

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Area 17 consists of Mahoning and Columbiana Counties in the northeastern part of the State of Ohio. The area is generally considered to be low-income and is part of the Appalachian Region. However, a number of positive economic developments in the last 18 months have buoyed the region and it is now seen by many as leading the state and even the nation in the recovery from the Great Recession (2007-2009). The Brookings Institute ranked the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman-Mercer MSA 14th of 100 for fastest growth since the recession ended. President Obama in the Feb. 12, 2013, State of the Union address cited the nation's first National Additive Manufacturing Innovation Institute (NAMII) located in Youngstown. Launched in 2012, NAMII explores manufacturing opportunities resulting from 3D printing.



The region's unemployment rate currently is lower than the nation's. While slightly higher than the state of Ohio's jobless level, unemployment in the area is anticipated to continue to decrease as the region's manufacturing industry coupled with the emerging shale natural gas industry advances.

Challenges persist, however, due to an uneven recovery. Many businesses remain reluctant or unable to expand. The local workforce is short on the skills required for many of the new jobs and an aging workforce exacerbates the problem as replacements for experienced workers nearing retirement are not available. Solutions to address the skills "mis-match" are being developed. The decades-long decline in the size of the civilian workforce in both counties continues with a 3 percent reduction in the last two years alone.

For more than a decade, employment in Healthcare has grown significantly. At this point, it appears to have reached a plateau but remains a large employment sector. Due to the area's aging population, the sector is expected to continue its demand for entry-level positions, but the affect of the Affordable Health Care for America Act on the industry's workforce is unclear at this time.

In the past two years, major improvements have been realized in the region's educational attainment among working age adults with the percentage of residents 25 years or older who lack a high school diploma or GED being reduced by nearly 5 percentage points in both counties. But the migration of youth from the area continues.

To address the area's workforce needs, the One-Stop System provides information regarding a variety of training programs as well as access to local, state and federal resources that are available to assist in training, education and skill acquisition. Partnerships are in place with more than 30 public and private organizations that streamline access to employment, education, training, workforce development and economic development resources. Partnerships are continually pursued to expand those resources. One-Stop partners coordinate services to job seekers through the Screening and Service Delivery Committees, resulting in a more fluid and effective relationship and the minimization of service duplication.

To further avoid duplication of effort not only on the part of the job seeker, but also the staff, the Common Assessment was put in place at the Columbiana County and Mahoning County One-Stops. Common Assessment is accepted by all partners providing tuition assistance and continues to result in improved customer satisfaction.

To extend to single point of contact concept to employers, the Business Resource Network (BRN) was created in 2008. In recognition of the BRN's success, the Department of Labor awarded a \$6 million Workforce Innovation Fund grant to expand it to 13 additional counties in Ohio. The BRN, with its 40 partner agencies and organizations, helps struggling companies and companies seeking to grow and expand.

The Oh-Penn Interstate Region, created in 2009 as the first in the nation, continues the close association of workforce, economic development, education and vision of the five counties Mahoning, Columbiana and Trumbull Counties in Ohio and Lawrence and Mercer Counties in Pennsylvania. In 2012, the Interstate Region was also the recipient of a \$6 million Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund grant to address the region's skills "mis-match" mentioned earlier. The grant aims to recruit current workers and attract future workers to manufacturing, build out career pathways and promote industry-recognized credentials.

This Business Plan was created with the oversight of the WIB Planning & Monitoring Committee to establish direction for PY 13 and PY14 that balances anticipated levels of demand and capacity. Consideration was given to the data available regarding past, present and future needs of our regional economy. The document will be available for public review.

The vision of WIB:

We will be a catalyst in the creation of a premier workforce development system that builds a community of full employment – where employers and employees have access to the education, training, and support services that lead to effective matches between labor supply and demand and sustained economic success.

The mission of the Area 17 Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is:

To address the employment and training needs of the individuals and employers of Columbiana and Mahoning Counties through coordination of The Workforce Development System, including advice and direction to MCTA.

WIB Values include:

- Equal opportunity to employment and training services;
- Collaboration and partnerships that leverage resources, ensure efficiency, and promote customer satisfaction;
- Pro-active, demand-driven policies;
- Lifelong learning to maximize individual potential; and
- Employment opportunities with competitive wages and benefits.

Given its mission, the Business Plan of the Area 17 WIB is intended to guide the One-Stop workforce development system, including its partners, resources and service delivery toward a comprehensive and integrated system that provides service to all individuals seeking help.

Critical issues were identified and goals and strategies were developed to address these critical issues. The intended result is stronger collaboration among area economic development and workforce development organizations, and ultimately, an increase in demand for One-Stop and other workforce services.

Strategic Plan:

Critical Issue 1: Advocacy

Goal 1: To advocate for adequate, sustainable and flexible funding to address existing workforce demographic trends and labor market needs.

Strategy 1.1 Identify stakeholders who can influence decision makers for the workforce development system.

Strategy 1.2 Align with platforms of national workforce development organizations.

Strategy 1.3 Educate stakeholders about the workforce development system to strengthen support.

Critical Issue 2: Service Delivery

Goal 2: To direct services to be more responsive, effective, and efficient.

Strategy 2.1 Systematically review intensive and training service mix to meet the needs of employers, job seekers, and youth in the most effective and efficient way.

Strategy 2.2 Continue to coordinate policies and procedures within Oh-Penn Interstate Region.

Strategy 2.3 Coordinate policies and procedures with the State.

Strategy 2.4 Continue to improve system performance and access of the One-Stop service delivery to job seekers.

Strategy 2.5 Continue to improve system performance and access of the One-Stop service delivery to businesses.

Critical Issue 3: Maintain, Expand, and Diversify Funding

Goal 3: To advocate for the continuation of existing funding, develop additional resources and provide fiscal oversight of its allocated resources.

Strategy 3.1 Continue to explore additional funding opportunities.

Strategy 3.2 Partner with regional and local public & private entities to maximize funding.

Critical Issue 4: Business Resource Network (BRN)

Goal 4: Sustain, maintain, and expand the successful business model of the BRN as indicated within the Workforce Innovation Funds Grant proposal.

Strategy 4.1 Continue expansion of BRN throughout the designated Ohio counties.

Strategy 4.2 Educate local, state, and federal stakeholders about the BRN to increase outreach and support.

Strategy 4.3 Increase and improve data collection and reporting to demonstrate the effectiveness of the BRN.

Strategy 4.4 Stay current with industry trends and provide appropriate assistance to address short term and long term workforce needs identified.

Strategy 4.5 Continue to evaluate BRN operations to improve efficiencies.

Strategy 4.6 Implement the deliverables under the DOL Workforce Innovation Fund grant.

Critical Issue 5: Oh-Penn Interstate Region Pathways to Competitiveness

Goal 5: Address the critical manufacturing skills shortage and insufficient talent pipeline in the region as indicated within the Workforce Innovation Funds Grant proposal.

Strategy 5.1 Build on the Oh-Penn Region to create stronger cooperation and alignment across state lines, programs and funding stream, to achieve improved efficiencies and better results for job seekers and employers.

Strategy 5.2 Create a robust sector strategy that aligns employment and training services with the critical skills needs of regional manufacturers.

Strategy 5.3 Build out manufacturing career pathways.

Strategy 5.4 Implement the deliverables under the DOL Workforce Innovation Fund grant.

II. Workforce Area Description

Workforce Investment Area #17 encompasses Mahoning and Columbiana Counties and is part of the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman-Mercer Metropolitan Statistical Area. Columbiana County is part of the *East Liverpool – Salem* Micropolitan Statistical Area. Both counties are included in the Appalachian Region – Columbiana County since 1987 and Mahoning County since 2009. Both are also included in the 18-county Jobs Ohio region identified as *Cleveland Plus*.

Columbiana County had a population of 107,570 and a labor force of 51,400 in 2011, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. It is primarily rural in nature.

Located north of Columbiana County,

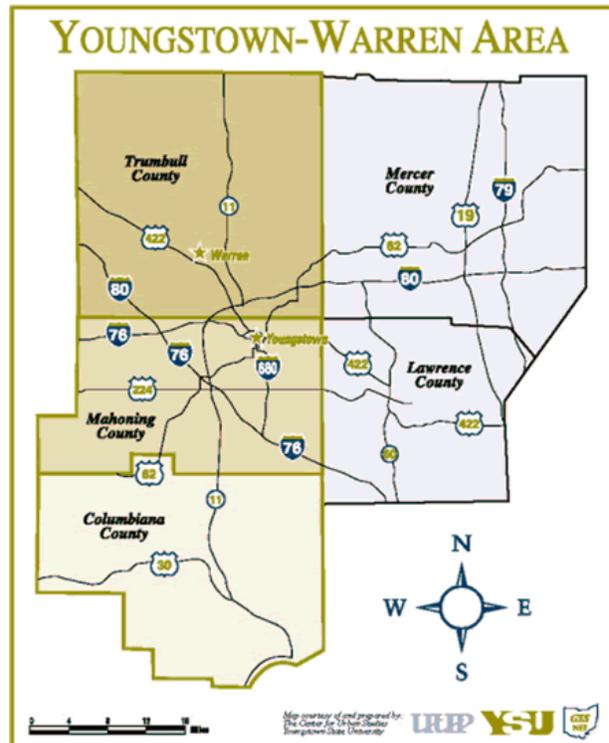
Mahoning County had a population of 237,270 and a labor force of 112,900 in 2011, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The county has a proud manufacturing segment that survived the decline of the area's steel industry. The center and northern portion of the county is urban with the surrounding areas suburban and rural in character.

Both counties have experienced a decline in population, due to an aging population and the migration of youth. In addition, many who leave for higher education, do not return. The median age continues to increase. In **Columbiana County** the median age is 41.6 years and in **Mahoning County** it is 42.4 years.

In **Columbiana County**, women make up 49.7 percent of the population, according to the Census Bureau, while in **Mahoning County** women comprise 51.6 percent of the population. Minorities total 5.0 percent of Columbiana County's population and 22 percent of Mahoning County's. The median household income increased about \$5,000 in the past two years in both counties. At present the median household income is \$39,502 in Columbiana County, slightly below the Mahoning County median income of \$40,123, according to Ohio Development Service Agency's *County Profiles*.

The economies of the two counties are interconnected by industry and workforce. Both counties have a high percentage of workers who commute out to work, and a remarkably high rate of workers who commute in. This noteworthy commuting pattern that extends into Trumbull County located north of Mahoning County and across the state line into Lawrence and Mercer Counties in Pennsylvania, is one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Oh-Penn Interstate Region, the nation's first interstate region that encompasses the five counties.

Mahoning and Columbiana Counties are heavily influenced by the auto industry with the huge General Motors' Lordstown Complex located in nearby Trumbull County. Likewise, the heavy industrial history



of the area continues to hold sway. Healthcare provides a significant share of the area's employment but its large employment growth of the past decade has slowed, if not slightly declined.

The shale natural gas industry has emerged in the region in the last 18 months. The extent and effect on the local workforce has been minimal to date but the industry holds the potential for significant number of jobs that offer high levels of pay. The industry has brought a number of new companies into the region as well as offering expansion opportunities to existing local companies.

a. Demographics and skills attainment level

For years the heavy industrial mills of the region provided well-paying jobs to a large portion of the area's population including those without a high school diploma. Little, if any, employment opportunities exist today for those who lack a high school diploma. The low-skill jobs have all but disappeared and today's jobs in manufacturing and heavy industry require a minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent and a modicum of skill.

Educational attainment in both counties is relatively low. In Columbiana County 14.7 percent of the population over 25 years of age does not have a high school diploma or the equivalent. In Mahoning County, that statistic is 12.7 percent, according to the *County Profiles*. While 17 percent of Columbiana County residents have some college and 8.7 percent have an associate degree, only 8.4 percent have a bachelor's degree. In Mahoning County, 20.4 percent of the population has some college, 5.9 percent possess an associate degree and 13.3 percent have a bachelor's degree.

Area 17 was hard hit by the 2007 economic downturn with unemployment rates in the double digits in 2009, 2010 and much of 2011. Many of the region's dislocated workers faced joblessness for the first time. Many of those same dislocated workers continue to do so. The workers with the most difficulty finding employment often lack current, in-demand skills having worked for a company for decades developing a skill set that is no longer viable. Other dislocated workers who do possess more up-to-date skills do not necessarily recognize that those skills are transferable to other occupations or industries. Furthermore, many dislocated workers face the need to get back to work quickly in order to support their families and cannot afford the time for extensive retraining. For dislocated workers with families and bills, only short-term training programs or programs that give credit for prior learning or already-acquired skills can be considered.

The area has made significant recovery for the depths of the recession and at present the jobless rate is only slightly higher than the state and national rates. Much of the employment recovery has been lead by manufacturing that is re-emerging as a growing industry in the area. Some of the manufacturing recovery is the result of the shale natural gas industry's Utica play that has huge potential for the region. While some of the energy employment needs can be satisfied through short-term training, many require advanced and specific engineering degrees and experience that have not previously been warranted in this area.

b. What is the makeup of business in the workforce area by industry sectors? (percent of manufacturers, percent of service industries, etc.).

Despite years of decline in area manufacturing, the segment continues to be a dominate employment factor and in very recent months appears to be in growth mode based on recent job orders placed with the One-Stop and by the expressed need from local manufacturers. Throughout NE Ohio, there was a 9.4 percent increase in advanced manufacturing from 2010 to 2012, representing a faster growth than any other sector. Currently, this sector represents approximately 15 percent of local employment.

The emerging shale natural gas industry has already boosted regional manufacturing. The full effect of this industry on local employment is difficult to predict although it is anticipated to be positive for employment. In late 2012, a U.S. Chamber of Commerce-funded study reported the industry had generated more than 38,000 jobs in Ohio. Presumably, many of those are in Northeastern Ohio because that is the center of drilling and natural gas processing activity in the state. The study goes on to predict that by 2020, the industry will create 143,600 jobs in the state as the industry moves from exploration phase into production mode. Furthermore, according to the study, 3.5 to 4 indirect jobs are created by every shale oil & gas industry job.

The impact of both sectors mentioned has spurred corresponding growth in the transportation and warehousing sector. The 3 percent rate represented in the following graphic is a conservative estimate based on 2011 data.

Healthcare represents a major employment sector in the region (21 percent) even though its growth has slowed. However, its future will be affected by the Affordable Health Care for America Act and the full impact of it at this point in time is unclear. The demand for healthcare services is expected to increase as the area's population ages.

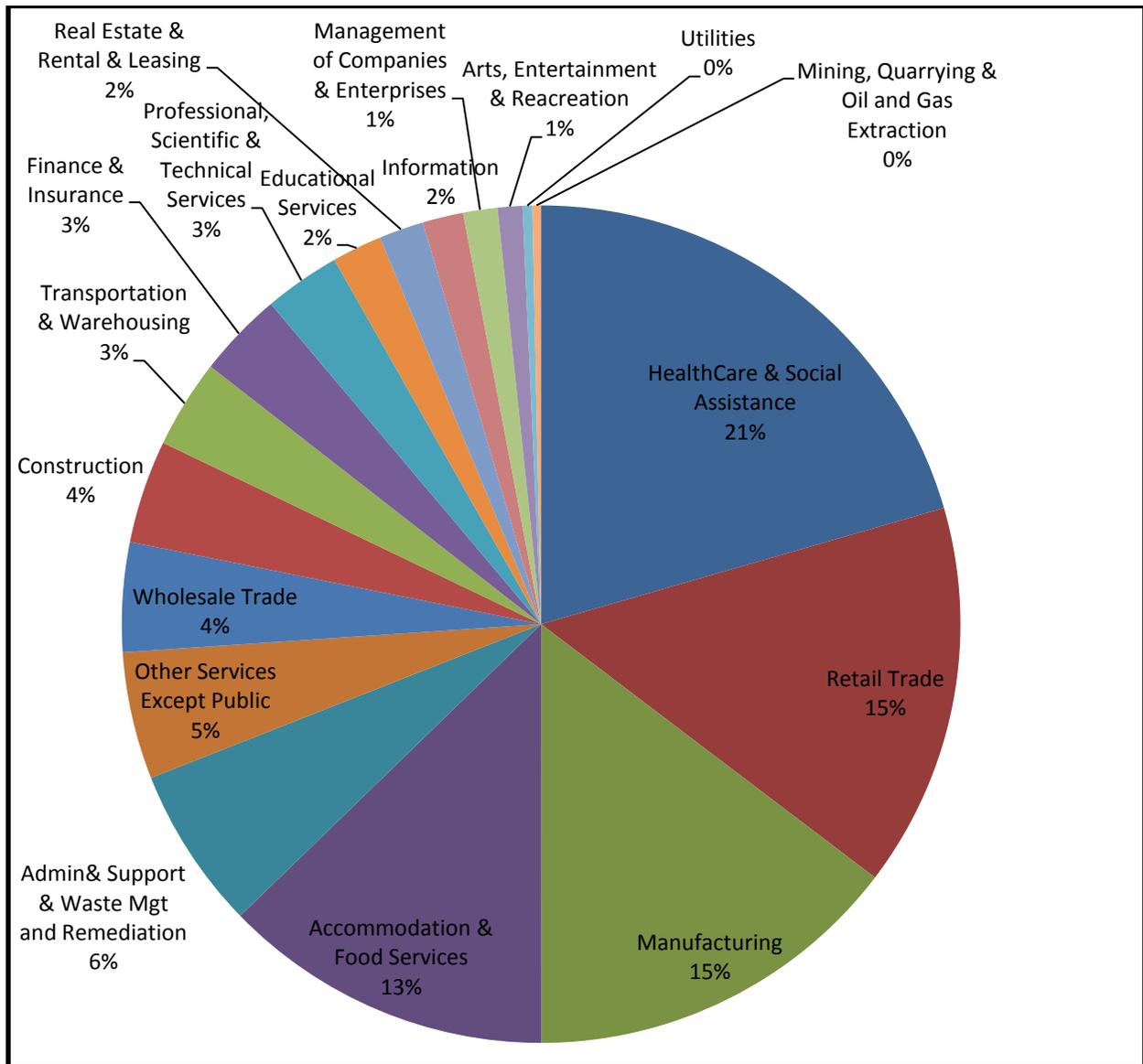
The unemployment rate remains higher than acceptable even as various industries are in hiring mode and some employers express disappointment at not being able to find qualified employees. The mismatch of skills and the lack of in-demand skills leaves the area with a number of unfilled positions and dislocated workers unable to find employment.

Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA(Ohio Area)

Rank	Industry	Average Quarterly Employment (2010Q4,2011Q1, 2011Q2,2011Q3)	Growth in Employment (%) (2010Q3,2011Q3)
	All NAICS Sectors	149,291	4.5 %
1	62 Health Care and Social Assistance	29,754	0.2 %
2	44-45 Retail Trade	23,877	4.7 %
3	31-33 Manufacturing	23,235	1.4 %
4	72 Accommodation and Food Services	16,380	7.5 %
5	56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	12,784	17.0 %
6	42 Wholesale Trade	7,016	-4.4 %
7	23 Construction	6,698	1.9 %
8	48-49 Transportation and Warehousing	5,989	8.5 %
9	81 Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,220	10.5 %
10	54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,838	6.4 %

c. What percent of jobs exist in each sector?

Percentage of Jobs by Industry in the Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA (2011)



d. What educational attainment is needed to do these jobs?

Because of the diversity of the jobs available in the region, there is no single educational requirement. Manufacturing positions require a variety of skills including CNC machining and welding that can be acquired at career & technical schools. Healthcare professions have educational requirements that range from a six-week course for STNA training to many years for doctors and pharmacists. Educational requirements for the emerging oil & gas industry also appear to vary greatly depending on job duties but safety training seems to be a constant across the board. Retail jobs require basic education. Computer competency is becoming a requirement in almost all professions and industries.

However, beyond the educational requirement, the region's industries need responsible, dependable and drug-free workers. Soft skills such as those have presented a challenge to area companies seeking to hire.

Another requirement that appears across the board is "experience." The full range of employers wants workers with experience – evidence that the job seeker can do the job. This requirement presents a challenge to new graduates. While the case for credentials such as the National Career Readiness Credential (WorkKeys®) has gained some traction, it is far from being universally accepted.

e. What resources are available for training in the workforce development area, including primary and secondary education systems, colleges, adult workforce centers, private training providers, local workforce centers, etc.?

Area 17 has 92 institutions offering a variety of training and education within 50 miles of zip code 44512 (Boardman). They range from technical and specialty schools to four-year universities. These institutions not only offer courses and training to students but many will provide customized training programs for local employers. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the institutions within a 50-mile radius of zip code 44512 (Boardman) include:

- 61 that offer programs in Health Professions & Related Clinical Sciences;
- 44 that offer programs in Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services;
- 24 that offer programs in Engineering or Engineering Technologies/Technicians;
- 40 that offer programs in Business, Management, Marketing & Related Support Services;
- 19 that offer programs in Mechanics and Repair Technologies/Technicians or Precision Production or Transportation and Materials Moving Workers;
- 4 that offer programs in Construction Trades;
- 23 that offer programs in Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting and Related Protective Services; and
- 19 that offer programs in Liberal Arts, Sciences, General Studies & Humanities.

The One-Stop provides information regarding training programs and local, state and federal resources available to assist in training including partnerships with several education institutions, including Kent State-Columbiana County, Youngstown State University, Choffin Career & Technical Center, Columbiana County Career & Technical Center, Mahoning Career & Technical Center, Columbiana County Educational Service Center and Eastern Gateway Community College.

Public schools in Mahoning County include: Youngstown City, Austintown, Boardman, Campbell, Struthers, Jackson-Milton, Springfield, West Branch, Canfield, Sebring, Poland, South Range, Western Reserve, Lowellville and Mahoning County Educational Service Center. Non-public and/or non-traditional schools include: St. Charles Elementary, St. Luke Elementary, Youngstown Christian, Holy Family Elementary, Montessori School of Mahoning Valley, Willow Creek Learning Center, Cardinal Mooney High, St. Christine Elementary, Islamic Academy of Youngstown, St. Nicholas School, St. Joseph the Provider, Akiva Academy, St. Joseph Immaculate Heart of Mary, Ursuline High, Legacy Academy, Life Skills Center, Mahoning Unlimited Classroom, Mahoning Valley Opportunity Center, Mollie Kessler, Stambaugh Charter Academy, Summit Academy, Summit Academy – Secondary, Western Reserve Kindergarten Learning Academy, Youngstown Academy of Excellence, Youngstown Community School, Mahoning County High School, Southside Academy and Horizon Science Academy Youngstown.

Columbiana County public school districts include: Beaver Local, Wellsville, Southern Local, Leetonia, United Local, Crestview, Columbiana, Lisbon, East Liverpool, East Palestine and Salem. Private and alternative schools in Columbiana County are: Act 1 Education Center, St. Paul Elementary, American Spirit Academy, St. Aloysius, Buckeye On-Line School for Success, Heartland Christian, East Liverpool Christian and Dixon Early Learning Center Conversion Community School.

Colleges, technical schools and other training providers include: ITT Technical Institute Youngstown, National College-Youngstown, ETI Technical College, Trumbull Business College, Ross Medical Education Center, Hannah E. Mullins School of Practical Nursing, Allegheny Wesleyan College, TDDS Technical Institute.

Both the Mahoning County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) and the Columbiana County MRDD serve a number of school-age children in specialized educational programs.

A variety of **Apprenticeship Programs** are offered by skilled trade unions in the area. Minimum qualifications vary, but all require applicants to be at least 17 years of age and have a high school diploma or the equivalent (GED), and most require that applicants take and pass a drug test. Barriers exist when applicants are not able to meet the minimum qualifications set by the trade union. Programs can be one to five years in length and completion rates for applicants accepted into the multi-year programs range from 50 percent to 98 percent. A complete list is included as **Attachment 1**.

The workforce development system described under Workforce Investment Act (WIA) mandates informed customer choice, system performance, and continuous improvement – all ingredients of the Individual Training Account (ITA) system. The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) establishes the level of support, which is \$4,000 for a 12-month period for area residents for completion of a program of training services which is a series of courses or classes that will lead to a degree or certificate recognized by business and industry that may not exceed two (2) years. ITA's are coordinated with PELL and other applicable grants, and are provided to those customers who lack a marketable skill through a credential or work experience, or those customers who need skill enhancements to make them more employable. Payment methods and schedules are determined by the training institution.

In recognizing the need of many dislocated workers to return to work quickly but are lacking in skills as well as a significant reduction in WIA funding, Area 17 adopted a policy of emphasizing short-term training including On-the-Job Training (OJT). OJTs have become very popular among area employers and have been embraced by job seekers.

See **Attachment 2 - Individual Training Account (ITA) policy** and **Attachment 3 – WIA-Eligible Training Provider List**.

f. Who else is providing similar services in the area?

No single organization or agency provides all the same services as the One-Stop system. However, a variety of public and private organizations provide some of the services.

- Private employers, employment agencies and temp service provide employment services.
- Labor Unions and other agencies provide training services.
- Select social service agencies provide some training tuition.
- Some web sites/computer programs provide limited skill training and job search assistance (resume writing, interviewing techniques, etc.)

The One-Stop is constantly monitoring services provided by others in order to assess whether that service should be considered for inclusion in the One-Stop offerings or the provider of that service should be approached to become a One-Stop partner.

g. Why are customers (job seekers and employers) using venues other than the One-Stop? What is lacking in the One-Stop?

Limited availability of services is a major reason for job seekers and employers to use other services. The One-Stop has taken a number of steps to correct the short-fall. In Mahoning County, a One-Stop satellite location was established to serve a geographically targeted population – inner-city Youngstown. In both Columbiana and Mahoning Counties, the One-Stop has established Express Sites at all public libraries. In Mahoning County that equates to 17 sites spread throughout the county and in Columbiana County that is seven additional sites. In addition to adding geographically to the system, the libraries expand the hours of access with evening and weekend hours. Also four libraries in contiguous counties have been added as Express Sites that further expand the geographic reach of the One-Stop.

In partnership with local WIA Area 18 (Trumbull County), a website (www.onestopohio.org) has been developed and is maintained to provide 24/7 access to a range of One-Stop services from any computer with Internet access. The website was recently redesigned to make it more user-friendly. Information was streamlined for easier use not only by job seeker but also by staff.

III. **Current Operations—**

With this Business Plan, the Area 17 WIB will continue to align workforce development and economic development resources and services available to businesses and job seekers in Mahoning and Columbiana Counties in order to better meet their needs.

a. How are area resources being used to support local workforce efforts?

There are two full-service One-Stop Workforce Centers in Area 17. In both One-Stop Workforce Centers, all 19 required partners and many additional partners are actively involved.

The One-Stop Workforce System delivers services at the following locations:

Columbiana County One-Stop
7989 Dickey Drive, Suite 4
Lisbon, OH 44432
Ph: 330.420.9675
Fax: 330.424.7313

Mahoning County One-Stop
141 Boardman-Canfield Road
Youngstown, OH 44512
Ph: 330.965.1787
Fax: 330.965.1788

Satellite –

Oakhill Renaissance Place
345 Oak Hill Place
Youngstown, OH 44502
Ph: 330.884.6178

Express Sites –

Public Libraries of Youngstown & Mahoning County (17 locations)

Public Libraries in Columbiana County (Salem, Lisbon, Leetonia, Columbiana, East Liverpool, Wellsville and East Palestine) and in contiguous counties of Stark (Minerva and Alliance) and Carroll (Carrollton and Malvern).

Electronic Access –

www.onestopohio.org

An **intergovernmental agreement (Attachment 5)**, was executed on January 20, 2004, between the Mahoning and Columbiana County Boards of Commissioners and MCTA, designating MCTA as the entity responsible for administrative and fiscal functions in the implementation of a local workforce investment system pursuant to the WIA of August 7, 1998.

MCTA was designated as the One-Stop System Operator for Mahoning and Columbiana Counties on January 20, 2004, by the Executive Council of the WIB which consists of the six elected County Commissioners, and by the Executive Committee of the WIB on February 19, 2004, and has dedicated personnel for management, technology and staffing of the One-Stop System. **Copies of these resolutions are included as Attachment 6. A current list of WIB members is included as Attachment 7.** The WIB includes a minimum of 51 percent participation by employers and private sector representatives.

With the launch in 2008 of the Business Resource Network (BRN), much of the Business Outreach of the One-Stop is through this collaborative effort of the BRN's 40 partner organizations. The BRN is made up of the region's chambers of commerce, workforce training organizations, schools, colleges and universities and government agencies that offer some sort of business service.

Job Seekers registering with the One-Stop complete orientation and self-assessment to determine eligibility for services provided by One-Stop partners. The Self-Assessment generates recommendations for review with appropriate partner agency staff. **Job Seeker and Employer Work Flow Chart is included in Attachment 9 – MOU**

b. Where is the majority of time and resources being spent? Are all services receiving the correct amount of staff time and resources based on the workforce area's priority needs?

Many low-skilled and dislocated workers are realizing the need for additional training and education—a change in long-standing values and perceptions in the region. Training on the use of computers to apply for work and maintain employment is in demand, particularly for mature workers who have not been trained in technology for previous employment. Technically unskilled job seekers place demands on staff time. In addition, new opportunities in the emerging oil & gas industry has heightened interest in training for positions in that field. Coordination with training providers is an ongoing process to match gaps articulated by businesses with corresponding training.

Continued unemployment and claimants' exhaustion of Emergency Unemployment Compensation are expected to stress the workforce system throughout the period of this plan. Reductions to One-Stop partners' resources and WIA formula funding require close alignment between the area's priority needs and allocation of services. Concurrently, employers are asking for more services and companies moving into the area are relying on the One-Stop as a remote extension of their human resources operations for recruiting and pre-employment testing.

To meet the staff needs, personnel have been shifted and given temporary assignments to handle the demands. The distinction between business and job seeker services as they pertain to staff responsibility has been blurred. Flexibility and coordination between all departments' staff time and resources has allowed customers to be served throughout the system.

To get the most for the reduced WIA training dollars, the WIB has endorsed the policy of emphasizing short-term training (12 months or less) over long-term (two years). Not only does the policy provide training funding for more job seekers but it returns them to gainful employment in a shorter period of time.

c. How are the workforce preparation and development needs of youth being addressed?

The purpose of youth programming under WIA is to improve education and skill competencies through 1) effective connections for youth (mentoring, training and support services), 2) incentives for recognition and achievement and 3) opportunities for leadership, citizenship, decision-making and community service. Additionally, MCTA provides a menu of services for eligible youth.

Under WIA guidelines, youth must be between the ages of 14 and 21 (our local target group is youth between the ages of 16 and 21); must be low income, and must have a “legislative barrier”. These barriers include:

- Deficiency in basic literacy skills (1 year below grade level);
- School dropout;
- Homeless, runaway or a foster child;
- Pregnant or a parent;
- Offender/Ex-offender;
- Needs additional assistance to complete school or get a job – WIB defined.

Youth services, currently provided through Mahoning & Columbiana Training Association include; information, referral, and assessment, which results in an individual service strategy developed for each student that 1) prepares participating youth for post-secondary educational opportunities; 2) links youth to academic and occupational learning; 3) prepares youth for employment and 4) provides connections to intermediary organizations linked to the job market and employers.

Parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth are involved in the design and implementation of programs. **A list of Youth Council members is included in Attachment 8.**

d. Are there other local policies and procedures, assurances and certifications, and/or processes pertaining to the current operations of the local area?

Please see **Attachment 9, the Memorandum of Understanding**, for additional information.

e. How is the local area ensuring continuous improvement of services and the One-Stop System?

Through participation in sub-committees and work teams, One-Stop partners participate in a process of program review and continuous improvement to offer the

best possible services and seize opportunities for further integration. The WIB Planning & Monitoring Committee oversees this process.

In addition, the partners encourage and accommodate training and cross training, as deemed appropriate, to ensure that partner staff is familiar with programs represented within Area 17's One-Stop System so that services are as integrated as possible, duplication is reduced and overall service delivery is at its highest level. The One-Stops in Mahoning and Columbiana Counties each have a service delivery committee that meets regularly and reviews services provided to job seekers.

To assure that services are responsive to the needs of the community, partners survey their customers regularly to obtain feedback on customer satisfaction and to consider modification of services based on customer input. Business services are tracked by the business service teams in both counties with satisfaction surveys conducted on a regular basis on recruiting efforts and overall business services.

The Area 17 Workforce Investment Board's Balanced Scorecard that monitors the metrics considered key in meeting the goals and objectives of the business plan continues to track the area's efforts to maintain and build on the highest level of performance. The Balanced Scorecard is reviewed at both the Quarterly One-Stop Committee meeting and the quarterly WIB meeting.

f. Identify the needs not being met in the workforce area.

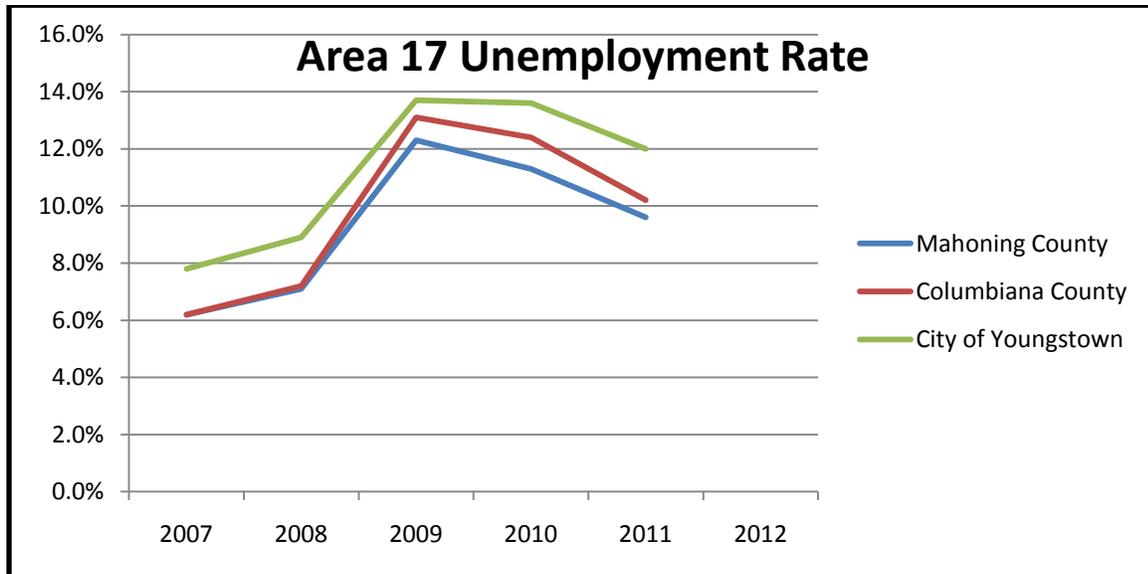
Local manufacturers continue to struggle to find employees with the skills for today's sophisticated and technologically advanced shop floor. The problem is two-fold. First there is a shortage of skills in the region, especially for highly skilled and technical positions such as welders, machinists and IT professionals. Also there is the image problem that the manufacturing is a "dirty" and unstable industry. Both holdovers attitudes from previous times need to be countered to attract a young workforce. Currently, local manufacturing is experiencing a resurgence and could actually grow faster if the skilled workers were available. This gap is being addressed by a Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) grant to the Oh-Penn Interstate Region.

Also the Mahoning County Career & Technical Center and the Columbiana County Career & Technical Center have responded to the demand by upgrading and vigorously promoting their machining and welding programs.

Another DOL WIF grant benefiting Area 17 is the Business Resource Network (BRN) expansion grant. The grant seeks to expand the workforce and economic development partnership launched by Area 17 and 18 in 2008, into 16 counties across Ohio Through comprehensive surveys and discussion with businesses, the BRN continually identifies unmet needs, determines trends and collaborates to address employers' challenges and opportunities.

IV. Market Trends Analysis

Manufacturing has lead Area 17's recovery from the 2008-09 Great Recession when unemployment reached levels not seen since the Great Depression. The resurgence of manufacturing in the area has been notable with growth returning to an employment sector that has been a major, but declining, industry since the steel mill closings in the 1970s.



The area's workforce has declined in the past decade by 4.6 percent in Mahoning, and 4.5 percent in Columbiana County as a result of an aging population and young people, especially those with a college education, leaving the area for better job prospects. Total population in Mahoning County dropped 7.9 percent from 2000 to 2011 and 4.0 percent in Columbiana County.

a. What do current employers want and need?

Today's busy employers want and need a single point of contact for a wide range of services. They want to cut through the red tape and they want a service representative who knows and understands their industry sector.

Manufacturing

The region's skills mis-match is no more evident than in the manufacturing segment that is undergoing a resurgence but the shortage of skilled machinists and welders is hampering some companies' growth.

The local manufacturing sector is comprised of existing companies that are growing and several new companies moving into the area primarily to take advantage of the emerging shale natural gas industry.

Hiring and Training needs:

Manufacturers have moved to the fore with the area's most critical hiring and training needs. The skills that are in extremely short supply are welders and machinists, especially those with certifications and experience.

This skills shortage has lead local manufacturers to create the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition (MVMC) that focuses on attracting more young people into the manufacturing skill training programs. Fortunately at the same time, local career and technical centers have been re-invigorated and expanded their welding and machining programs both at the high school and adult education levels.

While the effort is showing signs of success, the shortage remains and there continues to be an issue with some manufacturers hiring workers away from other manufacturers.

A Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund grant in which Area 17 participates, addresses the manufacturing skills shortfall by seeking to attract more young people to the industry, creating career pathways, promoting recognized credentials and implementing the action plan developed by the MVMC.

Shale Natural Gas Industry

The shale natural gas industry appeared in the area only two years ago but has already had a significant impact on the local workforce with much more effect anticipated in the next few years. Some of the growth in manufacturing has been attributed to the shale segment as the demand for drilling and processing as well as ancillary equipment has taken off.

Hiring and Training needs:

The industry's direct demand for workers is still emerging as the drilling and processing companies initiate projects in the region. What has become clear is the need for CDL truck drivers. Drilling activity is mobile and requires a lot of water and supplies to be delivered to drilling sites. The other occupation in immediate demand is welders because the industry is building a pipeline infrastructure. Also with companies moving production into the area as well as the building processing facilities, the demand on the construction trades has increased in the past year and is expected to be even greater in the future.

Healthcare

The healthcare industry that had been one of the area's fastest growing industry segments has stabilized and actually may be contracting. However, it remains a significant employment sector in the area.

Hiring and Training needs:

Current hiring is for replacement workers with the most demand seen in non-nursing patient-care professions such as general practice physicians, physical therapists and pharmacists with many healthcare facilities acting to cut costs. Additionally, experienced nurses to serve in supervisor and training capacities are needed to replace retiring workers.

There continues to be an on-going demand for STNAs and other basic healthcare workers who are involved in providing in-home and supportive health care.

b. What are the worker populations whose needs should be addressed? In what ways can these workers' needs be better met?

Even with the area's economic recovery, there are many job seekers in the area who do not possess the skills currently in demand. Even more critical is the fact many lack the skills to job search in today's environment. Many need assistance identifying transferrable skills. Some need minimal training to bring their capabilities up to those demanded by employers while some need extensive training to gain employable skills.

There continues to be low educational attainment levels in the area although there has been marked improvement in the past two years.

Education Attainment

	Mahoning Co		Columbiana Co	
	2011	2009	2011	2009
No high school diploma or GED	12.7%	17.6%	14.7%	19.4%
High school diploma	40.7%	40.1%	47.1%	47.6%
Some college	20.4%	20.0%	17.0%	17.2%
Associate degree	5.9%	4.8%	8.7%	5.0%
Bachelor's degree	13.3%	11.8%	8.4%	7.4%
Master's degree or higher	7.0%	5.7%	4.0%	3.3%

Both counties have ABLE/GED programs connected to the One-Stop System. With the One-Stop's self-assessment completed by all registrants, those lacking a high school diploma are identified quickly and are encouraged and guided to use the free program to improve their employment potential.

Another need identified by Area 17 job seekers is the need to get back to work quickly. Many have financial responsibilities so long-term training is not an option. Many must simply take the first job available in order to pay the mortgage and keep food on the table. One way to address some of these issues is through the On-the-Job Training program that has been extremely successful in the past year or so. The program defrays the cost to an employer of training a new hire. The OJTs along with Area 17's emphasis on short term training (12 months or less) over long-term training (two-year programs) seeks to get job seekers back to work in the shortest time possible.

In addition, Area 17 has been able to take advantage of the Shale-Net OJT program that defrays the costs of new hires in Tier 1 and Tier 2 shale natural gas industry suppliers.

c. What changes can we anticipate in the regional economy and local workforce that will have workforce development implications?

The emerging shale natural gas industry has already had positive effects on the local economy and workforce and it is expected to have greater impact in the future. A number of local companies have experienced increased business because of the industry—Dearing Compressor, Specialty Fab and MAC Trailer are examples. New companies are moving into the area—Exterran is building a new manufacturing facility in Youngstown and will hire more than 100 workers. Also the construction of infrastructure (pipelines) for the shale industry is in very early stages requiring a number of workers including many welders.

The ancillary affect of the development includes demands on lodging and restaurants by out-of-town workers. Many landowners have benefited from oil & gas leases and have increased spending including the purchase of new cars, new pickup trucks, new farm equipment and new pole buildings and other structures. In general, more money is being spent in the region and therefore retail and service businesses are growing and bringing with that growth increased employment.

The industry is expected to attract more downstream industries but at this point in time, what effect that will have on the workforce and the kinds of skills that could be required is unclear. But with the speed that the industry has moved into the area, the One-Stop is being vigilant for new developments and is poised to react to new demands on the workforce.

d. What industries are growing, which are declining?

As Area 17 continues to be impacted by the emerging shale natural gas industry, the past cannot be used as an indication of the future. The area is in uncharted waters. Neither the resurgence of manufacturing nor the stalled growth in healthcare was foreseen two years ago when the previous business plan was written.

With the shale industry arriving in Area 17 barely two years ago, many statistics do not yet show the effect on the workforce. Also, with the major player in Columbiana County – Chesapeake Energy—located its offices in Canton, its effect on workforce may show more in WIA Area 6 statistics. Furthermore, the industry ramp up is only beginning thus current needs may not be the same as its long-term needs. In addition, the industry presence is felt more strongly in Columbiana County (not part of the Youngstown-Warren Boardman MSA).

Major Employment Sectors for Youngstown-Warren-Boardman MSA

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Average Quarterly Employment (2010Q4,2011Q1, 2011Q2,2011Q3)</i>	<i>Growth in Employment (%) (2010Q3,2011Q3)</i>
	All NAICS Sectors	149,291	4.5 %
1	<u>62 Health Care and Social Assistance</u>	29,754	0.2 %
2	<u>44-45 Retail Trade</u>	23,877	4.7 %
3	<u>31-33 Manufacturing</u>	23,235	1.4 %
4	<u>72 Accommodation and Food Services</u>	16,380	7.5 %
5	<u>56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</u>	12,784	17.0 %
6	<u>42 Wholesale Trade</u>	7,016	-4.4 %
7	<u>23 Construction</u>	6,698	1.9 %
8	<u>48-49 Transportation and Warehousing</u>	5,989	8.5 %
9	<u>81 Other Services (except Public Administration)</u>	5,220	10.5 %
10	<u>54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</u>	4,838	6.4 %

e. What ways can we transition incumbent workers in a declining industry into a growing industry by building on their existing skills?

Area 17's One-Stop System brings together resources to help job seekers find jobs and employers find qualified workers in many ways:

Career Exploration Workshop – The One-Stop workshop allows participants to explore career pathways. The participant can learn what is required in various careers and see what best suits their individual skills, abilities, experience and personality. They also learn how to find information about a career's wages, projected growth rates and education and/or certification requirements.

MySkills/MyFuture.com – The website helps job seekers explore new careers that use skills the same or similar to those they used in a past job. A link to the website is prominently displayed on the OneStopOhio.org website

MyNextMove.org – The website is prominently displayed on the OneStopOhio.org website and is used in the Career Exploration Workshop to help job seekers match their personal work preferences with careers. It provides information such as pay and outlook about careers that job seekers express an interest in pursuing.

f. What employers are you reaching and what employers should you focus more attention towards?

The One-Stop System is reaching many Area 17 employers in a wide range of industries. One of the goals identified on the Balanced Scorecard is to have job orders from at least 500 unique employers during Program Year 2012.

In addition, the One-Stop system was instrumental in the creation of the Business Resource Network (BRN). The BRN is a partnership of local schools and organizations that offer variety of business services all of which can be accessed through a single point of contact. The BRN targets companies that are growing or struggling to survive. The DOL Workforce Innovation Fund grant to expand the BRN is expected to allow more Area 17 companies to access services through the BRN. Also, companies at risk are expected to be able to access assistance. The grant will expand the concept to an additional 16 counties in Ohio.

The One-Stop system is also an active participant with the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition that seeks to train and recruit workers for local machining and fabrication shops. Its participation in DOL WIF grant to the Oh-Penn Interstate Region to bridge the manufacturing skills gap will enhance contact and services to Area 17's manufacturing companies.

Area 17 has a long and beneficial history with healthcare providers that covers more than a decade. Even as the healthcare industry's employment needs have changed, the relationship continues.

g. What are some of the changes occurring in local demographics that may affect the current workforce system?

The steady decline in Area 17 population since 2000 may have ended with Mahoning County showing a slight increase since 2009. Mahoning County's population dropped from 257,555 in 2000 to 236,735 in 2009 but rose to 237,270 in 2011. This same positive growth has not been realized in the labor force participation rate. For Columbiana County, the drop was from 112,075 in 2000 to 107,722 in 2009 and essentially stabilized with a population of 107,570 reported in 2011.

That said, the population in both counties is aging. The percentage of residents 65 or older in both counties is greater than the 14.1 percent for the state as a whole. Mahoning County residents 65 or older represent 17.9 percent of the population while the 65 and older segment is 16.5 percent of the Columbiana County population. The median age for each county also is greater than for the State of Ohio which is 38.2 years. Mahoning County's median age is 42.1 years while the median age in Columbiana County is 41.6 years.

Many of the area's youth leave the area to attend college or university and then stay away for employment opportunities. Many youth who attend college locally, upon

completion leave the area for better job prospects. Even many youth who complete high school leave the area for better job opportunities.

Concurrently, the trend of individuals in their 60s and 70s continuing to work well past the time that earlier generations would have retired has and is expected to continue.

V. MARKETING – This section should outline a strategy for creating awareness of services provided and connecting with all job seekers and employers in the regional workforce area.

a. What is the current marketing strategy and what plans are in place for improvements?

With reduced funding, a targeted approach to outreach has been implemented. Presentations, print and electronic media will be directed at increasing participation in on-the-job training and other short-term training in compliance with state and national guidance.

Recent improvements to the One-Stop website and communication capabilities of the customer tracking system allow for directed outreach to One-Stop customers. By utilizing demographic and interest information collected during registration, relevant information on services, events and opportunities can be electronically conveyed to individuals.

Recent outreach efforts--

- Articles were submitted for the Progress Editions/Growth Reports in *The Business Journal*, *The Vindicator*, *The Salem News* and *The (East Liverpool) Review*. In July, one will be submitted to *The Morning Journal*. These have been identified as the major publications in Area 17. An article in conjunction with Area 18 (Trumbull County) was submitted to the *Tribune-Chronicle*.
- *The Connection*, the One-Stop newsletter, is published every other month with partner information actively solicited for each edition. Editions also can be accessed at: www.OneStopOhio.org
- “User-Friendly Phone Book” yellow pages ad lists Area 17 and 18 One-Stop sites.
- One-Stop information appears in the *Columbiana County Fact Book* and the *Mahoning County Fact Book*.

Current marketing outreach strategies--

- Update frequently the web site, www.OneStopOhio.org
- Build on successful employer relationships in BRN promotions.
- Update and consolidate One-Stop brochures and pamphlets.

b. Are targeted job seekers and employers aware of the services provided?

While, no survey of area job seekers has been conducted recently, consistently high rates of job seeker traffic at One-Stop offices and on the website indicate that awareness exists. Directives from ODJFS Office of Unemployment Compensation to claimants to contact the One-Stop and to attend Unemployment Compensation Reemployment Services sessions promote awareness of services available. Additionally, One-Stop and WIA representatives participate in all local Rapid Response orientations to inform dislocated workers of available services. The offices of both the Columbiana County One-Stop and the Oak Hill Satellite are

located in the same buildings as their respective County Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS). Direct referrals are made onsite. Also news releases concerning large recruitment efforts at the One-Stops are distributed to local media with the result being that such hiring events are well attended.

The Business Resource Network actively monitor activity in the business community and pursue leads. Staff members routinely conduct outreach to business groups to increase awareness of available services. The BRN that was formed in partnership with Area 18 currently has 40 partners including chambers of commerce, workforce training organizations, schools, colleges and universities and government agencies that offer some sort of business service. The BRN is constantly seeking new partners and targeting businesses where it can provide solutions that will help a company survive or grow.

Active participation with the Mahoning Valley Manufacturers Coalition and NEOHealthforce provide direct contact with employers in two of the area's primary sectors and opportunities to both disburse information on services as well as identify the short- and long-term workforce needs.

c. Are there job seeker and/or employer target populations that need to be reached?

Job Seekers

Coordinated access and service to specific targeted populations will be pursued through collaboration with partner organizations specifically tied to those populations as well as through general One-Stop outreach

- ex-offenders
- low-income individuals, including public assistance recipients
- veterans
- older workers
- disabled
- individuals without a GED or diploma
- long-term unemployed and under-employed

The One-Stop customer tracking system provides job seeker demographics and indicators for an individuals inclusion the targeted groups. these demographics are periodically reviewed to ensure the region's population is being served. This capability allows the One-Stop management to assess the extent that it serves all aspects of Area 17's population.

Columbiana County	Population*	One-Stop
White	95.7%	95.0%
African-American	2.1%	2.9%
Native American	0.1%	0.3%
Asian	0.2%	0.1%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.2%
Other	0.6%	0.4%
2 or more races	1.3%	**
Hispanic (any race)	1/3%	0.8%
Choose not to disclose	--	0.5%

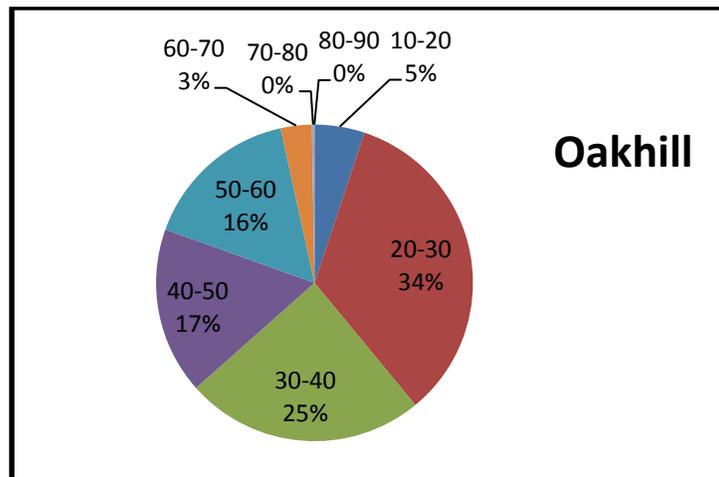
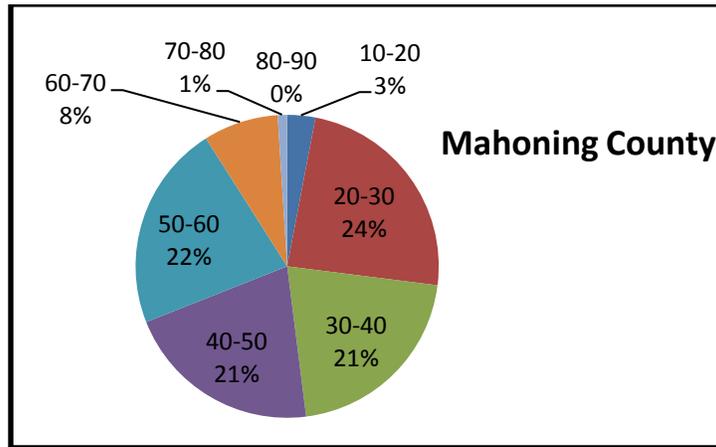
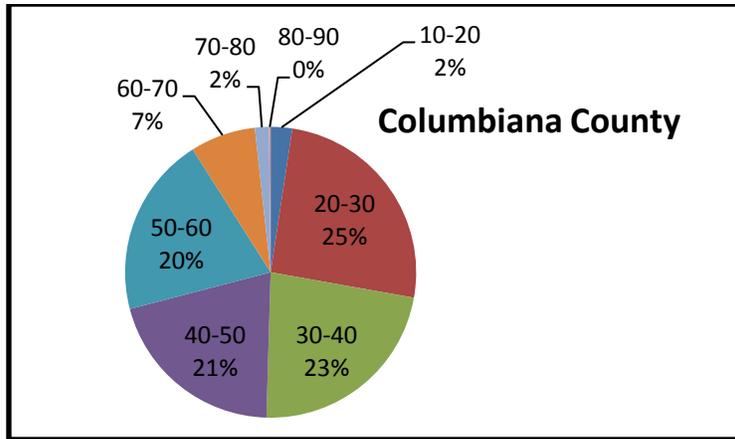
Mahoning County	Population*	One-stop	Oakhill
White	80.8%	58.4%	24.3%
African-American	15.8%	31.0%	57.5%
Native American	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%
Asian	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%
Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Other	1.0%	1.6%	1.5%
2 or more races	1.4%	**	**
Hispanic (any race)	4.3%	5.6%	5.9%
Choose not to disclose	--	2.9%	0.7%

** not tracked

*from Office of Policy, Research & Strategic Planning/County Profiles

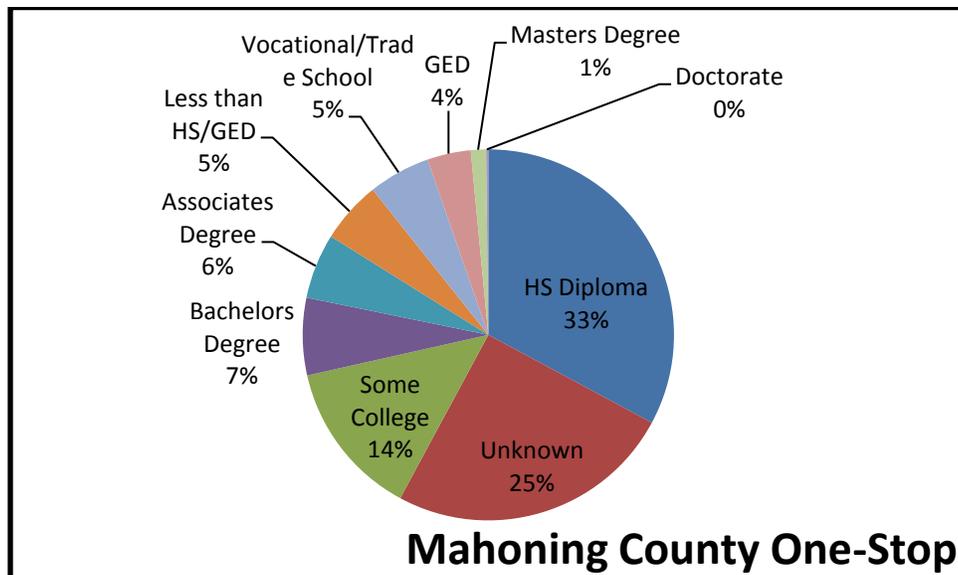
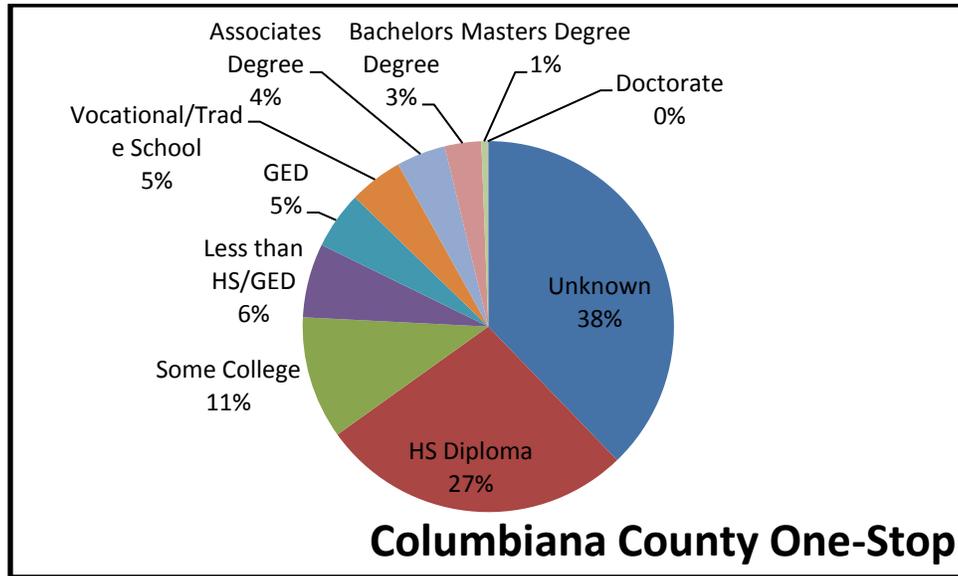
Males predominate at Mahoning and Columbiana One-Stops, accounting for 60 percent and 59 percent of visitors, respectively. However, at the Oakhill Satellite, 54 percent of customers are female.

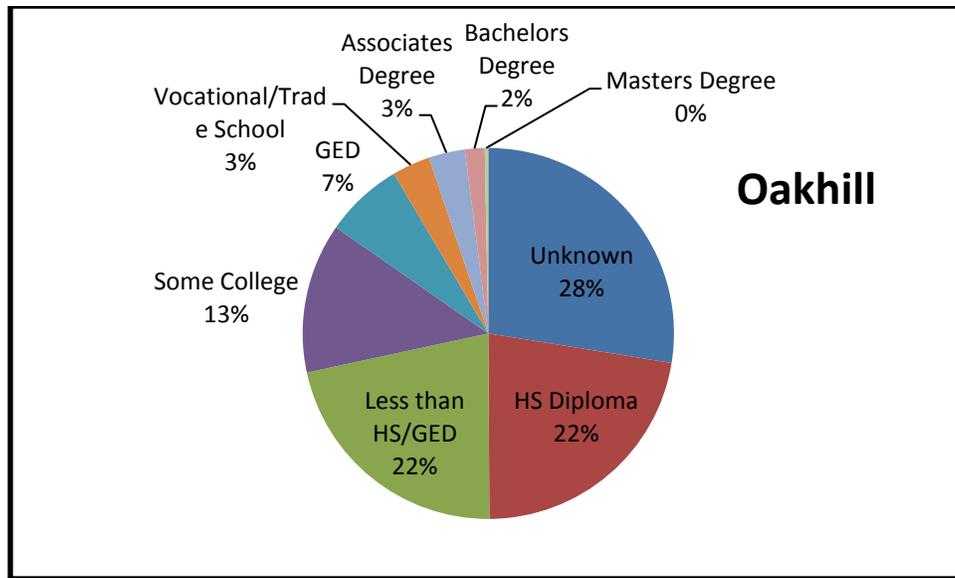
The ages of One-Stop customers fall within every ten-year span of the standard working population. Universal and intensive services are distributed across all age groups. The recession of 2007 to 2009 had a more severe effect on older workers, particularly those in the 45 to 64 age group. As compared to younger workers, lower levels of technical skills and educational attainment among this group often impede re-employment. This group represents a large number of the long-term unemployed. Area 17 continues to direct resources accordingly.



The percentage of One-Stop customers that list themselves as having a disability is 6.9 percent in Columbiana County, 4.9 percent in Mahoning County and 9.5 percent at the Oakhill One-Stop Satellite. Of the customers who complete the self-assessment on-line from a remote location, 5.5 percent list themselves as disabled. The question asked is: “Do you have a disability or medical condition that hinders you from obtaining or maintaining employment? (This includes currently being treated for excessive alcohol use or abuse of a controlled substance).”

The breakdown by educational achievement shows One-Stop customers are at all levels of education. Those lacking a high school diploma or GED are identified very early in the registration process and are encouraged to attend ABLÉ classes with the aim of earning a GED.





In Columbiana County, 12.5 percent of customers are employed full-time, in Mahoning County, 12.6 percent are employed while 6.2 percent of the Oakhill Satellite customers are employed full time.

Having the highest percentage of veterans during the past two years is Columbiana County at 9.2 percent followed by 5.7 percent at the Mahoning County One-Stop and 4.5 percent at the Oakhill Satellite.

Business

Targeted businesses include those identified as at-risk and those positioned for growth. Interviews conducted through the BRN facilitate appropriate services. Focus will continue on specific industry sectors, particularly those whose entry-level needs can be accommodated through short-term training Workforce shortages in manufacturing, transportation, health and human services, information technology, education and energy are expected to increase demand for recruitment and training services during the period of this plan. Concentrated outreach will be conducted to manufacturers through a Workforce Innovation Fund Grant to identify and address the skills gap in that sector. Basic One-Stop business outreach for recruitment services will be directed to a comprehensive spectrum of employers.

d. Does the current marketing strategy relate to a statewide marketing initiative?

All outreach efforts and materials include the use of the OhioMeansJobs branding to maintain consistency and increase recognition of One-Stops throughout Ohio.

VI. GOAL SETTING AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Please see Area 17's detailed Strategic Plan that follows.

VII. STRATEGIC PLAN

Please see Area 17's detailed Strategic Plan that follows.