

Wyoming Department of Workforce Services 2011-2012 Strategic Plan

Name of Department Wyoming Department of Workforce Services

Public Benefit or Wyoming Quality of Life Result

The Wyoming Department of Workforce Services strives to develop a diverse economy that provides family-sustaining incomes and ensures wage equality. The Agency also endeavors to advance technologies and a quality workforce to allow Wyoming's businesses and communities to adapt and thrive.

Agency Mission Statement

To deliver comprehensive and effective services that build a workforce to meet the changing demands of Wyoming's diverse businesses, citizens and economy.

Agency Vision Statement

To link human and economic development for Wyoming's future.

Basic Facts

This agency has 272 employees and operated with a 2009-10 budget of \$79,019,996 of which \$23,245,872 were general funds, \$48,454,298 were federal funds and \$7,319,826 were other funds.

The five most important functions of the Department of Workforce Services are:

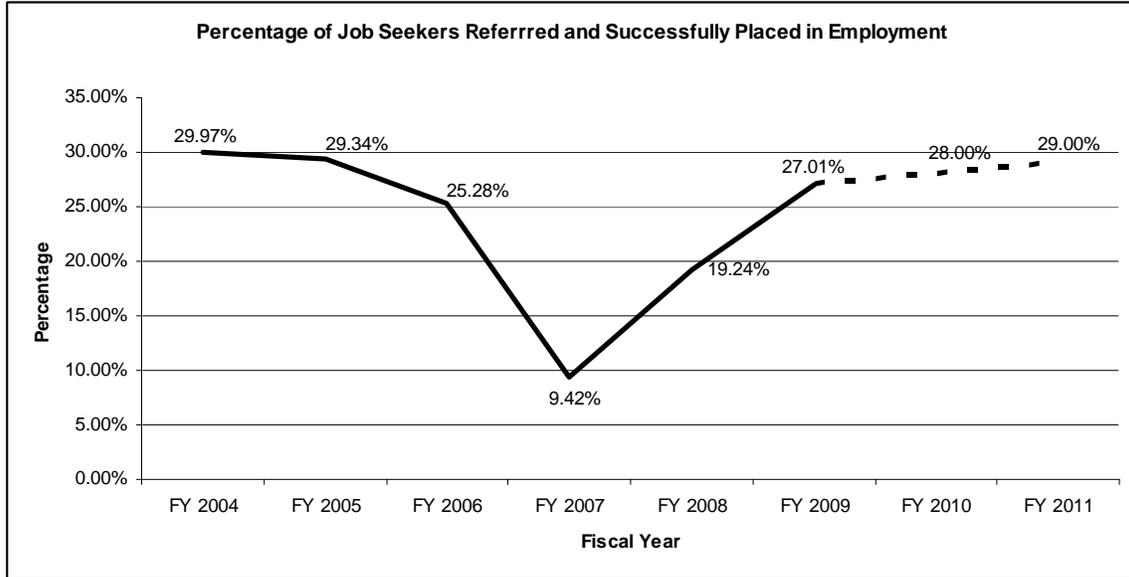
<i>Recruitment</i>	Process of connecting an individual job seeker to a business which has identified specific skills and qualifications.
<i>Employment</i>	Job placement and retention
<i>Training</i>	Programs focused on providing skill development leading to placement, retention and wage progression
<i>Career Guidance</i>	Assessing interests and aptitudes leading to establishment of career pathways
<i>Rehabilitation Counseling</i>	Assisting clients with disabilities to gain or retain employment that they cannot engage in without specialized services such as assessment, vocational counseling and guidance, physical and mental restoration, training, placement and job development

The Department has 28 programs that served 5,162 businesses and 85,833 individuals in fiscal year 2009. We anticipate that these numbers will increase during this planning period.

Performance Measures

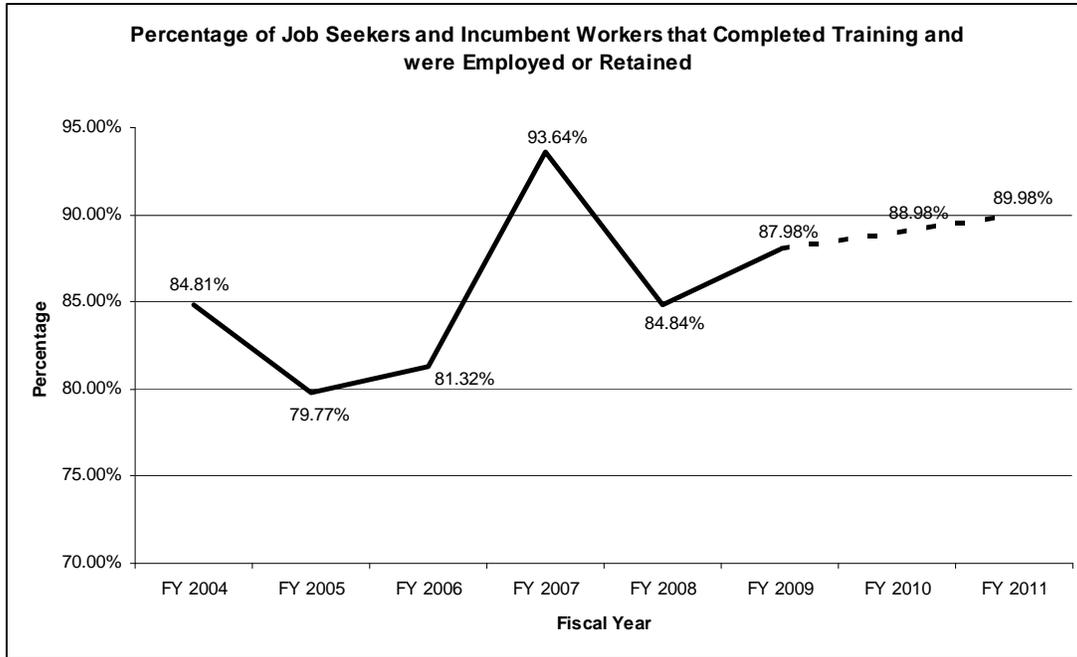
The Performance Measures that are most important to the Agency’s work are as follows:

#1 Percentage of Job Seekers Referred and Successfully Placed in Employment



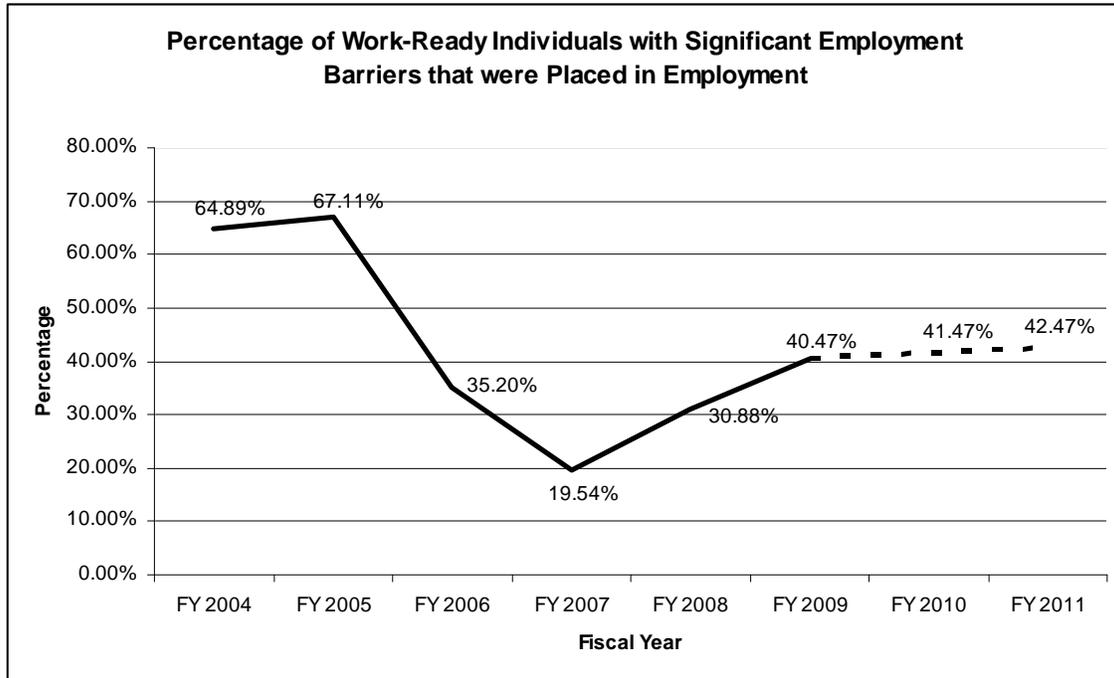
Fiscal Year	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Total Matched	9,853	9,414	7,064	4,743	6,599	5,796	6,006	6,221
Total Available	32,874	32,083	27,941	50,324	34,284	21,452	21,452	21,452
Percentage	29.97%	29.34%	25.28%	9.42%	19.24%	27.01%	28.00%	29.00%

#2 Percentage of Job Seekers and Incumbent Workers that Completed Training and were Employed or Retained



Fiscal Year	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Total Matched	1,743	2,879	2,483	1,488	4,345	2,694	2,724	2,755
Total Available	2,055	3,609	3,053	1,589	5,121	3,062	3,062	3,062
Percentage	84.81%	79.77%	81.32%	93.64%	84.84%	87.98%	88.98%	89.98%

#3 Percentage of Work-Ready Individuals with Significant Employment Barriers that were Placed in Employment



Fiscal Year	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Total Matched	1,242	1,257	1,776	1,545	1,767	1,579	1,617	1,656
Total Available	1,914	1,873	5,045	7,903	5,722	3,901	3,901	3,901
Percentage	64.89%	67.11%	35.20%	19.54%	30.88%	40.47%	41.47%	42.47%

Story Behind the Performance

Performance Measure #1: Percentage of Job Seekers Referred and Successfully Placed in Employment

Performance Measure #1 examines the number of individuals the Agency referred and placed in employment compared to the number of individuals that were staff-referred to an open position. A staff referral occurs when a staff member has identified a job seeker as being qualified for a position and directs that job seeker to the employer. Data for this measure have been retrieved from the Agency’s Employment Services Division and shows the Agency’s trend in successfully matching these workers to jobs.

The primary components to the Employment Services Division are the Workforce Center staff and *Wyoming At Work*, an online job matching system, which brings together job seekers and potential employers. Using *Wyoming At Work*, employers can post job vacancies and job seekers can post resumes. This tool allows staff to interact with job seekers and employers to make successful matches. The Workforce Center staff recruit, screen, train and place workers based on employer needs. *Wyoming At Work* serves as the central tool that Agency staff use to perform job matching functions.

The Workforce Centers continue to use a staff-intensive approach to find qualified workers to refer to employers, in order to achieve their primary objective of placing qualified workers in Wyoming's businesses. The Agency wants to place the right person with the right company in the right position at the right time. When these four elements come together, the Agency creates a success story. Job seekers come to the Agency not only to discover open positions, but to also gain value-added services, to become successfully employed. The Agency assists job seekers to identify employment needs that match their unique situations, to meet the qualifications for employment and to work towards a successful placement. In addition, the Agency provides to employers recruiting, screening and training services to identify qualified workers to fill their current and future open positions. The Agency's continued partnerships with community colleges and businesses will ensure an increase in successful placements.

Performance Measure #2: Percentage of Job Seekers and Incumbent Workers that Completed Training and were Employed or Retained

Performance Measure #2 examines the number of individuals who completed training and were placed into or retained employment compared to the total number of individuals who received training and could have completed the training in the same period. Data for this measure have been retrieved from all three of the Agency's Divisions: the Business Training and Outreach Division, the Employment Services Division and the Vocational Rehabilitation Division. The data show the Agency's trend in successfully training workers and placing them in employment.

Agency-wide, training services are provided to eligible individuals based on unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice. The Agency's goal is to add skills to the workforce. Wyoming's economy is continuing to become more of a knowledge-based economy where all positions are requiring higher levels of technological expertise. The Agency remains dedicated to meeting the current needs facing Wyoming's economy and future workforce demands as new industries evolve within the state. As the demand for higher-skilled, technological workers increases, the Agency, alongside its partners, is working to create innovative strategies that identify those skills needed, develop training opportunities and style its services/funding streams to meet Wyoming's evolving economy.

As Wyoming's population and industry make-up continually evolves, so does the need to add skills to potential and existing workers. Typically, as workers or employers identify a skills need, the Agency facilitates access to training activities and supports to the Wyoming labor force and employers. Training Services that are offered by the Agency includes activities such as subsidized on-the-job training, classroom training and customized training. Supportive Services are also provided to assure successful participation in those activities, ultimately intended to improve success in employment.

In the Business Training and Outreach Division, a primary contributor to this measure includes data from the Workforce Development Training Fund. The Workforce Development Training Fund serves the training needs of Wyoming businesses and with the

2009 downturn in the national economy the training fund was marginally impacted by the need for businesses to be conservative in this time of uncertainty.

New to contributing to this performance measure this year is the WY Quality Counts! Program. The WY Quality Counts! Program, which began in 2008 and is the newest program to the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, focuses on delivering services to provide awareness and training about how the quality of child care impacts Wyoming's children, parents and future. In an effort to address continuing needs for quality child care in Wyoming, the WY Quality Counts! Program offers grants to licensed child care providers and their staff for professional development training. The aim of the WY Quality Counts! Program is to subsidize the cost of attending expensive training sessions offered in-state and out-of-state so that educated, skilled workers will remain employed in the child care industry.

Performance Measure #3: Percentage of Work-Ready Individuals with Significant Employment Barriers that were Placed in Employment

Performance Measure #3 examines the number of workers with significant employment barriers that were eligible for services offered by the Agency compared to the number of those individuals that were successfully placed into employment. Data for this measure have been retrieved from all three of the Agency's Divisions: the Business Training and Outreach Division, the Employment Services Division and the Vocational Rehabilitation Division. Data shows the Agency's trend in successfully placing workers with significant barriers in employment.

Workers included in this measure are offenders, individuals enrolled in Food Stamp Employment and Training Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible individuals in the Employment and Training for Self-Sufficiency Program, low income seniors enrolled in the Senior Community Service Employment Program and all clients receiving services through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Veterans receiving specialized services unique to their veteran status are also included in this measure.

The Agency continues to view intensive counseling and guidance services as essential to the successful placement of program participants with significant employment barriers into unsubsidized positions. These counseling and guidance services empower participants and help to remove barriers to employment. The Agency will continue to create innovative strategies such as coordinated case management, intensive counseling and guidance to address future demands from populations with significant barriers to employment.

Over the past four years, the Agency's view has been that intensive counseling and guidance services are essential to the success in unsubsidized positions gained by participants contained in this measure. These counseling and guidance services empower participants and help to remove barriers to employment. The Agency will continue to create innovative strategies such as coordinated case management, intensive counseling and guidance to address future demands from populations with significant barriers to employment.

Within the past 13 months, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) has transitioned between three contractors:

- Wyoming Senior Citizens, Inc. (WSCI): July 2007-June 2008
- Synergy Human Resource Development Associates, Inc.: July 2008-February 2009
- Natalie Hancock, MPA: June 2008-Present

The transition from WSCI occurred as a result of a request for proposals for the administration of the program for the 2008 program year (July 1, 2008-June 2009). Synergy was awarded the contract, but was terminated in February 2009 due to a lack of oversight by management. The Agency's SCSEP Program Manager served as the interim case manager during March and April 2009. From February through April 2009, the Agency sought to recruit a State AWEC position. After the implementation of the hiring freeze, the Agency hired a temporary case manager from April through June 2009, while a second request for proposals was released for case management services only. It was awarded to Natalie Hancock, MPA.

Performance during the past year declined from the previous year. At the end of WSCI's contract, enrollment was relatively low (40 participants out of 64 positions). Under Synergy's oversight, it decreased into the 20s and stayed this low for the remainder of the contract year.

The Employment and Training for Self-Sufficiency (ETSS) Program funds programs that are designed to meet the goals of providing employment and training opportunities that:

- Assist income eligible parenting adults develop skills so they can experience wage progression;
- Prepare individuals to enter high-demand occupations that pay above-average wages;
- Decrease the gender wage gap in Wyoming by providing female workers with training in non-traditional occupations; and
- Decrease the number of individuals who must work multiple jobs to survive.

The ETSS program empowers businesses to obtain well trained, well qualified employees that will help them meet customer demand, provides training that allows employees to gain necessary skills to compete in today's competitive work environment, provides funding for trainers to develop innovative programs that will serve the demand of businesses in their local communities and offer skills to low income parents that will allow them to achieve a livable wage

From October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2008, ETSS training programs served a total of 437 participants (an increase of 62% over the 2004-2006 time period). Of the total participants, 69% completed training and 70% of the participants who completed training were able to transition into unsubsidized employment with an average salary of \$13 per hour

In the Business Training and Outreach Division, the Employment Training for Self-Sufficiency Program has enrolled 304 participants into training programs statewide since October 1, 2008. These participants are parenting adults who earn 185 percent or below of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Of those enrolled, 154 have completed the training programs they entered and 71 were hired into full-time employment where they experienced wage progression.

What Do You Propose to Do to Improve Performance in FY2010-2011?

Performance Measure #1: Percentage of Job Seekers Referred and Successfully Placed in Employment

Statistics for June 2009 show that Wyoming's total jobs were 2.6% percent lower in June 2009 than they were in June 2008. Also, the state's labor force (the sum of employed and unemployed individuals) decreased by 1,964 (0.7%), compared to June 2008, and Wyoming's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate – while lower than the U.S. rate of 9.5% – had increased to 5.9%. These negative conditions, which developed because of the existing global recession of 2008 and 2009, have also made it more difficult for the Agency's workforce center staff to match workers with suitable employment, at least for the short term future. The Agency anticipates continued success at placing workers in employment. However, improvements in performance outcomes may be comparatively modest.

There are a number of things which will improve performance:

- The Employment Services Division has updated its *Wyoming at Work* management information system to Version 10, which provides numerous improvements that facilitate system usability and effectiveness. In turn, these improvements are expected to help with job matching and provide cleaner, more accurate data.
- The *Wyoming at Work* system now contains a Workforce Appraisal tool on its home page. The purpose of this tool was developed as a pre-service tool, to assist users in making the best decisions about services available to them in the system. The appraisal also helps workforce specialists to determine programs and services that best fit the unique needs of each customer.
- The Division consistently works with the host of the *Wyoming at Work* system, Geographic Solutions, Inc., to clean up issues and data errors that are noticed in the system. Also, the Division, itself, anticipates being able to host the system in the near future, which will provide more control over data and reporting.
- In July 2008, the Division adopted a Career Readiness Certificate program which tests and rates worker skills in the competency areas of reading for information, applied math, and locating information. As this certificate becomes more widely known, it is anticipated that business partners will more readily seek out job seekers who are certified through this program. As of July 2009, the Division had issued over 800 career readiness certificates to job seekers.
- The Division is continuing to participate in some promising pilot projects with its partners, which are pointed toward increasing job skills and job readiness among customers, to make them more employable. For example, a workshop is being presented in Laramie County by the Agency and Laramie County Community College. This workshop will focus on four key components: writing an effective resume, critical interview skills, workplace professionalism, and computer basics briefing for beginning keyboarding and computer users.
- Low-cost and no-cost improvements to policy and instruction for staff, job seekers and businesses will continue to assist in more successful matches. The Employment Services Division will also increase its efforts to follow up with job seekers successfully matched and with job openings posted by employers.
- In recent years, the Employment Services Division has received significant cuts to staff dollars from federal partners. Also, the Division has been affected by the hiring freeze

imposed on Wyoming State Agencies during the current recession. However, the Division has received federal stimulus monies, as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which supplement regular formula Wagner-Peyser appropriations that are used to link job seekers with employers. While the law requires the Division to track and spend Recovery Act funds separately from other formula funds, the Division is working to strategically align all of its resources to meet both short-term and long-term state workforce development needs.

- The Agency will continue to maintain technical support to local Workforce Centers so that the Agency's ability to successfully match job seekers to employers is not affected.
- The Agency will work to maintain uninterrupted services through its Workforce Centers and satellite offices, during a period of budget cuts, to assure that it can serve the state's population.
- The Agency's communications staff and Employment Services Division are working together to increase the number of job seekers and businesses using the services the Agency provides. With the current employment condition of the State, it is imperative that businesses are connected to talent and talent is connected to employment operations, to further strengthen the State's economy into the future. Contracts exist with all 44 of the state's newspapers, which allow for focused advertising of events and services in Wyoming communities. With the understanding that many of today's youth and other potential customers may not read newspapers routinely, the Agency is also utilizing other opportunities to increase public awareness. Regular news releases are sent out to all news media in the state, so the public can be routinely be made aware of things the Agency is doing for workers and businesses. In addition, the Agency is continuing to work through its community and state partners, such as the community colleges, to make its message known.
- Video monitors are being placed in each of Wyoming's workforce centers that will repeatedly share important messages with people who come to the center. They will be instructed about services for veterans and youth workers, workforce appraisals, the process for finding a job, how to use the *Wyoming at Work* system, the roles of workforce specialists, what the Agency can do for businesses, and the process for finding workers.
- The current Information Technology structures used by the Agency require continuous improvement processes. Assuring integrity of current systems and future security of information is an inherent priority of the Agency and to meeting this performance measure.

Performance Measure #2: Percentage of Job Seekers and Incumbent Workers that Completed Training and were Employed or Retained

- Under the Employment Services Division:
 - The Employment Services Division has asked for a federal waiver which, if granted, will enable the Division to report on fewer federal performance measures, and thus be able to concentrate more fully on helping participants obtain employment following training. It is anticipated that this waiver will be granted as requested.
 - The Employment Services Division subjects all potential training providers to a two-tiered approval process, to ensure that each provider, and its programs, meet the Division's standards. The provider's application is initially reviewed by

Division staff. Then it must be reviewed by the Workforce Development Council before final approval is given. The Division will continue to follow this required policy to assure the quality of training in the state.

- The Employment Services Division will continue to concentrate on providing quality training to participants in need of training, and the placement of those participants in suitable employment following their training.
- The Agency will continue to partner with public schools, community colleges and their commission, and the University of Wyoming to strategically improve the training and education for employment process. While it is soon to expect tangible results, it is noted that training costs are not getting cheaper.
- Under the Vocational Rehabilitation Division:
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation Division will continue to develop mutual training with Special Education staff for the local education agencies as needed.
- Under the Business Training and Outreach Division:
 - The Workforce Development Training Fund plans to implement a rigorous marketing plan to increase the number of businesses and trainees that utilize the program through advertizing in business publications, identification of businesses in the immediate area that will be visited and personal contact via telephone with businesses across the state. Initial identification of business to be contacted will follow the Wyoming Workforce Development Council's sector initiative.
 - The WY Quality Counts! program will focus on two main goals to increase continuing education grant use by at least 15 percent in FY2010. The program will increase outreach by creating a registration system for providers. This system will create a database with contact information for employees working in the child care industry that are interested in WY Quality Counts! services. Once registered, a newsletter will be distributed every quarter to users with information about new training opportunities, deadlines, and training grant fund availability.

Performance Measure #3: Percentage of Work-Ready Individuals with Significant Employment Barriers that were Placed in Employment

- Under the Employment Services Division:
 - The Wyoming at Work system has been updated to emphasize Veterans priority of service, thereby more easily letting Veterans and their spouses know that this priority exists and encouraging them to inquire about it.
 - All Divisions within the Agency will continue to work with all partners and increase outreach efforts to these populations.
- Under the Vocational Rehabilitation Division:
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation Division will continue to have the Transition Consultant to provide a consistent policy message to the Wyoming Department of Education and to the 48 Local Education Agencies regarding the transition of students with disabilities into the workforce. This effort resulted in a large increase in the number of students with disabilities becoming Vocational Rehabilitation clients over the prior year.
 - The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will complete the Wyoming Needs Assessment to determine what changes should be made within the Division. In

particular, the assessment will help identify the needs of returning veterans, minority groups and students in transition from school to work.

- The Disability Determination Service (DDS) will continue to meet or exceed federal performance measures in determining eligibility of disabled individuals for services.
- Under the Business Training and Outreach Division:
 - The Senior Community Service Employment Program will increase performance by following a marketing plan developed by the Agency's Marketing Team. Tactics under this plan propose to increase program enrollment and a VISTA grant has been received to increase program capacity at the community level.
 - The Employment Training for Self-Sufficiency Program
 - Continue the partnership established with the Department of Corrections to create job training program with inmates at the Honor Farm in Newcastle, Wyoming. A welding program is being developed and will be taught by Eastern Wyoming College faculty. The class will begin in Fall 2009.
 - The ETSS program will again partner with United Way of Laramie County to provide a two-day Bridges Out of Poverty training for community service professionals from around the state.
 - The ETSS program will continue to support the Circles Out of Poverty program in Cheyenne. The Circles Campaign is an action plan that brings together the best efforts and resources of individuals, organizations, communities, and government in a program proven to raise people out of poverty. Initial training began in fall 2008. A second class will begin in Fall 2009.
 - The Dads Making a Difference program will expand to Rock Springs in Fall 2009.
 - The 4th Dads Making a Difference Program will begin in spring 2010.
 - The LIFT mentor programs will be expanded to Gillette and Rock Springs. They provide adult mentorship services to ETSS program participants during the course of their training program and beyond.