

## Creating Profitable Connections July 2009 - June 2010 Annual Report

*Opportunity Links is operated by:*

Licking County   
**Job & Family Services**  
*Help for today. Hope for tomorrow.*

# Looking forward to a bright future.

*Dear Community Member,*

Licking County employers, educators, trainers, and economic developers share one goal: a profitable, productive Licking County where residents have rewarding work, and businesses have opportunities to thrive.

Given our economic climate, at times, this goal may seem out of reach.

However, if you speak to the thousands of job seekers helped by the Opportunity Links One Stop Employment and Training Center in 2010, they will tell you the future looks brighter. If you speak to employers who benefited from on-the-job training subsidies and qualified employees, they will say they are positioned to succeed.

During the past fiscal year, Opportunity Links focused on critical skills training and developing a quality workforce in Licking County. By funding classroom training, we made it possible to retrain unemployed workers, giving them skills needed to take advantage of existing and future opportunities. By subsidizing on-the-job training, we gave employers the ability to hire more workers and develop essential skills to drive future growth.

By reforging our workforce, we not only helped existing businesses; we also created a key asset that will help attract new businesses and jobs to our area.

There is still work to be done. But many employees and employers are already reaping the rewards of these efforts. In this fiscal year and those to follow, Licking County Job & Family Services and Opportunity Links will continue to make every effort to ensure Licking County is a place where every worker and every employer has every opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your support. Here's to a profitable 2011.



John D. Fisher  
Director, Licking County Job & Family Services



CREDIBILITY • INTEGRITY • ACHIEVEMENT

# Putting Licking County back to work.

In fiscal year 2010, the number of first time visitors to Opportunity Links One-Stop increased by 63%. Time spent on active job searches skyrocketed.

Opportunity Links helps Licking County residents find employment by serving as a one-stop source of services, resources, and tools to assist both job seekers and employers. Opportunity Links collaborates with educational and training partners and other economic development organizations to bring new jobs to Licking County and prepared our residents to excel in those jobs.

## *Job Seeker Services:*

- Access to job leads
- On site resource room with fax machine, copier, Internet access, job boards, resume templates, mini-library, and more
- Access to new career training
- Interview skills training
- Resume assistance
- Job search workshops
- Career and skill assessments
- Access to community resources, local training programs, and educational institutions

## *Profitable Connections:*

- Job fairs
- Onsite recruiting, meet and greets, and interviews
- Local and statewide job postings



## *Employer Services:*

- Prescreened applicants
- Application distribution and collection
- Customized on-the-job training
- Subsidized employment opportunities
- Rapid Response for layoffs and closures
- Information concerning tax credits for hiring job seekers most in need of employment



## *Young people need jobs, too.*

Youth continued to be a focus for Opportunity Links in fiscal year 2010. We offered a number of services specifically tailored to young people, including:

- Provided funding for summer youth employment programs: partnered with five different contractors to provide 119 youth, ages 16-21, with paid summer employment and work skills training
- Contracted WIA youth programs targeting at-risk youth, including:
  - Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG)-East Central Career Programs, Inc.: 33 C-TEC-enrolled youth received training and mentoring in employability skills, employment competency curriculum, leadership and professional development
  - Youth Works Program—Licking-Knox Goodwill Industries: 18 out-of-school youth received work experience, GED assistance, and job coaching services
  - Credit Recovery Program- C-TEC: 27 youth received help with recovering credits needed to graduate or to become eligible for vocational training at C-TEC
- In-school presentations to share information about the One Stop's resources
- CareerXPress Job Fair for young people ages 16-21
- Initiated plans to develop a new youth focused employment web resource at [theonestop.org](http://theonestop.org)

## Connecting workers with opportunities that make cents.

In the 2010 fiscal year, Licking County continued to deal with the effects of a weak economy. Opportunity Links also saw an increase in the number of people applying for positions that did not match their skill sets.

**“In 2010, the One Stop logged a total of 29,414 visits, including 5,339 first-time visitors”**

To combat these trends, Opportunity Links focused on helping displaced and unemployed/underemployed workers find employment opportunities that matched their qualification and met their needs. In 2010, the One Stop logged a total of 29,414 visits, including 5,339 first-time visitors who took advantage of both our core job search services and our more intensive training resources.

### *Job search help:*

- Upgraded technology in the resource center
- Sent email blasts to more than 2,000 job seekers promoting immediate employment opportunities and upcoming events
- Counseled job seekers on jobs that suit their lifestyle and family needs
- Held Resource Fairs to provide information on community and social services available to unemployed residents, including mental health resources, support groups, and financial, housing, and utility assistance

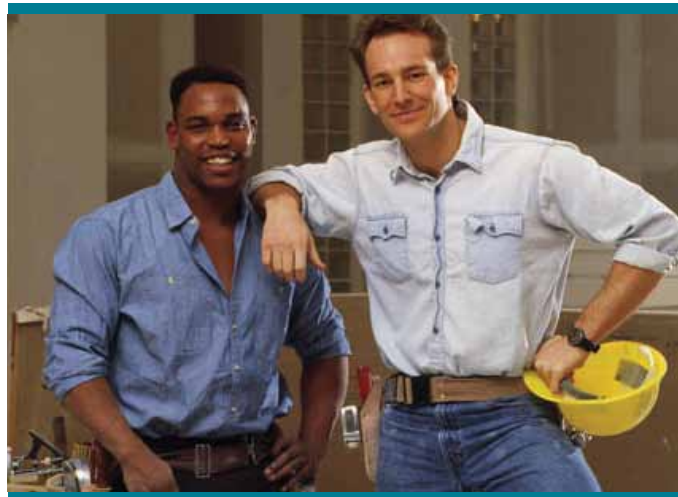
### *Training:*

- Focused funding dollars toward training for high-demand occupations
- Partnered with local employers to tailor training to current and future job openings
- Helped displaced workers explore new career opportunities in other growth fields and refine their skills for specialized positions
- On-site ABLE classes offered reading and math skills training to help job seekers better qualify for business and industry positions
- Offered training assistance for pre-employment tests and employer entrance exams
- Partnered with educational institutions to fund pre-employment job training in areas including manufacturing, healthcare, and customer service

## Helping to bring new jobs to town.

Economic development is a key to helping people find and keep jobs. In fiscal year 2010, Opportunity Links participated in numerous economic development initiatives to help stimulate and strengthen our economy, including:

**Workenomics™**—Opportunity Links works with other businesses, government, and academic entities to attract employers to our area. We provided employers looking to relocate with valuable data about our labor market and available resources to help influence their decisions.



### **Licking County Retention and Expansion Task Force—**

As a partner of the task force, Opportunity Links assists employers by working with them to understand what they need in order to create and retain jobs and remain a strong and vital presence in our community.

**Meeting with One-Stop Partners**—Opportunity Links worked more collaboratively with its partners than ever before. By gaining a greater understanding of the services offered by organizations that share or have similar goals, we can all better meet the needs of the community.

### **One-Stop Partners**

- AARP
- Americorps/Positive Balance/Benefit Bank
- Central Ohio Technical College
- C-TEC
- Licking-Knox Goodwill Industries
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
- The Ohio State University—Newark
- Rehabilitation Services Commission

## Helping businesses keep employees on the payroll.

It's hard to help people find jobs or to justify job training if employment opportunities are not available. During the 2010 fiscal year, Opportunity Links provided a wider range of employer services than ever before. We assisted local businesses in providing valuable opportunities for workers to get jobs—and keep them.

Through WIA dollars and other sources of funding, Opportunity Links proved instrumental in helping businesses bridge difficult economic times and keep workers working. We assisted employers via:

**On The Job Training**—We incentivized employers to hire dislocated workers by reimbursing 50% of the new hires' wages while in training and for three months following the completion of training.

**Subsidized Employment Program**—Opportunity Links assisted 12 Licking County employers by reimbursing 50% of an eligible employee's wages up to \$6,000 per new employee.

**Recruiting Assistance**—We helped link employers to qualified candidates through advertising and the use of our onsite interview rooms.

## *Putting employers and employees in the same place at the same time.*

Job fairs continue to be one of the most important services Opportunity Links has to offer to both job seekers and employers. We strive to include only those employers currently hiring and we work with applicants to develop the skills needed to present themselves and excel at interviews.



Based on needs and opportunities in the community, Opportunity Links tailors job fairs to specific age groups, occupations, and even individual employers. In fiscal year 2010, Opportunity Links held 32 recruitment events including:

**September Job Fair**—Eleventh annual job fair and the first held at Opportunity Links, the 2010 Job Fair featured 21 quality employers and attracted more than 630 job seekers, many of whom were offered employment as a result of the fair.

**Youth CareerXPress Job Fair**—Held in April specifically for young people ages 16-21.

**30 employer-specific job fairs**—Opportunity Links hosted job fairs to assist employers in the home health, security, commercial cleaning, retail, tax preparation, and other industries with their employment needs.

### *Visit [www.theonestop.org](http://www.theonestop.org)*

In addition to face-to-face job fairs, Opportunity Links brought employers and employees together in a virtual setting via the newly updated One Stop Website. Enhancements include downloadable PDFs of Hot Jobs, advertising for upcoming recruitment events, and a link to **ohiomeansjobs.com**. Job seekers and employers can also submit questions and comments that are answered by our Employment Specialists every day.



# Opportunity Links Expenditures SFY2010

## Adult

Adult	\$194,013.19
Adult Stimulus	\$171,237.55
Adult Admin	\$7,104.90
Adult Admin Stimulus	\$7,730.37
<b>Total Adult</b>	<b>\$380,086.01</b>

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## Dislocated Worker

Dislocated Worker	\$184,304.88
Dislocated Worker Stimulus	\$740,379.11
Dislocated Worker Admin	\$25,544.86
Dislocate Worker Admin Stimulus	\$16,597.94
<b>Total Dislocated Worker</b>	<b>\$966,826.79</b>

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## Youth

Youth	\$414,823.16
Youth Stimulus	\$470,551.89
Youth Admin	\$11,811.96
Youth Admin Stimulus	\$8,547.18
<b>Total Youth</b>	<b>\$905,734.19</b>

**Total WIA Expenditures**      **\$2,252,646.99**

## One-Stop Partners

- AARP
- Americorps/Positive Balance/Benefit Bank
- Central Ohio Technical College
- C-TEC
- Licking-Knox Goodwill Industries
- Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services
- The Ohio State University—Newark
- Rehabilitation Services Commission



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Opportunity Links Works for Licking County.

To learn more about current programs, services, and initiatives, visit [www.theonestop.org](http://www.theonestop.org).