



LOUISIANA WORKS

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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N E W S R E L E A S E

Louisiana ranks third in money spent on customized training

BATON ROUGE – With a 2006 budget of more than \$44 million, Louisiana ranked third in the nation for dollars spent on customized training for employees, according to a recent report. Only Iowa and California spent more, with \$62 million and \$52 million respectively.

The report, published by the U.S. Department of Labor, took a comprehensive look at state-financed customized training programs across the country. Only Connecticut and New Hampshire did not fund training in 2006, while Oregon has no state-funded customized training program.

“Our ranking confirms what we have always believed,” said Labor Secretary John Warner Smith. “Louisiana is firmly committed to keeping our workforce on the cutting edge when it comes to job skills.”

The Louisiana Department of Labor provides customized training opportunities through its Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWTP). Since the first grant was awarded in 1999, IWTP has trained more than 206,000 workers.

IWTP is funded by a portion of Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax contributions dedicated solely for training. Under legislation passed in 2007, future annual assessments for the program will be either \$20 million or \$35 million depending on the balance of the UI Trust Fund.

The report characterizes IWTP as “one of the broadest and best-funded in the country, even after hurricane Katrina devastated large parts of the state and slowed tax collections.”

“One of the major factors in IWTP’s success is the flexibility of the program,” said IWTP Director Michael Harris. “We allow businesses to choose their own training providers and tailor programs to best suit the needs of their employees.”

Contributing to that flexibility is the Small Business Employee Training, or SBET. This component of IWTP provides off-the-shelf training opportunities for businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

Louisiana also ranked third, behind Iowa and Mississippi, in per capita spending in 2006. The state spent \$23.01 per person in the labor force on customized training compared to Iowa’s \$42.48 and Mississippi’s \$24.64.

Training dollars have helped retain jobs, create new jobs and increase training participant wages by an average of 13.5 percent, Harris said.

The “State-Financed Customized Training 2006” report is available at http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2345&mp=y.

For more information on the Incumbent Worker Training Program, visit www.LAWORKS.net or call 1-866-725-IWTP (4987).

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