

DIRECTORS NOTES



3/21/02

Local News

- On behalf of the WIB, the Department has, in coordination with the Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce applied for a USDOL grant to provide Technical Assistance and Training. This would provide partial funding for a Workforce Academy for small businesses.
- Worknet participated in a Job Fair on March 9th sponsored by KUBB/Hot 105, at Merced Fair grounds.
- The Department has submitted a grant application for \$50,000, to the State Employment Development Department (EDD), to provide expanded access for one-stop customers with disabilities.
- The Department has entered into a MOU to collaborate with CAA and others to submit a Technology Opportunities Program grant application. This grant would fund the design and piloting of a workforce system intra net in Merced County to reduce customer need to duplicate efforts to access services.
- The Department is developing Business Services for the One-Stop Business customer and has been soliciting feedback from WIB committees. When further developed the concept will be brought through committee to the WIB.
- Building Trades program is still in review for continuance. Merced College, Human Services Agency, the Carpenters Union and the Department will bring recommendations through committee for the May WIB meeting.

State/Local News

- Performance negotiations for Program Year 2 and 3 of WIA have **not** progresses. The Work Force Investment Area's from Kern to San Joaquin Counties (excluding Fresno), have collectively submitted performance measures to the State for consideration, that reflect the economy and the labor market of the Central Valley in relationship to the State. The region has been informed that the State is considering our proposal.
- Re-Designation of the Workforce Investment Areas under a 500,000 population base and Re- Certifications of Local WIB by the State WIB must be accomplished by June 30th 2002. No direction or process from the State WIB has been identified at this time.

- Federal allocations have been released for WIA Program Year 2002. California has received reduced allocations in all areas. Youth Allocations are reduced by 3.96 %. Adult allocations are reduced by 3.60%. Dislocated worker allocations are reduced by 20.08%. The California sub-state allocations to local Workforce Investment Areas (WIA's) have not been announced.
- The Governor is seeking input on the reform of the administration of workforce systems prior to the formation of the proposed new State Department of Labor. He has developed input mechanisms for input through the EDD website. Both the State Workforce Investment Board and the Employment Development Department), which administers WIA would be included in the new Department.
- The 2nd State Youth Council meeting is scheduled for April 18th in Pasadena.

State and National News

- The US Department of Labor is sponsoring forums on the reauthorization of WIA and linkages to the TANF program. The forum for region VI will be held on April 17th from 1-4pm in Los Angeles at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel at the Los Angeles Airport.
- The Bush Administration sent on 3/21/02 a \$25 billion supplemental appropriations request that will include the following: 1. \$110 million to restore last summers dislocated worker rescission, 2. \$50 million for WIA targeted high growth initiative. 3. \$550 million for National Emergency Grants available until September 30, 2003. and 4. \$40 million for a Commerce Department initiative with D.O.L.'s Employment and Training administration. The Presidential increase, coming less than two months after the Administrations proposed WIA cuts is a remarkable turn of events.
- Congressional support for WIA is increasing, but there is still work to do. The Dear Colleague letters in the Senate have both Senators Boxer and Feinstein as signatures. On the House side, we have not been successful in getting Congressman Condit to sign on. The Senate budget committee has a draft budget resolution document, calling for the restoration of the WIA cuts proposed by the President and including Community services for Older Americans and the \$73 million increase the President proposed for Job Corps. This does not mean that there will be support for this on the Senate floor.
- The Reed Act that transfers excess funds from the unemployment insurance trust fund will occur today. This is a one-time opportunity for the States. California will receive \$940 million. The State can use it for additional UI benefits, but also to help One Stops. We will keep the WIB informed on the direction EDD will take with the funds they receive.