

**Using TANF Funds to Support
Subsidized Youth Employment:
The 2010 Summer Youth
Employment Initiative**

Final Report

July 29, 2011

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Megan Hague Angus
Cassandra Pickens
Michelle Derr



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ABSTRACT

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act), local areas throughout the country had the opportunity to offer subsidized summer employment to large numbers of youth in 2009 and 2010. In summer 2010, these initiatives relied largely on Recovery Act funds allocated to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund (TANF Emergency Fund). Capitalizing on the flexibility offered by the TANF Emergency Fund and building on their summer 2009 experiences using Recovery Act funds allocated to the Workforce Investment Act Youth program, state and local TANF and workforce agencies partnered to plan and administer summer youth employment initiatives in 2010.

This study examines qualitative data collected in 10 local sites across seven states to describe the partnerships between state and local TANF and workforce agencies, particular aspects of the youth employment initiatives that the TANF funding affected, and youths' summer work experiences.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the recent recession, youth employment has remained at a historic low. Although the recovery officially began in June 2009, the employment rate for youth ages 16 to 19 was 32.9 percent in June 2009 and declined to 28.6 percent in June 2010, the lowest rate in the post-World War II era (Sum et al. 2010). Youth unemployment is a cause for concern because without work experiences many youth will lack soft work skills, such as knowing how to interact with employers and coworkers, and they will not be able to develop specific job skills that will make them marketable in the workplace as adults.

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act), public funds were used to create subsidized employment opportunities for disadvantaged adults and youth through two different allocations. First, in summer 2009, local workforce investment areas (LWIAs) used the Recovery Act's allocation to the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) youth program to provide summer work opportunities to youth. Then, with most of those funds spent, states could submit applications to use the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Emergency Contingency Fund (the TANF Emergency Fund) to subsidize employment opportunities for adults and youth. These TANF funds went from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to the state TANF agencies. In most states, these funds then went to LWIAs to administer the 2010 subsidized youth employment initiative (SYEI). By September 30, 2010, when the TANF Emergency Fund expired, 24 states and the District of Columbia had used these funds to operate summer employment programs targeted to youth (Pavetti et al. 2011).

To understand how the TANF Emergency Fund was used in support of summer youth employment, ACF worked closely with the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to plan and fund this study of the TANF-funded SYEI. This study describes the implementation of the 2010 SYEI in 10 sites in seven states. Although the study was not intended to produce findings that would be nationally representative, it provides useful insights into how the TANF and workforce agencies planned and implemented their SYEIs, how the use of the TANF Emergency Fund affected their programs, and what youth experienced during the summer months.

Subsidized Summer Youth Employment Through the Recovery Act

The Recovery Act invested in opportunities for local areas to operate summer youth employment programs primarily through WIA youth funding in 2009 and the TANF Emergency Fund in 2010. In 2009, the Recovery Act invested \$1.2 billion in the WIA youth program. Guidance from both the congressional explanatory statement and ETA's Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 14-08 encouraged states and LWIAs to use these funds to subsidize summer employment opportunities for youth in summer 2009 (U.S. Department of Labor 2009). Although the act itself did not specify a particular use for the funds, which remained available until June 30, 2011, it did extend eligibility to youth up to 24 years of age and specified that states measure participants' achievement of work readiness goals.

In a joint letter, the assistant secretaries of ETA and ACF issued guidance encouraging states to use the TANF Emergency Fund for subsidized youth employment in summer 2010 (U.S. Department of Labor 2010). States could apply for these funds, which expired on September 30, 2010, under three categories of spending to assist needy families: (1) basic assistance;

(2) nonrecurring, short-term benefits; and (3) subsidized employment. Through the TANF Emergency Fund, states received 80 percent reimbursement for increased costs (relative to a corresponding base year quarter) in the provision of services in each of the three categories.

By September 30, 2010, states had qualified to receive the full amount of the TANF Emergency Fund totaling \$5 billion. An estimated \$1.3 billion was awarded to support subsidized employment for adults and/or youth, which represented 26 percent of the total amount of the fund. Nineteen states operated programs for both adults and youth, 14 states operated subsidized employment programs only for adults, and 5 states and the District of Columbia operated programs targeted only to youth (Pavetti et al. 2011). Across the states, the TANF Emergency Fund served 262,520 workers, including 124,470 adults and 138,050 youth enrolled in summer youth programs. The remaining funds (about \$3.7 billion) were awarded for increased spending in the other two spending categories.

Overview of the Study

The study's overarching objective was to examine how state and local agencies used the TANF Emergency Fund and other resources to create subsidized jobs for youth in summer 2010. Four research topics guided the study of the 2010 SYEI:

1. The workforce and TANF agency partnerships developed in planning and implementation
2. Design approaches, in particular those affected by the use of the TANF Emergency Fund
3. Youths' reasons for participating and their experiences in the summer program
4. Lessons and noteworthy practices drawn from states' and sites' experiences

The study team collected qualitative data from the seven states and 10 sites selected for the study. First, the team conducted telephone interviews with administrators of the state TANF and workforce agencies to explore their decisions regarding the application for and use of the TANF Emergency Fund for the SYEI. Then, within the states, the study team conducted site visits to 10 selected sites that administered the SYEI. During these visits, the study team conducted in-person interviews with respondents knowledgeable about the 2010 SYEI. Each visit lasted an average of two days and included interviews with key administrative and line staff, youth service providers, employers, and youth participants when possible. Site visitors spoke with 50 employer representatives and 42 participants across the sites.

Study Sites

Selected study sites differed on an array of contextual characteristics to ensure that the study could collect rich information on the 2010 SYEI experiences. The study sites represented different regions of the country and different levels of urbanicity. For example, 6 of the 10 study sites served largely urban areas and 4 served predominantly rural areas. Across the 10 sites, the June 2010 unemployment rates ranged from 5.5 to 13.6 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011). (See Table 1 for the list of selected sites.)

Service providers in the sites placed as many youth in summer employment as they could using the TANF Emergency Fund or other funds. In most study sites, one or two local organizations provided the services to youth. Overall, approximately 8,000 youth were served at these 10 sites

during the 2010 SYEI. Half of the sites served more than 500 youth, with the largest site serving 2,000 youth over the summer.

Table 1. Local Workforce Investment Areas Selected for the Study

| State | Local Site Name |
|------------|--|
| Arkansas | Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Investment Board (Northwest Arkansas) |
| California | South Bay Workforce Investment Board/Los Angeles County (South Bay) |
| California | Santa Clara Social Services Agency (Santa Clara County) |
| Illinois | Southern Illinois Workforce Board (Southern Illinois) |
| Illinois | The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County (Northern Cook County) |
| Minnesota | Anoka County Workforce Council (Anoka County) |
| Minnesota | South Central Workforce Council (South Central) |
| New York | Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board (Buffalo/Erie County) |
| Oklahoma | Eastern Workforce Investment Board (Eastern Oklahoma) |
| Texas | Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas (Dallas County) |

Note: The name in parentheses following each local site name is how the site is referenced throughout the report.

Agency Partnerships in the 2010 SYEI

The TANF Emergency Fund created an opportunity for workforce and TANF agencies to build new or expand existing partnerships in serving disadvantaged youth. In all study states, the state TANF and workforce agencies collaborated to submit an application for SYEI using the TANF Emergency Fund. They worked together to determine how to distribute their TANF Emergency Fund allocations to sites and provided guidelines about youth eligibility. The extent of the collaboration differed across the states, however. During the initial planning, one agency typically took the lead while asking for information and input from the other. In two states, the two agencies worked more closely together to plan for the SYEI.

In a majority of study sites, the LWIA had primary local responsibility for planning the SYEI. Because the allocation often passed from the state to the LWIA, there was little perceived need to involve the local TANF office in planning. In three sites, the two local agencies did work together. In two sites, the county TANF offices received the TANF Emergency Funds and sought out the LWIAs to help administer the SYEI. In the third site, staff from both the TANF and workforce offices participated in weekly management meetings in which they discussed plans for the summer program.

Similarly, the LWIAs mostly took the lead in operating the program, but with some support from the local TANF offices. The LWIAs were well positioned for this role given their previous experiences providing subsidized summer jobs to youth. Local TANF offices were most often involved in helping to recruit and identify eligible TANF youth for the program. This was a critical role given the TANF-funded SYEIs' focus on serving TANF and TANF-eligible youth.

Sites identified the benefits and challenges to collaborating on the SYEI. The benefits included the following:

- **Educating agencies and customers.** The 2010 SYEI exposed the workforce system to the TANF population, a population that the workforce system might not have had much experience serving. In addition, TANF youth were exposed to the range of workforce services available to them.
- **Expanding opportunities through additional resources.** The partnership enabled the local workforce agencies to tap into funds to serve a greater number of youth than it would have otherwise.

Challenges that hindered the TANF–workforce agency partnerships included the following:

- **Delays in funding and guidance.** Sites indicated that they received late notification of the funds that they would be receiving through the TANF Emergency Fund and delayed guidance about the requirements associated with the funding. According to some respondents, these delays did not provide the workforce and TANF agencies with sufficient time to plan for the summer program.
- **Different agency cultures.** Some respondents reported that they experienced difficulty understanding each other’s agency culture and language regarding programs and policies. These barriers hindered their partnership efforts.
- **Short-term nature of the TANF-funded SYEI.** The knowledge that these TANF Emergency funds were due to expire and unlikely to be appropriated again did not encourage agencies to build new relationships, which would be difficult to sustain without further funding.

Key Program Design Features and Approaches

Although sites generally modeled their 2010 programs on their experiences providing summer youth employment opportunities in the previous summer, sites’ reliance on TANF funds affected key aspects of the program. These aspects included the use of different funding streams, the enrollment of SYEI participants in the regular WIA Youth formula program, youth eligibility and recruitment, participation of public and private work sites, and reporting on work readiness measures.

Multiple Funding Streams Supporting the SYEI

For the 2010 SYEI, sites could use five potential sources of funding: (1) remaining funds from the 2009 WIA Recovery Act youth allocation; (2) the TANF Emergency Fund; (3) regular WIA Youth formula funds; (4) regular TANF funds; and (5) other funding sources, such as state or city general funds or private foundations. Nine of the study sites used multiple funding sources. The remaining site used only the TANF Emergency Fund to support its SYEI.

Those sites with more than one funding stream used the funds in one of three ways:

1. **Concurrently.** Six sites used several funding streams concurrently to support different youths’ summer work experiences. When youth applied to the program, the provider staff determined the appropriate funding stream for that youth depending on his or her eligibility and needs and the availability of funds. Regardless of the funding stream, however, youth in these sites generally participated in the same SYEI experience.

2. **Stacked funding.** Two sites used stacked funding; when the first funding source was expended, the next funding source was used. The services youth received were generally the same, regardless of funding stream. These sites stacked funding streams because of the uncertainty of the funding and because it was easier to administer one funding stream at a time. However, rules regarding youth eligibility and employer participation meant that some youth had to end their participation or switch work sites as one source of funding ended and the other began.
3. **Concurrently but supporting different services.** One site used two concurrent funding sources to support the SYEI, but older and younger youth received different services depending on whether TANF Emergency Fund or WIA Recovery Act funds supported their experience. For example, the TANF Emergency Fund-subsidized younger youth participated in fewer hours of work readiness training than older youth subsidized by the WIA Recovery Act funds.

Waivers Encouraging Enrollment in the Regular WIA Youth Formula Program

Through the use of waivers, ETA encouraged states and sites to enroll TANF SYEI participants in the regular WIA Youth formula program. Enrolling these youth into the WIA program could potentially offer them additional services, such as counseling and job training. The two waivers would allow sites to enroll the SYEI youth for the summer months without following particular regular WIA Youth formula program requirements on (1) tracking performance on key outcomes or (2) providing participants with key services, such as developing an individual service strategy and following up with participants for 12 months.

Generally, sites reported that they enrolled TANF SYEI participants into the regular WIA Youth formula program on an individual basis, whether or not the state had applied for and received one or both waivers. Some state administrators in the four states that received waivers indicated that they did not require enrollment of the SYEI youth in WIA in order to provide flexibility to the local sites. And local sites in these states indicated that enrolling large numbers of youth in WIA still required additional staff resources and, thus, they enrolled TANF SYEI youth based on individual need. Administrators in states without the waivers indicated that they did not have time or sufficient information on what the program requirements would be to warrant the application. Sites in these states reported that they enrolled TANF SYEI youth in the regular WIA Youth formula program on a case-by-case basis.

Youth Eligibility Requirements

For the TANF Emergency Fund, each state interpreted the DHHS guidelines and provided guidance to its local areas regarding the state's youth eligibility requirements. Based on state guidance, two sites continued to use WIA eligibility rules for the TANF Emergency Fund, and other sites either restricted eligibility for the TANF funds to TANF and TANF-eligible households or youth in households earning 200 percent or less of the federal poverty level. Additional guidance regarding priority of service among groups of eligible youth could be articulated at the county or LWIA level.

Of the nine sites that used more than one funding stream, seven served youth of the same age regardless of funding stream. The other two sites served older youth with WIA Recovery Funds and younger youth with TANF or TANF Emergency Funds.

Youth Recruitment

Given the focus on youth in TANF or TANF-eligible households, the programs did more to recruit these youth in 2010 than in the previous summer. At least six sites coordinated with the TANF agency to recruit eligible youth for the program and/or to verify the eligibility of recruited youth. Additionally, provider staff in six sites reported receiving lists of TANF or TANF-eligible recipients from the local or state TANF office. Provider staff typically used these lists as a starting point for recruitment. Beyond these efforts, sites' recruitment strategies included distributing fliers in the community and advertising on local television and/or radio stations and in local newspapers.

The Participation of Private Work Sites

Although sites reported relying on employers that had previously hosted summer youth, several sites did indicate that they purposefully sought private work sites for the 2010 SYEI. Sites reported that they expanded the participation of private work sites for one of two main reasons:

1. **Count employer costs of supervision as state maintenance-of-effort (MOE) funds.** The TANF Emergency Fund requirements did affect some sites' use of public and private work sites. The TANF Emergency Fund reimbursed states for 80 percent of the increased costs resulting from the funded program. States could support the remaining 20 percent by counting the employer costs of supervision and training as MOE. However, to count the costs of supervision and training as MOE, the employer costs could not come from federal funds. To prevent any misunderstanding of the source of supervisors' sources of income, some sites elected to expand their use of private, for-profit employers that did not have the potential federal fund conflict that existed in some public sites.
2. **Offer broader opportunities for youth.** Other study sites reported that they recruited private sector employers to broaden the opportunities for youth and/or increase the likelihood that the summer job would lead to youths' permanent work placement at the jobsite.

Tracking Youths' Work Readiness

Although states and sites did not have to report any data documenting the outcomes of their TANF-funded SYEIs, the LWIAs that were administering the SYEIs had received guidance from ETA on strengthening and standardizing a measure of youths' work readiness. In May 2010, ETA issued guidance to LWIAs based on the experiences of the 2009 SYEI; the guidance suggested a methodology for measuring work readiness and the implementation of employer evaluations. Given discretion to follow this guidance for their SYEIs, six study sites met or mostly met ETA's guidance. The remaining four sites did not place emphasis on the work readiness measure. For these sites, they either did not collect work readiness data or did not collect it systematically. Because the youth were not co-enrolled in WIA, and the TANF Emergency Fund did not have a work readiness measure requirement, these sites did not collect and report the measure.

Youths' Experiences in Summer 2010

To document how the TANF Emergency Fund and other funding sources were used, the study also explored how services were provided to youth, the types of work site activities experienced by youth, their wages, and the availability of post-summer transitions. Discussions with staff and youth across the 10 sites indicated that youth appreciated the opportunity to work, especially during

difficult economic times. Most interviewed youth indicated that they participated in the program to earn money and to develop their career skills, including building their resumes and obtaining references and contacts for future employment.

Models of Job Placement and Services

Although some sites focused on providing youth with a work experience, others provided a broader range of services to all or a portion of their youth. For purposes of this report, the types of services the 10 sites provided were categorized into three different models.

1. **Basic work model.** Youth participating in the four sites with this model received an orientation, assessment of their career interests, and work experience. When placing youth at work sites, sites considered youths' stated career interests along with youths' age, location of home relative to the work site, experience, and availability.
2. **Enhanced work model.** The four sites using this model did more to assess youths' needs and place them in work sites building on their academic and vocational strengths. Sites also sought feedback from potential employers about youth before placing participants at their work sites. In addition to the services provided to youth in the basic work model, youth received work readiness training at the beginning of the summer experience.
3. **Integrated service model.** The two sites using this model focused on the long-term needs of youth. In addition to the services provided to youth in the enhanced work model, youth were required to participate in academic support services and ongoing work readiness training.

Although site visit respondents suggested that many placements were successful, all sites, regardless of model and the care they took to place youth at appropriate work sites, reported needing to reassign at least some youth. No pattern was discernable across the three service models regarding the sites' experiences in making successful placements.

Youths' Work Site Experiences

The core of the SYEI was the subsidized work experience and putting income into the hands of youth. Each site had to identify work sites, determine the number of hours youth could work, and determine the wages youth could earn based on available budgets and funding streams. Sites focused on identifying enough work sites to meet the expected number of participants, often without consideration of the industry. Common work sites included manufacturing facilities, restaurants, retail stores, summer camps, and public administration buildings.

Youth were placed at work sites to perform an array of tasks, such as administrative, construction, food service, sales, and senior care. On average, youth in the 10 sites worked 300 hours over 10 weeks and earned an average of \$8.15 per hour. Generally, payments were made to youth through the site's LWIA, which was the employer of record. In two sites, the payroll process was contracted to an outside service provider, such as the city or an external organization.

Work Site Supervision and Mentoring

Across all sites, youth were assigned an on-site supervisor. The supervisor's official job was to oversee and manage the youths' experiences, including making sure youth were engaged in

productive tasks, signing their timesheets, and providing feedback to the service provider regarding youths' performance. Based on comments from employers and youth in some sites, an ideal relationship between the supervisor and the youth was one in which a supervisor could spend time not only teaching the youth how to complete assigned tasks properly, but also be willing and able to teach the youth about the value of soft work skills, including listening to instructions, communicating with coworkers, and dressing appropriately.

Post-Summer Transitions

The transition of youth to post-summer activities was not a major focus of the 2010 SYEI in study sites, but staff and employers at most sites reported referring or discussing options with participants. For both older and younger youth, sites reported that they encouraged participants to visit their local One-Stop Career Centers for services following the end of the summer work experience. Additionally, staff at nearly all of the sites reported connecting individual youth with opportunities to pursue further education at postsecondary institutions. These connections appeared to be enhanced if a community college was a partner in the SYEI. On a case-by-case basis, staff counseled youth on completing college applications and financial aid forms, identifying available scholarships, and exploring possible careers.

Looking Ahead

With the Recovery Act funds now spent, communities have to consider other ways to support youths' employment, especially when youth employment rates have been so low. These communities should consider and explore avenues to develop and sustain future, more long-lasting partnerships that can combine the resources of TANF and workforce agencies and other organizations with the expertise of the workforce agencies in providing youth with valuable summer experiences. As demonstrated by the New York site included in this study, these partnerships can be long lasting. In New York, TANF block grant funds have supported LWIAs' provision of subsidized employment opportunities for several years. By using these funds to subsidize summer youth employment, workforce and TANF agencies can continue to explore and expand upon the opportunities that began in summer 2010 through the TANF Emergency Fund.

I. INTRODUCTION

As the United States began its recovery from the 2007 recession, youth employment remained at a historic low. Although the recovery officially began in June 2009, the employment rate for youth ages 16 to 19 in June 2009 was 32.9 percent and, by June 2010, had decreased to 28.6 percent, the lowest rate in the post-World War II era (Sum et al. 2010). Low youth employment is concerning because, without work experiences, many youth will lack soft work skills, such as knowing how to interact with employers and coworkers, and will not be able to develop specific job skills that will make them marketable in the workplace as adults.

To diminish the effects of the recession, Congress passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act). As part of this landmark legislation, public funds were used to create subsidized employment opportunities for disadvantaged adults and youth. Through funds allocated to the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) Youth program, local workforce investment areas (LWIAs) provided summer employment opportunities to youth on a large scale, as they had before the implementation of WIA. However, following guidance received from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA), many local areas spent most of their Recovery Act youth allocation in the summer of 2009 and had few funds remaining to provide youth with subsidized employment opportunities in summer 2010.

The Recovery Act also allocated \$5 billion to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund (or the TANF Emergency Fund). Administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), the fund could be used to provide support to needy families as defined by states. In order to receive TANF Emergency Funds, states submitted applications to ACF demonstrating an increase in expenditures over a predetermined base year in up to three defined categories. One of the categories was subsidized employment for youth and adults.

In January 2010, the assistant secretaries for ETA and ACF issued a joint memo encouraging states and local areas to use the TANF Emergency Fund for additional subsidized youth employment opportunities that summer (U.S. Department of Labor 2010). By September 30, 2010, when the TANF Emergency Fund expired, 24 states and the District of Columbia had operated summer employment programs targeted to youth (Pavetti et al. 2011). Although these funds flowed through the TANF system from ACF to the state TANF agencies, in most states the LWIAs administered the summer program.

To understand how the TANF Emergency Fund was used in support of summer youth employment, ACF worked closely with ETA to plan and fund this study of the TANF-funded summer youth employment initiatives (SYEIs). Under their direction, Mathematica Policy Research conducted this implementation study of the 2010 SYEIs in 10 local areas in seven states. Although the study was not intended to produce findings that would be nationally representative, it provides useful insights into how TANF and workforce agencies worked together to implement their SYEIs, how they used the TANF funds to provide opportunities to youth, and what youth experienced during the summer months.

A. Summer Youth Programs Before the Recovery Act

Local areas throughout the country had experience providing subsidized summer employment to their youth before the Recovery Act. From 1964 through 1999, the federal government funded a

stand-alone summer program for youth (U.S. Department of Labor 2000). First, the program was funded with the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964 and then ended with the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982, which funded year-round services to youth ages 16 to 21 and a summer youth employment and training program for youth ages 14 to 21. WIA supplanted JTPA in 1998.

Beginning in 2000, WIA changed funding of youth programs to focus on comprehensive services, ending funding of stand-alone summer youth programs and integrating these services into the regular WIA Youth formula program. Some cities and local areas continued these programs, which tended to rely on three different funding sources:

1. **WIA formula funds.** Many LWIAs continued to provide a summer work experience to youth who participated in their regular WIA Youth formula program. Often, these opportunities, which were mandated as one of the 10 required elements, were provided to participants as a reward for their work during the school year.¹
2. **Federal TANF funds.** State TANF agencies have invested federal TANF funds in education and prevention programs targeted to youth and children (Derr et al. 2009). These funds can be used to support summer youth employment under two of the four stated purposes of the TANF block grant: (1) to “provide assistance to needy families so that children may be cared for in their own homes or in the homes of relatives” and (2) to “prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies and establish annual numerical goals for preventing and reducing the incidence of these pregnancies” (U.S. Congress 1996). For example, since 2000, New York State has allocated a portion of its TANF block grant funding for a summer youth employment program. In 2000, the state allocated \$35 million of TANF funds to fund a summer youth employment program. By summer 2010, the allocation had been reduced to \$15.5 million.
3. **State and local funds.** Other communities, through local government, the LWIA, or other entities, were able to identify nonfederal funding sources, whether from state or city general funds or foundations, to provide stand-alone summer work experience programs that were administered without WIA funds and sometimes outside the public workforce investment system. For example, in 2005, the mayor of Los Angeles began a city initiative called HIRE LA, supported by city and county funding, to help youth find jobs. One component of the initiative was a summer youth employment program, which in summer 2008 placed 10,000 youth in subsidized and unsubsidized jobs (Bellotti et al. 2010).

B. Use of Recovery Act Funds to Support the SYEI

The Recovery Act provided an opportunity for local areas to provide their youth with summer work experiences. In summer 2009, Congress and ETA encouraged states and local areas to use the

¹ The nine other elements included (1) tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion; (2) alternative secondary school offerings; (3) paid and unpaid work experiences; (4) occupational skill training; (5) leadership development opportunities; (6) supportive services; (7) adult mentoring; (8) comprehensive guidance and counseling; and (9) follow-up activities for at least 12 months following program exit.

Recovery Act's WIA youth allocation to fund these experiences. Then, in summer 2010, ETA and ACF encouraged using the TANF Emergency Fund to subsidize summer youth employment.

1. The Recovery Act-Funded Summer 2009 SYEI

The Recovery Act invested \$1.2 billion in the WIA youth program. Both the congressional explanatory statement for the Recovery Act and ETA's Training and Employment Guidance letter (TEGL) No. 14-08 on the use of the Recovery Act's allocation to WIA programs encouraged states and LWIAs to use the youth portion to subsidize summer employment opportunities for youth. Although the act itself did not specify a particular use for the funds, which remained available until June 30, 2011, it did extend eligibility to youth up to 24 years of age and specified that states measure participants' achievement of work readiness goals. LWIAs throughout the country operated their Recovery Act-funded summer youth employment initiatives during the summer months, defined as May 1, 2009, through September 30, 2009 (U.S. Department of Labor 2009).

Under contract to ETA, Mathematica conducted a study of 20 sites' implementation experiences and lessons stemming from the 2009 SYEI (Bellotti et al. 2010). These 2009 experiences provided a foundation for and informed LWIAs' decisions about how to structure their 2010 SYEIs. Important findings from the study of the 2009 SYEI that can inform understanding of sites' 2010 experiences are provided in Box I.1.

Box I.1. Select Findings from the Study of the Recovery-Act Funded 2009 SYEI

The study of the 2009 SYEI captured the experiences of 20 purposefully selected sites (Bellotti et al. 2010). Important elements of these sites' SYEIs experiences and the services provided to youth include:

- **Program services.** Although program models differed across the 20 study sites, core services of the SYEI typically included a program orientation for the youth participants and a work readiness training session to help prepare them for their work site placement. The training sessions varied in their intensity from eight hours to two weeks.
- **Recruitment of youth and employers.** In the short time available between the allocation of their Recovery Act funds and the start of summer, the 2009 study sites successfully recruited youth and employers. To recruit youth, sites used both media campaigns and targeted recruitment efforts in schools and through partnerships with agencies that served at-risk youth. Although all sites but one recruited youth to fill their available sites, the sites reported difficulties reaching some targeted youth, including veterans and their spouses, older youth, homeless and runaway youth, foster youth, and juvenile offenders. Sites often recruited employers for the SYEI by contacting those they already knew from other programs, conducting media campaigns, and directly approaching individual employers.
- **Participating employers.** Employers participating in the SYEI across the 20 sites represented the public and private sectors. Four sites targeted private sector employers because these employers were perceived as more likely to offer regular positions after the summer.
- **The work experience.** Study sites' SYEIs focused on the youths' work experience. They often matched youth to the available job sites based on the youths' interests. In their jobs, youth most often performed administrative or clerical tasks, landscaping and outdoor maintenance, janitorial and indoor maintenance, and construction work. Over the course of the summer, they worked in these jobs an average of 200 hours for average potential earnings of \$1,500. In addition, SYEI staff regularly visited the youth at their work sites to collect timesheets, drop off paychecks, and discuss any issues at the job sites with the youth and their supervisors.

Having spent funds on the summer 2009 SYEI and any activities during the school year, most LWIAs did not have sufficient funds from their WIA Recovery Act youth allocation remaining to administer an SYEI in summer 2010 comparable to the scale of their 2009 programs. Through November 2009, states had drawn down almost 61 percent of the Recovery Act's \$1.2 billion allocation to the WIA youth program (Bellotti et al. 2010). With any remaining funds, LWIAs could continue to serve youth during the school year and/or support additional work experiences in summer 2010, as some sites did (Holcomb et al. 2011). Attempts in the U.S. Congress, for example the Youth Jobs Act of 2010 (S. 2923), would have funded jobs for youth that built on the 2009 SYEI, but legislation was not passed.

2. The TANF Emergency Fund SYEI

The TANF Emergency Fund, also funded through the Recovery Act, made available \$5 billion to states, federally recognized tribes that had chosen to implement their own TANF programs, and certain territories. The funds, which expired on September 30, 2010, could be used for three categories of spending to assist needy families: (1) basic assistance; (2) nonrecurring, short-term benefits; and (3) subsidized employment for adults and youth. In the TANF program, states have the discretion to define needy families; thus, eligibility for the TANF Emergency Fund was not restricted to families receiving or eligible for TANF cash assistance. Through the TANF Emergency Fund, states could receive reimbursement for 80 percent of increased expenditures (relative to a corresponding base year quarter) in the provision of services in each of the three categories. States could fund the remaining 20 percent of expenditure increase with other funds, such as TANF block grant or state TANF maintenance of effort (MOE) funds.² For the subsidized employment programs, states could count as MOE employers' costs for supervising youth placed at their work sites.³

The January 2010 letter from the ETA and ACF assistant secretaries highlighted the potential for workforce and TANF agencies to collaborate to create employment opportunities for youth in summer 2010 (U.S. Department of Labor 2010). The letter provided guidance on the purposes for which these funds could be used and encouraged co-enrollment of participating youth in applicable WIA programs so that they could make use of relevant supportive services, occupational skills training, and other WIA-funded services.

By September 30, 2010, states had qualified to receive the full amount of the TANF Emergency Fund. Roughly \$1.3 billion of the funds were awarded for subsidized employment for adults and/or youth, which represented 26 percent of the total amount of the fund.⁴ States had discretion in designing their subsidized employment programs. Nineteen states operated programs for both adults and youth, 14 states operated subsidized employment programs only for adults, and 5 states and the District of Columbia operated programs targeted only to youth (Pavetti et al. 2011). Across the states, the TANF Emergency Fund served 262,520 workers, including 124,470 adults and

² Under TANF, MOE funds are the minimum amount of funds that states are required to spend each year on needy families.

³ States could calculate, without further documentation, that employer costs of supervision and training were 25 percent of wage costs, and count such expenditures as MOE.

⁴ Data obtained from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/tanf/apprTANFemerfund.html>, accessed March 4, 2011.

138,050 youth enrolled in summer youth programs. The remaining funds (about \$3.7 billion) were awarded for increased spending on basic assistance and nonrecurring, short-term benefits.

For their adult subsidized employment programs, state TANF agencies often relied on partnerships with state workforce agencies to provide services. TANF agencies in 19 of 33 states contracted with the workforce partners to implement the subsidized employment program (Pavetti et al. 2011). In another two states, California and Ohio, local counties decided whether and how to include workforce agencies. Other states relied exclusively on the TANF agency and/or their contracted service providers to operate the program.

In most states, adult and youth programs operated independently (Pavetti et al. 2011). For example, the LWIAs often relied on their contracted providers of their regular WIA youth programs to operate the 2010 SYEI. However, some communities used the infrastructure created for the adult subsidized employment program to build their summer youth programs.

C. Overview of the Study

This study's overarching objective is to examine how state and local TANF and workforce agencies used the TANF Emergency Fund and other resources to create subsidized jobs for youth in summer 2010. In order to meet this objective, in consultation with ACF and ETA, the study team chose 10 local areas in seven states for in-depth study on the use of TANF funds for their 2010 SYEIs. Because chosen sites were not representative of the initiative, the study is limited in its ability to draw general conclusions about the summer 2010 experiences of states, local areas, youth, and employers. However, the study provides valuable insights into how TANF and workforce agencies partnered to provide services and how the use of the TANF funding stream affected the SYEI.

1. The Study's Research Topics

In consultation with ETA and ACF, the following four research topics and their associated research questions emerged to guide the study:

1. **Partnerships.** In summer 2010, what partnerships developed between state workforce and TANF agencies and their local counterparts? What roles did the different state and local agencies and organizations play in the design and implementation of the TANF-funded SYEI in 2010? What waivers, if any, did states obtain for these programs? How, if at all, did the 2010 SYEI affect the relationships between organizations?
2. **SYEI design approaches.** How did states and local areas design and then implement the summer 2010 program? What other funding sources (for example, WIA Recovery Act and WIA formula funding) did states and local areas use? What approaches did states and sites take to particular aspects of the SYEI, such as participants' eligibility criteria, co-enrollment in WIA, work sites, work readiness, and other summer activities? How did programs identify, recruit, and determine eligibility of participants? What was the influence of different funding streams (for example, TANF Emergency Fund, TANF, WIA, and WIA Recovery Act) on these approaches?
3. **Youths' experiences.** What were youths' experiences in summer 2010? To what extent did the use of different funding streams affect these experiences? What program activities, services, and types of subsidized jobs were offered and provided to participating youth? Which funding sources paid for specific activities and services?

How did participants view their subsidized work experiences? What post-summer transitions were developed for participants? How did states and local areas report on youths' participation and performance?

4. **Lessons and noteworthy practices.** What lessons and noteworthy practices can be highlighted from states' and local areas' summer 2010 SYEI experiences? What challenges did they face in program planning, implementation, and reporting?

2. Selection of Study Sites

Ten local areas were chosen purposively for the study so that it could include a range of state and local experiences. Work to identify the study sites began in June 2010. As a first step, the study team, in collaboration with staff from the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities and the Center for Law and Social Policy, identified states that had known plans to apply TANF Emergency Funds to support summer subsidized jobs for youth. Discussions with state workforce or TANF staff confirmed the states' plans and helped to identify local areas as possible candidates for the summer 2010 study.

The study team sorted the information collected from 16 states and, in consultation with ETA and ACF, identified important factors for selecting local areas. In addition to whether the states used the TANF Emergency Fund to support summer youth employment, the team sought to identify sites that represented different regions of the country and that were diverse on the following factors:

- **Funding.** The study team examined the different types of funding streams used to support the summer 2010 SYEI. For example, some sites planned to use remaining WIA Recovery Act funds and regular WIA Youth formula funds, whereas others relied only on the TANF Emergency Fund.
- **Co-enrollment.** The team identified states that required or encouraged local sites to co-enroll summer youth in the regular WIA Youth or another related program.
- **Eligibility criteria.** The team identified sites that focused on providing summer work experiences to youth in TANF or TANF-eligible households, and youth who were determined eligible by the WIA youth program criteria. The team also looked for diversity in the ages of the youth served.
- **Size.** The team identified sites in large cities serving large numbers of youth and sites in rural settings serving smaller numbers of youth.

Based on these factors and in consultation with ETA and ACF, the study team initially recommended 10 sites for the study. One of the initially selected sites did not respond to invitations to participate in the study, so the study team identified and contacted a back-up site. All but one of the states and local areas selected and eventually visited as part of the study used part of its TANF Emergency Fund allocation to support its SYEIs. The one exception, Buffalo/Erie County in New York, operated its SYEI using TANF block grant funds instead of the TANF Emergency Fund. All sites but one were LWIAs. Santa Clara County received the TANF Emergency Funds and then contracted with two LWIAs and two community colleges to provide services. Table I.1 lists the seven states and 10 sites ultimately included in the study. Chapter II provides more information about these sites.

Table I.1. Sites Selected for the Study

| State | Local Site Name |
|------------|--|
| Arkansas | Northwest Arkansas Local Workforce Investment Board (Northwest Arkansas) |
| California | Santa Clara Social Services Agency (Santa Clara County) |
| California | South Bay Workforce Investment Board/Los Angeles County (South Bay) |
| Illinois | Southern Illinois Workforce Board (Southern Illinois) |
| Illinois | The Workforce Board of Northern Cook County (Northern Cook County) |
| Minnesota | Anoka County Workforce Council (Anoka County) |
| Minnesota | South Central Workforce Council (South Central) |
| New York | Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board (Buffalo/Erie County) |
| Oklahoma | Eastern Workforce Investment Board (Eastern Oklahoma) |
| Texas | Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas (Dallas County) |

Note: The name in parentheses following each local site name is how the site is referenced throughout the report.

3. Data Sources

The study collected qualitative data through interviews with both state and site respondents. First, the study team conducted telephone interviews with an administrator from the state workforce agency and an administrator from the state TANF agency. Through these interviews, the study team explored the states' decisions regarding the application for and use of the TANF Emergency Fund for the SYEI.

Second, across the 10 study sites, the study team conducted in-person interviews with respondents knowledgeable about the 2010 SYEI. Given the timing of the visits in relation to the summer program, seven of the visits occurred when the program was still operating and three occurred after it had ended. Each visit, conducted by one member of the study team, lasted an average of two days. In addition to interviewing the key staff of sites' workforce agencies and contracted youth service providers, site visitors interviewed local TANF agency staff involved in the SYEI. These interviews occurred in four sites; in the other sites, the local TANF agency staff were not involved in the SYEI. In addition, during the site visits and depending on whether the program had ended, site visitors attempted to talk with three to five employers and three to five youth participants. Across the 10 sites, site visitors spoke with 50 employer representatives and 42 participants.

4. Analytical Approach and Limitations

The data analysis focused on the study's key research questions as the study team searched for themes, patterns, and relationships that emerged both within individual sites and across several sites. As part of the analysis, the team (1) considered the partnerships that supported the 2010 SYEI, the models of program organization, and particular program approaches or strategies that TANF funding influenced; and (2) looked across sites at the common lessons learned, challenges faced, and noteworthy practices.

Throughout this report, the site is the unit of analysis. Given that researchers might not have met with representatives from all local youth providers (especially in large urban sites), the analysis is not able to discuss the full range of site experiences. In addition, the employers and participants

interviewed during the site visits were not representative of all those involved in the program, and site visitors were not able to meet with all respondents because of the late timing of some of the visits. Despite these limitations, the perspectives of a large number of diverse respondents in each site provide an overall rich description of the 2010 SYEI implementation experiences.

D. Organization of the Rest of the Report

The rest of the report describes the study sites and their summer 2010 experiences. Chapter II summarizes the study sites and provides brief profiles of their SYEIs, including the guidance they received from their states, their socioeconomic characteristics, and their administrative structures for the SYEI. In Chapter III, the report describes the relationship between the public workforce investment system and TANF agencies at both the state and local levels. Chapter IV explores particular design features of the TANF-funded SYEI, and Chapter V provides a portrait of what the summer 2010 experience was like for participating youth. Finally, Chapter VI looks ahead to possibilities for future SYEIs

II. THE STUDY SITES

The 10 selected study sites purposefully differed on important characteristics to ensure that the study could collect rich information on state and local summer 2010 SYEI experiences. Although they were not intended to be representative of the SYEI nationally, the study sites represented different regions of the country and different levels of urbanicity, as well as different organizational structures for providing summer youth employment. In this chapter, we provide a brief overview of the 10 selected sites and then provide site-specific profiles, including information on the state context and selected characteristics of the sites' SYEIs.

Key Findings: The Study Sites

- **The 10 study sites varied on an array of contextual characteristics.** For example, the population of the local areas served by sites included those with fewer than 250,000 residents to those with more than 1.5 million residents. In addition, the June 2010 unemployment rates of study sites ranged from 5.5 to 13.6 percent.
- **For the 2010 SYEIs, most study sites relied on multiple funding sources.** In addition to the TANF Emergency Fund or other TANF funds, nine sites used a combination of remaining WIA Recovery Act, regular WIA Youth formula, or state funds to provide subsidized work experiences to youth.
- **The study sites placed almost 8,000 youth in summer jobs.** Half the sites served more than 500 youth, with the largest site serving approximately 2,000 youth.

A. Overview of the Study Sites and Their SYEIs

An overview of the study sites provides a critical backdrop for understanding sites' and youths' experiences in summer 2010. Each of the study SYEIs operated within its own socioeconomic environment, reflecting varied populations and economic conditions. Within this context, the study sites organized their SYEIs and provided youth with a subsidized summer work experience. The following overview describes the sites' environments and provides a brief description of their programs. Subsequent chapters further explore particular aspects of their SYEIs.

1. The Local Contexts

Study sites covered geographic areas that served diverse populations and experienced different economic conditions (see Table II.1; all figures cited in this chapter for SYEIs' context and demographics appear in Table II.1). Although some study sites served one city or one county, others served multiple counties. For example, the Northwest Arkansas LWIA covered nine counties, whereas the Buffalo/Erie County LWIA served one county. Two sites included in the study served only a portion of a county. Of the 10 study sites, 6 served largely urban areas and 4 served predominantly rural areas.

Local areas' populations varied by size, ethnicity, and education levels. Although the smaller areas served a total population of approximately 225,000, the largest areas served more than 2 million people. Some counties were more racially diverse than the nation as a whole.

Table II.1. TANF SYEI Site Characteristics

| State | Site Name | County(ies) | Area Classification ^a | Population Estimate ^a | County Demographics ^{a,b} (Percentage) | Adults with High School Diploma ^{a,b} (Percentage) | Families Below Poverty Level ^{a,b} (Percentage) | County Unemployment Rate ^{b,c} (Percentage) |
|-------|----------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| n.a. | United States | n.a. | n.a. | 307,006,550 | Asian 4.4 Black 12.4 Other 8.7 White 74.5 <i>Hispanic 15.1</i> | 84.6 | 9.9 | 8.7 |
| AR | Northwest Arkansas | Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Washington | Rural counties surrounding one urban cluster | 581,205 | Asian 0.0–2.2 Black 0.0–3.2 Other 2.2–12.0 White 82.6–97.1 <i>Hispanic 0.5–14.4</i> | 75.3–84.6 | 7.8–16.4 | 5.5–9.6 |
| CA | Santa Clara County | Santa Clara | Urban | 1,784,642 | Asian 30.2 Black 2.6 Other 15.2 White 52.0 <i>Hispanic 25.7</i> | 85.8 | 6.0 | 11.3 |
| CA | South Bay | Los Angeles ^d | Urban | 9,848,011 | Asian 13.0 Black 8.8 Other 27.4 White 50.7 <i>Hispanic 47.3</i> | 75.5 | 12.5 | 12.2 |
| IL | Northern Cook County | Cook ^e | Urban | 5,287,037 | Asian 5.7 Black 25.5 Other 14.9 White 53.9 <i>Hispanic 22.5</i> | 87.2 | 11.8 | 10.9 |
| IL | Southern Illinois | Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry, Williamson | Rural | 224,952 | Asian 0.2–3.9 Black 0.3–13.6 Other 1.6–2.9 White 79.6–97.7 <i>Hispanic 1.0–3.0</i> | 80.9–88.8 | 11.8–17.1 | 8.8–13.6 |
| MN | Anoka County | Anoka | Urban | 331,582 | Asian 3.7 Black 3.4 Other 3.8 White 89.0 <i>Hispanic 2.7</i> | 92.3 | 4.2 | 7.2 |
| MN | South Central | Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, Le Sueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca, Watonwan | Rural | 226,255 | Asian 0.6–2.2 Black 0.1–2.0 Other 1.6–12.1 White 86.0–97.4 <i>Hispanic 2.2–19.3</i> | 80.4–92.1 | 5.3–10.2 | 5.7–8.7 |

Table II.1 (continued)

| State | Site Name | County(ies) | Area Classification ^a | Population Estimate ^a | County Demographics ^{a,b} (Percentage) | Adults with High School Diploma ^{a,b} (Percentage) | Families Below Poverty Level ^{a,b} (Percentage) | County Unemployment Rate ^{b,c} (Percentage) |
|-------|---------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| NY | Buffalo/Erie County | Erie | Urban | 909,247 | Asian 2.0 Black 13.3 Other 3.3 White 81.4 <i>Hispanic 3.8</i> | 87.9 | 10.1 | 7.6 |
| OK | Eastern Oklahoma | Adair, Cherokee, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Sequoyah, Wagoner | 7 rural counties, 2 of which have urban clusters | 310,218 | Asian 0.1–0.9 Black 0.0–9.5 Other 16.6–50.8 White 48.2–78.5 <i>Hispanic 1.9–6.4</i> | 75.4–87.1 | 9.3–22.1 | 5.9–10.6 |
| TX | Dallas County | Dallas | Urban | 2,451,730 | Asian 4.5 Black 20.2 Other 16.5 White 58.9 <i>Hispanic 37.7</i> | 75.1 | 14.2 | 9.0 |

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (2009); Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2011).

Notes: For local workforce investment areas that include more than one county, the range for all counties within the area is provided.

For those identifying a single race: White = White or Caucasian; Black = Black or African American; and Asian = Asian. Other = American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

Hispanic = Hispanic or Latino for any person identifying as Hispanic regardless of race(s).

^aU.S. Census Bureau (2009).

^bFor local workforce investment areas that include more than one county, the range for all counties within the area is provided. For any range provided, the first percentage indicates the lowest percentage for any county in the area, and the second percentage indicates the highest percentage for any county in the area. For example, in Eastern Oklahoma, 48.2 percent of the population in Adair County identified as white, whereas 78.5 percent of the population in Wagoner County identified as white. In any single-county site, percentages of whites, blacks, Asians and other might not sum to 100 because of rounding.

^cBureau of Labor and Statistics (2011). Labor force data by county, not seasonally adjusted, November 2009–December 2010 (preliminary).

^dFigures are for all of Los Angeles County. Data presented from the U.S. Census Bureau does not make it possible to determine information for the portion of Los Angeles County served by the South Bay Workforce Investment Board.

^eFigures are for all of Cook County. Data presented from the U.S. Census Bureau does not make it possible to determine information for the portion of Northern Cook County served by the Workforce Board of Northern Cook County.

TANF EF = TANF Emergency Fund; WIA ARRA = the Recovery Act's allocation to the WIA youth program.

n.a. = not applicable.

For example, Dallas County's population was 58.9 percent white compared with 74.5 percent nationally, and Dallas's proportion of Hispanics in its population was more than twice the national average. In other counties, such as those in Arkansas, the percentage of whites (82.6 to 97.1 percent) was larger than the percentage nationally. Across the sites' counties, the percentage of the adult population that received at least a high school diploma in the sites' counties was between 75.1 and 92.3 percent. By comparison, 84.6 percent of adults nationally had a high school diploma.

Finally, the economic condition of the local areas ranged from those that appeared to be struggling to those performing better than the national average. In some sites, more than 15 percent of families were living below the poverty level, whereas in another site as few as 4.2 percent were living in poverty. Eight sites included counties in which the percentage of families living below the poverty level was greater than the national average (9.9 percent). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, sites had county unemployment rates between 5.5 and 13.6 percent, and half of the sites had counties with unemployment rates over 10 percent in June 2010. By comparison, the national unemployment rate reached 8.7 percent in June 2010.

2. The Study Sites' SYEIs

The study sites' SYEIs used multiple funding streams and adopted different structures for delivering services. In the study sites, typically one or two providers, which could include the WIA administrative agency, provided direct services to the youth. Three sites that served larger numbers of youth contracted with three or more organizations to provide services (see Table II.2). Contracted service providers represented a range of organizations; seven sites contracted with nonprofit agencies, three sites with community colleges, and three used government entities (not shown).

Table II.2. Selected Characteristics of Study Sites' SYEIs

| State | Site Name | Number of Service Providers ^a | Funding Sources | | | | | Number of Youth Served ^b |
|-------|----------------------|--|-----------------|----------|-------------|------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| | | | TANF EF | WIA ARRA | WIA Formula | TANF | State | |
| AR | Northwest Arkansas | 1 | X | X | X | | | 443 |
| CA | Santa Clara County | 4 | X | X | | | | 1,049 |
| CA | South Bay | 6 | X | | | | | 1,000 |
| IL | Northern Cook County | 2 | X | X | | | | 1,202 |
| IL | Southern Illinois | 1 | X | X | | | | 107 |
| MN | Anoka County | 1 | X | | X | | X | 156 |
| MN | South Central | 1 | X | | X | | X | 307 |
| NY | Buffalo/Erie County | 1 | | X | X | X | | 1,297 |
| OK | Eastern Oklahoma | 1 | X | | X | | | 205 |
| TX | Dallas County | 3 | X | X | X | | | 2,000 |

Source: Mathematica site visits to study sites in 2010.

^aDirect service providers include WIA administrative agencies and/or other contracted providers.

^bNumber of youth served is approximate, as numbers were reported from the sites and may not reflect the official SYEI count.

MYP = Minnesota Youth Program, a state-funded program; TANF EF = TANF Emergency Fund; WIA ARRA = Recovery Act allocation to Workforce Investment Act youth program; WIA formula = regular WIA youth program funds.

Sites planning to administer an SYEI in summer 2010 were able to draw upon five potential sources of funding. Sites could have used any remaining funds from their WIA Recovery Act youth allocation, the TANF Emergency Fund, regular WIA Youth formula funds, regular TANF funds, and other funding sources, such as state or city general funds or private foundations. All but one of the 10 sites reported using two or three funding streams—typically the TANF Emergency Fund combined with WIA Youth formula and/or WIA Recovery Act funds. Given that sites were purposefully selected for the study because of their use of the TANF Emergency Fund or regular TANF funds, 9 sites used the TANF Emergency Fund to support some youths' work experiences, and 8 of these sites used the TANF Emergency Fund in combination with additional funding streams. Although the New York site did not use the TANF Emergency Fund for its SYEI, it combined the regular TANF funds from the state with remaining WIA Recovery Act funds and additional regular WIA Youth formula funds.

Sites placed as many youth as they could in summer employment opportunities using their multiple sources of funding. Across the 10 study sites, almost 8,000 youth were served during the 2010 SYEI. Half of the sites served more than 500 youth, with the largest site serving 2,000 youth during the summer.

B. State and Local Site Profiles

Profiles for each of the 10 study sites follow. The profiles first describe each state's approach to using the TANF Emergency Fund to support youths' summer employment, including the application process, partnerships among state agencies, and distribution of TANF funds. The profiles then describe the sites' administration of the program through various administrative and contracted organizations, funding streams used to serve youth, youth eligibility,⁵ and the number of youth served at each site.

Arkansas

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. Key Arkansas Department of Workforce Services (DWS) administrators began planning their application for the TANF Emergency Fund to support summer youth employment in March 2010.

State partnership. DWS has administered WIA, the TANF block grant, and the Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) program, which is the state's program to provide work activities to TANF recipients, since 2005. Staff determining TANF eligibility and staff providing employment assistance to TANF recipients already had a working relationship; they were within a single agency.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. DWS passed the funds to each of the state's 10 participating LWIAs. The state also used TANF funds carried over from the previous year for subsidized employment or education and training directly related to employment.

⁵ Although all states gave LWIAs guidance for youth eligibility for the SYEI, LWIAs could include additional eligibility criteria or priority of service considerations. For this reason, eligibility criteria are listed at the site, rather than state, level.

- **Northwest Arkansas**

- **Service area.** The Northwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (NWA-WIB) serves nine rural counties in Arkansas with a total population of approximately 581,100.
- **Youth program administrator.** The Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. (NWAEDD), the administrator of Northwest Arkansas' WIA programs, contracted with the Northwest Arkansas Certified Development Corporation (CDC) to provide the regular WIA Youth formula and SYEI programs.
- **Organizational roles.** CDC, NWAEDD, and the local TANF office are colocated within the region's Workforce Center and have a history of informal and formal collaboration. For the 2010 SYEI, CDC recruited youth and employers, determined youth eligibility under the different funding streams, conducted orientations and skills trainings/sessions, and provided case management and counseling. NWAEDD and CDC jointly reached out to employers to participate in the program. TANF staff referred youth to the SYEI.
- **Funding sources.** NWA-WIB used WIA Recovery Act funds, regular WIA Youth formula funds, and the TANF Emergency Fund. The site used the TANF Emergency Fund for youths' wages, benefits, supervision, and case management. Other services were supported with WIA Recovery Act and regular WIA Youth formula funds.
- **Eligibility.** WIA eligibility rules were used to determine if youth could participate in the program. Youth ages 14 to 21 were eligible, and CDC and NWAEDD targeted youth considered most in need.
- **Number of youth served.** The TANF Emergency Fund funded 291 youth. In total, the program funded 443 youth.

California

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. California's Department of Social Services (DSS) initially submitted an application in late 2009 for the TANF Emergency Fund allocation and then worked with California's Employment Development Department (EDD) to revise its application to include subsidized youth employment.

State partnership. DSS initiated plans for the TANF Emergency Fund and then involved EDD to plan and develop a subsidized summer employment program for youth. The two state agencies had not partnered before to design and implement a program.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. Twenty-four of California's 58 counties that administer the TANF program opted to receive a portion of the TANF Emergency Fund to support an SYEI. The county-level welfare office could decide whether to collaborate with the LWIAs to administer the program.

- **Santa Clara**

- **Service area.** The Santa Clara County Social Services Agency/Department of Employment and Benefit Services (SSA/DEBS) service area has a total population of about 1.8 million, with about half of the population living in the city of San Jose.
- **Youth program administrator.** SSA/DEBS was the lead administrative agency for Teen Works, the 2010 SYEI program. The agency contracted with four organizations, including two LWIAs and two local community colleges, to implement the program.

- **Organizational roles.** All four contracting organizations were responsible for youth intake and orientation, assessment, job placement, case management, and supportive services. The CalWORKs (or TANF) agency provided each contractor with a list of youth that received CalWORKs. LWIA staff were also trained to use the TANF countywide database to confirm youth eligibility.
 - **Funding sources.** All organizations used TANF Emergency Funds. The two LWIAs also used remaining WIA Recovery Act dollars.
 - **Eligibility.** TANF Emergency Funds were used only to support younger youth (ages 15 to 17). Within this age range, the county program first targeted CalWORKs recipients, then youth whose families received benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and then youth whose families earned less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The two LWIAs served older youth (ages 18 to 24) using remaining WIA Recovery Act funds.
 - **Number of youth served.** The TANF Emergency Fund supported 957 youth; 92 additional youth were funded through remaining WIA Recovery Act funds.
- **South Bay**
 - **Service area.** The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) is one of seven WIBs located in Los Angeles County, which has a population of more than 9 million. SBWIB serves 9 of the 88 cities in Los Angeles County.
 - **Youth program administrator.** DPSS contracted with SBWIB to administer the SYEI. SBWIB contracted with four One-Stop Career Centers and two local nonprofit service providers.
 - **Organizational roles.** All contracting organizations were responsible for providing a job readiness workshop using a standardized curriculum, a standardized pre-employment assessment, an individual service strategy, job placement using a centralized employer database, and periodic follow-up throughout the subsidized work experience.
 - **Funding sources.** TANF Emergency Funds were used to create subsidized jobs and to provide bus passes, work-related clothing and/or equipment, and ongoing case management as needed to eligible youth in the SYEI.
 - **Eligibility.** Under broad guidance from the state, priority of service was given to younger youth (ages 14 to 19) in CalWORKs households.⁶ To boost enrollment while the program was in operation, eligibility was expanded to include youth ages 18 to 24 who were either living in SNAP households or were former foster youth or general relief youth whose families earned less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
 - **Number of youth served.** Approximately 1,000 youth were served.

Illinois

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. The state Department of Human Services (DHS) submitted its TANF Emergency Fund application and was approved for the program in early

⁶ If a related minor child was in the home, service could then include foster youth (ages 14 to 19) living with a relative whose income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, former foster youth (ages 18 to 24) living with a relative whose income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and youth (ages 18 to 24) receiving general relief.

March 2010. The youth program, named Youth Employment for the Summer (YES), was an optional program for the LWIAs.

State partnership. The DHS worked with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) to design and plan the youth subsidized employment programs.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. DCEO administered the program, providing funds from the state to the LWIAs. Twenty-six of the state's 28 LWIAs participated.

- **Northern Cook County**

- **Service area.** The Northern Cook County WIB serves the portion of the county north of Chicago. The urban county has a total population of 5.3 million.
- **Youth program administrator.** The WIB contracted with Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) and TEC Services to run the 2010 YES program.
- **Organizational roles.** JVS and TEC Services recruited youth and work sites, conducted intake and orientation, placed youth in available work sites, and provided case management and oversight during the summer months. To assist in youth recruitment, the local TANF agency supplied a list of youth who were in households receiving TANF or SNAP.
- **Funding sources.** Both contracting organizations used the TANF Emergency Fund and remaining WIA Recovery Act funds. Most of the youth served were eligible for employment subsidized through the TANF Emergency Fund. The TANF Emergency Fund was used to pay for youths' wages, worker's compensation, and participant support.
- **Eligibility.** Youth ages 16 to 24, whose families earned less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, were eligible.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 1,202 youth.

- **Southern Illinois**

- **Service area.** The Southern Illinois Workforce Board (SIWB) serves five rural counties with a total population of about 225,000.
- **Youth program administrator.** Man-Tra-Con Corporation, the LWIA's administrative agency for WIA, took lead administration duties for the SYEI.
- **Organizational roles.** Man-Tra-Con recruited youth and work sites, verified youths' household status and income, matched eligible and enrolled youth to work sites, and provided case management services to participants.
- **Funding sources.** SIWB used remaining WIA Recovery Act funds and the TANF Emergency Fund. The TANF Emergency Fund allocation was used to pay for youths' wages, worker's compensation, and participant supportive services. WIA Recovery Act funds supported administrative costs, including case management.
- **Eligibility.** Youth ages 16 to 24, whose families earned less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level, were eligible.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 107 youth.

Minnesota

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Office of Youth Development approached the Minnesota DHS to ascertain its interest in partnering to design and implement a state program. A third partner, the state-level Minnesota Workforce Council Association (MWCA), secured permission from the legislature to apply for the TANF Emergency Funds. The state submitted an application for a TANF Emergency Fund SYEI in May 2010.

State partnership. DEED, DHS, and MWCA worked to administer the program jointly through an interagency agreement. These agencies and state-level associations had previous experience working together.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. Funds flowed through the DEED office to the state's LWIAs. All 16 of the states' LWIAs participated in the SYEI using the TANF Emergency Funds.

- **Anoka County**

- **Service area.** Anoka County is the fourth most-populous county in Minnesota and part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. It is an urban county with 331,582 residents.
- **Youth program administrator.** The Job Training Center (JTC) of Anoka County provided employment and training services to Anoka County residents, including youth. The Anoka County Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the local TANF program, was also county-administered and colocated in the Workforce Center with the JTC.
- **Organizational roles.** JTC recruited work sites, conducted youth intake and orientation, and placed youth in available work sites. Given the close association with the TANF program, TANF and SYEI program staff coordinated program efforts, including planning and recruiting. Youth were recruited from lists of eligible youth from TANF caseloads.
- **Funding sources.** Anoka County used the TANF Emergency Fund, regular WIA Youth formula funds, and funds from the Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), a state-funded youth employment program. The county co-enrolled all summer youth into MYP to support program staffing and operational costs. Regular WIA Youth formula funds were used to support the subsidized employment of youth who were eligible to receive WIA services.
- **Eligibility.** Eligibility for the SYEI consisted of four priority groups: (1) teen parents ages 16 to 24 who were on MFIP, the state's TANF program; (2) youth ages 16 to 18 who were on a grant in MFIP households; (3) youth ages 19 to 24 who were in MFIP households but not on the grant; and (4) youth in families with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 156 youth.

- **South Central**

- **Service area.** South Central WIB serves nine rural Minnesota counties, with approximately 226,000 residents.

- **Youth program administrator.** South Central Workforce Council, the WIB for South Central, contracted with Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC), a community action agency, to provide WIA employment services.
- **Organizational roles.** MVAC recruited youth and work sites, conducted intake and orientation, and placed youth in available work sites. MVAC staff are colocated with the TANF employment service providers and worked together to identify eligible youth.
- **Funding sources.** South Central used the TANF Emergency Fund, regular WIA Youth formula funds, and MYP. South Central co-enrolled all summer youth into MYP to use the funds to support program staffing and operational costs. Regular WIA Youth formula funds were used to support the subsidized employment of youth who were eligible to receive WIA services.
- **Eligibility.** Eligibility for the SYEI consisted of four priority groups: (1) teen parents ages 16 to 24 who were on MFIP, the state's TANF program; (2) youth ages 16 to 18 who were on a grant in MFIP households; (3) youth ages 19 to 24 who were in MFIP households but not on the grant; and (4) youth in families with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 307 youth.

New York

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. The Office of Temporary Disability and Assistance's Center for Employment and Economic Supports (OTDA) decided not to apply for TANF Emergency Funds for the SYEI, in part because of expectations that the state legislature would fund the summer youth program using TANF funds.

State partnership. OTDA dispersed funds to local areas. New York's Department of Labor had little involvement in the SYEI.

Distribution of TANF Funds. The New York State Legislature appropriated \$15.5 million in TANF Funds for the 2010 SYEI. Funding flowed from the state to county TANF agencies, which contracted with LWIAs to administer the program.

• Buffalo/Erie

- **Service area.** The Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Investment Board (BEWIB) serves Erie County and the city of Buffalo, with a total population of nearly one million.
- **Youth program administrator.** BEWIB administered the components of the SYEI and provided all youth services; it did not contract with any youth providers.
- **Organizational roles.** BEWIB services included case management, recruiting employers, and determining eligibility for different funding streams.
- **Funding sources.** BEWIB used remaining WIA Recovery Act funds, regular WIA Youth formula funds, and TANF block grant funds. TANF funds were used to provide work subsidies, education, other work activities and expenses, and administration. WIA Recovery Act and regular WIA Youth formula funds were used to subsidize employment of WIA-eligible youth.
- **Eligibility.** Youth had to be between the ages of 14 and 20 and in families either receiving TANF or with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 1,297 youth.

Oklahoma

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. The Oklahoma DHS and Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) worked together and applied in April 2010 for the TANF Emergency Fund to support the SYEI.

State partnership. Although DHS and OESC had not formally partnered before, each was familiar with the other's work, as they sit together on a governor's council. For the SYEI, the agencies jointly designed an interagency agreement. After the SYEI, the agencies discussed the successes and challenges of the program and explored opportunities for future collaborations.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. Funding for the SYEI was passed from DHS to OESC. OESC then passed funds to LWIAs. All 11 Oklahoma LWIAs participated in the program.

- **Eastern**

- **Service area.** The Eastern Workforce Investment Board (EWIB) serves seven rural counties in Oklahoma with a total population of approximately 310,000
- **Youth program administrator.** EWIB contracted operations of the regular WIA Youth formula program and SYEI to Connors State College.
- **Organizational roles.** EWIB and Connors jointly conducted outreach. Connors recruited youth, organized the caseload among eight case managers, determined regular WIA Youth formula eligibility, and conducted orientations and skills trainings/sessions. EWIB worked with youth and the local TANF agency to confirm eligibility requirements related to the SYEI. The state DHS provided EWIB with a list of youth in TANF households to recruit them for the program.
- **Funding sources.** From June 6 through July 31, the youths' summer work experiences were funded with regular WIA Youth formula funds. From August 2 through September 30, eligible youth continued their work experiences with funding from the TANF Emergency Fund.
- **Eligibility.** Eligible youth were between the ages of 16 and 21. All participating youth were determined eligible for and enrolled in the regular WIA Youth formula program. They also were required to fall into one of the TANF MOE categories, according to the following priority: (1) received TANF or was a member of a house that received TANF; (2) lived with a parent or relative caretaker; (3) was pregnant; (4) was a noncustodial parent; (5) was a custodial parent; or (6) was a publicly supported foster child.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served 205 youth; 99 youth were funded during the TANF Emergency Fund portion of the program.

Texas

State application for TANF Emergency Funds. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) took the lead in developing the plan for using the TANF Emergency Fund for the 2010 SYEI. The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (THHSC) then submitted the application in May 2010.

State partnership. Fifteen years ago, the Texas legislature mandated that all employment-related services be provided through the TWC. Since then, THHSC determines families' eligibility for TANF, and the TWC provides employment and training services to TANF recipients in the CHOICES program, the state's welfare-to-work program.

Distribution of TANF Emergency Funds. THHSC passed the TANF Emergency funds to the TWC, which in turn allocated funds to the state's 28 LWIAs.

- **Dallas**

- **Service area.** Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas serves Dallas County, which is dominated by the city of Dallas. The city comprises about 84 percent of the county's 2.5 million residents.
- **Youth program administrator.** Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas contracted operations of its SYEI to Arbor Education and Training (Arbor) and contracted with Unique to administer the payroll.
- **Organizational roles.** Arbor, which also provided employment services to the county's TANF customers, was responsible for recruiting youth, determining eligibility, and allocating the caseload among its staff and two other contractors, Richland Community College and the Urban League. Unique provided participating youth with swipe cards and added the youths' biweekly wages to their accounts.
- **Funding sources.** From June 6 through July 31, the youths' summer work experiences were funded with regular WIA Youth formula and WIA Recovery Act funds. From August 2 through September 30, eligible youth continued their work experiences with funding from the TANF Emergency Fund.
- **Eligibility.** Youth receiving subsidized employment through the TANF Emergency Fund had to be between the ages of 16 and 24 and either in households receiving public assistance or in families with income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Youth participating in WIA-funded subsidized employment met WIA eligibility requirements.
- **Number of youth served.** The program served approximately 2,000 youth.

III. AGENCY PARTNERSHIP IN THE 2010 SYEI

The TANF Emergency Fund created an opportunity for workforce and TANF agencies to build new and/or expand existing partnerships in serving disadvantaged youth. Given the tight time line between when the funding was available and when programs began, workforce agencies were well positioned to implement these programs using the TANF funds. They had existing program infrastructure, had experience with serving this population, and had recently implemented the WIA Recovery Act-funded SYEI in 2009. In this chapter, we examine the relationships between TANF and workforce agencies that supported the subsidized summer employment opportunities offered by LWIAs.

Key Findings: Agency Partnerships

- **The TANF Emergency Fund created an opportunity for state TANF and workforce agencies to partner.** In each state, state agencies partnered to some extent to submit their TANF Emergency Fund application for the SYEI. In most states, one agency—typically the TANF agency—took the lead in developing the application for the TANF Emergency Fund.
- **At the local level, the LWIA typically had the main responsibility for planning and delivering services to youth.** Because the LWIAs already had an infrastructure in place and experience with administering the SYEI, the TANF Emergency Fund was often dispersed directly from the state to the LWIAs. The short implementation time line combined with the direct allocation might have contributed to the minimal role that the TANF agency played in planning and administering the program. The local TANF agency mostly helped identify TANF youth eligible for the SYEI.
- **Although state and local agencies valued opportunities to partner, several challenges hindered their relationships.** The delays in receiving the TANF Emergency Fund, as well as the short-term nature of the summer program, limited the depth of the partnership and its sustainability.

A. A Review of Existing Partnerships between TANF and Workforce Agencies

The passage of WIA encouraged greater coordination of workforce and TANF agencies in serving disadvantaged populations. Before WIA, partnerships between welfare and workforce development systems were more limited because of their different focuses (Grubb et al. 1990; Trutko et al. 1991). The workforce system encouraged more long-term training, whereas welfare agencies emphasized job placement. In addition, workforce programs were often not targeted to or designed for disadvantaged populations. With the implementation of the Personal Responsibility Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) in 1996, which created TANF, and WIA two years later, states and localities began to explore opportunities to create partnerships between workforce and TANF agencies. PRWORA emphasized a work-first approach with penalties for nonparticipation in program activities, requiring low-income mothers with dependent children to secure employment quickly. WIA created universal access to employment and training services for all job seekers, including disadvantaged populations, and under the WIA system, LWIAs

consolidated employment-based services into One-Stop Career Centers (O’Shea and King 2001). Although the WIA legislation did not include TANF agencies as one of the mandated partners in local One-Stop Career Centers, many states and localities opted to include them.⁷

Researchers have documented three models of collaboration between TANF and workforce agencies that arose since the reforms (Martinson 1999; Pindus et al. 2000).

1. **Integration of two systems into a single state agency.** State TANF and workforce systems structurally integrated their systems into a single agency; TANF and workforce development staffs were colocated within the same organization. They also might have had common policies and, in some cases, workers could carry a mixed caseload of WIA and TANF jobseekers.
2. **Contracts between TANF and workforce agencies.** TANF agencies formally contracted with One-Stop Career Center service providers to provide all or a portion of employment services, including case management, for work-mandatory TANF recipients. These contractual arrangements could be negotiated at the state or local levels.
3. **Referral relationships.** TANF agencies or their contracted service providers could informally refer TANF recipients to the One-Stop Career Centers for services. Recipients could be referred for one or more employment-related activities, such as job skills and interest assessments, job search workshops, or job placement services. One-Stop Career Centers may also refer those who qualify for public assistance to the TANF agency.

These partnerships created both organizational benefits and challenges. Benefits of collaboration have included reduced duplication of services among government agencies, increased customer access to a wider range of existing services, and creation of new and/or more intensive services than might otherwise have been available (Martinson 1999; Pindus et al. 2000; Relave 2002). Yet, partnerships between these agencies have been difficult to establish in some states and communities. Identified challenges of collaboration have included cultural differences across agencies, such as how they approach their organizational structures, program definitions, and computer systems; the workforce system’s limited experience with serving disadvantaged populations; and the workforce system’s concerns of not meeting WIA performance measures, which could lead to financial sanctions (Martinson 1999; Pindus et al. 2000; U.S. General Accounting Office 2002).

B. State and Local Agency Roles in Planning

Implementation of the 2010 SYEI funded with the TANF Emergency Fund—or with other TANF funds—often necessitated coordinated planning between TANF and workforce agencies at the state and local levels. Many of these partnerships existed formally or informally before the 2010 SYEI. However, in many states, the TANF Emergency Fund created a new opportunity to plan and implement the policies, administrative infrastructure, and service delivery pathway for the summer

⁷ The mandated partners of One-Stop Career Centers included representatives from business, the local education agency, labor organizations, community-based organizations, and economic development agencies.

youth employment programs. This section examines the roles of state and local agencies in planning for the program.

1. Partnerships Before the 2010 SYEI

In each of the seven states included in the study, the TANF and workforce agencies had a relationship before the 2010 SYEI. Arkansas followed the first model described earlier. The state TANF and WIA programs were integrated into a single agency, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS). Program administrators operated under the same administrative structure and frequently communicated and coordinated across programs. In four states—California, Illinois, Minnesota, and Texas—TANF agencies had formal arrangements with workforce agencies to serve TANF recipients. In each of these states, the TANF agency created program policy (for example, sanctions for nonparticipation and time limits) and handled the initial and ongoing eligibility determination. Then, depending on the circumstances, all or a portion of case management and employment and training services for work-mandatory TANF recipients were performed by the workforce agency. At the state level, Texas legislated that the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) be responsible for all case management and employment services in each county. In the other states, contracting arrangements between TANF and workforce agencies were established at the county level. In Oklahoma and New York, the partnership between the state TANF and workforce agencies was mostly informal.

Three study sites had ongoing policies of colocating WIA and TANF eligibility staff that predated the SYEI. In Minnesota, both of the local study sites colocated TANF and WIA staff in the One-Stop Career Centers, an arrangement implemented many years before the SYEI. For example, in Anoka County, the Job Training Center, which handled employment services for WIA and TANF recipients, was located in the county Human Services building with income maintenance workers, who handled initial and ongoing eligibility for TANF recipients. One administrator described the different programs as “integrated,” noting that partnering for the SYEI was an automatic decision for both agencies. In Northwest Arkansas, WIA, TANF, and summer youth provider staff were colocated in one of the largest One-Stop Career Centers in the area. According to program administrators, the SYEI benefitted from the relationships that had been cultivated through colocation over time.

2. State-Level Planning Activities

The possibility of funding through the TANF Emergency Fund created additional opportunities for state TANF and WIA agencies to work together, particularly during the initial planning phase. In each of the states that received TANF Emergency Funds for the SYEI, the state TANF and WIA agencies collaborated to some extent on the SYEI. They worked together to determine how to distribute their TANF Emergency Fund allocations and provided general guidelines about eligibility. In some cases, they defined which local agency would receive the funds, the LWIA or the county TANF agency. During the initial planning, one agency typically took the lead while asking for information and input from the other partner.

In three states, the TANF agency took the lead in applying for and planning the SYEI. In California, the Department of Social Services (DSS) created an interdepartmental work group consisting of state and local partners, including WIA representatives. The work group met regularly to discuss how to apply for and use the TANF Emergency Fund. In Illinois, key staff at the state DHS met to determine whether to apply for the grant. After deciding to move forward, the joint ACF/ETA guidance letter became a catalyst for collaborating with the Department of Commerce

and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). In Oklahoma, the partnership was limited to a funding pass-through from the DHS to the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC).

In one state, Texas, the workforce agency took the lead. TWC wrote the application to use the TANF Emergency Fund for subsidized summer youth employment. The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) provided some input and, as the state TANF agency, submitted the proposal to ACF for approval.

In two states, planning appeared to be a shared endeavor. In Minnesota, the state DHS, state Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), and other agencies were involved with planning the SYEI. In Arkansas, planning began in January 2010 and included administrators from the TANF and WIA programs within DWS.

3. Local Involvement in State Planning

Three states formally included local partners in the initial planning for the summer programs. According to administrators in these states, local partners provided valuable policy and program input and improved local buy-in. For example, California's state TANF Emergency Fund steering committee included the County Welfare Director's Association, which was instrumental in convincing state administrators to expand the eligibility criteria to include younger youth. In Illinois, the state TANF agency met with local advocates to decide whether to apply for funds and how it might use them. The Minnesota Workforce Council Association, which was made up of local workforce councils, was included in the initial state planning for that state's summer youth program.

4. Site Planning Activities

At the local level, program administrators completed four primary tasks to get the programs up and running. First, they defined the program policies and procedures. In some states, such as California and Minnesota, state administrators defined general eligibility guidelines, but allowed local sites to further define eligibility requirements. They also made decisions about the work readiness measures, whether to use private sector placements, and priorities around co-enrolling youth in other WIA services. Second, they defined the service delivery infrastructure. Lead agencies contracted with youth employment service providers and/or hired additional staff to help serve the influx of youth to the program. Third, they defined the service delivery pathway. These decisions included the process for recruiting and enrolling youth, timing and length of work readiness activities, employer recruitment, process for monitoring youth and work placements, and types and amount of supportive services available to youth (for example, transportation or work-related clothing). Finally, they determined which agency would serve as the employer of record or handle wage reimbursements to employers.

In seven study sites, local planning was handled primarily by the LWIA with little input from local TANF staff. Input from the TANF agency came mostly from state program administrators rather than local administrators. One TANF administrator said that, based on her experience, the short planning time and implementation period for the SYEI was not conducive to new partnerships. More lead time for planning and implementation and state requirements for involvement of both agencies at the local level might have strengthened these partnerships. In addition, because the sites' TANF Emergency Funds often passed from the state to the LWIA, there was no perceived need to involve the local TANF office.

TANF and workforce agencies worked together during the initial summer youth program planning in three sites. In the two California sites, the county TANF offices received the areas' TANF Emergency Funds and sought out the LWIAs to help administer the SYEI. For example, in South Bay, the county TANF agency worked closely with the LWIAs to define the target population, administrative infrastructure, contracting arrangements, employer of record, and administrative data collection. It held several up-front planning calls with the LWIAs, had a webinar when the program began, and maintained ongoing contact with workforce staff afterward. In the third local site—Anoka County—the Youth Services Department took the lead in planning the program, but actively included TANF program staff in the planning process. It held weekly management meetings with representatives from both agencies in which they discussed the 2010 SYEI. The Youth Services Department also conducted presentations during TANF agency staff meetings to inform case managers about the program.

C. Agencies' Ongoing Roles and Interactions

In most sites, LWIAs administered the programs with some support from local TANF offices. State or county TANF agencies often called on LWIAs to administer the 2010 SYEI for a couple of reasons. First, many of the areas had been operating summer youth programs before the Recovery Act legislation, although on a much smaller scale. Second, the LWIAs had quickly implemented large-scale summer youth programs the preceding summer using the WIA Recovery Act funds. Having the infrastructure in place and experience scaling up services made LWIAs the logical choice for managing the implementation of these programs.

Local TANF agencies were involved mostly with program-related tasks, such as the recruitment of participants and verifying their TANF eligibility. Six of the 10 sites reported that TANF agencies helped with recruitment by providing the LWIA with a list of individuals on TANF caseloads and/or directly referring youth to the program. In three of the sites, the TANF case manager would authorize supportive services for summer youth participants living in TANF households.

According to local workforce and TANF agencies, contact between summer youth provider and TANF staff was infrequent and primarily as needed. In addition, most of the contact between agency staffs was during the initial recruitment and enrollment stage, when TANF case managers helped identify and recruit youth who were eligible for the program and/or verified eligibility for those who expressed interest. In most sites, when youth were assigned to a work site summer youth case managers and TANF staff had limited or no contact. In the sites where there was ongoing communication and coordination, TANF and SYEI staff were colocated in the local One-Stop Career Center, and/or they had a history of collaborating before the summer youth program.

D. Benefits and Challenges of Partnering

Although the TANF Emergency Fund SYEI provided the potential for LWIAs to serve TANF youth, sites reported a mix of benefits and challenges with creating these partnerships. One state TANF administrator appreciated that the 2010 SYEI created an opportunity for the LWIAs to serve TANF recipients, a population that the LWIAs did not have much experience serving. Another benefit was that it exposed TANF youth to the range of workforce services available to them. In addition, this partnership enabled the workforce agency to tap into funds providing it the ability to serve a greater number of youth than it would have otherwise. Without these funds, the number of summer youth served would have likely dropped to levels seen before the Recovery Act.

Sites identified several challenges that might have hindered the TANF–workforce agency partnerships.

- **Tight implementation time line.** Local areas were officially notified that they would receive the TANF Emergency Fund in late spring, requiring quick program design and implementation. The pressure to start quickly and to spend the funds before the September 30, 2010, deadline might have limited opportunities to cultivate new relationships effectively.
- **Interagency coordination challenges.** Local workforce and TANF agencies reported some difficulty merging the different agency cultures and “language.” In sites that targeted TANF recipients and/or that co-enrolled TANF- and WIA-eligible youth, local workforce staff said that they had some challenges understanding TANF policy, such as verifying TANF eligibility, monitoring participation, and documenting earnings.
- **Short-term, one-time funding opportunity.** The knowledge that these funds were due to expire and unlikely to be appropriated again could have dissuaded agencies from building new relationships that would not be sustained without further funding.

IV. KEY PROGRAM DESIGN FEATURES AND APPROACHES

Relying on TANF for the SYEI had implications for the design of the program in two primary ways. First, the TANF funds came with their own set of federal and state requirements, such as those determining youth eligibility. Second, because many sites still had other funds—such as the WIA Recovery Act and regular WIA Youth formula funds—to subsidize the summer employment of some youth, sites had to consider how to use the different funding streams in combination and still maintain the requirements of each.

Although sites mostly modeled their 2010 programs on the previous summer's SYEI and generally provided the same services to youth (as described in Chapter V), sites' reliance on TANF funds affected key aspects of the programs. After first describing how the 10 sites used the different funding streams available to them in summer 2010, this chapter explores the key design features of sites TANF-Funded SYEIs including (1) sites' enrollment of TANF-funded SYEI youth into the regular WIA youth program, (2) the eligibility requirements and the recruitment of eligible youth, (3) the types of work sites targeted and participating in the SYEI, and (4) the sites' assessments of participants' work readiness skills.

Key Findings: Program Design Features and Approaches

- **Most sites enrolled TANF-funded SYEI participants into the regular WIA Youth formula program based on individual needs.** ETA offered states and sites waivers so they could enroll SYEI youth in WIA and not have to follow program requirements. Whether or not the state had received the waivers, most study sites indicated that they enrolled TANF-funded SYEI participants in WIA on an as-needed basis.
- **States defined eligibility for their TANF-funded SYEIs in different ways, reflecting the flexibility in how the TANF funds could be used.** Based on state requirements, five study sites placed a priority on serving TANF or TANF-eligible youth, but most sites used a definition of *needy* that included youth in families at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Two sites used the regular WIA Youth program eligibility requirements for participation in SYEI 2010.
- **Despite efforts to engage TANF recipients, sites found it difficult to recruit and enroll youth in TANF households.** Site visit interviews suggested that many of these youth and their families did not want participation in the SYEI to affect their families' TANF eligibility or benefits. As a result, they chose not to participate.
- **Six sites reported an emphasis on recruiting private sector employers to count supervisors' wages as TANF MOE or to increase opportunities for permanent job placements.** Several sites that counted supervisory hours as maintenance of effort (MOE) found it easier to focus on private sector employers than to confirm that public sector supervisors were not supported with federal funds. In addition, sites perceived that private sector employers would be more likely than public sector employers to hire older youth as regular employees after the summer subsidy ended.
- **Sites adopted different approaches to measuring participants' work readiness.** Six sites followed or mostly followed ETA's guidance on measuring work readiness; three of these developed a new tool to correspond to the guidance. Other sites did not systematically collect the data because it was not a requirement of the TANF Emergency Fund.

A. Multiple Funding Streams Supporting the SYEI

Nine of the study sites drew upon multiple funding sources, including the TANF Emergency Fund, TANF, remaining WIA Recovery Act dollars, regular WIA Youth formula funding, and other state sources, to implement their 2010 SYEIs (see Table II.2). They used these funds in one of three ways: (1) they used the multiple funding streams concurrently but provided the same set of services to youth regardless of funding; (2) they expended one funding source before expending the next; or (3) although they used the funds concurrently, they provided youth with different services depending on the funding stream.

1. Concurrent Funding Streams

Six sites used several funding streams concurrently to support different youths' summer work experiences, but, regardless of the funding stream, youth participated in the same SYEI. In these sites, when a youth applied to the program, the provider staff determined the appropriate funding stream for that youth depending on his or her eligibility and needs and the availability of funds. For example, if the youth presented a WIA barrier and WIA Recovery Act funds were still available, the SYEI youth provider might determine that the youth's work experience could be subsidized using remaining WIA Recovery Act funds. Conversely, if no WIA Recovery Act funds were available and the youth was eligible for the TANF Emergency Fund according to state and local requirements, then the provider would mostly likely enroll the youth into the SYEI using these funds. Typically, the regular WIA Youth formula funds supported the subsidized work experience for youth who were already enrolled in the regular WIA Youth formula program, or who were good candidates for participating in the program beyond the summer months.

Although these sites appreciated the ability to serve a range of youth as a result of the multiple funding sources, they noted that the differing reporting requirements of each funding source posed challenges. Respondents noted that states did not have time to adapt their existing data and reporting systems and processes to reflect differences in funding streams. As a result, parallel data entry systems were sometimes developed, creating additional burden on program staff and/or youth providers.

2. Stacked Funding Streams

Two sites spent one funding source at a time; when the first funding source was expended, the next funding source was utilized. The services provided to youth were generally the same, regardless of funding stream. For example, the Dallas County SYEI used three funding sources to subsidize youths' summer employment. At the beginning of the summer the SYEI provided youth with summer employment through regular WIA Youth formula funds. When those funds were expended, the program utilized WIA Recovery Act funds. When those funds were exhausted, the program continued to support youths' wages using the TANF Emergency Fund. The fund supported youth from July 1 through September 30.

Sites used this approach for two reasons.

1. **Timing of the funds.** As sites planned their SYEIs in early spring, they were not always certain if and when the TANF Emergency Fund would become available for the SYEI. Delays in federal and state guidance also meant that local programs were not certain of the rules, such as the eligibility requirements, governing the use of the TANF Emergency Fund. Two sites reported that, as late as May 2010, they were still waiting to hear about

their funding. Stacking the funds enabled the sites to first use the funds that were already secure and then the TANF Emergency Fund when they received funds and guidance from the state.

2. **Reporting requirements.** Sites used this approach to simplify the reporting requirements. Rather than enrolling youth under different funding streams, youth were enrolled in one funding stream using one set of reporting requirements until those funds were expended and then moved on to the next funding stream.

Although the stacked funding approach was sensible for sites that were unsure of the availability of funds, it created complications in service delivery. Because the two funding streams had different youth eligibility requirements, such as for age eligibility, youth subsidized by the first funding stream would have to be redetermined as eligible before continuing their summer work site experiences with funding from the second funding source. Youth found ineligible under the requirements of the second funding stream had to end their participation. In addition, in one site, service delivery could be interrupted because of the different rules regarding eligible work sites. For example, if the site planned to use the hours of nonfederally funded supervisors to count as MOE for the TANF Emergency Fund, then youth initially placed in a public work site and subsidized with the initial funding source might have to change work sites when funding switched to the TANF Emergency Fund.

3. Different Funding, Different Programs

Two providers within one site, Santa Clara County, used two concurrent funding sources, the TANF Emergency Fund and the WIA Recovery Act, to provide two different sets of services to youth. Although the two LWIAs within the county used remaining WIA Recovery Act funds to support older youth, they used, as instructed by the county, the TANF Emergency Fund to support younger youth with a different set of program services. The county elected to serve younger youth with the TANF Emergency Fund because (1) the two county LWIAs had remaining WIA Recovery Act funds that could be used to serve the older youth, (2) the county perceived that the younger group had limited work options, and (3) the income earned by the younger youth would not affect eligibility for their CalWORKs families. As a result, the programs for the two age groups differed depending on the funding stream. For example, one LWIA required WIA Recovery Act-funded youth ages 18 to 24 to work 24 hours at their jobs and attend 16 hours of work readiness training per week. The younger TANF Emergency Fund youth (ages 15 to 17) worked 24 hours and attended 2 hours of work readiness training per week.

B. Waivers Encouraging Enrollment in the Regular WIA Youth Formula Program

To supplement the services allowable under the TANF Emergency Fund, ETA and ACF encouraged states and local areas to enroll the TANF Emergency Fund SYEI participants in the regular WIA Youth formula program. Although support services, such as counseling and tutoring, were an allowable expense under TANF as long as they were an integral part of the subsidized employment program, several states in the study permitted TANF-funded SYEIs to support only youths' wages, benefits, supervision, and training. Enrolling summer SYEI youth into the WIA program, which could provide additional supports, could potentially offer a more comprehensive set of services to the SYEI participants. However, applying the requirements of the regular WIA Youth formula program to youth participating only in the summer months could be burdensome for staff.

1. Two WIA Waivers Offered to States and Sites

To ease any perceived burden related to WIA enrollment, ETA offered states and local programs two possible waivers from the regular requirements for the regular WIA Youth formula program. These waivers were specifically developed for TANF SYEI youth enrolled in WIA for summer 2010.

The first waiver allowed LWIAs to report on only one performance indicator—achievement of work readiness goals—to measure the performance of enrolled summer youth, regardless of age. Typically, WIA requirements mandate that agencies report on seven performance measures.⁸ Four of the seven measures pertained to the employment and retention rates of older youth and three pertained to skill, diploma, and educational attainment rates of younger youth. With the waiver, work readiness was the only indicator for the summer TANF Emergency Fund youth co-enrolled in the WIA program.

The second waiver allowed states flexibility in the services provided to SYEI youth enrolled in WIA for the summer months. Typically, each youth enrolled in the regular WIA Youth formula program was required to have an objective assessment that resulted in an individual service strategy (ISS). In addition, LWIAs were required to provide follow-up services to a youth participant for a minimum of 12 months after the youth's last program activity. LWIAs in sites that took advantage of the second waiver would not have to provide a full initial assessment or follow-up services to youth whose work experience was supported by the TANF Emergency Fund and enrolled in WIA. This could allow youth to get the support services they needed without requiring service providers to conduct more labor- and time-intensive assessments and follow-ups for youth they served only during the summer months.

2. Effect of Waivers on WIA Enrollment

According to respondents, the study sites did not use the waivers to enroll large numbers of TANF-funded SYEI participants into the regular WIA Youth formula program. Respondents in the study sites reported that they enrolled their TANF-funded SYEI participants on an individual basis, whether or not their state had received one of the WIA waivers.

Four of the seven states in the study applied for and received the two ETA waivers. Yet only one of these states (Oklahoma) required SYEI youth to be enrolled in WIA. However, because these youth were also participating in the regular WIA Youth formula program beyond the summer months, the WIA requirements would still apply. The other three study states (California, Minnesota, and Texas) that received the waivers did not require their local sites to enroll their TANF-funded SYEI participants in WIA. Administrators in these states indicated that they applied for the waivers strategically; they applied early in the process without being sure how the program would be implemented locally and felt the waivers would provide local sites with additional options. Indeed, none of the local sites in these three states had a general policy of enrolling SYEI participants in WIA because administrators felt the waivers were not sufficient to reduce the complexities of having youth co-enrolled. For example, enrolling youth in the regular WIA Youth

⁸ States that have adapted the common measures document and report youth performance on three measures: (1) placement in employment or education, (2) literacy and numeracy gains, and (3) attainment of a degree or certificate.

formula program still involved eligibility and intake procedures that were more time-consuming than implementing intake procedures for youth who were participating in the TANF-funded SYEI only. As indicated previously, sites did enroll youth in the regular WIA Youth formula program on an individual basis.

In the other states that did not apply for waivers, administrators indicated that they did not have time or sufficient information on what the program requirements would be to warrant the application. Administrators in one of these states noted that they initially considered requiring all SYEI youth participants to be enrolled in the regular WIA Youth formula program due to perceived difficulties in tracking the TANF Emergency Fund youth in the statewide database system. However, in the end, the data system was amended to include tracking of the TANF Emergency Fund program, and there was no longer a need to enroll youth in WIA for tracking purposes. Ultimately, the state decided not to apply for the waivers, but rather encouraged local sites to enroll SYEI youth in WIA when appropriate without the benefit of a waiver.

C. Youth Eligibility Requirements and Recruitment

Given that TANF was the main source of funding for the 2010 SYEI, states and local sites emphasized recruiting and serving TANF and TANF-eligible youth. Eligibility for the TANF Emergency Fund, however, was not restricted to income eligibility for TANF cash assistance. To participate in a TANF Emergency Fund-subsidized job, youth had to be in needy families, as defined by each state. As a result of the TANF funds, sites considered the federal and state eligibility requirements for their different funding streams and how to recruit youth targeted for the 2010 SYEI. Several challenges also arose in the recruitment of these youth.

1. SYEI Eligibility Requirements

The flexibility inherent in the TANF funding led states to develop different eligibility requirements for their TANF-funded SYEIs. For the TANF Emergency Fund, each state interpreted the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) guidelines and provided guidance to its local areas regarding the state's youth eligibility requirements. Although the state generally defined the eligibility requirements for the TANF-funded SYEI, in California the counties established the eligibility criteria.

Across the sites, the characteristics and ages of eligible youth varied (Table IV.1). According to state guidance, two sites continued to use WIA eligibility rules for the TANF Emergency Fund and thus used these requirements for their WIA and TANF funding sources. Others, however, placed priority on serving youth in TANF or public assistance households and also extended eligibility to those in households earning 200 percent or less of the federal poverty level. In these latter sites, the eligibility requirements varied by the funding stream. For example the Buffalo/Erie County site followed WIA eligibility requirements for both of its WIA funding streams, but eligibility for the TANF funding source was youth in TANF households or youth in families at or below 200 percent of the poverty level.

Table IV.1. Youth Eligibility Requirements for TANF-Funded SYEIs

| Site | Eligibility Rules | Ages |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Northwest Arkansas, AR | WIA eligibility rules | 14–21 |
| Santa Clara County, CA | TANF recipients SNAP recipients Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 15–17 |
| South Bay, CA | TANF recipients SNAP recipients Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL Former foster youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL General relief youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 14–24 |
| Northern Cook County, IL | Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 16–24 |
| Southern Illinois, IL | Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 16–24 |
| Anoka County, MN | Teen parents on TANF Younger youth on TANF grant Older youth in TANF household Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 16–24 |
| South Central, MN | Teen parents on TANF Younger youth on TANF grant Older youth in TANF household Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 16–24 |
| Buffalo/Erie County, NY ^a | Youth in TANF household Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 14–20 |
| Eastern Oklahoma, OK | WIA eligibility rules ^b | 16–21 |
| Dallas County, TX | Youth in household receiving public assistance Youth in families earning 200 percent or less of FPL | 16–24 |

Source: Mathematica site visits to study sites, 2010.

^aBuffalo/Erie County supported its SYEI using regular TANF funds, not the TANF Emergency Fund.

^bAdditionally, 80 percent of youth served must fit into a maintenance of effort (MOE) category.

FPL = federal poverty level; SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families; TANF EF = TANF Emergency Fund; WIA ARRA = Workforce Investment Act Recovery Act youth allocation.

In addition, some sites received guidance on the priority of service among groups of eligible youth. For example, Minnesota prioritized its eligibility groups. The first priority group was teen parents ages 16 to 24 who received assistance from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the state TANF program. The second priority group was younger youth, ages 16 to 18, who were on a grant in MFIP households. The third group consisted of older youth, ages 19 to 24, who were in MFIP households but not on a grant, and the last priority group was other older and younger youth in TANF-eligible families (at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level) with a minor child in the household. Sites attempted to serve youth in these groups before serving other needy youth. State guidance regarding priority groups meant that certain youth, such as foster youth and older youth who did not have minor children in the household, were not eligible for the 2010 SYEI.

Additionally, the age requirements for eligibility set by the state—or the county in the case of California—differed across the sites. For the SYEI funded through TANF, the ages of youth served

ranged from 14 to 24, with only three sites serving 14-year-olds, and with only six sites serving 22- to 24-year-olds (Table IV.1). All sites served 16- and 17-year-olds. Of the nine sites that used more than one funding stream, seven served youth of the same age regardless of funding stream. The other two sites served older youth with WIA Recovery Act funds and younger youth with TANF or the TANF Emergency Funds.

Some sites also indicated that they focused on a particular age range based on their experiences in the 2009 SYEI. For example, one site indicated that it targeted older youth for the 2010 SYEI because of the challenges it had experienced in placing younger youth at work sites and because older youth had fewer services available to them. However, another site indicated that it focused on the younger youth because they were most in need of exposure to the world of work.

2. Youth Recruitment Strategies

For the 2010 SYEI, sites relied on recruitment strategies that had been successful in the past as well as new strategies to target TANF youth. Based on their prior experiences, sites reported recruiting youth by distributing fliers in the community and placing advertisements on local television and radio stations and in local newspapers. Partnering with other human service organizations and community providers was also a common strategy used by many sites. A provider in one site reported posting information about the SYEI on Facebook to recruit participants and receiving many inquiries as a result.

In addition to these methods, given the emphasis on recruiting TANF or TANF eligible youth, sites coordinated with their local TANF office. As described in Chapter III, six sites coordinated with the TANF agency to recruit eligible youth for the program and/or to verify the eligibility of recruited youth. In these sites, provider staff reported receiving from the local or state TANF office lists of TANF recipients or lists of youth who were automatically eligible for the program due to their status as members of TANF households. Provider staff typically used the list of TANF recipients and or youth living in TANF households as a starting point for recruitment. Provider staff contacted them either through a telephone call or through a mass letter distribution to see if they would be interested in the program. In addition to outreach at the local level, one site reported outreach efforts at the state level, too; its state TANF agency sent letters directly to TANF households.

When youth were recruited, TANF agencies also worked with workforce staff in several sites to verify eligibility. In Santa Clara, for example, the DHS trained youth provider staff to use the statewide TANF system, which enabled provider staff to verify youth eligibility. For youth providers who operated both 2009 and 2010 summer programs, several sites acknowledged that verifying eligibility was easier under the TANF Emergency Fund SYEI. WIA eligibility required an assessment to identify each youth's barrier(s) to employment. This process of establishing WIA eligibility was more time- and labor-intensive than for establishing TANF eligibility, which primarily required verifying family income.

3. Successes and Challenges of Recruiting and Enrolling Youth

Sites reported facing two key challenges as they worked to recruit and enroll youth.

1. **Participants' concerns about the effects on their public assistance benefits.** The first challenge involved difficulties recruiting and enrolling youth in TANF households for the SYEI. Significantly, for minors who were members of families receiving TANF

assistance, states had the option to disregard all the minor's earnings in determining the family's TANF eligibility and benefit. However, the Food and Nutrition Service, which operated SNAP, ruled that income from a job subsidized through the TANF Emergency Fund should be counted as earned income for SNAP purposes (Lower-Basch 2010). The effects of these policies was a particular concern for sites in four states in which youth and their families did not want participation in SYEI to reduce their families' monthly TANF or SNAP benefits. To ensure that youth and their families understood the implications of participating, participants in one state were required to sign a waiver acknowledging that they understood that wages paid through SYEI would count as income for TANF cash assistance, SNAP, medical assistance, and unemployment insurance. Even though staff worked to communicate the benefits of work experience to potential participants and their families, due to this challenge, sites that focused on TANF recipients did not serve as many youth in TANF households as they had planned.

- 2. Delayed state guidance.** A second challenge concerned the delay in guidance surrounding eligibility for employment subsidized through the TANF Emergency Fund. This delay meant that some sites did not recruit youth as early or as efficiently as they would have liked. Program staff reported that the delayed guidance prevented them from (1) developing a plan that targeted the necessary, eligible youth; and (2) partnering with local schools and other organizations that typically aid in recruitment. In a few sites, the delays resulted in recruiting youth for the SYEI who were no longer eligible for the program when the final guidance was issued. For example, one site initially recruited youth using the WIA Recovery Act eligibility guidelines but, after receiving the final rules and the state guidance on priority groups, had to review youths' applications and retroactively deny participation to those who did not meet the state-issued TANF Emergency Fund eligibility priority group guidelines. In the end, this site reported that it met its targeted enrollment due to its positive working relationship with the local TANF staff, who helped to identify eligible youth. Another way the delays affected sites' efforts to recruit youth involved their work recruiting in-school youth. Some sites reported that they did not have sufficient time to work with their school partners to recruit in-school youth for the summer.

Despite the delays in guidance and the challenges unique to recruiting the TANF youth, most of the study sites recruited, verified, and enrolled the targeted number of youth for their 2010 SYEIs. These sites frequently credited the previous SYEI for their success. Relationships were established with youth in the community in 2009 and paved the way for successful recruitment in summer 2010. Only one site, Buffalo/Erie County, had many more eligible youth apply for the program than it could serve; this appeared to be due to the popularity of the site's long-running SYEI. New York has a history of providing subsidized summer youth employment; the program in years past has attracted many youth and is frequently oversubscribed. As a result, the program used a lottery to allocate the available slots to eligible youth. Other sites missed their targets, in part because delays in funding shortened their recruitment efforts and the number of weeks of the SYEI.

D. The Participation of Public and Private Work Sites

Study sites reported that employers were willing participants in the 2010 SYEI. Many of the employers that sites recruited had participated in the sites' 2009 SYEI and had positive experiences with the youth. Some sites, however, reported that they intentionally recruited more private work sites in 2010 either because sites perceived that these work sites would provide more opportunities to youth or to count the private work site supervisory hours as MOE for the TANF Emergency

Fund. Across the study sites, eight were in states that reported that they planned to count the supervisory hours as MOE.

1. Recruiting and Orienting Employers

Sites' strategies for the recruitment and orientation of employers relied on their past experiences. To recruit employers for summer 2010, sites mostly approached employers that had participated in the 2009 SYEI and asked if they would participate again in 2010. This strategy yielded a good base of work sites.

When recruited to participate, employers were generally oriented to 2010 SYEI in one of two ways. They either attended a one-time group orientation given by program staff to learn about the program or they were contacted by staff for a one-on-one telephone or face-to-face meeting. Regardless of how employers were oriented to SYEI, program staff worked to communicate the program's goals, rules, and regulations. Interviewed employers noted that they were motivated to join the program for two main reasons: (1) they appreciated the assistance the SYEI participants provided during the summer months and (2) they liked the opportunity to do something for the larger community and to mentor the youth.

2. The Increased Use of Private Work Sites

Although the employers were recruited using similar methods, the TANF funding affected some sites' use of private work sites. Three of the eight study sites in states counting supervisory hours as MOE directly attributed their increased reliance on private employers in 2010 to this policy. These sites indicated that they recruited more private sector employers than in the previous year because they were concerned about public sector work sites' use of federal funding to support supervisors.

Other study sites also indicated that they increased their reliance on private sector employers, but not necessarily because of the match requirements. Two other sites in states that used supervisors' hours as MOE reported that they approached private employers not for this reason, but to broaden the opportunities for youth and/or increase the likelihood that the summer job would lead to permanent work placement at the job site. The other three sites in states using supervisors' hours as MOE did not report recruiting private employers over public employers. Rather, these sites openly recruited work sites from among the private and public sectors to provide quality job placements to the large number of participating youth. For example, one site reported that it worked harder in 2010 than it had in 2009 to recruit work sites that would provide youth with quality work experiences, regardless of the employer being from the public or private sector. In 2009, staff at this site reported that they focused only on identifying a sufficient number of work sites and accepted any employer that wanted to participate. As a result, not all youth had experiences in which they could gain job skills, work in a field related to their career interests, and be supervised by a responsible adult.

Some sites reported that using supervisors' hours as MOE posed challenges for some employers. According to respondents in these sites, counting the employer supervisory hours as MOE also affected sites' requirements for participating employers. For example, in one state that used supervisory hours, the state required employers to submit an "In Kind Claim Form" as part of the application process to report work site supervisors' monthly salaries, supervisors' monthly employee benefits, hours worked by the supervisor, and the number of TANF Emergency Fund

employees supervised. Employers that participated in the summer program the year before were initially resistant to the additional burden that tracking hours required.

E. Tracking Youths' Work-Readiness

Although states and sites did not have to report any data documenting the outcomes of their TANF-funded SYEIs, the LWIAs that administered the SYEIs had received guidance from ETA on reporting youths' work readiness. In May 2010, ETA issued guidance to LWIAs to strengthen and standardize a work-readiness measure based on the experiences of the 2009 SYEI.⁹ States and sites had discretion to follow this guidance for their SYEIs, but it was particularly relevant for sites providing subsidized work experiences to youth through the WIA Recovery Act funds.

As a result of the flexibility regarding the work-readiness reporting requirements, the study sites took three different approaches to the work readiness measure in summer 2010:

1. **Five sites followed ETA guidance.** In these sites, employers assessed youth, regardless of the source of funding for their work experience, repeatedly during the summer using a four-point scale. To be considered work ready, youth had to achieve proficiency in a particular number of content areas. For example, one site implemented a tool that averaged youths' scores in nine categories, such as punctuality, appearance, and quality of work. Youth who scored an average of three or higher attained work readiness status. In another site, the state developed a statewide tool in response to ETA guidance and instructed all sites to implement it in summer 2010 (see Box IV.1).
2. **One site assessed youths' work readiness but did not seek employer input.** Throughout the summer, youth in this site completed career-related modules in Career Ready 101, a self-paced computer program. Career Ready 101 informed youth and their case managers if they achieved proficiency in a module. Youth also completed a 20-question test to assess their work readiness at the end of the SYEI.
3. **Four sites did not collect work readiness data or did not collect it systematically.** Because the TANF Emergency Fund had no work readiness measure requirements and the youth were not enrolled in WIA, the remaining four sites did not place much emphasis on the work readiness measure. These sites either asked employers to assess youth but did not use the data to determine youths' attainment of work readiness or did not assess youth at all.

⁹ ETA's guidance to local areas regarding work readiness attainment includes (1) revised methodology for measuring work readiness (work site evaluation measuring performance in the workplace is required to assess work readiness for the work readiness indicator, the employer must conduct the work site evaluation, the evaluation tool should focus on attaining a satisfactory level of proficiency as opposed to a measureable increase or gain, and the attainment of proficiency or competency in the foundational and work site-specific skills necessary to be successful in the workplace should be determined by the employer and should be based on attainment of work behaviors outlined in the evaluation tool); (2) implementation of employer evaluation (employers should review the tool with the youth on or before the first day of the work experience and it is recommended that employers conduct more than one evaluation throughout the experience); and (3) design of the employer evaluation (the tool should measure work readiness skills most desired by employers and the tool should have clearly defined grading criteria; past work site evaluation tools have used a grading scale to measure youth performance, but not all tools have clearly defined the meaning and relevant value of each level).

Box IV.1. Arkansas' Statewide Work Readiness Measure

Arkansas developed a statewide tool in response to ETA guidance and instructed all sites to implement it in summer 2010. The Arkansas Work Readiness Tool (AWRT) was completed by youths' work site supervisors at least once during the summer (although the state recommended more than one evaluation over the course of the summer). The tool included 10 measures of work readiness, such as attendance, punctuality, workplace appearance, communication skills, and response to supervision. For each measure, the tool provided four rating categories: performance improvement plan needed, needs development, proficient, and exemplary. The employer could also indicate and rate the youth on any specific workplace or career skill required for the job. Each of the required measures was defined with examples of behavior that would meet each of the four rating categories. For example, a youth rated as exemplary for the workplace appearance measure had a "consistent display of professional appearance and hygiene [that] serves as a model for others." The SYEI participant had to have an overall average score of proficient to attain the work readiness skill.

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V. YOUTHS' SUMMER EXPERIENCES

In summer 2010, the 10 study sites placed about 8,000 youth in summer jobs. Learning what these youth did during the summer, especially the work they performed, is important for documenting how the TANF Emergency Fund and other funding sources were used. This chapter describes the SYEIs of the study sites and participating youths' summer work experiences, regardless of the funding source. These descriptions are based on the qualitative data collected through interviews with program staff, youth providers, employers, and youth. In particular, this chapter describes youths' motivation for participating, three models of services provided to youth, youths' work site experiences and their perceptions of how they benefited, and the availability of post-summer transitions.

Key Findings: Youths' Experiences

- **Based on a study-developed typology, sites provided services to youth that fit one of three models, which provided progressively more services.** (1) In the basic work model, youth received little assessment or work preparation before being placed at their work sites; (2) in the enhanced work model, sites provided work readiness training and matched youth to work sites based on an assessment of youths' skills and employer feedback; and (3) in the integrated services model, sites worked with many of their youth to provide other services, such as academic supports.
- **During the summer, youth worked in a variety of jobsites, including child and adult care facilities, local parks and recreation centers, manufacturing and construction companies, and social service facilities.** Across the sites, youth worked an average of 300 hours over 10 weeks and earned an average of \$8.15 per hour.
- **Youth appreciated the opportunities to earn income and gain work experience through the SYEI.** Youth reported spending the income they earned to pay for clothes or bills, or they saved it for future expenses. Youth also valued learning new skills and developing positive relationships with their work site supervisors.
- **Although sites did not focus on transitioning youth to other services, they did link some youth with post-summer services.** Sites described linking participants with the regular WIA Youth formula program, One-Stop Career Center services, and/or postsecondary educational institutions.

A. Motivation to Participate

Discussions with staff and youth across the 10 sites indicated that youth appreciated the opportunity to work, especially during difficult economic times. Youth in the selected communities faced a number of employment barriers when looking for work outside of the program. Due to the economic recession, jobs traditionally held by youth, such as in retail and food service, were taken by adults looking for work. As a result, youth reported having difficulty finding jobs for the summer. Program staff also reported other reasons youth in their communities had difficulties finding employment, including youth who lacked an education or basic literacy and work readiness skills, had a criminal record, were pregnant or had children, and/or had no reliable transportation to get to and from a job.

SYEI participants interviewed as part of the study said they participated to earn money and to build their careers (see Box V.1). They wanted to earn money to pay for essentials, such as a car,

bills, or child support, and/or to save for college or other future expenses. For some, saving money to purchase back-to-school or brand-name clothes was a motivating factor. Some youth also noted that their summer 2010 experiences enabled them to learn more about possible careers and future opportunities. Youth applied to participate in the program to build their resumes, learn job readiness skills, explore careers, and obtain references and contacts for future employment. Youth also mentioned that participating meant that they had something to do over the summer and that their participation would keep them out of trouble.

Box V.1. Youths' Reasons for Participating in the SYEI

- ***To earn money***

"I joined to help out my little brother and sister. Now they don't really ask my mom [for money], they just come to me and they know that I'll get what they want for them."

"I worked so I could put gas in my car. I have a job during the year so I drive back and forth. This money helped me keep the tank full."

"I think the money is just the initial interest, but then everything else is just a bonus on top of that."

- ***To build a resume***

"For me, I'm going to school right now for marketing management. I always wanted to build up something along the lines of customer service. Every job I've held in the program has been a customer service-related position. It just keeps me going and I've established a pretty good resume based on those job experiences."

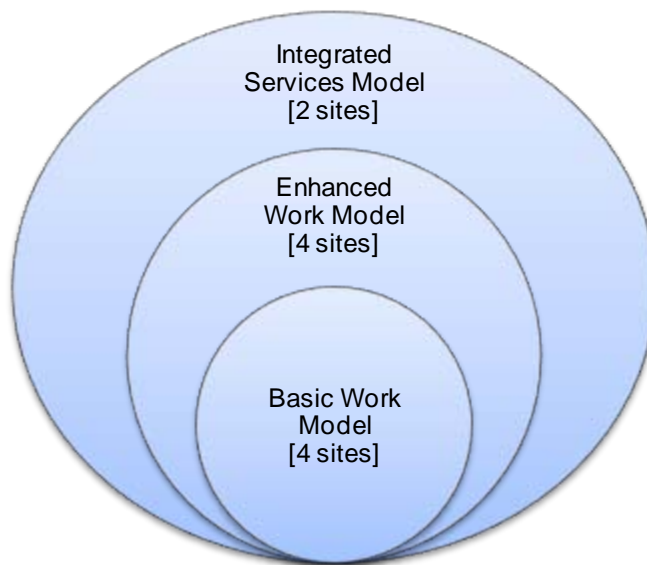
"I did [the program] last year and this year. I have two references right there. For the future, ya know? Experience on a resume will help, I think."

- ***To do something for the summer***

"I wanted to do it just to be able to do something! Beats sitting at home playing games all day. And I don't even have cable or internet. I didn't want to get into trouble."

B. Summer Program Models

Although some sites focused on providing youth with a work experience, others provided a broader range of services to all or a portion of their youth. For purposes of this report, the SYEIs of the 10 sites are categorized into three program models (Figure V.1): (1) the basic work model, (2) the enhanced work model, and (3) the integrated service model. These models were identified and defined by the authors based on the on-site data collected; sites did not identify their model nor purposefully select their model from among these three models. Although these models provide a useful typology to describe the services youth could receive across the sites, it should be noted that a site might not always fall neatly into one model, because it might have differentiated services by youths' ages or needs. One site, for example, provided most youth with services that would align with the basic services model; however, some youth in the same site received academic supports that might better align with the integrated services model.

Figure V.1. Three Program Models

Source: Mathematica site visits to study sites, 2010.

As described in this section, the models successively provided more services to youth. Sites' approaches to services and the resulting model categorizing these services appeared to stem from consideration of various factors. Sites generally provided services based on the type of funding source available, the time available to develop a summer program, and state/county guidance. Although all sites took youths' interests into account when placing them at available work sites, the models took different approaches to gathering additional information before placing the youth. Regardless of the model, however, sites reported challenges in making the most appropriate placements for youth and employers.

1. The Basic Work Model

Four sites' SYEIs mainly fell into the basic work model. These sites' primary goal was to provide participants with a work experience. Youth participating in these sites generally received the following services: an orientation, an assessment of their career interests, and a work experience. Support services, in the form of transportation assistance, clothing allowance and/or assistance with child care, were often provided to the youth to encourage and enable them to remain in their work experience. Box V.2 provides a case study of one site in this model.

When placing youth at work sites, sites considered youths' stated career interests, gathered from youths' applications and/or informal conversations, along with each of the following four factors thought to be important for a successful work site placement:

1. **Age.** In some sites, younger youth were placed at group sites, such as at a city park, with additional adult supervision; older youth were placed at offices or other more traditional jobsites. One site noted this approach was used because supervisors at public group sites had more experience working with youth and other individuals with little or no work experience than private or small businesses.
2. **Location.** In an effort to minimize the burden of finding and paying for transportation, provider staff preferred to place youth at a work site that was in close proximity to the

youths' homes. According to staff at one site, for example, they considered the public transportation routes available to youth when placing them at work sites.

3. **Experience.** Provider staff took into consideration youths' previous work experience to match youths' maturity and skill levels to jobs with appropriate tasks. For example, staff placed novice youth with an employer that could provide more supervision than a youth who already demonstrated an ability to work independently.
4. **Availability.** Provider staff considered the youth's schedule and availability when placing him or her at a particular work site. For example, if the employer specified that the work hours would be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., then the provider would be sure that the youth had no late afternoon commitments that would conflict with the work hours.

Box V.2. Case Study for the Basic Work Model

In Northern Cook County, one SYEI provider screened youth over the telephone and instructed them to bring necessary documentation to a scheduled group orientation. The hour-long orientation introduced the rules and regulations of the program and led youth through the application, page by page. Youth also provided information about family income. Within 48 hours of orientation, provider staff placed youth at a participating work site.

Before youth reported to their work sites, their assigned case manager often discussed the nature of the position and what the youth could expect while working at the site. During the summer, if youth had questions or concerns about their summer work experiences, they could contact their case managers. In most instances, case managers visited the work sites weekly to collect timesheets and to discuss any work site issues with the youth and employers.

Eligible youth could receive support services, most often in the form of a clothing allowance provided through the TANF Emergency Fund, up to \$427. In most instances, case managers accompanied youth on shopping trips to select and purchase work-appropriate clothing.

2. The Enhanced Work Model

As described by study respondents, the four sites in the enhanced work model did more than sites in the basic work model to assess youths' career interests when placing them in a work site and prepare them for that job. They also provide youth with work site training before placing them at their work sites. In particular, the four components that the enhanced work model added to the basic work model included:

1. **Collection of more comprehensive information about youths' interests or skills.** Sites in this model used formal assessment tools and processes to identify work site placements that built on youths' academic and vocational strengths. In two sites, youth were required to take an academic assessment, which included either the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) assessment, a modified version of the TABE, or the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Survey (CASAS). In the other two sites in this model, youth completed a full profile assessment, which asked information about the youths' background, criminal history, ideal summer jobs, transportation needs, physical health conditions, pregnancy and dependent children, and career goals and interests. All four sites used the information from the assessments to place youth at available work sites.

2. **Youth engagement in the placement process.** Youth either ranked their choice of employers or met with case workers in one-on-one meetings to discuss their interests.
3. **Employers' input into their SYEI-assigned youth.** Sites encouraged employers to interview the youth, which had three primary benefits: (1) to simulate a real interview experience when applying for a job; (2) to ensure that the employer was comfortable with the placement and was given the opportunity to meet the candidate; and (3) to enable the youth to ask questions about the position and learn more about the potential work environment. Employers were invited to provide feedback to the provider staff regarding the interviews and their impressions of the youths' skills or potential skill development; this feedback further assisted in the work site placement process.
4. **Work readiness training provided at the beginning of the summer.** This training went beyond orientation to the SYEI program and generally provided youth with information about time management, interviewing skills, effective communication skills, and personal budgeting. The length of the work readiness training sessions differed among sites (for example, six hours in one site and a series of five, four-hour sessions in another site), but all youth were paid for their participation. In all four enhanced work model sites, the training sessions occurred before youth began their work experience.

Box V.3 provides an enhanced work model case study.

Box V.3. Case Study for the Enhanced Work Model

In South Bay in Los Angeles, participants completed a Youth Profile form. The form gathered basic demographic data, grade level, criminal history, pregnancy and dependent children, job skills, career interests, transportation needs, physical health condition, and whether youth participated in a past summer jobs program through WIA or CalWORKs. The youth and case manager discussed the profile form assessment results, and the case manager used the information to develop the youth's individual service strategy (ISS).

Youth then attended a 20-hour job readiness workshop before being assigned to their work sites. The workshop was generally held for four hours per day over the course of five days. Certified instructors taught the workshop using a standard curriculum (*Blueprint for Workplace Success: A Guide for Employment Preparation*). Workshop instructors provided recommendations to youth provider staff about the type of job placement that would be a good fit for youth based on their performance and stated interests in the job readiness workshop.

Using information from the Youth Profile form, discussions with youth, recommendations from workshop instructors, and general considerations (for example, age, previous work experience, work site proximity to where youth lived, and employers' preferred schedule), youth provider staff identified work sites that would be appropriate for each youth. When staff identified a potential work site, they would contact the employer about the placement. In some instances the employer would interview the youth before agreeing to the placement. Feedback from employer interviews helped provider staff modify work site placements, if necessary.

Youth began their work placement within two weeks of finishing the job readiness workshop. When placed, youth typically worked full-time through the summer. Additionally, youth could receive support services, most often in the form of bus passes and a clothing and equipment allowance of up to \$100 paid through the TANF Emergency Fund.

3. The Integrated Services Model

The two sites in the integrated services model went beyond the enhanced work model by focusing more on the long-term needs of youth. Staff believed the focus on youths' experiences beyond the work site was necessary to help youth develop lifelong skills that could be used in the classroom and future employment. Therefore, they sought to provide youth with a long-range approach and plan for educational and employment success. Much like the enhanced work model sites, these sites assessed youths' academic needs and career interests and used that information to place them at a work site. However, the components that the integrated services model added to the enhanced work model included:

1. **Academic support services.** These services generally focused on reading and math skills, through either a self-paced, computer-based training program or classroom-based academics.
2. **Ongoing work readiness training.** The training was provided on a weekly basis throughout the summer and addressed work skills, such as finding the right job, writing a resume, interview skills, and workplace ethics.

In these two sites, youth earned monetary incentives for successful completion of academic and/or work readiness training, ranging from \$150 to \$400. Box V.4 provides a case study of a site in the integrated services model.

Box V.4. Case Study for the Integrated Services Model

Throughout the summer in the Eastern Oklahoma SYEI, youth participated in monthly group meetings with other youth participants and monthly one-on-one meetings with their case managers. The group meetings typically lasted two hours per month and focused on a specific aspect of work readiness, such as resume development and interview skills.

Additionally, youth were required to complete work readiness and academic skills training modules organized through a self-paced, computer-based program called Career Ready 101. A statewide program, Career Ready 101 has a number of modules designed to address youths' basic skill deficiencies in academics and work readiness. The program included academic skills modules in reading, applied mathematics, and locating information. It also covered work readiness skill modules in career development, pre-employment skills, survival/daily living skills, and job retention.

All youth took a pre-test and the results indicated which modules youth were required to complete. Case managers monitored the youths' progress in the system. Youth who successfully completed and demonstrated a grade-level gain in academic skills modules received a \$20 stipend for each grade-level gain. Youth who successfully completed and showed proficiency in work readiness modules received a \$50 stipend per module and were awarded a Work Key certificate at the end of the SYEI. Stipends were paid using regular WIA Youth formula funds.

Youth generally began their work placement within two weeks of completing their orientation. When placed, youth typically worked full-time through the summer.

4. Factors Influencing Sites' Models

As described above, sites did not pick and choose among these study-developed models, but instead offered services that built on their past experiences and took into account the time line for

the summer 2010 SYEI. Sites with an approach that fit into the basic work model developed their programs quickly and emphasized the youths' work experience, as opposed to work readiness training. Respondents in these four sites noted that delays in funding and the requirement to spend the funds by the September 30, 2010, deadline meant that they had to recruit youth quickly and assign them to their work sites. Some site administrators also indicated that their understanding, based on their own interpretation or guidance from the state, was that the TANF Emergency Fund could be used only for wages. Thus, they used their funds almost exclusively for youths' wages and did not provide other services.

Sites with approaches that fit within the other two models—enhanced work and integrated services—were able to take a more informed approach to placing youth at a work site and provided services to youth beyond the work placement. In some instances, sites were able to provide these services because of different interpretations regarding the services that the TANF Emergency Fund could support or because other funding sources, such as WIA Recovery Act or regular WIA Youth formula funds, were used.

5. Sites' Experiences Placing Youth at Work Sites

Although site visit respondents indicated that, based on their experiences, many placements were successful, all sites, regardless of model and the care they took to find a good fit between youth and work sites, reported needing to reassign at least some youth. No pattern was discernable across the models regarding the sites' success in placing youth at work sites. Across the sites, the timing of employer recruitment, in addition to the pressure to place youth quickly, limited providers' ability to make the best placement in every case. Many employers were recruited before youth; as a result, available employers were not always the best fit for recruited youths' interests. Additionally, local providers felt pressure to place youth quickly, even if all the youth information was at hand.

Occasionally, a quick or ill-informed placement occurred, and neither the youth nor employer was satisfied. Provider staff, employers, and youth respondents all provided examples in which they had to address an unsuccessful assignment. Some youth participants felt as if their career interests were not honored and requested to have their assignment switched. However, others noted that although their summer placement was not ideal, it was a job and finding another placement was not worth the trouble and effort. Employers also noted that some youth did not possess the skills necessary to successfully address the tasks assigned to them. In some instances, employers spoke with provider staff about finding youth better suited to the work. In one situation, a youth with a learning disability struggled in her original job placement. When this feedback was communicated to the provider staff, the youth was placed at a center that specialized in providing therapy to disabled youth. The staff at the site understood her limitations and the youth reportedly excelled. The original employer was assigned a different youth who could better meet the employer's needs.

C. Youths' Work Site Experiences

Across the sites, the core activity of the SYEI was the job experience and putting income into the hands of youth. Each site had to identify work sites and, at the work site, youth were assigned tasks and a work site supervisor. Sites also had to determine the number of hours youth could work, and determine the wages youth could earn based on available budgets and funding streams.

1. Work Site Recruitment

To identify enough work sites to meet the expected number of participants, sites relied on their 2009 employers and also recruited additional employers through local chambers of commerce and personal contacts with other employers. One site reported using the employer contacts developed for the area's adult subsidized employment program to aid in recruitment for the youth program. Six sites reported recruiting more private sector employers in 2010 than in 2009 either to increase the likelihood that the older youths' placement would lead to a regular position with the employer, or the site relied on private sector supervisors in order to count their wages as MOE funds.

Staff across the sites reported focusing on identifying enough work sites without consideration of the industry. Thus, as reported by program and youth respondents, common work sites included manufacturing facilities, restaurants, retail stores, summer camps, and public administration buildings.

Reflecting federal interest in health care and green industries, most sites reported identifying and placing some youth in health care or green industry-related jobs. However, some sites reported challenges placing youth in these industries. In the health care industry, for example, employees often need specific certifications to perform tasks. Without necessary certifications, some employers could not hire youth participants. Although some older youth received on-the-job training, opportunities to earn credentials were limited among younger youth due to age restrictions. Additionally, exposing youth to jobs in the green industry was often challenging as local areas often did not have local green industries with which to partner. Still, across the sites, at least some youth worked in non-green jobs that contained green elements (for example, company-wide recycling programs, composting, and efficient uses of energy). Work sites that were nature centers or recycling agencies enabled youth to gain exposure to green concepts through their work placements.

2. Types of Tasks

Youth performed a range of common tasks at their work sites, including administrative, construction, food service, sales, senior care, or janitorial tasks. Youth who participated in the study's focus groups also discussed the nature of their summer jobs and responsibilities. Across the sites, youth reported that they performed the following tasks:

- **Answered the phone and did clerical tasks.** "I would answer the phone and transfer the calls to the staff. I also learned more about computers and Microsoft Word. So that was cool. I learned a lot about Word there."
- **Worked with young children.** "I spent my summer working with the little kids. I made sure they were safe and didn't run away. I learned a lot about how to discipline little kids and teaching them about time outs."
- **Worked in landscaping.** "We woke up way early. I learned how to use a tree saw to cut off high branches."
- **Worked in building maintenance.** "We'd meet as a team and do stuff like hang drywall. We also would like paint and stuff. Do whatever needed to be done there to make it look better. Hang siding, mow the lawn."

3. Supervising and Mentoring

For many youth in SYEI, the summer work experience was their first work experience. The summer provided them with an opportunity to learn the skills required to perform well on the job. Equally important, the program attempted to expose youth to positive work behaviors from other professionals at the work sites.

Across all sites, each youth was assigned an on-site supervisor. The supervisor's official job was to oversee and manage the youth's experience, including making sure the youth was engaged in productive tasks, signing timesheets, and providing feedback to the service provider regarding the youth's performance. Throughout the recruiting and application/screening process, many sites worked to identify work site supervisors who would be willing to model and encourage positive work behaviors and values associated with successful employment.¹⁰

Although a mentoring relationship was not required of employers, respondents noted that an ideal relationship between the supervisor and the youth was one in which a supervisor could spend time not only teaching the youth how to do the assigned tasks properly, but also be willing and able to teach the youth about the value of listening to instructions, communicating appropriately, showing initiative, dressing appropriately, and being collegial. The value of a good mentor could influence youths' perception of professional work experiences. For example, in one site, employers spoke about how they worked closely with youth at their work sites to model proper behavior at the work site and to intervene when youth behaved or dressed inappropriately.

Most youth interviewed as part of the study spoke positively about their relationships with their supervisors. One youth's comments on the relationship reflected other youths' comments: "I'm really comfortable with [my supervisor]. We have time to talk and like ... he lets me know, if I am doing something wrong, he'd let me know if I'm doing it wrong and then he would try to [teach] me..." However, a few youth described poor relationships that might have limited the usefulness of their experiences. For example, one youth stated that his supervisor "Looks over my shoulder all the time ... [and the stuff] I do for her, it's never good enough."

In on-site discussions, employers voiced their satisfaction in mentoring their communities' youth. In addition to the support they received from their SYEI participants, these employers tended to take seriously the mentoring aspect of the program. In fact, most interviewed employers spoke enthusiastically about the program and stated a willingness to participate again, should the opportunity arise.

Interviews with provider staff and employers also revealed that communication was integral to ensuring successful relationships. Employers' understanding of the program components depended on the relationship they had with the youth and the youth's case manager. For employers, having a single point of contact proved beneficial—especially if a problem arose—and was frequently noted as being a strength of the program when such a contact existed. As the summer progressed, employers noted the strengths and weaknesses of particular youth they supervised and shared this information with their provider staff contacts. In some cases, employers would contact the provider

¹⁰ In the study sites, the youths' work site supervisor and mentor was often the same person. The supervisor would be the person working daily with the youth assigned to the work site and, thus, the person most likely to take on the role of mentor to the youth.

staff to identify other needs. For example, one youth's car broke down, forcing him to wake up at 5:30 in the morning so that he could walk to work and arrive by 8:00 a.m. When this transportation challenge was discovered by his supervisor, the supervisor called the provider staff and a bus pass was provided.

4. Hours and Wages

Youth in the 10 sites worked an average of 300 hours over 10 weeks and earned an average of \$8.15 per hour in these summer jobs. Generally, payments were made to youth through the LWIA administrative agency, which was often the employer of record. In two sites, the payroll process was contracted to an outside service provider, such as the city or an external organization. In Dallas County, for example, every two weeks, youth submitted a timesheet and their wages were loaded into their accounts, which were managed by an outside organization. Youth would access their accounts using swipe or debit cards.

D. Youths' Perspectives on their Summer Experiences

Because the study visits were conducted at the end of the summer, youth were able to provide their perspectives on what they had gained by participating in the SYEI (Box V.5). Learning about the value of money, the value of hard work, and the importance of education were dominant themes across the sites. Youth also spoke about the opportunities they had to improve their communication and interpersonal skills.

Box V.5. Youths' Perspectives on How they Benefited from the SYEI

- *Gained appreciation for the value of money*

"Working makes me think twice [when shopping]. Like say you go to the store, before I would always want stuff and ask to buy it. But now I think, "Yah, I don't have enough money for that, we need to get this. I'm like this outfit is like six hours of work. Okay, this one is like seven hours of work. That's like a whole day right there!"

- *Learned how to be behave at work*

"I think it opens your eyes basically. Because I know like before I'd be partying and stuff and I go hang out with all my friends and stuff. Then like when you have a job, it's like your baby.... When you have a job, like you have to go home, you have to get enough sleep so you won't wake up cranky, and you wake up on time."

"I learned ... [that] actual communication is like more effort than just hitting a person; like you would get in trouble by doing that. But if you have a problem, then pull them somewhere and just talk with them."

- *Learned about the importance of education for their careers*

"... [T]he people I work with, they were telling me to go get an education because it's gonna help [me] get more. And that made me excited to go to college and do what I love and come back and work for it."

E. Post-Summer Transitions

Although the transition of youth to post-summer activities was not a major focus of the SYEI in study sites, staff and employers at most sites reported referring or discussing options with individual participants. The types of transition strategies reported included (1) linking participants to WIA services, (2) identifying work sites for older youth that could lead to permanent employment, and (3) discussing with youth their postsecondary and career opportunities. Sites in all three of the service models reported these strategies for transitioning youth.

For both older and younger youth, sites reported that they encouraged summer participants to visit their local One-Stop Career Centers for services following the end of the summer work experience. Several sites that enrolled SYEI participants in WIA encouraged their participants to continue their WIA participation as long as they were age eligible. Because the summer youth provider also administered the regular WIA Youth formula program, the transition for eligible youth from summer to school-year activities was seamless. In another site, the SYEI agency also administered the WIA Adult program and, at the end of the summer, staff encouraged older SYEI participants to meet with a career specialist for assistance developing a resume and career counseling.

Several sites reported that they placed older youth at work sites, typically for-profit work sites, which they believed would be more likely to lead to permanent job placements following the SYEI. Six sites reported that summer placements did, in fact, lead to permanent placements for some youth, but, as such post-summer transitions were not a focus of the SYEI, the data were not available for specific numbers of youth transitioning to permanent placement, and how many of those were in the private sector.

Staff at nearly all of the sites reported connecting individual youth with opportunities to pursue their education at postsecondary institutions. These connections appeared to be enhanced if a community college was a partner in the SYEI (see Box V.6). Toward the end of the summer program, SYEI staff talked with individual participants who they thought would be good candidates for furthering their education at postsecondary institutions, such as community colleges. On a case-by-case basis, staff counseled youth on completing college applications and financial aid forms, identifying available scholarships, and exploring possible careers.

Box V.6. Working with Community Colleges

Three SYEI sites contracted with community colleges to serve as summer youth providers. Working closely with community colleges provided several additional opportunities for participating youth. In particular, the community colleges were resources for classroom-based activities, exposed youth to opportunities offered by postsecondary institutions, and created opportunities for youth to become familiar with a college campus. In one site, for example, younger youth (ages 14 and 15) were encouraged to attend week-long, career-focused camps at a local college. These camps had both classroom-based and hands-on learning experiences. For SYEI 2010, the camps focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and health care careers.

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VI. LOOKING AHEAD

In summer 2010, state and local TANF and workforce agencies had a unique opportunity to collaborate to provide subsidized work opportunities to youth. Through the TANF Emergency Fund, state TANF agencies had access to funding that could be used to subsidize youths' employment. At the same time, the public workforce investment system was poised to bring its expertise in providing youth with these opportunities.

Encouraged by the joint letter from the ETA and ACF assistant secretaries, the TANF and workforce systems worked together to expend part of their TANF Emergency Funds on a 2010 SYEI. By the end of the summer, 24 states and the District of Columbia accessed these funds to support approximately 138,000 youth in summer work experiences (Pavetti et al. 2011). Across the 10 study sites, about 8,000 youth participated in programs that were supported in part or wholly by the TANF Emergency Fund or other TANF resources.

The study sites' experiences with the 2010 SYEI highlight lessons learned and particular considerations for future SYEIs. Given the timing between receipt of the funds and the beginning of the summer, several local areas reported not having sufficient time to plan, affecting the coordination between agencies and the level and type of services that could be offered to participants. Thus, recommendations for future SYEIs include (1) offering additional activities that could be offered if sufficient funds are available and (2) seeking other opportunities for TANF and workforce agency coordination.

Enhanced program activities. In part because of insufficient planning time, the main thrust of the SYEIs was the work experience itself. However, several sites in this study were able to capitalize on youths' interest in the work opportunity to offer them additional experiences that could affect their futures. If sufficient time and resources are available, program providers should consider designing programs that provide youth—whether they are part of a TANF household or not—with additional experiences. Based on some study sites' experiences, the following three activities are worth exploring:

1. **Involving community colleges to a greater extent.** Sites that engaged community colleges found that the colleges can often provide additional opportunities for participating youth. They can (1) be a resource for classroom-based activities, (2) expose youth to available postsecondary opportunities, and (3) create unique opportunities for youth to become familiar with a college campus.
2. **Providing upfront/ongoing preparation of youth for a future in the world of work.** Sites noted the value of providing upfront and ongoing work readiness training to youth. SYEI participants might have little to no prior work experience and often have to develop soft work skills, such as knowing how to dress, interact with coworkers, and apply and interview for jobs, so they can be successful when they head into the workforce as adults.
3. **Placing additional emphasis on the mentoring of participants.** Youth and employers reported on the importance of a positive relationship between an SYEI participant and his or her supervisor. The supervisor can be instrumental in supporting the development of some of the soft work skills that youth need in the workplace, as described previously. A strengthened relationship, which perhaps could be furthered by

training supervisors on their role in the program or by providing incentives to sustain the relationship over time, could prove to be critical for youths' future success.

Additional opportunities to encourage TANF and workforce agency coordination.

Findings suggest that sites typically built on existing partnerships to implement the SYEI. The current fiscal and political environment, focused on deficit reduction and decreased government spending, has left federal and state policymakers looking for ways to streamline government and coordinate services of different agencies. Creating policies and procedures to encourage partnerships between TANF and workforce agencies could improve the efficiency and effectiveness of employment services for disadvantaged youth and adults.

Subsidized youth employment programs provide youth with opportunities that they might not otherwise have, particularly when youth employment rates are at a historic low. Although future funding similar in scope to summers 2009 and 2010 is uncertain, communities should consider other ways to support youths' employment. To continue these programs, communities could explore avenues to develop and sustain partnerships that combine the resources and expertise of TANF, workforce agencies, and other organizations in providing youth with valuable summer experiences. For example, TANF block grant funds in New York have supported LWIAs' provision of subsidized employment opportunities for several years. By combining resources to subsidize summer youth employment, workforce and TANF agencies can continue to explore and expand upon the opportunities that began in summer 2010 through the TANF Emergency Fund.

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