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Workforce Training: An Integral Component of the North Dakota University System

Workforce training is short-term, customized instruction tailored to the needs of a particular employer. The training is delivered when and where it is needed to current workers to enhance or upgrade their skills. The customers are private sector employers who contract for specific training. This training enhances the skills of their employees and increases the company's competitiveness, nationally and internationally.

Workforce training is an essential component of the mission of comprehensive community colleges. Williston State College, Lake Region State College, North Dakota State College of Science and Bismarck State College host North Dakota's four workforce training regions (TrainND). These regions were created through House Bill 1443, enacted in 1999, as a result of recommendations from a statewide task force on workforce development and training.

trainND

The primary purpose of this legislation was to develop a world-class workforce training system in North Dakota "to serve the workforce needs of business and industry and to serve as a broker in arranging the delivery of training." The legislative expectation was that the training should be "time sensitive and results oriented" and meet "the training needs of business and industry."

Other key components of House Bill 1443 included the establishment of advisory boards for the workforce training regions; financial support from a combination of state funds, local/regional funds, institution support and training fees; a requirement for performance measures; and the development of collaborative relationships.

Northwest TrainND is housed at Williston State College, Northeast TrainND at Lake Region State College, Southeast TrainND at the North Dakota State College of Science and Southwest TrainND at Bismarck State College.

Mission

TrainND provides training for North Dakota business and industry, enhancing their ability to compete globally. Training increases employee retention, productivity, competitiveness, quality and customer satisfaction. Relationship building, collaborating as a team and strong partnerships are the focus of the four TrainND regions.

Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances exist among the four regions and with state agencies, including the Department of Commerce, Job Service North Dakota and the U.S. Small Business Administration, as well as local economic developers, vocational centers and secondary schools with vocational education programs. The anticipated outcomes of these alliances include greater understanding of each agency's services, increased involvement and shared resources, development of a referral service for agencies' programs and providing information to plan and serve the state's business needs.

Examples of TrainND Collaboration with Business and Industry

Southwest TrainND, in collaboration with Northwest TrainND, provides commercial driver's license training and welding training. This partnership is a win-win as the training saves on expensive start-up costs for each college, and training costs remain reasonable for businesses.

Northwest TrainND, in collaboration with Southwest TrainND, delivered a half-day class targeted at business owners just getting started in internet marketing. "Social Media and Your Web Strategy" builds a solid understanding of the basic concepts of online marketing, including Web site and social media marketing.

Northeast TrainND collaborates with Southeast TrainND to bring manufacturing training into the region. The southeast region is experienced in delivering this type of training and has subject matter experts on staff.

Northeast TrainND and Cankdeska Cikana Community College (CCCC) are collaborating to provide certified nurse assistant (CNA) and Indian health care providers (IHCP) training to produce care providers for the Native Elder Caregiver Program. In five months, 14 participants have received training under a contract with CCCC and another 12 will be trained in the next six months.

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How Does North Dakota Business and Industry Contribute to TrainND?

Training revenue accounts for 56 percent ($12,079,972) of TrainND's total funding between FY 2006 and FY 2009. Business contributions account for 10 percent ($2,138,273) of the total funding during this same time period. This includes donations to all four regions from equipment (welders, tanks, software, machining, service rig, etc.) to training and office space. More than 80 companies have donated services or equipment to TrainND since 2006. Taken together, businesses support TrainND by providing 66 percent of the total operating budget through fees and donations.

Business and industry also contribute training space, high-end technical equipment for training held in their factories, input through serving on TrainND advisory boards and partnerships for grant opportunities and additional funding.

How Do the TrainND Regions Assess the Market?

TrainND regions:

• Use data available from Job Service and the Department of Commerce

• Evaluate responses from client surveys

• Determine local training needs through consultations with businesses, TrainND advisory boards and local organizations, such as regional economic development organizations; vocational rehabilitation services; chambers of commerce; and labor, trade and business associations

• Determine regional and national training trends from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and national associations, such as National Council for Continuing Education and Training (NCCET), American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and leading community college workforce training departments

How Do the TrainND Regions Develop Annual Objectives and Targets?

TrainND regions:

• Establish annual objectives and set targets in conjunction with advisory boards. One of the primary responsibilities of the advisory boards is to identify skill shortages and workforce training needs through business connections and partnerships

• Identify training needs from current businesses through client surveys

• Monitor national and local business climate trends and expectations for growth, new technology, workforce shortages, etc.

• Receive input from state policymakers and other stakeholders

How Do the TrainND Regions Assess Performance on a Continual Basis?

TrainND regions:

• Track performance measures, contracts, potential contracts and financial information monthly

• Survey participants and business owners about satisfaction and responsiveness after each training event

• Share performance measurement data with TrainND advisory boards quarterly

• Discuss expectations (met or exceeded) or shortfalls of current training projects with TrainND advisory boards

• Survey state agencies and business organizations regarding how the TrainND system is meeting business needs

How Does TrainND Measure Performance?

Performance measures were originally recommended by the statewide task force on workforce development and training and agreed upon by all workforce training regions in North Dakota. The measures were approved by the State Board of Higher Education, the Legislature and the College Technical Education Council. Accomplishments for FY 2006 through FY 2009 are displayed in the table below.

Performance Measures for Workforce Training, FY 2006-2009

	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009
Number of businesses receiving training	1,287	1,595	1,345	1,527
Number of employees receiving training	9,049	10,594	11,990	11,028
Businesses requesting repeat or additional training	59.0%	64.2%	55.2%	57.2%
Businesses' satisfaction with training	99.2%	99.1%	98.7%	98.0%
Participants' satisfaction with training	98.7%	99.6%	98.0%	98.0%
Satisfaction of companies with responsiveness	99.7%	99.5%	99.5%	99.3%
Revenue generated from training fees	$2,215,157	$2,807,628	$3,260,004	$3,797,183