours available. All Baltimore One-Stop customers could participate in this service.

Faith Based Organizations

Faith based and other community based organizations have strong ties to the Baltimore One-Stop system and were included in the planning and implementation process. The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) has launched a Faith-Based and Community Initiative, which includes representatives who are conducting workforce development activities in their community. Baltimore One-Stop staff conducts outreach and marketing to these organizations, and One-Stops participate in their events including job fairs, Career Days, and job search workshops. MOED keeps its list of these organizations up to date using the Baltimore Neighborhoods Indicators Alliance, which recently moved into The Jacob France Institute at the University of Baltimore (www.bnja.org).

The ECC routinely provides resource information and meeting space to various non-profit, community, and faith based organizations, and representatives have toured the center and met with staff. Detailed service descriptions for each Community Action Center are available at One-Stop locations, and One-Stop information is available from the Community Action Centers. Joint outreach, intake, and orientation sessions are conducted on a regular basis. One-Stop staff regularly participate in faith based organization community fairs, job fairs, and other outreach activities.

In 2002, the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau, Region III, in conjunction with BWIB, MOED and several state and city agencies sponsored a Building Faith-Based Partnerships symposium. MOED hosted the event at Eastside Career Center and more than 200 faith leaders, workforce development partners, legislators, and government officials shared workforce development ideas. A survey was conducted so that services could be more effectively integrated in the future.

SUPPORT SERVICES

MOED has a supportive services system in place to assist ECC customers, either through direct help (providing a bus pass) or by referrals to partner agencies for issues pertaining to childcare, substance abuse treatment, housing, and food. A comprehensive resource guide has been compiled of governmental agencies, civic groups, and non-profit organizations that provide resources that cannot be supported with WIA funds. The resource guide is updated yearly and used by all One-Stop staff.

The resource guide also gives information about financial counseling, energy assistance, eviction assistance, legal assistance, domestic violence assistance, and appropriate clothing for job related activities. Eastside staff members estimate the top 3 barriers to their customers' employment are substance abuse, ex-offender issues, and homelessness.

The United Way of Central Maryland "First Call for Help" is a free, confidential service that One-Stop staff uses to assist customers with health and human services. Their statewide database includes over 4,000 resources including substance abuse treatment programs, job training programs, mental health services, basic needs services, and family support centers.

Services are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and assistance can be provided both over the telephone and via the internet. All One-Stop staff is familiar with these resources and they routinely refer customers to the available resources.

Career Development Facilitators have developed strong relationships with staff from partner agencies, as well as community and faith based organizations. This is helpful for the referral process; CDFs are more confident that customers will get the assistance they need when they know and communicate with the resource staff personally.

A comprehensive assessment regarding barriers to employment and the need for supportive services typically takes place at the intensive level of service. Baltimore One-Stops simply do not have the resources to assist all customers at the core level. For instance, the entire annual ECC budget for supportive services (e.g., clothing, work tools, exam fees) is \$500. If core customers specifically request assistance, or if they disclose any needs to the greeter during their intake session, they are referred to community resources. In previous years, there used to be more assistance offered to core customers, but due to budget cuts, that is no longer the case. Occasionally, community agencies come to the One-Stops to offer assistance to customers.

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE BALTIMORE EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER

The ECC has been reconstituted many times by federal legislation, State mandates, and MOED decisions; but perhaps most important of all, the ECC has been recast in response to new challenges and opportunities first recognized by its own staff. This is consistent with what is understood to be Congressional intent defined by its legislative and appropriations actions, with precisely defined U.S. Department of Labor directives, with stated DLLR Division of Workforce Development priorities, and with MOED management principles—empower those closest to the customers to balance the interests of customers and the taxpayers who pay the bills for services that are delivered.

Chapter 4 concludes our summary of what we have learned about the evolution of the ECC since the mid-1990s. We turn next, in Chapter 5, to coverage of the actual flow of customers through the ECC.

CHAPTER 5

THE FLOW OF CUSTOMERS THROUGH THE BALTIMORE EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER

OVERVIEW

Who arrives at the ECC in-person or by remote communication, and what happens next and after that?

Sources of Information

Administrative Records

We collected ECC and MOED documents and electronic data, mostly between March 2004 and early 2005.

Observation of ECC Customer and Staff Actions

Time Tracking

Method

We collected observation-based information 3 to 4 days a month, usually during a 3 hour time period, beginning in March 2004 and continuing through November 2004. We alternated days and times to capture the full range of ECC activities, including after daytime business hours. Manual point in time data collection was necessary because of the unexpected and unfortunate problems encountered with swipe card documentation of customer transactions. ECC customers were tracked over a total of 23 three hour shifts, including two night session that yielded few customers to be tracked.

A researcher from The Jacob France Institute was positioned at the front entrance to the ECC. Tracking was accomplished by entering customer flow information into a manual log, including descriptive information that allowed each customer to be identified at a later time. Customers were then monitored as they moved through the ECC. For privacy and traffic reasons it was not always possible to determine what each monitored customer was doing, especially when meeting with ECC staff members, but activities can be inferred based on the center location—Career Lab is defined as job search, whereas the PLATO Lab is defined as GED/pre-GED activities.

Some customers arrived near the end of the researcher's shift and remained in the ECC at the conclusion of tracking. For observations relating to time, only the customers who were documented with an exit time were included. Exit times were estimated for those attending EI Workshops, GED/pre-GED classes, or TABE testing. These activities conclude at a specific time, and according to ECC staff customers rarely stay after they are finished.

THE FLOW OF ECC CUSTOMERS OBSERVED

Customer Flow Count

During the data collection period, a total of 1,071 ECC customers were monitored. On average, 47 customers were monitored during each three hour shift. Shift totals ranged from a high of 84 customers to a low of 14 customers. A total of 791 (74 percent) completed their visit at some point during the three hour observation time. Of these completers, the average time spent in the ECC was 83 minutes.

Customer Flow Demographics

Customers are required to sign in with the security guard each time they arrive at the ECC. The resulting log of customer arrivals includes customer names, time of visits, and intended destination within the ECC facility. Social Security Numbers are not collected. Because of the swipe card system, additional information was determined to be unnecessary. The swipe card system was discontinued in March 2005, but to date, no changes have been made to the sign-in process.

More than nine out of ten ECC customers monitored are African American (by our visual classification). An additional 6 percent of customers are white and 2 percent are defined as 'other'. The gender percentages among customers monitored are 54 percent women versus 46 percent men.

These figures are consistent with surrounding neighborhood demographics. The two largest ZIP code areas comprising the ECC customer base—21205 and 21213—are 75.4 percent and 88.5 percent African American, and females comprised 54.1 percent and 54.8 percent of the residents in these neighborhoods.²⁹

Customer age was approximated by the researcher. Based on these estimations, 34 percent were judged to be ages 18-29, 25 percent ages 30-39, 22 percent ages 40-49, and 18 percent ages 50 or older. Older customers usually meet with a specific staff member, so their age could be determined more accurately. The ECC is not designated by MOED to serve youth younger than 18, but the ECC facility is used to accept summer job program applications, and Baltimore City high school students use the ECC for career exploration. For these reasons, 1 percent of those tracked were judged to be ages 14-17.

Monitoring Results

Peak ECC customer flow was observed between 8:30 A.M. and noon. A total of 74 percent of the customers monitored were in the ECC building during these morning hours. After the *Anatomy* project time tracking ended, ECC staff scheduled a new daily group information session beginning at noon. ECC staff reports that afternoon customer flow has increased since this change was implemented. We have not determined if this reduced the morning customer count or increased the overall customer count.

²⁹ Census 2000 Summary File, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

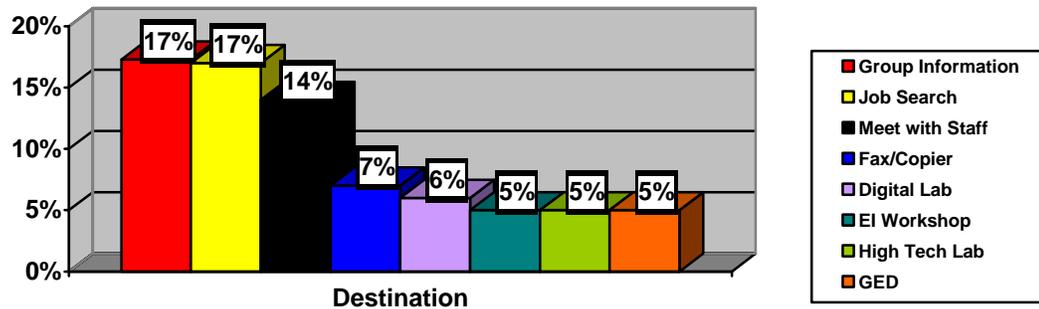
ECC Customer Destinations (N=791)

Our count of the most frequently visited ECC destinations/activities shows the following mix:

- The group information session—17 percent
- Job search/Career Lab—17 percent
- Meeting with staff—14 percent
- Using the fax/copier—7 percent
- Using the Digital Learning Lab—6 percent
- Participating in the Early Intervention (EI) Workshop—5 percent
- Visiting the High Tech Lab—5 percent
- GED classes—5 percent.

These eight ECC activities account for 76 percent of ECC customer destinations.

Figure 2:1 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Eastside Customers Most Frequently Chosen One-Stop Locations/Activities



Because of the numerous services offered by the ECC the remaining 24 percent of customer destinations is a diverse mix. Less frequently chosen destinations include:

- Using the phone bank—4 percent
- Completing a job application/job interview—4 percent
- Browsing the job postings and/or requesting ECC information—4 percent
- Picking up a youth summer employment application—2 percent
- Receiving an assessment—2 percent
- Dropping off/picking up materials—2 percent
- Waiting in the reception area—1 percent
- Talking informally with ECC staff—1 percent
- Other activities—4 percent

Tabulated below is the average time in minutes customers spent in each ECC location/activity.

Table 3:1 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Average Time Spent by Destination/Activity for All Tracked One-Stop Customers (N=791)	
<i>Destination/Activity</i>	<i>Average Destination/Activity Time</i>
EI Workshop	337 minutes
Digital Learning Lab	84 minutes
Adult Education Classes/PLATO	69 minutes
Job Interview/Application	58 minutes
Wait in reception area	50 minutes
High Tech Lab	46 minutes
Job Readiness Workshop	45 minutes
Job Search in Career Lab	45 minutes
Assessments	40 minutes
Phone Bank	36 minutes
Group Information Session	29 minutes
Fax/Copier	27 minutes
Meet with Staff/CDF	26 minutes
Talk to Staff informally	23 minutes
Collect One-Stop Information	15 minutes
Youth Employment Application	9 minutes
Pick up/Drop off Materials	7 minutes
<i>Average Overall Customer Time in One-Stop</i>	83 minutes

Single Destination/Activity Customers

The table below lists activities of customers who chose a single ECC destination/activity and then exited the building. The majority (60 percent) of customers were single destination/activity customers.

Table 3:2 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Single Destination/Activity Customer Choices (N=477)	
<i>Destination/Activity</i>	<i>% of Customers who Chose Destination/Activity</i>
Group Information Session	14%
EI Workshop	14%
Job Search in Career Lab	10%
Digital Learning Lab	9%
Meet with Staff/CDF	8%
Adult Education classes	7%
Fax/Copier	7%
Job Interview/Application	6%
High Tech Lab	5%
Collect One-Stop Information	5%
Phone Bank	4%
Youth Employment Application	4%
Pick Up/Drop Off Materials	3%
Wait in reception area	2%
Talk to Staff Informally	1%
Assessments	1%
<i>TOTAL</i>	100%

The following table displays single destination customers' average time on task in minutes for each ECC destination/activity.

Table 3:3 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Average Time in Minutes by Location for Single Destination/Activity Customers (N=477)	
<i>Destination/Activity</i>	<i>Average Destination/Activity Time</i>
EI Workshop	337 minutes
Job Readiness Workshop	135 minutes
Digital Learning Lab	93 minutes
Adult Education Classes	78 minutes
Job Interview/Application	59 minutes
High Tech Lab	56 minutes
Wait in reception area	56 minutes
Job Search in Career Lab	55 minutes
Group Information Session	32 minutes
Assessments	23 minutes
Meet with Staff/CDF	21 minutes
Phone Bank	17 minutes
Fax/Copier	13 minutes
Youth Employment Application	9 minutes
Talk to Staff informally	9 minutes
Pick up/Drop off Materials	8 minutes
Collect One-Stop Information	8 minutes
<i>Average Single Destination/Activity Customer Time in One-Stop</i>	79 minutes

Multiple Destination/Activity Customers

There were a total of 314 multiple destination/activity customers—40 percent of those monitored. The following table displays the average time spent in each destination or activity, as well as the total average time in the ECC. Data were aggregated for each destination/activity.

Table 3:4 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Average Time Spent in Minutes by Location for Multiple Destination/Activity Customers (N=314)		
<i>Destination/Activity</i>	<i>Average Destination Time</i>	<i>Average Total Time in One-Stop</i>
Assessments	120 minutes	140 minutes
Digital Learning Lab	100 minutes	87 minutes
Adult Education Classes	82 minutes	94 minutes
Job Readiness Workshop	75 minutes	136 minutes
Job Interview/Application	65 minutes	70 minutes
Job Search in Career Lab	51 minutes	70 minutes
High Tech Lab	49 minutes	70 minutes
Wait in reception area	43 minutes	78 minutes
Group Information Session	34 minutes	71 minutes
Phone Bank	32 minutes	44 minutes
Meet with Staff/CDF	22 minutes	46 minutes
Talk to Staff informally	14 minutes	59 minutes
Pick up/Drop Off Materials	12 minutes	23 minutes
Fax/Copier	12 minutes	26 minutes
Collect One-Stop Information	9 minutes	29 minutes
Youth Employment Application	8 minutes	9 minutes
<i>Average Multiple Destination Customer Time in One-Stop</i>	88 minutes	

Table 3:5 displays multiple destination/activity customer choices. Frequently cited first destinations/activities included:

- The group information session—32 percent
- Meeting with a Career Development Facilitator (CDF)—19 percent

Popular second destination/activity choices were:

- Conduct a job search—24 percent
- CDF appointment—15 percent
- Group Information Session—13 percent
- Using the Phone Bank—10 percent

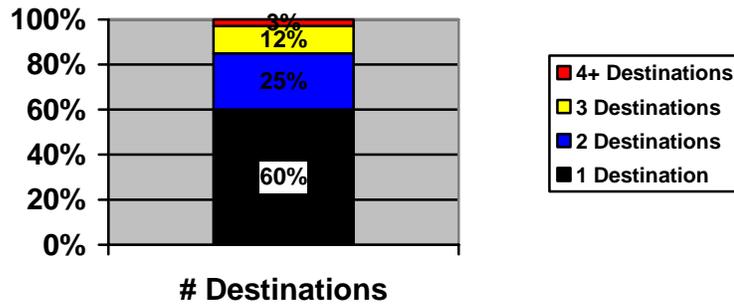
A total of 25 percent of monitored customers went to two ECC service locations and then exited.

Few ECC customers were observed to have 3 or 4 destinations/activities in a single visit—12 percent and 3 percent respectively. The most frequent 3rd and 4th destination was a Career Lab job search—41 percent and 38 percent respectively.

Table 3:5 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Multiple Destination/Activity One-Stop Customer Activities (N=314)

<i>Destination/Activity</i>	<i>1st Destinations (N=314)</i>	<i>2nd Destinations (N=314)</i>	<i>3rd Destinations (N=98)</i>	<i>4th Destinations (N=21)</i>
Group Information Session	32%	13%	1%	0%
Meet with Staff	19%	15%	13%	19%
Job Search in Career Lab	9%	24%	41%	38%
Assessment	6%	6%	0%	0%
Collect One-Stop Information	6%	6%	0%	0%
Digital Learning Lab	5%	2%	5%	0%
Phone Bank	5%	10%	14%	19%
Adult Education Classes	4%	4%	5%	0%
Fax/Copier	4%	8%	14%	19%
High Tech Lab	4%	5%	6%	5%
Pick up/Drop off Materials	2%	2%	0%	0%
Talk to Staff informally	2%	2%	0%	0%
Wait in reception area	1%	1%	0%	0%
Job Readiness Workshop	1%	1%	0%	0%
Job interview/application	1%	1%	0%	0%
TOTAL:	100%	100%	100%	100%

Figure 2:2 Anatomy Flow Analysis: Number of Destinaton/Activities during Eastside Visit



Demographic Differences in ECC Service Use and Mix

Of customers who completed their visit during the three hour observation period, the average total time spent in the One-Stop was 83 minutes. These times differed somewhat by race, gender, and age.

Differences by Race

African American customers spent less time (77 minutes) compared to Whites (148 minutes) and other races (116 minutes). One explanation might be that 27 percent of tracked white customers were in the One-Stop attending the EI workshop, which requires them to be in the One-Stop for six hours on a given day (the workshop is twelve hours spread over two days). Differences by race must be interpreted with caution, remembering that only 6 percent of monitored customers were white and 2 percent were of other races. There were no appreciable differences noted by race in Digital Learning Lab use.

Gender Differences

Females spent more time (91 minutes) compared to males (74 minutes), and customers in their teens and twenties spent less time (72 minutes) than all others (approximately 90 minutes). Female customers visited the ECC Digital Lab far more frequently than males—21 percent and 3 percent respectively.

Age Differences

While job search was the top ranked destination for those in their 40’s and younger, customers age 50 and above visited the Digital Learning Lab far more frequently. We speculate that the older customers are not as computer savvy as younger customers and take advantage of the ECC Digital Learning Lab services at a higher rate.

The top two ECC service unit destinations for customers we defined as ages 20-29 were: job search—27 percent, and the High Tech Lab—7 percent. In contrast, the top two ECC service unit destinations for customers we defined as being 50 or older were: the Digital Lab—21 percent, and job search—11 percent.

CONCLUSIONS FROM ON-SITE OBSERVATIONS IN THE BALTIMORE EASTSIDE CAREER CENTER

The ECC serves a diverse population. Age and gender matter in the self-selection of ECC services. The other-than-staff resources of the ECC are utilized by many customers. We show in Chapter 6 that this accessibility, coupled with what appears to be a high level of customer trust in staff counsel, explains why the ECC is seen as a community asset.

CHAPTER 6

PRE- AND POST- CUSTOMER SURVEY AND EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS SURVEY FINDINGS

CUSTOMER SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

Self-administered Surveys of ECC Customers

The pre- ECC service delivery survey was conducted before the Group Information Sessions. The brief questionnaire was given to each member of the Group Session with an announcement that completion was voluntary. Questions included why a person came to the ECC, what they expected to result from their visit, and how they thought the ECC could help them.

The post- ECC service delivery survey was conducted just prior to a customer's exit, seeking to determine their satisfaction with the ECC services received, whether they planned to return to the ECC, and what additional services they want.

A total of 836 customers completed the pre- survey, and 803 customers completed the post- survey.

Pre- Survey Respondent Demographics

The gender balance of first-time ECC customer respondents to the pre- survey is 51 percent women and 49 percent men. The average age of the respondents is 32 years, ranging from 16 to 72 years of age. Customers under the age of 30 are in the majority— 51 percent, with an additional 39 percent between 30-49 years old and 10 percent ages 50 and above.

Ninety-four percent of the pre- survey respondents are African American, 4 percent are White, and 2 percent are other races. Among the pre- survey respondents, 36 percent lacked a high school diploma or GED certificate. The same percentage of respondents had obtained their diploma or GED. Only 5 percent had any type of post-secondary degree. Approximately 18 percent of the respondents to the pre- survey had attended college but did not have a degree, while an additional 5 percent had received some type of technical training after high school.

Figure 2:3 Pre-Survey Customer Demographics by Gender

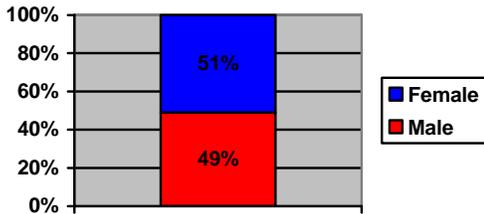


Figure 2:4 Pre-Survey Customer Demographics by Race

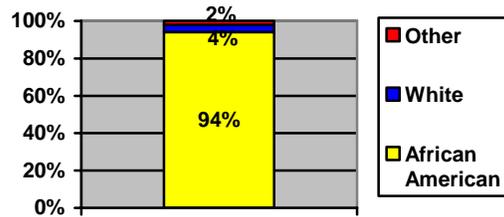


Figure 2:5 Pre-Survey Customer Demographics by Age

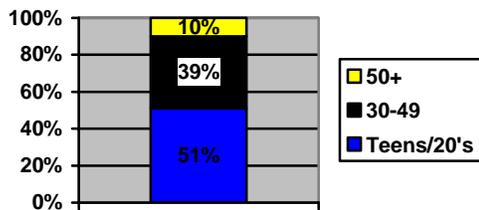
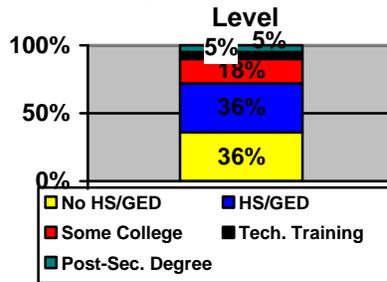


Figure 2:6 Pre-Survey Customer Demographics by Education Level



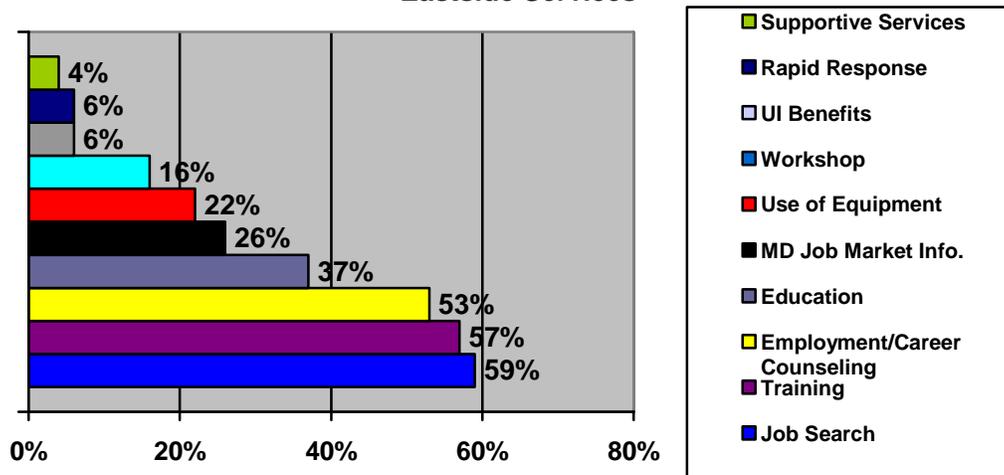
Pre-Survey Results

Customer Expectations about ECC Services

Prior to a first ECC visit the majority of individual customers expected assistance with their job search—59 percent, information about training—57 percent, and employment/career counseling—53 percent. Fewer expected assistance with education—37 percent, information about the regional job market—26 percent, the use of ECC office equipment—26 percent, or to attend a workshop—16 percent. Six percent or fewer expected information about unemployment benefits, Rapid Response activities or support services.

Approximately 10 percent of the pre- survey respondents listed an expectation that was not predefined on the survey instrument. Of those respondents, the most frequently cited expectations were the use of the Digital Learning Lab—43 percent, and financial aid—43 percent. Other expectations included wanting information about small business resource availability, ex-offender programs, and childcare resources.

Figure 2:7 Pre Survey Customer Expectations Regarding Eastside Services



Customer Expectations About Interaction With ECC Staff

When asked what they expected from the ECC staff, the majority—53 percent—wanted staff to help them get a job or a better job. Other frequently mentioned customer expectations from ECC staff included assistance with education—27 percent, and help with training—28 percent.

We note that customer expectations about ECC services align with their expectations about interaction with ECC staff. Most closely aligned was the expectation about job search assistance, the most frequently cited expectation both in terms of service—59 percent, and ECC staff assistance—53 percent. Customers overwhelmingly agreed or strongly agreed that the ECC would help them fulfill their personal goals—87 percent.

Figure 2:8 Pre Survey Customer Expectations Regarding Staff Assistance

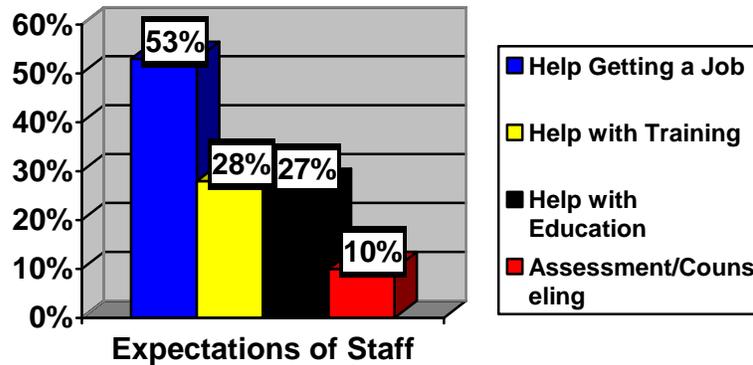
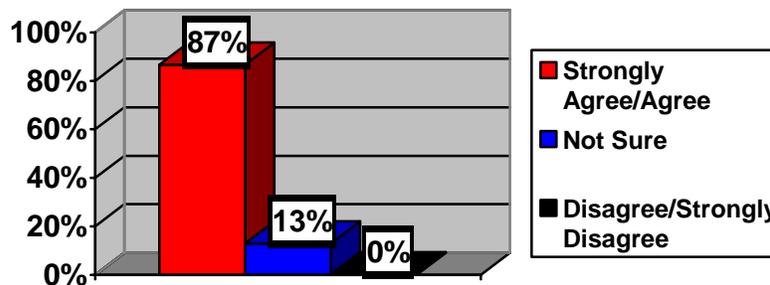


Figure 2:9 Pre Survey Customers' Expectations that Eastside Will Help Fulfill Goals



The Demographics of Pre- Survey Responses

Gender Differences

We found some interesting gender-based differences in ECC service expectations. First, training is an expressed expectation of 62 percent of women respondents, but only 52 of men who completed the pre- survey instrument. This is also reflected in what customers expected from ECC staff—35 percent of women completing the pre- survey expected staff assistance with training versus 22 percent of males. The women were more likely than the men to have at least some college—27 percent versus 18 percent. The percentage of females and males lacking a high school diploma/GED was similar.

There are many more male ex-offenders—38 percent versus 9 percent of the women who completed the pre- survey instrument. Twenty-two percent of female respondents report receiving public assistance versus 7 percent for males. Eight percent of the male respondents are veterans. There were no reported female veterans.

Age Differences

Older customers are more likely than customers under 30 years to have obtained a High School diploma or above—80 percent versus 55 percent respectively. Customer interest in obtaining a GED is highest among respondents in their teens/20's—50 percent, but declined considerably among customers in their 30's/40's—29 percent, or ages 50 and older—15 percent.

Customers who are 30 years old or above reported higher interest than customers in their teens and 20's in the use of ECC resource equipment (32 percent), attending workshops (27 percent), and utilizing the job search (62 percent).

The top 3 expectations of ECC staff expressed by respondents in all age categories is help from ECC staff in finding a job, receiving further education, and training. The only difference noted by age is wanting staff assistance with education, which was more frequently expected by customers in their teens/20's (42 percent) than customers in their 30's/40's (28 percent) or 50+ (18 percent). These responses are similar to customer interest in education responses by age group.

A large majority, between 81 percent and 86 percent, of all age groups had high expectations that the ECC would help them achieve their goal(s). However, customers aged 50 and above reported that they were unsure about this statement at a slightly higher rate (19 percent) than younger customers (13 percent). We speculate that this doubt is tied to older customers being less confident about their prospects in the local job market.

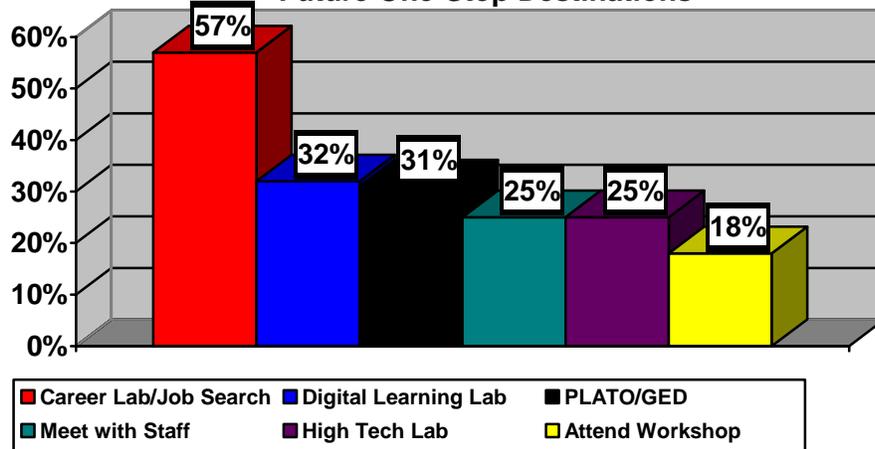
Ex-offenders were more likely to be in their 30's/40's (30 percent of the pre-survey respondents in this age category) than in their teens/20's (20 percent) or 50+ (16 percent). The oldest respondents self-define themselves as disabled at a higher rate (12 percent) than those in their 30's/40's (8 percent) or teens/20's (3 percent).

Post-Survey Results

Prior to ECC exit customers were asked to complete a post-survey instrument. The large majority of respondents reported being satisfied with their experiences—94 percent. Only 0.5 percent reported any level of dissatisfaction. A total of 91 percent reported that the ECC had delivered the services they expected to receive, 87 percent said they knew which services would be helpful to them, and 90 percent plan to return for additional ECC services. Clearly, ECC customers are optimistic that they will receive continuing help from the ECC.

When asked how they would spend their time on a return visit, the most popular answer is the Career Lab, cited by 57 percent of respondents. The other two most frequently cited destinations are the Digital Learning Lab (32 percent) and the PLATO Lab for GED instruction (31 percent). Fewer respondents chose meeting with an ECC staff member (25 percent), High Tech Lab (25 percent), or attending a workshop (18 percent). Respondents were able to choose more than one answer.

Figure 3:1 Post Survey Customers' Most Frequent Future One-Stop Destinations

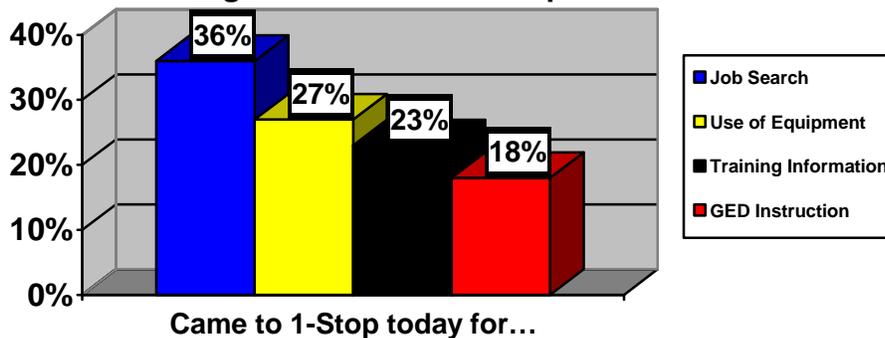


Exit Interviews

In addition to the post-survey completed by exiting respondents, interviews were conducted with 38 exiting customers using alternating questionnaire formats. Customer participation was voluntary, and a small incentive (chocolate bar) was offered. The interviews lasted an average of 10 minutes.

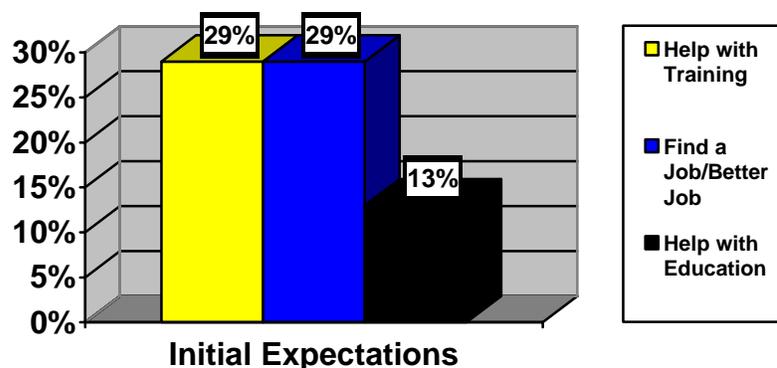
Common information collected using the two instruments was aggregated. The most frequently cited reason for an ECC customer's visit was to carry out a self-service job search (36 percent). Other popular destinations included use of ECC office equipment (27 percent), to get information about training (23 percent), and GED instruction (18 percent).

Figure 3:2 Exit Survey Customer Reasons for Coming to Eastside One-Stop Career Center



When asked what they expected prior to their first ECC visit, an equal number (29 percent) expected assistance in finding a job/better job and training information, while 13 percent expected help in furthering their education.

Figure 3:3 Exit Survey Customer First Reason for Coming to Eastside One-Stop Career Center



Three out of four of the customers interviewed reported having received the services expected. Of those whose expectations had not been met, all said that they were still engaged in service, but expected to achieve their goal.

An equal number of respondents either drove or walked to the ECC (41 percent); 18 percent had taken public transportation. It took the majority of those interviewed (68 percent) less than 15 minutes to get to the ECC. Only 5 percent commuted more than 30 minutes. No one reported any problems getting to the ECC location. On average, respondents spent 81 minutes at the ECC during their visit. They reported spending most of their time in the Career Lab (56 percent), the Digital Learning Lab (38 percent), and in the PLATO Lab (6 percent).

A total of 91 percent of the ECC customers interviewed reported satisfaction with their visit that day. They were also satisfied with the politeness of staff (100 percent), the ability of staff to help them (91 percent), ECC hours (100 percent), the location (100 percent), and the available resources (96 percent). A total of 96 percent knew where to go in the building to access resources and the same number found it easy to get around the building. The majority (91 percent) have recommended the ECC to their family/friends.

The interviewed ECC customers were somewhat less satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait for services (77 percent), but overall respondents felt that they got what they expected from their visit (81 percent).

Importance of Services

When asked about the *importance of services* to them personally (even if they had not yet personally used the service), the top choices indicated as “Somewhat Important” or “Important” included educational opportunities (94 percent), assessment of skills/abilities (88 percent), training (88percent), job resources/services (88 percent), career exploration (88 percent), and job preparation workshops (81 percent).

Helpfulness of Services

When asked about the *helpfulness of services* that they had received, the results were similar but somewhat lower. As was the case with the importance of services, the top choice indicated as “Somewhat Helpful”, “Helpful”, or “Very Helpful” was educational opportunities (80 percent), followed by job resources/services (75 percent), Career Lab job bank (75 percent), and career exploration (75 percent).

Most services ranked higher in terms of respondents’ opinion of their overall *importance* versus their personal *helpfulness*. Many ECC services viewed as important have not necessarily been used by customers personally. It is important to recognize the small sample size when interpreting these results.

Table 3:6 Exit Interview Respondents Opinions on Eastside One-Stop Career Center Services (N=16)

Service	Somewhat Important/Important (even if they haven’t used the service)	Somewhat to Very Helpful	Have Not Used
Job Resources/Services	88%	75%	25%
Career Lab Job Bank	69%	75%	25%
Career Exploration	88%	75%	25%
Job Training Assistance	88%	69%	31%
Job Preparation Workshops	81%	69%	25%
Education Opportunities	94%	80%	20%
Supportive Services	50%	50%	44%
Meet individually with staff	75%	69%	25%
EI Workshop	60%	37%	63%
Assessments	88%	69%	31%
Services for Special Populations	63%	20%	80%

TWO ECC CUSTOMER CASE STUDIES

Customer One

A 38 year old female customer came to the ECC after she had been laid off from the Baltimore City Public School System. She had been employed as a special education aide, but due to budget cuts and a large reduction in force, she lost her position. After this, she worked for a year as a contractual employee assisting disabled students, but her contract was not renewed.

At this point she came to the ECC for the Early Intervention Workshop. She had also heard about Baltimore's One-Stop System from friends who had used services. Initially she expected to get another job through ECC services. She wanted to continue to work with children. After several job searches in the Career Lab and completing coursework in the Digital Learning Lab, she decided that she was interested in training services.

She applied to receive an Individual Training Account voucher and her application was accepted. She began courses in childhood development through a program offered at Baltimore City Community College in August 2003 and completed training in December 2003. She reported being very pleased with the assistance she received from her Career Development Facilitator (CDF) as well as her community college teachers. She thoroughly enjoyed attending classes. High school had been difficult for her and she didn't feel successful. Finally, she felt confident in an academic setting.

After she received her certificate in childhood development, she started her own home daycare business. However, because she was not on the lease of her building, she couldn't continue her business due to licensing regulations. She has recently returned to Eastside for job searches and plans to stay in the childcare field. She feels confident that she will obtain a good paying job now that she has her childhood development certificate, and she believes that she will find a job soon.

Customer Two

A female customer in her late 50's came to the ECC after she was laid off from a large textile company. Of Greek descent, she worked in the textile industry for 40 years after coming to the United States, although she had always dreamed of attending school and getting her high school diploma.

After attending a Rapid Response event at the ECC in September 2002, she registered for One-Stop services and performed numerous job searches without success. She then decided to pursue her education, beginning first with pre-GED, then GED classes. Her CDF also helped her enroll in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class to improve her communication skills, and she was referred to other agencies for various support services.

She completed her class work in August 2004 and graduated with her high school diploma. Her CDF proudly attended the graduation ceremony and presented her with a diploma written in Greek. The customer still comes to the ECC and is working to complete her coursework in the Digital Learning Lab, after which time she will begin another job search. She hopes one day to be a receptionist.

She has recommended the ECC to both family members and friends. She feels strongly that the ECC is able to help anyone who is willing to learn and work. She started her GED classes with two friends, but both dropped out before completing the coursework. She is amazed that the services are offered free of charge and of how supportive the staff has been of her efforts.

ECC STAFF FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

A focus group was conducted with seven ECC staff members. A wide range of job titles were represented, included Assessment Facilitator, Metro-Tech Coordinator, WIA Supervisor, GED Instructor, Office Assistant, Career Development Facilitator, Business Services Representative, and Greeter. The tenure of this group ranged from 1 to 18 years. The session lasted for approximately 2 ½ hours and was facilitated by a staff member from MOED. The results are summarized below. Please note that many changes have occurred at Eastside since the focus group was conducted; however, the comments summarized below reflect staff attitudes during the *Anatomy* project data collection period.

Examples of How the ECC has Evolved/changed

Changes have been observed in customer flow since the ECC became known as a One-Stop Career Center under WIA in 2000. Group information sessions used to be offered 3 days per week, but they have been reduced to two days per week. Many staff reported they have additional responsibilities due to the loss of several positions necessitated by budget cuts. The remaining staff must share the workload that resulted. However, many noted that the coordination of services had improved greatly and that they felt more comfortable in their multiple roles.

Positive changes have been observed with the Career Development Facilitators (CDFs); it was noted that they have become more professional when assisting customers as a result of staff development activities. In addition, the ECC staff of two CDFs has increased to four, which has helped with large number of customers on the CDF caseloads.

ECC staff reported that customers are much more independent than they were under JTPA. They can self-direct many of their activities with minimal help, which frees staff to provide more assistance to customers who need it. However, staff is also available to assist customers as they become more self-sufficient.

It was difficult to change customers' mindset of how activities were conducted under JTPA (lots of "hand holding") to WIA (self-sufficiency). For instance, before WIA implementation, only staff could access the Job Bank. When CareerNet was developed under WIA, customers were expected to access employment opportunities independently.

Difficulties arise when customers want instant gratification. Many expect to walk into the ECC and receive a job that day. Others think they can simply sign up to begin a training class and start immediately. Many do not have the patience or commitment to do what it takes to obtain successful employment. ECC staff must work with customers and attempt to change their attitudes. They also assist customers in the development of concrete and achievable goals.

The expansion of technology throughout the ECC was noted. New computers, updated software, the creation of the Digital Learning Lab, and the introduction of the new Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) system have helped with operations a great deal. Technology has also assisted them in their work and communication with partner agencies. While at times it has been a challenge to master the new technology, particularly the new MWE System, all agreed that ultimately these changes will help them do their job better and more efficiently.

ECC Business Services staff reports that working with employers has become easier. Operations in the Business Services Unit have become more organized and streamlined, and the contracting process has been simplified for business customers.

Job Duties/Training/Feedback

Cross-training has taken place at ECC, and staff can assist customers in ways not necessarily related to their specific job functions. All reported that they felt part of a team and that their suggestions for improvement have been welcomed by management. Several staff began as One-Stop customers. As they have progressed through the system, obtained employment, and been promoted through the years, they have a clear understanding of ECC operations and how customers utilize services.

Everyone considers themselves to be front line staff when it comes to assisting customers. ECC staff regards one another as family. They have worked hard to become viewed as a seamless organization. There are common goals, and all staff can assist all customers. In Business Services, there is more frequent interaction between staff and employers than in years past. Satisfaction was expressed regarding the professional atmosphere of the One-Stop facility itself and the level of cooperation between staff members.

All CDFs have received their Global Career Development Facilitator certificates. Most CDFs learned their current job duties through informal, on the job training. Many noted that it takes time to learn how to effectively deal with the public and that nothing but real life experiences can prepare you for this aspect of the job.

Regarding feedback on their performance, staff is given an annual evaluation from their supervisors. In addition, continuous customer satisfaction data is collected and distributed. Employee satisfaction has not been measured to date.

Employees have received agency based training on the MWE system. In addition, staff cross train one another within the ECC, a process they describe as “constant”. Changes occur daily and staff must communicate and coordinate with one another to keep themselves up to date.

Despite cross-training, challenges remain in that some employees can only work with certain customers due to funding issues (e.g., Veterans). However, all staff makes a diligent effort to assist all customers in the ECC, regardless of their status, and they try to make these types of issues “invisible” to the customer.³⁰ Staff report that they are aware of the full range of services offered through Baltimore’s One-Stop Career Center Network and know how to serve specific customer populations (e.g., youth, older workers, disabled). Supervisors are responsible for providing this information to their staff as well as keeping them up to date on changes.

Employees have also received training in working with the disabled, customer service, various software products, Spanish, adult literacy, and public speaking. As one staff member noted, there are numerous opportunities for staff development and despite budget shortfalls, funds are found to provide these services to staff. In addition, staff attends Maryland’s annual workforce development conference.

ECC Staff Impressions of Most Frequently Sought Services and ECC Customer Expectations

When asked what types of services their customers most frequently wanted, it was nearly unanimous that most customers are seeking immediate employment. After completing a job search and working with staff, many customers realize they need additional skills and are often interested in obtaining their GED, receiving training, or attending a workshop.

Regarding expectations, a problem that is often encountered with job seeking customers is that they expect instant gratification. Even customers with limited skills want to walk away with a high paying, desirable job, and many express frustration or unwillingness to do what it takes to better themselves for a career versus simply getting a job. Many customers with this attitude are said to become angry and disconnect from the One-Stop without receiving additional services. The challenge of getting a customer to understand and accept what is needed to achieve their goal is the first critical step of the process. If the customer returns after this step, it is believed that they have a good chance to succeed.

³⁰ The ECC staff has become more integrated since the focus group. For instance, Veterans staff is now able to assist Core customers in the Career Lab.

ECC Staff Views About Guidance Provided to Customers

A wide range of guidance is provided to customers. They are treated as individuals, and given the level of assistance necessary. Some staff felt the need to act like a parent and thoroughly understand the person and their problems before proceeding. The next step is attempting to get the customer to a certain level of self-sufficiency versus “hand holding”. There is a great deal of follow-up provided to customers, at all tiers of service. Academic and career counseling is also provided. Staff ensures that customers understand the range of services that are available to them and the steps they must take to achieve their goal(s).

At times, customers are referred off-site for certain services. These usually include assistance with housing, social services, legal aid, child support, disability/supportive services, community colleges for literacy programs, and financial aid. It is estimated that approximately half of all Eastside customers are referred out for these types of services. CDFs and other staff are well aware of these resources and how to refer their customers to them.

Despite the term “self-service”, all customers receive staff assistance in one form or another. For instance, the Career Lab is staffed to help customers with their job search. The Digital Learning Lab has a full-time technology instructor, even though many students progress through self-directed modules. Some customers need more assistance than others, especially those who aren’t comfortable with computers.

When asked if they had a sense of when a customer was about to disconnect from the system without achieving their goal, many said yes. Some customers express frustration that things don’t happen immediately and they leave the center. For instance, due to large caseloads, customers may be required to wait a number of days for an appointment to meet with a CDF. Some of these customers never return for their appointment, despite a phone call reminder the day before. Others will look for a job in the Career Lab once, but if they don’t find something immediately they become discouraged and leave the center. Pregnancy and childcare related issues cause many young women to disconnect. The employment challenges that ex-offenders face cause a number of these customers to disconnect.

Others lose motivation because of the time required to achieve their goal. Many walk into the One-Stop with a goal of training for a certain type of career. However, if they lack the necessary basic skills, they may be required to obtain their GED or take a skills brush up class before they can be considered for training services. Others lack work readiness skills and may be required to take workshops before they can successfully compete in the job market, while others lack computer skills and may have to attend the Digital Learning Lab to achieve computer literacy and knowledge of basic software. All of these activities take time, and if a customer walks in the door expecting a job that day or to begin training immediately, they become frustrated and disconnect.

Some customers have unrealistic expectations regarding the type of job they want, primarily one that is high paying with desirable hours. They are unwilling to consider jobs that may have a lower salary, or that require shift work or weekend hours. They don't understand the need to establish a reliable work history before they are able to progress in a career. This is particularly true for certain populations, for instance, ex-offenders and those with little or no work experience.

When asked what ECC staff could do to keep customers better connected, one response was to "motivate them the minute they walk in the door" by inviting them to activities such as job fairs and workshops. In addition, many establish a personal relationship with their customers, making them more likely to return for service.

One staff member offered small incentives such as raffle tickets to keep customers coming. Developing a relationship and trust goes a long way in keeping customers engaged. In addition, if customers better understood the efforts staff takes on their behalf to help them achieve, they might feel more vested in the process. In other words, staff should let customers know how hard they're working to help them.

While there are a number of follow-up attempts made with customers, some staff felt that home visits might be more effective than a phone call or letter. Other suggestions included increasing community outreach efforts, becoming more involved with the school system through PTA meetings, and additional outreach to faith based organizations.

When asked what were the most frequently encountered compliments staff have received from customers, responses included "taking the time to solve problems", "a modern, professional atmosphere inside the building", and "the high level of customer service". Because customers receive help in a timely manner they consider the One-Stop different from their encounters with other government agencies.

The most frequently encountered complaints ranged from "no classroom space available on certain days", "not enough staff to address the traffic flow of customers", and "difficult to reach staff by telephone".

When asked about issues that needed to be addressed to better serve their customers, many ECC staff report a need for additional resources including more books for adult education classes, more customer service training for staff, additional funding for customer training programs, and more help for customers with barriers to employment (e.g., housing, clothing, childcare, substance abuse).

Despite limited funding, ECC staff felt that they have a positive impact on their customers, the neighborhood, and the community. They are extremely proud of the work that they do and feel that they are doing everything within their capacity to assist customers reach their goals.

Finally, ECC staff was asked about customer characteristics. Customers likely to succeed were reported to have determination, a willingness to go through the process, an ability to help themselves, and patience. Customers most likely to disconnect from the process were those who expected immediate results, those with unrealistic expectations, and those easily frustrated by the process.

FINDINGS FROM A FOLDER AUDIT OF WIA *INTENSIVE* AND *TRAINING* CUSTOMERS

A folder audit was conducted of registered WIA customers defined as *Intensive* or *Training* who had disconnected from the ECC without a favorable outcome. Customer registration dates for those audited are between January 2000 and September 2004. At the time of audit, these customers were included in an ECC “call back” category and are being contacted by the Follow-Up Unit.

Our examination of the folders revealed that a number of these ECC customers had moved or had their phone disconnected, leaving no contact information. When this occurs, the only staff option available is to check the individual’s Maryland UI wage record for employment status and possible employer contact information. When possible, ECC staff confirms the employment status with the employer and exits the individual from WIA.

Audit data collection took place manually; the Jacob France Institute researcher extracted pertinent data from customer service record folders and entered the information into a log. Data were then coded and entered into a spreadsheet for analysis.

Circuit Breaker Demographics

A random sample of 135 circuit breaker (disconnected from the ECC) customers was examined. Folders are filed alphabetically by the customer’s last name. Depending on the total number of folders in each letter designation, between 5 and 10 records were randomly selected for inclusion. Customer ages ranged from 22 to 65 with an average age of 39. A total of 23 percent were in their 20’s, 31 percent in their 30’s, 26 percent in their 40’s, and 20 percent ages 50 or older.

The large majority of audited ECC customers (86 percent) were African American, while 11 percent were White, and 3 percent were other races. More customers were men (64 percent) than women (36 percent). A total of 31 percent lacked a high school diploma. Only 11 percent reported any post-secondary education.

A total of 24 percent of the disconnected customers were ex-offenders. Other special populations included those receiving public assistance (7 percent), those who speak English as a second language (7 percent), and veterans (6 percent).

A total of 51 percent of the sample was defined in the audited records as unemployed. Of these individuals, 20 percent had been so for 0-2 months, 35 percent for 2-6 months, 23 percent for 6-12 months, and 22 percent for more than 12 months. When asked how many consecutive months they had worked in the past two years, an average

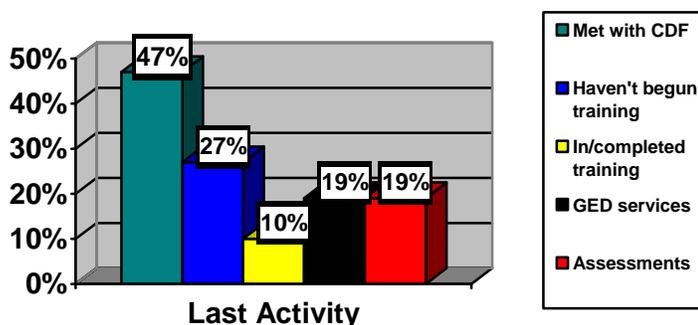
of 10.5 months was reported. Customers averaged 3 job interviews in the past six months and the large majority (83 percent) reported that they had no job offers.

Circuit Breaker Activities

Service record notations were coded in a manner so that common ECC activities could be examined. A total of 47 percent of customers' last contact with the ECC before "disconnecting" was meeting with their Career Development Facilitator (CDF). Another common final activity was training services. A total of 27 percent disconnected from the ECC without formally beginning training, while an additional 10 percent lost contact either during or after training. Finally, disconnects occurred while customers were involved in GED services (19 percent) or participating in assessments (19 percent).

Folders were also coded for disconnect reasons, when cited by the customer's CDF. The majority (64 percent) simply could not be reached. They had either moved (8 percent), had their phone disconnected (12 percent), or had not responded to multiple contacts both by phone and mail (44 percent). Other reasons included multiple no-shows for appointments (8 percent), and the need for supportive services regarding childcare, medical issues, or incarceration (8 percent).

Figure 4:1 Circuit Breaker Customers' Last Activities



A total of 47 percent of these disconnected customers registered and disconnected within the same month. The remaining 53 percent received services for an average of 5.2 months, ranging from 2 to 18 months. Of those with one month or less of contact with the ECC, the majority (65 percent) met with their CDF, then disconnected. Only 16 percent of this group continued on to the assessment phase.

Of customers with two or more months of service, 24 percent disconnected after meeting with their CDF, 21 percent after they had received assessment(s), and 29 percent were preparing to begin a training program prior to disconnecting.

As for activities, we speculate that because 47 percent of disconnected customers registered for WI A and disconnected from ECC services in the same month these customers may lack the motivation needed to pursue their goal(s). CDFs attempt

numerous contacts both by phone and mail to reconnect these lost customers to ECC services, but the majority of this sample (64 percent) could not be reached or did not respond to contact attempts.

A Comparison of Disconnected ECC Customers and Successful WIA Exiters

Circuit Breaker demographics were compared to a cohort of WIA Adult *Intensive* and *Training* customers who are defined as MOED successful exiters.³¹

For a number of reasons, this comparison should be interpreted with caution. First, it is important to note that the customer time coverage is not the same for the two groups. The Circuit Breaker folder registration dates spanned a longer time period (January 2000 through September 2004) than the WIA exit dates (October 2000 through June 2002). In addition, the Circuit Breaker analysis was specifically for ECC customers. Successful WIA exiters came from all four MOED One-Stops. Given available data, this was the best practical approximation of a comparison between these two groups.

Successful WIA exiters were more likely to be women (59 percent) than men (41 percent). This contrasts with the circuit breaker population, which had a higher percentage of men (64 percent) than women (36 percent). More than 80 percent of both groups is African American.

Successful WIA exiters are a bit younger (mean age 36 years) than circuit breakers (mean age 39 years). There is a higher percentage of WIA exiting customers in their 20's (31 percent) than circuit breaker customers (23 percent).

Although each group has a similar percentage who had obtained their high school diploma or GED (69 percent circuit breakers and 71 percent successful WIA exiters), more circuit breakers were high school dropouts (31 percent) than successful WIA exiters (19 percent). A total of 19 percent of successful WIA exiters reported some type of post-secondary education versus 11 percent of circuit breakers.

There is a higher percentage of ex-offenders (24 percent) in the circuit breaker population compared to successful WIA exiters (6 percent). There are also more veterans (6 percent circuit breakers and 1 percent successful WIA exiters), and customers who speak English as a second language (7 percent circuit breakers and 1.5 percent successful WIA exiters). Fewer circuit breakers report receiving public assistance (7 percent) versus successful WIA exiters (12 percent).

³¹ WIA Tier Study, Phase I and II, Customer Flow and Demographics, D. Safley, Mayor's Office of Employment Development, City of Baltimore, 2002 and 2003.

Figure 4:2 WIA Exiters and Circuit Breaker Customers, Comparison by Gender

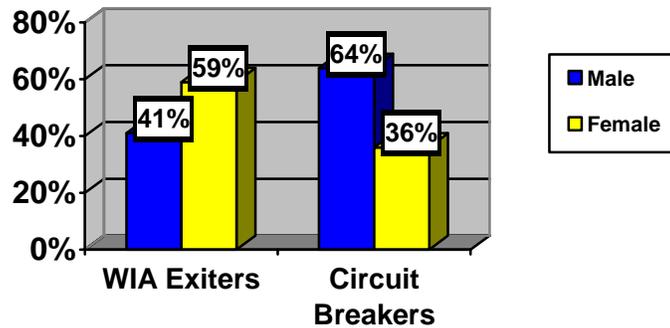
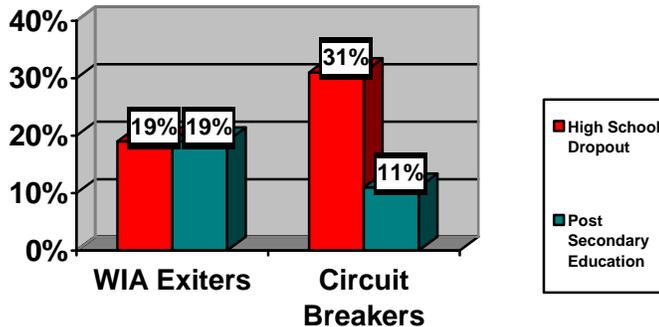


Figure 4:3 WIA Exiters and Circuit Breaker Customers, Comparison by Education Level



There are notable differences between Circuit Breaker customers and successful WIA exiters. There is a larger percentage of disconnected customers without a high school diploma or GED credential (31 percent) than among successful WIA exiters (19 percent). In addition, 24 percent of the Circuit Breaker file customers self-reported that they were ex-offenders, versus 6 percent of successful WIA exiters. Finally, Circuit Breaker customers were more likely to be men (64 percent) than were successful WIA exiters (41 percent).

ECC CUSTOMER EARNINGS ANALYSIS

Maryland UI Wage Records and TRADE Wage Data (MD, PA, DE, DC, VA, NJ, WV, OH)

The ECC cohort that was matched against the wage record data included:

- Self-Directed, non-WIA registered Core customers
- Staff-Assisted WIA registered Core customers
- WIA registered intensive and training “Circuit Breaker” customers

These ECC customers were matched against the Maryland UI wage records and the surrounding states TRADE wage records. TRADE data includes the states of Delaware, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.).

Core customers were extracted from the MOED data system and consisted of first time customers who registered with the Baltimore One-Stop system between the dates of 10/1/2000 and 6/30/2002. There were a total of 4,038 Self-Directed Core customers and 542 Staff-Assisted WIA Core customers.

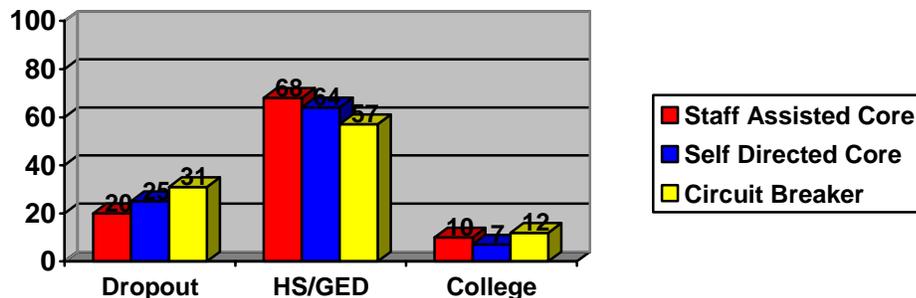
Circuit Breaker customer registration dates ranged from 2000 to 2004. Because the circuit breaker cohort was created from a random, manual audit of customer folders, the registration dates are not identical to the MOED extracted Core cohort. This fact must be considered when interpreting the data. However, the criterion for measurement is the same; median earnings for the three groups were examined 4 quarters prior and 4 quarters following their One-Stop registration date. The percentage of customers employed each quarter was also reviewed.

A total of 135 circuit breaker customers were included in the analysis. The sample was randomly selected from Eastside’s “Call Back” strategy customers, which include WIA registered intensive and training customers who disconnected from the One-Stop without a favorable outcome.

When the cohorts were compared by educational level, the circuit breaker file had a slightly higher percentage of customers with a college education (12 percent) than the self-directed core (7 percent) and staff-assisted core (10 percent) customers. However, the circuit breaker file had the largest percentage of high school dropouts (31 percent) compared to self-directed core (25 percent) and staff-assisted core (20 percent) customers.

More self-directed core (64 percent) and staff-assisted core (68 percent) customers had their high school diploma or GED than circuit breakers (57 percent). In aggregate figures, 78 percent of staff-assisted core customers had a high school degree/GED or above, compared to 71 percent of self-directed core customers and 69 percent of circuit breaker customers.

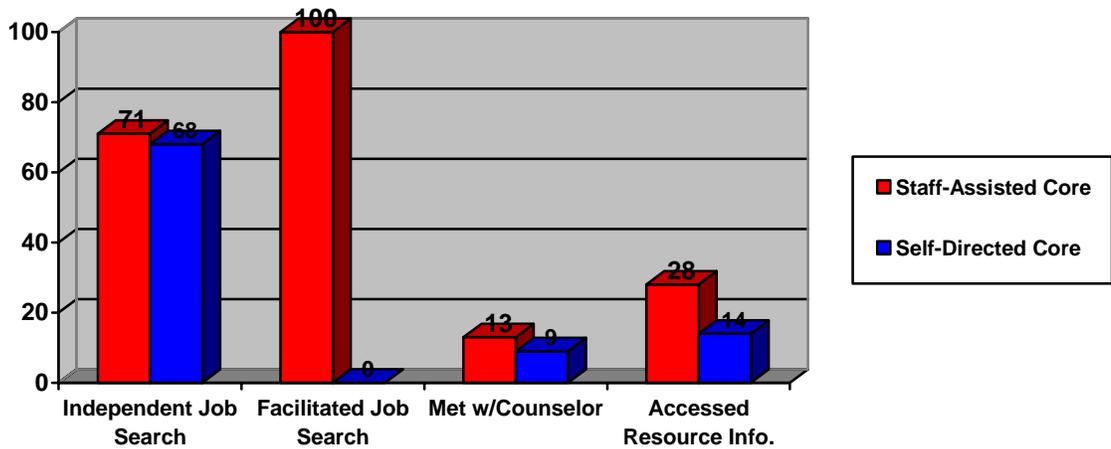
Figure 4:4 Education Levels of Self-Directed/Staff-Assisted Core and Circuit Breaker Customers



In regards to services, staff-assisted core customers were slightly more likely to perform an independent job search (71 percent) and meet with a Career Development Facilitator (13 percent) than self-directed core customers, where 68 percent performed an independent job search and 9 percent met with a Career Development Facilitator (some core customers met with a staff member but never registered in WIA). All staff-assisted core customers took part in a staff facilitated job search activity, a service not available to self-directed core customers.

Staff-assisted core customers were twice as likely to access resource information (28 percent) than self-directed core customers (14 percent). Staff-assisted core customers were also more likely to complete an employment application (4 percent) than self-directed core customers (1 percent). In both cohorts, 2 percent attended workshops.

Figure 4:5 Services Accessed by Self-Directed and Staff-Assisted Core Customers



TRADE data alone did not provide sufficient matches for meaningful quarterly analyses. A total of 209 customers, or 4.5 percent of all records were found at some point in the TRADE data (173 records/4.3 percent of Self-Directed Core cohort, 25 records/4.6 percent of Staff-Assisted Core cohort, and 11 records/8.1 percent of Circuit Breaker sample). Consequently, these earnings were merged with Maryland UI wage record matches for a more complete analysis. We are not surprised that the highest number of out of state workers is found in Virginia UI wage records, given Maryland’s proximity to the state.

Table 4:1 TRADE Data Surrounding State Wage Matches

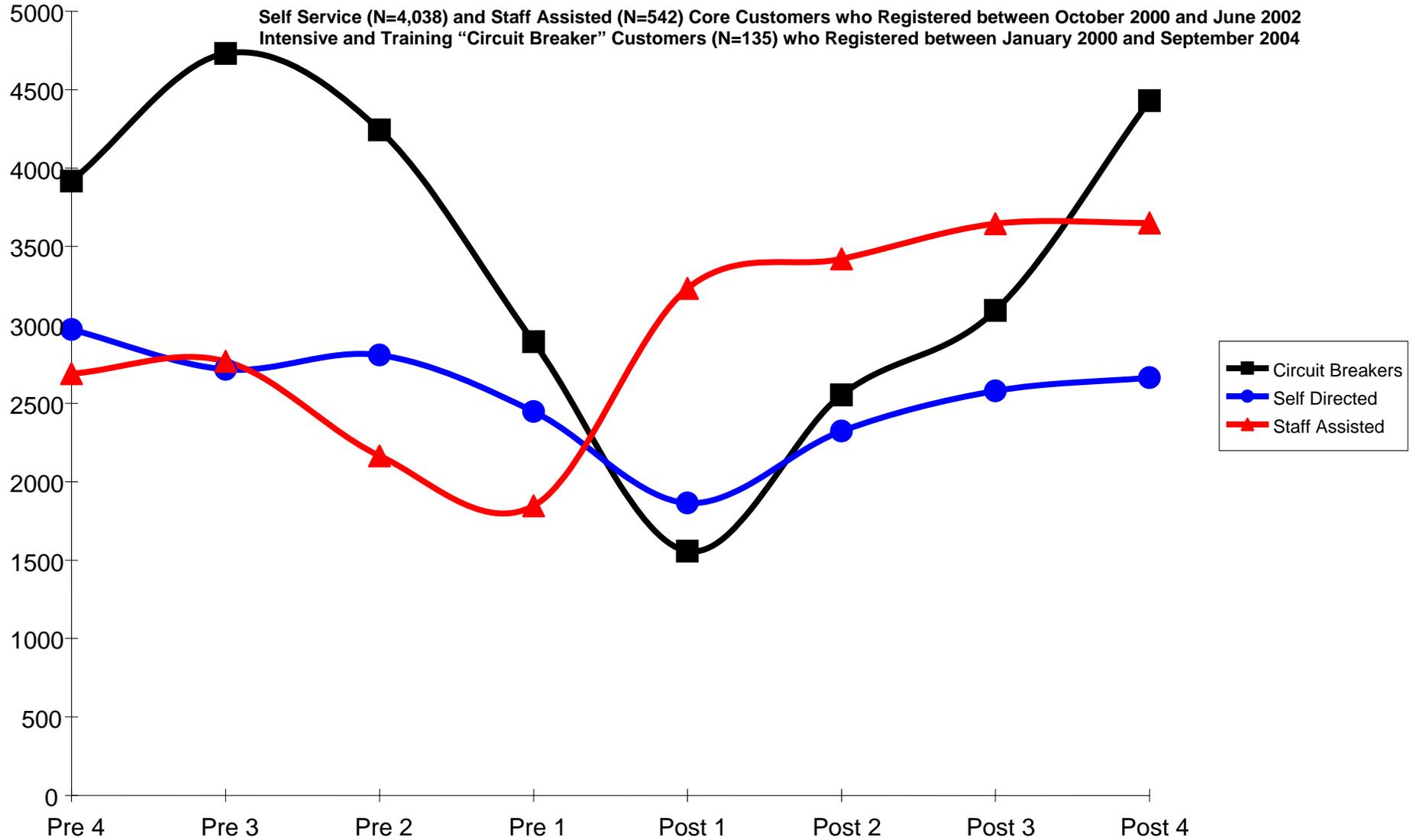
<i>Eastside Customer</i>	<i>Total N</i>	<i>TRADE N</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% DC</i>	<i>% DE</i>	<i>% NJ</i>	<i>% OH</i>	<i>% PA</i>	<i>% VA</i>	<i>% WV</i>
Self-Directed Core	4,038	173	4.30%	15%	8%	14%	0%	20%	34%	9%
Staff-Assisted Core	542	25	4.60%	8%	8%	28%	8%	20%	24%	4%
Circuit Breaker	135	11	8.10%	27%	9%	9%	0%	9%	46%	0%

Wage Record Comparisons

A look back at the year prior to the defined ECC customer registration date tells a different story than a look forward one year from those dates:

- *Figure 4:7* shows no more than a seven percentage point difference among the three defined customer types based on each group's distribution across the number of quarters with reported earnings during the year before ECC registration. Possibilities range from no earnings in any of the four quarters, through some earnings in one, two or three of these quarters, to earnings reported in each of the four reference quarters.
- *Figure 4:7* also shows as much as a twenty-two percentage point difference among the defined customer types based on each group's distribution across the number of quarters with reported earnings during the year after ECC registration.
- The largest post-registration differences among the defined customer groups appear in the 'no reported earnings in any of the four quarters' and 'some reported earnings in each of the four reference quarters' categories.
- One-third of the customers defined as *disconnected* from continued participation in One-Stop services had no reported earnings in any of the four post-registration quarters observed, while only twelve percent of those defined as *staff assisted* had no reported post-registration earnings.
- Forty-five percent of the customers defined as *staff assisted* had some reported earnings amount in each of the four post-registration quarters, which contrasts favorably with the thirty-four percent and twenty-seven percent calculations for the *self directed* and *disconnected* sub-groups respectively. At the same time, the forty-five percent figure also means that more than half of the *staff assisted* group cannot be described as having worked 'continuously' over the year following One-Stop registration.

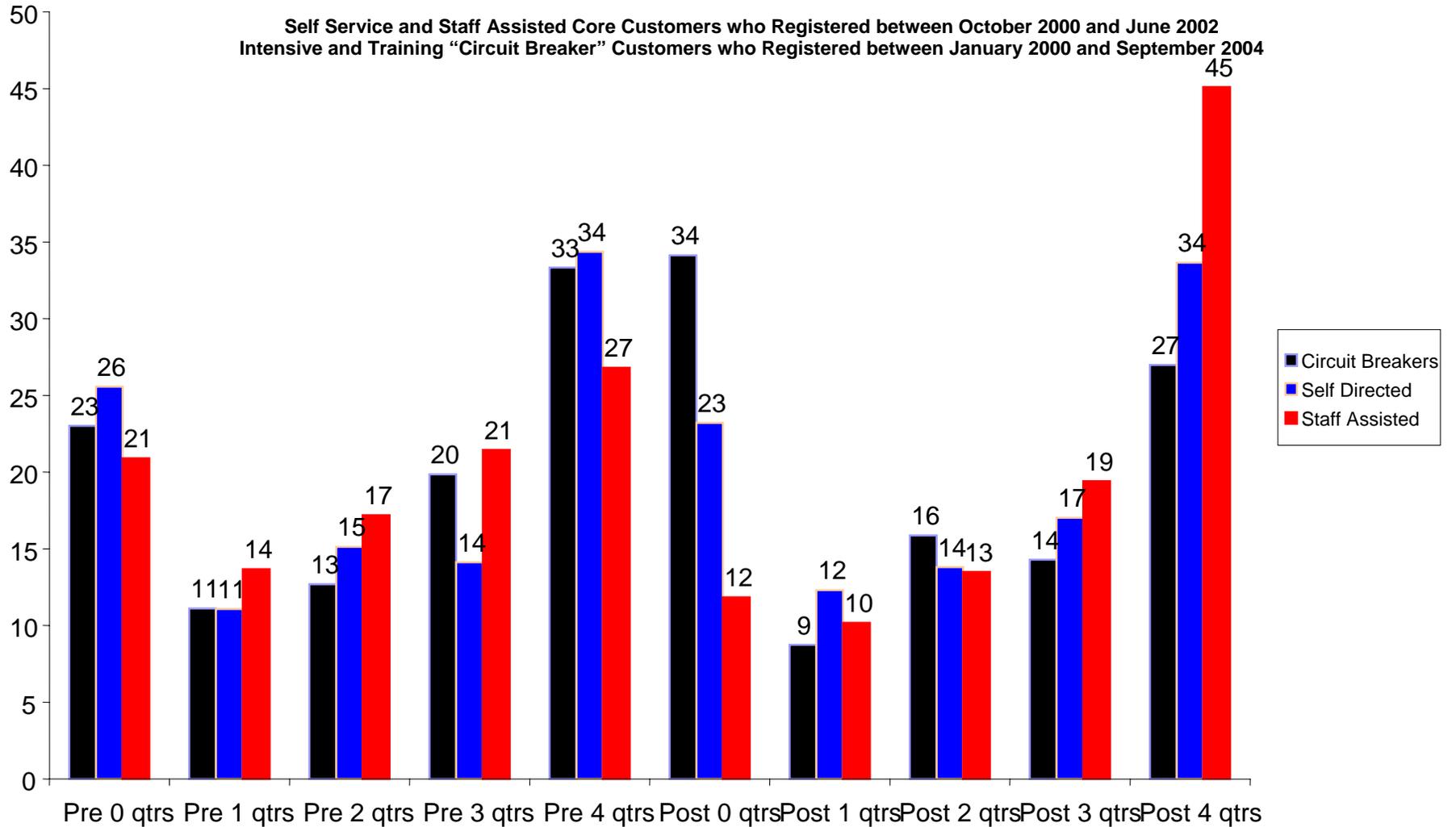
**Figure 4:6 Eastside One-Stop Career Center Customers
Median Earnings 4 Quarters Pre-Registration, 4 Quarters Post-Registration**



**Figure 4:7 Eastside One-Stop Career Center Customers
Self-Service (N=4,038), Staff-Assisted (N=542) Core Customers
Circuit Breaker Intensive and Training Customers (N=135)**

Percent Employed Pre and Post One-Stop Registration

Self Service and Staff Assisted Core Customers who Registered between October 2000 and June 2002
Intensive and Training "Circuit Breaker" Customers who Registered between January 2000 and September 2004



We turn next to the pre- and post- earnings levels for the three defined customer groups. *Figure 4:6* shows eight quarterly observations for each of the three customer groups—four pre- One-Stop registration date observations and four post- One-Stop registration date observations. Each value plotted here is the median inflation-adjusted dollar amount calculated for those who had some reported earnings in a designated reference quarter. This means, for example, that different customers may be included in particular quarterly calculations, each of which includes only those who had some reported earnings in the quarter.

The correct interpretation of this approach is to treat each median amount appearing in *Figure 4:6* as the single inflation-adjusted dollar amount that separates a sub-group's members with reported earnings in that quarter into unobserved above and below halves. Unusually low or high outlier earnings amounts do not affect the calculation of a median value, but concentrations of low or high values do impact the resulting amount.

Figure 4:6 shows that:

- Each of the three defined groups—the *disconnected*, the *self directed* and the *staff assisted*—experienced a decline in earnings during the two quarters immediately before One-Stop registration.
- The decline of pre- One-Stop registration earnings was largest for the *disconnected* group and smallest for the *self directed* group.
- The pre- One-Stop registration decline of earnings patterns of the *disconnected* and *self directed* groups described in the previous dot-point is reversed in the post- One-Stop registration observation year—the *disconnected* group has the largest increase in earnings (continuous over the four quarters), while the *self directed* group shows a relatively flat profile that does not return to pre- One-Stop registration levels.
- The *staff assisted* group earnings profile shows the expected and previously well documented 'dip' in pre- registration earnings, which for the Eastside Career Center is followed by an immediate and then sustained post- registration increase of inflation-adjusted median earnings to a level higher than any of the four pre- registration quarters observed.

Federal Employment Data Exchange System (FEDES) Records

Under the FEDES Pilot Project, Maryland was charged to create a data exchange environment to provide states and other grantees access to Federal civilian and military employment records. The following agencies provide data: Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Department of Defense (DOD) and the United States Postal Service (USPS). The FEDES project began operations in November 2003.

Table 4:2 FEDES Data, Federal Employment Wage Matches

<i>Eastside Customer</i>	<i>Total N</i>	<i>FEDES N</i>	<i>% of Total</i>	<i>% OPM</i>	<i>% DOD</i>	<i>% USPS</i>
Self-Directed Core	4,038	66	1.60%	53%	8%	39%
Staff-Assisted Core	542	14	2.60%	43%	7%	50%
Circuit Breaker	135	1	0.10%	100%	0%	0%

FINDINGS FROM THE EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS SURVEY

Introduction

The Jacob France Institute of the University of Baltimore designed and implemented a mail-based survey of businesses located in Baltimore City in July 2005. The goal of this survey was to collect information on the methods used by local businesses to recruit employees and to increase the understanding of how local employers view a range of workforce providers. Firms were asked questions regarding their employment, their plans to hire additional workers, their methods used to recruit employees, their assessment of workforce providers, and the groups of persons that use workforce provider services.

Survey Methodology

This survey was designed to target five specific industries within Baltimore City. These industries were: Health/bioscience; Business services; Construction; Information technology; and Hospitality/tourism. Each business employed a total of 10 or more persons, with Hospitality/tourism firms employing at least 25 persons. The Dun and Bradstreet iMarket database was used to identify the businesses that were targeted for this survey.

Once a survey instrument was developed, the survey was mailed to a total of 1,033 Baltimore City firms, including a postage-paid return envelope. Firms were also given the option to fax the completed survey back to the Jacob France Institute. Two rounds of surveys were mailed to each firm that had not completed a survey with a postcard reminder sent between each round of survey mailing. Of the 1,033 firms that were mailed a survey, there were 62 responses for response rate of 6 percent.

Employment

Surveyed firms were asked to provide their current number of employees and about their plans (if any) to hire additional employees during the remainder of 2005. If these firms were planning to hire additional workers, they were asked to choose the occupational classification that these new employees would be hired to fill. The

occupational classifications are general types of positions that include a range of job titles.

The 60 firms that provided their employment information currently employ a total of 12,910 full-time employees and 33,355 part-time workers in the Baltimore area (see Table 5). Per firm, this equates to 215 full-time and 56 part-time workers. The average employment per responding firm was driven by several large Health/bioscience firms and Hospitality/tourism firms. Fifty-eight percent (58 percent) of the responding firms employ fewer than 49 total full and part-time workers, 35 percent employ between 50 to

Table 5

Q1A: Number of Employees Currently Employed by Surveyed Firms in Baltimore Area

	Number	Average per Firm
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	2	3%
Total Valid Responses	60	
Full-time	12,910	215
Part-time	3,355	56

499 workers, and 7 percent employ over 500 workers (see Table 6).

Table 6

Q1B: Number of Firms by Employment Size

	Number of Firms	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	2	3%
Total Valid Responses	60	
1 to 19 Employees	17	28%
20 to 49 Employees	18	30%
50 to 99 Employees	10	17%
100 to 499 Employees	11	18%
500 and Above Employees	4	7%

When asked if their firm has plans to hire additional employees in 2005, 78 percent of the firms responded that they plan on increasing their employment (see Table 7). Of the 47 firms that plan on increasing their employment, they intend to hire an additional 1,589 full-time and 621 part-time workers (see Table 8).

Table 7
Q2A: Do You Expect Your Business to Hire Locally in the Remainder of 2005?

	Responses	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	2	3%
Total Valid Responses	60	
Yes	47	78%
No	3	5%
Don't Know	10	17%

Table 8
Q2B: Number of Employees to be Hired Locally by End of 2005

	Number	Average per Firm
Total Valid Responses	47	
Full-time	1,589	34
Part-time	621	13

The majority of firms (72 percent) plan to hire between 1 and 19 full and part-time employees in the remainder of 2005 (see Table 9). Twenty percent (20 percent) plan to hire between 20 to 99 employees, and 8 percent plan to hire 100 or more full and part-time employees.

Table 9
Number of Firms by the Number Employees they are Expecting to Hire

	Number of Firms	Percent of Total
Total Responses	47	
No Response/No Answer	1	2%
Total Valid Responses	46	
1 to 19 Employees	33	72%
20 to 49 Employees	5	11%
50 to 99 Employees	4	9%
100 to 499 Employees	2	4%
500 and Above Employees	2	4%

The firms that plan on increasing their employment were also asked to choose from a pre-selected list of occupational classifications that these hires would be filling (see Table 10). Firms were allowed to select more than one type of position that they intend to fill in the remainder of 2005. Over half of the responding firms (53 percent), reported that they intend to hire persons for managerial positions. Nearly half (49 percent) intend to hire persons for clerical/secretarial/administrative positions and 45 percent intend to hire unskilled workers/laborers. Thirty-six percent of firms reported

planning to hire persons for sales/marketing positions and 32 percent of firms are planning to hire persons for manufacturing/skilled trade positions.

Table 10
Q2C: For Which Position Groups Will New Employees be Hired For?

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Valid Responses	47	
Managerial	25	53%
Clerical/secretarial/administrative	23	49%
Unskilled workers/laborers	21	45%
Sales/marketing	17	36%
Manufacturing/skilled trade	15	32%
Computer programmers/analysts	6	13%
Computer technicians/operators	6	13%
Laboratory/technical	6	13%
Engineers/scientists	3	6%
Other	13	28%

The percent of total responses is greater than 100% since firms were allowed to choose more than one response.

Employee Recruitment

A goal of this survey was to collect information on the quality of the local workforce and to identify the means that local businesses in Baltimore City use to recruit workers. Firms were asked about the difficulty faced in finding qualified applicants, the types of recruitment problems they are facing, and the services that they use to recruit employees.

While 30 percent of firms responded that they did not find it difficult to find qualified applicants, 57 percent of firms stated that they find it difficult to find qualified applicants, and 12 percent found it very difficult to find qualified applicants currently (see Table 11). When asked why they experienced difficulty in finding applicants, several reasons were mentioned. The greatest problems faced by responding firms included that there are too few candidates (49 percent), that candidates lack basic skills (49 percent), they lack responsible behavior (32 percent), they lack the necessary technical skills (27 percent), and they lack training/vocational skills (27percent) (see Table 12).

Table 11
Q3A: Current Ability of Businesses to Find Qualified Applicants

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	2	3%
Total Valid Responses	60	
Very difficult	7	12%
Difficult	34	57%
Not difficult	18	30%
Easy	0	0%
Not hiring	1	2%

Table 12
Q3B: Types of Employee Recruitment Problems Experienced by Firms

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	60	
<u>Not Hiring</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2%</u>
Total Valid Responses	59	
Too few candidates	29	49%
Candidates lack basic skills	29	49%
Candidates lack responsible behavior	19	32%
Candidates lack necessary technical skills	16	27%
Candidates lack training/vocational skills	16	27%
Job offers are rejected by candidates	9	15%
Candidates overqualified for available positions	8	14%
Difficult to retain newly hired candidates	7	12%
Candidates lack computer/technology skills	4	7%
We are not experiencing recruitment problems	4	7%
Other	6	10%

The percent of total responses is greater than 100% since firms were allowed to choose more than one response.

Firms were also asked about the methods that they use to recruit employees (see Table 13). Responding firms cited using numerous methods to recruit employees. The most frequently used methods included: newspaper advertisement (79 percent); existing employee referrals (69 percent); using online services (52 percent); four-year colleges and universities (39 percent); and temporary service agencies (31 percent).

Table 13
Q4: Local Recruitment Services Used by Firms in Last 12 Months

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
<u>No Response/No Answer</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0%</u>
Total Valid Responses	62	
Newspaper Ads	49	79%
Existing Employee Referrals	43	69%
Online Services	32	52%
4 Year Colleges/Universities	24	39%
Temporary Service Agencies	19	31%
Job Fairs	17	27%
Recruiting Firms	15	24%
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges	15	24%
Community/Faith Based Organizations	8	13%
One Stop Career Centers	5	8%
Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB)	2	3%
Other	8	13%

The percent of total responses is greater than 100% since firms were allowed to choose more than one response.

When asked which recruitment services their business would consider using, there is similarity to the services that are already being used. Sixty-five percent of firms (65 percent) would use newspaper ads, 60 percent would use existing employee referrals, 45 percent would use four-year colleges/universities, and 39 percent would use online services (see Table 14).

Table 14
Q5: Which Local Recruitment Services Would Your Firm Consider Using?

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	0	0%
Total Valid Responses	62	
Newspaper Ads	40	65%
Existing Employee Referrals	37	60%
4 Year Colleges/Universities	28	45%
Online Services	24	39%
Job Fairs	18	29%
Temporary Service Agencies	17	27%
Recruiting Firms	17	27%
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges	15	24%
Community/Faith Based Organizations	11	18%
One Stop Career Centers	9	15%
Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB)	8	13%
Other	7	11%

The percent of total responses is greater than 100% since firms were allowed to choose more than one response.

Numerous employee recruitment services were viewed as being important to responding businesses (see Table 15). The most frequently cited services mentioned by firms include outreach/recruitment (68 percent), applicant pre-screening (65 percent), employee assessment/testing (32 percent), and provision of basic skills training (31 percent). Pre-screening services and assessment/testing services allow a firm to choose potential employees from a smaller pool of applicants that have already been found to possess the necessary job requirements or passed some type of test, whether it be drug screening or ability to use equipment or machinery.

Table 15
Q9: Which Employee Recruitment Services are Most Important to Your Business?

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	0	0%
Total Valid Responses	62	
Outreach/Recruitment	42	68%
Applicant pre-screening	40	65%
Assessment/Testing	20	32%
Provision of basic skills training	19	31%
Assistance with training grants	11	18%
Provision of job training	11	18%
Human Resources support	10	16%
Assistance with workforce tax credits	7	11%
Transition services to help with layoffs	4	6%
Other	2	3%

With 52 percent of firms already reporting that they use online services to hire an employee, firms were asked to provide the names of the online services that they use (see Table 16). The most frequently mentioned online services included Career builder (52 percent), Monster.com (42 percent), the Maryland Workforce Exchange (10 percent), and America's Job Bank (10 percent).

Table 16
Q10: Online Recruitment Services Used by Firms

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	0	0%
Total Valid Responses	62	
Careerbuilder.com	32	52%
Monster.com	26	42%
Maryland Workforce Exchange	6	10%
America's Job Bank	6	10%
Yahoo.com Hot Jobs	5	8%
Other	20	32%
We don't recruit online	15	24%

Workforce Provider Assessment

Another goal of this survey was to collect the opinions of local businesses about the workforce providers that supply potential employees. Knowing how firms view workforce providers is key to understanding the usefulness of workforce providers and their success in serving local businesses and the workforce. Firms were asked a series of questions regarding their understanding of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the services they believe are offered by a variety of workforce providers, and the types of job candidates that are offered by various workforce providers.

When asked about the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, 40 percent of firms understand the intention of the Act to assist out of work individuals prepare for and to find jobs (see Table 17). Forty percent of firms (40 percent) understand the Act to assist businesses to connect with qualified candidates for employment, and 21 percent believe the intention of the Act to be to promote economic development within local communities.

Table 17
Q6: Which Statement Fits Your Firms Understanding of the Workforce Investment Act?

	Number	Percent of Total
Total Responses	62	
No Response/No Answer	14	23%
Total Valid Responses	48	
Helping out of work individuals prepare for & find jobs	19	40%
Assisting businesses connect with qualified candidates for employment	19	40%
Promoting economic development within local communities	10	21%

Surveyed firms were asked their opinion of the services that are provided by a range of workforce providers (see Table 18). Firms most frequently responded that workforce providers most often provide outreach and recruitment services. Recruiting firms were viewed by 71 percent of firms as providing candidate pre-screening and temporary service agencies were viewed by 66 percent of firms in providing candidate pre-screening. Sixty-three percent (63 percent) of firms viewed Community colleges as providing employee training while 52 percent of firms viewed four-year colleges/universities as providing employee training.

Table 18
Q7: Surveyed Businesses Opinions as to the Services Provided by Workforce Providers

Workforce Provider	Outreach and Recruitment	Candidate Pre-screening	Assessment and Testing	Human Services Support	Training	Unsure of Services
Temporary Service Agencies	45%	66%	40%	26%	8%	11%
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges	50%	11%	29%	8%	63%	8%
4 Year Universities/Colleges	58%	15%	29%	13%	52%	8%
Recruiting Firms	81%	71%	44%	27%	13%	3%
One-Stop Career Centers	45%	24%	24%	16%	16%	42%
Internet/Online Services	69%	16%	8%	6%	6%	15%
Community/Faith Based Organizations	50%	15%	8%	13%	10%	39%
Newspaper Ads	84%	3%	2%	5%	2%	6%
Local Workforce Investment Board	27%	21%	21%	13%	21%	61%

Businesses were also asked what types of candidates workforce providers offer to local firms (see Table 19). Each provider was viewed as assisting a variety of candidates. For the population of employed workers seeking a career change, the most noted providers were newspaper advertisements, internet/online services, and recruiting firms. For the unemployed, the most frequently cited providers were newspaper ads, temporary service agencies, internet/online services, and community/faith based organizations.

For the underemployed, the most frequently cited providers were newspaper ads, temporary service agencies, and internet/online services. For targeted populations (Veterans, displaced workers, disabled workers, seniors, and youth) the most frequently noted workforce providers were community/faith based organizations and the local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB).

It was felt that Entry-level workers were most likely available through community colleges, temporary service agencies, four-year colleges/universities, and newspaper ads. Four-year colleges/universities, recruiting firms, newspaper ads, and internet/online services were most frequently cited as providing professionals.

Table 19
Q8: Surveyed Businesses Opinions as to the Types of Candidates Workforce Providers Offer to Local Firms

Workforce Provider	Employed Seeking Career Change	Unemployed	Underemployed (Low Wages)	Targeted Populations	Entry-level Workers	Professionals
Temporary Service Agencies	35%	74%	48%	23%	61%	35%
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges	37%	42%	18%	13%	68%	24%
4 Year Universities/Colleges	32%	42%	13%	11%	60%	68%
Recruiting Firms	74%	39%	19%	18%	19%	66%
One-Stop Career Centers	35%	48%	34%	34%	34%	16%
Internet/Online Services	77%	61%	48%	32%	47%	60%
Community/Faith Based Organizations	18%	58%	45%	50%	34%	5%
Newspaper Ads	84%	84%	63%	31%	60%	61%
Local Workforce Investment Board	15%	48%	35%	44%	32%	18%

Conclusions from the Employer Perceptions Survey

This study reinforces the notion that Baltimore area employers are unaware of the public workforce development system, even in the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board's "targeted industries".

Nearly three quarters of respondents plan to hire during the remainder of 2005 (72 percent of respondents). However, 69 percent felt that finding qualified applicants was "Difficult" or "Very Difficult". The top 2 recruitment problems facing employers was "too few candidates", cited by 49 percent, and "candidates lack basic skills" cited by 49 percent.

Slightly over one third (34 percent) of respondents felt that the job candidates provided by Baltimore One-Stop Career Centers would be underemployed (low wage workers), from targeted populations (Veterans, disabled workers, seniors, youth), or entry-level workers. A total of 48 percent felt that the job candidates would be currently unemployed. Only 16 percent felt that professionals would be provided by One-Stop Career Centers.

Very few cited One-Stop Career Centers (8%) as recruitment methods used in the last 12 months, and only 15% said they would consider using them for future recruitment. The majority of employers are using newspaper ads (79%), employee referrals (69%), and online services (52%) for recruitment.

Recruitment services that employers indicated as important (outreach/recruitment, applicant pre-screening, assessment/testing, basic skills training) are currently offered free of charge by Baltimore One-Stops. A total of 42 percent of employers were unsure as to what type of workforce services One-Stop Career Centers provide. In addition, 61 percent were unsure about services provided through the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board.

When asked about their understanding of the Workforce Investment Act, 40 percent felt it was about assisting employers in finding qualified job candidates. An equal number thought it was about helping out of work individuals find a job. Few (21 percent) thought it was about promoting economic development within the community.

A 2003 report issued by the Center for Workforce Preparation/U.S. Chamber of Commerce found similar opinions among employers across the country regarding the public workforce development system.³² A total 77 state and local chambers of commerce participated in the survey, and over 3,700 surveys were returned (Maryland did not participate in the survey).

Key findings indicated that half of employers have a hard/very hard time finding qualified job applicants. Only 19 percent of surveyed employers have used a One-Stop Center in the last 12 months, and 59 percent were not aware of the One-Stop Center(s) in their area. The primary reasons cited for not using the public workforce development system were lack of awareness about One-Stop Centers, or use of other available

³² Rising to the Challenge: Business Voices on the Public Workforce Development System. Spring 2003.

resources. Employers' overall awareness of their Local Workforce Investment Board was 28 percent.

Baltimore Business Employee Recruitment Survey Instrument

The Merrick School of Business is collecting information to improve our understanding of how local businesses recruit new employees. Your willingness to complete this short questionnaire is needed to ensure representative coverage of Baltimore area employers. If you do not hire new employees frequently, we are still interested in your perspective – how would you approach recruitment? **All responses will be kept confidential.** Questions or comments can be directed to Treva Stack at 410-837-4685. Please feel free to make additional comments on either the back of the survey or on a separate sheet of paper. Thank you!

Company Name: _____ Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

1. Today, how many employees work for your business in the Baltimore area?

Full-time __ # Part-time __

2. Do you expect your business to hire locally in the remainder of 2005?

Yes No Don't know/No response

If yes, how many employees do you expect to be hired locally by the end of December, 2005?

Full-time __ # Part-time __

Which position group(s) include the new local recruits expected to be hired by December, 2005?

(Select all that apply)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Managerial | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales/marketing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer programmers/analysts | <input type="checkbox"/> Laboratory/technical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer technicians/operators | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineers/scientists |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing/skilled trade | <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical/secretarial/administrative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unskilled workers/laborers | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please describe) _____ |

3. Describe your current ability to find qualified applicants.

Very difficult Difficult Not difficult Easy Not hiring

If you're experiencing recruitment problems, what are they? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too few candidates | <input type="checkbox"/> Job offers are rejected by candidates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates lack basic skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates lack necessary technical skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates lack responsible behavior | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult to retain newly hired candidates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates overqualified for available positions | <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates lack training/vocational skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Candidates lack computer/technology skills | <input type="checkbox"/> We are not experiencing recruitment problems |
- Other (please describe) _____

4. In the past 12 months, which local recruitment services HAVE YOU USED to hire someone?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Service Agencies | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Fairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Community/Junior/Technical Colleges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Existing Employee Referrals | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper Ads | <input type="checkbox"/> One Stop Career Centers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Year Colleges/Universities | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting Firms | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) |

Community/Faith Based Organizations Online Services Other
 (describe)_____

5. Which local recruitment services would you CONSIDER USING? (Select all that apply)

- Temporary Service Agencies Job Fairs Community/Junior/Technical Colleges
 Existing Employee Referrals Newspaper Ads One Stop Career Centers
 4 Year Colleges/Universities Recruiting Firms Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB)
 Community/Faith Based Organizations Online Services Other
 (describe)_____

6. Which ONE of the following BEST fits your understanding of the mission of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998? (please choose only one response)

- Helping out of work individuals prepare for and find jobs
 Assisting businesses connect with qualified candidates for employment
 Promoting economic development within local communities

7. Even if you have NEVER USED the following providers, what service(s) do you feel they offer local businesses? (Select all that apply)

WORKFORCE PROVIDERS	SERVICE PROVIDED					
	Outreach and Recruitment	Candidate Pre-Screening	Assessment and Testing	Human Resources Support	Training	Unsure of their Services
Temporary Service Agencies						
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges						
4 Year Universities/Colleges						
Recruiting Firms						
One-Stop Career Centers						
Internet/Online Services						
Community/Faith Based Organizations						
Newspaper Ads						
Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB)						

8. In your opinion, what types of candidates do each provider offer to local businesses? (Select all that apply)

WORKFORCE PROVIDERS	JOB SEEKING CANDIDATES					
	Employed, Seeking Career Change	Unemployed	Underemployed (low wages)	Targeted Populations (Veterans, Displaced Workers, Disabled, Seniors, Youth, Other)	Entry Level Workers	Professionals
Temporary Service Agencies						
Community/Junior/Technical Colleges						
4 Year Universities/Colleges						
Recruiting Firms						
One-Stop Career Centers						
Internet/Online Services						
Community/Faith Based Organizations						
Newspaper Ads						
Local Workforce Investment Board (BWIB)						

9. Which of the following employee recruitment services are most important to YOUR business locally? (Select all that apply)

- Outreach/Recruitment Applicant pre-screening
- Assessment/Testing Human Resources support
- Assistance with training grants Assistance with workforce tax credits
- Provision of job training Provision of basic skills training
- Transition services to help with layoffs Other (please describe)

10. Has your business used any of the following online recruitment sources? (Select all that apply)

- Maryland Workforce Exchange Monster.com Careerbuilder.com
- America's Job Bank Yahoo.com Hot Jobs We don't recruit online
- Other (please describe) _____

FOUR EMPLOYER CASE STUDIES

Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD

The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) has been in a successful training partnership with Johns Hopkins Hospital for over 8 years. In 1997, Johns Hopkins decided they needed to upgrade the skills of many staff to move into new positions. They utilized funding made available through the Empower Baltimore Management Corporation³³ and partnered with MOED to retrain 47 workers to advance into clinical associate, clerical associate, and support associate positions.

Following the successful completion of this training, 15 JTPA customers were trained to fill healthcare transporter positions. This training took place an additional 3 times over the course of 2 years.

In 1999, Johns Hopkins approached MOED regarding their critical shortage of patient services coordinators. MOED contracted with the Maryland Center for Arts and Technology (MCAT) to provide a 12 week Healthcare Administration Training Program with paid internships supported by Hopkins. In July 2003, the program was approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission. The program lasts for 20 weeks and includes 10 weeks of curriculum training, 2 weeks of employer specific training, and 10 weeks of a paid internship with the employer. Successful participants are eligible for permanent placements with employers.

The program was a great success and expanded to include positions at nearby Mercy Hospital and University of Maryland Medical System. Since the inception of the program, over 50 MOED customers have been trained and placed in full-time, permanent positions with benefits at Johns Hopkins. The employer has reported significant increases in employee retention and approximately 25% of this cohort of employees as advanced into level 2 Patient Services Coordinator positions or taken advantage of additional incumbent worker initiatives. Financial support has come from WIA adult/dislocated worker funds as well as from the Youth Opportunities Grant for out-of-school youth.

In 2004, MOED, MCAT and Johns Hopkins Pathology Department met to design a new customized training program for entry-level medical laboratory technicians, who must possess venipuncture and phlebotomy skills, and are responsible for the collection of lab specimens. Six medical lab technicians were trained and hired in the first class. There will be a new class of 10 students beginning in the summer of 2005, and negotiations are underway to begin a clinical environment worker training for 20 customers.

³³ Baltimore received a \$100 million federal grant and \$250 million in federal tax incentives as one of 6 winners in the federal Empowerment Zone Initiative. Baltimore's Empowerment Zone extends over 6.8 square miles and contains over 70,000 people and 2,000 businesses.

Johns Hopkins has also been the lead partner in the state funded incumbent worker “Skills Based Training for Employment Promotion” (STEP) grant. Beginning in 2001, MOED has been awarded three consecutive competitive grants averaging \$500,000 to serve low wage, low skill working parents in the healthcare industry. To date, Johns Hopkins has supported over 75 workers to be trained as clinical associates, pharmacy technicians, medical coders, medical lab technicians, and surgical technicians. Johns Hopkins is located approximately two miles from the ECC.

Second Chance, Inc.

Second Chance, Inc. is located in an industrial park behind Baltimore Ravens Football Stadium and specializes in preserving local architectural history. The non-profit business salvages items including ornate stained glass, fireplaces, doors, and tin ceilings from old buildings.

Mark Foster founded the company in 2001 after restoring his own 19th century house in Roland Park. Mr. Foster spent a great deal of time trying to find architectural elements that were true to the style and era of his own home. He realized that the fine detailing that made many of the area’s historic buildings unique were ending up in a landfill. At the time, no Baltimore demolition companies were making an effort to do any salvage work.

Second Chance offers a way to preserve some of these materials for new houses. The company’s mission is as follows:

- Deconstructing old buildings (taking a house apart and saving all usable interior elements)
- Salvaging and selling preserved architectural antiques
- Providing job skills training and employment for Baltimore City residents.

In the spring of 2003, Second Chance partnered with MOED to provide deconstruction on-the-job training. Five city residents participated in the program and came from a variety of backgrounds, including construction and mechanics. However, they were all dislocated workers looking to obtain new skills and new jobs. In September 2004 after a 16 week training period, participants completed the program. They are now highly skilled deconstruction workers with full time positions that include benefits. All have moved into specialized training areas within the business such as retail sales and refinishing/restoration/adaptive use of architectural antiques. Two additional classes of 5 trainees have taken place. Graduates earn on average \$14 per hour.

The company believes that second chances are not just for buildings, but for people, too. They are committed to reconnecting ex-offenders to the workforce and several have participated in the training program and are now employed with the company. Second Chance continues to demonstrate that it is working to preserve Baltimore’s past while building a future for its citizens.

Allen's Poultry

The MOED relationship with Allen's Poultry began approximately one year ago. The Eastern Shore poultry processing plant was having difficulty filling positions and turned to the Baltimore One-Stop system for assistance. Below is a description of a recruitment effort by Allen's Poultry that took place in July 2005.

Close to 40 job seeking customers filed into Eastside Career Center for the recruitment. They were a mixed group of mostly young men, but many women and older customers, as well. All were registered One-Stop customers, and they were waiting to hear a presentation by Allen's Poultry, a poultry processing plant with locations in Cordova, MD, Hurlock, MD, and Harbeson, DE. All are small towns in the Delmarva area.

The company's Human Resource Manager and a Management trainee presented information about the company to the potential applicants. The jobs they were offering were in the Cordova plant, which is approximately 65 miles away on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The commute runs 1 hour, 20 minutes, and the bus leaves every morning at 5:30am, Monday-Friday, from the ECC parking lot. Commuters are charged \$34 per week for this service.

Workers are currently needed for their production line. New hires are offered \$7.50/hr, which is raised to \$9.05 after 90 days and \$9.55 after 6 months, with annual raises thereafter. Time and a half is offered for anything over 40 hours. All positions are full-time and include health, dental, vision, prescription, life insurance, sick pay, vacation time and paid holidays.

Allen's Poultry workers essentially are hired to guide the "product" (chicken) through machines, and to grade and pack the product. No special skills are required, and they are willing to train anyone who is willing to learn. The representative added that numerous positions were available and they could potentially hire every qualified applicant on the spot. Allen's Poultry is one of few area employers willing to take a chance with ex-offenders. The ECC has a large population of ex-offender customers.

The representative was extremely up-front about the working conditions. In addition to the long commute, employees work in shifts of approximately 12 hours. They are required to stand the entire time, and the working conditions are often cold due to health code requirements. After discussing the job at length, customers were given an opportunity to leave if they were no longer interested. Very few left.

Applications were filled out and submitted to the HR manager and trainee. After speaking with each person individually, applicants were given an appointment to come back to Eastside the following week to travel to the plant for a health screening. Potential employees are screened for injuries as well as substance abuse. Health screenings take place on Tuesdays in Cordova, after which time applicants are transported back to the ECC. They are not paid for this day. If they pass the screening, they begin work on the following Thursday.

To date, over 200 customers have entered into employment with Allen's Poultry, with slightly more than half remaining employed currently.

Proctor and Gamble

Since February 2004, Staff Management, a high-volume vendor-on-premise staffing solutions for the light industrial segment and call center sectors, has been working with the ECC to fill positions for Proctor and Gamble. Available jobs include assembly line worker, tech worker, manager, and team leader positions for the company's facility located in Northern Baltimore County. The positions pay between \$7.15 and \$10 an hour.

According to the Senior Manager of the company, "Staff Management was looking for help in identifying and hiring a large number of qualified candidates in a short period of time. The staff at ECC has been incredibly supportive and accommodating by providing much more assistance and customer service than is typically given. They greet our candidates, help them fill out the information card, and manage the flow of candidates for us. We would not have been able to meet the numbers we needed without their assistance".

The ECC manager reported that as of June 2005, more than 1,000 job seekers had been interviewed and 364 had been offered employment. ECC staff also hosts employee orientations for newly hired Proctor and Gamble staff. The project will continue until full staffing has been achieved.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

Our report has covered more than a decade of local, state and national re-creation of how public workforce development services are delivered. We have concentrated on a single large city One-Stop—the Baltimore Mayor’s Office of Employment Development Eastside Career Center.

Before undertaking our observations in the Baltimore Eastside Career Center (ECC) and collecting related administrative, survey and interview information, we defined four questions to be answered. We repeat each of these four questions here with answers based on our findings.

Question 1

Who seeks what type(s) of One-Stop help?

Our Answer

Most of the ECC customers observed and interviewed are African American adults, with more women than men represented in this customer base. These demographics reflect the ECC location in a part of Eastside Baltimore that has not been reached yet by residential and commercial investments nearby. Many of the residents in surrounding neighborhoods are single mothers with young children and older long-time neighbors, both with limited education and work experience qualifications consistent with today’s living wage opportunities.

We have noted that many Latinos have moved into the adjacent neighborhoods, but few of these new arrivals seek ECC help. This is important, because it has consequences for how a One-Stop can and should be positioned to serve neighborhoods in flux.

Evidence about job search behaviors accumulated over many decades has consistently indicated that word-of-mouth information is a preferred source of intelligence about where a person may succeed in finding a satisfactory job. Of course, word-of-mouth sharing of information assumes that one’s communication network includes people who have valuable information to share. A close-knit community of immigrants often satisfies this criterion. A neighborhood of some who have been left behind and others who have never experienced a daily work routine is far less likely to enjoy this preferred route to success.

The depth and breadth of help sought by ECC customers is instructive—there is clear evidence that these are motivated neighbors who share our own aspirations for success—education, skills training, a good job and decent earnings. At the same time, the cost and time needed to satisfy what many customers seek are clear barriers to a successful outcome for most.

Question 2

Why do some residents and local businesses not seek ECC help?

Our Answer

There are many facets of this issue. We have already mentioned the ‘no perceived need’ part of the answer above. Some businesses have what they consider to be satisfactory, preferred, personnel recruitment sources. Some individuals can rely on dependable networks of relatives, neighbors and friends to learn about job opportunities. Both have growing access to free or inexpensive electronic sources of job opening information.

However, there is another facet that offers more promise of wider ECC access to individual customers and businesses—it is clear to us that many non-users of the ECC are unaware of today’s full portfolio of services. Creative marketing is essential for any business that has launched a new product or service. Unfortunately, creative marketing is expensive and dispensable when budget stress is encountered.

Question 3

What happens within the ECC—are the resources and staff expertise appropriate and available when needed to satisfy or modify customer expectations?

Our Answer

All of the evidence we collected points in one direction—the resources and staff expertise are appropriate. One important correlate remains unclear to us—what use of either staff or other resources would occur if different hours/days of ECC operation were available. We do know that the ECC staff has tried different evening hour shifts with limited success. We also know that many of the single mothers with young children who live nearby do not have the luxury of child-care help that would enable them to use ECC learning resources ‘after hours’.

Question 4

Are customers who exit the ECC satisfied with their experience(s); and, if not, why and with what consequences?

Our Answer

Here we encountered what appears to be some contradictory evidence. The ECC customers who completed our survey instrument and participated in our interviews expressed a uniformly high level of satisfaction and appreciation for staff help. However, our focus group with ECC staff members elicited a view that ‘many’ customers have unrealistic expectations and leave frustrated and upset or angry.

RELEVANCE OF FINDINGS FOR NEGOTIATION OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The importance of additional education and skills training to improve the productivity of many individual ECC customers is apparent to everyone—to the MOED management team, the ECC staff, the customers themselves, business customers who use the ECC, and State of Maryland and national individuals and organizations who make decisions that impact the local availability of further education and training.

Regional and state negotiators of performance standards share responsibilities to set standards that reflect what covered jurisdictions have an *opportunity* to achieve and *likelihood* of achieving given their customer base and economic conditions. We have documented aspects of diversity that impact the opportunity set—customer attributes, business perceptions, and competing bricks-and-mortar and electronic intermediaries. The regional economy is strong. Ultimately, the likelihood of greater ECC penetration of this robust market will depend on improved alignment of individual customer qualifications and aspirations with business needs. All interested parties know this.

A FINAL OBSERVATION

We began this report with an expressed belief that our findings will help those involved in the negotiation of workforce development system performance standards gain or renew an appreciation for the importance of diversity and change as determinants of the opportunity a One-Stop has to perform and the challenges it faces in responding to recognized opportunities. We are confident that this goal has been achieved, at least in the offering of useful new information.