

Draft #1 – Release to be customized for local press kits

Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi Celebrates Statewide Rollout

Mississippi Development Authority activates new program through local Workforce Investment Areas and combines federal, state and community workforce programs and services

CITY NAME, Miss., August 20, 2001 – The Mississippi Development Authority today officially activates the Workforce Investment Network (WIN) in Mississippi, an innovative program designed to provide, one-stop employment and training services to employers and job seekers statewide. Local festivities hosted in (*city where press conference held*) by the (*local WIA name*) Workforce Investment Area marked this celebrated occasion.

WIN in Mississippi creates a system that is both convenient and user-friendly by combining federal, state and community workforce programs and services into physical locations and electronic sites. Originally named and announced in Fall 2000, the WIN program is open to everyone.

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, known as WIA, provides the framework for WIN in Mississippi and is administered by the Employment Training Division of the Mississippi Development Authority.

"Mississippi's greatest resource is its people and WIN in Mississippi will empower state residents with increased opportunities to obtain good jobs while providing employers with the best qualified workforce," said Governor Ronnie Musgrove. "The new program also stimulates economic development as we focus on attracting new companies to Mississippi and growing existing business through Advantage Mississippi Initiatives."

(*name of WIA*) is one of six Workforce Investment Areas located across the state where local Workforce Investment Boards plan and develop WIN programs based on community needs. These local boards are business-led and work in collaboration with elected and community officials, local and state agencies, and the private sector.

Members of the (*name of WIA*) Workforce Investment Boards include: *list names*

"Input and participation at the local level is a hallmark of WIN in Mississippi," said *XXX, title (local WIA spokesperson)*. "(*name of WIA*) is very fortunate to have the leadership of such a diverse group of professionals."

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ADD ONE – WIN in Mississippi

Local Workforce Investment Boards ensure that employers' and job seekers' needs are met through tailored solutions designed to promote local workforce development and economic growth. WIN in Mississippi recognizes that workforce and training needs vary from one region of Mississippi to another and is structured to allow greater flexibility and more choices.

The following counties are included in the (*local WIA name*) Workforce Investment Area: *list counties*.

A network of WIN Job Centers is the centerpiece of the new workforce investment system. In (*local WIA*), these centers are located in ## communities and provide customers with easy access to services in the areas of employment, education, training, human services and economic development. This is accomplished through co-location of offices, electronic connectivity, and coordination of existing agency programs and services.

"We consider every WIN Job Center as a place where people and jobs come together," said *XXX last name (local WIA spokesperson)*. "These centers bring together extensive resources and information under one roof." For example, job seekers can access job training, education, and employment services, and employers can post job openings and get current information on the skills their workers will need to be competitive – all at one location.

By consolidating services, WIN in Mississippi offers added efficiencies that make the most of every dollar available for training, retraining and education.

"It is a WIN-WIN for everyone," said J. C. Burns, executive director, Mississippi Development Authority. "In addition to the more effective use of public resources, WIN in Mississippi helps put people to work creating a broader tax base which in turn grows communities across the state. It is a valuable tool that will allow us to capitalize on Mississippi's high-quality workforce and increasing economic development opportunities."

To learn more about the WIN Job Center nearest you and the WIN in Mississippi system, contact (*local Workforce Investment Area name and main phone number*).

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