



# Advancing Colorado's Highly Skilled Workforce

## H-1B

Technical Skills Training Grant  
*3rd Quarter 2014 Update*



COLORADO  
DEPARTMENT OF  
LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT

COLORADO IS GROWING SOME OF ITS KEY INDUSTRIES BY PROVIDING EDUCATION, TRAINING AND JOB PLACEMENT ASSISTANCE TO INTERMEDIATE, HIGHLY-SKILLED INCUMBENT WORKERS AND LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYED WORKERS. TRAINING IS ENABLED THROUGH A \$5,000,000 GRANT FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND IS FOCUSED ON OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES WHERE H-1B VISAS ARE USED TO HIRE FOREIGN WORKERS.

### Occupations in these Industries



## Grant Benefits

The grant provides funding for **up to 100% of the tuition costs** for eligible training. Participating businesses must match grant funds by providing paid time for employees to participate in the training.

- Training providers can be selected by the employer.
- Education and training can be “For-Credit” or “Non-Credit”, but all participants must receive a degree, credential or certificate at the conclusion.
- Training and education for incumbent workers will provide a clear pathway for individuals to retain their position, advance into a new position, or receive a raise.

H-1B grant funds can be leveraged with the Colorado First and Existing Industry grant program as well as other grants.

## Who We’ve Helped through 09/30/2014

**2,003** participants have been served  
**1,709** completed education/job training activities and received credentials  
**2,759** industry recognized certificates and credentials awarded

## Participating Workforce Centers

- Arapahoe/Douglas Works!
- Workforce Boulder County
- Denver Workforce Center
- Larimer County Workforce Center
- Mesa County Workforce Center
- Pikes Peak Workforce Center
- Pueblo Workforce Center
- Employment Services of Weld County

## Key Partners

- Industry Advisory Council
- Colorado Workforce Development Council
- Other State Agencies
- Business & Industry Associations
- Partner Employers
- Education Partners
  - Colorado Community College System
  - University of Denver - Colorado Women’s College

## Success Stories

While the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment was the recipient of the H-1B Technical Skills Training grant in 2011 and is responsible for its overall grant administration, it is through our participating workforce centers that the grant activities are implemented. Each of the eight statewide partnering workforce regions are responsible for serving the incumbent workers employed at work sites in their region or the unemployed participants residing in their regions. While identifying and serving incumbent workers has been a resounding success, serving over 300% of our goal, finding and training the unemployed has been more challenging. What the workforce regions have made very clear over the past three years of the grant is that it takes a myriad of approaches to reach and serve the long-term unemployed.

Employment Services of Weld County (ESWC) has exceeded H-1B goals of both the long-term unemployed (LTU) and Incumbent Worker through a multipronged approach. Strategies used by ESWC to recruit eligible participants for the LTU included participation in Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) orientations, creating a flyer for both ESWC and County websites, Community College Career Coaches, reviewing Dislocated Worker profiles, and referrals from fellow case managers.

As the previous paragraph illustrates, there has not been one silver bullet, one approach, for Weld to achieve their H-1B goals. Not relying upon one approach served Weld County particularly well as the economy across Colorado and in Weld improved considerably since the grant was awarded in 2011. As the economy picked up it became more challenging for a

workforce center to identify and serve the long-term unemployed, Weld County had in place several avenues. So when one approach waned, the expiration of EUC, they continued to enroll and train the long-term unemployed through other efforts.

Further, Employment Services of Weld County built on a previous partnership already in place. Employment Services had collaborated with Upstate Colorado Economic Development on several Incumbent Worker training initiatives over the years, and successfully continued the collaboration on the H-1B grant. Employment Services provided Upstate Colorado staff with information on the H-1B Grant that upstate would then share with employers. Staff at both agencies worked together to ensure the training and applicants met grant requirements, approved trainings and obtained all needed documentation from the employers. These strategies have resulted in ESWC exceeding numerical goals for the program and assisting 96 participants with training thus far.

## **New H-1B Grant Awarded to Denver**

A previous quarterly H-1B Newsletter article announced the availability of the February 19, 2014 U.S. Department of Labor of the H-1B Ready to Work Partnership grant opportunity. The stated purpose of this particular H-1B grant is to provide long-term unemployed workers with individualized counseling, training and supportive and specialized services leading to rapid employment.

On October 15, 2014, the U.S. Department of Labor announced the awarding of nearly \$170 million in grants to partnerships in 23 states and Puerto Rico. The Denver Office of Economic Development-Division of Workforce Development, as the applicant lead, was awarded \$6,172,569 for the Technology Employment in Colorado Partnership (TEC-P) project. The focus of this grant is to build the information technology (IT) and advanced manufacturing (AM) sectors through an industry and employer-driven approach. This approach will develop an education and training career pathway, leading to employment of LTUs and incumbent workers in middle- to high-skilled jobs in the IT and AM sectors.

TEC-P is a three-track training and education intervention program that will provide:

1. Intensive coaching through Platform to Employment, Workforce Empowerment Series and/or Power Prep sessions
2. On the job training with an earning component, and
3. Training leading to certificates and credentials needed for employment in the targeted occupations

While Denver is the grant lead for TEC-P, there are numerous partners that will be working together for the benefit of both incumbent and long-term unemployed workers, though with a focus on putting the long-term unemployed back to work in good paying jobs. These partners include six Workforce Investment Boards, the Colorado Urban Workforce Alliance (CUWA), five community colleges, three industry associations, 11 employers in the IT and AM industries, and five training partners. Together the partners will serve 538 long-term unemployed individuals and 55 other unemployed or incumbent workers. The period of performance for the grant is four years from the date the grant is executed.

## Get Involved

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