



2008 Governor's Workforce Development Conference Recognition of Excellence Awards

Recognition of Excellence Awards will be given in the following categories:

- **Training for Business Demands**
- **Leveraging Alternate Resources**
- **Serving Special Populations**
- **Educating Mississippi's Youth**

The attached Application Form must be completed and submitted as indicated in order to be considered by the Awards Evaluation Committee. The four award categories are explained below. Also included are the evaluation criteria and the maximum points that may be awarded for each. The awards are designed to highlight innovative programs, projects or initiatives, not individuals.

I. Training for Business Demands

Our State's ability to be competitive in a global economy depends on the quality of our workforce. To succeed we must build and maintain a market driven system, focused on responding to the immediate needs of businesses while preparing a skilled workforce for the future. The **Training for Business Demands Award** recognizes excellence in meeting the immediate needs of a specific business customer or group of business customers and area job seekers. Criteria to be considered:

A. Innovation (20 points)

- Describe how the program, project or initiative engaged business and economic development groups in innovative ways to identify areas of high-growth employment and the skills and competencies needed for high-growth jobs.
- Describe whether these skills are employer-specific or general industry requirements.
- Are they forward looking? How? Be specific, such as in the design and development of a business service delivery model (types of services, how services are accessible, methods of service delivery, etc.).
- Describe input from state and local officials and local business organizations.

B. Collaboration (20 points)

- Describe the collaborative relationships involved in this initiative.
- Explain steps taken to engage business and industry, and the method of determining current and future labor force needs, required job competencies, and entry level and career progression opportunities.
- Describe any resources that are leveraged, citing all resources that are involved.
- Are there specific performance expectations for each of the collaborative partners? Please describe.

C. Performance Outcomes (20 points)

- Describe how you measured the success of the effort. Cite any performance goals that were set and how they were established. Identify strategies that were established and/or efforts undertaken, beyond what is normally expected, in order to meet those goals.
- Describe the positive outcomes in quantitative and/or qualitative terms. How do they relate to the overall goal(s) of the program, project or initiative? What impact has the initiative had on jobseekers and employers? Do these goals relate to the required performance outcomes for the ETA-funded activity (i.e., are they the same or different, and how)?
- How did this effort improve or enhance ETA-funded program performance?

D. Linkages to Economic Development and Community Benefit (20 points)

- Show evidence that the project leveraged the resources of partners such as employers, economic development organizations; and worked with industries.
- Discuss how the project attempts to address regional economic needs.
- Include information on how demand information was determined.

E. Replicability (20 points)

- Describe how this project, program or initiative is replicable.
- Have you replicated this program, project or initiative in other areas of your operation?
- How can you facilitate replication? Examples include, but are not limited to, demonstrating the model for others; providing tools or resources that enable the model/approach to be replicated; providing documentation or findings that can be disseminated to and utilized by others; developing a strategy to continue a successful project; or utilizing the model in other programs areas.

II. Leveraging Alternate Resources

Addressing the critical challenges that both job seekers and employers face requires considerable leveraging of resources from multiple systems that impact the labor market, particularly those of employment, education and economic development programs. This category will be organizations that demonstrate sustained partnerships that can show how they are successfully working together to prepare: (1) jobseekers for employment; (2) incumbent workers for jobs with upward career

mobility potential; or (3) entrepreneurs to create, sustain and expand their businesses in their communities. Criteria to be considered include:

A. Innovation (20 points)

- Briefly describe the purpose of the partnerships and the approaches used to develop innovative solutions to the specific challenges of the area.
- Demonstrate how the project is innovative compared to traditional approaches.
- Describe any unique characteristics of the partnerships.

B. Collaboration (20 points)

- Describe how the project initiative created or enhanced partnerships to identify needs of workers and/or entrepreneurs.
- Describe how partners helped to identify, develop, and prepare new and diverse labor pools to meet critical industry needs.
- Describe how the partners brought together and leveraged resources, and what role the workforce investment system had as catalyst and convener in bringing together the entities involved.
- Describe how the project used business-driven leadership at the regional, state, or local levels to achieve its results.
- Describe the specific role each partner carried out including specific actions taken, if appropriate.

C. Performance Outcomes (20 points)

- Describe any performance goals for the initiative and how they were met or exceeded. Quantify the outcomes to the extent possible.
- How did the project help business, industry, jobseekers and entrepreneurs better access the services of the workforce investment system?
- What was the impact in measurable terms?
- How did this effort consolidate or link resources to reduce duplication across funding streams?
- Identify strategies that were established and/or efforts undertaken beyond what is normally expected of ETA-funded activities in order to meet project goals.

D. Linking Services to Economic Development and/or Community Benefit (20 Points)

- Describe how the project has been driven by specific local or regional economic factors.
- Describe how the project was a catalyst and convener to link the publicly funded workforce investment system with other entities, such as education, and economic development entities.

E. Replicability (20 Points)

- Describe how this project is replicable.

- Have you replicated this program, project or initiative in other areas of your operation?
- How can you facilitate replication? (Examples include, but are not limited to, demonstrating the model for others; providing tools or resources that enable the model/approach to be replicated; providing documentation or findings that can be disseminated to and utilized by others; or developing a strategy to continue a successful project.)

III. Serving Special Populations

With the shifting demographics of the U.S. workforce, it is becoming ever more critical that the workforce investment system find ways to integrate every available worker into the workforce to enable the continued competitiveness of U.S. businesses. The **Serving Special Populations Award** will recognize programs, projects or initiatives that provide effective services to special populations with unique characteristics and barriers to employment.

Examples of special populations include, but are not limited to: persons with disabilities, drop-outs, out-of-school youth, individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP), immigrants, older workers, ex-offenders, homeless individuals and families, Indian and Native Americans, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers, welfare recipients, etc. Criteria to be considered include:

A. Innovation (20 points)

- Describe how the project provided the same or greater range of employment and training-related services as are expected to be provided to the general population to help the target population(s) overcome specific barriers to employment.
- Identify how the project is innovative and creative compared to traditional programs. (For example, what strategies or tools were used to help overcome barriers to physical and programmatic access, enhance staff capabilities, overcome language and technology barriers, recruit the population, etc.)
- What prompted this innovation and how was this achieved?

B. Collaboration (20 points)

- Describe the collaborative relationships involved in this initiative.
- Describe how resources are leveraged, citing all resources that are involved, including regional, state, and local supports. (Examples include: obtaining additional support and/or resources to serve this population, gaining expertise from outside organizations, pooling and combining resources across program and agencies to solve the employment and training concerns of the population including leveraging workforce investment system resources, outreach to community and faith based organizations, etc.)
- If direct services are involved, are they provided in a seamless manner? How is this seamless approach accomplished?

C. Performance Outcomes (25 points)

- Describe how you measured the success of the effort.
- Describe any performance goals that were set and how they were established. Identify strategies that were established and/or efforts undertaken, beyond what is normally expected, in order to meet those goals.
- How did these goals recognize the demographics of the current and future workforce and focus on positive outcomes in employment and retention for special population(s)?
- Describe the positive outcomes in quantitative terms. How do they relate to the overall goal(s) of the program, project or initiative?

D. Linking Services (20 Points)

- Describe why this project is important to the business customer and/or the community.
- Describe the business or community challenges, issues or needs it addresses.
- If outreach was conducted, what was the result? (For example, identify how outreach was done to connect with individuals in the targeted population(s); work within the community to determine the target population's needs; efforts to connect the targeted populations with employers; create links with specific employer or business needs, etc.).
- How did the project enhance the quantity and quality of services for the special population?

E. Replicability (15 Points)

- Describe how this project is replicable.
- Have you replicated this program, project or initiative in other areas of your operation?
- How can you facilitate replication? (Examples include, but are not limited to, demonstrating the model to others; providing tools or resources that enable the model/approach to be replicated; documenting findings that can be disseminated to and utilized by others; or developing a strategy to continue a successful project.)

IV. Educating Youth

By providing youth with experience, education and skills, we can help develop a pipeline of job ready individuals to serve the needs of business and provide youth with paths to career enhancing opportunities and productive lives. The challenge for agencies that employ a demand-driven strategic approach to serving youth, especially out-of-school youth is developing programs that balance traditional methodology with “outside the box” or creative techniques to successfully match employers who need workers with young people who need jobs.

The **Educating Youth Award** recognizes an exemplary program, project or initiative that employs innovative techniques for talent development and actively collaborates with business and industry and other essential partners to develop successful

workforce solutions that address the education, training and hiring challenges facing youth. The initiative should be part of a network of stakeholders, partners and resources and be able to demonstrate positive performance outcomes for youth in placement, retention, earnings gained, and/or credentials obtained. Criteria to be considered include:

A. Innovation (15 points)

- Describe how the project is innovative and creative compared to traditional approaches.
- Identify any innovative activities that ensure that the workforce system partners connect with business, community organizations, and public and higher education systems in order to prepare youth for career opportunities in high growth job sectors of the 21st century.

B. Collaboration (20 points)

- Describe how the program utilizes linkages with different stakeholders, partners, organizations or resources, including but not limited to, partnerships with businesses, community colleges, high schools, community and faith-based organizations, non-traditional education and training programs, Job Corps, Youth Build, and Youth Corps.
- Describe how these partnerships promote educating, training and/or employing youth in self-sustaining jobs, including, but not limited to: providing vital support services such as work readiness training, mentoring; transportation; child care; translation services and job coaching; raising academic standards; addressing student needs; reaching out to employers; collaborating to maximize funding; resource mapping; specialized case management for youth; managing community partners and networks; youth liaisons; or collaboration to make electronic technology tools.
- Describe how resources are leveraged, citing all resources or contributions.

C. Performance Outcomes (25 points)

- Describe how you measured the success of the effort. In quantitative terms, how did the effort improve the placement, earnings, retention and or credentialing for out-of-school youth?
- How were performance goals established?
- Identify strategies that were established and/or efforts undertaken, beyond what is normally expected, in order to meet those goals. How do goals relate to the overall goal(s) of the project?
- Do these goals relate to the required performance outcomes for the ETA-funded activity (i.e. are they the same or different, and how)?
- How does the project foster long-term attachment to the workforce?

D. Linking Services (25 points)

- Describe how the project ensures that the workforce system connects with business, public and higher education systems in order to prepare youth for career opportunities and skills in high growth job sectors.

- How does the program contribute to community betterment?
- If providing services, how does the service delivery model demonstrate a demand driven approach and effective engagement with the business community, education and the larger economy?
- Does the initiative nurture career awareness and/or career planning and readiness throughout the program?

E. Replicability (15 Points)

- Describe how this project is replicable.
- Have you replicated this project in other areas of your operation?
- How can you facilitate replication? (Examples include, but are not limited to, demonstrating the replicable model for others; providing tools or resources that enable the model/approach to be replicated; providing documentation or findings that can be disseminated to and utilized by others; or developing a strategy to continue a successful project.)



**2008 Governor's Workforce Development Conference
Recognition of Excellence Awards
Application Form**

I. Nominator Information

Please provide the following information for each application:

- A. Nominator's Full Name and Title:
- B. Organization:
- C. Contact Telephone Number:
- D. Email Address:

II. Nominee Information

This section contains identification and contact information for the project, program or initiative that is being nominated for the Recognition of Excellence Award.

- A. Recognition Category – Identify the applicable category:
 - 1. Training for Business Demands
 - 2. Leveraging Alternate Resources
 - 3. Serving Special Populations
 - 4. Educating Mississippi's Youth
- B. Name of Program, Project or Initiative:
- C. Location of Program, Project or Initiative:
- D. Dates of Program, Project or Initiative:
 - From:
 - To:
- E. Fund Source(s):
- F. Organization Representative Information:

Identify and provide contact information for the person with the knowledge of and authority over the program, project or initiative, e.g. WIB Chair, Program Director. If the nomination is successful, this person will be expected to accept the award.

 - 1. Name:
 - 2. Title:
 - 3. Organization:
 - 4. Address:
 - 5. Work Phone:

6. Fax:
7. Email Address:

III. Narrative Description of Program, Project or Initiative

Describe the program, project or initiative following the nomination outline for the applicable category.

IV. Nomination Specifications

Each nomination is limited to eight pages, one (1) page for Nominator and Nominee Information and seven (7) pages for the Narrative Description of Program, Project or Initiative. The seven-page narrative should be single sided and double-spaced on 8.5-inch-by-11-inch pages with 12-point font and 1-inch margins with numbered pages.

V. Submission Specification

Nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. CDT, Friday, October 31, 2008.

Nominations may be sent through the mail to:

**Jeanine Lilly
Office of Grant Management
MS Department of Employment Security
P. O. Box 1699
Jackson, MS 39215-1699**

or emailed to

jlilly@mdes.ms.gov