

Workforce Innovation Fund DeKalb County Workforce Development Final Evaluation Report



Contributors to this Report

Evaluation Project Managers:

Tara Dixon, MPH, CQA, CQIA, Co–Project Manager, Research and Evaluation Group

Shenée Bryan, MPH/MPA, Co–Project Manager, Research and Evaluation Group

Contributing Authors:

Shenée Bryan, MPH/MPA

Amirah Patterson, MPH

Leslie A. Williams, MPH, MS

Bridget C Lewis, MBA – *Workplace Learning Solutions, LLC*

Jennifer Ballentine, MPH – *Highland Nonprofit Consulting, LLC*

Editor:

Karon L. Phillips, Ph.D., MPH

Acronyms and Definitions

BIF	Baseline Information Form
Career Advisor	A person who gives information about opportunities, as well as helping with competencies, resumes, and application forms.
Case Manager	The individuals within the LWIA with responsibility for managing individual participants' cases.
Competencies	The measureable or observable knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors critical to successful job performance.
Conceptual Model	A set of concepts, with propositions that describe them, express the relationship between them, or set forth the basic assumptions of the model.
Consortium	Metro–Atlanta Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA): Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development, and the Fulton County Office of Workforce Development, and Staffing agencies
Credentials	A quality, skill, or experience that makes a person suited to do a job.
DWD	DeKalb Workforce Development
Eligible Provider List	A list of training providers approved by the state of Georgia to receive WIA funding.
Employability	Capable of being employed
Employer Agreement	An agreement between the staffing agencies and employers who were interested in providing work experiences to participants in the LWIAs.
Facilitators and Barriers	A wide range of factors reported to either facilitate or inhibit effective implementation.
GDOL	Georgia Department of Labor
Home Safe Georgia	A federally funded, state–operated mortgage assistance program that helps homeowners avoid foreclosure through mortgage payment help.
IBM	International Business Machines Corporation – An American multinational technology and consulting corporation.
Implementing Agency	DeKalb Workforce Development
Individualized Employment Plans	Plans created by the case manager to prepare a participant for employment readiness.

Kenexa®	A leading provider of recruiting and talent management solutions
Key Groups	Grant manager (DeKalb Workforce Development), partners within the LWIAs, staffing agencies (i.e. Manpower and Hire Dynamics), eligible participants from the long-term unemployed target population, and employers from companies willing to work with and hire the target population.
Key Informants	Those whose social positions in a research setting give them knowledge about other people, processes or happenings that is more extensive, detailed or privileged and who are particularly valuable sources of information to a researcher.
Labor Market	The market in which workers compete for jobs and employers compete for workers.
Livable Wage	An approximate income needed to meet a family's basic needs, would enable the working poor to achieve financial independence while maintaining housing and food security.
LMS	Learning Management System
Long-Term Training	A training that lasts eight weeks or longer.
Long-Term Unemployed	A category of unemployed workers that includes those who have been unemployed more than 27 weeks.
LWIA	Local Workforce Investment Area
MARTA	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
Networking	The cultivation of productive relationships for employment or business.
Niche Industries	Industries that specialize in a particular type of work such as technology, finance and fitness.
NVivo	A qualitative analysis software program.
OEQ	Outcome Evaluation Question
One Stop Career Centers	Centers within the LWIA where participants can access the resources needed to assist them with all their job-search related needs such as computers, printers, resume building software, and job postings etc.
Participant	An individual that is screened and assessed to determine eligibility for the WIA program.
Partners	Staffing agencies, LWIA sites and employers that participated materially in the Metro Atlanta Workforce Innovation Fund project.
Procurement	The acquisition of services from an external source.
Program Manager	Person(s) at each LWIA that were responsible for overseeing information sessions, initial assessments, and referrals to Manpower.

PROVE IT!™	An assessment developed by IBM and Kenexa that covers a variety of industries and fields of work that include accounting, financial, healthcare, construction, and much more. The assessment summarizes the participants' results by the following variables: questions answered correctly, percentile ranking, elapse time, and percent of questions answered correctly by question level.
Research Design	A blueprint for research and evaluation projects. A research design will typically include the data collection process, measures/instruments that will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected.
Respondents	Participants who gave answers as part of questionnaire.
Selective Service	A system for calling up people for compulsory military service.
Semi-Structured Interviews	Interviews that used to gather focused, qualitative, and textual data. This method offers a balance between the flexibility of an open-ended interview and the focus of a structured ethnographic questionnaire.
Serial Data Collection	Data collection methods building upon one another.
Short-Term Training	A training that lasts less than eight week.
Skilled Labor	Labor that requires special technical training.
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Soft Skills	Personal characteristics that enhance an individual's interactions, career prospects and job performance.
Subsidies	A form of financial aid or support extended to an economic sector (or institution, business, or individual) generally with the aim of promoting economic and social policy.
Subsidized Work Experience	Work where a government agency pays a portion of or the entire cost of an employee's wages on behalf of the employer for a fixed period of time. In exchange, the employer agrees to train the employee during this time period.
Supportive Services	Services such as transportation assistance, childcare and other services provided to participants to aid in eliminating the barriers that prevent their return to employment.
TDC	Manpower's Training and Development Center
Unemployment Insurance	A benefit for individuals who are unemployed due to no fault of their own.
Unsubsidized Work Experiences	Work with earnings provided by an employer who does not receive a subsidy for the creation and maintenance of the employment position.
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WIF	Workforce Innovation Fund

Work Readiness Assessment	A tool used to identify gaps in readiness before a participant begins a job, pinpointing where they need improvement.
Workforce Investment Act	A comprehensive range of workforce development activities through statewide and local organizations. Available workforce development activities provided in local communities can benefit job seekers, laid off workers, youth, incumbent workers, new entrants to the workforce, veterans, persons with disabilities, and employers. The purpose of these activities is to promote an increase in the employment, job retention, earnings, and occupational skills improvement by participants.
Work-Related Skills	Skills acquired from work experience.

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Executive Summary

Intervention Purpose & Scope

The mission of the Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Consortium is to provide targeted and subsidized work experiences to the long-term unemployed people. Initially, the Consortium collaborated with employment service provider Manpower to assist with the implementation of the program by providing reemployment services. The Metro-Atlanta LWIA is comprised of five local workforce investment areas spanning across 10 Georgia counties. The five local workforce investment areas are the Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development, and the Fulton County Office of Workforce Development.

The Consortium's goal was to reemploy 125 long-term unemployed individuals through the program. This temporary employment placement ideally would lead to additional work experience and eventually to unsubsidized permanent employment outside of the program. The central goal of the program was to provide recent work experiences so that the participants would be better equipped to secure regular employment. The program also offered supplemental training opportunities for program participants that lacked specific skills to reenter the workforce. There is an expectation that participants placed in employment will retain their temporary employment for at least six months after placement and earn a wage equal to or greater than the local area's self-sufficiency guidelines.

Evaluation Purpose & Questions

The Research and Evaluation Group designed two types of evaluations to inform this program: and implementation study and an outcome study. The goal of this implementation study was to determine 1) if implementation of the program went as planned, 2) to document the challenges of implementing the program, and 3) to determine which factors led to the program's success. The outcome study focused on the program's intended outcomes and determined the merit, value, and worth of services provided by the LWIA and Manpower. A mixture of methods was used to collect data for this evaluation. These methods included 1) an intake and exit participant questionnaire, 2) a semi-structured interview with key informants, and 3) a review of administrative documents.

Implementation Evaluation Results

Fidelity of Program Implementation

A few changes were made to the program and thus it was not fully implemented as intended. Throughout the program, the implementing agency and their partners completely met 12 out of the 15 planned activities. The factors that affected the fidelity of the program implementation are: 1) two of the LWIAs discontinued their participation in the program, 2) the program had significant delay in starting the planned activities, 3) the program was not able to enroll 125 participants, and 4) the implementing agency added a second staffing agency midway in the program. Although the program made progress towards their goal of placing 125 participants in temporary employment, they only placed 65 individuals (52% progress towards their goal) as of March 2015.

Program Strengths and Limitations

While the program did not meet its original goal of placing 125 participants, both partners and employers still felt that it was very successful for a number of reasons. The program successes and strengths included the actual success of the placements made, program structure and partnerships, and the impact of this program on the participants placed. Interviewees reported several limitations of the program including the program requirements, role clarity and communication, and types of jobs available.

Internal/External Factors that

Advanced/Hindered Program

During key informant interviews, participants, partners and employers noted several factors that contributed to the success of the program including: 1) positive participant characteristics, 2) helpful services provided by Manpower, and 3) services and resources provided by the WIA. The factors that hindered the success of the program included 1) challenges with the target population/participants, 2) program changes, 3) program timeframe, and 4) the marketing and public awareness efforts.

Barriers/Enhancers to Participatory Rates & Recruitment

The factors that affected participation of the target population in the program factors included 1) the limited number of jobs with higher paid wages, 2) location and type of jobs, 3) participants' lack of appropriate skills and qualifications, and 4) participants' lack of transportation.

Strategic Partnerships

Two of the local workforce agencies discontinued their participation in the program after briefly participating at the start of the initiative and an additional staffing agency was added to increase the number of participants placed and the number and type of jobs available. Some of the LWIAs and several employers interviewed reported having a successful partnership and positive interactions with Manpower's staff. While the partners reported working together well, there were some challenges related to partner buy-in and building strong communication channels.

Outcome Evaluation Results

Participant Awareness of Training Opportunities & Job Placement Services

Slightly more than 70% of participants reported they were aware of and intended to use the training opportunities. However, only 20% reported using these training opportunities. While respondents were not as aware of job placement services (61%) as an opportunity, 44% of individuals reported actual use of job placement services. When participants were asked to list specific services they were aware of, the most common responses were interviewing techniques, resume writing, job fair announcements, opportunities to get training/education, and computer availability. Both placed and unplaced participants reported using other resources and services in addition to those offered by the WIA. Most participants agreed that using additional resources, increased their opportunities and job options.

Participant Awareness of Support and Follow-Up Services

Nearly half (46%) of the participants reported that they were aware of support and follow-up services and 80% said they intended to use these services. However, reported use was only 12%. The most notable services recognized by participants were the personal counseling services that Manpower offered to their placed participants and the accessibility of the Manpower staff.

Search for Employment

Over 80% of participants reported that they had been actively searching for a job for at least one year and 42% spent more than two years searching for employment. Since entering in the

program, most participants reported submitting fewer job applications in comparison to their job searching activities prior to the program.

Employability & Preparedness

Overall, participants reported a statistically significant decrease in the number of new industry/career contacts since entering into the program. Although, the number of contacts decreased after the work experience, a few participants openly recognized the importance of networking for future employment. A greater proportion of participants reported that they completed at least one interview since their participation in the program. While the majority of participants (88%) received at least one job during their enrollment in the program, over one quarter received multiple jobs offers.

Income & Livable Wage

Over 70% of the participants reported working a full-time position (30 hours or more) during enrollment in the program. Participants also reported an increase in both access to health insurance and paid leave benefits. Among those participants that reported being employed, the median hourly wage increased from \$10.63 to \$14.50; however, the income range remained the same.

Employment after Program Experience

A large percentage of participants (41%) were offered jobs, but did not stay in their roles for more than three months. Participants mentioned they were either let go early from their appointed position due to financial restraints or organizational structure change at employment site.

Program Experience & Wage Outcomes

The extent to which the workforce development program leader to wage increases among the graduating participants was inconclusive. There is limited information that supports that

placing the long-term unemployed into short-term subsidized employment improves employment and wage outcomes. A greater response to the participant wage and employer information is needed to better ascertain the impact.

Recommendations to Program Administrators for Future Program and Evaluation Efforts

- Improve marketing strategies to spread awareness of the program to attract a variety of employers across different occupational sectors/industries.
- Build stronger communication channels among the strategic partnerships (i.e. provide programmatic updates through regularly scheduled meetings and maintain a presence of program leadership).
- Utilize multiple staffing agencies in order to maintain of employer pool of diverse occupational sectors/industries.
- Diversify the type and increase the number of professional level (high-skill) job opportunities that offer higher wages.
- Screen potential employers to ensure that the firms have good financial standing to support the full-employment of participant after the participant successfully complete the programs.
- Offer more hand-on and personal assistance/instructions/guidance/counselling to the participants to ensure they are adequately prepared for the position.
- Obtain greater buy-in from the employers to ensure they are: 1) a good fit for the program, 2) invested in the program's initiatives, and 3) willing to permanently hire a strong participant of the program.

Purpose of This Report

This purpose of the Workforce Innovation Fund: DeKalb County Workforce Development Final Evaluation Report is to summarize the evaluation findings from the DeKalb County Workforce Development programmatic activities. This evaluation only captures programmatic activities from February 2012 to March 2015, although activities were still occurring during the development of this report. The Research and Evaluation Group are the leading authors of this report and as of June 2014 were the second procured evaluators for this program. In some cases, the Research and Evaluation Group relied on data collected from the previous evaluators and administrative documents to inform activities that occurred prior to their hire.

Introduction: Program Overview

Intervention Purpose & Scope

The mission of the Metro–Atlanta Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Consortium is to provide targeted and subsidized work experiences to the long–term unemployed people. Initially, the Consortium collaborated with employment service provider Manpower to assist with the implementation of the program by providing reemployment services. Later in the program, it was determined that there was a need for additional reemployment services, and the Consortium selected Hire Dynamics as an additional partner. The Metro–Atlanta LWIA is comprised of five local workforce investment areas spanning across 10 Georgia counties. The five local workforce investment areas are the Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development, and the Fulton County Office of Workforce Development. The program was administered through the DeKalb Workforce Development (DWD) agency and was designed to function as a local implementation of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

The LWIA Consortium's goal was to reemploy 125 long–term unemployed individuals through the program. This temporary employment placement ideally would lead to additional work experience and eventually to unsubsidized permanent employment outside of the program. The central goal of the program was to provide recent work experiences so that the participants would be better equipped to secure regular employment. The program also offered supplemental training opportunities through the Manpower Training and Development Center (TDC) for program participants that lacked specific skills to reenter the workforce. Even if a participant does not gain employment after participating in job and/or skill training, they are still able to update their resumes with recent and relevant training experiences. There is an expectation that participants placed in employment will retain their temporary employment for at least six months after placement and earn a wage equal to or greater than the local area's self-sufficiency guidelines.

Manpower & the Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Consortium

Each LWIA had the goal of enrolling 25 long–term unemployed individuals into the program and placing those individuals in temporary employment. They were also tasked with recruiting an additional 50 or more participants in order to have replacement participants ready as participants gained employment or left the program. In most cases, the LWIA sites were able to recruit participants from their existing caseloads and other cases from within their agencies. The responsibility of the LWIA case managers, as it relates to the implementation of the program, was to spread awareness of the program within their local agency, oversee information sessions for potential participants, administer or oversee the initial participant assessments, and refer eligible participants to the staffing agencies for placement in temporary subsidized employment. The case managers were also responsible for screening the applicants to determine their eligibility for the program. They also developed individualized employment plans for participants seeking job–search assistance within their agency. Additionally, the case managers maintained consistent communication with the staffing agencies as it pertained to their program and the placement of the participants.

According to the original project proposal¹, a key consideration leading to the selection of staffing agencies to serve as placement partners was the win–win factor for both the staffing agencies and the Consortium. The increased referrals and quick placements of participants into work opportunities would enhance the value of the services of both entities.

The staffing agencies' role involved:

- Identifying industries that were hiring
- Recruiting employers that were willing to participate in the program and hire the target population
- Matching participants to unsubsidized or subsidized employment opportunities that meet the participants' skillset and expertise
- Executing employer agreements to provide work experience to participants using subsidies
- Monitoring work experience worksites for compliance and tracking employee progress
- Maintaining communication with the LWIA case managers for the duration of the participants' engagement

The staffing agencies were also responsible for pinpointing partner agencies that specialized in niche industries not currently within their scope of services. Manpower also offered training opportunities and additional resources which addressed the challenges/barriers that participants faced while seeking work.

Target Population & Program Eligibility

Individuals eligible to participate in this program were required to have been unemployed for a minimum of one year. They were required to show information that documented two consecutive years of employment prior to being unemployed. They also needed to be 18 years or older, have a high school diploma or GED, and be willing to submit to a background and drug screen. Registration with the Selective Service was required for male participants. Additionally, they must possess work–related skills that are in demand in the local labor market, which removed the need for extensive retraining. Lastly, participants must be interested in gaining work experience.

Once deemed eligible for the program, the participant completed a work readiness assessment. Participants found to be work ready moved on to the occupational assessment, which involved completing a reference check and specific ProveIt!™ tests. LWIA case managers used this information and test results to create an individualized work plan for each participant. There were three things addressed in the development of an individualized employment plan for each participant: 1) industries and occupations where the participant worked, 2) participant barriers and challenges when seeking re–employment, and 3) whether or not the program is a good fit. Participants who had sufficient occupational skills received a referral to the staffing agencies for placement. If they were not work ready or lacked the appropriate occupational skills, they received referrals to the LWIA work readiness short–term and/or long–term training based on their specific needs. Once a participant completed the training recommended by their case manager, they would then continue with the eligibility process of the

¹ Original Proposal-Attachment J RFP 13-500290 (pp. 10-11)

program. Upon completion of all the assessments, the participant was ready for the staffing agencies to match them with employers.

Recruitment of Participants & Employers

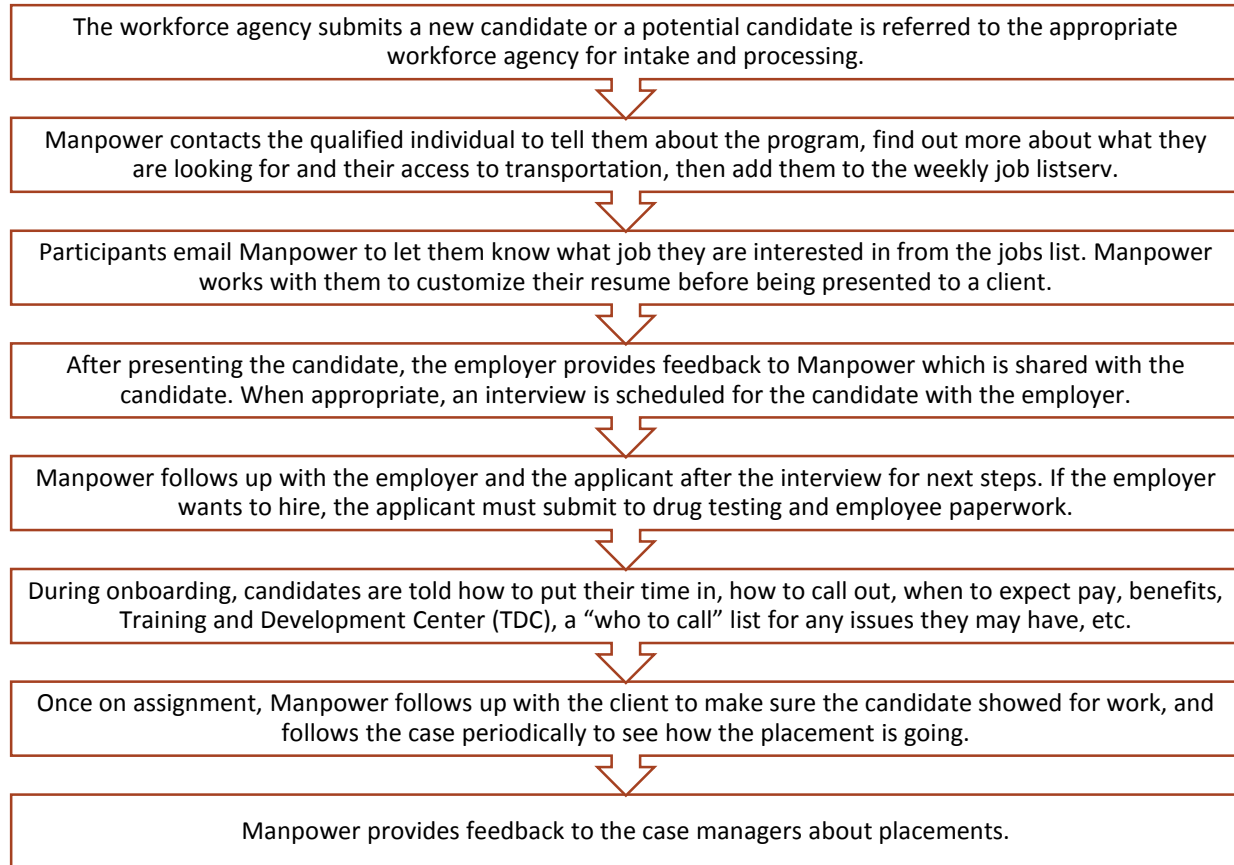
The LWIAs and the staffing agencies recruited eligible participants for the program using a variety of methods and media outlets. The recruitment process consisted of 1) the LWIA case managers identifying and selecting potential participants from their existing caseloads, 2) the staffing agencies actively recruiting participants through job fairs and other activities, and 3) the WIA program managers using government databases (e.g. Home Safe Georgia, Department of Labor Unemployment Insurance System, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP]) to find eligible participants. The LWIA case managers also used various marketing tactics to spread awareness of the program within the Metro–Atlanta region. These marketing tactics included the distribution and posting of flyers/posters in each LWIA site, in addition to sending letters, emails, and calling potential participants. Program information was listed at various One–Stop Career Centers and other appropriate websites. Community outreach activities occurred at faith–based organizations and special information sessions were held for specific–groups.

The methods used to recruit employers included posting flyers in the LWIAs and through word–of–mouth. The staffing agencies also have access to a list of existing and new employers that are anxious to hire new permanent and/or temporary staff in their companies. Employers willing to participate in the program were invited to review the applications and resumes of the participants that met the job descriptions of the vacancies in their company.

Job Placement & Training Services

The staffing agencies assist the LWIAs in meeting their placement goals by placing participants with employers with whom the agencies have written program participation agreements. They also continuously recruit new employers to add more value to the program. After screening all participants based on the employers' guidelines and requirements, the staffing agencies placed the participants in either subsidized or unsubsidized employment placements that match the participant's qualifications and the employers' preferences. Figure 1 outlines the process for placement.

Figure 1. Participant Placement Process



After the participant received a placement, the program manager at the staffing agency schedules periodic meetings with both the participant and the employer throughout the experience. After the participants’ temporary work experience is completed, the staffing agency attempted to place them into permanent employment. At 90 days, the staffing agency program manager discussed the possibility of transitioning the participants to the employers’ payroll as a permanent hire. If the participant has not transitioned to the employers’ payroll, the staffing agency will discuss action plans with the LWIA case manager to transition the participants out of the program.

Throughout the placement process, participants have access to Manpower’s TDC. TDC is an online resource, part of the Learning Management System (LMS), which carries thousands of courses related to job skills. All participants of the program received access to these training programs and resources. The LWIA also shares a list of training providers known as the ‘Eligible Provider List’ to all program participants with potential matches to employers. Participants self-evaluate their need for training and choose their preferred provider to obtain training.

Evaluation of Implementation: A Process/Implementation Study

Implementation Objectives

The goal of this implementation study was to determine 1) if implementation of the program went as planned, 2) to document the challenges of implementing the program, and 3) to determine which factors led to the program's success. Information gained through the implementation study will be used to help improve the program if continued and to examine lessons from the field in the area of practices and sustainability.

Program Implementers & Implementing Organization

The temporary subsidized work experience program used a variety of key groups to implement and carry out the services offered by the program. The key groups that were necessary to execute the program successfully were 1) the grant manager (DeKalb Workforce Development), 2) partners within the LWIAs, 3) staffing agencies (i.e. Manpower and Hire Dynamics), 4) eligible participants from the long-term unemployed target population, and 5) employers from companies willing to work with and hire the target population. The roles and responsibilities for the implementers (grant manager, LWIA case managers, and staffing agencies) are as follows²:

Program Grant Manager <i>DeKalb Workforce Development</i>	• Oversee the project implementation • Monitor project activities • Report to local Workforce Innovation Board • Monitor timelines, goals, objectives, and activities • Complete reports
LWIA Case Managers	• Manage the screening and eligibility of participants • Implement of marketing strategies • Conduct participant intake sessions • Provide case management to include completing Individualize Employment Plans, maintaining workshop and training records, worksite monitoring, and wage inquiries.
Staffing Agencies <i>Manpower and Hire Dynamics</i>	• Provide skills training opportunities through Manpower's Training and Development Center • Collect required data for evaluation • Execute employer agreements • Assist with work site monitoring • Assist with pre-placement evaluations • Provide post training assessments • Market the program to employers • Maintain case note documentation • Match participants with subsidized work experiences • Place participants in unsubsidized employment opportunities

² Extracted from RFP #13-500290 – Workforce Innovation Grant Program Evaluator – Attachment J pg. 21

Program Activities, Goals, & Process Objectives

The DeKalb Workforce Development outlined a series of activities to successfully progress toward the goals of the program. Table 1 includes a list of the activities planned during program implementation period, as outlined in the grant proposal document³.

Table 1. Program Activities

Activities	Duration	Implementer(s)
Sign Consortium agreement	February 2012 – March 2012	LWIA's/ Manpower
Procure evaluator	May 2012 – July 2012	DeKalb LWIA
Select key and qualified staff	May 2012 – July 2012	LWIA's/ Manpower
Establish employer agreements	May 2012 – June 2012	LWIA's/ Manpower
Serve/screen participants that are eligible for the program	June 2012 – Program Duration	LWIA's
Assess the participants qualifications for industry	July 2012 – Program Duration	LWIA's/ Manpower
Engage participants in maintaining or enhancing their industry skills	June 2012 – Program Duration	LWIA's/ Manpower
Place participants in temporary subsidize employment with willing/participating agencies	September 2012 – Program Duration	LWIA's/ Manpower
Assist participants in the exit (end of program) and assist them in the transition to permanent employment	April 2013 – Program Duration	LWIA's/ Manpower
Provide supportive and follow-up services to all participants	July 2012 – Program Duration	LWIA's/ Manpower

³ Attachment J – Original Proposal RFP No. 13-500290 Table-1 Page 6

LWIA Consortium’s objectives and outcomes were carefully aligned to the Workforce Innovation Grant Fund’s (WIF) impact goals to:

- Reduce the duration of unemployment
- Reduce permanent earning loss
- Provide faster job placement/job matching
- Prevent atrophy of skills among target group
- Establish job networks for target group
- Perform comprehensive skills assessments
- Increase employer interest in target groups
- Provide job search assistance to target groups
- Support post–employment retention of target group for six months after entry into employment
- Provide outreach to target group

Table 2 shows the alignment of the implementation activities to the WIF impact goals. This table also serves as a planning tool to monitor the process objectives developed by the grantee. It can aid in determining the fidelity of the intervention’s implementation. In addition, it can identify any challenges or barriers that may have inhibited achievement of the project goals and objectives.

Table 2. Workforce Innovation Fund Goals and Programmatic Process Objectives/Activities (Revised May 20, 2014)

Workforce Innovation Fund Goals	Programmatic Objectives/Activities	Duration	Implementer(s)
Goal 8: Provide job search assistance to target groups Goal 10: Provide outreach to target groups	Objective 1. The program will operate in five local workforce investment areas (City of Atlanta, Atlanta Regional Commission, Cobb, DeKalb, and Fulton) and in partnership with employment services agency Manpower, each site serving at least 25 individuals that have been unemployed for a minimum of one year.	July 2012 to June 2015	Local Program Manager
Goal 5: Establish jobs network for target group	Objective 2. Local Program Managers and project staff will be identified.	May 2012 to July 2012	Evaluator
	Objective 3. A marketing flyer will be posted at each local area. Potential participants will be identified. In-take or one-on-one sessions will be conducted.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers
Goal 3: Provide faster job placement/job matching Goal 6: Perform comprehensive skills assessments	Objective 4. Local program managers will screen applicants for eligibility and develop individualized employment plans for eligible participants.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers
Goal 1: Reduce the duration of unemployment. Goal 2: Reduce permanent earnings loss	Objective 5. Local program managers will refer eligible applicants to Manpower for services.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers; Staffing Agencies
Goal 4: Prevent atrophy of skills among target groups Goal 6: Perform comprehensive skills assessments	Objective 6. Participants will be assessed for skill competencies. Results will be a part of a participant's file and identified weaknesses will be addressed as documented by the participant's IEP.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Local Program Managers
Goal 4: Prevent atrophy of skills among target groups Goal 6: Perform comprehensive skills assessments	Objective 7. Participants that have skill deficiencies as revealed by assessments will be referred to Manpower's TDC.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Local Program Managers

Workforce Innovation Fund Goals	Programmatic Objectives/Activities	Duration	Implementer(s)
Goal 8: Provide job search assistance to target groups	Objective 8. Participants will attend work readiness activities based on IEPs.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers
	Objective 9. Participants will be provided job search assistance.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Local Program Managers
	Objective 10. Work ready participants will be matched to employers with jobs that meet their skill set.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Local Program Managers
Goal 7: Increase employer interest in target groups	Objective 11. Employer agreements will be executed with employers that provide work experience to participants using subsidies.	May 2012 to June 2012	Staffing Agencies & Program Manager
	Objective 12. Work experience sites and activities will be monitored for compliance with the experience agreement.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Program Managers
Goal 10: Provide outreach to target groups	Objective 13. Counseling and supportive services will be provided to participants as needed and documented by participant's IEP.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers
Goal 3: Provide faster job placement/job matching Goal 9: Post–employment retention of target group for six months after entry into employment	Objective 14. Placement services will be provided to participants completing work experience.	Duration of Program	Staffing Agencies & Local Program Managers;
Goal 9: Post–employment retention of target group for six months after entry into employment	Objective 15. Program registration, services and exit information will be recorded in the state's workforce management information system Geographic Solutions.	Duration of Program	Local Program Managers; Evaluator

Statement of Process/Implementation Evaluation Questions

This implementation study was designed to answer the following research questions about the implementation of the DeKalb Workforce Development program:

1. Was the program implemented with fidelity according to the existing grant requirements, applications, and strategic plans? Were process objectives implemented (see Table 2)?
2. What are the strengths and limitations of the program?
3. What external/internal factors contributed to or hindered the success of the program?
4. What are the barriers and enhancing factors that affected participatory rates? Were there any differences in recruitment and/or intake procedures across the five sites?
5. To what extent were strategic partnerships formed with the five local workforce investment areas (LWIA)?

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data Collected

For the process evaluation, qualitative data were collected from a variety of program participants. In order to obtain a richer understanding of the program, a purposive sample of key groups that were involved in the program were invited to participate in a semi-structured telephone interview. The sample was selected based upon the details provided in the staffing agencies' case notes. The information captured in the semi-structured interviews included the following:

Placed & Unplaced Participants	• Experience with Manpower job placement and length of time in the position (placed participants only) • Current employment status • Recent search for employment and importance of finding/maintaining employment • Challenges faced in finding employment (unplaced participants only) • LWIA resources/services used and helpfulness of services • Other job placement programs used (unplaced participants only) • Program's impact on participants' marketability and preparedness to enter the workforce • Suggestions for program improvement
Partners	• Partnerships formed from the program and level of buy-in among the stakeholders
<i>LWIA and Staffing Agencies</i>	• Successes, challenges faced, and lessons learned from program partnerships • Challenges faced recruiting, screening and/or working with the target population • Strategies for overcoming challenges • Ease of working with the target population and their willingness to work • Types of jobs available and appropriateness for the target population • Competing programs • Suggestions for program improvements

Employers

- Motivations and expectations for participating
- Experience working with the implementing and staffing agencies
- Challenges encountered in working with the implementing and staffing agencies
- Challenges encountered in working with the program participants

Data Collection Methods

This evaluation used a mixture of methods to collect the data. These methods included a review of administrative documents and semi-structured telephone interviews with key informants. These data collection methods built upon each other; the first method of reviewing administrative documents informed specific questions in the interview protocol for each key informant group.

Data Sources

Data sources consisted of questionnaires, administrative documents, and key informant interviews. The Participant Exit Questionnaire was administered to the participants one to two weeks after they completed their temporary job placement in the program. On the exit questionnaire, the participant indicated their interest in participating in a key informant interview to further discuss their experiences in the program. Administrative documents included the program objectives from the lead implementing agency and staffing agency case notes. These documents provided general information about the implementation of the program and the number of participants that were matched to employers.

The key informant interviewees were a convenient sample of individuals that were willing to participate in the semi-structured interview. Key informants received invitations based on details provided in the staffing agencies' case notes. Key informants included:

- 4 placed participants,
- 3 unplaced participants,
- 4 partners including the implementing organization and the staffing agency
- 5 selected employers that hired participants.

Data Analysis

Interviews were analyzed using qualitative software (Nvivo) to better understand the factors related to implementing the subsidized work program. The process evaluation questions and conceptual model served as a guiding conceptual framework for this analysis. Consistent patterns demonstrated through analyses of a sample of the interviews were used to generate an initial set of codes.

As the interview content was analyzed, additional codes were allowed to emerge and a priori codes found to not be useful or relevant were removed. All codes were assigned a definition to help maintain consistency in coding within and between coders. Two evaluators coded each interview using the final qualitative codebook and draft notes that identified and quantified emerging themes. Evaluators also offered additional perspectives to help identify emerging codes. The emerging themes were aligned with each programmatic concept and process evaluation question.

Process/Implementation Evaluation Results

Process Evaluation Question #1: Fidelity of Program Implementation

A few changes were made to the program and thus it was not fully implemented as intended. Some of the changes in the program were done to improve the execution of the program and to overcome unforeseen challenges.

Two of the LWIAs (Atlanta Workforce Development and Fulton County Workforce Development) were active and strategic partners at the beginning of the program. During the beginning of the program, these two partners began enrolling participants, but then dropped out of the program for a variety of reasons (i.e. change in leadership at the executive level of the agencies).

Another factor that affected the fidelity of the program implementation was the significant delay in the program start. According to the interviews, the DeKalb County Workforce Development internal procurement processes to obtain the first evaluators of the program was a significant contributor to this delay. Once the original evaluators were obtained, the program experienced further delay related to the planning processes of the original evaluation. The original evaluators determined that they needed to bring all partners together for a series of meetings before the program could begin. Because of varying schedules and site locations throughout the Atlanta area, bringing everyone together proved to be very challenging. After several attempts, this plan was abandoned since several months had been lost at that point. A new evaluator was sought and changes to the research design were made. This process resulted in additional delays and the program did not officially begin until over 12 months after receiving the grant award. According to one partner, the reduced timeframe proved very challenging.

“So when we agreed to do 125 people, we thought we would have three years. Then it ended up being basically 18 months. So that has been a huge factor.” – Partner

Given this delay in the program start and the reduced number of LWIAs participating, the program was not able to enroll 125 participants. Additionally some participants prematurely quit the program reporting that they found employment with higher pay on their own or they were unhappy with their roles, responsibilities, or pay at the job placement site. To address this issue and to continue to strive for the goal of placing 125 participants, the implementing agency added a second staffing agency (through another procurement process) in December 2014. By adding another staffing agency, the implementing agency hoped to increase the number of placements and diversify the types and number of jobs being offered.

Program administrators and staffing agencies tracked participant enrollment and placement into temporary work. A total of 203 individuals were enrolled in the program across six sites and 65 (32%) participants were placed by Manpower into temporary subsidized employment as of March 30, 2015 (Table 3). The DeKalb County Workforce Development LWIA site had the largest number of participants enrolled in the program (N=83) which made up 41% of the total participant population. DeKalb also had the largest number and proportion of participants (42%) that were placed into temporary employment through the program. Although the program made progress towards their goal of placing 125 participants in temporary employment, they only place 65 individuals (52% progress towards their goal) as of March 2015.

Table 3. Overall Participants and Placed Participants by Local Workforce Investment Area Site (as of March 30, 2015)

Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Site	Overall Participants	Placed Participants
Atlanta Regional Commission	37	9 (25%)
City of Atlanta	39	12 (31%)
Cobb	10	2 (20%)
DeKalb	83	35 (42%)
Fulton	31	6 (19%)
Gwinnett	1	1 (100%)
LWIA	203	65 (32%)

In addition to the delay in the program’s commencement, the next most commonly reported challenge in placing the 125 participants were the participants’ willingness to work. Approximately 20% of the participant population were classified as “ready to work” (Table 4). However, nearly half of the participant population had either “pending” their approval into the program, or they were unresponsive to phone calls and/or emails. A total of 29 (14%) participants could not be reached. The majority of these participants visited the Atlanta Regional Commission or DeKalb sites. Missing participants constituted nearly one-third of those at the Atlanta Regional Commission and Cobb sites.

Table 4. Participant Work Ready Status across All Local Workforce Investment Area Sites (N=203) (as of March 30, 2015)

Participant Work Ready Status	Count of Participants	% of Total Participants
Placed	65	32%
Ready to work	46	23%
Pending program approval	45	22%
Unable to locate	29	14%
Found job	10	5%
Ineligible	6	3%
Referred back to local site	2	1%

Once the program began, the participating LWIAs and the staffing agency implemented the activities and objectives as planned. Throughout the program, the implementing agency and their partners completely met 12 out of the 15 planned activities (Table 5). As discussed above, the program did not meet the goal of placing 125 participants (Objective 1) as of March 30, 2015. Additionally, referrals to Manpower or Manpower’s TDC were made, but none of the program participants attended the trainings (Objective 7 and 8). At one point, program managers attempted to mandate participation in the trainings as part of the program, but were still not successful in enrolling participants in the Institute.

Table 5. Programmatic Process Objectives/Activities and Completion Status

Programmatic Process Objectives/Activities	Status
Objective 1. The program will operate in five local workforce investment areas (City of Atlanta, Atlanta Regional Commission, Cobb, DeKalb, and Fulton) and in partnership with the employment services agency Manpower. Each area will serve at least 25 individuals between 7/1/12–6/30/15 that have been unemployed for a minimum of one year.	Partially Met
Objective 2. Local Program Managers and project staff will be identified.	Completely Met
Objective 3. A marketing flyer will be posted at each local area. Potential participants will be identified. In–take or one–on–one sessions will be conducted.	Completely Met
Objective 4. Local program managers will screen applicants for eligibility and develop individualized employment plans for eligible participants.	Completely Met
Objective 5. Local program managers will refer eligible applicants to Manpower for services.	Completely Met
Objective 6. Participants will be assessed for skill competencies. Results will be part of participant’s participant file and identified weaknesses will be addressed as documented by participant’s IEP.	Completely Met
Objective 7. Participants that have skill deficiencies as revealed by assessments will be referred to Manpower’s Training and Development Institute.	Partially Met
Objective 8. Participants will attend work readiness activities based on IEPs.	Partially Met
Objective 9. Participants will be provided job search assistance.	Completely Met
Objective 10. Work ready participants will be matched to employers with jobs that meet their skill set.	Completely Met
Objective 11. Employer agreements will be executed with employers that provide work experience to participants using subsidies.	Completely Met
Objective 12. Work experience work sites and activities will be monitored for compliance with the experience agreement.	Completely Met
Objective 13. Counseling and supportive services will be provided to participants as needed and documented by participant’s IEP.	Completely Met
Objective 14. Placement services will be provided to participants completing work experience.	Completely Met
Objective 15. Program registration, services and exit information will be recorded in the state’s workforce management information system Geographic Solutions.	Completely Met

Process Evaluation Question #2: Program Strengths and Limitations

Program Strengths

While the program did not meet its original goal of placing 125 participants, both partners and employers still felt that it was very successful for a number of reasons. The program successes and strengths included the actual success of the placements made, program structure and partnerships, and the impact of this program on the participants placed.

Placements Made

Partners reported feeling particularly proud of the number of participants they were able to place given the delayed start and the challenges faced. In the 18 months they had (half of the original timeframe) program partners were able to make 52% of the anticipated placements (65 out of 125 participants). If the program had the full three years to implement, they would have likely reached the goal of 125 placements.

While not all placements ended in permanent employment, the majority of the placements were successful according to the employers. Four of the five employers interviewed reported being very pleased with the program overall and with the participants that were placed at their agencies. In fact, one employer ended up permanently hiring two out of three participants that were placed through the program. Others wanted to retain the placed participants, but could not for various reasons. This point is illustrated by the following quote:

“The employee that we did get was conscientious and very motivated. The overall initiative that we were looking for did not work out well and had nothing to do with her per se as her personally, individually. It was just wrong place, wrong time that we tried to initiate and it didn’t work out, but she was again a very good employee.” – Employer

Program Structure and Partnerships

Key informant interviewees revealed that the program structure and partnerships were a major strength. More specifically, the partnership between the workforce investment areas, the staffing agency, employers and the long-term unemployed was a “win-win” for all involved. This was true for employers in particular because the LWIA have a program that is not only attractive to employers, but can significantly save employers money and help employ the long-term unemployed as well. LWIAs actively invested their efforts into the program and the partnership with the implementing agency, especially during 2012 when the DeKalb County Workforce Development applied for the grant.

“There was significant buy-in all around. No one was hesitant about participating. It’s a very workable plan. Only thing needed was the employers and participants.” – Partner

Two employers agreed and reported that the program was very helpful for them. Some employers noted that there were other similar programs they were part of in the past, but felt that this program was structured more effectively (e.g. six months vs. a shorter timeframe, etc.).

“I think once they get that name out there and what the program is all about, I think it’s a win–win because you get to have these employees that get on the job training and you get a probation period. You get to feel them out, they get to feel you out to determine whether or not there’s a good match. And Manpower is picking up the tab during that time, so...” – Employer

Impact on Participants

Finally, a major success or strength of the program was the impact of the program on the participants, specifically the skills and confidence participants were able to gain. One partner indicated that the placed participants gained valuable experiences and were able to add skills and enhance their resumes. Others participants noted that they acquired jobs through connections made via the program. Participants also felt that the program was beneficial and helped them to gain valuable experience, skills and the confidence needed to reenter the workforce.

“I feel like that helped me so much because I didn’t have a job for a long time and when you don’t have a job, not only is it the bills and everything piling up but then you don’t even get a lead. You don’t even feel comfortable and it’s almost like it starts taking your confidence away and for that, just working on there, just going there, getting interviewed, getting placed in a position; whether it’s temp, part–time or whatever, I felt you’re getting a salary, you’re at work, it gives you your confidence back that you can get another job.” – Participant

Another participant who was not placed in temporary employment noted that even though they did not find a job, the program helped him learn more about the current job market, the types of jobs available, and what employers are looking for in an employee.

Program Limitations

Interviewees reported several limitations of the program including the program requirements, role clarity and communication, and types of available jobs.

Program Requirements

The program requirements were seen as a limitation of the program. Specifically, the two eligibility criteria that made it difficult to recruit and enroll participants are: 1) unemployment for 12 months or more, and 2) active in the workforce for two consecutive years prior to unemployment. Additionally, individuals who greatly needed work had to be turned away.

“The challenges would be, number one, I know that they want to serve a population of the folks who’ve been unemployed for a year but it should be flexible on a case–by–case in my opinion because there are folks who are 10 months unemployed, 11 months unemployed, and I’m having to turn them away.” – Partner

Some employers also viewed the requirement that employers had to connect Manpower rather than contacting the participants directly as a challenge.

Role Clarity and Communication

Another limitation of the program reported by some partners included an uncertainty about roles and communication. The staffing agency in particular was unclear about roles and responsibilities for each of the partners. In addition, while partners reported that the initial communication was strong, they received virtually no communication as the project progressed.

“As far as the partnership, there could have been a lot more communication, again us coming together to talk about what’s working, what’s not working and kind of next steps after that, but we only; if I’m not mistaking, had kind of two meetings, and the first one being that initial one and the second one was kind of a follow up once they had brought in another team it think from Manpower. There needed to be a lot more communication because again we don’t necessarily know, or at least I don’t know where we stand with the grant, how many people have been placed? We don’t know where we are in the grant.” – Partner

The implementing agency, however, felt that communication was strong and that partners knew what their roles and responsibilities were.

Type of Available Jobs

Lastly, the LWIA partners and participants viewed the type of jobs available as a major limitation of the program. Both LWIA partners and participants would have liked to a greater number of professional-level (hard skill) jobs. Many of the jobs were in administration, manufacturing, and construction. This was not a good match for many of the candidates. While the type of jobs available did not affect their ability to recruit participants, it deterred some participants away from the program and thus prohibited the LWIAs from making placements and achieving their placement goal.

Process Evaluation Question #3: Internal/External Factors that Advanced/Hindered Program

Factors that Contributed to the Success of the Program

During key informant interviewees, participants, partners and employers noted several factors that contributed to the success of the program including 1) positive participant characteristics, 2) helpful services provided by Manpower, and 3) services and resources provided by the WIA.

Positive Participant Characteristics

Most of the employers reported that placed participants were very willing to work and met or exceeded their expectations. One employer noted that their hired participant possessed great people-skills and was very professional. Both employers and partners indicated that the placed participants were of “high quality” and that their willingness to work contributed greatly to the success of the program.

“The employees were excellent because they were all motivated. They were willing to work. We were even thinking about having a conference if we could have gotten all that together. We were trying to raise \$120,000 just to keep them on if the funding comes.” – Employer

Helpful Services Provided by Manpower

All of the employers reported that the services provided by Manpower were very helpful and contributed to the success of the program. According to the employers, Manpower handled all aspects of the program very professionally and executed several administrative tasks (i.e. recruitment, screening, and payroll), allowing the employers to focus on other details of their work.

“Honestly I really enjoyed it. It was a lot more organized than I had remembered from previous experiences through other agencies. I also think that if there were ever any challenges, they were addressed immediately, so that was a value added... The administrative services provided by the Manpower office itself was really great. They kept track of the time and they did all of the payroll, so that piece of it was really good.” – Employer

Most of the LWIA partners interviewed spoke very highly of Manpower and the services they provided while one partner was disappointed in the services provided. Similarly, while some of the unplaced participants did not find Manpower’s services to be helpful, several of the placed participants appreciated Manpower’s assistance and found the experience to be helpful and worthwhile.

“Actually, Manpower was the one that got me the interviews to get a job. I’ve sent in so many applications and never gotten an interview, never got call back or if I got a letter it would say that we’ve selected someone else at this time. So Manpower actually was the only one that when I submitted an application to at least get an interview.” – Participant

Workforce Investment Area (WIA) Resources and Services Provided

Another factor that contributed to the success of the program included the WIA resources and services provided. Among those participants who used the services, several reported that they were helpful and provided them with necessary skills and information.

“Just by going in and being able to get critiqued on a resume or finding out how I can just kind of like pin a resume up every now and then and using the computer to search for jobs...was extremely helpful” – Participant

The partners also found the assistance provided by the WIA’s to be helpful to participants and to the overall success of the program. Unplaced participants reported that the WIA resources and services were only “somewhat” useful. Several participants, both placed and unplaced reported using other resources and services in addition to those offered by the WIA.

Factors that Hindered the Program

In addition to factors that enhanced the program, participants, partners and employers also reported a number of factors that hindered the success of the program. These factors included 1) challenges with the target population/participants, 2) program changes, 3) program timeframe, and 4) the marketing and public awareness efforts. These factors can be turned into opportunities to enhance the program in the future.

Challenges with the Target Population/Participants

Although the program implementer and their partners anticipated challenges working with the target population, some barriers could not be directly addressed by the program. Specifically, there were a number of issues with the target population that proved challenging including their attitude, background, skill set, punctuality, lack of transportation, and other personal obstacles and challenges related to the participant. Some of the challenges with this population include poor attitudes and an unwillingness to work. In addition to having poor attitudes, some participants did not exhibit high levels of professionalism (i.e. coming to work on time). Some of the tardiness, however, may have been due to a lack of transportation or relying on public transportation, or an inability to pay for transportation.

“They quit because they don’t like the work or they don’t like who they’re working with or they just feel like [the work] is beneath them. I mean, they feel like for the pay it’s not worth it.” –Partner

Since the target population had been out of work for at least a year, some had skills that atrophied. In addition, many of the basic qualifications, skills and characteristics needed to secure permanent employment were missing. Because participants had been unemployed for a year or more, several of them lacked the skills, both technical and soft skills, needed to compete in today’s marketplace. While the LWIAs offered numerous trainings and courses, few participants took advantage of these resources. Many partners noted that this population needs to be handled differently than others.

“The most important lesson that we learned is that there are several reasons that people who are long-term unemployed are long-term unemployed. This population needs special attention and their personal issues to be addressed first, before they can be successfully placed into work.” – Partner

Program Changes

A few changes occurred during the program implementation that limited the success of the program. These changes were related primarily to staff turnover, changes in the research design, and procurement of new evaluators. Many of the partner agencies (including Manpower and a leading LWIA) experienced staff turnover at the beginning of the program. The turnover in hired staff resulted in delays in the recruitment and placement of the program participants.

Secondly, changes were made to the research design that impacted the overall program. The first evaluation team recommended strategies that were not feasible to implement. As a result, the newly evaluators (procured through a lengthy process), entered into the program evaluation 18 months after the program began. Collecting baseline data retrospectively and establishing new partnerships was also a challenge. According to one partner, this delayed start and turnover of key staff led to a decrease in enthusiasm and excitement about the program among both the partners and participants.

Program Timeframe

Another factor that hindered the success of the program was the short timeframe in which the partners and staffing agency had to place 125 participants after the program started. Despite only having 18 months (instead of the full three years) partners were able to place over 50% of the 125 anticipated participants.

The timeframe of the program itself (e.g. the six-month placement period) was seen as an impediment by some program participants. Some participants felt that the placement period was too short and that some of the employers were not intending to keep them on after the temporary placement. The perception among many participants is that the employers were interested in the program for the free labor. A few participants reported that they were let go prematurely and very abruptly, causing them to search for new employment. Others felt that having longer than six months would have helped increase their chances for permanent employment elsewhere.

“I think maybe if I was there a little bit longer [this experience] probably would stand out more on my resume.” – Participant

Marketing and Public Awareness Efforts

Some program partners, employers and participants noted that improvements were needed with the marketing and public awareness efforts. An employer noted that while she had heard of Manpower, she was not familiar with the local workforce agencies and the work they do in recruiting eligible employees. A partner agreed and noted that marketing is key to the success of the program.

“What would have helped would be more marketing. Depends on how they are marketing it. The marketing to the participants was key and having a marketing person that could market to both the employer and the participant. The marketing is key. That person should be able to communicate and the program in a manner that is appealing to the employers and the participants.” – Partner

A participant suggested that a news story about the program be broadcast using local media outlets. The participant indicated that the news story would raise awareness both among potential employers who need staff and among the long-term unemployed who are looking for work.

Process Evaluation Question #4: Barriers/Enhancers to Participatory Rates & Recruitment

Factors Affecting Participation

During key informant interviewees, participants, partners and employers noted several factors that affected the long-term unemployed participation in the program. These factors included 1) the limited number of jobs with higher paid wages, 2) location and type of jobs, 3) participants' lack of appropriate skills and qualifications, and 4) participants' lack of transportation.

Limited Number of Jobs & Low Paid Wages

Partners and participants interviewed reported that there were very few attractive jobs available through the staffing agencies. Partner agencies reported that the jobs offered were those of low pay and required individuals with softer skills. Almost all partners reported that the low wages offered by the jobs that were available prevented many participants willingness to take and commit to the position.

“They seemed interested in the position until they went to the job and then left. I spoke with one person who was placed in two different positions and he said that the income was not sufficient, that it did not meet his needs and so he left both positions...The reason that they didn't want to stay in their job was that \$10 an hour was not satisfactory pay and they left because of that.” – Partner

Interestingly, only one participant noted that the low wages served as a barrier to participation in the program. The participant felt that the temporary job agencies were not willing to negotiate with employers to pay people appropriately for their trades and skills.

Job Location

In addition to the low wages, a few partners and one employer reported that the location of the available jobs prevented the participants from taking the positions. Not surprisingly, participants were not willing to travel for an hour or more to a job that paid only \$10 an hour.

“People that were interested in participant service type positions but again they weren't willing, if there aren't any positions in our area and it's only paying \$10 an hour, they were not willing to travel to a DeKalb or to a Gwinnett or to the south side of Fulton County.” – Partner

One unplaced participant was offered a job opportunity, however declined the position noting that the location combined with the low wages was particularly problematic.

“I did get a call for a job, but then that was too far away. I thought maybe there was one closer but it was just too far away and some of these jobs that [Manpower] sends out on the Hot Picks, they’re just too far. There was one in Buford. For somebody who is going to go for \$10/hour with gas and whatever, you know that really won’t work. So those are some of the obstacles with the jobs that she puts out.” – Unplaced Participant

One of the employers agreed, noting that finding the right participant with the right skills in their geographical area was a challenge.

Participant Skills and Qualifications

Several participants felt they were either underqualified, overqualified, or lacked the appropriate skills for the job. The staffing agency also noted that the lack of skills along with several other factors posed several barriers to successful participation in the program. The staffing agency reported that they had difficulty matching the right participants with the necessary skill set to the appropriate job.

“What happened was when we launched we were ready to start paying participants to work, you know the work experience, in October and it took like a month to get a pool of participants which is completely normal. That wasn’t a surprise. But unfortunately, they were sending over people that didn’t have the skills of the jobs that we already had prepared. So then we had to change direction.” – Staffing Agency

Transportation

Finally having a reliable means of transportation posed a significant barrier to successful participant participation according to the partners. Finding jobs that were accessible by public transportation was as important as the participants’ access to and ability to pay for public transportation.

Process Evaluation Question #5: Strategic Partnerships

Two of the local workforce agencies (Atlanta Workforce Development Agency and Fulton County Workforce Development) discontinued their participation in the program after briefly participating at the start of the initiative. Thus, strategic partnerships were formed between the three remaining local workforce development agencies, DeKalb Workforce Development, Atlanta Regional Commission and Cobb Works.

An additional staffing agency, Hire Dynamics, was added in December 2014 to increase the number of participants placed and the number and type of jobs available. Although Hire Dynamics was considered one of the key partners as of December 2014, this staffing agency did not place any participants as of March 30, 2015.

Some of the LWIAs and several employers interviewed reported having a successful partnership and positive interactions with Manpower's staff. While the partners reported working together well, there were some challenges related to partner buy-in and building strong communication channels.

Buy-In

The partners noted that the initial meetings were successful and that at the beginning of the project, there was a high level of buy-in into the program. However, as the program progressed, two partners reported that buy-in into the program decreased. They experienced several challenges working with the partners, specifically related to changes in key staff/personnel, communication and the decision-making process. Another aspect that led to the lack of partner buy-in was the location of the available jobs. Partners were informed that there would be available jobs in their areas. Despite the staffing agency's effort to get employers and potential job opportunities in high need areas, partners became frustrated and less interested in the program.

Communication

The LWIA partners and staffing agency reported that lack of communication was a hindrance to the success of the program. Both groups reported that they would have liked more frequent meetings and communication to increase engagement in the program. According to some partners, there were very few meetings and little communication about the project. This lack of communication led to a lack of enthusiasm about the project on the part of the partners. One partner reported that the implementing agency's inability to make decisions quickly given the administrative procedures that required them to seek approval for any changes was a huge challenge. These required administrative procedures lead to many missed opportunities (i.e. large companies waiting for approval to be entered into the program) and affected the partners' ability to move forward.

Evaluation of Outcomes

Outcome Objectives

The goal of the outcome study evaluation was to assess the merit, worth, and value of the program in regards to the short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. The outcome evaluation intended to measure not only the changes in outcomes, but also how the program contributed to those changes. The findings from this evaluation will be used to document changes among the long-term unemployed population and help to facilitate programmatic improvements that is sustainable, innovative, and practice-based. The list of the outcome objectives that DeKalb Workforce Development anticipated achieving by June 30, 2015 are listed below:

1. Participants placed in subsidized work experience will be placed in employment.
2. Participants referred to the Manpower TDC will show improvement in skill competencies.
3. Participants placed in employment will retain employment for at least 6 months after placement.
4. Participants placed in employment will earn a wage equal or greater than local areas self-sufficiency guidelines.

The outcome objectives listed above will be measured using the following short term and long term measures in Table 6.

Table 6. Program Outcome Measures

Measures	
Short Term	Awareness of job placement services and sources
	Awareness of support and follow up services offered
Intermediate	Search for employment
	Employability and preparedness
Long Term	Change in wage during work experience program
	Permanent unsubsidized employment length
	Change in wage after work experience program

Statement of Outcome Evaluation Questions

The evaluation questions were developed based on the proposed strategies, goals, and objectives of the original grant application. The evaluation design focused on programmatic improvement and determined the merit, value, and worth of services provided by the LWIA and Manpower. Each outcome evaluation question aimed to see the progress of accomplishing the intended outcomes that sought changes in behavior, attitude, skills, knowledge, and the conditional state of employment. Below is a list of the outcome evaluation questions:

1. To what degree are the participants aware of job placement services and sources that are compatible with their skillsets?

2. To what degree are participants aware of the support and follow-up services offered?
3. To what degree have participants increased their search for employment within the LWIA extended resources?
4. To what degree did the participants improve their marketability and preparedness to enter in the workforce?
5. To what degree did the participants increase their income and earn a livable wage⁴?
6. To what degree did participants remain employed after permanent unsubsidized employment began?
7. Does placing the long-term unemployed into short-term subsidized employment opportunities improve their employment and wage outcomes?

Outcome Evaluation Question 1. To what degree are the participants aware of job placement services and sources that are compatible with their skillsets?

The LWIA (Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development, and the Fulton County Office of Workforce Development) and their partners provided trainings, workshops, and resources to strengthen participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities. In addition, the participants' awareness of such services would increase enrollment and the utilization of such programs leading to an increase in a participant's marketability and self-confidence to reenter in the workforce.

Outcome Evaluation Question 2. To what degree are participants aware of the support and follow-up services offered?

For participants in the work experience program (i.e. temporary or permanent employment) who needed support and follow-up services in order to sustain/maintain their positions, LWIA and Manpower provided additional trainings and counseling services. The trainings and services helped the participants mediate through difficult situations encountered in the workplace. This provides program participants an opportunity to successfully complete their work experience assignments with proper guidance in order to obtain a heightened level of knowledge and skills. These skills can in turn be used to become more marketable for other opportunities.

Outcome Evaluation Question 3. To what degree have participants increased their search for employment within the LWIA extended resources?

For participants actively searching for employment who need extended resources to increase access to available job opportunities, LWIA and Manpower provided participants with opportunities to attend job fairs (to gauge new industry/career contacts) and frequently emailed them potential job opportunities. Ideally, the participants would become encouraged and motivated to use the extended resources

⁴Livable wage, an approximate income needed to meet a family's basic needs, would enable the working poor to achieve financial independence while maintaining housing and food security. The livable wage for the state of Georgia is calculated using compiling geographically specific expenditure data for food, childcare, health care, housing, transportation, and other basic necessities. The livable wage calculator was developed Dr. Amy K. Glasmeier and the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) © 2014.

offered by the LWIAs and Manpower and therefore increase the number of job applications and resumes submitted for potential employment.

Outcome Evaluation Question 4. To what degree did the participants improve their marketability and preparedness to enter in the workforce?

Employability and preparedness refers to the participants' capability of gaining initial employment, maintaining employment, and obtaining new employment⁵. For participants who seek an opportunity to improve their marketability and preparedness to re-enter the workforce, LWIA and Manpower provided them with resources and support (i.e. resume writing, interviewing skills, computer access, and current work experience) to strengthen their ability to compete against similarly qualified individuals. By improving the marketability and preparedness of participants, they will be more effective and efficient in seeking placement in the workforce.

Outcome Evaluation Question 5. To what degree did the participants increase their income and earn a livable wage?

For participants seeking to earn an income and a livable wage, LWIA and Manpower provided program participants with an opportunity to acquire monetary compensation and the means to sustain quality of life (i.e. health insurance and paid leave). The two points of time that was used to determine the change in wage: 1) the wage received by the participant from their last documented employer prior to unemployment; and, 2) wage received during the temporary job placement.

Outcome Evaluation Question 6. To what degree did participants remain employed after permanent unsubsidized employment began?

After the participants complete the short-term (6 month) subsidized work experience, it is anticipated that the participants will be hired by their subsidized work experience employer or by another employer external to the program. The participants' ability to maintain and sustain unsubsidized employment will be measured by the length of time the participants keeps their position after the unsubsidized work begins.

Outcome Evaluation Question 7. Does placing long-term unemployed into short-term subsidized employment opportunities improve their employment and wage outcomes?

The three points of time that were to determine the change in wage are 1) the wage received by the participant from their last documented employer prior to unemployment, 2) wage received during the temporary job placement, and 3) wage received from unsubsidized employment after the participant completed the program.

⁵ Hillage and Pollard, 1998

Data Collection and Analysis Methods

The collection of data is a key milestone in the evaluation activities and is anticipated to coordinate with the implementation phases. The evaluators worked closely with the DWD program staff to ensure that the evaluation milestones (i.e. pre- and post-intervention data) coordinated and aligned with the program activities. For example, the Manpower program staff informed the evaluator during bi-weekly calls or via email of the upcoming in-take processes of eligible participants.

Data Collected

For the purpose of the outcome evaluation, quantitative and qualitative data were collected from program participants to support each outcome evaluation question. In order to determine whether the program was effective in serving the long-term unemployed, viable information was retrieved from a convenience sample of participants placed in the work experience program and those that were unplaced. The data collected documented the knowledge, skills, ability, and the conditional state of employment as a result of the participants' personal experiences in the program.

Data Collection Methods

A mixture of methods was used to collect data for this evaluation. These methods included 1) a participant questionnaire, 2) a semi-structured interview with key informants, and 3) a review of administrative documents. The Participant Questionnaire was administered twice for each cohort entering into the temporary subsidized employment program – prior to each participants' entry into the program and after each participant completed the program. The primary data collection tool for the outcome evaluation was the participant questionnaire, a modified data collection tool was used to capture specific measures and address gaps in the evaluation. Specific measures captured in the participant questionnaire included the following:

Measures Identified in the Tool (Intake)

Outcomes Measures of Interests:

- Personal-identifiable information (for data linking)
- Awareness of job placement services and sources
- Awareness of support and follow up services offered
- Wage prior to long term unemployment
- Wage after long term unemployment

Other Variables that Provide Context to Outcome Measures:

- Job searching activities
- Employment history

Measures Identified in the Tool (Exit)

Outcome Measures of Interests:

- Personal-identifiable information (for data linking)
- Subsidized work experience
- Actual use of LWIA and Manpower services
- Marketability (i.e. new industry contacts)
- Livable Wage (i.e. health insurance)

Data Sources

There were two types of data sources used to gather evidence that would inform the outcome evaluation: 1) the Intake/Exit Participant Questionnaire and 2) key informant interviews. The Intake/Exit Participant Questionnaire was a modified data collection tool that was used to capture measures and address gaps in the evaluation. The previous evaluator for the developed the original tool (called the Participant Intake Questionnaire Baseline Information Form – BIF) and obtained approval by the Institutional Review Board. The newly hired evaluators modified the BIF to include missing measures such as wages prior to long-term unemployment, awareness of job placement services, and awareness of support/follow-up services into the questionnaire. The Intake/Exit Participant Questionnaire also aligned with the anticipated outcome measures for the new evaluation design.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

The evaluation design called for a pretest–posttest assessment, where participants were compared to their own baseline. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data obtained from the Intake/Exit Participant Questionnaire. The analyses presented included frequency tables, bar charts, and histograms. Since participants are being compared to their own baseline data, a matching strategy was employed to remove bias in comparison by controlling the effects of covariates (i.e. frequency and within-class matching). A matched pair analysis was used to determine specific changes at the individual level. Matched pairs are commonly used in situations where two measurements are taken from each respondent. It is often used in experiments where there are before and after treatment measurements. This helped to eliminate individual differences and illuminate changes in responses from the Intake and Exit Participant Questionnaires. Statistical significance testing was used to determine differences in responses (where applicable). Chi-square tests of association were used to test the difference between what was observed verses what was expected. A p-value of 0.05 or lower is the cutoff for statistical significance.

Qualitative Analysis

Similar to the process evaluation, interviews were analyzed in Nvivo and utilized to better understand the experiences within the program from the perspective of participants as well as any challenges/barriers related to the implementation of the subsidized work program. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Consistent patterns analyzed across participant interviews were used to generate an initial set of codes for coding all interviews. Additional codes were allowed to emerge, and a priori codes found to not be useful or relevant were removed, as the interview content was analyzed. All codes were assigned a definition to help maintain consistency in coding within and between coders. At least two evaluators coded the interviews using the final codes and drafted notes that identified and quantified emerging themes.

Outcome Evaluation Results

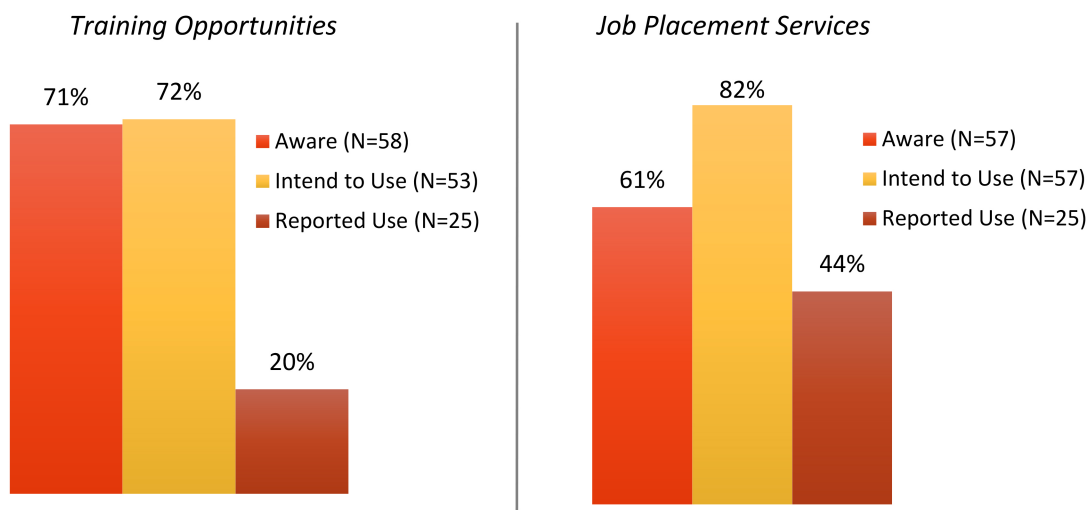
While there were 230 participants enrolled in the program (65 which were placed into temporary employment), as of March 2015, only 70 participants responded to the intake participant questionnaire and 25 responded to the exit participant questionnaire. A total of 17 participants responded and completed both the intake and exit questionnaire. The matched pair quantitative analyses were conducted on the 17 participants that answered at least one question on both the intake and exit questionnaires. Ten of the 17 matched pairs provided income and employment data on both the intake and exit questionnaires.

The majority of the participants that responded to the intake and exit questionnaire were enrolled into the program from the DeKalb Workforce Development and Atlanta Workforce LWIAs. The majority of the respondents were black women approximately 50 years of age. About half of the participants had an educational attainment status of receiving a high school diploma or GED or higher. The majority of respondents identified as single or widowed/divorced/separated with households that included zero or one other adult and no children.

Outcome Evaluation Question #1: Participant Awareness of Training Opportunities & Job Placement Services

Figure 2 shows the responses to participants being asked about their awareness and intent to use training opportunities and job placement services provided by the program on the intake and exit participant questionnaires. Slightly more than 70% of participants reported they were aware of and intended to use the training opportunities. However, only 20% reported using these training opportunities on the exit questionnaire. While respondents were not as aware of job placement services (61%) as an opportunity, more reported they intended to use these services (82%). However, in the exit questionnaire only 44% of individuals reported actual use of job placement services.

Figure 2. Awareness, Intent, and Reported Use of Training Opportunities and Job Placement Services



When participants were asked to list specific services they were aware of, the most common responses were interviewing techniques, resume writing, job fair announcements, opportunities to get training/education, and computer availability. Among those participants who used the services, several of the placed participants reported that they were helpful and provided them with necessary skills and information. When asked whether or not the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) services provided were helpful, one participant stated:

“My counselor through this program...was amazing. She was really good and literally when I found out about the program I called her one day, she interviewed me the next day and the following week Manpower called me and sent me on an interview and I got the job.” – Participant

Although participants said they were not knowledgeable about the services the program offered, few participants said they were aware of the services, but did not receive much help. Most unplaced participants reported that the WIA resources and services were only “somewhat” useful. Majority of the program participants mentioned that most of the services that were provided were either not publicly known, limited or not helpful. Therefore, many ventured outside of the WIA resources to gain better access to opportunities and workforce development services. Both placed and unplaced participants reported using other resources and services in addition to those offered by the WIA. Other resources and services used outside of the WIA included job fairs, the Goodwill, DeKalb Piedmont College Career Center, and additional schooling to gain more credentials and improve marketability. Most participants agreed that using additional resources outside of the WIA, increased their opportunities and job options. One placed participant reported:

“I did try to go through them again to get an actual welding job and they said they don’t really supply any jobs for that particular industry. It’s more warehouse and forklift jobs. I did try to go through them again but you know, like I said, they didn’t really have anything that I was kind of like looking for... So I just kind of, moved on to other temp agencies.” – Participant

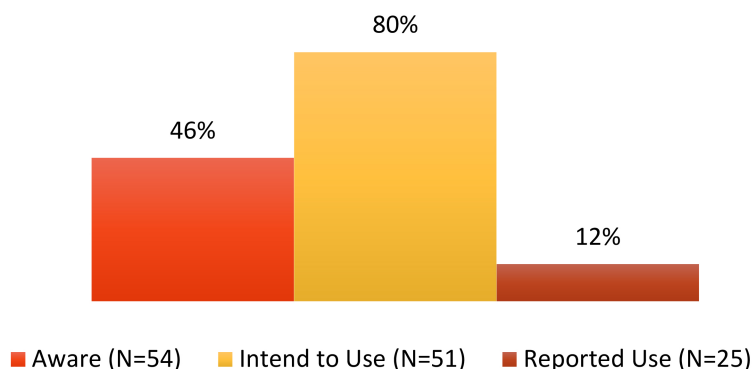
Another participant reported that resources offered by other non–WIA agencies were much more beneficial and personal, stating:

“[Other non–WIA resources] have computer classes and they have an instructor, it’s not like at Workforce [where] you would just go to the computer, but it was more like they have an instructor. I like that Manpower works with their job leads better. They really don’t have a person to get job leads, I’ll just put it that way. I’m not going to say everybody doesn’t because it probably helps some people.” – Participant

Outcome Evaluation Question #2: Participant Awareness of Support and Follow-Up Services

Participants were also asked about their awareness and intent to use support and follow-up services on the intake participant questionnaire (Figure 3). Nearly half (46%) of the participants reported that they were aware of support and follow-up services and 80% said they intended to use these services. However, reported use on the exit participant questionnaire was only 12%.

Figure 3. Awareness, Intent, and Reported Use of Support and Follow-Up Services



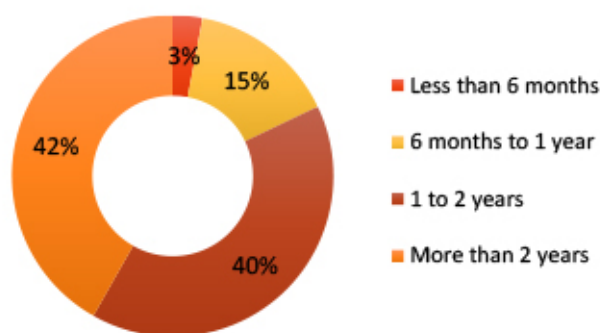
Although participants reported little awareness about the support and follow-up services offered by Manpower and the LWIAs, those that accessed these resources found them to be very helpful. The most notable services recognized by participants were the personal counseling services that Manpower offered to their placed participants and the accessibility of the Manpower staff. A few participants agreed that their communication with the Manpower staff helped them better prepare for the job placements, reconcile differences with their employers, overcome personal obstacles and challenges to getting to work, and more. One interviewee reported:

"I actually called her on a Sunday on her day off and said hey these people just called me and let me go. She did everything she could to try to, you know, find me something else like moving forward through the next phase..." –Participant

Outcome Evaluation Question #3: Search for Employment

Participants of this program were considered long-term unemployed and therefore were unemployed for more than one year. According to the intake participant questionnaire, over 80% of participants reported that they had been actively searching for a job for at least one year (Figure 4) and 42% spent more than two years searching for employment.

Figure 4. Length of Time Actively Searching for Employment (N=67, Intake Questionnaire)



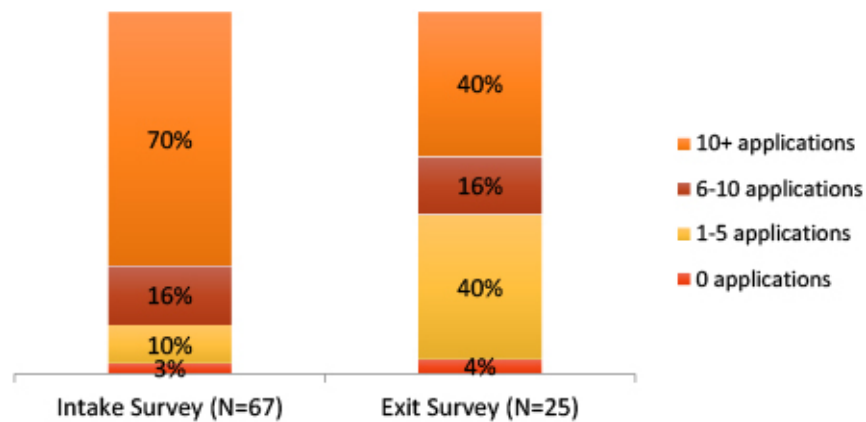
Job Application Completed

Since entering in the program, most participants reported submitting fewer job applications in comparison to their job searching activities prior to the program. The results of the job applications submitted from both the intake and exit participant questionnaire is shown in Figure 5. Nearly all participants reported submitting at least one job application in the six months prior to taking the intake participant questionnaire and during the program.

Among all participants, the following were statistically significant:

- 30% increase in participants that submitted one to five applications (p-value = 0.002)
- 31% decrease in participants that submitted six or more applications (p-value = 0.003)
- 30% decrease in participants that submitted 10 or more applications (p-value = 0.015)

Figure 5. Comparison of the Number of Job Applications Submitted at Program Intake and Exit



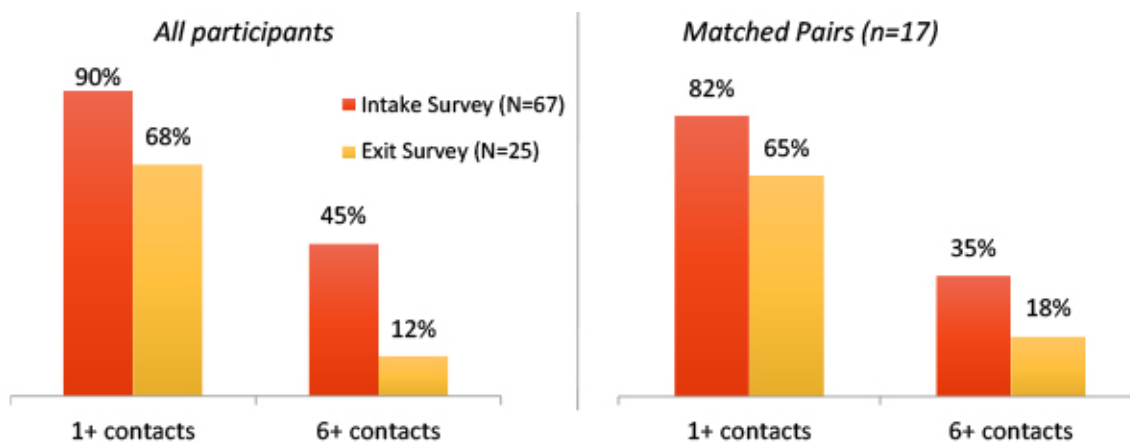
The aggregately reported intake and exit results were very similarly to the results of the match paired analysis were individual participant behavior analyzed before and after temporary subsidized employment yielded similar results; however, none of the changes among matched pairs were statistically significant. There are mixed results about the number of job applications submitted and can be explained two different ways. The decline in submitted six or more applications could mean that participants are submitting less applications. If this is the case, efforts should be made to articulate the importance of continued job application submissions. However, since the percentage of those who submitted one to five applications increased, this could mean that participants are being more particular about what applications they are submitting. This could mean they are putting more concentrated effort to apply to jobs that support their interests and skills.

Industry/Career Contacts & Networking

Participants reported the number of new industry/career contacts and job applications submitted in the six months prior to their job placement in the intake participant questionnaire. They also reported the number of new industry/career contacts and job applications submitted while enrolled in the program on the exit participant questionnaire. Results in Figure 6 show the results across all questionnaire respondents and results from matched respondents.

Overall, participants reported a decrease in the number of new industry/career contacts from the intake to exit participant questionnaires. The 22% decrease in making at least one new contact was statistically significant among all participants (p -value = 0.023), but not among matched pairs. Additionally, the 33% decrease in making six or more new contacts between questionnaires was statistically significant among all participants (p -value = 0.003). This decrease was not statistically significant among matched pairs.

Figure 6. Comparison of the Number of New Industry/Career Contacts Made at Program Intake and Exit



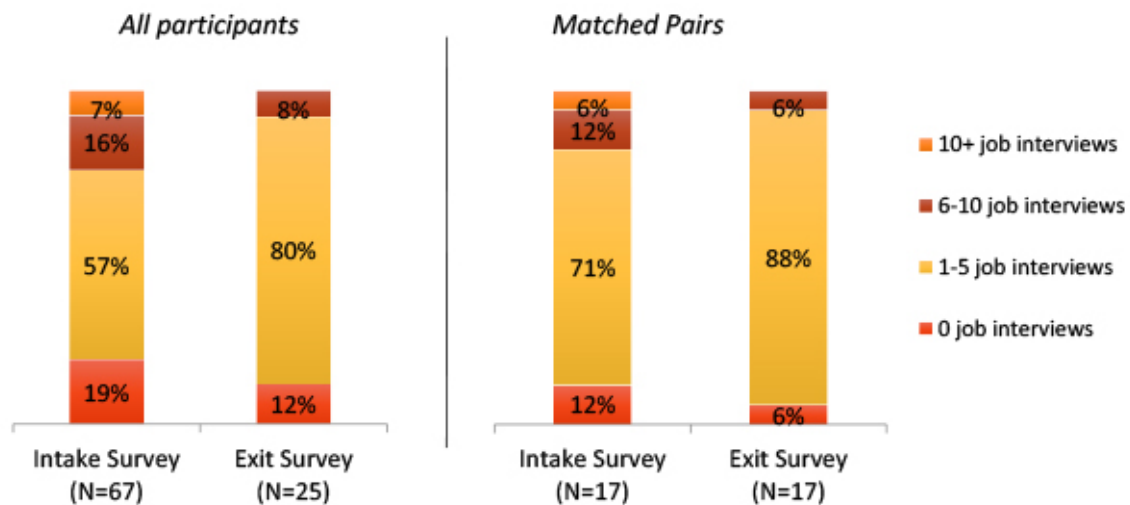
Contacts made through networking is one way to increase the chances of getting a job, as one learns more about the industry of interest and key players. Many participants looked to establish new career connections and job fairs and by using their case managers at the LWIA. Although, the number of contacts decreased after the work experience, a few participants openly recognized the importance of networking for future employment. One participant stated:

“What I learned being here is being in the right place at the right time and knowing the right people and connecting...” – Participant

Job Interviews

Participants reported the number of job interviews they completed in the six months prior to the program on the intake questionnaire. They reported this number while enrolled in the program on the exit questionnaire. Trends among all participants and matched pairs were similar; however, matched pairs reported slightly higher values of completed job interviews particularly in the one to five job interviews category (Figure 7). Among all participants, 81% completed at least one interview on the intake participant questionnaire and this value increased to 88% on the exit participant questionnaire. Participants mainly reported completing one to five job interviews most often, and this value increased from the intake to the exit participant questionnaire (23% increase for all participants, 17% increase for matched pairs). The changes in the number of job interviews completed were not statistically significant among all participants or matched pairs.

Figure 7. Number of Job Interviews Completed at Program Intake and Exit

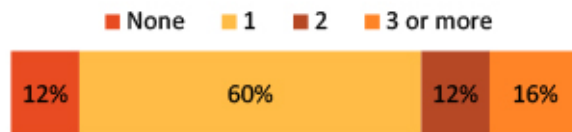


Results indicated that the percent of participants that were granted at least one job interview slightly increased from the intake questionnaire to the exit questionnaire, although not statistically significant. A notable comparison is between the number of job applications submitted and interviews completed. While the percentage of participants who submitted six or more job applications decreased about 30%, the percentage who completed one to five interviews increased by over 20% among all participants. While participants did not necessarily increase the number of applications they submitted, they were still able to get to the interview phase. Another result of interest was that the percentage of participants granted six or more interviews decreased from the intake to the exit questionnaire. This data finding aligns with the participants' job application submission behaviors, as participants decreased the number of applications submitted and therefore would not be invited to as many job interviews.

Job Offers

Respondents reported the number of jobs they received offers for while enrolled in the program. Among all participants, majority (88%) received an offer for at least one job (Figure 8). Of those that received an offer for a job, most reported receiving one job (60%). Results were similar among matched pairs (not shown). While the majority of respondents received at least one job during their enrollment in the program, over one quarter received multiple jobs offers. This one indicator supports success of the program.

Figure 8. Number of Job Offers during Enrollment among All Participants (N=25)

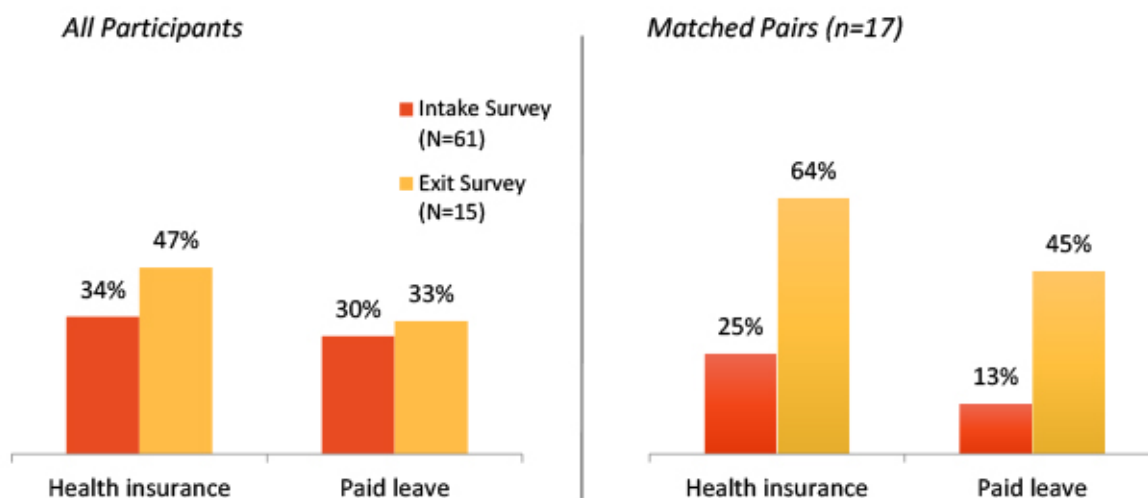


Outcome Evaluation Question #5: Income & Livable Wage

Respondents filled in information about their last employment during two times: 1) prior to becoming involved in the program (intake questionnaire) and 2) employment they received as a result of being involved in the program (exit questionnaire).

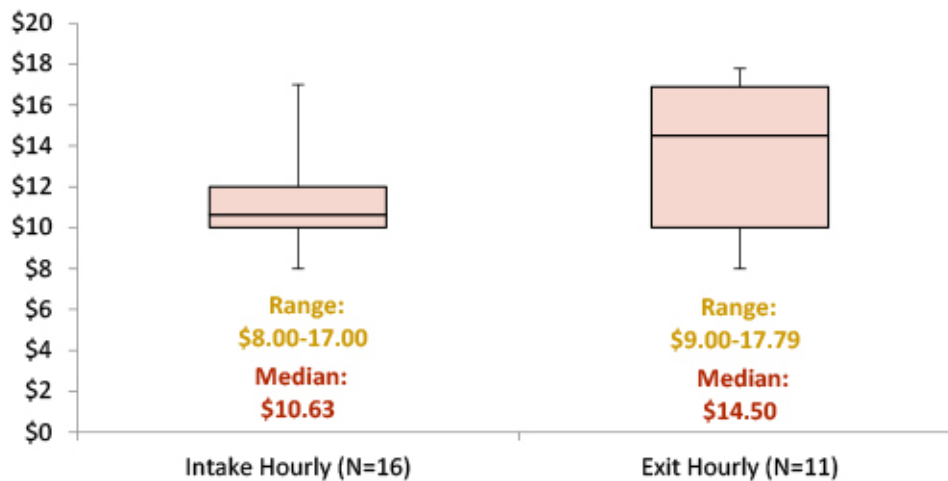
On both the intake and exit questionnaires, over 70% reported working a full-time position during enrollment in the program, which is defined as 30 hours or more (not shown). This value increased to over 90% among matched pairs. Additionally, respondents reported the benefits they received while employed, which can enhance quality of life. There was an increase in both those who had access to health insurance and paid leave benefits from the intake to exit questionnaires, particularly among matched pairs (Figure 9). The increase in those that received health insurance was significantly significant among matched pairs (39% increase, $p=0.04$).

Figure 9. Benefits Offered by Employers at Program Intake and Exit



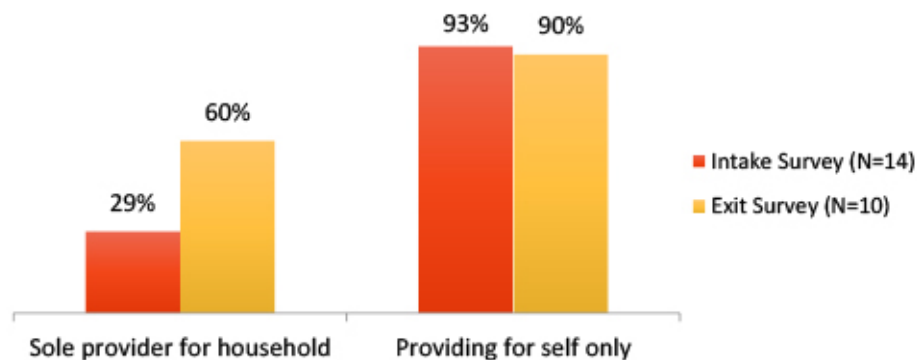
Participants also reported their wage information on both the intake and exit questionnaires. Wage information was converted to hourly values if a participant reported a salary. Results from matched pairs show that the median hourly wage increased from \$10.63 to \$14.50 from the intake to exit questionnaires (Figure 10). However, the range stayed about the same.

Figure 10. Change in Hourly Wages



Based off the wage information and household size provided, it was determined whether a participant earned a livable wage according to the state of Georgia's livable wage figures (Figure 11). Since it was not known whether a participant was the sole provider for his/her household or was responsible for providing monetarily only to him/herself, both values were calculated. The most notable change was the 31% increase in the percentage of those that earned a livable wage assuming they were the sole income providers for the household. Nearly all participants earned a livable wage as a single adult on both the intake and exit questionnaires.

Figure 11. Income at or above Livable Wage (Matched Pairs) at Program Intake and Exit

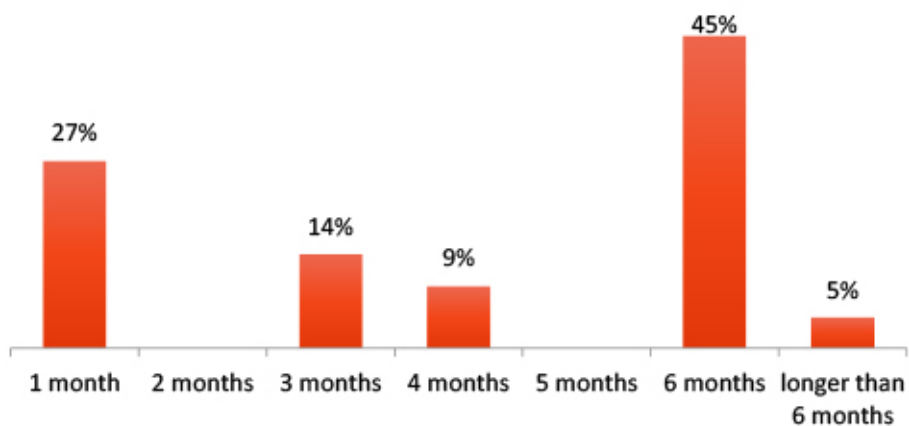


While these results (i.e. increase in median hourly wage, employer-provided benefits, and livable wage as the sole provider) seem promising, it is important to note that these values are based off a small sample size. Furthermore, most participants reported wage information on the exit questionnaire from their temporary employment as opposed to their current/most recent employment they acquired after completing the program. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether the program had a profound effect on increasing income and livable wages.

Outcome Evaluation Question #6: Employment after Program Experience

Of the 88% of participants that reported being employed from the program on the exit questionnaire, half reported being employed for at least six months (Figure 12). A large percentage of participants that were offered jobs did not stay in their roles for more than three months (41%). Participants mentioned they were either let go early from their appointed position due to financial restraints, organizational structure change at employment site, or told that the timeframe was not to exceed two weeks. This employment information relates to the jobs received as a result of the program and do not indicate how long participants have remained in a job after program completion.

Figure 14. Duration of Employment (N=22)



Outcome Evaluation Question #7: Program Experience & Wage Outcomes

The extent to which the workforce development program was effective in achieving the intended outcome (Table 6) was inconclusive. There is limited information that supports that placing the long-term unemployed into short-term subsidized employment improves employment and wage outcomes. As noted above in outcome evaluation question #5, median wage, benefits offered, and livable wage rose from the last documented employer to the temporary job placement. However, current wages from unsubsidized employers are needed to show a fuller picture of the impact of the program. Additionally, more wage and employer information is needed to better ascertain the impact, as there were few participants who answered wage questions on the intake and exit questionnaires. It is not clear whether participants gained the necessary skills and knowledge that would enable them to become gainfully employed, especially given only half of those employed remained in their short-term employment for six or more months.

At the same time, findings from the key informant interviews suggest that there were successful cases. Some program participants were able to become employed after the subsidized work experience, improve their marketability, and earn a comparable livable wage.

“I learned a lot, it felt good just having a job so that was one of the things I liked about it, just being able to work and getting that paycheck. That felt really good.” – Participant

“I feel like that helped me so much because I didn’t have a job for a long time and when you don’t have a job, not only is it the bills and everything piling up but then you don’t even get a lead. You don’t even feel comfortable and it’s almost like it starts taking your confidence away and for that, just working on there, just going there, getting interviewed, getting placed in a position; whether it’s temp, part-time or whatever, I felt you’re getting a salary, you’re at work, it gives you your confidence back that you can get another job.” – Participant

“Right now I’m still looking for a job but it gave me so much confidence in myself again.” – Participant

Integration of Process and Outcome Evaluation Information

As evidenced by the outcome data, the program did not meet all of its intended goals and objectives. While 203 individuals were enrolled in the program, 65 were placed into a temporary placement as of March 30, 2015.

Intake and exit questionnaire data, along with key informant interview findings suggest a number of reasons why 52% of the projected 125 participants were placed. The delayed start, inconsistent communication, and decreased partner buy-in proved to be hindering factors that affected reaching the program enrollment goal.

Other factors however also might have contributed to the low rate of job placement made among the program participants. For example, while slightly more than 70% of participants reported they were aware of and intended to use training opportunities, only 20% reported using these them. Similarly, while 82% reported that they intended to use these services, only 44% reported that they used them. Interview data also suggest that some participants lacked the necessary skills and qualifications to find and retain employment. Additionally, the data suggests that among the placed participants who used the services they found them to be helpful. Had more participants used these services, it is possible that they could have had more success in finding employment.

The exit questionnaire data indicated that half of those placed in temporary employment remained employed for at least six months and over a quarter were employed for one month. While there were some employers who only needed very short-term assistance and let these participants go prematurely, interview data suggests that some of the participants did not possess the skills or level of professionalism necessary to keep the position. Taking advantage of the resources and training offered through the program could have improved participant employability and level of preparedness for the workforce.

While the participants' characteristics influenced some of the outcomes, there were other factors related to the program that affected the results. For example, the comparison of the intake and exit questionnaire data indicates that there was an increase in the number of participants that submitted one to five applications and a decrease in the number that submitted more than five. While participants may have been more selective about their applications, the key informant interview data suggests that this could also be related to the lack of appropriate jobs and the type of jobs available through the program. This is especially true for jobs with accessible locations and acceptable wages. Participants and partners both noted that the types of jobs were not appropriate for many of the program participants. Participants were likely not submitting applications for these jobs or the positions that were located too far away and did not offer sufficient compensation.

For livable wages, there was a decrease among those providing only for themselves and making at or above livable wage after the program. This may have been due to the low paying jobs that were offered via the program. Having more high-paying jobs available might led to an increase in the participants living at or above livable wages.

Recommendations to Program Administrators for Future Program and Evaluation Efforts

During the key informant interviews, the various stakeholder groups (e.g. placed and unplaced participants, partners and employers) proposed several suggestions for ways to improve upon the program. The following is a list of suggestions for improving the program:

- Improve marketing strategies to spread awareness of the program to attract a variety of employers across different occupational sectors/industries.
- Build stronger communication channels among the strategic partnerships (i.e. provide programmatic updates through regularly scheduled meetings and maintain a presence of program leadership).
- Utilize multiple staffing agencies in order to maintain of employer pool of diverse occupational sectors/industries.
- Diversify the type and increase the number of professional level (high-skill) job opportunities that offer higher wages.
- Screen potential employers to ensure that the firms have good financial standing to support the full-employment of participant after the participant successfully complete the programs.
- Offer more hand-on and personal assistance/instructions/guidance/counselling to the participants to ensure they are adequately prepared for the position.
- Obtain greater buy-in from the employers to ensure they are: 1) a good fit for the program, 2) invested in the program's initiatives, and 3) willing to permanently hire a strong participant of the program.

Appendix

Workforce Innovation Fund Intake Questionnaire

Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Site

Please mark with a check (✓) your local LWIA site:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Atlanta Regional Commission | ☐ DeKalb Workforce Development |
| ☐ Atlanta Workforce Development Agency | ☐ Fulton County Office of Workforce Development |
| ☐ Cobb Works | |

General Information

Last Name		First Name		Middle Initial
Address				
City		State	ZIP Code	County
				Best Contact: ☐ Home Phone ☐ Cell Phone
Home Phone		Cell Phone		
E-mail Address				Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
Today's Date				

Demographics

1. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. What is your race?

- ☐ White
☐ Black or African-American
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Asian
☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

3. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

4. Do you speak a language other than English at home? If so, what language(s) do you speak?

- ☐ Yes, I speak: _____
☐ No

5. What is your marital status?

- ☐ Single or Never Married
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Not married but living together
- ☐ Widowed/divorced/separated

6. How many adults, ages 18 years and older are currently living or staying in your household?

- ☐ There are no adults living or staying in my household
- ☐ 1 Adult
- ☐ 2 Adults
- ☐ 3 or more adults

7. How many children between the ages of 0 months and 17 years are currently living or staying with you in your household?

- ☐ There are no children living or staying in my household
- ☐ 1 Child
- ☐ 2 Children
- ☐ 3 or more children

8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- ☐ High School Diploma/GED
- ☐ Associates Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Doctoral Degree
- ☐ None of the above

9. Are you currently enrolled in any job training or education programs?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. What is your specific career/profession?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ Do NOT have a specific career or profession | ☐ <u>Education, Training, and Library</u> | ☐ <u>Management</u> |
| ☐ <u>Architecture and Engineering</u> | ☐ <u>Farming, Fishing, and Forestry</u> | ☐ <u>Office and Administrative Support</u> |
| ☐ <u>Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media</u> | ☐ <u>Food Preparation and Serving Related</u> | ☐ <u>Personal Care and Service</u> |
| ☐ <u>Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance</u> | ☐ <u>Healthcare Practitioners, Support and Technical Occupations</u> | ☐ <u>Production</u> |
| ☐ <u>Business and Financial Operations</u> | ☐ <u>Installation, Maintenance, and Repair</u> | ☐ <u>Protective Service</u> |
| ☐ <u>Community and Social Services</u> | ☐ <u>Legal</u> | ☐ <u>Sales and Related</u> |
| ☐ <u>Computer and Mathematical</u> | ☐ <u>Life, Physical, and Social Science</u> | ☐ <u>Transportation and Material Moving</u> |
| ☐ <u>Construction and Extraction</u> | | ☐ <u>Other (please specify):</u>
_____ |

11. Do you possess any credentials or certificates in your profession? If so, please list the credentials/certificates.

12. Have you ever been employed in this career field?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No <SKIP TO QUESTION 14>

13. How long have you been employed in this career field?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

14. How long have you been searching for a job?

- ☐ 6 months
- ☐ 1 year
- ☐ 1 year and 6 months2 years
- ☐ More than 2 years

15. Do you feel that any of the following are affecting your ability to become employed (*check all that apply*)?

- ☐ Lack of transportation
- ☐ Childcare needs
- ☐ Age
- ☐ Background
- ☐ Current skill level
- ☐ Resume
- ☐ Interviewing skills
- ☐ Other (*please list*): _____

16. How did you hear about the program?

- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Advertisement
- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Social Media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter)
- ☐ Billboard/flyer
- ☐ Family
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Unemployment office
- ☐ Letter
- ☐ Visiting one of the Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) sites (e.g. Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development and Fulton County Office of Workforce Development)
- ☐ Contacted by one of the five LWIA sites (see list above) by Phone
- ☐ Other (*please specify*): _____

Previous Employment History: Your Last Three Employers

17. Please complete the details of your LAST/MOST RECENT employer below.

Industry		Company Name	
Position Title/Occupation		Dates of Employment (MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY)	
Address			
City	State	ZIP Code	County
Were you employed? ☐ Full Time ☐ Part-Time	Salary?		
	\$, .00		\$.
	Yearly		Hourly
Average Hours Worked per Week? ☐ 1-10 hours per week ☐ 11-20 hours per week ☐ 21-39 hours per week ☐ Exactly 40 hours per week ☐ Over 40 hours per week	Received benefits? ☐ Yes ☐ No If Yes: Health Insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No		Paid Leave? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Would you like to remain within the industry listed above? ☐ Yes ☐ No	Would you like to remain within the profession/occupation that is listed above? ☐ Yes ☐ No		How important is it for you to continue earning the salary of your last full-time position? ☐ Very important ☐ Somewhat important ☐ Not important at all

18. Please complete the details of your SECOND TO LAST employer below.

Industry		Company Name	
Position Title/Occupation		Dates of Employment (MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY)	
Were you employed? ☐ Full Time ☐ Part-Time	Salary?		
	\$, .00		\$.
	Yearly	Hourly	
Average Hours Worked per Week? ☐ 1-10 hours per week ☐ 11-20 hours per week ☐ 21-39 hours per week ☐ Exactly 40 hours per week ☐ Over 40 hours per week	Received benefits? ☐ Yes ☐ No If Yes: Health Insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No		Paid Leave? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. Please complete the details of your THIRD TO LAST employer below.

Industry		Company Name	
Position Title/Occupation		Dates of Employment (MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY)	
Were you employed? ☐ Full Time ☐ Part-Time	Salary?		
	\$, .00		\$.
	Yearly	Hourly	
Average Hours Worked per Week? ☐ 1-10 hours per week ☐ 11-20 hours per week ☐ 21-39 hours per week ☐ Exactly 40 hours per week ☐ Over 40 hours per week	Received benefits? ☐ Yes ☐ No If Yes: Health Insurance? ☐ Yes ☐ No		Paid Leave? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Job Placement and Follow-Up Services

20. Are you aware of the job placement services that are offered by this program?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
21. Over the next 12 months, do you intend to use the job placement services offered?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
22. Are you aware of the training opportunities that are offered by this program?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
23. Over the next 12 months, do you intend to use the training opportunities offered?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
24. Are you aware of the follow-up and support services that are offered by this program?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
25. Over the next 12 months, do you intend to use the follow-up/support services offered?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

Workforce Innovation Fund Exit Questionnaire

Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) Site

Please mark with a check (✓) your local LWIA site:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Atlanta Regional Commission | ☐ DeKalb Workforce Development |
| ☐ Atlanta Workforce Development Agency | ☐ Fulton County Office of Workforce Development |
| ☐ Cobb Works | |

General Information

Last Name	First Name	Middle Initial
E-mail Address		Date of Birth (MM/DD/YYYY)
Today's Date		

Demographics

26. What is your marital status?

- ☐ Single or Never Married
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Not married but living together
- ☐ Widowed/divorced/separated

27. How many adults, ages 18 years and older are currently living or staying in your household?

- ☐ There are no adults living or staying in my household
- ☐ 1 Adult
- ☐ 2 Adults
- ☐ 3 or more adults

28. How many children between the ages of 0 months and 17 years are currently living or staying with you in your household?

- ☐ There are no children living or staying in my household
- ☐ 1 Child
- ☐ 2 Children
- ☐ 3 or more children

Job Placement and Follow-Up Services

29. Have you used the job placement services offered by your LWIA site (e.g. Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development and Fulton County Office of Workforce Development) in the last six months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

30. Have you used the training opportunities offered by your LWIA site (see list above) in the last six months?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
31. Have you used the follow-up/support services offered by your LWIA site (see list above) in the last six months?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No
32. How long have you been enrolled in the program at your LWIA site?
- ☐ 1 month
 - ☐ 2-3 months
 - ☐ 4-6 months
 - ☐ Longer than 6 months
 - ☐ Am not enrolled in the program

Job Applications and Interviews Completed

33. During your enrollment in the program, how many new industry/career contacts did you make? For example, did you meet with a hiring recruiter or did you meet people in your field at networking events/meetings?
- ☐ 1-5 industry/career contacts
 - ☐ 6-10 industry/career contacts
 - ☐ More than 10 industry/career contacts
34. During your enrollment in the program, how many job applications did you complete?
- ☐ 1-5 applications
 - ☐ 6-10 applications
 - ☐ More than 10 applications
35. During your enrollment in the program, how many job interviews did you complete?
- ☐ 1-5 job interviews
 - ☐ 6-10 job interviews
 - ☐ More than 10 job interviews
36. During your enrollment in the program, how many jobs were you offered?
- Number of jobs offered

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37. Did you receive a temporary job placement as a result of this program?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☒ No
38. How long were you in this temporary job placement?
- a. Was NOT in a temporary job placement
 - ☐ 1 month
 - ☐ 2 months
 - ☐ 3 months
 - ☐ 4 months
 - ☐ 5 months
 - ☐ 6 months
 - ☐ Longer than 6 months

Interest In A Key Informant Interview

39. DeKalb Workforce Development is interested in obtaining a greater understanding of your experience in this program. Would you be willing to participate in a 15-30 minute interview within the next 1-2 months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Workforce Innovation Fund Key Informant Interview Protocol

Key Informant Group	Interview Questions
DeKalb Workforce Development	1. As the Project Manager for this program what were the specific goals you needed to achieve? To what degree would you say those goals were achieved? What challenges (if any) impacted your ability to achieve your goals? 2. What would have helped or what could help you to have greater capacity to implement this program (e.g. more training, resources, support, etc.)? 3. You partnered with several community partners (e.g. Cobb Works, Atlanta Regional Commission, Fulton County Office of Workforce Development, etc.) to implement this program. How successful do you feel those partnerships/collaborations have been/were? What have been some of the challenges with these partnerships? Lessons learned? 4. What, if anything, could have been done to better communicate the goals and objectives of the program to the participants, your agency and/or partner agencies? How would you describe the level of buy-in among the stakeholders (participants, DWD, and partner agencies)? What, if anything, could be done differently next time to improve buy-in? 5. What challenges (if any) did you and/or other partners face in recruiting the target population? In screening the target population? How were you and/or partners able to overcome these challenges? 6. How would you describe the ease of working with the target population? Were participants willing to work and if not, why not? Were there appropriate jobs available for the participants and if not, what impact did that have on the ability to recruit and retain participants? Were there other similar programs that participants were using instead of or in addition to yours? What effect do you think these programs had on your ability to recruit and retain participants? 7. Anything else you would like to add about successes, challenges and lessons learned in implementing this program?
ManPower Staffing Agency	1. As the Manager for this program what were the specific goals you needed to achieve? To what degree would you say those goals were achieved? What challenges (if any) impacted your ability to achieve your goals? 2. What would have helped or what could help you to have greater capacity to implement this program (e.g. more training, resources, support, etc.)? 3. You partnered with the DeKalb Workforce Development Agency (and other agencies?) to implement this program. How successful do you feel those partnerships/collaborations have been/were? What have been some of the challenges with these partnerships? Lessons learned? 4. What, if anything, could have been done to better communicate the goals and objectives of the program to the participants, your agency and/or partner agencies? How would you describe the level of buy-in among the stakeholders (participants, DWD, and partner agencies)? What, if anything, could be done differently next time to improve buy-in? 5. What challenges (if any) did you face in recruiting the target population? In screening the target population? How were you able to overcome these challenges? 6. How would you describe the ease of working with the target population? Were participants willing to work and if not, why not? Were there other similar programs that participants were using instead of or in addition to yours? What effect do you think these programs had on your ability to recruit and retain participants? 7. Were there appropriate jobs available for the participants? Were there good matches between the target population and jobs? If not, what impact did that have on the ability to recruit and retain participants? What challenges did you face in making good matches? 8. What do you think were some barriers to participants' abilities to get and/or maintain a job (e.g. education, skills, experience, lack of job history, etc.)? How did these barriers affect participants' ability to get/maintain a job? 9. Anything else you would like to add about successes, challenges and lessons learned in implementing this program?

Key Informant Group	Interview Questions
Local Workforce Investment Area Partners	1. Who did you partner with to implement this program (e.g. DWD, Manpower, other?)? How successful do you feel those partnerships/collaborations have been/were? What have been some of the challenges with these partnerships? Lessons learned? 2. What challenges (if any) did you face in recruiting the target population? In screening the target population? How were you able to overcome these challenges? 3. How would you describe the ease of working with the target population? Were participants willing to work and if not, why not? Were there appropriate jobs available for the participants and if not, what impact did that have on the ability to recruit and retain participants? Were there other similar programs that participants were using instead of or in addition to yours? What effect do you think these programs had on your ability to recruit and retain participants? 4. What, if anything, could have been done to better communicate the goals and objectives of the program to the participants, your agency and/or partner agencies? How would you describe the level of buy-in among the stakeholders (participants, DWD, and partner agencies)? What, if anything, could be done differently next time to improve buy-in?
Participants	1. How long have you been searching for a job or were you searching for a job before you found one? Probes: How many job applications did you complete throughout the course of the program? How critical was it to you and your family that you find/found a job as soon as possible? 2. What do you think prevented you or is preventing you from getting a job or affecting your ability to do so? Probes: What are some of the barriers/challenges you have faced/are facing (e.g. being out of work for so long, not right jobs or ones you're interested in, not having right skills, experience, background, etc.)? 3. Did you use the job placement services offered by your LWIA site (e.g. Atlanta Regional Commission, Atlanta Workforce Development Agency, Cobb Works, DeKalb Workforce Development and Fulton County Office of Workforce Development) in the last six months? Yes No (if no, end interview?) 4. Did you find the job placement services helpful? Why or why not? Was it easy to understand what was being offered and how it could help you? Why or why not? 5. Did you find that there were a lot of jobs available to you? If not, why not? Were there jobs available, but not ones you were interested in or qualified for? Were there other programs that you participated in that had better job offerings or felt did a better job of helping you to get a job? 6. Do you feel that your participation in your LWIA site helped you be better prepared to get a job? If yes, how so? If no, why not? Other possible question: Do you feel it prepared you to get a higher paying job than you otherwise would be able to get? 7. Do you feel that the skills you gained from participating in this program at your LWIA site helped you be more attractive or marketable to a potential employer? If yes, how so? If no, why not? 8. Did you find a temporary job placement as a result of your participation in this program? If not, skip to question 11. If so, was/is the job in your field of choice? Was/is the salary an increase over your previous pay? Was/is the salary enough for you to provide for yourself and your dependents (if you have any)? 9. Are you still employed in the job you found through this program? If not, skip to question 11. If so, how long have you been in this placement? Do you anticipate staying in this job permanently? 10. If you are no longer in this job, why not? Did you find/have you found a new job? Did this job help you to get your current job? Is your new job higher paying than your previous one? 11. Do you have anything else to add about this program or how to improve upon it?

Key Informant Group	Interview Questions
Employers	1. You worked with Manpower Inc. to help participants in the DeKalb Workforce Development program find employment. What motivated you to participate in this program? What were you hoping to gain by participating? 2. What was your experience working with Manpower like? What worked well? What didn't work as well or what challenges did you encounter, if any? Would you work with Manpower again (both just generally and specifically with this kind of program)? 3. What was your experience hiring and/or working with the candidate(s) that were placed and/or matched with you by Manpower? Did you find them to be good employees? What challenges, if any, did you encounter in hiring and/or working with them? 4. What advice would you give to local workforce agencies implementing these kinds of programs about how to work effectively with employers such as yourself? What could this program have done differently? How can it be improved upon?