



Workforce Development Board
County of Middlesex

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
ANNUAL REPORT
PROGRAM YEARS
2015 & 2016**

MIDDLESEX COUNTY FREEHOLDER DIRECTOR RIOS MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to provide this overview report of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board (MCWDB) for program years 2015 and 2016 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016 & July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017). The report highlights many positive indicators for our local economy including a consistent decrease in the unemployment rate, a growing employment market, an increase in wages, and a 5.2% increase in the labor force over the last five years.

Our dedicated staff continues to serve hundreds of county residents who are seeking new career opportunities through the federally funded Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. These customers include youth, adults, and dislocated workers. Our two One Stop Career Centers, located in New Brunswick and Perth Amboy, are easily accessible and ready to serve Middlesex County residents. The services provided by the Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development provide access to career pathways that lead to increased earnings and a brighter economic future for our customers.

The Workforce Development Board is working diligently to build high quality partnerships with local businesses while maintaining the strong partnerships that have already been established. Through our Business Resource Center (BRC), we are establishing strong connections to employers to assist in meeting their labor demands. It also should be noted that the board is collaborating with its Central New Jersey regional counterparts to devise strategies that will enhance services by sharing resources and best practices to maximize positive outcomes.

While many encouraging trends show that the economy is on the rise in Middlesex County, we must remain steadfast in providing services that will put even more people back to work. In doing so, we can be certain that the residents of Middlesex County enjoy a comfortable lifestyle and great quality of life.

Should you have questions or comments after reading this report, please feel free to contact Kevin J. Kurdziel, Director at 732-745-3601, or via email at Kevin.Kurdziel@co.middlesex.nj.us.

Together we can be certain that Middlesex County remains a great place to live and work.

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Rios
Director, Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders



MIDDLESEX COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB) CHAIR & DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

The start of Program Year 2015 marked the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014. While WIOA maintains many of the operational systems utilized under the Workforce Invest Act (WIA) of 1998, there are some significant changes that should be noted. First, there is an emphasis on establishing career pathways, so that training programs provide a gateway to consistent career advancement. Second, all training programs must provide a least one credential that is the building block for launching a career pathway. Third, there is a greater importance on providing youth customers with work experience and employment opportunities. Fourth, all local areas are encouraged to build high quality partnerships with businesses locally and regionally. Finally, program performance indicators have been revised to better reflect customer outcomes. While the aforementioned changes are not all inclusive, they provide an accurate depiction of how local workforce development systems are being re-positioned to better serve both job seekers and businesses.

This report highlights the accomplishments of the last two program years- 2015 and 2016. It demonstrates the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board's commitment to providing high quality services to our customers. Both of our full service One Stop centers in New Brunswick and Perth Amboy deliver a vast array of services. Whether it's utilizing our public access area or enrolling into an occupational training program, our customers are provided with necessary tools for realizing their career goals.

Although the transition from WIA to WIOA is nearly complete, we anticipate further service enhancements will be set forth by the New Jersey State Employment Training Commission (SETC). As always, the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board is committed to work collaboratively with its partners including the United States & New Jersey Departments of Labor, local stakeholders, and service providers to construct an even stronger workforce system.

Sincerely,

Jill Schiff, Chairperson

Kevin J. Kurdziel, Director

Executive Summary

The Middlesex County Workforce Development Board (WDB) was established by federal legislation when Congress passed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. The WIA Legislation was reauthorized by Congress in July 2014 as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The Workforce Development Board is a local partnership of private and public sector individuals who provide coordinated planning, policy guidance, and oversight for all workforce investment programs and resources in Middlesex County. The WDB, appointed by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, is comprised of at least 51% private sector representatives and the balance of other mandatory representatives from Education, Human Services, Economic Development, and Government.

The core principles of New Jersey's Workforce Investment Policies are:

- A successful system must be consumer based and market-driven and therefore, relevant to the needs of the businesses;
- The true measures of success of the workforce development system must be the duration of employment and the wages paid to graduates of programs;
- Attainment of fundamental levels of literacy and basic skills lies at the heart of the workforce system; and
- There must be full utilization of all potential workers.

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) provides advice and support to Middlesex County in relation to both business and job seeker services. This includes services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth as classified by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The WDB meets on a quarterly basis and sub-committees of the WDB meet frequently to closely monitor the local area workforce needs and trends. The board is comprised of members from local/regional businesses, organized labor, community based organizations, local government, and the community. The board meets on a quarterly meeting pursuant to the "Open Public Meetings Act" (NJSA 10:4-10).

As the second most populous county in New Jersey, Middlesex County embodies a great deal of diversity both culturally and through its workforce. From an educational standpoint, at least 18% of the population in Middlesex County has a Bachelor's degree, and 16% have earned an advanced degree in Professional, Graduate or Doctorate. In comparison, 5.5% of county residents 25 years of age and older lack a High School Diploma or equivalent, while 26% have obtained their High School Diploma or equivalent.

Middlesex County is home to Rutgers University in New Brunswick and Piscataway. The university offers undergraduate, graduate and doctorate degrees across many disciplines.

Middlesex County College (MCC), with its main campus located in Edison, with an enrollment of 12,000 (2014) students, provides residents with the opportunity to earn undergraduate degrees and certificates. Its mission is to provide access to a quality, affordable education for a diverse population, to support student success for lifelong learning, and to strengthen the economic, social and cultural life of the community. MCC is considered one of the top community colleges in the country.

Middlesex County also offers a wide range of Vocational and Technical Education to high school students through its award winning Vo-Tech District. Middlesex County Vocational and Technical Schools enroll approximately 2,000 high school students and over 7,000 adults annually. MCVTS provide skilled technical services, create and produce products, care for the sick, build houses and fix cars. They teach students how to repair air conditioning, give a haircut, cater a party, fix leaky sinks. MCVTS offers a host of apprenticeship programs that lead to lifelong sustainable careers.

Standing Committees of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board

Committee Name	Description	Membership Requirements
Business Outreach and Economic Development	Shall be responsible for identifying, recommending and ensuring coordination, implementation and monitoring of the program needs and services required and/or requested by the business community.	
By-Laws and Membership	Shall review and/or revise By-Laws, as needed, but minimally shall review them on an annual basis. Shall serve as the committee to present on an annual basis, a slate of officers for the Board's consideration, as well as any actions for officer member removal or the filling of an officer vacancy in accordance with the By Laws provision for same. Part of its functions may include on-going recruitment of WDB and Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) members and the submission of nominations for the Board's consideration.	
Disabilities	This committee focuses on several issues related to serving disabled customers seeking services through the One-Stop Career Center. These issues include, but are not limited to: accessibility of the One-Stop and its community partners, assessing Services for Disabled county wide, environmental scan, identifying best practices, and establishing policies for serving disabled customers.	
Executive	Responsible for ensuring WDB responsibilities, policies and tasks are carried out in accordance with the appropriate WIOA rules/regulations, conduct Board business in between meetings, ensure that a meeting agenda is set, minutes sent out, and that the strategic plan is being implemented and monitored. The composition shall consist of all duly elected officers, the County Freeholder liaison and all chairpersons of the Standing Committees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Officers of the Board -Freeholder Liaison -Chairs of other Standing Committees

Standing Committees of the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board

Committee Name	Description	Membership Requirements
Governance, Planning and Performance	Shall develop, assess, and negotiate criteria, standards and performance goals for the workforce development system, its providers, and develop customer satisfaction criteria. Shall be responsible for One Stop planning, policy development, and oversight and evaluation of the One Stop operation and the workforce investment system and ensure coordination between workforce programs and services. Membership shall consist of Executive Committee members. Shall also be responsible for: 1) Gathering community resource data, identifying gaps; 2) providing policy and program development guidance and recommendations to effectively create and implement the County Workforce Strategic WIOA Plan, its modifications, and/or changes to said plan and monitors implementation of local WDB Plan. Encourages resource usage and collaboration that can impact positively the development and expansion of the local workforce system.	Members of the Executive Committee
Literacy	Shall be responsible for assessing, recommending, ensuring implementation of and monitoring the County Literacy Plan and services related to the development of a literate workforce.	
Prisoner Reentry Employment and Training	The committee is focusing on identifying and creating employment/training opportunities for men and women that have recently been released from Federal, State, and Local correctional facilities. The committee is cultivating strategies that will take a different approach to creating career opportunities for this hard-to-serve population.	
Youth Advisory Council	Provides expertise in planning, policy development and oversight of youth employment and training services. Shall assist the local WDB in: 1) broadening the youth employment and training focus in the community to incorporate a youth development perspective; 2) establishing linkages with other organizations serving youth in the local area; and 3) taking into account a range of issues that can have an impact on the success of youth in the labor market.	

MIDDLESEX COUNTY AT A GLANCE

According to the most recent information from the United States Census Bureau (2015), the population of Middlesex County is 840,900 people, ranking 70th in the country. Listed below are population estimates by age:

AGE	NUMBER
0 to 4	50,202
5 to 17	134,647
18 to 24	82,689
25 to 44	231,436
45 to 64	219,314
65 +	105,758
Median Age	37.6

Population Estimates by Race and Hispanic Origin

(US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014)

Race/Hispanic Origin	Number
American Ind. Or Alaskan Native	1,457
Asian Alone	188,063
Black Alone	79,558
Native Islander or Other Pac. Island	299
White Alone	507,667
Two or More Race Groups	18,891
Hispanic or Latino (can be of any race)	665,882
Hispanic or Latino	158,164

Labor Force for Middlesex, NJ

Middlesex County's total labor force ranks 66th in the United States. It has increased modestly over a 10-year period. The county's unemployment rate continues to follow national and state levels consistently trending downward as the local economy continues to recover from the Great Recession of 2008.

Labor Force Annual Averages in 2015-2025

	Number	Rank	U.S. % of U.S.	U.S.
Total Labor Force	440,343	66	0.3 %	157,130,000
5-Year % Change	3.8 %	491	--	0.0 %
10-Year % Change	6.2 %	737	--	5.2 %
Employed	418,408	65	0.3 %	148,834,000
5-Year % Change	8.3 %	501	--	7.0 %
10-Year % Change	5.3 %	831	--	5.0 %
Unemployed	21,935	72	0.3 %	8,296,000
5-Year % Change	-42.2 %	1,573	--	-44.0 %
10-Year % Change	25.2 %	476	--	9.3 %
Unemployment Rate	5.0	1,734	94.3 %	5.3
5-Year % Change	-43.8 %	1,906	--	-44.8 %
10-Year % Change	19.0 %	687	--	3.9 %

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Top Ten Labor Sectors

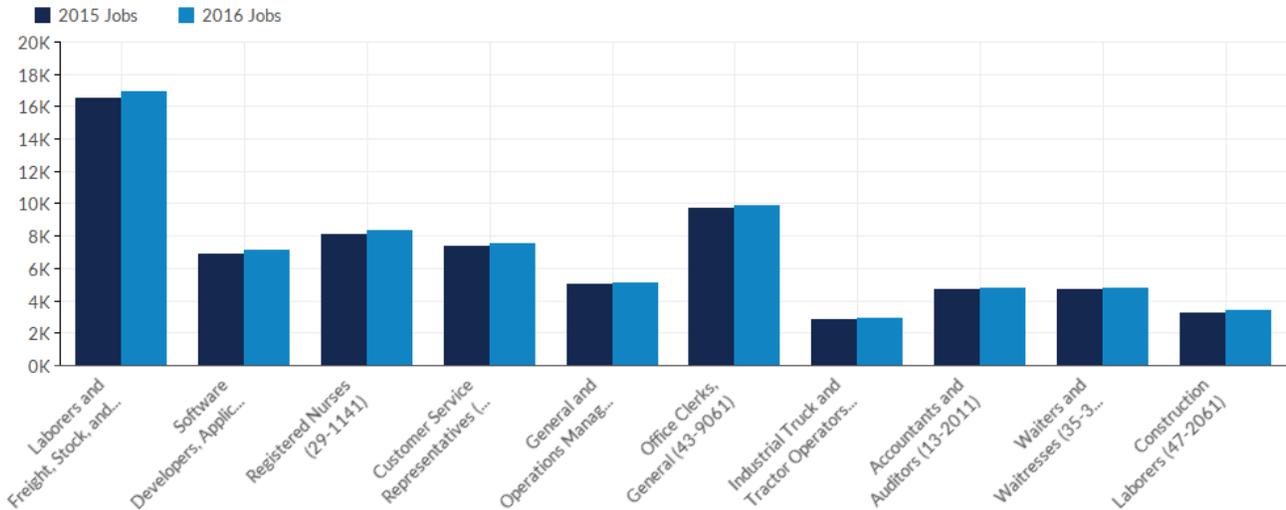
The chart below demonstrates the top 10 labor sectors offering full time employment in Middlesex County. These sectors include Transportation, Logistics, & Distribution, Health Care, Retail & Hospitality, and Technology.



Source: EMSI

Fastest Growing Occupations

Looking forward, Middlesex County contains several labor sectors that have been identified as fast growing. The chart below demonstrates anticipated consistency with current demand occupations as well as the emergence of occupations in the financial services sector.

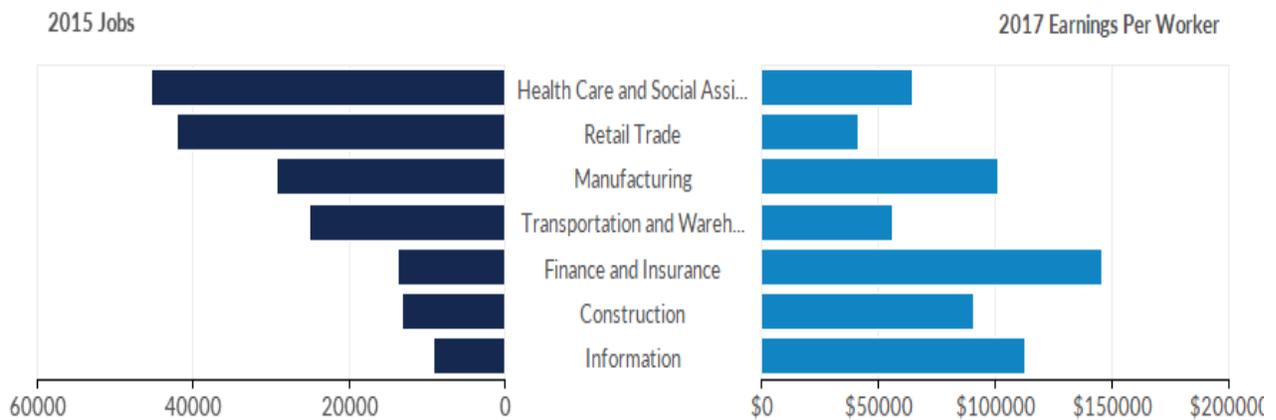


Occupation	2015 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2015-2016)	% Change	2015 Median Hourly Earnings
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	16,518	16,926	408	2%	\$12.18
Software Developers, Applications	6,846	7,087	241	4%	\$49.31
Registered Nurses	8,106	8,325	218	3%	\$43.49
Customer Service Representatives	7,386	7,506	120	2%	\$19.18
General and Operations Managers	5,023	5,137	114	2%	\$71.00
Office Clerks, General	9,740	9,844	104	1%	\$15.84
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	2,829	2,931	103	4%	\$16.49
Accountants and Auditors	4,668	4,770	102	2%	\$42.76
Waiters and Waitresses	4,713	4,815	102	2%	\$11.78
Construction Laborers	3,274	3,375	101	3%	\$22.03

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

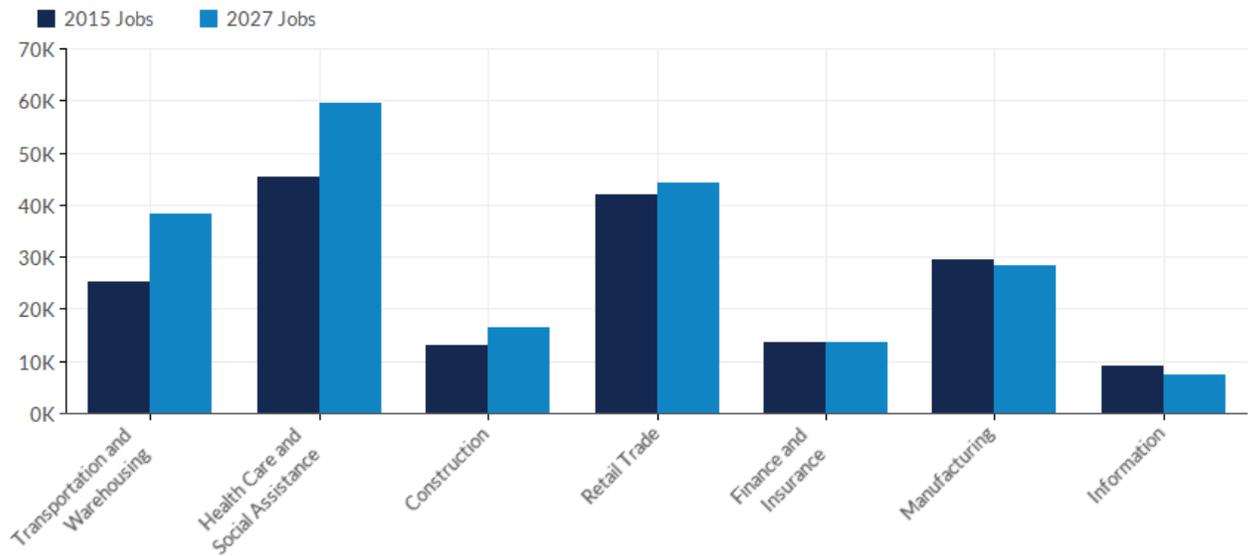
Industry Group Jobs and Earnings Comparison

Group	2015 Jobs	2027 Jobs	2017 Earnings Per Worker
Health Care and Social Assistance	45,395	59,639	\$64,397
Retail Trade	42,072	44,187	\$41,647
Manufacturing	29,347	28,417	\$101,216
Transportation and Warehousing	25,103	38,146	\$56,268
Finance and Insurance	13,692	13,506	\$145,934
Construction	13,095	16,417	\$90,767
Information	9,159	7,399	\$112,948



Source: EMSI

Industry Group Growth Comparison



Group	2015 Jobs	2027 Jobs	Change	% Change
Transportation and Warehousing	25,103	38,146	13,043	52%
Health Care and Social Assistance	45,395	59,639	14,244	31%
Construction	13,095	16,417	3,322	25%
Retail Trade	42,072	44,187	2,114	5%
Finance and Insurance	13,692	13,506	-186	-1%
Manufacturing	29,347	28,417	-930	-3%
Information	9,159	7,399	-1,759	-19%

Source: EMSI

SERVICES PROVIDED TO CUSTOMERS

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker

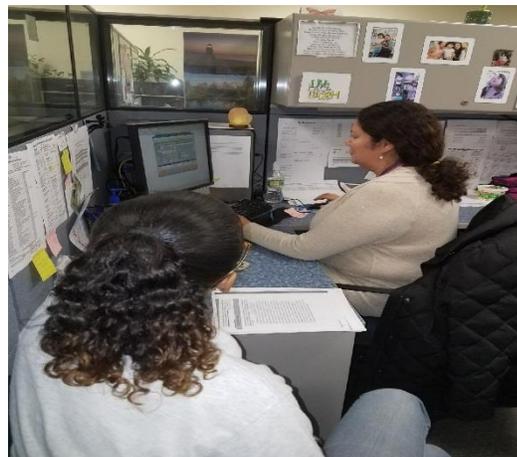
The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development works in tandem with the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development (NJDOLEWD) to prepare customers for their job search. The Workforce Development System is focused on assisting individuals attain labor demand skills, knowledge, and abilities to obtain a job and achieve a career.

The NJDOLEWD website Career Connections (www.careerconnections.nj.gov), along with On-Ramp, allows job seekers to upload their resumes and gain access to thousands of job postings. Career Counselors are available at our One Stop Career Centers to assist job seekers with services which include:

- Assistance finding Job Openings
- Help Contacting Employers
- Assistance with Resumes, Cover Letters, and Job Applications
- Interview Coaching
- Job Search and Job Retention Workshops
- Career Exploration, Guidance and Counseling
- Free Occupational Skills Training Grants
- Basic Skills Remediation and Basic Computer Literacy
- Follow-Up Services

The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides training to eligible individuals with opportunities to develop new skills leading to nationally recognized credential attainment and employment. The WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs are designed to help those who are unemployed or underemployed.

During Program Year 2015 & 2016, the Office of Workforce Development met with 1,914 customers to determine eligibility and interests in occupational skills training. During this time, 930 customers were enrolled in occupational training via Individual Training Accounts. These customers received training in occupation sectors delineated by the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development as in demand.





Youth Advisory Council (YAC)



Youth enrolled in ELITE

Entry Level Internships, Training & Employment (E.L.I.T.E.) Youth

The ELITE Youth One Stop Center located in Perth Amboy currently offers a wide range of programs for youth, ages 16 -24 that reside in Middlesex County and are not enrolled in an educational or training program. The ELITE Youth One Stop Career Services is your resource for youth services:

- Career Exploration
- Work Readiness Skills
- Basic Skills Remediation
- **High School Equivalency Preparation Classes (HSE)**
- Training in Demand Occupations
- Support Services (ex. stipends)
- Follow Up Services
- Work Experience (Internships)

Youth Work Experience (Internships)

Once enrolled in our youth program, youth may be eligible to receive additional services through the work based learning. This program is “On-the-Job Work Experience” in which a participant is matched to an employer for at least 3 months in order to gain valuable training related experience. The goal of the Work Experience program is permanent employment.

The E.L.I.T.E. program served 362 customers in Program Year 2015 & 2016. Seventy-three (73) students obtained their High School Equivalency Diploma. One hundred fifty-one (151) were enrolled in occupation and vocational training programs via Individual Training Accounts. Eighty-nine (89) students were placed into unsubsidized employment.

WorkFirst NJ (WFNJ)

The Middlesex County Office of Workforce Development (MCOWD) provides case management services and job search programs for the Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) population. These federal and state funded programs include Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance (GA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The MCOWD and Board of Social Service works in collaboration to serve these customers.

The WFNJ job search programs are provided at both of the One-Stop Career Centers (New Brunswick and Perth Amboy) and provide a wide range of services. Listed below are the contracted WFNJ programs for PY 2015 & PY 2016:

- Job Search Assistance Program (JSAP)
- Community Work Experience Program (TANF-CWEP, SNAP/ABAWD)
- Engagement/Reengagement Program (TANF)
- Job Readiness (TANF-BREM)
- Extended Job Search (GA-EJS)
- Extended Job Search (SNAP-EJS)

For PY 2015 & PY 2016, listed below are the statistics for the number of referrals, enrollments, job placements and non-participating customers:

WorkFirst Program Overview 2015

	Referrals	Enrollments	Placements	Inactivation
TANF	1,945	924	214	374
GA	1,281	743	107	542
SNAP	6,938	2,566	183	918

WorkFirst Program Overview 2016

	Referrals	Enrollments	Placements	Inactivation
TANF	1,296	598	128	251
GA	1,504	1,118	91	633
SNAP	7,003	1,790	255	835



New Brunswick Workforce Learning Link

Workforce Learning Link (WLL)

The Middlesex County Workforce Development Board (WDB) supports two (2) Workforce Learning Link classrooms through funds from the N.J. Department of Labor and Workforce Development. However, there is a third classroom that was used in the past for an additional Workforce Learning Link, when additional funding was provided. That classroom can be utilized in the future, if additional funding is provided.

The MCWDB was awarded \$164,000 for the Program Year (PY) 2015 and \$212,000. for PY2016. The funding is used to provide Basic Skills, Basic Computer Literacy and English as a Second Language instruction to customers who need to improve their skills in these areas prior to enrolling in an occupational/vocational training program, post-secondary education or seeking employment. Both Workforce Learning Links are located within the Middlesex County One-Stop Career Centers. There is one WLL classroom at the New Brunswick Center and one at the Perth Amboy Center. The WLLs are open from 8:30 AM to 4:15 PM five days a week. Customers can access the computer assisted training for either a morning or afternoon instruction session.

WLL Location	PY15	PY16
New Brunswick	183	78
Perth Amboy	95	92
Total Served	278	170



Business Recruitment Event

Business Services

The Business Development Unit (BDU) was created in the Office of Workforce Development to implement a Business Development Initiative to assist trained graduates in obtaining employment. The BDU was responsible for developing an extensive database of company contacts which would be dispersed among the staff and the NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Business Representatives (BRs) in order to assist in placement and understanding the skill set needs of the companies in our region in addition to helping companies fulfill their job vacancy needs.

The BDU also assists businesses with a variety of services including a hiring needs assessment, employment incentives, tax credits, Incumbent Worker Training, On-The-Job training subsidies, labor market data and economic development analytics.

Listed below are the Business Development Unit's recruitments, participants, job orders, new employer contacts and new company profiles for 2015 and 2016.

Cumulative Services for Business Services		
	2015	2016
Recruitments	169	161
Participants	657	688
Job Orders	277	323
New Employers Visits/Marketing Calls	167/193	190/212
New Company Profile Created	288	152

Job Fairs

The Business Development Unit hosts spring and autumn job fairs annually. Middlesex County will continue to coordinate job fairs in various locations throughout Middlesex County with participation from local businesses. They are co-sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, local municipalities, and the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders. In the future, Middlesex County will have regional job fairs with our Central Jersey Partners (Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean).



Veterans Job Fair- Freeholder Director Rios and Bert Baron, Radio Personality



WDB Director, Kevin Kurdziel (On the Far Left)

FUNDING FOR PROGRAM YEARS 2015 & 2016

FUNDING	PROGRAM YEAR 2015	PROGRAM YEAR 2016
Adult	\$ 1,466,763	\$ 1,451,348
Youth (includes work experience funding)	\$ 1,768,497	\$ 1,781,538
Dislocated Worker	\$ 2,060,255	\$ 2,238,817
Workforce Learning Link (WLL)	\$ 164,000	\$ 212,000
Workforce Development Program (WDP)	\$ 320,601	\$ -
WFNJ: TANF (includes Case Management)	\$ 1,342,414	\$ 1,381,693
WFNJ: CAVP	\$ 37,000	\$ 12,000
WFNJ: Work Verification	\$ 37,000	\$ 37,400
WFNJ: Needs Based	\$ 38,000	\$ 38,000
WFNJ: G.A./SNAP (formerly "food stamps")	\$ 728,753	\$ 710,534
Smart Steps	\$ 3,210	\$ 803
TOTALS	\$ 7,966,493	\$ 7,864,133