

## RECOVERY ACT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### 1. Provide an analysis of the LWIA's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context.

The Lehigh Valley is a key location in northeastern United States. With a population of approximately 30 million people within a 100-mile radius, the Lehigh Valley is a one-day drive from one-third of the population of the United States and one-half of all Canadian consumers. There are 11 institutions of higher learning with more than 50,000 students, two community colleges and three career and technical schools.

The Lehigh Valley area has an approximate population of 635,000 people and 242,000 households. It has a workforce of 329,000 people, 301,000 of whom are employed. There are 277,000 jobs at 15,400 companies; 24,000 commuters are potential employees for new companies. Between 1996 and 2008, 43,000 net new jobs were created, an increase of 18 percent.

Between 2000 and 2008, the Lehigh Valley added nearly 25 new residents a day. During this time-period, it was one of the fastest growing metropolitan regions in the northeastern United States. Its population grew by 67,800 people, a 9 percent increase. Eighty percent of the growth was from in-migration from other states and metropolitan areas.

The most recent estimated median household income data for 2008 is \$55,269, a 24 percent increase during the eight-year period, an income 11 percent higher than the national average and 5 percent higher than the state average.

In 2008, *Forbes* ranked the Lehigh Valley 30<sup>th</sup> in the nation in its list of Best Places for Business and Careers. The Lehigh Valley was the only metropolitan area selected in Pennsylvania. It was one of two metropolitan areas in the northeastern United States ranked in the top 50.

For the Lehigh Valley to remain competitive in the global economy, the LVWIB is connecting workforce development to the demands of business and industry through industry clusters. An industry cluster is a group of industries that are closely linked by common product markets, labor pools, similar technologies, supplier chains and/or other economic ties. By working with businesses within the industry clusters, training needs for multiple firms with similar skill needs can be combined to help drive a market-based approach to workforce development. The industry clusters include healthcare and life sciences, diversified manufacturing, business and financial services, information and communication, and energy services.

Health Care and Life Sciences



Diversified Manufacturing



Business and Financial Services



Information and Communication



Energy Services



Lehigh Valley's targeted industry clusters provides above-average wages and are less reliant upon low-wage labor, incorporate a high-technology, knowledge and skill-set component, have synergy with the existing Lehigh Valley workforce, infrastructure and educational institutions, leverage existing Lehigh Valley assets, have established competitive positioning in the US and globally, have a high value-added component in the local economy, and are classified as growth industries at the state and/or national level.

The key factors that shape the LVWIB's work include:

- In the past ten years, the service sectors have had substantial growth: trade, transportation and utilities have grown by 8.7 percent including the sub-sector of logistics and transportation, which has grown by 18.6 percent; professional and business services by 11 percent; and education and health services by 25 percent.
- The two largest employers in the Lehigh Valley are Lehigh Valley Health Network and St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network, together employing more than 16,300 people. When combined with Sacred Heart Hospital, Easton Hospital and Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Network, these employers account for more than 6 percent of the total workforce in the Lehigh Valley.
- Education and health services are the highest growth sectors in the region.
- Warehousing and distribution and call centers are concerned about the shortage of workers in these fields, the relatively low number of candidates in the pipeline and the demand for high, entry-level wages.
- The number of people retiring from the workforce is escalating. On a skills-needed basis, employers are enticing workers age 55 and over to remain in the workplace and are providing extremely attractive packages to retirees to attract them back as consultants. This is especially true in mechanical, civil and quality engineering. At the same time, 37 percent of retirees report that returning to work is a necessity.
- Business and industry require workers to be skilled and qualified for work. In this economy, employers can and are hiring applicants who are over-qualified, further closing employment opportunities to job seekers with minimum skills and education.
- Regional employers consider work readiness, technical, vocational and advanced academic skills to be the most important, both currently and in the future.

In this turbulent economy, the economic landscape of the Lehigh Valley is constantly changing. In recent years, the Lehigh Valley has been one of the primary job-generating areas in the mid-Atlantic region. Its population and therefore has swelled to record highs, as job seekers move to the Lehigh Valley seeking job opportunities. With the current economic times and the severe cutback of job openings, however, this flow of new residents has been reduced to a trickle. In January 2009, the unemployment rate in the Lehigh Valley stood at 7 percent, the first time it was that high since January 1993. By March 2009, it had increased to 8.3 percent.

Current economic conditions in the Lehigh Valley, including major layoffs and general labor market conditions, are as follows:

- Cutbacks and plant closings are occurring in all sectors of the economy. Twenty-nine companies and more than 3,100 workers have been laid off or have received notice of layoff from April 2008 to September 2009.

- There has been a 34.6 percent increase in company closings and a 139 percent increase in affected workers from April 2007 to March 2009.
- Diversified manufacturing, logistics, and transportation have experienced the largest number of dislocated workers.
- The unemployment rate has steadily increased over the past three years to its current 12-year high of 8.3 percent in March 2009.
- There was a 48.5 percent decrease in Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS) job orders, with 4,029 from April 2007 to December 2007 as compared to 2,070 from April 2008 to December 2008.
- Due to the decrease in employment opportunities and increase in people available for work, competition is increasing and skills are in demand. Employers are becoming extremely selective in hiring only the most qualified workers, which is having an adverse impact on workers who are disadvantaged due to lack of education, training and skills.
- The total number of job openings listed in *The Morning Call* and *The Express-Times* is substantially lower in comparison to the same time period one and two years ago.
- Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation reported a 20 percent decrease in employer prospects. Ten businesses have put a hold on either expanding or relocating to the Lehigh Valley. This is a negative impact of 2,000 job openings.
- The annual PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley Job Fair held in September 2008 had 109 employer booths and 6,016 jobseekers compared to the Job Fair held in September 2007, which had 118 employer booths and 4,990 jobseekers.
- There has been a dramatic decrease in employer recruitment job fairs held at the PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley, decreasing from 71 to 19.

The impact of the economic downturn in the Lehigh Valley has been felt by individuals from all walks of life:

- There has been a 22.9 percent increase in Unemployment Insurance claimants utilizing CareerLink services. There is a 10.42 percent increase in long-term unemployment due in part to the length of time it takes to get re-employed. This increased period of unemployment means that participants are using PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley services longer, resulting in a pool of carryover participants added to an ever-increasing pool of new participants.
- There has been a 50 percent increase of professional workers using PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley services.
- The skill gaps of the available workforce include but are not limited to occupations within health care occupations, skilled crafts and trades workers, and customer service and inside sales, PLC Controllers, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), basic and advanced academic skills, technical skills with credentials and work readiness skills.

## **2. What is the LWIA's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce?**

The **vision** of Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (LVWIB) for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce is that *the Lehigh Valley has a world-class, competitive workforce.*

Its **mission**, within the context of the current economic recovery, is *to accelerate the timeframe to ensure a world-class workforce system in the Lehigh Valley that is aligned with economic development and education*. Through funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the LVWIB will accelerate its efforts to:

- Assist those most impacted by the recession, including low-income, displaced and under-skilled adults and disconnected youth
- Work with employers to preserve and create jobs
- Promote the Lehigh Valley region's economic recovery

The LVWIB has adopted the following **goals** to guide its use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds:

- To promote the Lehigh Valley's long-term economic growth by improving the quality of the region's workforce and the competitiveness of its employers
- To transform the LVWIB's workforce system so that the Lehigh Valley's workforce and employers have access to a coordinated, transparent and effective system of workforce and training services
- To promote coordination, cooperation and information sharing about American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds available to the Lehigh Valley
- To use performance data to drive the improvement of the workforce development system

To foster a demand-driven, workforce development system, the LVWIB will continue to focus on:

- **Access**, by looking for and eliminating barriers which inhibit workers from getting the education/training needed to be employable and employers from getting the quality/quantity of the workforce needed;
- **Education**, by working with industry to understand the technical and soft skill sets employees need to be effective partners in maintaining a growing, competitive, sustainable regional economy, and to design and develop an education and training system which can effectively provide those skill sets;
- **Industry needs**, by identifying those industry-specific workforce needs which must be addressed to sustain a robust economy in the Lehigh Valley and to work in concert with educational institutions to develop an action plan to meet identified needs;
- **Marketing**, by creating a sense of urgency at the state, regional and local levels about the importance of a competitive workforce and to insure that industry clusters, employers and workers know of available workforce development support services.

This approach will help the LVWIB build an even stronger holistic, one-stop system that serves its customers, workers and employers. Because of the current daunting economic conditions, the LVWIB must be able to service the extremes of the workforce, the highly trained and educated unemployed, as well as those who are most vulnerable educationally and economically. It recognizes that its staff must be retooled to deal effectively and efficiently with the new economic realities. The delivery process must be compressed so workers can quickly obtain the services they need. Service locations need to be expanded and marketing efforts to the entire community need to be intensified.

The LVWIB is uniquely positioned to accelerate the timeframe to ensure a world-class workforce system in the Lehigh Valley that is aligned with economic development and education through its partnerships and collaborative efforts. Its history of working with local employers and its focus on helping all individuals secure a job with family-sustaining wages is documented by consistently exceeding USDOL and Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry standards of performance.

**3. What is the LWIA’s vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need of assistance, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk?**

The LVWIB’s workforce system is optimized to ensure that every youth has the opportunity for:

- Skills assessments
- Career interest and awareness information
- Skills training
- Work readiness, interest employment and self-sufficiency

The LVWIB expects to target youth most in need of assistance such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm workers youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk. It will serve between 400 to 500 youth, a greater number than in previous years, and provide summer employment opportunities for up to 300 youth.

We project that up to 80 percent, the majority of funding received through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for youth, will be spent in the summer of 2009 on intensive services and training. Youth will receive work experience and spendable income over the summer months as they prepare to participate in the labor market in the future.

The work experience, a core component of the Summer Youth Employment Program, will be a planned, structured and a paid work activity in a workplace. The work experience will introduce the youth to the world of work and will develop knowledge, skills and personal attributes that enable them to obtain a job, be successful in the career of their choice, and contribute to the betterment of society. All summer youth programming providers including for profit corporations, public or private non-profit agencies, educational institutions, labor organizations, or public agencies will focus on aligning youth with work experiences that mirror entry level employment in the private sector.

The LVWIB recognizes two significant changes to the Summer Youth Employment Program due to funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act:

- The eligibility age is increased to a maximum of 24 years old
- Work readiness is the only indicator required to assess the effectiveness of summer work experiences

Because the eligibility age has been increased to a maximum of 24 years, we anticipate an increase in the number of veterans and eligible spouses seeking assistance. Veterans ages 18 to 24 have a particularly high incidence of unemployment immediately upon discharge. The LVWIB will provide priority of services for veterans and their eligible spouses.

To accelerate the process and serve an increased number of youth, the LVWIB plans to:

- Intensify and broaden outreach efforts to identify increased numbers of at-risk youth
- Intensify and broaden outreach efforts to veterans 18-24 and their eligible spouse
- Intensify and broaden collaborative partnerships to identify and create more wraparound services
- Intensify outreach efforts to ensure youth, in particular at-risk youth, are connected to career resources and training, wraparound services and employment options.

This increase in services will be facilitated in part by the linkages the LVWIB and its PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley operators and subcontractors have established with local educational agencies, community-based organizations, Office of Assistance of Lehigh and Northampton counties, one-stop mandated partners, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, local businesses and labor groups and apprenticeship. These partners have a voice in the planning process for youth services through their representatives serving on the LVWIB and the Lehigh Valley Youth Council.

#### **4. Identify the LWIA's key workforce investment system priorities and how each will lead to actualizing the LWIA's vision for workforce and economic development.**

The **vision** of the LVWIB for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce is that the Lehigh Valley has a world-class, competitive workforce. Its **mission**, within the context of economic recovery, is to accelerate the timeframe to ensure a world-class workforce system in the Lehigh Valley that is aligned with economic development and education.

Each priority adopted by the LVWIB to guide its use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds will play a vital role in making the LVWIB's vision a reality. These priorities include:

**Priority one:** *To promote the Lehigh Valley's long-term economic growth by improving the quality of the region's workforce and the competitiveness of its employers.*

**Priority two:** *To transform the LVWIB's workforce system so that the Lehigh Valley's workforce and employers have access to a coordinated, transparent and effective system of workforce and training services.*

**Priority three:** *To promote coordination, cooperation and information sharing about Recovery Act funds available to the Lehigh Valley.*

**Priority four:** *To use performance data to drive the improvement of the workforce development system.*

**Priority five:** *To use ARRA funds to ensure a continuum of education and training.*

**Priority one** builds on the dual customer approach the LVWIB follows. It has established wide-ranging partnerships in the community including established Lehigh Valley Industry Partnerships; the Lehigh Valley Business/Education Partnership, which brings together the joint

leadership of business and education; Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation; Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce; local universities and community colleges; Manufacturers Resource Center; career and technical schools; Society for Human Resource Management; PA CareerLink's Lehigh Valley employer master list; community-based organizations, and more.

These partnerships provide the LVWIB with keen insight as to the needs and opportunities of local business and industry. Using information and data culled from these partnerships, the LVWIB addresses specific skills, training and education needs of the workforce to ensure that the workforce system prepares workers for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

***Priority two*** focuses on the need, especially throughout the economic recovery period, to continually transform the workforce system. The current system faces many challenges due to the economic downturn. The workforce system is now called upon to work with the extremes of the workforce continuum including those economically disadvantaged by the recession, and the highly educated and trained workers who are unemployed due to job dislocation and downsizing along with unskilled workers whose lives have been devastated by the economic downturn. The system must compress its service delivery, providing targeted services quickly and seamlessly after an initial assessment; people must receive services quickly. The capacity of the system to work with more and more customers must be increased. Finally, the staff delivering services must be continually trained to address current workforce realities.

***Priority three*** focuses on the need to use American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds in a coordinated manner and lead to economic recovery in the Lehigh Valley. The LVWIB has laid a strong foundation for this type of partnership and collaboration to leverage funding and will continue to do so. The committee structure of the LVWIB, which includes business, labor, education and community-based organizations, leads to such collaboration. The LVWIB is also a member of the Lehigh Valley Recession Response and Recovery Task Force, a newly-created committee to provide coordination for the use of Recovery Act funds. It also partners with the Lehigh Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, PennDOT, County and City Government, among others, to ensure that strategies are coordinated and funding is leveraged for the greatest impact.

***Priority four*** addresses the need to use performance data to drive the improvement of the workforce system. Labor market information provided by the PA Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, coupled with information from Industry Partnerships, private consultants, Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission is used in the LVWIB's strategic planning process. The design of the workforce system in the Lehigh Valley is market driven; therefore, many decisions regarding system development will continue to be made based on a combination of state and local data.

***Priority five*** prioritizes the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to (1) increase the academic level of our workforce by increasing the number individuals attending and obtaining a Community College Associate Degree, and (2) to increase the number of people graduating from training programs with industry credentials and certifications.

**5. What strategies are in place to address the Governor's priorities, the LWIA's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the LWIA's economy and labor market?**

*How workforce investment system resources, both stimulus and regular formula funds, can be deployed to serve increased numbers of workers in need.*

A major impact of the economic downturn has been the tremendous increase in the sheer number of people seeking workforce assistance, including those on the extremes of the workforce continuum; those highly skilled individuals and those with few marketable skills.

To serve this increased number of workers in need, using both Stimulus and regular formula funds, the LVWIB will (1) increase staff on a temporary basis, (2) streamline the customer flow process to reduce the time to access training and employment services, (3) increase access of community resources like the Society for Human Resource Management, (4) increase the use of volunteers in delivering services, (5) increase services delivered in groups, and use additional outreach locations to deliver services when required. We will also raise awareness of our services and engage in significant community outreach through the implementation of a strategic marketing plan. Comprehensive marketing efforts have already begun with the youth stimulus funding through print, web-based/Internet, television, radio, newspaper stories and advertisements, mailings, public meetings, press conferences and other such strategies. The LVWIB has a busy recruitment agenda targeting eligible individuals, using every partnership developed over the years. All members of the employer community have been challenged to become strategic partners. In keeping with Governor Rendell's request, the LVWIB will hold a *Here To Help Day* to attract more individuals to the services offered.

In addition, a Recession Response and Recovery Task Force was recently formed in the area with over 30 community and private sectors leaders who are projected to receive Recovery Act funds. The Task Force is working diligently to ensure that resources are spent strategically and efforts are not duplicated. The LVWIB is responsible for the Employment Committee of the Recession Response and Recovery Task Force and we are beginning to see the leveraging of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act resources in the Lehigh Valley.

*How adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills, will have increased access to education and training opportunities.*

Adults and dislocated workers, including low-income adults, who need to acquire new skills, will have increased access to education and training opportunities. PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley is streamlining its process so that once appropriate assessments are completed; people will quickly receive necessary services tailored to their needs, rather than a more generic offering. People will begin training sooner, and through service and financial supports, they will be able to stay in training longer to complete their training and education.

In addition, the types of training offered by PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley will be expanded to better meet the needs of individuals, including training through community colleges, career and technical schools, and on-the-job. There will be more direct access to training vendors as well. To encourage people to complete their training, wraparound services will be provided so

participants have a better chance for success. This may include providing stipends while in academic enrichment training and transportation stipends.

***How the LWIA will address a dual-customer approach, meeting the skill needs of existing and emerging employers and high-growth occupations as well as the needs of under-skilled adults.***

The LVWIB has been meeting many of the skill needs of existing and emerging employers and high-growth occupations as well as the needs of under-skilled adults. It has established wide-ranging partnerships in the community including the Lehigh Valley Business/Education Partnership, bringing together the joint leadership of business and education; Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation; Lehigh Valley Industry Partnerships; Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce; local universities and community colleges; Manufacturers Resource Center; career and technical schools; and Society for Human Resource Management. These partnerships provide the LVWIB with keen insight as to the needs and opportunities of local business and industry. Using information and data culled from these partnerships, the LVWIB works with under-skilled adults to assess their skills and interests and channel them to appropriate high growth jobs and industries.

***How workforce activities will be aligned in career pathways both now in implementing the ARRA and in the transformed workforce system of the future.***

At present, PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley's workforce development system is aligned with industry clusters to more closely align with the skills demands of industry. This allows the training needs for multiple firms with similar skill needs to be met and helps to drive a market-based approach to workforce development. It aligns the services of education and training institutions with employer and worker needs. Within each cluster, there are defined career pathways and labor market information. With the help of a case manager and career planner, individuals develop a training plan, self-explore job opportunities with employers, and then undertake training. Once training is complete, case managers and business services representatives continue to provide assistance through job development services.

Workforce activities are being redirected to align with career pathways within Lehigh Valley's industry clusters. The continuum of career pathways begins in all 17 school districts in the Lehigh Valley and our strategy is to utilize this comprehensive, educational career awareness system within the workforce system to: prepare individuals for successful careers based on interests and abilities and industry driven skills training and credentialing; provide a scope and sequence of academic and technical training, engage people in learning, and use data to analyze individual achievement.

***How the LWIA will partner to develop workforce solutions with community colleges, business and labor organizations, registered apprenticeship program sponsors, civic groups, and community organizations to align workforce development strategies with strategies for regional development and shared prosperity.***

The LVWIB has established wide-ranging partnerships in the community including the Lehigh Valley Business/Education Partnership, bringing together the joint leadership of business and education; Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation; Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce; Manufacturers Resource Center; career and technical schools; Society for Human

Resource Management; Lehigh Valley Industry Partnerships the state apprenticeship programs; local apprenticeship programs; 11 institutions of higher education, 2 community colleges, 3 career and technical schools and many private for profit training institutions to name a few. The LVWIB is also part of a regional WIB collaborative including Berks, Pocono Counties, Luzerne/Schuylkill and Lackawanna.

In addition, a Recession Response and Recovery Task Force was recently formed with over 30 community and private sectors leaders who are projected to receive Recovery Act funds. The Task Force is working diligently to ensure that resources are spent strategically and efforts are not duplicated. LVWIB staff chairs the Employment Committee.

**6. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the LWIA has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key LWIA goals.**

*Increase services to workers in need.* The LVWIB will increase services to workers in need through planned changes in the delivery of services, intensified marketing and outreach, and additional services to accommodate workers, especially those on the extremes of the workforce continuum.

- *Delivery.* Because of the dramatic increase in the number of individuals who must be served at PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley, it is necessary to streamline service delivery to serve more people. To help increase positive outcomes for customers a tool kit of recognized assessments will be used to measure career awareness, interest, educational levels, skills, industry credentials and much. Immediately upon eligibility an assessment will be completed and next step service plan will be completed and implementation can begin. This structure will decrease the necessity of attending generic services, and allow customers to move through the workforce system easily and acquire necessary resources more quickly. Staff must be trained to adapt to this streamlined approach and to more quickly pinpoint the needs of customers. In addition, PA Career Link Lehigh Valley will offer more services and at additional locations. Services will also be increased by partnering with additional service providers. This process has already been started as part of the Summer Youth Employment Program. A request for proposal was issued for programs linking young adults to current and future employment opportunities, including work experience and work readiness components.
- *Outreach and marketing.* To serve an increased number of workers most in need, using Stimulus funds, the LVWIB will raise awareness of its services and engage in significant community outreach through the implementation of its strategic marketing plan. Comprehensive marketing efforts have already begun with the Youth Stimulus funding through print, web-based/Internet, television, radio, newspaper stories, advertisements, mailings, public meetings and other such strategies. The LVWIB has a recruitment strategy of targeting eligible individuals, using every partnership developed over the years. All members of the employer community have been challenged to become strategic partners. In keeping with Governor Rendell's request, the LVWIB will hold a *Here To Help Day* to attract more individuals to the services under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

- *Services.* A number of additional services are planned at PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley to assist more workers during the economic downturn. These include providing a comprehensive assessment tool kit through a dedicated assessment center, assessment and human service counselors, career planning to map career pathways, education and occupation skills planning, and increasing the number of short- and long-term skills training certificate programs. English as a Second Language is a basic, required work readiness skill and in partnership with our community college partners we plan to increase the availability of ESL classes within our workforce system. In addition, service delivery to employers will be increased through the Business Relations Team and partners.

***Support the full range of PA CareerLink customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high growth, high-wage industries and occupations, including such supports as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language and supportive services.***

Because of the economic downturn, PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley is working more with the extremes of the workforce continuum. This demands a different approach to service delivery.

- All training on the high priority list must be in high demand occupations even though not all job seekers will acquire high skill, high-wage employment.
- The number of job seekers without the adequate education or skills to compete in the local economy is growing. A holistic workforce system approach is necessary to break this cycle of unemployment. This approach will include intensive workforce and supportive services including assessments, skills enhancements including a career readiness credential, basic skills remediation, increased offerings of General Educational Development (GED) classes, ESL training, tutoring, and customized wraparound services, short- and long-term training leading to skills credentials and certificates, and on-the-job training.
- LVWIB will continue to partner with Northampton and Lehigh Carbon Community Colleges to operate Workforce Investment Act Title II funded ESL and GED classes within PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley and with the Project of Easton and the Literacy Center to identify ways to decrease or eliminate the waiting list that currently exists for entry into ESL and basic skills training programs. LVWIB will consider the use of ARRA funds for this purpose as well as explore alternative funding sources.
- TANF populations will continue to be served through the Department of Public Welfare funded Employment and Retention Network (EARN) program. The EARN program is designed to serve the most difficult to serve population. Extensive case management and support services are available to EARN clients to assist them to identify and remove barriers to employment. Currently, the EARN program can accommodate all clients referred by the Lehigh and Northampton County Assistance Offices. The program is expected to expand further in Program Year 2009 to accommodate an additional 200 clients. LVWIB will use ARRA funds to serve additional TANF clients if necessary.
- More and more highly skilled, highly educated individuals are seeking employment services as well. Supportive services for this population include peer-to-peer networking, financial planning, mortgage refinancing counseling, entrepreneurship and self-assistance employment training, associate and four-year degrees, and short- and long-term training certificates and credentials.

***Ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.***

The LVWIB and PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley publish a monthly resource, *Job and Labor Market Outlook*, which highlights workforce skills required by employers. This tool coupled with data from the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, drive the education and training delivered through the workforce system. *Job and Labor Market Outlook* is used by local economic developers, educators, workforce professionals, community-based organization leaders, the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Society for Human Resource Management, county and municipal governments, as well as job seekers.

***Provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all job seekers, and summer work experience for youth.***

In such a rapidly changing economy as the country and the Lehigh Valley are experiencing today, all job seekers are unsure of where they fit into the labor market. Likewise, employers are unsure of their business development and growth plans. Employers are trying to survive and keep their current workforce so they are ready when the economy rebounds. At the same time, employers are attempting to plan for the new economy including future growth, hiring trends and skill requirements of employees.

This uncertain job market has led to a change in the LVWIB's strategy as well. Through its well established Industry Partnerships, the LVWIB is providing targeted work experiences, on-the-job training, and summer work experiences for youth and apprenticeship training to increase the skill levels of current and future workers, so they too, will be ready for the emerging economy. Our recent targeted cluster for work experience opportunities is Energy. Whenever possible, work experience in green jobs will be given top priority.

***Align workforce activities with education, economic and community development strategies to meet skill needs of individuals for occupations and industries important to the local and regional economies.***

The LVWIB ensures that all workforce activities align with education, economic and community development strategies through its structure and community partnerships. The LVWIB is comprised of representatives from business, labor, education, and community-based organizations. Board members are responsible for providing direction based on their particular expertise. This approach is bolstered through the committee structure including the following:

- *Access Committee*, which looks for and eliminates barriers which inhibit workers from attaining the education/training needed to be employable and employers from acquiring the quality/quantity of the workforce needed;
- *Marketing Committee*, which creates a sense of urgency at the state, regional and local level about the importance of a competitive workforce and assures that the industry clusters, employers and workers know the available workforce development support services;

- *Education Committee*, which works with industry to understand the technical and soft skill sets needed for employees to be effective partners in maintaining a growing, competitive, sustainable regional economy;
- *Governance Committee*, which develops systems to measure and report the local and regional impact of a workforce development system;
- *Industry Committee*, which identifies those industry-specific workforce needs which must be addressed to sustain a robust economy in the Lehigh Valley and to work in concert with education to develop an action plan to meet the identified needs;
- *Youth Council*, which develops, adapts, refines and delivers programs which meet the highest priority workforce and education needs of all youth in the Lehigh Valley, from pre-kindergarten through college.

In addition, the LVWIB is part of the Recession Response and Recovery Task Force made up of over 30 community and private sectors leaders who have come together to assist Lehigh Valley residents adversely affected by the recession to develop a coordinated response that maximizes the use of funding opportunities through the Recovery Act. The committee structure will help to ensure that workforce activities are aligned with education, economic and community development strategies. Committees include:

- *Human Services*, which will increase the capacity of the region's information and referral services to be responsive to emerging needs;
- *Health Care*, which will address the loss of health insurance, COBRA costs and changes in COBRA benefits;
- *Employment*, which will address the wraparound needs of the unemployed;
- *Small Business*, which will address issues facing business owners during the economic downturn;
- *Stimulus*, which will access all appropriate American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

## **7. Describe the LWIB's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.**

The LVWIB's overall strategy is to increase the academic and skill level of every job seeker. It is projected that by 2015, more than 80 percent of all jobs will require skilled workers. Ongoing advances in technology and the movement toward alternative energy and energy conservation will increase the need for a more educated workforce. Both now and in the future, employers will demand work readiness, technical/vocational and advanced academic skills. The new high school diploma is an associate's degree.

Throughout its history, LVWIB has developed partnerships with the education community and other training vendors, helping to ensure its ability to increase training access and opportunities for individuals.

- The LVWIB has an excellent skills and education information feeder system. It has established relationships with the 17 school districts in the region. In addition, representatives from one school district, two community colleges, a career and technical school and a college are on the board of LVWIB. Representatives from community

college, four-year college, and another career and technical school serve on the Lehigh Valley Youth Council.

- LVWIB's Education Committee includes all regional superintendents, career and technical schools, private educational institutions and colleges.
- LVWIB's Industry Committee includes representative employers of all industry clusters in the Lehigh Valley as well as the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, Lehigh Valley Chapter of the Society of Human Resource Management, the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce and Industry Partnerships.
- Lehigh Valley's Industry Partnerships are developed based on private sector needs. LVWIB will continue to work with employers and educators to develop new curriculum training through this partnership under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Educational institutions have always been involved and have assisted in responding to the changing training, skills and education needs of employers.

Throughout its history, the LVWIB has developed a reputation for offering high quality, high demand training and academics. This will continue. An infusion of funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will allow the LVWIB to increase the number of people served in all levels of intensive services and training. The LVWIB's education partners deliver flexible, high-quality training and are prepared to do so for an increased number of individuals.

In order to have more customers access Individual Training Accounts our strategy is to deploy the increased services strategy we are using to increase services to more customers in need by: (1) streamline the customer flow process to reduce the time necessary to access training and employment services, (2) increase access and assistance from community resources like the Society for Human Resource Management, (3) increase the use of volunteers in delivering services, (4) increase services in groups, (5) use outreach locations to deliver services, and (6) increase staff on a temporary basis if required.

The LVWIB will utilize Individual Training Accounts for individuals requesting training, including WIA Title I adults, youth and dislocated workers. The LVWIB has implemented the waiver of the statutory exclusion and regulatory prohibition of using Individual Training Accounts for out-of-school youth. This will provide greater flexibility and enhanced service delivery while offering out-of-school youth greater access to more choices of career and occupational training options.

To address the concern that the length of training needs be shortened, the LVWIB is working with its industry partnerships and educational institutions to develop accelerated curricula for emerging sectors while at the same time enhancing the capacity for quality short-term training.

The number of dislocated workers using the workforce system has doubled since the recession began. To accommodate this increased demand for service, the LVWIB is working with local community colleges and four-year colleges to increase availability and shorten the length of time needed to earn an associate's degree and advanced skills certificates based on industry needs.

**8. Describe the LWIA's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need.**

*Describe the anticipated program design for the WIA Youth funds provided under the ARRA. Include in this description a program design for both younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including the 22 to 24 year olds that can be served with ARRA funds).*

The LVWIB anticipates providing a summer youth program that links young adults to current and future employment opportunities. Programs will target economically disadvantaged youth adults, 14 to 24 years of age, with barriers to employment. Services will be provided by the private, for-profit sector, the non-profit sector and the public sector. They may include municipalities, townships, business and industry, community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions. Providers are chosen through a competitive process.

Each program must link young adults to current and future employment opportunities and include a work experience component with a work readiness measurement. Programs may include but are not limited to: work experience, educational continuums, employability training, internships, integration of basic academic skills into work activities, service learning, enhanced career awareness, basic and occupational skills, exposure to business and industry, job shadowing, community service projects, entrepreneurship, and individual service strategies.

Programming for younger, in-school youth will include academics and work readiness with work experience at community or faith-based organizations, and schools or municipalities. Older youth will have broader options including training, academic enrichment and work experience. Work experience will be in the private sector and local government including municipalities, counties and cities, as well as community and faith-based organizations.

*Will the LWIA use the ARRA funds to fund only a 2009 summer youth program or some combination of 2009 and 2010? If using the funds over two summers, what percentage of funds does the LWIA anticipate using for the first summer?*

The LVWIB plans to spend approximately 80% of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for the 2009 summer youth program. Remaining funds will be carried into the 2010 summer youth program.

*If using the funds for summer employment opportunities, describe how the LWIA will deliver summer youth employment opportunities.*

The LVWIB has developed a marketing plan to make both potential employers and youth aware of the new Career Force program.

Youth ages 14 to 24 must submit a services application, by mail or in person to PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley locations. Employers must submit a worksite request form, listing planned work experiences, structured learning experiences as well as work schedules. We will also enter into worksite agreements with appropriate employers, including business, community-based and faith-based organizations, schools, municipalities and local government.

***Describe the types of worksite that will be developed for summer employment, including a mix of public and private sector work experiences, and how the LWIA will ensure that meaningful work experiences will be developed.***

Examples of worksites for summer employment include work experiences at: St. Luke's Hospital Easton Home Health and Hospice Services, Lehigh Valley Health Network, Community Services for Children, Borough of Coplay, The Crayola Factory, Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, City of Allentown and Bethlehem, MP Uniform and Supply, Redevelopment Authority of the City of Allentown, Community Bike Works, Bethlehem and Allentown Area School Districts, Lehigh Valley Child Care, Salisbury township, Arts Quest, the DaVinci Science Center, Upper Mount Bethel Township, Family YMCA, Lehigh County Senior Center, PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley and more.

LWVIB will ensure a process of ongoing oversight and monitoring of the worksite locations, work experiences and required supervision to assure that youth are increasing their workplace readiness skills. Please see attached Work Readiness Attainment Sheet.

***Describe the LWIA's policy for developing the mix of classroom versus worksite time in a summer employment opportunity. Describe the LWIA's policy for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized.***

The LVWIB has established a detailed process to ensure that participating youth will have an appropriate and meaningful summer experience combining both classroom and worksite time. Through a Request for Proposal process, the LVWIB solicited proposals from private sector, community-based and faith-based organizations, schools, municipalities and local government for programs that link young adults to current and future employment opportunities. One requirement was the inclusion of both a work experience component with a work readiness measurement. Based on the chosen applications, the LVWIB is developing a listing of work experience, and academic enrichment programs. As youth apply, they will be matched with appropriate work and classroom experience. This will be based on a detailed application submitted by each participant.

***Describe any policies or strategies, in alignment with State guidance, to ensure implementation of activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care.***

The LVWIB's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 Youth Policies include:

- ***Youth Work Readiness Policy.*** The LVWIB requires every young adult receiving services under ARRA between the ages of 14 to 24 to participate in work readiness activities. Pre- and post-tests will be administered to document measurable gains in work readiness.
- ***Youth Payment Policy.*** The LVWIB requires every young adult receiving service under ARRA between the ages of 14 to 24 enrolled in a work experience activity to be paid a taxable wage of \$7.25 per hour for each hour of work. Any youth enrolled in an academic enrichment, career awareness, basic and occupation skills training or work readiness will receive a non-taxable stipend of \$7.25 for each hour of participation.

- *Youth Probationary Policy.* Youth ages 14 to 24 must complete the first week of scheduled activities to continue in the program and to receive payment for their participation.
- *Priority of Service Policy for Veterans and Eligible Spouses.* This policy applies to any individual that meet the criteria.

***Provide the anticipated number of youth to be served with ARRA funds, including the anticipated number of summer employment opportunities created with ARRA funds.***

The LVWIB anticipates that between 400 and 500 youth will be served and up to 300 youth will have summer work experiences.

**9. What policies and strategies does the LWIA have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?**

The LVWIB has implemented Priority of Services for Covered Persons pertaining to Veterans and Eligible Spouses. On March 17, 2009, the LVWIB approved a policy, which adopts the United States Department of Labor’s Priority of Service for Covered Persons pertaining to Veterans and Eligible Spouses.

PA Career Link Lehigh Valley will identify all covered persons physically seeking services at its comprehensive, One-Stop and outreach locations through the use of a data collection sheet which is completed by every first-time visitor. Covered persons who seek virtual delivery of services will be identified through the Commonwealth Workforce Development System.

A Priority of Service for Covered Persons pertaining to Veterans and Eligible Spouses information sheet which explains their entitlement to priority of services, the services available through PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley and the eligibility requirements for each program, is provided to all individuals entering the CRC, attending the Introduction to Services session and applying for GED or ESL classes.

The U.S. Department of Labor is proposing new regulations implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses, as provided by the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA), and as specified by the Veterans’ Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. JVA calls for priority of service to be implemented by all “qualified job training programs,” defined as “any workforce preparation, development or delivery program or service that is directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor.” Since enactment of JVA in 2002, priority of service has been implemented under policy guidance issued by the Employment and Training Administration. The purpose of the proposed regulations is to further articulate how priority of service is to be applied across all new and existing qualified job-training programs.

The regulations require Workforce Systems to:

1. Identify all covered persons at the point of entry

2. Ensure that veterans/spouses are aware of their entitlement to priority of service; the full array of programs and services available to them; and any applicable eligibility requirements for programs and/or services
3. Ensure eligible veterans/spouses take precedence over eligible non-covered persons in obtaining services; ensure covered persons receive access to the service or resource earlier in time than the non-covered person; or if the service or resource is limited, the covered person receives access to the service or resource instead of or before the non-covered person

The LVWIB will ensure the priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is implemented according to the Jobs for Veterans Act. See attached Priority of Services for Covered Persons Policy (*Attachment 1*).

**10. Describe the LWIA’s strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the LWIA’s PA CareerLink delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities).**

*Describe the strategy the LWIA will use to effectively implement the ARRA priority of service for low-income individuals and recipients of public assistance under the WIA Adult program.*

LVWIB will use the following strategy:

- PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley houses the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Move-Up Program and New Directions in partnership with the Department of Public Welfare. We partner with community-based organizations and faith-based organizations to conduct outreach to dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment, including older, limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities, to make all targeted populations aware of the full range of employment and training programs and services available through American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- PA Career Link Lehigh Valley will identify youth, dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, nontraditional, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment, including older individuals, limited English proficiency, and people with disabilities seeking services at its comprehensive, one-stop and outreach locations through the use of a Data Collection Sheet completed by every first-time visitor. Upon completion of an assessment, these individuals receive priority service.
- The Commonwealth’s Workforce Development System (CWDS) is available on-line daily, 24 hours per day. Those who seek virtual delivery of services through the CWDS will be identified through this system.
- The One-Stop Center is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act. All vendors and service providers must be ADA compliant.

- The LVWIB will raise awareness of its services and engage in significant community outreach through the implementation of its strategic marketing plan. In keeping with Governor Rendell’s request, the LVWIB will hold a *Here To Help Day* to attract more individuals to the services offered.
- The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, a partner and Operator of PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley, has an office at the PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley Allentown and Easton sites, making the system more accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley has a veterans and disabled veteran’s representative to encourage participation and assist with marketing services.
- PA CareerLink Lehigh Valley has a 22 percent bilingual staff making its services more accessible to individuals who speak English as a second language.

**11. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the local level to award grants and contracts under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts.**

*How providers of all youth services will be procured under the ARRA. If using funds for summer employment opportunities and the fiscal agent or the LWIA is not operating this program element, please specifically describe procedures for procuring summer employment operational entities and job opportunities.*

The LVWIB is using a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) process to award grants and contracts to providers of youth services. The following timeline is being followed:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
3/22, 3/25, 3/29, 4/1/09	Legal advertisements <i>Morning Call</i> and <i>The Express- Times</i>
3/25/09	Full page ad in <i>The Morning Call</i>
3/27/09	RFP flyer emailed to community partners
3/30/09	Full page ad in <i>The Express-Times</i>
4/3/09	Proposal issued; received 182 requests for the RFP
4/8/09	Held RFP informational session with 143 attendees
4/30/09	Deadline for submission at 3 p.m.
5/8-5/14/09	Review of proposals
5/15-5/22/09	LVWIB action
Beginning 5/26/09	Contract negotiations
To be determined	Contract start dates

A review team made up of WIB, Youth Council and staff members is responsible for evaluating the proposals. The LVWIB’s Youth Council and Executive Committee will make final Youth Programming recommendations to the LVWIB board. During contract negotiations, recommended changes will be discussed with the Subcontractors and all ARRA requirements and contract procedures will be reviewed with the Subcontractors.

The LVWIB’s fiscal agent, the Private Industry Council of Lehigh Valley, is the employer of record for summer youth job opportunities.

***How the LWIA will implement the ARRA provision allowing the LWIB to award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider if the local board determines that it would facilitate the training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, and if such a contract does not limit customer choice.***

If the LVWIB determines that training multiple individuals in high-demand occupations would be beneficial for workers, the LVWIB will issue a Request for Proposal to the institutions for higher education and other training providers that have an approved program on the Eligible Training Programs/Providers list leading to the applicable high-demand occupations.

The Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc. has currently not made the decision to exercise the clause to award contracts to institutions of higher education or other eligible training providers outside of our existing Request For Proposal Process. If it becomes necessary to quickly design new education and training programs based on industry driven needs within new emerging clusters such as Energy and green jobs, the WIB will re-evaluate their decision to exercise this clause.

## **12. How will the LWIB ensure that ARRA funds will supplement, not supplant, existing resources?**

The LVWIB will ensure that ARRA funds supplement and not supplant existing resources in the following ways:

- A major impact of the economic downturn has been the tremendous increase in the number of people seeking workforce assistance, including those on the extremes of the workforce continuum; those highly skilled individuals and those with few marketable skills. ARRA funds will supplement existing resources to allow for the increase in the number and services provided an increase that would not be possible without ARRA funds.
- Eligible ARRA customers funded through ARRA will be enrolled on an ongoing basis, using the appropriate funding stream.
- ARRA funds will be used to expand current offerings of longer training programs and supportive wraparound services that current resources cannot meet.
- ARRA funds will be tracked separately in the financial management system based on the services provided.
- Three LVWIB committees will be responsible for ensuring that ARRA funds supplement and not supplant existing resources. They include:
  - **Access**, which is responsible for looking for and eliminating barriers which inhibit workers from attaining the education/training needed to be employable and employers from acquiring the quality/quantity of the workforce needed;
  - **Governance**, which is responsible for developing systems to measure and report the local and regional impact of a workforce development system;
  - **Finance**, which is responsible for reviewing program budgets and expenditures and reporting variances to the LVWIB and reviewing audit reports and financial aspects or program monitoring reports, making recommendations as needed.

**13. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the Local Area has in place to ensure not only compliance with the laws, regulations and guidance, but also with the intent and spirit of ARRA.**

The LVWIB Monitoring Policy meets the requirement of 20 CFR 667.410(b)(2). See attached LVWIB Monitoring Policy (*Attachment 2*).

The LVWIB will conduct oversight of additional funds provided by the ARRA in accordance with the LVWIB Monitoring Policy. Under this policy, the LVWIB conducts oversight of all new subcontracted programs; therefore, it will conduct oversight of all ARRA subcontracted programs including Reemployment Services and Summer Youth programs. The LVWIB is in the process of hiring an additional monitor to assist in the oversight process of Youth Programs, including summer youth worksites.

The LVWIB Quality Improvement Specialist is revising all monitoring tools to include provisions of the ARRA.

**14. Identify the performance indicators and goals established to track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the LWIA's vision for the workforce investment system.**

*The ARRA emphasizes the importance of accountability. Describe the LWIB's overall efforts to hold the LWIA accountable for the results of activities funded by the ARRA, and how the LWIB will measure whether it has achieved the local goals for implementation as described in Local Vision and Priorities.*

See performance indicators below for each objective that will all have a separate tracking system for ARRA funded participants.

**Goal 1:** *To promote the Lehigh Valley's long-term economic growth by improving the quality of the region's workforce and the competitiveness of its employers.*

- **Objective 1:** Increase by 40 percent the number of dislocated workers and adults receiving intensive and training services, including those who have been most heavily impacted by the recession
  - *Performance indicator:* The number of dislocated workers and adults receiving intensive and training services.
- **Objective 2:** To make veterans and eligible spouses a priority for services under ARRA
  - *Performance indicator:* Using CWDS and internal management information system, review service data for veterans.
- **Objective 3:** To increase by 100 percent the number of youth served under ARRA
  - *Performance indicator:* The number of youth served under ARRA funds.

**Goal 2:** *To transform the LVWIB's workforce system so that the Lehigh Valley's workforce and employers have access to a coordinated, transparent and effective system of workforce and training services.*

- **Objective 1:** To implement wraparound services to address the needs of those most heavily impacted by the recession

- *Performance indicator:* The number of individuals receiving wraparound services
- **Objective 2:** To compress and streamline the customer pathway to wraparound services, training and connection to employment opportunities
  - *Performance indicator:* The average number of days it takes an individual to have a career plan developed for a training or employment pathway

**Goal 3:** *To promote coordination, cooperation and information sharing about Recovery Act funds available to the Lehigh Valley.*

- **Objective 1:** To serve as a catalyst in the Lehigh Valley to leverage Recovery Act funding to assist those most impacted by the recession
  - *Performance indicator:* Asset mapping of ARRA funds available to the Lehigh Valley
- **Objective 2:** To support the efforts of other Lehigh Valley community leaders in leveraging Recovery Act funding to assist those most impacted by the recession
  - *Performance indicator:* Asset mapping of ARRA funds available to the Lehigh Valley

**Goal 4:** *To use performance data to drive the improvement of the workforce development system.*

- **Objective 1:** To analyze the effectiveness of wraparound services to drive the improvement of the workforce development system
  - *Performance indicator:* LVWIB committee reports and board minutes to indicate use of data provided by one-stop operator to drive the improvement of the workforce development system
- **Objective 2:** To analyze the effectiveness of compressing and streamlining the customer pathway to wraparound services, training and connection to employment opportunities to drive the improvement of the workforce development system
  - *Performance indicator:* LVWIB committee reports and board minutes to indicate use of data provided by one-stop operator to drive the improvement of the workforce development system

***The ARRA requires states to report on work readiness to assess the effectiveness of summer employment opportunities for youth. The LWIA should identify its methodology for determining whether a measurable increase in work readiness skills has occurred and what tools will be used for this determination.***

The work readiness skills goal includes a measurable increase in work readiness, including world-of-work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision-making, and job search techniques including resumes, interviews, applications and follow-up letters. Work readiness skills also encompass survival/daily-living skills. They also include positive work habits, attitudes, and behaviors such as punctuality, regular attendance, presenting a neat appearance, getting along and working well with others, exhibiting good conduct, following instructions and completing tasks, accepting constructive criticism from supervisors and co-workers, showing initiative and reliability, and assuming the responsibilities involved in maintaining a job. Work readiness also entails developing motivation and adaptability, effective coping and problem-solving skills, and acquiring an improved self-image.

All youth participants are expected to increase their workplace readiness skills, based on pre- and post-assessments. Program providers will be required to document an increase in these skills using a tool developed in coordination with the LVWIB. At a minimum, the Work Readiness Skills Goal refers to a measurable increase in work readiness skills including world-of-work awareness, labor market knowledge, occupational information, values clarification and personal understanding, career planning and decision-making, and job search techniques, including resumes, interviews, applications and follow-up letters. Use of successfully proven tools and/or indicators will be required to document work readiness competencies.

The LVWIB has developed a new Youth Program image and name called



**The Recovery Act Implementation Strategy Plan will be voted on at the June 16, 2009 meeting of the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board, Inc.**