



Workforce Bulletin - September 26, 2014

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NASWA Hosts 78th Annual Conference in Burlington, Vermont

On September 17-19, 2014, NASWA and the Vermont Department of Labor hosted the [78th NASWA Annual Conference](#) in Burlington, Vermont, welcoming state workforce development, unemployment insurance, and other professionals in the public workforce system from across the country to discuss and share ideas on how to address some of the most pressing challenges facing the workforce development and unemployment insurance programs.

Kicking off the Conference was a presentation of colors by the Vermont National Guard Color Guard, followed by Vermont Department of Labor Commissioner Annie Noonan, who welcomed Conference attendees to Burlington.

Kennesaw State Professor of Economics and Director of the Econometric Center Roger C. Tutterow, Ph.D., served as the keynote speaker opening this year's Conference. He reviewed the economic recovery in the U.S. following the Great Recession and forecast sustained, moderate economic growth through the end of 2014 and into 2015.

Following Dr. Tutterow's opening keynote was a panel on workforce system challenges. The panel served as a follow up from last year's Conference discussion in Denver, Colorado.

John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development **Director Carl Van Horn** moderated a panel of state workforce system experts, including NASWA **Senior Policy Advisor Jim Van Erden**, New Mexico

Department of Workforce Services Cabinet **Secretary Celina Bussey**, Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services Assistant **Director Bruce Madson**, Georgia Department of Labor Employment Services **Director Ann Shirra**, and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development **Deputy Commissioner Aaron Fichtner**.

Much of the discussion focused on ways states have leveraged resources from multiple programs in order to provide a cohesive menu of services to businesses and job seekers. Panelists also touched on the opportunities presented by the passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Capitol Hill Partners **Partner John Colbert** moderated the Wednesday afternoon panel session on implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, with U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) **Deputy Assistant Secretary Gerri Fiala**, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment **Executive Director Ellen Golombek**, Texas Workforce Commission **Executive Director Larry Temple**, Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services **Assistant Director Jim Apperson**, and Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Bureau of Workforce Development Administration **Director Brandy Burnham** participating as panelists in the session.

During the panel discussion, states outlined the challenges and opportunities they had identified in the two months since WIOA was signed into law in order to implement the new provisions set to take effect July 1, 2015. States on the panel and in the audience were also able to ask ETA Deputy Assistant Secretary Fiala about USDOL's interpretations on certain provisions under WIOA and would be subject to USDOL's proposed rule-making (PRM) to be published at the latest by January 18, 2015. Additionally, states were able to express any concerns they had about the way USDOL was collecting information as it developed the proposed rule.

The final panel discussion on Wednesday afternoon was on how state workforce agencies and employers can maximize their use of the [National Labor Exchange \(NLx\)](#). Georgia Department of Labor Employment Services **Director Ann Shirra** moderated a panel of states and employers that included United Airlines Senior Program Manager-Talent Acquisition **John Whalin**, Iowa Department of Workforce Development Workforce Services **Administrator Lori Adams**, and Texas Workforce Commission Workforce Automation **Director Scott Eychner**.

Lori Adams (IA) discussed how NLx no-cost indexing services assisted Iowa in substantially increasing the number of job openings in its state job bank in a manner that provided high-quality jobs to job seekers. Scott Eychner shared how Texas was taking advantage of search engine optimization products from the NLx through microsites to learn of changing job seeker behavior and allowing job seekers to "discover" state job bank content through job searches conducted on search engines.

From the employer perspective, **United's John Whalin** highlighted his engagement through the NLx, and how it has enabled his company to better connect with special applicant pipelines, such as veterans, and the importance of receiving this service along with other employer services from states.

On the second day of the Conference, during the NASWA Business Session, members considered new and updated resolutions and policies for adoption by the Association. NASWA's Resolutions and Policy Notebook serves as the official policy positions of the Association on workforce development and unemployment insurance programs. This year NASWA's [2014 Resolutions and Policy Notebook](#) received a significant update, as six new resolutions were considered and a number of other resolutions were either updated or eliminated because they were no longer relevant. To view the updated Resolutions and Policy Notebook, visit <http://naswa.org/GovRelations/index.cfm?action=policy>.

The Thursday afternoon sessions featured six workshops on both workforce development and unemployment insurance programs. Workshops covering workforce development programs included sessions on *trends in jobseeker services state workforce agencies provide*; *how labor market information can be more effectively used in the provision of workforce services*; and *innovative approaches in serving businesses in states*.

For unemployment insurance programs, two workshop discussions were held covering *unemployment insurance integrity and unemployment insurance information technology modernization projects*. Further, two technical assistance sessions were held for states covering issues surrounding the *adoption of various tools and resources from the National Labor Exchange*, and *staff training materials from NASWA's Information Technology Support Center's (ITSC) Unemployment Insurance Training Center*, which provides online training for all federal and state employees within the UI program.

On the final day of the Conference, the issue of workforce information technology was the topic of discussion, with a panel of state and federal experts moderated by Maher and Maher President and CEO Rick Maher.

Panelists in the discussion included Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Department of Workforce Investment **Commissioner Beth Brinly**, USDOL ETA Office of Unemployment Insurance **Administrator Gay Gilbert**, Washington Employment Security Department **Deputy Commissioner Lisa Marsh**, and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development **Deputy Commissioner Aaron Fichtner**. The interactive panel focused on the use of technology to foster integrated case management systems, and the costs and benefits in states developing their own systems versus using commercial off-the-shelf solutions.

Presentations from the 78th Annual Conference are available by clicking [here](#) and also in the [NASWA Conference Presentation Database](#), which allows users to search for presentations by conference, topic and year. NASWA has also posted photos from this year's Conference to its [Facebook page](#).

NASWA thanks all those who attended this year's Annual Conference and looks forward to the 2015 Annual Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana!

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President Signs Continuing Resolution to Start FY 2015 as Congress Adjourns for Midterm Elections

On Friday, September 19, President Barack Obama signed into law a Continuing Resolution (CR) ([H.J. Res. 124](#)) providing funding for federal government operations at fiscal year (FY) 2014 levels for the beginning of FY 2015 through December 11, after bipartisan passage in both the House and Senate earlier in the week. Lawmakers sought to pass the ten-week measure to provide funding for federal agencies until after the November elections, setting the stage for a post-election or "lame-duck" session in mid-November to address FY 2015 appropriations and other issues.

Although President Obama supported the short-term CR, he also called on Congress to do what it did for FY 2014 in passing a 12-bill omnibus appropriations bill to provide federal agencies fresh appropriations. It is unclear whether a 12-bill omnibus appropriations approach will be used once the CR expires on December 11 because some members of the current House Majority and Senate Minority have indicated a desire to defer decisions on FY 2015 appropriations until the next session of Congress if they are able to win a majority of seats in both chambers in the November elections.

However the Chairs and Ranking Members of the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations indicated they will look towards completing a 12-bill omnibus appropriations bill once Congress returns for its lame-duck session on November 12.

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NASWA Honors Contributions to Workforce System with 2014 Salute to Leadership Awards

NASWA and its members honored those who sought to improve the workforce system over the past year at its Annual Conference in Burlington, VT, with NASWA's [2014 Salute to the Leadership Awards](#). NASWA's Board of Directors and Committees presented several awards to recognize individual and team successes in the workforce system. Recipients of this year's Salute to the Leadership Awards are listed below.

- **President's Award** – Richard A. Hobbie, Executive Director, NASWA;
- **S.E.A.L. Award** – The State of Florida, with Special Recognition to the Honorable Rick Scott, Governor, the CareerSource Florida Network;
- **Eagle Award** – Roger Bailie (Posthumous), Director of Finance, New York State Department of Labor;
- **James F. Walls Employee Award** – Eric McAbee, Local Veterans' Employment Representative, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce;
- **James F. Walls Team Award** – Arkansas Department of Workforce Services' (ARDWS) Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services Team;
- **Merrill Baumgardner Award** – David Kyre, Director of Application Development & Technical Director, South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce;
- **Vladimir Chavrid Award** – Tom Price, Business and Technology Applications Specialist, North Carolina Department of Commerce;
- **NASWA National Business of the Year Award** – Schaeffler Group-INA

For the complete Salute to the Leadership publication, highlighting award recipients' accomplishments, click [here](#).

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NASWA Executive Director Rich Hobbie to Join Rutgers Heldrich Center after Retirement from NASWA

After 16 years with NASWA and 11 years as Executive Director, Rich Hobbie will retire next week effective October 1, 2014 from NASWA.

While Mr. Hobbie will be retiring from NASWA next week, he will continue to remain involved with the workforce system, as he was recently appointed as a Visiting Scholar at the Rutgers University John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development effective his retirement date.

During his career, Mr. Hobbie has been Unemployment Insurance Director at NASWA, a consultant, an Associate Assistant Secretary at the U.S. Department of Labor, staff director of a subcommittee of the House Committee on Ways and Means of the U.S. Congress and an analyst at the Congressional Research Service and the Congressional Budget Office. Mr. Hobbie was an elected member of the National Academy of Social Insurance Board of Directors from 2002 to 2010 and served as its Treasurer from 2005 to 2010. He also is on the Board of Directors of the UWC Foundation and the Labor, Education and Health Advisory Council of the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank. Mr. Hobbie earned a Ph.D. degree from the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at Ohio State University (OSU) in 1975 and also has earned Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts degrees in economics at OSU. Mr. Hobbie is a Vietnam veteran.

Mr. Hobbie will be spending his winter months in San Diego, CA, where his daughter lives with her husband and three children. During the warmer months, he will return to the Washington, DC area where his son lives with his wife and two sons. Mr. Hobbie said he looks forward to spending much time with his five grandchildren, as well as, biking, sailing, kayaking, and playing tennis.

NASWA will miss Rich and his leadership, but we wish him well in his retirement!

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2014 National UI Directors' Conference and IT/Legal Issues Forum: Only a Few Weeks Away!

NASWA and the Utah Department of Workforce Services invite you to join us for this year's [2014 National UI Directors' Conference and IT/Legal Issues Forum](#). The National UI Meeting will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 20-23, 2014.

The theme of this year's national meeting, *Creating Connections In The 21st Century*, will provide stakeholders in the federal-state unemployment insurance (UI) system an opportunity to share innovative ideas, policies and best practices during the three day meeting. Plenary and workshop topics will focus on recent developments in UI integrity initiatives at the state and federal level, customer service innovations, advances in technologies to better serve UI customers, and legal issues surrounding recent changes to state UI law.

To view a preliminary agenda for this year's Conference, visit <http://www.naswa.org/meetings/uidir2014/?action=agenda>. To avoid the late registration fee, please register for the conference by Tuesday, October 14, 2014. For more information on registration, hotel accommodations, sponsors and exhibitors and any other information on the Conference, please visit the Conference website at <http://www.naswa.org/meetings/uidir2014/?action=home>.

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USDOL Announces \$87 Million in Supplemental Funds for State UI Programs

On September 15, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) [announced](#) awards totaling more than \$87 million to improve state unemployment insurance programs. The funding, awarded to 46 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, will allow state agencies to implement program integrity and system improvement activities, as well as implement or expand reemployment and eligibility assessment programs.

To qualify for program integrity funding, states must have implemented or committed to implement a set of required integrity activities. These include the implementation and expansion of the State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES); an enhanced National Directory of New Hire cross-match strategy; Unemployment Compensation for Ex-servicemembers automation; SIDES Monetary and Potential Employer Charges Data Exchanges; as well as other optional strategies identified by USDOL. A complete listing of award totals for each state is available at <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20141706.htm>.

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USDOL Provides \$14.8 Million to Expand Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities

On Thursday, September 25, the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) announced \$14.8 million in grants to six states to improve employment opportunities for adults and youth with disabilities. As part of USDOL's [Disability Employment Initiative](#), the states of California, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota and South Dakota were awarded the \$14.8 million to help expand the capacity of local one-stop centers to improve employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities by increasing their participation in existing career pathway systems and programs that build on partnerships among local educational institutions, businesses and disability advocates.

This is the fifth round of funding through the Disability Employment Initiative, which now supports 37 projects in 26 states. For more information on the grant funding, visit <http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20141764.htm>.

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Unemployment Insurance Initial Claims Increase and Continued Claims Increase

The U.S. Department of Labor reported for the week ending September 20 seasonally adjusted unemployment insurance initial claims increased from the previous week's revised figure.

Seasonally adjusted initial claims increased by 12,000 to 293,000 from last week's revised figure of 281,000. The 4-week moving average was 298,500, a decrease of 1,250 from the previous week's revised average of

299,750. The unadjusted initial claims level totaled 238,539, down 3,533 from the previous week, and down 16,548 from the level of 255,087 for a comparable week in 2013.

UI continued claims, seasonally adjusted, for the week ending September 13 were 2,439,000 up 7,000 from the previous week's revised figure. The 4-week moving average decreased 22,250 to 2,460,250 from the prior week's revised figure of 2,482,500.

The total number of individuals claiming benefits in all programs for the week ending September 6 was 2,222,189, a decrease of 42,035 from the prior week. Regular state continued claims decreased by 45,684, and EB decreased by 31. During the week of September 6, 2014, continued claims for ex-federal employees stood at 15,743 up 1,428 from the prior week, and for newly discharged veterans, 24,224 up 539 from the prior week.

Continued claims and initial claims continue to decline from their Great Recession highs. This decline alone with the strong seasonal component of each series is shown in the graph below.

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NASWA Gains Two New Companies to Affiliate Program

NASWA has gained two new organizations to its Affiliate program this month, with [Associated Builders and Contractors](#) (ABC) and [Exp Federal](#) joining NASWA's Affiliate program. ABC is a national construction industry trade association representing nearly 21,000 chapter members. ABC and its 70 chapters help members develop people, win work and deliver that work safely, ethically, profitably and for the betterment of the communities in which ABC and its members work. For more information on Associated Builders and Contractors, visit their website at <http://www.abc.org>.

Exp Federal is a wholly owned subsidiary company of exp U.S. Services, Inc. with the sole mission of providing U.S. Federal clients best-in-class services in the architecture, engineering, operations and maintenance, and mission critical support services domain. For more information on Exp Federal visit <http://www.exp.com/en/federal-home>.

A NASWA Affiliation is available to parties interested in the Workforce Investment System, such as workforce professionals, economic developers, and educators and business persons. **NASWA does not endorse the goods and services produced by affiliates.** The NASWA affiliate package includes the following benefits:

- Access to NASWA's national information network to support your organization's efforts;
- Access to NASWA membership lists via the NASWA web site (phone and fax numbers not provided);
- Automatic e-mail notifications when new information is posted on NASWA's web site;
- Access to NASWA's weekly newsletter the, "Workforce Bulletin;"
- Receipt of "NewsWire" three times a week;
- FREE advertising opportunities in "NewsWire" and on the NASWA home page.
- Priority posting of your organization's position announcements on NASWA's [Classified Ad page](#);
- Networking opportunities with federal and state workforce investment leaders as well as workforce development professionals in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam.

To find out more information about NASWA's Affiliate program, click [here](#).

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USDOL Directives & Releases

September 25, 2014: USDOL's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) released a [notice in the Federal Register](#) establishing the Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities.

September 25, 2014: USDOL released a [notice in the Federal Register](#) submitting the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) sponsored information collection request (ICR) revision titled, "Federal Contractor Veterans' Employment Report," to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval for use in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995.

September 25, 2014: Veterans Employment and Training Service released a [rule in the Federal Register](#) to revise the regulations implementing the reporting requirements under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended (VEVRAA).

September 22, 2014: ETA released [Training and Employment Notice No. 09-14](#) announcing the Survey about the Use of Technical Assistance by State and Local Workforce Systems ("Technical Assistance Survey") and encourages responses from public workforce system representatives who receive the survey.

September 18, 2014: ETA issued [Unemployment Insurance Program Letter No. 23-14](#) transmitting the subject computation for State Workforce Agency usage in computing minimum weekly Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) amounts for all major disasters declared during the first quarter of Fiscal Year (FY) 2015.

September 12, 2014: ETA issued [Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 07-14](#) providing guidance for YouthBuild grantees implementing the "Construction Plus" component of the YouthBuild program, including a synopsis of what it entails and to inform workforce partners of the expansion of the YouthBuild program to include Construction Plus training in addition to construction training.

Other Reports

September 21, 2014: [Left Behind: The Long-term Unemployed Struggle in an Improving Economy](#) - The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development released a report on the unemployed and long-term unemployed Americans revealing the profound struggles of Americans who remained jobless for months and years even as the economy gradually recovers.

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Articles were contributed by Tim Griffith, Brian Langley, and Hillary Hewko.

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