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Access to Training for Mature Workers Through One-Stop Career Centers in Massachusetts

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Executive Summary

The major purpose of this research is to determine the extent to which career centers in Massachusetts are providing mature workers with access to federally funded training. The research is based on two large administrative data sources: The MOSES database made available by the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training (now Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment) and a customer service database maintained by The Career Place, a career center in Woburn, MA. The MOSES data file provided for this research includes data on user characteristics and service transactions for all career centers in Massachusetts from July 1, 2001 through June 6, 2003 for individuals who were classified as eligible for training. Data from the career center cover all users for a three-year period beginning July 1, 2001.

Principle findings:

- Mature workers are well represented among career center users. Mature workers make up an increasing proportion of career center users. Between 2001 and 2003, workers 45 years of age and older grew from 36.6% to 44.5% of career center users.
- The number of adults of all ages who receive federally funded training through career centers is exceedingly modest.
- Among those eligible for training, mature workers are less likely than younger workers to receive training.
- Mature workers make extensive use of other services offered by career centers.
- Mature workers who receive training through career centers enter both training and employment less rapidly than do younger workers. When they are employed, mature workers tend to receive slightly higher wages than do younger workers.

Major recommendations:

- A greater public investment in employment training continues to be needed. Both younger workers and mature workers need improved access to publicly funded training.
- Improved data are needed to monitor and assess employment and training services. In particular, more attention is needed for assessing employment outcomes for career center users who are not eligible for training.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared to support the efforts of the Mature Workers Coalition to obtain a statistical overview of the experiences of mature workers in Massachusetts in seeking publicly funded training through career centers operating in the framework of the federal Workforce Investment Act. The Mature Workers Coalition consists of a variety of Massachusetts organizations that are concerned with employment opportunities for older workers. The Coalition operates under the auspices of the Massachusetts Association of Older Americans. Ruth Ann Moriarty chairs the Coalition.

The report is possible because of the willingness of the Massachusetts Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment to make data available from its MOSES database. Leslie Abramowitz of the Division of Career Services was particularly helpful in responding to the data request for the study. The report is enhanced substantially by the willingness of George Moriarty, Director of The Career Place of Woburn, Massachusetts, to make additional data available from the internal data system of the career center that he directs. Christina Patterson of The Career Place did the technical work by creating a data file for this research project.

Don Anderson, Director of Workforce Central in Worcester, George Moriarty, Director of The Career Place in Woburn, and Paul Graham, Business Service Representative of Career Source in Cambridge hosted site visits that helped the research team understand the operations of the career centers.

Kelly Fitzgerald obtained valuable background information about career centers. Josephine Sturgis assisted in the formatting of the report. I am particularly indebted to Peter Doeringer, Jose Melendez, and Françoise Carre for their thoughtful comments on previous drafts of this report.

Francis G. Caro

BACKGROUND

Continuing workforce participation on the part of mature adults is of increasing importance both for mature adults themselves and for the economy. The limitations in the numbers of mature workers covered by private pensions, the limitations of pensions for many who are covered, the modest savings of mature adults, the upward shift in age of full eligibility for Social Security benefits, the increasing health care costs that older people must finance themselves, and increased longevity provide reasons for mature adults to remain in the workforce for as long as possible. The major decline among men in the age of retirement that began after World War II has disappeared. More women have entered the workforce, and the age of retirement is increasing. The forces listed above are likely to lead to a substantial increase in age of retirement among both men and women in the future. With the aging of the baby boom generation, the absolute numbers of mature adults who will want to remain in the workforce will grow substantially.

In the decades ahead, mature adults will play an increasing role in the workforce. Both because of the aging of the baby boomers and the relatively modest numbers of younger cohorts entering the workforce, mature adults will represent a major pool among those available to work. In periods like the late 1990s, when the economy was strong and demand for workers was great, many employers will have reason to look more favorably on mature adults as employees.

Mature adults vary greatly with respect to their status in the workforce. Some are fully employed and in a trajectory to remain as fully employed as they like.

Others are:

- Fully employed now but may be at risk of unemployment in the future because of increased competition in their field or decline in their industry.
- Working full time but at low wages and/or in unattractive work. They would rather be working at higher wages and/or more attractive work.
- Working part-time but would prefer to be working full-time.
- Unemployed and are actively looking for work.
- Discouraged workers, that is, individuals who have been out of work for a long time, would prefer to be working, but are no longer actively looking for work.

Upgrading skills throughout work life is increasingly important if individuals are to contribute fully to the economy. Upgrading skills is likely to be important for mature workers regardless of their current attachment to the workforce. In many fields, workers must improve their skills continuously if they are to remain competitive. Rapid patterns of industrial growth and contraction also force workers to change fields during their work lives. Development of new skills is often a necessity for individuals to make these transitions successfully.

The manner in which workers upgrade their skills varies greatly. Some receive training from employers. (Large employers are more likely than small employers to offer training.) Some draw on their own financial resources and enroll in educational and training programs. Some learn informally. Others rely on publicly funded training. The focus of this report is publicly funded training, which is particularly important for those who do not have access to employer-sponsored training, those who are changing fields, those who need new skills that they are not likely to learn informally, and those with modest financial resources who cannot afford to finance their own training.

Contemporary U.S. employment and training policies can be traced back to the manpower programs of the 1960s – the Area Redevelopment Act of 1961 and the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962. The early programs were administered by the United States Department of Labor but often worked closely with the federal-state employment services system. Over the years, these programs have been modified in ways that place governance responsibilities in the hands of state and local governments. Major milestones were the creation of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Program (CETA) in 1973, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982, and the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998.

For the most part, the federal programs have emphasized immediate placements rather than long-term training that would upgrade skills and earnings (Doeringer, 2002). None of the programs has accomplished much in integrating federally funded employment and training programs with the adult basic education and occupational training programs regularly offered by community colleges with state and local funding (Doeringer, 2002).

The Workforce Investment Act called for the establishment of local “one-stop career centers” that were to be the access points for all job placement and training services for adults who were unemployed or at risk of losing their jobs. One-stop career centers operate under the supervision of regional Workforce Investment Boards. Massachusetts has developed a network

of 16 Workforce Investment Boards and 34 one-stop career centers. Career centers are mandated to provide three tiers of services:

- **Core services**, which include intake, initial assessment of skill levels and supportive services needs, career counseling, and information about local job opportunities; core services are available to anyone who possesses a valid working status, including immigrants who have valid work permits;
- **Intensive services**, which include diagnostic testing, evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals, career planning, and short-term prevocational services to assist in job searching; and
- **Training** through a program or courses.

Massachusetts has two forms of career centers: public and competitive. The public career centers have their roots in regional offices of the state public employment services. Competitive centers are operated by private nonprofit organizations.

Most federal training money is available from three major sources: Title I of the Workforce Investment Act provides funds to assist adults, including those classified as dislocated workers; National Emergency Grants (NEG) provide funds to assist workers laid-off as a result of large company cutbacks or plant shutdowns; and the Trade Adjustment Assistance programs provide training funds for workers who have lost their jobs as a result of companies moving overseas. (Some federal training money is also available for a few specialized groups such as Native Americans, migrant workers, and veterans.) The term “Title I-eligible” is used by the Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment and career centers to describe those who are eligible for federally funded training after having received career centers’ core services and are unable to find employment.

Career centers differ from one another in the optional services that they offer. Centers vary in the degree to which they provide access to resources such as computers and resume software, reference materials, networking groups, and economic data. Unemployment insurance walk-in services are also available at centers with an unemployment insurance representative visiting the center at least once a week. Some centers also provide assistance to companies interested in recruiting new employees. Many centers have computers available to individuals for

researching jobs or applying for positions online and writing cover letters and resumes. Fax machines, copiers, and libraries with current magazine and newspapers useful to job hunting are located at many career centers. Some centers offer special computer labs with self-instruction training programs so that job seekers can train themselves on new computer skills. Some of this training is offered on a fee basis.

Each center has its own registration process. While the application processes vary from one center to another, they must all capture the data required by the WIA. Generally, new users must complete an application that seeks information about education, prior employment, and desired employment. All centers have tiered registration systems depending on the level of assistance a job seeker will receive from the center. For those seeking only core services, the registration process is simplified. Additional steps are required for those seeking a more comprehensive level of services.

The Massachusetts Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment Assistance (formerly, Division of Employment and Training (DET) and the career centers in the state also offer several online job tools useful throughout the job search and training process. Available through the DET website (<http://www.detma.org/>), The Job Search Advisor (<http://www.detma.org/jsadvisor/start/>) is a self-guided tool useful to jobseekers when performing their own job searches. The guide helps an individual develop a more sophisticated job search process by providing information and exercises that help organize the job search and teach an individual how to talk about his or her skills. The guide also presents ideas on how to write effective resumes, cover letters, and applications; the guide also helps the individual in finding new sources for job leads; and it helps to prepare an individual for an interview and making the decision to accept an offer.

Massachusetts JobQuest (<https://web.detma.org/Jobseeker/CM1.ASP>) is a database of current job postings. Jobs may be located in Massachusetts or around the country. JobQuest also offers listings of training programs, recruitment activities, and other activities and workshops offered through the career centers. Those who register with JobQuest can receive email messages with new job postings and information about upcoming career center events. Lastly, JobQuest can determine eligibility for some government programs for those who have registered.

Funds for Title I Adult training can be provided only to those who have made use of the core services provided by career centers, have not found a job, meet income-eligibility criteria,

and who agree to train for an occupation that the local Workforce Investment Board has determined to be in demand. Eligibility for training is determined through an assessment made by the career center.

Because of resource limitations, career centers are able to make Title I funding available only to a portion of those who meet eligibility criteria. To make training available to more users, career centers explore other funding sources such as TANF grants, VETS, Job Corps, ATELS, and Trade and Pell grants.

For those whose training is funded through Title I, Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are established. A public or private training provider must meet several requirements before it is eligible to receive reimbursement for providing training to individuals with an ITA. A provider must first be approved by the local WIB. Secondly, the training provider must post a bond with surety or a term deposit account payable held in trust for the students. Training providers must also be in good standing with an accreditation or licensing board. Most importantly, the training program offered through the provider must lead to some form of certification or degree or provide skills training used and recognized by employers.

Because of the greater autonomy currently enjoyed by local employment service providers, the Workforce Investment Act has invited questions about how well older workers are served under the legislation. Previously, JTPA mandated that 5% of training funds be reserved for workers 55 years of age and older. Under WIA, that restriction has been removed.

In April 2000, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Blue Ribbon Commission on Older Workers issued a report that called attention to the growing importance of older workers for the Massachusetts Workforce. The Commission was co-chaired by John T. Dunlop of Harvard University and Warren Pepicelli of U.N.I.T.E., AFL-CIO. The Commission was supported by a research team directed by Professor Peter Doeringer of Boston University.

The report's recommendations placed heavy emphasis on the upgrading of worker skills. The report called for the Legislature to provide "additional resources for long-term training of older workers by community colleges and other post-secondary institutions to help reduce major skill mismatches." The report also recommended that the Legislature create a Workplace Training Fund for public-sector employees. The Legislature was asked to provide supplemental funding to serve at least 20,000 adult workers in intensive workforce development programs. The Governor was encouraged to "strengthen the capacity of unions and employers to upgrade

the skills of older workers. Career centers were urged to offer intensive assessment to all job seekers who were at risk because they are unlikely to find employment that provides at least 85% of the earnings of their previous job or half of the median family income. The report also called for establishing an independent system for evaluating all publicly funded workforce development programs.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The major purpose of this research is to determine the extent to which career centers are providing mature workers with access to federally funded training. Secondary purposes of the research are to determine the extent to which mature workers are using other services offered by career centers. The research also explores the relationship between training and employment outcomes for mature workers.

METHODS

The research is concerned with a three-year period beginning July 1, 2000 and ending June 30, 2003. The research is based on two secondary data sources: The MOSES database made available by the Massachusetts Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment and a customer service database maintained by The Career Place, a career center in Woburn, MA. The MOSES data file includes data on user characteristics and service transactions for all career centers from July 1, 2001 through June 6, 2003 for individuals classified as “eligible for training.” The data file does not include information for the majority of career center users who were not eligible for training. The demographic characteristics included in the file are age, gender, race/ethnicity, and education. The data file includes the date on which eligibility for training was established, the date on which training began, the date on which training ended, the source of training funds, employment start date, starting wages, the career center used, and the workforce investment area in which career centers are located. The data file also indicates which of the following core and intensive services other than training were provided to users:

- Assessment Test Service—Measures strengths and interests of an individual matching the results to potential occupational professions.
- Counseling Service—Career-counseling service that is tailored to individual needs.

- Job Development Service—Workshops that teach an individual how to prepare for a new job, cope with the loss of a job, set goals, manage stress, and use techniques that help improve personal job skills.
- Job Search Service—Workshops that teach an individual how to improve job search efforts including writing a resume and cover letters, interviewing, networking, organizing a job search, and negotiating job offers.
- Resource Room—Use of high-tech resources (such as computers, fax machines, and copiers) and job-search and employment-market printed materials.
- Support Service
- Workshop Service—Use of special workshops organized through the career centers.
- Referral to non-career center services.

The data file distinguishes among three categories of federally funded training:

- Occupational and Skills Training—Attended occupational and skills training courses, which are paid for by the state.
- On-the-Job Training.
- Adult basic education and English as a Second Language Training.

The MOSES database includes usable records for 19,400 service users. Some cleaning of the data file was done to remove duplicate records and to remove records with serious internal inconsistencies. An estimate of training authorization was made for the period June 7 through June 30, 2003 so that comparisons could be made of eligibility of mature workers for training for fiscal years 2001, 2002, and 2003. Extrapolations were based on service patterns in the first 11 months of 2003 and service patterns in June of 2001 and 2002.

Supplementary data were sought from The Career Place because the Massachusetts Division of Career Services and Division of Unemployment did not provide data on the vast majority of career center users who were not eligible for training. The Career Place was able to provide more complete data because it has a very strong data system. The Career Place maintains an electronic data file with demographic characteristics of all service users and maintains a record of services used at each visit to the center. The Career Place provided data for 13,767 users who registered between July 1, 2000 and June 30, 2003.

Because of the large size of the data files used in the study, most of the comparisons yielded statistically significant differences. For that reason, statistical significance is usually not reported here. The more important issue in this research is whether the difference reported in this research is substantively important.

Neither data file included names or other identifying information about service recipients. Data on Massachusetts unemployment patterns were obtained to put the training data in context. The unemployment data were obtained from economic data posted on the Massachusetts Division of Career Services web site (http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/lmi_lur_a.asp).

For this research, mature workers are defined as those who are 45 years of age and older. Among those concerned with older worker employment issues, the age cut offs for mature workers vary. Federal legislation concerned with age discrimination in employment provides coverage to all who are 40 years of age and older. On the other hand, some federal programs designed to serve older workers have been restricted to those 55 years of age and older. In this report, a portion of the analysis focuses on those who are 55 years of age and older. In the case of the MOSES database, age is measured at the time of certification for eligibility for training. In the case of the Career Place data, age was established at the time of registration. Since career center users may establish eligibility for training months or sometimes years after registering, those in the MOSES database are somewhat older than those in the Career Place database.

FINDINGS

Receipt of Training

Mature workers became increasingly involved with training during the study period. Title I eligibility among those 45 and over increased by 49% between FY01 and FY03, while Title I eligibility among those under 45 increased only 7% during that period. Over the three-year period, mature workers became a substantially larger proportion of those who were eligible for Title I training. In FY01, 36.6% of career centers' users were 45 and over. In FY03, 44.5% of users were 45 and over (Table 1).

Table 1. Age and Eligibility for Training, FY 2001-2003

Age category at enrollment	Enrollment year			Total
	2001	2002	2003	
Under 45 years	63.4	59.0	55.5	59.1
Over 45 years	36.6	41.0	44.5	40.9
Total percent	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total number	5,916	6,609	6,875	19,400

Among those who became eligible for federally funded training, mature workers were less likely than younger workers to receive training. Overall, slightly less than half of those for whom training eligibility was established actually received training. Among those under 45 years of age, 52% received training. Among those 45 years of age and older, only 42% received training. The impact of age on receipt of training was particularly great for those 60 years of age and older. Among those 60 years of age and older, only 30% received training (Table 2).

Table 2. Age and Receipt of Training Among Those Eligible for Training*

Age	Percent	Total receiving training
Under 30	53.9	1,946
30-34	50.7	1,060
35-39	48.9	1,321
40-44	46.6	1,425
45-49	42.9	1,292
50-54	40.7	991
55-59	37.8	645
60 and over	30.0	235

*FY 2001 and FY 2002 only.

Among those who received training in any of the three fiscal years, 35.5% were 45 years of age and older, and approximately 10% were 55 years of age and older (Table 3).

**Table 3. Ages of Training Recipients,
FY 2001-2003**

Age	Percent
Under 30	21.8
30-34	11.9
35-39	14.8
40-44	16.0
45-49	14.5
50-54	11.1
55-59	7.2
60 and over	2.7
Total	100.0

Although it is only a single career center, data from Career Place enables us to determine the extent to which older workers are users of career centers and the extent to which older workers are represented among those who become Title I-eligible.

Mature workers make extensive use of The Career Place – nearly 45% were 45 years of age and older at the time of registration; nearly 8% were 60 years of age and older.

Users of the Career Place were rarely eligible for Title I training, but mature workers are as likely as younger workers to become Title I-eligible. Overall, 3.8% of users became Title I-eligible. Among mature workers, 3.7% became Title I-eligible. Among younger workers, 3.9% became Title I-eligible. A more detailed examination of the relationship between age and Title I eligibility shows that rates of eligibility for Title I are remarkably stable among users between the ages of 25 and 64 (Table 4). Rates are higher for those between 20 and 24 years of age and lower among those 65 years of age and over. The data for the population 60 years of age and older should be interpreted cautiously since the number of users of The Career Place over 60 years of age is much lower than the numbers in younger age groups.

Table 4. Title I Eligibility and Age at The Career Place

Age	Percent	Total number
Under 20	.5	556
20-24	8.2	820
25-29	4.1	1,117
30-34	3.2	1,472
35-39	3.4	1,691
40-44	3.8	1,977
45-49	3.8	1,955
50-54	4.3	1,643
55-59	3.6	1,349
60-64	4.2	717
65 and over	1.3	313
Total		13,610

Since roughly half of those who are Title I-eligible eventually receive training, less than 2% of all users at The Career Place receive federally funded training.

Another indication of scope of the federal investment in training is the ratio of the number who receive training to the number who are unemployed. This additional indicator is useful because there is no information on the extent to which those with serious employment problems seek assistance from career centers. Unemployment data are useful but imperfect indicators of the scope of serious employment problems. Unemployment data do not show the full extent of employment problems since neither underemployed nor discouraged workers are included. There is not a one-to-one relationship between unemployment and need for training. Many, if not most, of the unemployed can find acceptable work within a reasonable time frame without retraining. Some fraction of the unemployed (and underemployed and discouraged workers) could improve their job prospects with training. Trend data on the number of trainees to 1,000 unemployed are shown in Table 5. Training data are reported both for the number of individuals who were in training during a quarter and the number who initiated training during the quarter. (Unemployment levels were established by averaging the monthly unemployment numbers for each three-month period.) Use of the number in training during a quarter provides a more generous estimation of the penetration of training than the number who began training

during a quarter. Episodes of both unemployment and training can extend beyond quarters. (In calculating the numbers in training, we assumed that training lasted no more than a year. The small number of cases in which the duration of training was reported as more than a year is likely to be the result of errors in the database. In any quarter, we did not include any training that began more than 12 months prior to that quarter.)

The number reached by federally funded training was consistently modest when compared to the number of unemployed. In no quarter were there more than 14.8 trainees per 1,000 unemployment compensation claimants. In Fiscal Year 2002, the ratio of trainees to 1,000 unemployment compensation claimants was consistently around 11. By the more stringent measure of the relationship between training and unemployment, the number of new trainees per 1,000 unemployed never exceeded 7.7 in any quarter. In the summer of 2002, there were only 3.7 training starts per 1,000 unemployment compensation claimants.

Table 5. Unemployment and Training Trends by Quarter in Massachusetts, July 2001 Through December 2003

	July-Sept. 2001	Oct.-Dec. 2001	Jan.-Mar. 2002	Apr.-June 2002	July-Sept. 2002	Oct.-Dec. 2002	Jan.-Mar. 2003	Apr.-June 2003	Jul.-Sept. 2003	Oct.-Dec. 2003
Unemployed	133,906	153,771	174,015	182,268	192,541	191,702	187,386	191,844	196,212	192,933
Unemployment compensation claimants				101,126	96,227	94,040				
Active training recipients	1,978	1,993	1,983	1,998	2,109	2,089	2,703			
Trainees per 1000 unemployed	14.8	13.0	11.4	11.0	11.0	10.9	14.4			
New training recipients	1,026	680	883	728	998	700	1,346			
New trainees per 1000 unemployed	7.7	4.4	5.1	4.0	5.2	3.7	7.2			

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics web site <http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm>, Massachusetts Dept. of Employment and Training website, and Moses database.

The age distribution of unemployment claimants provides further insight about the access of mature workers to federally funded training (Table 6). While the ages of unemployment claimants roughly correspond to the age profile of DET trainees, the data also suggest that younger workers are more likely to receive training than older workers. (The time frames for the two age distributions are similar but not identical. Unemployment claimant data are for the period April through December 2002. Title I trainee data are for July 2000 through June 2003.) Those 45 to 54 years of age were slightly more heavily represented among trainees than they were among unemployment compensation claimants (25.6% compared to 22.9%). Those 55 years of age and older were somewhat less likely to be training recipients than their representation among unemployment compensation claimants suggests: 15% of unemployment compensation claimants were 55 years of age and older while only 9.8% of training recipients were 55 years of age and older.

Table 6. Ages of Massachusetts Unemployment Compensation Claimants and Recipients of Federally Funded Training (Percentages)

Claimants by Age Group	Unemployment Compensation Claimants*	Title I Trainees**
Under Age 21	2.8	3.5
21 -24	5.1	8.2
25 - 34	24.6	22.1
35 - 44	29.6	30.8
45 - 54	22.9	25.6
55 - 59	8.1	7.2
60 - 64	4.6	2.2
65 and over	2.3	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0

*April through December 2002

**July 2000 through June 2003

A variety of explanations for the suggested “tilt” toward younger workers in the allocation of training resources is possible. No information is available that compares unemployment compensation claimants in their use of career centers. Career centers may be more proactive in encouraging use of training among younger workers. Alternately, mature workers may be less receptive to training than younger workers.

More Detailed Findings

Other services

While few career center users receive federally funded employment training, users frequently make use of a variety of services. At The Career Place, job search, workshops, and resource rooms are commonly used (Table 7). Mature workers are more likely than younger users to use several services: job search, workshops, resource rooms, and counseling. More than 90% of those who are Title I-eligible use counseling, workshops, and job search services. Mature workers who are Title I-eligible are more likely than others who are Title I-eligible to use the resource room and are less likely to use assessment services.

Table 7. Use of Services at The Career Place by Mature Workers & Those Title I-Eligible (Percentages)

Service	Under Age 45	Age 45 and Over	Title I-Eligible & under age 45	Title I-Eligible & over age 45
Assessment	6.3	3.2	43.0	28.1
Counseling	19.7	30.7	97.0	97.4
Job development	9.4	12.0	41.4	39.0
Job search	67.5	80.2	93.2	93.9
Resource room	51.8	68.6	70.2	94.7
Support service	3.3	4.6	11.2	11.4
Workshop service	57.5	71.0	90.5	92.5
Referred to non career center	1.0	1.6	4.8	4.8

A more detailed analysis that contrasted use of services among those 45 to 59 with use among those 60 years of age and older showed that use of services tended to be slightly more intense among those over 60 than among those 45 to 59 years of age. Those over 60 years of age were more likely to use counseling, job search, the resource room, and workshop services. These differences in service usage between the younger and older mature workers were less than 8%; nevertheless the differences were statistically significant. There were no instances in which those over 60 used services less frequently than those 45 to 59 years of age.

Statewide, a similar pattern is evident among those who were Title I-eligible (Table 8). Close to 90% of workers in this group used counseling services, assessment services, job search services, and between 40% and 50% used workshop services. Approximately a quarter of the Title I-eligible workers used resource rooms and job development services. A few differences between mature workers of the Title I-eligible workers and younger users emerged. Mature workers were more likely to use both job search and workshop services. Those who received occupational skills training were similar to those who were Title I-eligible in their overall patterns of use of career center services. Those who received training were more likely to receive both counseling and support services. Mature workers who received training were more likely than younger workers to use both job search and workshop services.

Table 8. Use of Career Center Services Among Those Eligible for Title I-Training Statewide, FY2001-2003 (Percentages)

Service	Title I-Eligible		Occupational Skill Training Recipients	
	Under age 45	Age 45 and over	Under age 45	Age 45 and over
Occupational skills training	50.0	39.8	100.0	100.0
On-the-job training	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2
Basic Ed/ESL	6.3	5.0	9.5	7.8
Assessment	37.6	40.5	40.5	43.7
Counseling	87.2	87.1	93.4	94.1
Job development	25.7	28.8	24.2	26.4
Job search	36.2	42.8	37.8	44.4
Resource room	24.9	27.0	25.9	29.8
Support service	10.9	8.6	15.3	12.0
Workshop service	44.7	52.2	45.5	52.8
Referred to non career center	2.3	2.8	2.1	2.8

A further analysis that compared those over 60 years of age to those 45 to 59 years of age showed that those over 60 were 10% less likely to receive occupational skills training but were significantly more likely to receive job search, support services, workshop services, and to be referred to a non career center.

A comparison of the demographic characteristics of all training recipients with similar characteristics of unemployment compensation claimants suggests that among those with serious

employment problems, women, blacks, Hispanics, and Asians are more likely to receive federally funded training (Table 9). Similarly, 82% of Unemployment Compensation claimants are white, yet only 64% of training recipients are white. Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics are all more highly represented among trainees than they are represented among Unemployment Compensation Claimants. Women represent 64% of training recipients but only 42% of Unemployment Compensation claimants.

Table 9. Ethnicity and Gender of Massachusetts Unemployment Compensation Claimants and Recipients of Federally Funded Occupational Skills Training (Percentages)

Race/ethnicity	Claimants	Trainees
White	82.0	64.5
Black	7.2	11.0
Asian	3.5	8.5
Hispanic or Latino		
Hispanic or Latino	10.5	21.2
Gender		
Male	57.7	36.4
Female	42.3	63.6

Sources of training funds differed between younger workers and mature workers (Table 10). Those designated to receive training through the Adult program tended to be seven to nine years younger than those designated to receive training through the Dislocated Worker, National Employment Grants, or National Reserve Accounts. The average age of those in the Dislocated Worker and National Employment Grants categories was nearly 44 years. In contrast, those designated for the Adult program averaged 34 years of age

Table 10. Program Type and Age at Enrollment

Program Type	Age at Enrollment		Frequency
	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Adult	34.0	11.2	5,294
Dislocated Worker	43.9	10.2	9,127
National Emergency Grant	43.9	10.1	4,182
National Reserve Account	41.8	10.3	797
Total	41.1	11.3	19,400

The type of program in which individuals were enrolled was associated with their receipt of training. Those enrolled in the Adult program were most likely to receive training (53.7%). Least likely to receive training were those designated for National Employment Grants (41.9%). Those in the Dislocated Worker and National Recovery Act programs fell in between, with 43.1% and 45.3%, respectively, receiving occupational skills training.

Because of the relative size of the program and their specific vulnerabilities, older workers who received occupational training were most likely to be enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program (Table 11). Of the mature workers who received training, 56% were funded through the Dislocated Worker program. In contrast, only 38% of younger workers were funded through the Dislocated Worker program. National Emergency Grants (NEG) were also more important for older workers than younger workers. For younger workers, the Adult program was more important. Among younger workers, 41% were funded through the Adult program while only 16% of mature workers were funded through the Adult program.

Table 11. Training Program Type and Age of Occupational Skills Training Recipients (Percentages)

	Age at Enrollment		Total
	Under 45	45 and older	
Adult	40.9	15.8	31.0
Dislocated Worker	37.6	56.4	44.3
National Emergency Grant	17.8	23.1	19.7
National Reserve Account	3.7	4.7	4.1
Total Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number	5,734	3,156	8,890

Training experiences

Age made a difference for a number of specific aspects of training. As indicated in Table 2 and repeated in Table 12, younger career center users who were eligible for training were more likely to receive training. Among those under 45 years of age who became Title I-eligible between July 2000 and June 30, 2002, 51.8% received occupational skills training. Among those 45 to 59 years of age, 42.8% received training, and only a third of those over 60 years of age received training. Younger workers tended to begin their training more promptly than did mature workers. For younger workers, the average number of days that elapsed prior to the start

of training was 43.4; among those 45 to 59 years of age, elapsed time before the start of training averaged 52.4 days; among those over 60, the elapsed time was 50.6 days (Table 12).

Table 12. Training and Employment Summary

Comparison	Base	Statistic & Significance	Under 45	45-59	60+
Receipt of training	Title I-eligible (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Percentage ***(1)	51.8%	42.8%	33.0%
Days to training start	Occupational skills training recipients (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Mean ***(2)	45.3	57.2	52.0
Hours of training	Occupational skills training recipients (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Mean Ns (2)	422.1	417.7	382.8
Duration of training (days)	Occupational skills training recipients (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Mean Ns (2)	135.5	133.1	123.2
Entered employment	Occupational skills training recipients (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Percentage Ns (1)	71.2%	68.4%	67.8%
Training end to employment start	Completed training (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Mean *** (2)	60.8	75.5	67.1
Employment training related	Employed after training (Enrolled Title I July '00-June '02)	Percentage Ns (1)	82.9%	81.3%	75.0%
Hourly wage	Employed after receiving occupational skills training	Mean ***(2)	\$12.32	\$13.65	\$14.61
Employment hours per week	Employed after receiving occupational skills training	Mean ***(2)	36.8	36.7	33.1
Weekly income	Employed after receiving occupational skills training	Mean ***(2)	\$457.76	\$504.15	\$483.43

***P<.001 (1) Chi square test (2) One-way analysis of variance

There were no statistically significant age differences regarding the number of hours of occupational skills. (In Table 12, an inspection of the mean value suggests that those 60 years of age and older received an average of nearly 10% fewer training hours than younger individuals; because of the small number of trainees over 60 and the large variation in hours of training, the difference is not statistically significant.)

Duration of training was also similar for mature workers and younger workers. For workers under 45 and those 45 to 59, training lasted an average of approximately 135 days compared to 123 days for those 60 years of age and older (Table 12). The difference was not significant.

Employment

Among those who became eligible for training in fiscal years 2001 and 2002 and subsequently received occupational skills training, mature workers were slightly less likely than younger workers to enter employment (Table 12). Of the younger workers who received occupational skills training, 71.2% entered employment compared to approximately 68% of those 45 years of age and older. (Among the older training recipients, those 60 and over were as likely as those between 45 and 59 to find employment.) The data suggest that younger individuals were slightly more likely to enter employment, but the relationship is not statistically significant at the .05 level.

Among those who obtained jobs after training, younger workers tended to do so more rapidly than did mature workers (Table 12). On average, younger workers who found jobs after completing training did so in an average of 61 days after completing training. Those 45 to 59 years of age, on average, began their jobs 75 days after completing training. Those 60 years of age and older who received training and found jobs entered employment at an average of 67 days.

For mature workers and younger workers who found jobs after completing training, employment was equally likely to be training-related (approximately 80%); the data suggest that among those 60 years of age and older, employment is less likely to be training-related, but the difference is not statistically significant (Table 12).

Among those who received occupational skills training, hourly placement wages tended to be slightly higher for mature workers than for younger workers. For workers 45 to 59 years of age, the mean and median hourly wages at placement were \$13.64 and \$12.00, respectively. For those 60 years of age and older, the mean and median hourly wages at placement were \$14.61 and \$12.00, respectively. For younger workers, the mean and median hourly wages at placement were \$12.33 and \$10.85, respectively.

Among those who received occupational skills training, there were no differences between younger workers and those 45 to 59 years of age in hours per week of employment. For both younger workers and those 45 to 59, the mean hours per week were 37 and the median was 40. However, workers 60 years of age and older worked fewer hours – an average of 33 per week, but for them the median was 37.5.

The income generated through these job placements typically was modest. As indicated above, the Blue Ribbon Commission recommended that recipients of training should be able to earn at least half of the median household income. According to the Current Population Survey, the median household income in Massachusetts in 2000-2001 was \$50,155 or approximately \$965 per week (DeNavas-Wait, C. & Cleveland, R., 2002). Half of the median household income was \$482. Of the mature workers between 45 and 59 years of age who entered employment after receiving training, 42% had weekly wages that placed them at or above half of the median household income. Only 33% of younger workers had weekly incomes that met the minimum standard recommended by the Blue Ribbon Commission. Among those 60 years of age, 38% had weekly wages at or above half of the median household income.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression techniques were used to help explain the variation in three outcome variables: the likelihood of users of the Career Place becoming Title I-eligible, the likelihood of those with Title I eligibility statewide receiving occupational skills training, and the likelihood of those with Title I eligibility in fiscal years 2001 and 2002 obtaining employment. In every case, logistic regression was used. The regression tables are reported in the Appendix to this report.

Title I eligibility.

The model included the following background variables: age, gender, Hispanic, African-American, white, limited English, and education. The model had modest explanatory power accounting for 3% of the variance. Women and those with limited formal education and limited English were more likely to become Title I-eligible. Age was not a significant predictor of Title I eligibility.

Receipt of occupational skills training.

The model included the following background variables: age, gender, Hispanic, African-American, Asian, whites, limited English, education (high school drop out and post-secondary education contrasted with high school graduate), type of program (dislocated worker, NEG and NRA contrasted with Adult), and entered employment within a month of program enrollment. Rapid entry into employment was included because some workers probably accepted job opportunities instead of entering training programs. Some of those in the database enrolled in training programs after starting jobs. The model had modest explanatory power, accounting for 6.6% of the variance. All of the independent variables were statistically significant. Younger workers, women, and Asians were more likely to receive occupational skills training. Those with limited English were less likely than others to receive occupational skills training. Those with a high school education were more likely to receive occupational skills training than either high school dropouts or those with post-secondary education. Those enrolled in the dislocated worker program, the National Emergency Grants program, and the National Recovery Act programs were less likely to receive training than those enrolled in the Adult program. Further, those who found employment within a month after program enrollment were less likely to receive occupational training.

Entering employment.

The model included the same variables as the previous model with the addition of various services offered by career centers. The analysis was limited to those who enrolled in the 2002 and 2003 fiscal years. Those enrolling in the 2004 fiscal year were excluded because they may not have had sufficient time to complete training and find employment. In this model, the model accounted for 6% of the variance. Older individuals were less likely to enter employment than younger individuals. Men were less likely to enter employment than women. African Americans and Hispanics were less likely than whites to enter employment. High school dropouts were less likely than high school graduates to enter employment. Receipt of occupational skills training and job development services were strong positive predictors of entering employment. Eligibility for training through the Dislocated Worker program was a positive predictor of entry into employment contrasted to eligibility for training through the adult program. Those eligible for

training through National Emergency Grants or the National Recovery Act were less likely to obtain employment than those eligible for training through the Adult program.

DISCUSSION

Several important themes emerged from the data:

- The number of adults of all ages who receive federally funded training is exceedingly modest; the number of mature workers receiving training falls far short of the number recommended by the Blue Ribbon Commission.
- Mature workers are well represented among career center users.
- In the single career center for which data were available (The Career Place), mature users were as likely as younger users to become Title I-eligible. Because the Career Place may not be representative of career centers in Massachusetts, no generalizations can be drawn from the data.
- Mature workers who are eligible for training are less likely than younger workers to receive training.
- Among those receiving federal training funds, mature workers are reasonably well represented.
- Mature workers make extensive use of other services offered by career centers.
- Mature workers who are Title I-eligible and receive training enter both training and employment less rapidly than do younger workers. When they are employed, mature workers tend to receive slightly higher wages than do younger workers. Weekly earnings for most older and younger workers fall below half of the median household income, the minimum standard suggested by the Blue Ribbon Commission.
- The type of program in which training eligibility is established has implications for both receipt of training and employment. When compared to eligibility for training through the Adult program, eligibility for training through the Dislocated Worker program is less likely to lead to enrollment in training and more likely to lead directly to employment. Mature workers are more likely than younger workers to be enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program. Consequently, the enrollment of older workers in the Dislocated Worker program may be a factor in the tendency for mature workers who are Title I-eligible to move into employment without training.

A number of explanations are possible for the differences found between younger and older users of career centers who were eligible for training in their use of training, waiting time before the start of training, and time lapse between completion of training and start of employment. One set of explanations focuses on those who use career centers. Older users may pursue training more selectively than do younger users. Older users may also be more selective and more deliberate than younger users in considering employment opportunities. Alternately, there may be differences in both the training and employment opportunities experienced by older people. Further research that examines more fully the experiences of users of career centers as they consider training options, engage in training, and seek employment would be useful in addressing these questions.

The fact that, among those Title I-eligible, women and minority group members were more likely to receive training can broadly be interpreted as an indication that the system is effective in its responsiveness to members of disadvantaged groups. At the same time, the data reported in this study do not provide a basis for understanding how these results are achieved. It is possible, for example, that the women and racial/ethnic minorities who use career centers are particularly proactive in taking advantage of services. Alternately, it is possible that the training opportunities offered through career centers provide a particularly good fit for minority group members and some women. Again, research that directly examines the experiences of career center users in seeking employment and exploring training options would be helpful.

Follow-up research that examines employment outcomes for career center users who do not receive training funded through Title I would also be useful. Some analysis should be possible with the MOSES database since career centers are required to track employment experiences for all of those who receive intensive services. Original data would have to be collected for career center users who use only core services.

The reasons why enrollment in the Dislocated Worker program is less likely than enrollment in the Adult program to lead to training and more likely to lead directly to employment deserve further attention. It is possible that for those in the Dislocated Worker program the available training opportunities are less attractive than they are for those enrolled in the Adult program. Alternately, older workers enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program have financial pressures that lead them to forego training when a job possibility emerges. Particularly

valuable would be research that examines the skills of older dislocated workers, the available employment options that draw upon those skills, the receptivity of older dislocated workers to training, the fit between the skills of workers and employment opportunities, the extent to which training opportunities lead to employment in fields acceptable to dislocated workers, the effectiveness of training in developing skills, and the implications of training for the subsequent employment experiences of trainees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A greater public investment in employment training continues to need attention. Both younger workers and mature workers need improved access to publicly funded training.

The Blue Ribbon Commission's recommendations for comprehensive planning of workforce development programs should receive renewed attention in light of the modest scope of federally funded training. Alternate venues for upgrading worker skills are of increased importance because of the limited capacity of career centers to draw upon federal funds for training.

Improved data are needed to monitor and assess employment and training services. In particular, more attention is needed to career center users who receive only basic and intensive services. This report relies heavily on data provided by a single career center, The Career Place in Woburn. The strength of its internal data system is the result of its own initiative. More career centers should have similar data systems so that it is possible to gain a fuller picture of the services they provide. Systematic follow-up surveys should be conducted on a sample of career center users who are not Title I-eligible to determine the extent to which they achieve their short-term employment goals and to estimate how career center services contribute.

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Appendix

Table A-1.
Logistic Regression of Title I Eligibility by Characteristics of Registrants at the Career Place.

Variables	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z
Age at registration	.99	.00	-1.65*
Gender (male)	.56	.05	5.91***
African American	.80	.21	-.90
Asian	.45	.12	-3.02**
Hispanic	1.18	.27	0.73
High school dropout ^a	.93	.19	-0.36
Post-Secondary education ^a	.57	.06	-5.79***
Limited English	4.65	1.48	4.83***
		Number of obs	= 12005
		LRchi2 (8)	= 124.47
		Prob > chi2	= 0.000
Log likelihood = 1981.8188		Pseudo R2	= 0.0304

^aReference category set to high school graduate

* P <.05; ** P <.01; *** P <.001.

Table A-2.
Logistic Regression of Receipt of Occupational Skills Training by Characteristics of Those
Title I-Eligible, Program Type, and Rapid Entry in Employment, Fiscal Years 2002-2004.

Variables	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z
Age at Enrollment	.98	.00	-10.86***
Gender (male)	.87	.03	-4.28***
Hispanic	1.18	.05	2.63**
African	1.43	.08	6.53***
Asian	2.17	.15	10.91***
Limited English	.56	.05	-6.33***
High school dropout ^a	.54	.03	-13.27***
Post-secondary education ^b	.73	.03	-9.26***
Dislocated worker program ^b	.82	.03	-4.78***
National emergency grant ^b	.74	.03	-6.49***
National recovery act ^b	.80	.06	-2.74**
Entered employment rapidly ^c	.08	.01	-23.35***
	Number of obs	=	19213
	LR chi2 (12)	=	1758.36
	Prob > chi2	=	0.0000
Log Likelihood = -12376.712	Pseudo R2	=	0.0663

^aReference category set to high school graduate

^bReference category set to adult program

^cEntered employment within one month after registration

* P < .05; ** P < .01; *** P < .001.

Table A-3.
Logistic Regression of Entry into Employment by Characteristics of Those Title I-Eligible,
Program Type, and Service Received, Fiscal Years 2002-2003.

Variables	Odds Ratio	Std. Err.	z
Age at enrollment	.99	.00	-3.14**
Gender (male)	.91	.04	-2.14*
Hispanic	1.00	.05	0.10
African	.82	.06	-2.94**
Asian	.85	.08	-1.73*
Limited English	1.01	.11	0.13
High school dropout ^a	.77	.05	-4.37***
Post-secondary education ^b	.99	.05	-0.18
Dislocated worker program ^b	1.87	.09	12.28***
National Emergency Grant ^b	.50	.04	-9.49***
National Recovery Act ^b	.62	.05	-5.60***
Occupational skills training	1.43	.06	8.58***
On-the-job training	1.99	.84	1.63
Adult basic education	.95	.09	-0.60
Assessment service	.82	.04	-4.37***
Counseling service	1.15	.07	2.09*
Job development service	1.57	.08	9.34***
Job search service	1.12	.05	2.40*
Resource room	.90	.04	-2.17*
Support service	1.10	.07	1.39
Workshop service	1.15	.06	2.92**
Referred service	.94	.12	-0.46
		Number of obs	= 12462
		LR chi2 (22)	= 954.97
		Prob > chi2	= 0.0000
Log likelihood = -7428.86		Pseudo R2	= 0.0604

^aReference category set to high school graduate

^bReference category set to adult program

*P < .05; **P < .01; ***P < .001.