



*NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE
WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS*

MEETING SUMMARY

**Annual Meeting
August 21-24, 2005**

The Benson, Portland, Oregon

Sunday, August 21

Orientation for New Chairs and Staff

After introductions, **Gwyn Harvey (Chair of the Association and Chair of Oregon's Workforce Board)** reviewed the purpose and benefits of the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs, noting that peer-to-peer learning is the most important outcome of participating. The Association presents members with opportunities to discuss policy, strategic plans, common challenges, and success stories that members can take back to their state in a way that provides some leverage to make progress. As a group, members have leverage with Federal entities too. The Department of Labor and Department of Education listen to recommendations and frequently attend the Association's meetings to participate in dialogues on important topics. The better informed and educated we are about each other's progress and challenges, the better we can inform policy and practice on a national scale. Toward this end, the Association holds an annual meeting each summer and a semi-annual meeting each Winter, corresponding to the National Association of Workforce Boards meeting in Washington D.C.

Martin Simon (National Governors Association) provided a history of the Association, including an overview of the group's influence on federal workforce policy since its founding in 1988. The group's history reflects the strengthened role of the private sector in the workforce system during the eighties. A series of policy papers authored by the Association over the past decade have focused on the fragmentation and duplication within the system, recommendations for restructuring, strategies to finance through public/private partnerships, and most recently recommendations on building a world class workforce in the knowledge economy. These policy papers are listed in the Orientation packet and are available through the NGA. The Association today represents the private sector voice in the system, but more importantly it represents experience. This is very meaningful to the policy decisions at the federal and state levels. The NGA, the entity that staffs the Association, pulls the state experiences together through the two meetings held each year, surveys of members, conference calls, a monthly on-line Workforce Update, and a quarterly on-line Policy Forum. These activities are funded by a fee-for-service system for members.

To demonstrate the benefits of sharing state experiences, a few of the Chairs of the Association's Executive Committee discussed some current challenges in their states, as well as benefits of participation in the Association:

- **Jim Hardegree (GA)** cited coalition building among the public workforce system, education system, and the private sector as the biggest challenge. Jim asserted that the Board sometimes must be aggressive to get them to the table, and does not recommend waiting for them to come to you. This relates to a second challenge: member involvement on the Board. These challenges are no different in Georgia than in any state. The benefit of the Association is collaboration on the barriers to progress, and the opportunity to avoid re-inventing the wheel at each turn.
- **Mark Pingrey (CO)** agrees that getting the private sector involved is a challenge. He recommends going through the list of Chairs provided in the meeting packets to find the Board chairs and staff directors in states close to you. Engage them in a discussion on how to get the

private sector to the table. An additional challenge for Boards is the frequent change in administration and party in light of the steep learning curve inherent in the workforce system. A point of stability on the Board or in the system would improve seamlessness in service and outcomes. This is counter-balanced to some degree by the Association which provides a unified, bi-partisan voice.

- **Pat Hudson (SC)** explained the challenges of compliance with federal laws. Compliance is very important but must be balanced with getting things done at the state and local levels. This is why waivers should be viewed less as optional, last resorts, but as tools the state can use to improve outcomes. Our ability to push back on the Department of Labor when necessary is our responsibility. Pat also discussed the importance of clear roles for staff directors, the Board, and the Chair. The state Board must work closely with local boards so they are supported, involved, and accountable. An additional role of the Board is to be an informer and conduit to the Governor and their staff. The Association can provide the opportunity for each of us to share how we overcome challenges and fill the various roles of our positions.

To balance the input from the Chairs, **Greg White, Staff Director, OR** described the role of staff director as a “personal trainer” for the Chair and the Board members. The Board convenes the conversation and designs policy. The staff implement the programs that capture the policies envisioned by the Board. Greg warns that at times the Board can become too involved in program implementation, and conversely the staff can take control of the policy decisions. It is the staff director’s responsibility to maintain the clarity and distinction between the two. Greg further delineates the role of the staff director as:

- An agenda manager who ensures the Board’s priorities are ahead of the curve and understood at all implementation levels;
- A communicator among board members, stakeholders, and local offices; and
- A coach on the legal barriers and regulatory issues involved in WIA.

To conclude, **Sam Leiken (NGA)** emphasized the reciprocal nature of the Association and the staffing responsibility of the NGA. The NGA’s role is to identify best practices, convene experts and state practitioners, and provide vehicles for collaboration and sharing among states. This meeting is an example of that. Each year it grows because members bring ideas back to their states, and return to the meetings with expansions on those original ideas.

Monday, August 22

Opening Session

After brief introductions from all participants, Oregon’s **Governor Ted Kulongoski** welcomed the participants to the Northwest, and recommended everyone leave the meeting now and head to the mountains and 300 miles of Pacific coastline. In alignment with the meeting’s theme linking workforce development with higher education, the Governor envisions that all Oregonians have the skills necessary to achieve economic prosperity. The realities of living in a global economy where each state must compete requires long-term planning of at least 15 to 25 years. The most important action we can take is to convince elected officials that education is the root of success in this economy, and the issue of a skilled workforce is the greatest challenge of the economy right now. We as a society de-value the type of work that is the foundation of our history and culture – the skilled craftsmen. Baby-boom retirees are not just lawyers and teachers, they are mill-rights and marble workers. Investment in the skills infrastructure is as important as investment in roads and bridges. But this will require a culture shift that values skills outside of college degrees, and it means talking to our young people realistically about their opportunities to work. Education and training must be accessible, affordable and diverse to meet the needs of our young people and of the global economy. Oregon is making progress. Oregon implemented an incumbent worker training program that provided grants to over 250 training providers to train 11,000 workers so they could climb the career ladder. The state has a new web portal that links employers, training services, and job searchers. The Oregon Simulation Alliance is easing the critical healthcare shortage, and the Lean Manufacturing Committee is making recommendations to support our relatively large manufacturing sector, which makes up 25 percent of Oregon’s GSP, as compared to 14 percent nationally. Oregon’s post-secondary system is a leading thinker in the career pathways field. The voice of business in all of these initiatives is a critical component of our success so far, as is the dedication of the workforce staff.

Association Update

Gwyn Harvey (OR) briefly discussed the un-likelihood of WIA Reauthorization passing this session; reviewed the efforts to reach common ground with NAWB on the role of the state and local boards, and the language in the WIA reauthorization package; and reminded participants to think about elections of a new chair and vice-chair of the Association at the end of the meeting.

NGA Update

Martin Simon (NGA) explained that the last two years of re-authorization discussions have created a wedge between this Association and NAWB. The division is over the balance of state and local authority over the workforce system, with NAWB a strong proponent of local authority. Both groups, however, are interested in improving relations around common objectives, such as bringing the private sector voice to the system.

Martin also reviewed the recent change in Chairs of the NGA. Each year the Chair rotates and leads a specific initiative that continues beyond their tenure. Former Chair Mark Warner, Governor of Virginia, led a highly successful initiative around High School Reform. Current Chair Mike Huckabee of Arkansas is launching an initiative around healthy living. Within the division of Social, Economic, and Workforce Programs in the Center for Best Practices, a number of new initiatives are underway, including a policy academy on improving outcomes for young adults with disabilities, and projects focusing on low-income families, prisoner re-entry, and older workers. In addition to these projects, the division is beginning to think about re-tooling the annual Policy Forum, last held in January 2005 in Miami. In place of a Policy Forum next year, the division is planning a meeting around the implications of WIA reauthorization, if WIA passes. Martin invites input from all participants on what else might be attractive and useful for the next forum.

Small Group Discussion followed by Report-outs

What are innovative ways your state is collaborating between the workforce and the post-secondary education systems? What is successful? What are the challenges?

The above questions were discussed in “Simon-square” format. Groups reported that the major challenges to collaboration between the systems are:

- General feeling that efforts to communicate are one-way from the workforce system to the education system, and that information-sharing is sporadic, if it exists at all;
- Lack of consensus of the role of workforce development in education;
- A disconnect between the State Board of Education and the State Workforce Board;
- Unprepared high school graduates for the workforce;
- Lack of access in rural areas and by low-income individuals to post-secondary options;
- Conflicting philosophies and priorities around career vs. college-readiness; and
- Inconsistent focus in community colleges on traditional vs. career-pathway courses.

Participants agreed that taking advantage of members on the Board that might represent the education system, and using crisis situations to unite on key issues is smart. Agreement also existed around the need to align governance and performance among community and technical college systems, 4-year institutes, and the workforce system. Also critical is the need to frame language around the relevance of the workforce system to education, including what the system can offer and specific models of success in customized training.

The Changing Role of State Boards under WIA Reauthorization

Martin Simon (NGA)

Martin summarized the current legislative versions and status of:

- Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations, passed the by House but awaiting Senate action – likely to be wrapped up in end-of-year omnibus spending bill;
- TANF reauthorization underwent its 10th extension to 9/30/05; reauthorization waits on full Senate action and House Ways and Means Committee mark-up – likely to be included in Fall reconciliation bill;

- Carl D. Perkins reauthorization approved by House and Senate, and awaits House-Senate conference over separate or merged funding for basic grants/tech prep, 2 or 5% limits on administrative costs, a 10% set aside for professional development, separate secondary/ post-secondary performance measures, and stronger local accountability provisions;
- Higher Education Act reauthorization awaits mark-up by Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions committee – passage unlikely this year. *Comment from CO: Recommends approaching Senators about defining state WIB's as part of the Higher Education alliance in order to emphasize the importance of cross-system collaboration.*
- WIA reauthorization passed by House, awaiting full vote by Senate but conference will be required to reach agreement on House/Senate bill discrepancies. See the side-by-side chart or a copy of Martin's power point for the specific differences between the bills.

Regardless of when reauthorization of WIA occurs, states should expect:

- Expanded state board membership, increased Governor's flexibility, more responsibility over one-stop systems, and widened oversight of cross-system performance;
- Increased flexibility across funding streams, stronger connections to business, increased emphasis on targeting performance, and tighter administrative provisions.

State WIB's should begin thinking about moving from a narrow advisory role for a single program to overseeing a system of multiple programs, including integrating performance measures, policies, funding, and services. State strategies should be developed to coordinate workforce and economic development strategies that meet business needs.

Questions and Discussion:

- The group discussed the different views on state certification of one-stop centers, agreeing that if a state does certify one-stops (such as in VA and FL), they must remain mindful of striking a balance between setting state standards and allowing one-stops to manage themselves. The role of the state board must be distinct from the role of local boards. Those who do not certify the one-stops assert that it is also a practical issue of delegating out responsibility. The new WIA bill will allow state boards to certify one-stops, but it should be clear that this is not a place for a mandate. Flexibility is critical.
- Responding to a question about Board approval of Perkins funds, most states agreed that they never addressed the issue either because priority alignment generally exists between the systems, or because the board feared spending too much time in the weeds trying to figure out how the funds are spent. Louisiana holds a meeting once a year for all education and training programs to present annual updates on performance and spending, at which point necessary changes can be identified.
- Out of discouragement by some that WIA might never pass, states agreed that everyone should be applying to all waivers that might suit their needs. VA pointed out that DOL is currently highly receptive to waivers. Others are sure WIA will pass next year due to the leadership by Senators Enzi and Kennedy.

Washington Update

Dr. Susan Sclafani, Assistant Secretary Office of Vocational and Adult Education, USDOE

Before announcing her official resignation to OVAE, Dr. Sclafani reviewed the key priorities in the Department of Education around the K-12 and community college continuum. This included:

- Selling the value of the work-readiness certificate in a way that assures the K-12 system that it is not meant to replace a high school diploma.
- Continuing communication with the community college system is critical so that they collaborate on common philosophies, not just common funding. This includes providing an understanding of the importance of LMI as an on-going driver and feeder of their activities, and a way to ensure sustainable funding.
- Data warehousing, such as Florida's model that has the potential to connect students from pre-k to graduate school, should be pushed in all states. This should be combined with OVAE's efforts to require testing at the 9th grade level so that individual progress can be accurately measured through high school.
- Strengthening the use of and access to up-to-date technology.

- Developing a consistent and effective ESL curriculum that combines the best practices of the multitude of course material currently available.
- Valuing craftwork as we value 4-year degrees. DOL funded the School for the Building Arts in Charleston, SC to teach trades such as masonry, beam building, wrought iron and marble work. Currently the U.S. imports workers from London and Italy to repair our state capitol steps. We have oversold the college-for-all philosophy, and are missing opportunities to provide respectable and decent jobs to our young people.

Mason Bishop, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Employment and Training Administration, USDOL

Mason discussed 5 areas, including:

- A renewed focus on youth, particularly the crisis of drop-outs: DOL's ownership in the issue is alternative education, and is exploring options for action. The most recent regional Youth Forum included 120 people from the justice, labor, human services, and education systems. Response has been very positive, and DOL sent a letter to all the Governors inviting their input. DOL would like to launch a pilot of intensive cross-system integration technical assistance in this area. It will build on models like the 17 alternative schools in Portland, OR and ISUS in Dayton, OH, a business-funded charter school that enrolls juvenile justice youth.
- Career counseling pilots in high schools: This idea is in the beginning stages and DOL invites input and ideas on what a pilot in high schools might look like.
- A review of DOL's priorities in WIA reauthorization, including increased flexibility for states, reduced overhead costs, increased training, and higher performance accountability. Regarding re-designation of local workforce areas, the law is silent. Like Governor Kempthorne of ID, any governor could modify their plan and re-assess their designations. Mason announced that there are matching funds for 2 more states to pilot Personal Responsibility Accounts, joining the 7 current pilots.
- DOL is encouraging all states who will experience a base closure to actively keep workforce issues at the forefront, and to not let site re-use and environmental clean-up issues take priority. Regarding the timeline for implementation and planning after BRAC announces closures, DOL will work with states individually to plan in a customized way.
- DOL acknowledges Florida for their work on performance measure, citing the need for national consistency on entrance and exit data so that comparisons among states can be made. The take-away for DOL from the Integrated Performance Information project is the changes to the earnings measure. DOL is cautious about embracing anything but a truly national accountability system, in lieu of efforts that reflect state-by-state measures. The final report on IPI is still in draft form.

Questions and Discussion:

- DOL must also, however, be cautious about driving an underground system of performance measures that in the end will undermine common goals. Florida appreciates the cross-state comparison but is concerned about some of DOL's requirements. For example, the 100% entered employment measure will result in creaming against individuals with disabilities or ex-offenders. It will also result in local providers choosing to not use WIA funds in order to avoid the performance measurement.
- Virginia's private sector partners are really excited about the IPI measures. They wanted to adopt the measures immediately because it was the first time they saw measures that made sense. DOL must recognize this significance.
- Common measures became politicized in context of WIA reauthorization but in the process states have developed a real consensus about reduced and meaningful measures. What is lost is guidance around IPI systems. FL has become a laboratory, and over 30 states have signed up to learn from them. Regardless of what those measures are, the important dimension is that states can learn about silo-busting and using performance as a vehicle for cross-system alignment.

Chairs' and Staff Only Sessions

Chairs' Meeting – Action item: send letter to senate leadership urging passage of WIA.

Staff Directors' Meeting – Round Robin Updates on Activities and Challenges

California is seeing success from a collaboration project that brought in local and stakeholder involvement in their 2-year plan. The plan is now being used as an implementation tool that frames outcomes and committees around each priority area.

Idaho re-designated into a single-state region and is looking at restructuring the state Board to fill gaps left by the change.

Oklahoma is seriously looking at aligning workforce and economic development activities; re-organizing around industry clusters; initiating skills panels; conducting a conference for all LWIB members; organizing a Workforce Development Initiative Conference for local elected officials and state K-20 leadership; and starting Work Keys pilots, using ACT.

Comment: Illinois started Work Keys pilots a few years ago and is abandoning the effort due to unsatisfied LWA's. They were approached by Profiles International to start a new program but turned them away. Louisiana has been very successful with their pilots, and the programs are now statewide. Programs were originally rolled out via TANF in literacy labs in community and technical colleges, then to 1-stops, adult education, and high schools. Business has been receptive and the Chambers have acted as an intermediary. Louisiana went with ACT because they are well-known to college systems. Tennessee is searching for an alternative to Work Keys and will seek competitive bids. They cannot justify sole source contracting with ACT.

Missouri is working on restructuring their system to be more WIA-focused. Missouri's board was one of the few grand-fathered under JTPA.

Virginia received an economic development waiver from DOL that only prohibits spending on construction. This allows us to truly collaborate with economic development in ways that improve human capital. This includes a requirement that all 1-stops have at least 1 industry-specific certification staff member. Virginia adopted the IPI measures and is really excited about them. This Association must develop common agreement on IPI in order to push DOL further.

North Dakota is focusing on the aging workforce and youth retention, as well as specific industry shortages in energy, exploration, manufacturing and healthcare. Also following IPI progress as ND has spent a lot of time coordinating cross-system measures.

Vermont is collaborating with the National Science Foundation for a \$600,000 web design curriculum grant at technical colleges. NSF provides all operating costs and do not require performance measurements. Micro-technology curriculum is next on the agenda. VT also created a marketing document/power point to recruit more businesses to the workforce agenda.

New Hampshire is a single-designation state board and a 501-C-3, and as such experiences a constant fear of being "the next meal" for bigger entities like Employment Services. NH is focusing on incumbent worker training, specifically honing in on what it should look like within the workforce development system.

New Mexico merged their economic security and economic development departments a year ago. The new department is holding a joint development conference with the state board. Collaboration around industry-customized post-secondary education among employer service specialists and customized training representatives are creating a buzz in the business community. The Board is sponsoring the state fair along with the NM Manufacturing Association in order to market mechanical and engineering career pathways.

Arizona is framing a statewide vision that includes the 15 LWB's, 19 tribal nations, and private sector partners. The Governor just created a P-20 Council. The state Board is designating committees, previously non-existent, including a marketing/branding committee.

Utah's new Governor moved economic development into his office and hired new staff. Workforce created a slide show that outlines how the system compliments the Governor's 10 economic development goals. UT will hold a conference in October bringing together education, post-secondary education, and workforce partners.

Iowa is focusing on high school reform as a result of NGA's initiative; statewide survey of over 10,000 businesses is in process; 4 "New Iowan" centers offer newcomers to the state resources in housing, jobs, schools, business start-ups, and health; and industry clusters are marketed on public television.

Florida's Board financially controls TANF and WIA, which has ensured these partners at every board meeting. The shared development of a bio-science curriculum is in process.

Georgia's Commission for a New Georgia designated issue-specific task forces, each with businesses involved. The Workforce task force recommended 501-C-3 status. Incumbent worker pilots are in process, and the Georgia Works program funds on-the-job training for UI recipients for 24 hours a week for 8 weeks at no cost to businesses. ES offices were re-vamped into career centers including color coding and kiddy corners. Local areas can receive grants for long-range comprehensive plans to partner with business. Three local areas per year are given awards for success in youth work, collaboration, and outstanding individual employees.

Montana is waiting on the designation of their state board; wants to expand their number of 1-stops; will pursue IPI measures; and is linking education with healthcare apprenticeships.

Pennsylvania's state budget passed 90% of their requests, including funding local industry partnerships in the state's 9 priority industry clusters. Training will go to a group of employers as opposed to an individual employer. \$23 million was added to community colleges; \$10 million to adults over age 25 who do not qualify for Stafford loans; and up to \$50,000 a year in loan forgiveness to nurses who commit to 4 years of teaching. Ten standards have been developed for all local boards, including compliance incentive funds. A Commission on College and Career Success was created to identify what students who did not get what they needed in high school need to succeed.

Kentucky is settling into a new governor, a new board, and a new chair. A major coal-mining training initiative started as a partnership with business and local boards. This was the first year for a "Best Places to Work in Kentucky" report, which businesses like as an unbiased self-assessment.

Colorado is celebrating Workforce Development month in September with projects and events like business symposiums, and sponsorship from NBC and Jefferson Radio Company. CO set up a state-of-the-art nursing simulation center in partnership with community colleges, hospitals, and universities.

Wyoming is focusing on strengthened youth career guidance in the k-12 system; Work Keys pilots; and more business-responsive community college training. WY is also updating their Job Network system to capture more meaningful information from business clients and job seekers.

Mississippi also is adjusting to a new Governor and new board. The state WIA plan was written entirely via on-line meetings, which was highly efficient. MS has two priorities: accountability and business involvement in workforce training – receiving \$20 million for 5 years.

Illinois is working with the first Democratic governor in 20 years. Virtual one-stops for businesses are being installed, worknet.com. To address critical healthcare skills needs, the 26 local areas were put into 5 regions, each of which received a grant to implement a plan.

Louisiana's Board has authority over Title I, II, III, and IV, and is divided into 3 taskforces including adult learning, high school re-design, and workforce competitiveness. \$6 million has been designated to meeting the healthcare shortage, and \$50 million goes to incumbent worker training. An "enterprise" team representing the multiple agency partners meets twice a month. The Louisiana Interagency Performance Integration Data System (LIPIDS) brings DOL together with the community and technical college system, and uses social security numbers as common identifiers.

Oregon is also working on the IPI initiative and is looking to expand to the K-20 systems. With the help of a consultant, the compliance plan will be widened and deepened.

Michigan underwent a major re-structuring that combined departments and re-constituted the board, now up to 75 members and 7 committees. The new Opportunities Partnership plans to put 30,000 to work this year, and 40,000 next year. An employer pledge drive to advance low-wage workers, partly funded by the Joyce Foundation, will use consultants to create opportunities for careers, not just jobs, including entrepreneurship programs.

Tuesday, August 23

Venus, Mars, and Pluto

Nan Poppe, Campus President-Extended Learning Portland Community College

Jim Jacobs, Vice President, Macomb Community College

Jim Crabbe, Director of Workforce Development, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

The 3 panelists discussed how higher education operates, how it is governed and evaluated, and what workforce development to do to collaborate more effectively with it. Nan Poppe specifically discussed these issues from the perspective of Extended Learning Portland Community College, including:

- How career pathways illustrate the distinct but connected roles of workforce boards, as conveners of policy alternatives, and community colleges as implementers. PCC has over 90 degrees and certificates, and to keep them competitive, the Workforce Board must be actively involved.
- Targeting disconnected youth through a partnership among the community college, workforce, and K-12 systems to develop safety nets and alternatives for the 31 of 100 students that do not graduate from high school, and for the 54 of the 69 high school grads that do not finish a BA or AA degree.
- Designing ways to “jump-start” the more than half of all adults in the adult education system that do not possess the skills to go to college so that they can enter careers.
- Eliminating the need for a 500-person per year waiting list for ESL classes.
- Creating quick turn-around and meaningful dislocated worker programs.
- Building on PCC’s roadmaps to careers, and “bite-sized” 3 to 6-month courses.

Jim Crabbe reviewed the structure of the Washington state workforce system and the allocation of resources to each partner system, including Community and Technical Colleges, OSPI, ES, DSHS, Dep’t Services for the Blind, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Dep’t Labor/Industries, and Private career schools. Jim identified four specific challenges and corresponding system goals:

- To close the skills gap between employer needs and Washington residents prepared to meet that need;
- To enable workers to make smooth transitions so that they may benefit fully from the new, changing economy, and develop a strategy for dislocated and incumbent worker training;
- To assist disadvantaged youth, persons with disabilities, new labor market entrants, immigrants, low-wage workers, minorities, and women to move up the career ladder by developing a wage-progression strategy; and
- To facilitate the integration of workforce development programs in order to improve customer service and relations.

Questions and Discussion:

- In response to inquiry as to what WIBs can do to improve participation by higher education in the workforce system, Jacobs recommended finding common ground in the crisis of low-skills, and recognizing that both systems are dealing with the same population. Crabbe agreed, and cited Washington’s requirement that all budgets and plans for their system earn approval from the local economic development boards as an example of finding common ground. Poppe added that community colleges are used to thinking internally, but need to revive a relationship with economic goals.
- To match community college curriculum with high demand industry sectors – instead of over-emphasizing English and Psych 101 – the workforce boards must convene business and industry in a way that supports community college curriculum development, especially since many industry-focused curriculum are expensive. Both systems must work to secure funding from foundations and outside sources to strengthen this alignment. The greatest obstacles to customized training are: a heavily unionized workforce whose mantra is increasing enrollment to increase their capacity to expand curriculum; and the fear of having to differentiate tuitions based on cost variance of coursework. Most community colleges have less than 2,000 students, which severely limits their ability to pay for customized training courses. States need to subsidize high-demand, expensive curriculae to address industry shortages. If the state needs 50 nurses, then leverage funding and be creative about equipment and facilities to graduate them.
- The implication is not that the workforce system can demand certain curriculum based on receipt of funding but the state can incentivize the college system with funds and with joint accountability offers. Community colleges will respond to that positively, albeit in varying ways due to the different levels of public funding in each system (from 27% to 60% of total community college budgets).
- The difference between technical and community colleges is that technical colleges count in clock hours, not credit hours. Other differences, such as faculty certifications and definitions of labs vs. lectures, are becoming increasingly blurred between the two. Technical colleges tend to have less liberal arts focus.

- The first people to see about constructing meaningful partnerships is the President of the College and the Boards of Trustees, whose goals can sometimes conflict. Having them both on board is important to make sure the workforce system is heard somewhere.

Linking Workforce Development and Post Secondary Education

Moderator: Jim Hardegree, GA, Chair

David Harrison, WA, Chair

Cam Preus-Braly, Commissioner, Department of Community Colleges/Workforce Development, OR

Panelists discussed how state boards have collaborated successfully with the post-secondary agenda. Harrison outlined a list of to-do's in order to counter-balance insufficient funding, competition over resources, turf battles, and lack of committment by partners. These included:

1. Industry Skills Panels – Washington state has 40.
2. Defining demand – An employer survey across WA state identified the lack of 1 to 2 years of technical training is the biggest obstacle to employment.
3. Use regulatory powers to create a collaborative environment.
4. Incentivize collaboration with funds.
5. Use Skills panel structures to drive new disucssion and funds in local regions.
6. Use Skills panels to leverage funds from new sources and partners
7. Use funds creatively to amass training funds to support community colleges.
8. Use Skills panels to extend to every level and state of service.

Cam supplemented these recommendations with an overview of Oregon's "Just in time, Just enough, Just for you" strategies. The collaboration between the workforce and community college systems began with discussions on common challenges and populations, and the healthcare shortage. Today, OR has 14 simulation centers. The career pathways structure modularizes for-credit curriculum into 3 to 6 month "bites" that give individuals a set of skills that allow job entry at varying levels; it's about "chunking" the curriculum down into realistic timeframes and course loads for adult learners.

Questions and Discussion:

- In Washington, Centers of Excellence are coordinated by the state's Community College Board. This connection began 5 years ago during early discussions of driving industry growth region by region, which called on community colleges in each region to collaborate to develop industry-focused curriculae. When WA realized that the state needed a coordinating body, the Centers of Excellence and Skills Panels were born.
- To guide individuals as they choose the set of skills or career pathway that is right for them, one-stop center staff work closely with them to elicit interests and present alternatives.

Site Visits: Participants visited Portland Community College to better understand the types of career pathway modules offered, including length, cost, resulting certificate, test requirements, and predicted occupations and entry-level wages for each set of training. Discussion included rigor of curriculum, connections to LMI and business needs, extra supports to students, and state funding strategies. At the Healthcare Simulation Alliance Project (Mt. Hood CC), participants learned the history of the project as well as details such as how OR used the Governor's discretionary funds to purchase equipment, additaion securement of funds from a DOL grant and private healthcare systems, and the involvement of the state nursing board to approve training. Participants then observed two nursing students during a simulated scenario of Booker's imaginary son experiencing heart irregularities.

Wednesday , August 24

Business Meeting and Election of Officers

Members nominated Jim Hardegree of Georgia as the new Chair of the Association, and Charles Ware of Wyoming as Vice Chair. Participants agreed that the 2006 winter meeting should be held Thursday, February 23 to Saturday, February 25, just prior to the annual NAWB meeting in Washington D.C. from February 25 to Tuesday, February 28, 2006.

Prisoner Re-entry

Thomas MacLellan, Senior Policy Analyst, NGA Center for Best Practices

Respondents: **Booker Graves, CO** and **Gloria Kusmik, GA**

Thomas outlined why prisoner re-entry has become such an important policy issue, including the growing number of individuals entering and exiting state prison systems, rising trends of re-arrests and recidivism, rising corrections costs and criminal justice expenditures, and steady crime rates nation-wide. Prisoners re-entering society have a history of substance abuse, may have a mental illness, are or will be homeless, and have a higher chance of having HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C, or tuberculosis than the general population. Most are unemployed upon release. Thomas informed participants of other important trends, including the concentration of returning prisoners in specific, urban centers; the high percentage of black men among the returning prisoner population; and reduced in-prison programs and declining participation in existing programs. But, the good news is that states are beginning to recognize what works for re-entry and the savings to the system based on re-entry strategies. Thomas listed the initiatives that provide valuable lessons to states, including efforts by the NGA, Urban Institute, Council on State Governments, GAINS Center for Co-Occurring Disorders, Federal Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI), and the Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TCPI). The NGA policy academy on re-entry assisted seven states (GA, ID, MA, MI, NJ, VA and RI) to:

- Develop interagency approaches that utilize interagency governance structures, mapping of prisoner reentry, resource mapping of services, and shared funding strategies;
- Improve the process of how individuals are sent to prison;
- Improve how prisoners are prepared for release including risk assessment tools and access to service providers and Faith-based organizations;
- Improve how prisoners are released including considerations of when and where, if they have proper identification, and if they have applied to appropriate benefits and services;
- Build on key social and family relationships and local connections;
- Ensure transitional jobs and health/mental health care needs; and
- Form partnerships with local law enforcement.

Workforce Information - Evolving to Meet Workforce Needs in the 21st Century

Graham Slater, Workforce Information Director, Oregon Employment Department

Workforce boards are under pressure to provide timely and comprehensive information. The presentation summarized the types of information available from workforce information groups and highlighted the new types of information that have been captured and utilized in the Oregon Labor Market Information System (OLMIS), Oregon's example of improvements in the states' workforce information web site. Graham defined workforce information as employment/unemployment status; current and projected employment opportunities; wages, benefits, and skills trends by occupation; layoffs and displacements; and employment and earnings data. Graham explained that states faced changes in data dynamics after WIA, including shifts from a traditional data focus to a customer focus, from producing data to providing information, and from mass-mailed reports to customized information. This presented challenges to balancing data integrity while responding to customer needs, balancing responsiveness with constrained funding and policies, and presenting findings in ways that appealed to private sector clients. Oregon approached this transition by talking to the WIBs on a regular basis to find out what information they need and want. OLMIS provides regular wage information, GIS services, and employer surveys to collect the information listed above. Oregon's system also provides customer focused products such as skills analysis tools; career information; posters and materials for one-stop clients; special studies on clusters, career pathways, and major economic events; wage record analysis; performance measurement; and local employment dynamics. This information is available at www.qualityinfo.org. For a link to other states' workforce information websites, go to http://www.icesa.org/subject_links.cfm?results_sub_id=21.