



November 3, 2022

Tammy Wilkinson, Division Director  
Workforce Development  
401 Adams Avenue  
P.O. Box 304103  
Montgomery, AL 36130-4103

RE: Governor's Workforce Innovation Directive No. PY2022-03

Dear Tammy,

Please find the attached Annual Report for Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE) reflecting the above-mentioned directive.

We feel that we had a successful and learning year and look forward to many more years of success.

Thank you and your staff for the leadership and support that you have given and continue to give to SWAPTE throughout Region 7.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sydney G. Baine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a long, sweeping underline.

Sydney G. Baine, President  
Southwest Alabama Partnership  
For Training and Employment

Cc: Danny Cheek  
Laura Bethea  
Susan Kozlowski



**Annual Report**

**For the period**

**July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022**

**Submitted By:**

**SWAPTE  
515 Springhill Plaza Court  
Mobile, AL 36608  
(251)432-0909**

**Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment  
Annual Report  
For the period  
July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022**

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**MISSION**

The **Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE)** exists to ensure a competitive advantage **FOR EMPLOYERS** through quality people and **FOR PEOPLE** through quality jobs.

**VISION**

The **Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE)** is a regional partnership of business, education, labor, and community leaders that achieves excellence by providing high-quality services that meet the labor market needs of employers and residents in our region of nine counties which include Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington, and Wilcox.

## 2021-2022 Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment Workforce Development Board

### INTERIM CHAIR

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Alabama Power

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Community Based Organization

Carolyn Akers  
Mobile Area Education Foundation  
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Barnett Millworks  
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Adam Boykin  
Future Achievers Learning Enrichment Ctr  
Business

Stan Chavis  
State Farm Insurance  
Business

Dawn Dixon  
Life Planning Designs, LLC  
Business

Mike Hare  
Qwick Kurb, Inc.  
Business

Susan Kozlowski  
Region 7 Alabama Career Centers  
Government

Ryan Lee  
Austal  
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Judy Mitchell  
Franklin Primary Health Center, Inc  
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Education

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Alabama Department of Rehabilitations Services  
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Choctaw County Chamber of Commerce  
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Phillip Morris  
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Golden Dragon Cooper Tubing Plant  
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Gabriel Peck  
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Charles Pharr  
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Government

Dr. Craig Pouncey  
Coastal Alabama Community College  
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Comfort Care Hospice  
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Rickey Rhodes  
South Alabama Regional Planning Commission  
Government

John Clyde Riggs  
Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission  
Government

Tamaniek Sanchez  
Poarch Band of Creek Indians  
Government

Lesleigh Smith  
Performance Contractors and the Wharf  
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Carol Statter  
Infirmary Health  
Business

Stephanie Streeter  
Department of Human Recourses  
Government

Jill Stork  
Alabama Power  
Business

Tonya Wilson  
Franklin Health Care  
Community Based Organization

#### **A. State of Alabama's Waivers**

- 1) Allow the use of individual training accounts (ITAs) for in-school youth, ages 14-21 years

This program year was the first year that SWAPTE has taken advantage of this waiver. Three (3) individuals were enrolled into an ITA of which one is still enrolled and progressing in nursing. One failed first semester of LPN nursing, however, is currently attending school on their own and passing RN classes and SWAPTE will reevaluate grades and start assisting again to accomplish their goal. The third client enrolled in welding had personal issues after the first semester and has decided not to reenroll however is working.

SWAPTE continues to work with in-school youth during the last year of the waiver and would like to see it continue.



## **B. Customer Satisfaction**

SWAPTE currently has 6 full time Career Centers and 3 Itinerant Centers in their Workforce Region. The itinerant centers are open one day a week to expand services to both participants and employers in the more rural areas of the Region.

All centers focus on effectiveness and are aware of and responsive to the needs and expectations of the local area in which they are located. In addition, the centers are flexible regarding the priorities of each center and are responsive to area businesses or industry sectors as demands for workforce rise or fall.

Career Centers provide both participants and employers customer surveys requesting feedback on the services that they received. These surveys are discussed, and improvements are made, as needed, to better serve both the participant and employer. Most of these surveys have positive responses which leads to repeat customers.

Career Centers maintain partnerships with programs such as Adult Basic Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Human Resources, and other resources that are available for participant referrals.

Career Centers also demonstrate a commitment to reaching out to the community to make services more readily available to business and industry as well as to job seekers and to individuals in need of training. Reaching out to the communities and sharing this information leads to more employers and job seekers using the Career Centers.

## **C. Progress Made**

Our State has relaxed on COVID-19 safety measures, however SWAPTE along with the Department of Labor continued these measures on an as needed basis for staff and clients, so that everyone is comfortable receiving services on a day-to-day basis.

Still experiencing challenges in rebuilding the workforce, SWAPTE consistently reaches out to businesses and industries to discuss these challenges and strategize on efforts to better assist. Career Centers have started back organizing job fairs within the Career Centers and at public venues to promote job opportunities.

SWAPTE along with Career Center staff have realized that since COVID-19 we must reach out into the communities. In doing this, staff have been attending community events and providing information on the services that are offered within the Career Center.

SWAPTE continues to focus its resources on addressing the demand for workforce with manufacturing, healthcare, construction, transportation, hospitality, and technology skills.

SWAPTE has noticed an increase in businesses using OJT and believe that this is owed to the result of streamlining the process, which makes it less burdensome for businesses, and the community outreach that is being conducted. In addition, we have more businesses sharing their positive experiences with other businesses.

SWAPTE has also operated the Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program Grant (AWSP) which has allowed many businesses within the region to upskill their current employees. This has helped not only the employers increase their performance but has helped the employers understand the other services that SWAPTE can offer.

Also, by using the AWSP grant employers have increased wages for their employees so that they are more competitive and will have a better chance of retaining and even increasing their current workforce.

Partnerships are continuing to be made with SWAPTE, the regional community colleges and the Secondary Education System work together to respond to the business and industry needs with new opportunities.

The partnership that SWAPTE has had with Bishop State Community College and Alabama Power is expanding to include not only lineman training but HVAC training. The lineman program has been very successful with SWAPTE funding approximately 26 WIOA eligible applicants and a placement rate of 99.9%, therefore we are excited to fund those that are eligible for HVAC soon.

SWAPTE continues to support FlightPath9 which is a unique pre-employment training program for high school seniors created through a partnership between Flight Works Alabama and Airbus. High school seniors are graduating with full time employment making above self-sufficient wages.

SWAPTE is reaching out to partner with other employers in the region along with the continuing education programs within the high schools to build more training and funding opportunities for our youth. This will allow industries to train our youth to better perform in the workforce.

SWAPTE continued to struggle with youth performance, therefore SWAPTE is reviewing the services that are being provided to our youth through our providers and provide training for all stakeholders, to ensure understanding of the changes. SWAPTE has also realigned some of the programs so that the services that are being provided are aligned with performance. We understand that it will take a year or so before these changes will show in performance.

#### **D. Sector Strategies/Career Pathways**

SWAPTE addresses sector strategies by meeting with our Regional Workforce Board, key businesses, and local community colleges in our region to discuss their needs and identify what training resources are needed to secure a well-trained workforce for their industry.

During these meetings SWAPTE discusses the variety of programs that are offered and how funding can be braided to better meet their needs. Programs that are discussed are:

- Alabama Workforce Stabilization Grant (AWSP)
- Apprenticeships
- Incumbent Worker
- On-the-Job Training
- Individual Training Accounts

Many times, businesses choose OJT because it is an immediate way to expand their workforce and because it provides them with the opportunity to custom train the individuals.

The AWSP grant has been a great opportunity for businesses to upskill their current employees. This has also allowed businesses to offer training to their employees in which they would not have been able to support due to the losses that they occurred during COVID-19. In addition, this has helped the employees increase their skills to become eligible for promotions and higher wages.



SWAPTE developed a Work Based Learning program for Out of School Youth ages 18-24. This program provides work readiness and occupational skills to eligible youth. This has been very successful in our rural communities especially and several youth participants have been offered full-time employment after their completion of the program. SWAPTE was able to offer OJT opportunities to those employers that retained these youth in permanent employment.

SWAPTE counsels individuals who have utilized training services to further their education by stacking credentials to reach a higher skill level within an industry. This has been very successful in healthcare, for example having a client with a CNA certificate to continue to become an LPN. In addition, our partnership with the University of South Alabama School of Nursing has been extremely effective. SWAPTE provides funds to eligible nursing students in their last two years of school to complete the RN program. By providing this assistance to complete their degree it assures students can complete without having to leave school to go to work and risk the possibility of not returning to class.

SWAPTE feels that having participants accomplish smaller goals gives them the initiative to keep striving, therefore the stackable credentials is a great way of getting that client to becoming self-sufficient.

SWAPTE also reaches out to employers to offer OJT opportunities for participants that have recently completed an Individual Training Account (ITA). By doing this helps the participant have a better chance at receiving employment with higher wages.

The Career Center system will continue to focus on the following services:

- ❖ Reaching out into the communities to promote the importance of getting back into the workforce.
- ❖ An integrated system of maximum flexibility with increased private sector involvement where access to WIOA training and eligibility determination are provided to assist individuals who are seeking to return to the workforce.
- ❖ Giving job seekers access to job readiness, financial literacy, basic computer skills, basic adult education for literacy and GED preparation and use of our Resource Room with access to the fax machine, copier, phone, and printed materials related to job seeking along with access to computers for on-line job search.
- ❖ Continue to promote the AWSP to employers to help rebuild their workforce.
- ❖ Continue to develop and support training between the business/industry and colleges so that the business/industry may increase their workforce with skilled employees.

#### **E. Technical Assistance Needs**

SWAPTE always welcomes and participates in any technical assistance that is offered.

SWAPTE conducted Youth Provider training to youth providers and youth case managers to better explain youth services and performance. SWAPTE will be conducting customer service training, case manager training and OJT training to all WIOA staff in the upcoming year.



SWAPTE staff attended their first GeoSolution conference, which was beneficial in understanding more functions of the data system. We would also like to continue attending these conferences so that improvement and understanding with data entry will increase.

SWAPTE staff attended and will continue to attend the Youth Symposium sponsored by National Development of Workforce Professionals, to continue to get ideas on how to better serve our youth and get them involved in the workforce.

## **F. Discussions:**

### **1. Promising Practices**

SWAPTE works with entities carrying out core programs to find strategies that will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals including those with barriers to employment.

SWAPTE works closely with its local Workforce Board, Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC). In doing this SWAPTE and SAWDC have developed a great working relationship where both partners are included on discussions about what is needed in Region 7. In establishing this relationship, it allows both partners to know how to go about braiding funds to better help employers.

Both SWAPTE and SAWDC meet with employers and local community colleges to discuss the workforce need and the skill level of clients needed. During these round table meetings, a plan is made on how to better help employers achieve their goals.

In addition, SWAPTE and SAWDC meet regularly to discuss the needs in the communities and how a plan of action can be put together to help address these needs.

Both partners believe that by establishing this great working relationship that it benefits the business and industry workforce in Region 7.

SWAPTE has also met with the Office of Apprenticeship staff to discuss how we could better partner with them when employers are establishing apprenticeships. We are hopeful that this relationship will continue to grow, and that Region 7 will be more active in working with apprenticeships.

Due to the AWSP grant identifying many partners working together to implement the grant, each partner, SWAPTE, Alabama Technology Network (ATN) and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) have had the opportunity to better understand the overall goal of each department. Most important it has taught all the partners how to communicate, collaborate and coordinate in a more efficient manner.

ACCS has shared the Mobilization Alabama Pathways courses with the Career Centers and SWAPTE will better utilize these courses with our youth providers.

SWAPTE has also developed a video to share success stories to other businesses and workforce agencies. Currently it features an OJT Employer/Employee success story, FlightPath9 Youth Program success, Alabama Power Lineman success and we plan to continue to add to this video in the future. SWAPTE feels that "real stories" will show a true meaning of what the Career Center and WIOA funds are doing to help individuals within our region.

## 2. Lessons Learned

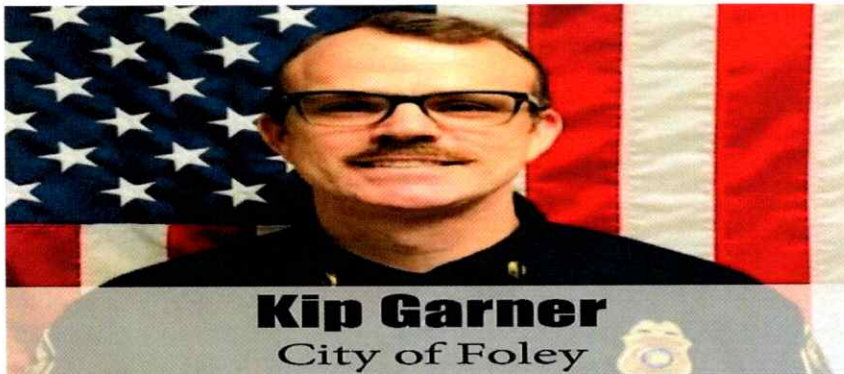
SWAPTE continues to learn that since COVID-19 that staff will need to go outside the office to seek individuals for services. In addition, there are more jobs available than individuals, therefore individuals will “job hop” for any type of wage increase.

SWAPTE continues to find that all partners are not included when meeting with employers and that this sometimes becomes overwhelming to the employers especially understanding all the different levels of funding.

SWAPTE continues to review data entry to ensure that accurate information is entered in a timely manner to increase overall performance. SWAPTE is also stressing to staff to review follow up and reach out to those participants that are not employed and invite them back to the Career Center for job search.

## 3. Success Stories

### Adult



Garner came to the Foley Career Center in June 2021 seeking full-time employment. He was eligible through WIOA and placed in On-the-Job Training with the City of Foley. He had previously been employed with various restaurants in the area and was looking for something with more responsibility and benefits.

*“After having spent my entire adult life jumping from job to job in dead end kitchen positions, I realized I was treading water. I didn’t know where I was headed, if anywhere. I decided cooking was not the profession for me anymore; I can cook at home every day. I took a job with the local Walmart and ended up in asset protection. After three years in this position, I had formed numerous relationships with the men and women of the Foley Police Department. A position at the PD in the jail came available. I was encouraged to apply for the position. I did. I got the job! After meeting with Kristi at the Alabama Career Center, I was enrolled in an on-the-job training program to help with hands on, practical training that would help me succeed in my new profession as a Corrections Officer. I’m almost a year in and my training is still rolling in, whether it’s field sobriety testing training, taser use and safety training, leadership training, de-escalation training or CPR, the training I have received has allowed me to flourish in my new career, and I can’t wait to see what the future holds!”*

**—KIP GARNER**

City of Foley Corrections Officer

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**WAY TO GO GARNER.. MUCH SUCCESS!**

## Dislocated Worker



### **Lahannah Williams** Werner Enterprises LLC

Lahannah Williams came to the Jackson Career Center after losing her job in July 2021. Lahannah had recently been working in the construction industry as a laborer and fire watcher, working various shutdowns and supplementing her income working in the fast food and sales industries.

Lahannah expressed her desire to become a truck driver and in October began CDL truck driving training with Bishop State Community College. In December she completed her training and obtained her Class A CDL.

In January 2022, Lahannah accepted a truck driving position with trucking company Werner Enterprises.

**WAY TO GO LAHANNAH! MUCH SUCCESS!**



## Dislocated Worker and Veteran



James Brunner Jr. is a veteran who was unemployed and has the barrier of having a past felony. He turned his life around and wanted to find a way to provide for himself and his family and also be a role model to others.

He was interested in truck driving and said he was looking for a better opportunity in life when he came to the Career Center. His eligibility for WIOA allowed him to be enrolled in Class A CDL training at CDL of Alabama in Summerdale. With continued positivity and encouragement from Nina and other Foley Career Center staff, Brunner says he is grateful that Nina “took a chance” on him.

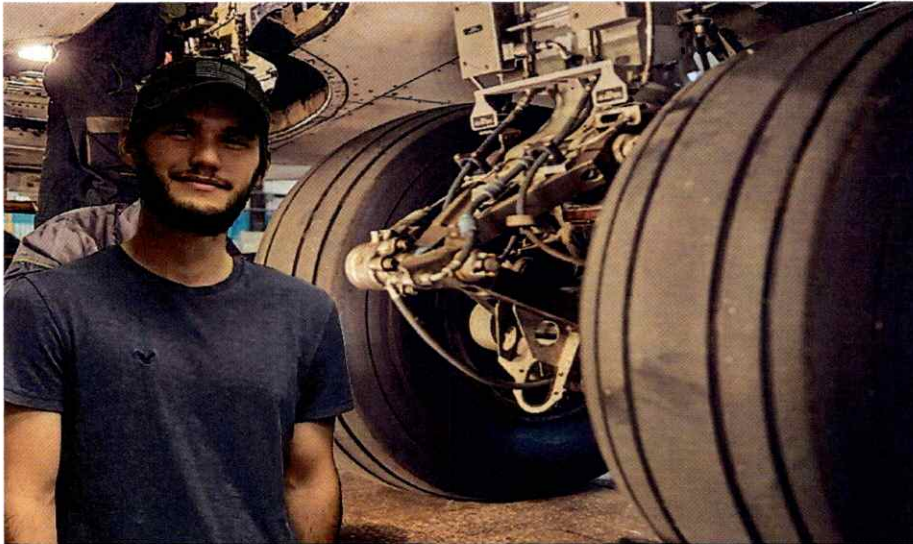
After completing his training and obtaining his CDL, Brunner went on to get tanker, doubles/triples, and Hazmat endorsements. He found employment with Schneider and will soon finish his training period with them. He will go from making \$96 a day to \$196 a day, plus incentives, and receive a \$6,000 sign-on bonus.

Brunner hopes for the future are to continue to have a stable career, begin to invest, continue having a good quality of life and being a positive influence on others.

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**KUDOS TO YOU BRUNNER... MUCH SUCCESS!**

## Youth



**Daren Hall**  
Raytheon Aerospace

Daren Hall came to the Career Center because he was interested in pursuing a stable long-term career.

Once his eligibility was determined he was enrolled as a youth in WIOA and began his training. Attending Coastal Alabama Community College, Daren took the Airframe and Powerplant curriculum and received multiple certifications.

Daren was granted his temporary airman license and most recently received his degree. Toward the end of his degree he was working as a security guard making \$14 per hour. Daren was offered and accepted a position as Mechanical Repair Technician I with Raytheon Aerospace a rate of \$20 hour.

**WAY TO GO DAREN! MUCH SUCCESS!**



## Disability



### **PASSAGE USA - University of South Alabama**

*Preparing All Students Socially and Academically for Gainful Employment*

PASSAGE USA helps young adults with intellectual disabilities focus on gainful employment through academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, integrated career skill development and work experiences.

Enrique and Trice enrolled in PASSAGE USA, a youth provider of Alabama Career Center. Both young men completed the 2-year program, achieved their employment goals, and was then invited to further enhance their skills by continuing in the 4-year program with PASSAGE USA.

*"I am currently employed with Renaissance Hotel and I now have a Food Handler's card!"*

-Enrique Lynch-

*"My biggest accomplishments are becoming employed with Heron Lakes and being nominated 'Most Outstanding Student' with PASSAGE USA!"*

-Trice Burkett-



## Veteran



Daniel MacArthur, a U.S. Coast Guard Veteran, completed the WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT) program. Hank Lahti, LVER of the Bay Minette Career Center, assisted Daniel in his transitioning from Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts so he could obtain a position with E3 Pest Control. Upon completion of serving in the U.S. Coast Guard, he transitioned into an OJT opportunity as a Supervisor.

After completing the OJT program, Daniel was allowed to move forward training team members, assisting clients with their needs, learning new skills and was also entrusted with a company vehicle.

The future is continuing to look bright for Daniel as his potential for growth is leading him towards a Management position with E3. Additionally, Daniel's salary has increased, along with having received quarterly incentives towards his improvements.

**WAY TO GO DANIEL! MUCH SUCCESS!**

## Lineman Program



Planning with Alabama Power and Bishop State Community College, SWAPTE funded 27 clients for the Linework Training Program. As of now, 26 have successfully completed the training with 99% being employed, earning starting wages much higher than possible without the training.



## Youth Program



# *FlightPath9*

The FlightPath9 program is designed to equip high school seniors with the skills and certifications they need to launch a life-changing career in aviation maintenance and manufacturing.

The first program training class was funded by SWAPTE for 13 students who would otherwise have not been able to participate. Of those students, 11 graduated and have been hired as permanent employees of Airbus, earning starting wages much higher than possible without the training.

After the initial training, SWAPTE provided additional funding directly to Airbus for On-the-Job Training funds for these newly hired employees.



## G. Challenges

SWAPTE continues to face challenges motivating clients to enter the workforce and youth staying engaged with training opportunities. Staff will refer clients to the DAVID system, however when they see the results of how long it may take to become self-sufficient it discourages them. Career Center staff are not trained to financially advise clients who are receiving governmental benefits on what direction they should take. This is something that should be discussed between the client and their DHR case manager before coming to the Career Center. However, staff continues to seek ways to utilize this tool and alternate ways of presenting the information to clients.

There are also challenges with involving youth in work experience programs because the income they receive from work experience is included in the family income and this sometimes places the family in a situation where they begin losing their benefits. Therefore, many young people are discouraged to participate in these type programs. It would be helpful if there were discussions with other organizations/agencies to prevent ways from this happening.

We continue to have some challenges with partners understanding WIOA requirements, however by meeting with them periodically there is an understanding that when in doubt contact SWAPTE staff.

SWAPTE is still struggling with positive performance from Youth Programs. However, staff have found that many of the services related to performance was being coded incorrectly in the data system and this was corrected the beginning of the new program year. Although we understand that it could take a year or so to start seeing the results with these corrections though current indicators are promising.

SWAPTE continues to struggle with transportation in our rural communities. This topic has been discussed with various partners to try and come up with a solution, however we have been unsuccessful. However, SWAPTE continues to work to identify individuals who have an insight into existing resources and look for ways to help, when possible, to address the transportation issues. Staff offer clients with transportation issues as many virtual services as possible.

Data information is being checked by supervisors to ensure sure that staff understand how and where information should be placed in the data system accurately. Finance is making some progress on the budget information that is entered in the data system and everyone will continue to work at making this a seamless process.

Staff also struggle with changes being made by higher management during the program year while they are working with clients. These changes cause hardships for clients and breaks down the relationship that the staff have with the clients. In addition, these changes come with little explanation and are being made without any feedback from the management or staff that works in the field daily.

Career Center staff struggle with internet issues operating at a very slow speed, however some of the offices are finally being upgraded. They also have issues with computers not operating correctly and difficulty getting them in proper working conditions.

Staff continue to have challenges with Community Colleges changing prices of fees, books along with not posting grades in sufficient time for participants to get required information to their case manager before the start of the next semester.

## H. 2021 – 2022 Program Activities

The Alabama Career Center prioritizes providing services that demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. Our veterans always receive priority of services and are recognized immediately when entering the Career Centers.

Each Career Center has a Facebook page where information on training and employment is shared, and the pages are updated daily. Career Center's offer a variety of workshops and information related to the workshop with an invite to the public is shared on these pages as well.

SWAPTE addresses services offered by extensive Community Outreach and Marketing. Staff visit local libraries, community centers, community functions and business meetings to extend opportunities to job seekers and employers.

Career Centers have restarted their quarterly meetings with all partners to share information and stay abreast of job opportunities, community events, new programs, workforce directives, financial matters, and strategies to better integrate services for job seekers and local business. Key achievements during the past year include:

- Continue to improve communication allowing partners to share information crucial to the documentation of services, minimizing the duplication of effort and increase follow up with job seekers
- Collaboration with the Community College System to link those seeking certification through short term training programs, which lead to employment.
- Build more partnerships with employers and high schools to better prepare our young people for the workforce.

All clients are welcomed as they enter the Career Centers. If the client has never been enrolled, then they are given a customer information form (CIF) to complete before having a one-on-one interview with staff. During this interview, services that are provided are explained to the client. In addition, supportive services are addressed should there be a need. Clients are registered in the data system and the use of the data system is also explained, so that clients can work on their own for job opportunities. During this visit staff also create a resume for the client to use during job searches.

Should the client be a veteran and have a disability they are referred to a Veteran Representative, who will then work with them individually and case manage them until they have overcome their barrier(s) to obtain employment.

Staff are case managing their clients to make sure that each of them are continuously job searching or receiving training. When training/employment opportunities arise, staff contact them with the information. This is done until employment is secured.

The itinerant Career Centers are open one day a week and are located in the more rural communities. This makes it possible for those job seekers to receive services that experience transportation issues. This also allows staff to visit employers in these areas to develop employment opportunities for the job seekers in the community.

Everyday staff work with clients that are at a loss on what direction they should take to better themselves. Staff will sometimes refer the client to the DAVID program so that they can see where they are and what it takes to be



self-sufficient. When clients are discouraged by some of the results, staff continue to give them guidance and support focusing on long term benefits. This is much vested valuable time spent with the clients and they still may not choose to enroll into a training program.

The costs for this valuable time cannot easily be translated into costs per person. Service delivery costs are also impacted by our mandate to prioritize services to the most at need jobseekers. Once identified via eligibility determination, many students continue to face numerous financial challenges while working to complete training and find employment.

Cost per participant was calculated based on expenditures from each funding stream divided by enrollments for the program year 2021-2022. The amounts are higher than normal due to enrollments decreasing since COVID-19. This calculation provided the following figures. Cost per participant for Adults was \$5,092.15, cost for Dislocated Workers was \$4,460.26 and Youth cost per participant was \$15,418.49.

### **Youth Services**

Youth services are provided by programs identified by regional procurement process undertaken every other year. Success is attributed to partnership with committed youth providers who implement innovative programs that attract and retain youth. Providers offer incentives to youth who achieve key milestones and host graduation events that provide a setting in which family and friends can celebrate the success of these youth.

Stipends to offset costs associated with transportation, meals, etc. while the students are enrolled are also available to assist those youth who have chosen to enroll and pursue their GED or high school diploma.

Most of the Youth funding is focused on high risk out-of-school youth and programs are challenged to link participants to all elements of WIOA youth services needed by each enrollee, while remaining cost effective. This goal is accomplished via partnerships with area agencies that collaborate to address teen parenting, drug addiction and leadership. There are numerous examples of cross referral between youth providers who work closely with SWAPTE to assure that eligible youth are enrolled in the program best suited to the goals and barriers identified at intake.

Youth programs funded by SWAPTE offer the following service elements directly or via referral:

- Intake & Registration
- Objective assessment
- Service strategy development (ISS)
- Case management & follow up
- Training & instruction to enhance secondary School completion
- Alternative secondary schooling opportunities
- Summer employment opportunities
- Paid and unpaid work experiences
- Occupational skills training
- Leadership Development
- Access to supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling

SWAPTE provides eligibility determination, case management coordination and follow-up services to support youth program activities. In addition, supportive services are an integral part of assistance provided to youth. The youth are made aware of partner and community services that help with addressing barriers to employment, education and/or training. The Youth Provider is required to give this information to the Case Manager so that all services are documented in the data system.



SWAPTE and Youth Providers do find a challenge with low-income eligibility for a youth. The 70% family income level is extremely low, and we find it extremely difficult to help those youth that need the extra motivation to succeed to be eligible.

SWAPTE developed a work-based learning program for out of school youth. This program is geared toward 18–24-year-old out of school youth. The participants are paid \$12.00 per hour for 90 days. The first complete week of employment the youth is granted \$150.00 stipend. The youth are evaluated and counseled during their employment. After completion of the program, it is hoped that they employer will hire the participant full time. However, if they do not, we ask for a letter of recommendation that the youth can use when applying for future employment. Should the employer hire the youth full time, then SWAPTE provides an OJT contract with the employer providing 50% wage reimbursement. SWAPTE has had more success at this program in the rural counties. Also, should the participants’ final evaluation be rated average or more, the participant receives a \$300.00 gift card as an incentive.

SWAPTE will be working on providing a Summer Employment program for out of school and in school youth in the 2023 Summer.

SWAPTE also will be conducting reviews with the youth providers to assure that services are being provided per the contract.

### **Adults/Dislocated Workers**

This past year as in years past SWAPTE has offered training at a variety of educational and vocational training sites that are identified on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Current policy states that training is focused on high wage/high demand jobs and the Workforce Board has identified the following areas for local focus:

- Maritime
- Aviation
- Materials Handling/Transportation
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- Technology

SWAPTE provides services for employed, unemployed or underemployed Adults and Dislocated Workers who have not been able to obtain employment leading to self-sufficiency.

There is no sequence of service requirement for “career services” and training. However, SWAPTE provides a comprehensive assessment to clients and those determined eligible and suitable can receive WIOA training funds. Priority of services is given to Veterans and other special populations including TANF/ SNAP recipients and Low-Income Adults lacking a significant work history.

Clients are referred to Adult Education to be given the TABE test for an academic assessment. SWAPTE has the policy that if a client is currently enrolled in Postsecondary Education and has a ‘C’ average they are not required to take the TABE test, unless youth funding is being used. Once this is done and eligibility and suitability are determined, clients are given information available through website that provides general statistics including successful training completions, job acquisition rates, entry-level wages, and career and promotional opportunities. Clients should facilitate comparison shopping to ensure an informed customer choice, which aligns with the current Labor Market Information.

Adult and Dislocated Worker funds available through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are used to purchase training services from eligible training providers selected by participants in consultation with Alabama Career Center staff through a comprehensive assessment including the development of the Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy (IEP/ISS).

SWAPTE uses GeoSolutions by entering budgets and issuing vouchers for training to providers. This also allows the system to keep track of the monies spent per client so that the allowable amount is not exceeded.

ITA participants receive case management services including monthly contact with their case manager to provide copies of grades, schedules, other measurable skills gains achieved, and credentials attained. After the client has completed training, they also receive quarterly follow up after exit for one year. Follow-up services establish unsubsidized employment along with counseling regarding the workplace to assure retention.

SWAPTE allocates program costs to Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth. This percentage varies depending on individuals served from each category. The percentage also includes time spent for serving job seekers not registered and identified by a funding stream. SWAPTE also continues to transfer dislocated worker funding to the adult program to better meet the profile of the job seeker coming into our center for services.

### **On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

SWAPTE continues to partner with local businesses to offer OJT as a resource to help area industries expand and rebuild their workforce while providing opportunities for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth to move into the workforce, gain new skills, and earn an income.

Costs for assessment and core services for OJT enrollees tend to be slightly higher per individual trained. This is primarily due to the individualized work required to match job seekers with OJT opportunities while seeking to meet expectation of both the business owner and the job seeker. SWAPTE monitors performance to ensure retention is being met for positive outcomes.

OJT has been very successful for SWAPTE throughout the region.

### **Alabama Workforce Stabilization Program Grant (AWSP)**

This grant was written through the Department of Education that included 8 partners within our State. The Career Center staff was identified as maintaining the data entry on all the participants. After a slow start with trying to understand the role of each partner and what performance was needed for each partner, SWAPTE eventually started operating the grant. With doing this, it has placed much additional work on SWAPTE and Career Center staff. Staff are promoting, developing contracts, following up, certifying participants, collecting documents, entering data, processing reimbursements and payments for those with contracts in Region 7. SWAPTE staff are spending more than 60% of their time operating this grant.

The process that SWAPTE has taken with this grant has increased business interest in training opportunities and knowledge of the services that are offered through SWAPTE and the Career Centers.

During this program year, SWAPTE has made a complete turnaround with the activities of this grant and are continuing to be very productive.



**Performance:**

Program performance outcomes for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth are traced and reported to our region quarterly. The performance for 7/1/2021 – 6/30/2022 are on the following pages.

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth performance all struggled in meeting the employment rate 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Sadly, the workforce is still struggling in getting everyone back to work, although the unemployment rate has declined. Staff are reaching out to participants to encourage them to reenter the workforce by inviting them to job fairs, visit the Career Centers and referring them to employers that are hiring.

Median wages for all fund sources exceeded the negotiated rate due to employers increasing wages. Since COVID-19, employers are seeing that the cost of living is constantly increasing and with the workforce struggling, individuals are demanding higher wages to return to work.

Measurable Skill Gains and Credentials also exceeded performance in all fund sources. Since changing to a new data system, staff have been cleaning up data files and making sure that all data transferred over correctly. In addition, it has been a learning process to make sure that all data is linked correctly in GeoSolutions.

SWAPTE has been concerned with training related performance and after much investigating, it has recently been determined that when changing data systems, the information did not transfer correctly. SWAPTE has confidence that with staff correcting this information in this current year that that area of performance will see a drastic increase. Also, with the system not recording correctly, staff have developed a work around so that data will be reported accurately.



## Adult Performance

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
	Participants Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
<b>Service</b>				
Career Services	907	611		
Training Services	696	556		
Percent training-related employment:		Percent enrolled in more than one core program:		Percent Admin Expended:
42.81%		99.89%		0.00%

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS												
	Total			Employment Rate (Q2)		Employment Rate (Q4)		Median Earnings	Credential Rate		Measurable Skill Gains	
	Participants Served Cohort Period: 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2022	Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04-01-2021 - 03-31-2022		Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate	Earnings	Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate
<b>Total Statewide</b>	907	611	Negotiated Target		78.00%		74.50%	\$5,800.00		61.50%		55.00%
				Actual	898	71.50%	928	64.90%	\$7,280.00	814	75.51%	490
				1,256		1,430			1,078		684	
<b>Sex</b>												
Female	545	399		572		611		\$6,740.46		553		336
				793	72.13%	913	66.92%		729	75.86%	464	72.41%
Male	362	212		326		317		\$7,789.82		261		154
				463	70.41%	517	61.32%		349	74.79%	220	70.00%

## Dislocated Worker Performance

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
	Participants Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
<b>Service</b>				
Career Services	105	97		
Training Services	70	59		
<b>Percent training-related employment:</b>		<b>Percent enrolled in more than one core program:</b>		<b>Percent Admin Expended:</b>
<u>41.90%</u>		<u>100.00%</u>		0.00%

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS												
	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2022	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04-01-2021 - 03-31-2022		Employment Rate (Q2) Cohort Period: 07-01-2020 - 06-30-2021		Employment Rate (Q4) Cohort Period: 01-01-2020 - 12-31-2020		Median Earnings Cohort Period: 07-01-2020 - 06-30-2021	Credential Rate Cohort Period: 01-01-2020 - 12-31-2020		Measurable Skill Gains Cohort Period: 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2022	
				Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate	Earnings	Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate
<b>Total Statewide</b>	<u>105</u>	<u>97</u>	<b>Negotiated Target</b>		79.30%		77.50%	\$7,250.00		70.50%		55.00%
			<b>Actual</b>	<u>158</u>		<u>119</u>		\$7,800.00	<u>93</u>		<u>55</u>	78.57%
				<u>222</u>		<u>163</u>			<u>110</u>		<u>70</u>	
<b>Sex</b>												
Female	<u>53</u>	<u>46</u>		<u>52</u>		<u>38</u>	\$5,339.59		<u>27</u>		<u>20</u>	80.00%
				<u>80</u>		<u>55</u>			<u>34</u>		<u>25</u>	
Male	<u>52</u>	<u>51</u>		<u>106</u>		<u>81</u>	\$9,401.30		<u>66</u>		<u>35</u>	77.78%
				<u>142</u>		<u>108</u>			<u>76</u>		<u>45</u>	

## Youth Performance

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
Service	Participants Served	Participants Exited	Funds Expended	Cost Per Participant Served
Career Services	465	335		
Training Services	237	152		
Percent training-related employment:		Percent enrolled in more than one core program:		Percent Admin Expended:
6.67%		69.70%		0.00%

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS													
	Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2022	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 04-01-2021 - 03-31-2022		Employment Rate (Q2) Cohort Period: 07-01-2020 - 06-30-2021		Employment Rate (Q4) Cohort Period: 01-01-2020 - 12-31-2020		Median Earnings Cohort Period: 07-01-2020 - 06-30-2021	Credential Rate Cohort Period: 01-01-2020 - 12-31-2020		Measurable Skill Gains Cohort Period: 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2022		
				Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate	Earnings	Num/Den	Rate	Num/Den	Rate	
Total Statewide	472	339	Negotiated Target		67.80%		67.50%	\$2,795.00		45.00%		47.00%	
			Actual	115	44.92%	121	57.35%	\$3,103.75	93	59.24%	228	52.90%	
				256		211			157	431			
Sex													
Female	271	169		61	48.80%	70	59.32%	\$2,779.00	55	62.50%	133	52.57%	
				125		118			88		253		
Male	200	170		53	40.77%	51	55.43%	\$3,546.76	38	55.88%	94	53.11%	
				130		92			68		177		