



# The Lancaster County Workforce System and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA): A Retrospective

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# For Lancaster

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- A total of \$1,876,000 allocated to Lancaster County
  - \$283,000 for low income adults;
  - \$852,000 for dislocated workers;
  - \$741,000 for low income young people from ages 14 to 24



# For Lancaster

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- Additional competitive funding
  - PA Department of Labor and Industry
    - Career Opportunity Grants, \$510,000;
    - Pre-employment training, Ready2Work



# Our Goals and Strategies

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- Improve the skill level of the Lancaster County workforce;
  - Serve as many people as possible while building the system that we will need to continue when the crisis passes;
  - Use the stimulus funding to fill gaps and connect elements of the existing system;
- Get people back to work as soon as possible



# Guiding Principles

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- 75% for training and 75% of youth funding in first year
- Use systems already in place
- Become the employment business service of choice
- Apply for other grants as they fit our plan
- Be totally transparent
- Get the word out to the community



# Elements in Place

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- Industry Partnerships
  - 11 now in place in Lancaster County and the region
  - \$1.4 million for 2008-2009 program year
- Ready2Work
  - Assessment
  - Foundation skill enrichment
  - Job skill coaching
  - WorkKeys testing



# Elements in Place

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- Pre-Employment Training
  - Pre-allied health, customer service, introduction to manufacturing, introduction to industrial food sanitation, welding, construction, printing
- Individual Training Accounts
  - Longer-term training using area educational programs



# Elements in Place

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- Job Club and Job Search
  - Variety of options both full-time and part-time
- Business Services
  - WorkKeys profiling of jobs
  - Ready2Work employer



# Expand Existing Programs

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- Double Ready2Work
- Increase pre-employment training
  - Fork lift driving, heavy equipment operation, administrative support, building maintenance, welding, green technology
- Double Job Club enrollment
- Increase ITAs
- Expand business services



# Add New Components

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- Add new medium-term courses to ITA list
  - Computer hardware technicians, building maintenance, environmental remediation, green technology installation, sales, and laboratory skills
- Summer youth employment program
- Service/learning options for long-term unemployed



# Results

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- Additional 178 ITAs (in addition to those funded with WIA allocation and Rapid Response) (120 in PY07, 169 in PY08)
- Additional 138 Job Club participants (in addition to those funded with WIA allocation and Rapid Response) (211 in PY08)
- Summer Youth Program (234 young people)
- Average 250 per month graduating Ready2Work and earning Career Readiness Credential
- More than 400 individuals participated in Pre-Employment Training



# Recommendations

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- State

- Continue to allow local areas to use funding for pre-employment training as a supplement to ITAs
- Require a workforce readiness assessment and remedial before investing funds in training
- Require Title II providers to invest WIA funds in workforce readiness and contextual learning or change the way that Title II funds are distributed (directly to Workforce Investment Boards)



# Recommendations

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- Federal
  - Allow local areas to develop ITA providers and courses in a more flexible way that recognize employer needs for more skills less education
  - Re-examine eligibility criteria for youth programming



# Contact

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