



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

2 0 1 4 A N N U A L R E P O R T

Workforce Investment Board

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

It is my pleasure to present the 2014 Annual Report for the Lake County Workforce Investment Board. After years of advocacy by many stakeholders, including the Lake County Workforce Investment Board, for reauthorization of the legislation that operates the public workforce system, on July 22, 2014 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law. This new law keeps many of the aspects of the prior law, but there is a new focus on work experiences or internships instead of stand-alone training, career pathways instead of jobs, and services for job seekers with significant barriers to employment. The new law also goes further to integrate the partnerships between workforce programs, adult education and vocational rehabilitation. Fortunately, the Lake County Workforce Investment Board has already been moving in the right direction, which positions us well as we transition to WIOA.

In late 2013, the Lake County Workforce Investment Board adopted a policy to create a work experience program. The program offers job seekers that have completed occupational training the opportunity to complete a paid work experience in their field of study at a County department. The job seeker gets to put their skills to use in the real world, can add Lake County to their resume, and gets the benefit of building relationships with potential references. Even in the pilot stage, we saw success. The short-term work experiences turned into long-term jobs, both in the sponsoring County departments and in the private sector. In 2014, we expanded the program to include private sector work experiences.

Even before WIOA was signed, we were collaborating with Lake County Partners, our local economic development agency, to identify career pathways within strategic industry sectors in Lake County. Based on the Lake County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and other economic development planning, we identified seven critical industry sectors, and selected occupations within those industries that pay livable wages, are growing, are on a career pathway, and require transferrable skills. As a result, we have made policy changes to ensure that workforce development and economic development are truly linked by directing training funds toward programs that prepare workers for those high priority occupations. In addition, we have continued to seek grants like the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing grant that recruit and train individuals in strategic industries based on economic development planning.

We were one of only two workforce areas in the state to receive a grant to coordinate services for individuals with disabilities in 2014. These funds allow us to increase our outreach to people with disabilities and help bridge the gap between them and local employers who recognize their skills and abilities.

As I conclude my term as Chairman this year, I want to thank my fellow Board members for their leadership and vision. I would also like to recognize the staff of the Lake County Workforce Development Department and our partner agencies for their dedication. I'm proud to say that we're on the right track in Lake County, and I'm confident that we'll make even more progress in 2015.

- **Todd Mundorf**
Chair, Lake County Workforce Investment Board

MISSION

To ensure a workforce ready for today and prepared for tomorrow.

VISION

The Workforce Investment Board is the recognized leader of an exemplary Lake County workforce development system that produces a highly skilled workforce and significantly contributes to the region's economic vitality and quality of life. As a result of this visionary leadership:

- Employers are the pivotal link driving the evolution of the local workforce development system—readily sharing their passion, knowledge and resources to get the job done.
- Vital partnerships exist with economic development, education and community forces committed to collaboration to ensure a dynamic workforce development system.
- Our Job Centers are model systems for lifelong education, training and job readiness programs that exceed the needs of area job seekers and employers.

MEET THE LAKE COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

The Workforce Investment Board has three committees including the Executive Committee, which is led by the Chair of the Board, the Marketing and Employer Linkages Committee, which focuses on increasing awareness and usage of the workforce system by Lake County employers, and the One-Stop Committee, which works to evaluate and improve the Job Center. In addition, a Youth Council oversees youth programming. The following individuals served on the Workforce Investment Board or Youth Council in 2014.

PURPOSE

THE LAKE COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD SHALL ENSURE THE INTEGRATION OF SERVICES TO PREPARE INDIVIDUALS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY. THE BOARD SHALL TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN ADVOCATING, PLANNING, EVALUATING, AND DEVELOPING LOCAL WORKFORCE RESOURCES TO ENABLE INDIVIDUALS AND BUSINESSES TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL IN A CHANGING GLOBAL MARKETPLACE.

– LAKE COUNTY
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT
BOARD BYLAWS

LAKE COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

CHAIR

Todd Mundorf: *NRG Energy*

VICE CHAIR

Bonnie Schirato: *Physicians Interactive*

Kurt Beier: *First Institute*

Jack Borders: *Illinois Department of Employment Security*

Jack Bore: *Baxter*

Greg Burns: *Allstate*

Sam Cade: *Siemens Building Technologies, Inc.*

Timothy Dempsey: *The Dempsey Financial Group*

J. A. Tony Figueroa: *P3 Strategic*

Emily Garrity: *ConnectVETS*

Christine Hammerlund: *Assured Healthcare*

Jennifer Harris: *CR Search, Inc.*

Susan Huwe: *Illinois Department of Human Services*

Dennis Kessler: *Kessler Management Consulting*

Noelle Kischer-Lepper: *City of Waukegan Office of the Mayor*

Halina Krajcer: *H. K. Consulting*

Kristi Long: *United Way of Lake County*

Maria Martinez-McKinley: *IDHS, Div. of Rehabilitation Service*

Edward J. Melton: *Prairie Park Partners*

Audrey Nixon: *Lake County Board*

Ali O'Brien: *College of Lake County*

Pete Olson: *Lake County Building & Construction Trades Council*

Carlotta Roman: *VW Credit, Inc.*

Arlene Santos-George: *Lake County Area Planning Council*

Victoria Schofield: *Central States SER – Jobs for Progress Inc.*

Jennifer Serino Stasch: *Lake County Workforce Development Department*

Patrick Statter: *Local 881 UFCW*

Michael Stevens: *Lake County Partners*

Karen Stoneman: *Systemex America, Inc.*

Andrew Warrington: *United Conveyor Corporation*

Dr. Jerry Weber: *College of Lake County*

Ann Willits: *Fairway Talent*

Roycealee Wood: *Regional Superintendent of Schools*

We would like to thank the following Workforce Investment Board Members whose service concluded in 2014:

Oscar Adler: *Silent Selling*

Diana Beyer: *Illinois Department of Employment Security*

Keith McKinley: *IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Service*

Raiana Mearns: *Lake County Area Planning Council*

Sylvia Zaldivar-Sykes: *Lake County Community Foundation*

LAKE COUNTY YOUTH COUNCIL

Vicki Berger: *Avanti Resources*

Frances Bryner: *Guardian of Youth Program Participant*

Greg Burns: *Allstate*

Germain Castellanos: *Former Youth Program Participant*

Nanette Cohen: *Jewish Vocational Services*

Christine Hammerlund: *Assured Healthcare*

Sylvia Johnson: *Career & Placement Services, College of Lake County*

Tim Kirschner: *Waukegan Public Schools*

Mary Marsolek: *Juvenile Probation Office*

Ali O'Brien: *College of Lake County*

Jim Ross: *SEDOL*

Monika Schwander-Lottermoser: *Regional Office of Education*

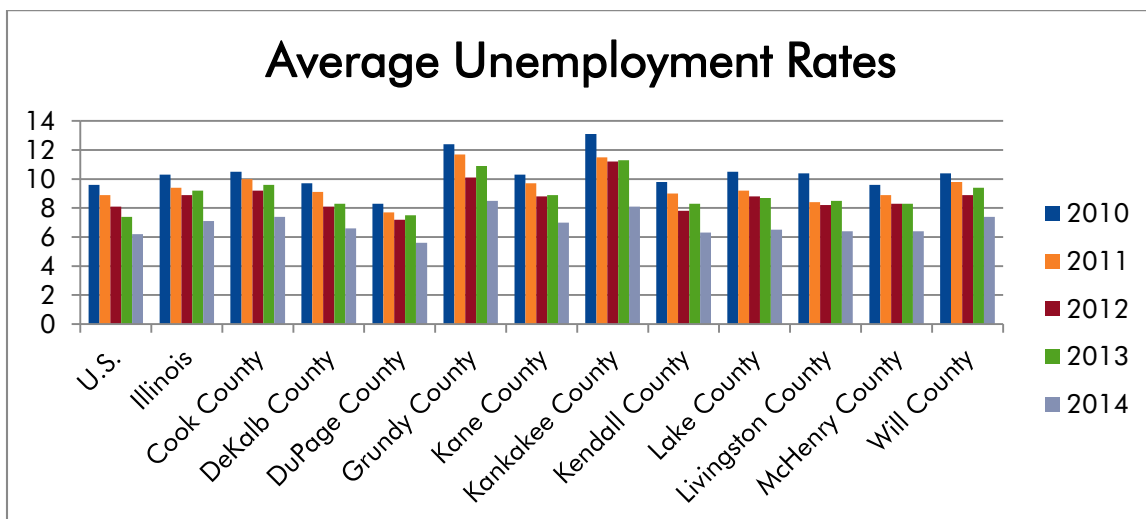
Jennifer Serino Stasch: *Lake County Workforce Development Department*

Patrick Statter: *Local 881 UFCW*

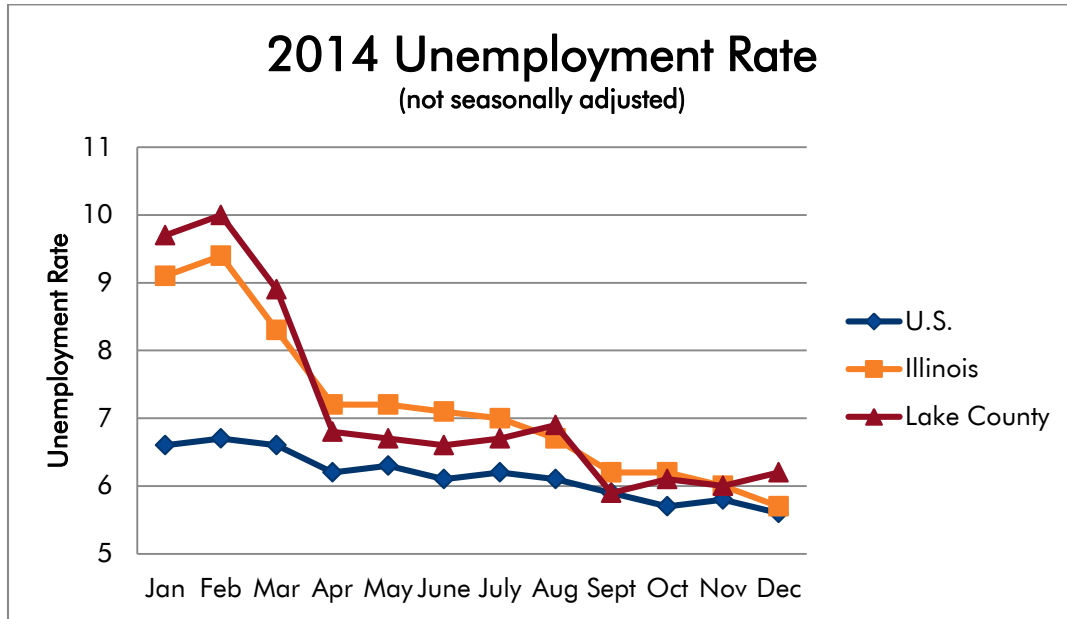
Gary Thompson: *Ferris, Thompson & Zweig, Ltd.*

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In general, unemployment rates began to decline in 2011 and that trend continued through 2014. Unemployment rates were about two percentage points lower in 2014 than 2013 throughout the region.

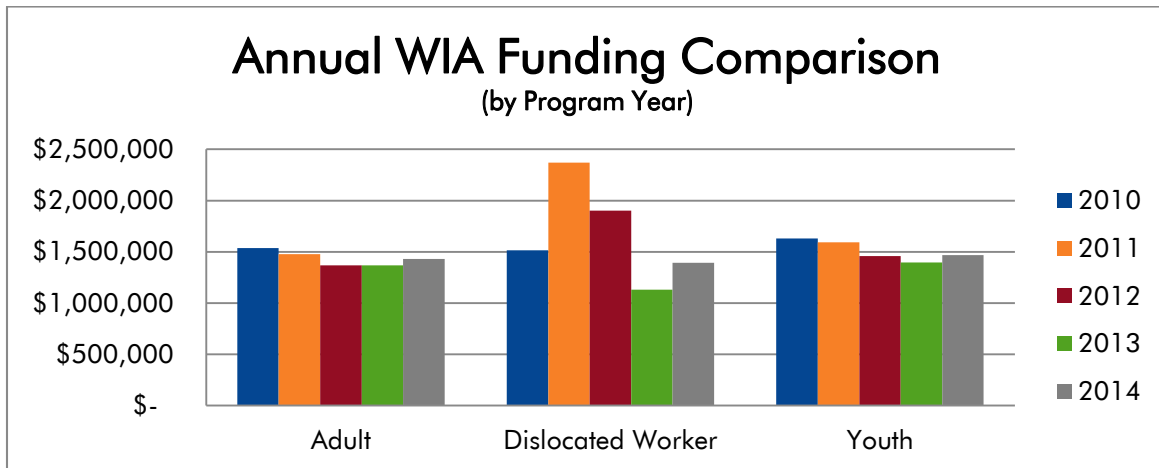


The recovery in Illinois and Lake County labor markets still trails behind the national recovery, but the gap narrowed significantly in 2014.



FUNDING

The majority of the Board’s budget comes from the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA). These funds are allocated annually to deliver adult, dislocated worker and youth employment & training programming. (Dislocated workers are those who are unemployed due to layoffs.) WIA funding levels are based on formulas that take into account factors such as unemployment and poverty rates. WIA funding as a whole has continued to decline over the past few years. The greatest volatility is in dislocated worker funding, which rebounded somewhat in 2014.



Additional grant funds received include Trade Adjustment Act funds and discretionary funds to serve special populations or target specific industries. Lastly, the Lake County Board continues to support the Summer Youth Employment Program. The Lake County Workforce Investment Board continues to seek opportunities to diversify the funding sources for the local workforce system.

In an era of shrinking resources, it is critical to evaluate the impact of this funding on the Lake County economy. In the program year that ended in 2014, for every federal dollar invested in the Lake County workforce system, \$2.03 was returned to the local economy in the form of direct wages earned by program participants. While this kind of return on investment is impressive, it only partially captures the value of our programs. In addition to these wages, other real economic benefits are produced including decreased dependence on social service programs like Unemployment Insurance (UI), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), increased tax revenue to the local, state and federal governments and increased economic competitiveness of our local companies as a result of high-quality training.



BUSINESS SERVICES

Business services is an important priority for the Board and staff who continued their outreach to employers in Lake County through a variety of means this year including:

Business services worked with 101 different employers to host 54 on-site recruitment events at the Lake County Job Center. Employers met with more than 3,100 job seekers to fill job openings, which is more than twice as many as in the previous year. For example, Ross opened a new department store in Waukegan in early 2014. In order to hire an entire store full of employees, they turned to the Job Center help. Staff planned a series of hiring events where Ross representatives met with nearly 300 candidates, of which they hired 52. This support allowed them to ramp up hiring in time for their Grand Opening.

Jobapalooza, an annual job and resource fair for young adults (ages 15-21), was held on March 6, 2014. Co-sponsored by the College of Lake County, the event brought together employers, training providers, resource providers, and more than 775 young job seekers on the College of Lake County campus in Grayslake.

In partnership with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) and the College of Lake County, Lake County Workforce Development co-hosted the annual Job Marketplace on May 22, 2014. This job fair for adult job seekers was held at the College of Lake County campus in Grayslake and included 43 local employers and 582 job seekers.

"Throughout the years it has been a pleasure to work with the Lake County Job Center. They have been very supportive with helping us in our search to find qualified candidates by assisting us with job fairs, on-site recruits, job postings and allowing us to send our candidates to their facility to utilize their computers. Last year we were able to put over 20 people back to work and that number is continuing to grow."

*Ty Taylor, Recruiter
Kelly Services*

In addition to working with businesses and employers to find and match the right candidates to jobs, Workforce Development also plays a critical role in assisting businesses as they are downsizing and laying off employees. Through Rapid Response events, Workforce Development partners with the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to provide information, assistance and services to the employer and impacted individuals. Lake County Workforce Development participated in nine Rapid Response events, and shared information about resources and services, including training opportunities, to 492 impacted individuals—a 75% decrease over the previous year.

JOB SEEKER SERVICES

The Job Centers continue to reach deeper into the community to share the tools and programs that are available to businesses, job seekers and youth throughout Lake County. Over 17,172 people made use of the services at the Lake County Job Centers in Waukegan and Grayslake in 2014. At least 1,426 people attended information sessions to learn more about the services available and potential training opportunities, an increase from 2013 attendance. Approximately 1,981 individuals attended workshops offered this year on a number of employment related topics including our new "5 Steps to Your Next Job" series, which walks a job seeker through the entire job search process from researching career opportunities to landing the job.



Rosie was a project manager for a hospital supply company for more than seven years. When she lost her job in 2013, she wiped out her retirement savings trying to stay afloat. Although she had a bachelor's degree and multiple accreditations, she sent out thousands of resumes without a single reply. "I was preparing to become homeless." In desperation, she contacted her state senator's office and was referred to the Job Center of Lake County. A staff member from the Job Center met with Rosie and helped her redesign her resume to feature her most relevant skills. The staff person helped her add information to make her stand out including awards and certificates. "I sent out two resumes after that and got a phone call immediately." She was hired as a Manufacturing Engineer in May 2014. She says the job couldn't have come at a better time. Rosie tells other job seekers to never give up and to use every resource. "I didn't know how important a resume was. I wish I had visited the Job Center earlier."

A total of 57,068 unique individuals accessed the Job Center web site over the course of 2014, which means that the community continues to seek out our services despite an uptick in employment. Social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, has helped to deliver targeted, timely messages to an even broader audience. Please find us on your favorite social network:



Like us on Facebook.
Lake County Workforce Development



Join our group on LinkedIn.
Lake County Illinois Workforce Development



Follow us on Twitter.
@LakeCountyJobs

This year included the launch of the “5 Steps to Your Next Job” workshop series. Each of the five steps is covered in a workshop, and the series is offered one week during each month (Monday through Friday).

The 5 Steps are:

RESEARCH - Align yourself with current workforce demand with online research tools. Take an inventory of your skills. Research local companies. Use an online tool to determine your next job move.

PREPARE- Examine industry trends and educational requirements to get into your next job. Find out free resources and funding options to take your training to the next level. Get organized and begin.

DOCUMENT - Fully document your knowledge, skills and experience with written tools including: applications, social media, email, letters and resumes. Describe how you are the unique solution to fill an employer’s needs.

FIND - Finding your next great job opportunity can be tough. In this workshop you will develop an elevator speech, identify target companies and practice targeted networking techniques.

LAND - Finally, an employer responds to your job application. How can you ensure that you land this job? This workshop includes practical tips to prepare for and ace an interview. Rehearse specific responses to behavioral interview questions. Learn how to follow up after an interview and negotiate salary and benefits.

Staff divided up into five different teams and developed the curriculum for the series. Each team presents the workshop on their assigned day. This approach connects staff directly without job seeker customers and allows them to hone and utilize their subject matter expertise. At the end of each week, participants that have attended all five workshops receive a certificate of completion. The series has been very well attended and received very positive comments from the community. In addition to offering the workshops at the Job Center in Waukegan, staff took the popular series out to a community library in late 2014. Plans are already in place to expand this offsite service throughout Lake County in 2015.

We are also working to make sure that workforce development services are reaching job seekers with special needs. Lake County was selected as one of only two workforce areas in the state to receive funds as part of the Disability Employment Initiative. This program provides funding for staff to coordinate resources to serve job seekers with disabilities. The program is designed to increase accessibility of employment assistance to those with disabilities in order to help remove barriers to their employment.

ADULT JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

Adult Job Training Programs are designed to increase the employment, retention, earnings and occupational skill attainment of Lake County workers. Individuals may receive assistance through job referrals and labor market information or specialized employment services such as career assessment and job search assistance. Job training opportunities are also available for selected individuals who are in need of occupational training to gain the skills necessary to obtain productive, self-sustaining employment.

In the program year that concluded in June 2014, 896 adults were enrolled in training services. A total of 318 individuals completed training and employment related services with the Workforce Development Department and of those, 226 individuals entered employment (71%). The “entered employment” rate is a key performance measure.



Beatriz landed a job as an LPN (licensed practical nurse) in August 2014 earning more than \$24/hourly with benefits. She already had over 10 years of experience in the medical field but requested help from Workforce Development because she had trouble in finding the ‘right’ kind of work. She was certified as a nurse’s aide in 2009 but knew she needed to set higher goals for herself. Workforce funded her for LPN training in 2013. She graduated in January 2014. She describes the Job Center as her ‘oasis’ and says that Workforce staff helped her understand the importance of setting goals. “The Job Center took care of everything that I couldn’t have imagined, in order to make it through one of the toughest periods in my life.”

In addition to our regular programs and services, Lake County Workforce Development received a National Emergency Grant to serve the long-term unemployed. The grant initially provided for training funds for 50 people for careers in informational technology and healthcare. Due to the success of the program in Lake County, the program was expanded this year to serve a total of 67 individuals. So far a total of 62 people have started training. Of those, 37 have completed their training and 33 of those have found employment.



James is a military veteran who went through a long time of unemployment that led to homelessness and health struggles. He faced job rejections, partially due to a criminal conviction from 28 years ago. Lake County Workforce Development was part of the team that helped him to rebuild his life. He also worked closely with the Veterans Administration's intensive counseling programs. James needed new skills to compete in today's job market after 10 months of unemployment. Workforce Development funded him for training as a professional commercial truck driver; he received his commercial driver's license in May 2014. He accepted a driving position that almost doubles his past annual income in July 2014. "Although times were rough, the WIA program provided hope during a very bleak time in my life and helped me to defeat those challenges and I am very optimistic going into the future."

Lake County Workforce Development worked as part of a regional partnership with the other collar counties of Cook County to secure a grant to create a fast track for individuals interested in advanced manufacturing careers. The Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Program is designed to include local employers from the earliest stages. Manufacturers identified the types of training and credentials that are needed in the workforce, are helping to screen candidates before training to ensure suitability for the field and are working with the participants after their training to provide work experiences. The initial grant allowed for 37 participants from Lake County, but that number was increased to 45 in 2014. Currently 28 participants have completed training and 22 of those have found employment.

Despite having new educational credentials, nothing beats real world experience on the job. A total of 29 training graduates have received a paid work experience with Lake County, including the IT Department, Health Department and Department of Transportation. These work experiences allow participants to utilize their new skills, work alongside industry professionals, and add a line to their resume—all while earning a paycheck. Staff are looking to expand this program into the private sector in the coming year.

YOUTH SERVICES

Lake County Workforce Development's Youth Programs offer a variety of options for young people in need of help to finish their education and successfully transition to the world of work.

In-School youth services offer young people (ages 17 to 21) who are currently in high school an opportunity to learn about careers, participate in work experiences and achieve academic success while earning an hourly wage. In the program year that ended in 2014, a total of 58 youth participated in In-School programs and all of them graduated from high school. In addition, 50 of the students are attending college, have joined the military, or found employment. This year, programs were provided by:

North Chicago Community Unit High School's Future First Program
 Waukegan Public School's Shine Program
 Zion Benton Township High School's Jobs for Bees Program



Andrea attended Waukegan High School and participated in their SHINE program for in-school youth. As part of the program, she completed a work experience with Habitat for Humanity Lake County. According to Andrea, "My internship helped me to think of work not in terms of how much money I can make, but on how much impact I can make on my community and that's what really made me happy." Andrea is the first in her family to go to college and was named as a Gates Scholar, one of only 1000 across the entire country. She started school at Stanford University this fall. "I plan to seek internships during college to help develop my professional network and help with my job search after college," she says.

Out-of-School youth services offer young people (ages 19 to 21) an opportunity to complete their GED (if they have not already graduated from high school) and participate in occupational skills/employment training while earning an hourly wage. In the program year that ended in 2014, a total of 53 youth participated in Out-of-School programs, and 42 of those earned an industry-recognized credential (80%). A total of 37 participants went on to attend college, join the military, or find employment at the conclusion of the program (70%). This year, Out-of-School programs included:

First Institute's Medical Office Assistant Program
 North Chicago Community Unit High School's Certified Nursing Assistant Program
 Waukegan Public School's Pharmacy Technician Program
 YouthBuild Lake County's Automotive Technician Program
 Computer Systems Institute's Business Technology & Healthcare Programs

In addition to the contracted In-School and Out-of-School programs, youth can also receive funding for occupational training on an individual basis. This program is ideal for youth who would like to pursue careers in a field of study that is not offered through one of the contracted programs, or for those who would like to begin training after the contracted programs have been fully enrolled. Approximately 15 students began their studies in the program year that ended in June 2014. Students in these programs have been successful in completing their training programs and earning their credentials.

The Lake County Board approved its annual appropriation of \$200,000 for the 2014 Summer Youth Employment Program, which provided 171 youth between the ages of 14 and 22 with opportunities to explore the world of work, gain experience, increase confidence and self-esteem and build their resume. The County Board has appropriated funds to expand this program to serve more youth in summer 2015.



Participants in the Summer Youth Employment Program were recognized as "Shining Stars" for their outstanding efforts in their work placements at an end of summer celebration hosted by the Lake County Workforce Investment Board.

2014 BY THE NUMBERS

17,172 job seekers used the Lake County Job Centers.

3,407 individuals attended workshops on career and job search topics.

896 unemployed workers were enrolled in training to prepare for high-demand careers.

The Job Center hosted **101** recruitment events for **54** different employers.

297 youth participated in programs that helped them earn a high school diploma, learn job skills, or gain work experience.

For every \$1 invested in the Lake County workforce development system, **\$2.03** was paid to program participants in the form of wages.

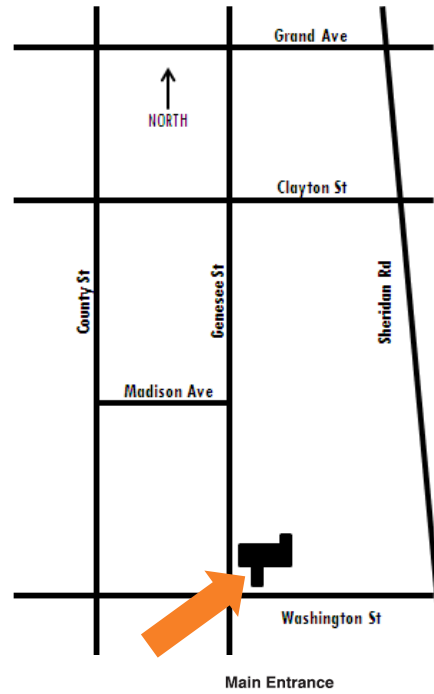


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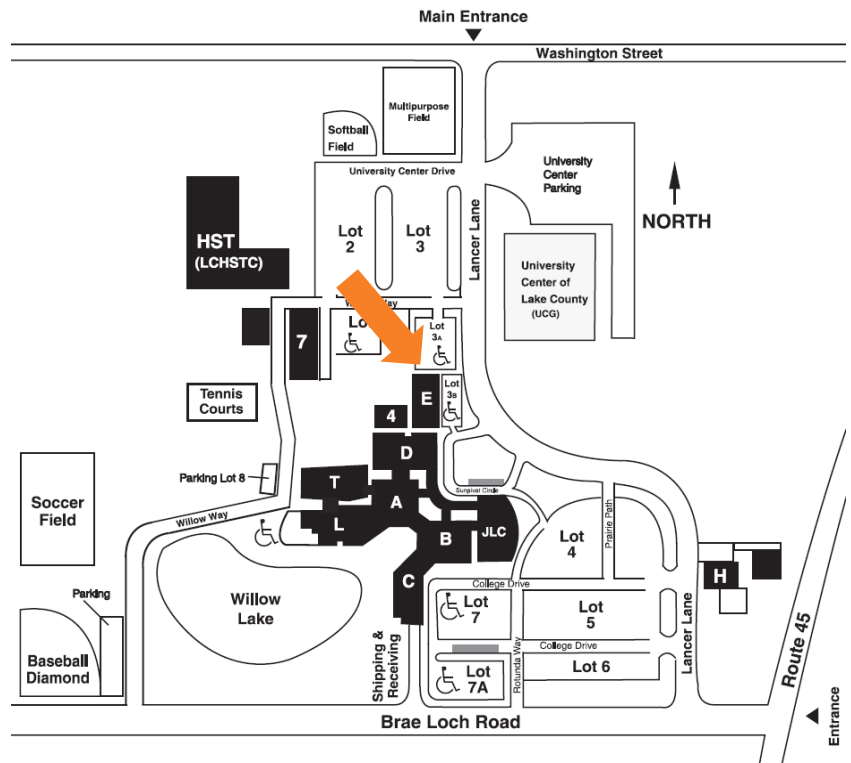
1 NORTH GENESEE STREET WAUKEGAN, IL 60085

The **Waukegan Job Center** is located on the northeast corner of Genesee and Washington Streets.



800 LANCER LANE GRAYSLAKE, IL 60030

The **Grayslake Job Center** is located on the corner of Lancer Lane and Willow Way on the College of Lake County Campus, Building E. Parking is available in Lot 3A.



WWW.LAKECOUNTYJOBCENTER.COM

847.377.3450