

GRANT PROPOSAL

Work Incentive Grants

Submitted to:

**United States Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration**

By:

**Nashville Career Advancement Center
Middle Tennessee Career Center
Nashville Metropolitan Government – Mayor’s Office
Local Workforce Investment Board – LWIA 9**

July 31, 2000

I. PROJECT FINANCIAL PLAN

APPLICATION FOR

OMB Approval No. 0348-0043

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

		2. DATE SUBMITTED 7/31/00	Applicant Identifier Nashville Career Advancement Center
1. TYPE OF SUBMISSION: Application <input type="checkbox"/> Construction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction	Preapplication <input type="checkbox"/> Construction	3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE	State Application Identifier
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Construction	4. DATE RECEIVED BY FEDERAL AGENCY	Federal Identifier
5. APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Legal Name: Nashville Career Advancement Center		Organizational Unit: Nashville Career Advancement Center	
Address (give city, county, State and zip code): 621 Mainstream Dr., Suite 210 Nashville, TN. 37228-1210		Name, telephone number and fax number of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application (give area code): Lisa Pote 615-862-8890 (x277)	
6. EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (EIN): 62-0694743		7. TYPE OF APPLICANT: (enter appropriate letter in box) C A. State B. County C. Municipa D. Township E. Interstate F. Intermunicipal G. Special District H. Independent School Dist. I. State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning J. Private University K. Indian Tribe L. Individual M. Profit Organization N. Other (Specify): _____	
8. TYPE OF APPLICATION: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision If Revision, enter appropriate letter(s) in box(es): A. Increase Award B. Decrease Award C. Increase Duration D. Decrease Duration Other (specify): _____		9. NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Division	
10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER: 17-207 TITLE: Work Incentive Grant		11. DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT: Outreach, information and referral services designed and provided for job seekers with disabilities.	
12. AREAS AFFECTED BY PROJECT (cities, counties, States, etc.): Davidson, Rutherford, Trousdale and Wilson counties (LWIA9) in Tennessee			
13. PROPOSED PROJECT:		14. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS OF:	
Start Date 1/1/01	Ending Date 6/30/03	a. Applicant 5,6	b. Project 5,6
15. ESTIMATED FUNDING:		16. IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?	
a. Federal	\$ 1,498,014 .00	a. YES. THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON DATE _____ b. NO. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372 <input type="checkbox"/> OR PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN SELECTED BY STATE FOR REVIEW	
b. Applicant	\$.00		
c. State	\$.00		
d. Local	\$.00		
e. Other	\$.00		
f. Program Income	\$.00	17. IS THE APPLICANT DELINQUENT ON ANY FEDERAL DEBT? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If "Yes," attach an explanation. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	
g. TOTAL	\$ 1,498,014 .00		
18. TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEF, ALL DATA IN THIS APPLICATION/PREAPPLICATION ARE TRUE AND CORRECT. THE DOCUMENT HAS BEEN DULY AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE APPLICANT AND THE APPLICANT WILL COMPLY WITH THE ATTACHED ASSURANCES IF THE ASSISTANCE IS AWARDED.			
a. Typed Name of Authorized Representative Lisa Pote		b. Title Program Manager	c. Telephone number (615) 862-8890
d. Signature of Authorized Representative		e. Date Signed	

PART II - BUDGET INFORMATION

SECTION A - Budget Summary by Categories

	(A)	(B)	(C)
1. Personnel	115,097		
2. Fringe Benefits (Rate 32 %)	37,982		
3. Travel	7,322		
4. Equipment	0		
5. Supplies	6,200		
6. Contractual	1,133,500		
7. Other	48,113		
8. Total, Direct Cost (Lines 1 through 7)	1,348,214	0	0
9. Administrative Cost (Rate 10 %)	149,800	0	0
10. Training Cost/Stipends			
11. TOTAL Funds Requested (Lines 8 through 10)	1,498,014	0	0

SECTION B - Cost Sharing / Match Summary (if appropriate)

	(A)	(B)	(C)
1. Cash Contribution			
2. In-Kind Contribution			
3. TOTAL Cost Sharing / Match (Rate %)			

NOTE: Use Column A to record funds requested for the initial period of performance (i.e. 12 months, 18 months, etc.); Column B to record changes to Column A (i.e. requests for additional funds or line item changes; and Column C to record the totals (A plus B) .

BUDGET NARRATIVE

PERSONNEL:	ANNUAL SALARIES	6% INCREASE	6% INCREASE	GRANT
	1-12 MTHS	13-24 MTHS	25-30 MTHS	TOTAL
Program Manager - 1 FTE	36,000	38,160	20,225	94,385
Program Director - .15 FTE	7,900	8,374	4,438	20,712
Job descriptions on file at NCAC				
Total Personnel	43,900	46,534	24,663	115,097

Above salaries will comply with the pay schedule of the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County, for the NCAC Department.

BENEFITS - Rate of 33% **37,982**

Includes Benefits offered by the Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County, such as FICA, Retirement, Medical, Dental, Life, etc.

TRAVEL - NCAC Staff

Local Travel:	3,822
Out of Area Travel:	3,500
	7,322

Travel rates to be in compliance with the Tennessee Dept of Labor and Workforce Development

EQUIPMENT -

None with a per unit cost in excess of \$5,000 **0**

SUPPLIES -

Computer and printer for PM	2,200
Office furniture & equipment	2,500
Office supplies & materials	1,500
	6,200

CONTRACTUAL -

Center for Independent Living	280,000	250,000	110,000	640,000
IAM Cares	175,000	175,000	81,000	431,000
Assessments	20,000	20,000	10,000	50,000
Marketing materials	10,000	2,500		12,500
				1,133,500

OTHER:

Occupancy Cost - Est. at \$15 per foot	1,950	1,950	1,950	5,850
Postage	384	384	195	963
Printing & Copying	500	500	500	1,500
Telephone/Communications	1,020	1,020	510	2,550
Staff Professional Development	700	700	350	1,750
Miscellaneous - 1% of Direct Costs				13,000
Transportation vouchers	9,000	9,000	4,500	22,500

Total Other **48,113**

ADMINISTRATIVE - WIA Rate of 10% **149,800**

WIA definition of Administrative Cost to be followed.

TRAINING COST / STIPENDS - **0**

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – PROJECT SYNOPSIS

The Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC), the lead agency of Local Workforce Investment Area 9 in Middle Tennessee, is applying for \$1,498,014 for a 30- month period.

NCAC, formally the PIC in Nashville, was one of three recipients of a Career Center Early Implementation Grant in Tennessee, and began operation of the Middle Tennessee Career Center (MTCC) partnered with the Department of Labor and Work force Development/ Employment Security in October of 1998. Since opening its doors as a One-Stop for employment services, we have served job seekers through JTPA, Welfare to Work, TANF and Dislocated Worker funding. Our success rate at implementing this system has eased the way for us to transition into WIA with additional partners Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Human Services and the Tennessee Board of Regents.

The capacity of the one-stop system in Middle Tennessee to serve persons with disabilities would be greatly augmented by the programming outlined in this proposal. There have historically been either large gaps in services or duplication of services for members of this population who seek gainful employment. The proposed program will function to provide a service delivery platform that fills service gaps, eliminates duplication and allows persons with disabilities to compete in the labor market on an equitable basis.

Though we are fortunate to have a partner in Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab), many disabled customers do not qualify or choose away from these benefits. As a result, the One-Stop currently has a hit and miss process of referral to community based organizations to meet the needs of this special population. Instead of one unified, quality system designed to be flexible enough to meet the needs of everyone that walks through the door, in effect, the current One-Stop offers an incomplete employment and training system for individuals with disabilities. This application for grant funds indicates the clear understanding that it will take more than the appropriate size parking spaces, bathrooms and doorframes to meet the employment needs of this special population.

The WIA system has been designed to be a self-directed system. While MTCC serves some customers very well, there is opportunity in this “self serve” system to make accommodations to prospective customers with disabilities who would need additional or unique assistance. In order to truly provide “universally accessible” services, the MTCC must intentionally create internal pathways that can meet these needs.

Our goal is to improve access to One Stop services for customers with special needs in several ways:

- The creation of several “Special Services Facilitators” whose responsibility will be to serve as gatekeepers for Federally funded employment and training benefits programs, and the community based organizations that serve individuals disabilities with employment and training and supportive services.
- The improvement of coordinated employment opportunities through the development of an employment council for people with disabilities.

- The development of an ITA system for customers with special needs who would need specialized employment and training services, in preparation for the Ticket to Work system.

LWIA9 is fortunate in that there are quality resources for individuals with disabilities in the employment and training arena in our region. We don't need to create services ourselves. Instead, the need in this community is to intentionally identify those agencies already providing quality services, offer a menu of those agencies and their services to our customers and give the customers a chance to choose according to their needs.

Though Voc Rehab is a core partner in the One-Stop, their role is limited to serving those who are eligible for and desire to participate in their programs. This grant will enable the customer to have direct contact with a Voc Rehab counselor, while learning about other agencies and programs that may suit their needs.

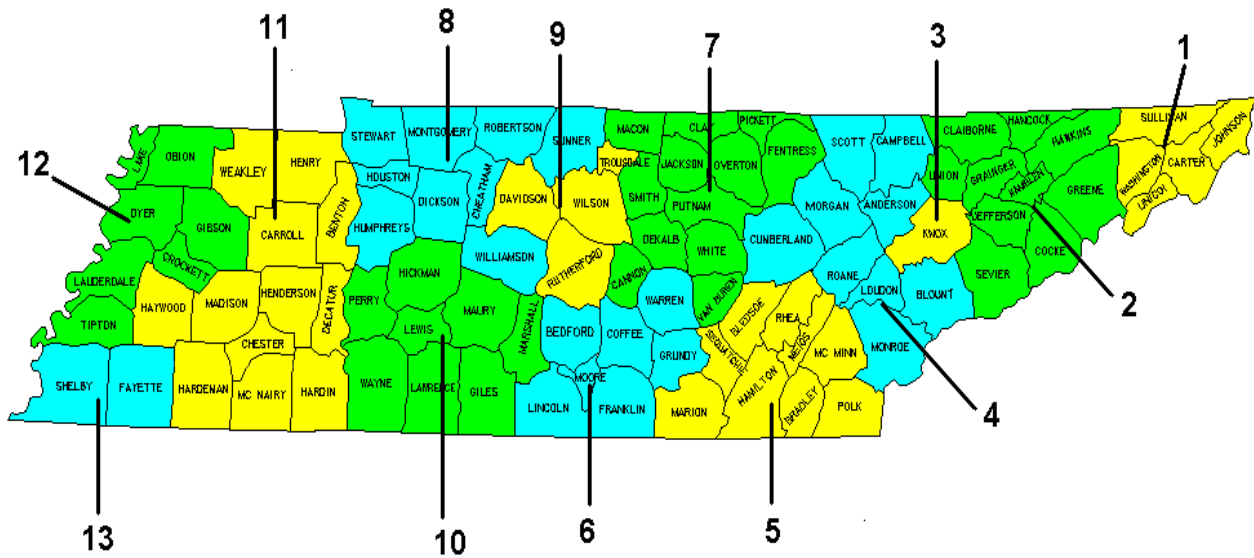
We are aware that the driving purpose for WIA is to centralize employment related activities. Currently, the community of disability-related service providers is operating independent of this system, without the benefits of the resources that the One-Stop could provide. The inclusion of personnel dedicated to meeting the needs of these individuals could greatly enhance their chances for employment. While at the same time, community organizations would be strengthened in their ability to provide continuous employment and employment-related services.

The One-Stop system in Middle Tennessee could only be enhanced by this grant, which would provide us with the means to improve our One-Stop facilities and create an environment and service strategy that would address the employment needs all citizens in Middle Tennessee.

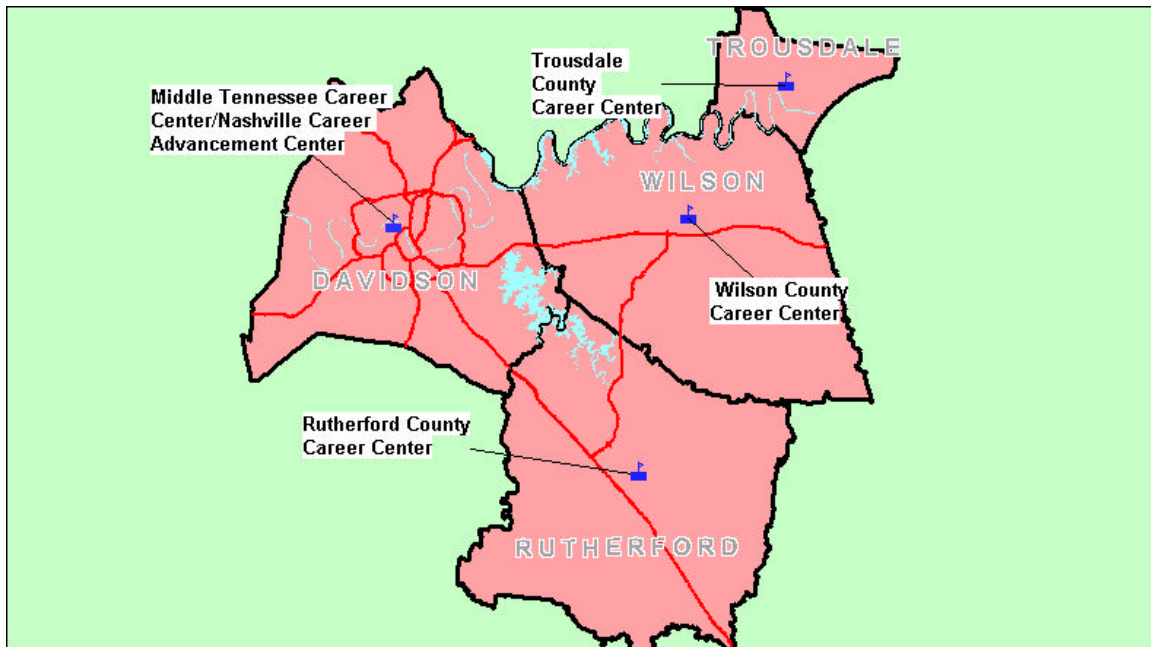
III. PROJECT NARRATIVE

Description of Service Area and Consortium Configuration

Tennessee currently contains 13 newly designated Local Workforce Development Areas that were established under the Workforce Investment Act. The composition of most of these



areas has been altered from their previous form, which was established under the Job Training Partnership Act. Local Workforce Investment Area 9, which contains Davidson, Wilson, Rutherford and Trousdale counties, is an area that experienced a significant degree of transformation during this transition. Under the former legislation, Service Delivery Area 9 consisted only of Davidson County. Within the guidelines of WIA, the Governor added three counties to the local area in an effort at a more regional approach to workforce development in Middle Tennessee. As the WIA funding recipient, the Nashville Career Advancement Center has responded to this mandate by establishing a collaborative process by which a Workforce Investment Board has been established, partnering agencies have become integrated into the service delivery framework, and career centers in all LWIA 9 counties have been established.



Funding as requested under this announcement will be utilized to provide services to disabled individuals within LWIA 9 in Tennessee.

The coalition formed to implement this project includes six primary members, the Nashville Career Advancement Center, the Tennessee Disability Coalition, the Center for Independent Living of Middle Tennessee, IAM CARES, the Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services, specifically Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Division of Mental Retardation Services.

The Nashville Career Advancement Center (NCAC) is the administering agency of the Local Workforce Investment Board 9 (LWIA9), the Greater Nashville Area. The primary mission of NCAC is to provide a comprehensive network of career employment, educational, and training resources for employers, employees and job seekers. This mission is fulfilled in cooperation with core partners of the Middle Tennessee Career Center: The Department of

Labor and Workforce Development (Employment Security), Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and the Department of Human Services.

The Tennessee Disability Coalition is a statewide alliance of advocacy, planning, service provider, and professional organizations and individuals committed to assuring that all Tennesseans with disabilities have the services they want and need in the communities where they live.

The Center of Independent Living of Middle Tennessee's (CILMT) primary mission is to help people with disabilities achieve or maintain self-sufficient and productive lives in their own communities. The CILMT serves Davidson, Rutherford, Trousdale, Williamson, and Wilson Counties.

IAM CARES, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Center for Administering Rehabilitation and employment Services, has been assisting people with disabilities to secure and maintain employment. IAM CARES' mission is to promote full inclusion in today's workforce for the traditionally underserved and unserved. IAM CARES currently operates in Davidson, Wilson, and Rutherford Counties.

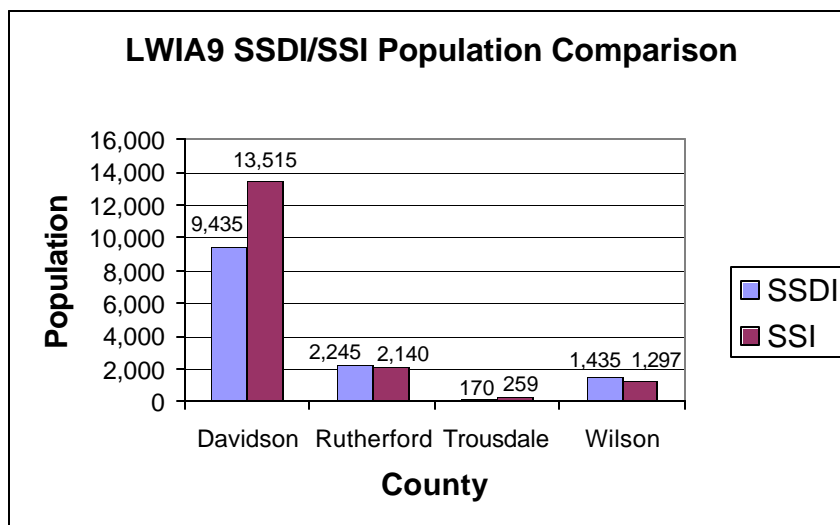
Rehabilitation Services is a division of the Tennessee Department of Human Services that helps citizens with disabilities across the state become self-sufficient, gain employment, or receive timely and efficient services, and accurate decisions on their applications for Voc Rehab services.

The Division of Mental Retardation Services, Middle Tennessee Region covers forty counties including the project counties. It is a division of the State Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and its core services include adult day training, vocational programs,

supported employment, community participation, early intervention services for preschoolers, residential and supported living services, and family support services.

The American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 defines a person with a disability as one with "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual." Based on model projections completed by the US Census Bureau utilizing 1990 population information, the total population of the four-county Service Delivery Area to be included in this grant is 466,954 people between the ages of 16 and 64. Using that model, the Census Bureau projects that 43,278 individuals, or 9.27% of the working age population of the area, have disabilities that could limit the individual's ability to work, impair mobility, or hinder self-care.

In addition, Tennessee has a total of 303,520 recipients of SSDI and SSI. The four county region served under this grant proposal has a total population of 13,285 SSDI recipients and 17,211 SSI recipients. These figures represent 10.66 percent and 9.62 percent of the total SSDI and SSI recipient population in the State.



Although these numbers represent recipients of all age groups, including individuals not generally counted among the workforce, both the high percentage of SSDI and SSI recipients in

this area as well as the percentage of the workforce in the area considered to have a disability reflects a tremendous need in this community. Given the historically low unemployment rates recently

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES, LWIA 9

COUNTY	MAY 2000	APRIL 2000
Davidson	2.3%	2.4%
Rutherford	2.2%	2.3%
Trousdale	4.0%	4.2%
Wilson	2.8%	2.6%

exhibited in the four-county area (presented in the table above), this population has a unique opportunity, with the proper support, to enter the workforce and contribute to the economy.

Barriers in the Current Workforce Investment System

Where individuals with disabilities are concerned, there remain enormous gaps in workforce development services. This population has a significant potential to contribute to the workforce, and therefore to the economy as a whole. Programming funded through this proposal will be utilized to provide a means to “level the playing field,” thus allowing these individuals to reach this potential.

The local workforce investment system is in its infancy in Tennessee, and although the long-term goal of the Middle Tennessee Career Center is to be a comprehensive provider of career and employment services to all Nashville area job seekers and employers, multiple job-related systems still exist in the area. These additional tiers of service, or parallel employment services structures include the employment and employability services accessed only through Families First, Tennessee’s TANF program. Similarly, disability-related service providers have created parallel employment and training structures to assist individuals with disabilities in entering the workforce.

Although conduits have been created to increase the seamless nature of employment service delivery in the community through partnerships with Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Human Services, there remain opportunities for improvement in this area. Currently individuals with disabilities engaged in employment related activities through a disability-related service provider do not consistently have ready access to the resources of the workforce development system. Likewise individuals with disabilities who come through the workforce development system may not have access to the resources and supports available through appropriate disability-related service providers.

In addition to the parallel systems for employment services that individuals with disabilities face in the larger community, the One-Stop as it is currently structured may in and of itself prove to be discouraging to individuals with disabilities. The MTCC has been developed as a self-directed system, designed to provide information and resources about employment-related choices individuals may be making. Structurally, the workforce investment system provides minimal interpersonal guidance—it is a “low touch” system. The primary benefit of this structural emphasis on self-direction and information and resource brokering is that individuals who come to the Career Center are empowered to make career and employment related choices for themselves.

The drawback of a self-directed system is that individuals, such as people with disabilities, who have less of an ability to advocate for themselves or to negotiate through complex systems may find the current structure of the workforce investment system too daunting to be useful. Individuals not capable or comfortable with self-direction currently find minimal personal or “high touch” assistance within the system. As a result, many people with disabilities self exit from the workforce investment system or never enter the door at all.

Disability-Related Knowledge and Skills

The proposed project would comprehensively address the objectives of the Work Incentive Grant by addressing the significant deficiencies of the local workforce investment system. The project would work to integrate the employment and career related resources of the community into the Career Center by providing staff whose role would partially be to provide to individuals with disabilities comprehensive information and resources regarding employment and training opportunities from an array of community providers. These resources would include linkages to additional benefits planning resources for individuals who receive SSI or SSDI through the Social Security Administration's grant proposed by the Statewide Independent Living Council of Tennessee, as well as information about Ticket-to-Work and additional Federal programs for people with disabilities. As resource and information providers, these staff members would be facilitating seamless service delivery and integration of the resources of disability-related service providers with the resources of the workforce investment system.

The interjection of these staff members with expertise in the field of disabilities will provide knowledgeable and skilled staff in this area for the benefit of the entire local workforce investment system. Also, this project represents the resource base of six different coalition partners, all of which provide opportunities for further training in this area both in and through the One-Stop system. This addition of expertise provides on-going developmental opportunities for the existing staff of the One-Stop as well as One-Stop customers.

The other portion of the job duties of the proposal staff would be to make the existing center more friendly for individuals who access the WIA Title I services independently rather than through the auspices of a disability-related service provider. These information and resource providers would also serve to advocate for and support individuals who may have

disabilities as they negotiate through the One-Stop system. This staff would provide a degree of the much-needed “high touch” element missing from the current workforce investment system.

The project also plans to incorporate resources for diagnostic testing where such testing has not already been done or where individuals do not have access to appropriate diagnostic assessment through other sources and where such testing would open doors to additional, criteria-based disability services such as those offered through Vocational Rehabilitation or Division of Mental Retardation. These additional resources would further enhance the existing Career Center by making it a more comprehensive portal to all the employment resources available in the community.

Finally, the proposal plans to carry out extensive and wide-ranging outreach to the disability community. This outreach would be conducted in three ways, externally through outreach to disability-related service providers and with direct community-based outreach, and also internally within the Career Center itself. Agency and Career Center related outreach will be conducted through education of the member and contracted agencies of the consortium members. In order to maximize outreach to individuals, this grant will hire individuals whose specific job will be community-based recruitment and outreach. Many people, who may in fact qualify as having a disability under the definition of either the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and who may be in need of employment, do not regard themselves as having a disability. Instead, they may describe themselves as having a “learning problem,” having long periods of sadness, or simply being “limited.” These individuals are prime candidates for the enhanced services offered through the One-Stop with this grant.

Recognizing that the current staff of the One-Stop does not have the knowledge or skills necessary to successfully implement the project described, the grant deliberately allocates to

agencies with expertise in the area of disability-related resources as well as outreach to individuals with disabilities, all aspects of the project that require such expertise. However, the coalition's intention is to utilize the partnership to develop the skills and knowledge base of all partners, particularly the staff of the Career Center. The partner agencies of the project coalition each bring unique training opportunities for developing knowledge and skills in working with people with disabilities for the One-Stop staff.

The WIB is currently taking steps to make sure that there is universal access to the One-Stop. NCAC, the host agency of the One-Stop, has worked with the government of the city of Nashville to insure and improve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Based on the most recent survey and walk through conducted jointly between Nashville Government and the Technical Assistance Center, the flagship facility of the Career Center in SDA 9 meets ADA requirements.

Additional steps have been taken to insure that the building is not only accessible to individuals with disabilities, but is also welcoming. Current changes already underway include slight modifications to increase wheelchair accessibility to the building, adjustable tables, and slight alterations to the handicap-designated parking spaces. Additional steps for the future include the purchase of screen reading software, touch pad and roller ball mouses for computers, and joy sticks.

Satellite Career Centers are located in each of the three additional counties, the Opry Mills Mall, and a local Enterprise Community facility. Each site meets basic ADA compliance.

An MOU was executed on June 27th between the LWIA9 WIB and Vocational Rehabilitation that mandated Voc Rehab as a core partner of the One-Stop. This mandate addressed the following: one full time staff would be assigned to the One-Stop. This staff person

will provide eligibility determination for those with documented disabilities who “require Voc Rehab services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.” The following are services that Voc Rehab can provide:

- a. Medical and psychological exams and trial work experience as necessary for determining eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation services
- b. Vocational evaluations as necessary for program services planning
- c. Physical and mental restoration services
- d. Physical aids
- e. Academic, vocational and work adjustment training.
- f. Special services for the deaf and hard of hearing and blind and visually impaired
- g. Counseling and guidance
- h. Job development and job placement services
- i. Rehabilitation technology
- j. Supported employment, independent living and post employment services
- k. Temporary assistance with transportation and living expenses while participating in the Voc Rehab program.

The State of Tennessee is still in the planning stages of how it is going to implement the TWWIA program. This grant partnership will monitor that planning and incorporate TWWIA into the One-Stop to the fullest extent possible as the program is implemented in Tennessee.

Currently, the MTCC does not have tools to identify individuals with learning disabilities. Voc Rehab, as a core partner of the One-Stop, can provide limited diagnostic testing for learning disabilities but only when prior documentation of a learning disability exists but is too old to determine eligibility for services. As a result, a certain percentage of individuals who present with symptoms indicating a disability, such as learning disabilities, for which they might be eligible for Voc Rehab, or other criteria-based programs, cannot access those services because they do not have the proper assessment background.

A part of this grant proposal are funds for additional assessment resources in order to provide assessments for individuals who have not previously been diagnosed with a disability,

could not access assessment through other sources, and for whom assessment probably would provide access to additional criteria-based services such as Vocational Rehabilitation.

In addition to diagnostic assessments, the MTCC currently utilizes a variety of assessment tools related to employment and career development. These tools include the Valpar System 3000 for vocational assessment, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator for personality style, the Strong Interest Inventory for career interest, and other resources for assessing career values and motivated skills. Any and every appropriate modification would be made to these existing assessments in order to make them more readily available to individuals with disabilities. These modifications may include but are not limited to extensions to time-based tests, and tests given using “speaking” computers.

Comprehensive Service Strategy

Middle Tennessee is fortunate to have a wide range of services available for individuals with disabilities. These services are provided both through independent, community-based organizations and through contracts that partner agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division of Mental Retardation have with outside agencies. The core service of this grant project is information and resource brokering, providing information about these programs through the One-Stop is a primary function of this position. In addition, the partners for the Work Incentive grant are services and resource providers themselves and as a result, they represent opportunities for training offered both too One-Stop staff and mandated partners, as well as through the One-Stop to the larger community.

Currently in Middle Tennessee there are more individuals with disabilities who need work related services than there are traditional venues for providing those services. As a result, there is tremendous community support for the creation of non-traditional pathways for service,

such as partnerships between the disability community and the workforce investment system. Additional networks have been established and will continue to be expanded and supported through this grant. For example, the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville has developed a smaller working group of employment and training providers for the disabled designed to develop innovative strategies to serve the disabled. Currently that group has established a partnership with the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce that includes partnership with the Chamber's website.

This grant also brings with it the possibility of improving linkages between already existing systems in place to serve the disabled. Large caseloads within the DMHMR and Vocational Rehabilitation systems have become a barrier to serving all who might need employment-related services. These providers are limited in their scope by both their size and by the rules that govern their roles in the community. With the creation of the role of the Special Needs Facilitator, there can now be a gatekeeper who will assist these agencies in spending time only on those who could and choose to benefit from their services. This will create more efficient use of time on behalf of the grant partners, which will result in leveraging resources more effectively for the customer.

Each partner agency includes individuals with disabilities and their families in their internal planning processes. It is partially these relationships that the partnership plans to capitalize on in order to better understand and integrate the work-related needs of individuals with disabilities, existing employment services, and the local workforce investment system.

The Tennessee Disabilities Coalition, a partner in the consortium, is the official state contact for the Disability Business and Technical Assistance Center in the region. As the contact, TDC distributes approved material about ADA, provides technical assistance and

training, and has an obligation to build the community's capacity to further perform these functions. In addition, as the contact for Tennessee, the Disability Coalition also networks informally with other agencies with an interest in promoting accessibility, awareness, and ADA compliance.

Though select agency personnel within the One-Stop have received training in ADA compliance, there has been no across agency/partner training. The TDC has made a commitment to create an ADA library within the Middle Tennessee Career Center and each of its satellite career centers across LWIA9. This library will be available to all MTCC customers and employers alike who are interested in training staff on ADA compliance.

The Center for Independent Living of Middle Tennessee is an integral part of the proposed project. The partnership's intention is for CILMT to employ the resource staff housed in the MTCC and the surrounding county satellite One-Stops. The CILMT provides four basic services within the purview of their mission of helping people with disabilities achieve or maintain self-sufficient and productive lives in their own communities. Those services include providing information about disability issues and referral to other agencies with services to the disabled community; peer counseling regarding issues of independent living; personal advocacy services; and counseling and peer support to assist individuals, couples, families and groups with disability related issues.

CILMT is not itself a provider of vocational or career services. As such, CILMT occupies at once the position of purveyor of information about resources for training and employment without the corresponding conflict of interest of having contractual obligations to provide that training and employment placement themselves.

CILMT is also a member of the Tennessee Disability Coalition and therefore has a close working relationship with the DBTAC for the Middle Tennessee Region. This tie will additionally strengthen their brokerage role and their ability to link with organizations that provide technical assistance in regards to ADA issues. Also, the CILTN is writing for the SSA grant for benefits counseling, a critical information source for disabled customers of the One-Stop. This link to benefits counseling services will provide another resource among many that will assist the individuals find and sustain employment.

Division of Mental Retardation is a partner in the project coalition. Currently that agency has a waiting list for services that is over 700 people long. As part of the partnership DMR's contract agencies will refer when appropriate, participants for Career Center services. Thereby addressing some of the capacity and resource coordination issue faced by those providers.

Within the proposed partnership, connections to both the Department of Education's vocational programs and services have already been made. IAM CARES operates additional programs through funding from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Vocational Rehabilitation Services coordinates directly with the schools in order to provide job-related services to individuals with disabilities ages 16 and up. DMR has a staff person whose job it is to coordinate with the school systems. The Nashville Career Advancement Center is also the agency of the Youth One-Stop according to WIA requirements. As such, NCAC is linked to the School-to-Career initiative in the state. All of these partnerships provide an additional resource for outreach to the community, resource and information provision, as well as for training of staff and training through the One-Stop itself.

The Middle Tennessee Career Center and its regional satellites are intrinsically linked to the TANF program through a cooperative relationship with DHS staff and TANF contractors.

A position has been developed within the MTCC structure similar to that of the Special Services Facilitator, to serve both TANF contractors and TANF customers through One-Stop services.

Statistics indicate the increasing need to provide more intensive services to those left on welfare, beyond those that the WtW program or TANF itself can provide. Many customers on welfare face unique challenges like mental health issues, domestic violence, undetected learning disabilities and other barriers to employment. Further identification of these needs will be possible through this grant, which will help integrate these customers more easily into the One-Stop system while providing access to staff supported by the technical support of the grant funded Special Services Facilitator.

In addition, the TANF program in Tennessee provides mental health, domestic violence and A&D counseling through a Family Services Counseling system. This structure would serve as an additional resource to remove barriers to employment and to assist individuals with these types of disabilities in meeting TANF participation guidelines. The Work Incentive Grant staff person in the Career Center would also serve as additional resource and information providers for the Family Service's Counselors, helping these TANF-based service providers better access employment related services for individuals served in that program who have disabilities.

NCAC is a WtW competitive grant recipient, and will continue to serve WtW customers until July 2001. The WtW program has already served many customers through the One-Stop. In addition, the Welfare to Work provides its core service of intensive case management through a network of subcontractors. These subcontractors would also benefit from the additional integration of disability services into the One-Stop system as they seek to serve long-term welfare recipients, many of who have disabilities.

The Statewide Centers for Independent Living are the lead agency of a consortium of providers applying for the SSA Benefits Planning Grant. The statewide project being proposed would provide benefits counselors throughout the State to aid individuals who receive SSI or SSDI in preparing for and planning out the relationship between their employment and their benefits. This kind of benefits planning and benefits expertise would be an additional resource that the information staff person hired through the Work Incentive Grant would be able to offer to job seekers in the One-Stop.

In the State of Tennessee, the TennCare program already makes allowances for any Federal health care benefits that an SSI or SSDI recipient might lose due to increased income by including individuals, such as individuals with disabilities unable to access private insurance, who are considered uninsurable by private coverage in the population for which it provides health care coverage.

Innovative strategies and model One-Stop service designs

The consortium of agencies submitting this proposal plan to comprehensively address the employment-related needs of individuals with disabilities in this area a number of ways. For example, the proposed additions of disability related resource and service information providers, or Special Services Facilitators to the One-Stop center staff would be employed by the Center for Independent Living of Middle Tennessee. These individuals will enhance services already provided by the One-Stop staff through training and technical support, and will enable those individuals with special needs to be served by those who have expert knowledge regarding community and agency resources. These staff will also provide information and linkages to resources for benefits planning through the Statewide Independent Living Council's proposed

SSA grant, as well as TennCare benefits, housing, food stamps and other supportive services needed for individuals with disabilities to go to work.

The Tennessee Disability Coalition, as the state DBTAC provider represents an additional resource and information source for individuals with disabilities that can be accessed through the Special Services Facilitator.

IAM CARES, an agency with an extensive history of success in recruitment and outreach to individuals with disabilities, will be responsible for the project's intensive community-based outreach. Through its commitment to providing access to services in settings such as public housing and through the use of alternative outreach methods such as flyers that use sensitive wording and one-on-one meetings, IAM CARES has developed culturally-sensitive outreach methods which are inclusive in nature and eliminate the stigmas society often associates with disabilities. Outreach for this project will include linkages with all public housing developments in each county. These connections will include direct outreach in rental offices and community centers, coordination with social service workers, outreach to local churches, and coordination with other community-based organizations.

Voc Rehab, DMR, and NCAC all provide additional criteria-based services that may be accessed by some individuals with disabilities as they utilize the enhanced services of the One-Stop. All three offer vocational assessment, guidance, and training. In addition, as public non-profits charged with providing and brokering services, all three are all conduits to additional service providers. The following is a list of providers of employment, training and employment support services in LWIA9:

Name	Services Provided	County
Abilities, Inc.	Job readiness, placement, coaching	Davidson, Trou.
	Follow-up, supported employment, vocational Evaluations	Wilson, Rutherford
Angelo Pagan Agency	Job Placement and coaching	Davidson, Trou.

		Wilson, Rutherford
Athena, Inc.	Certified training provider	All
Center for Living and Learning	Job readiness, placement, work adj.	Davidson, Trou.
Centerstone	Diagnostic evaluation, residential treatment, Prevention, and education, job readiness, Placement, supported employment	Davidson, Rutherford
Creative Training Solutions	Certified training provider	All
Crisis Intervention Center	Info and referral, telephone counseling Support groups for survivors of suicide Individuals of sudden loss due to suicide Outreach to schools regarding suicide Prevention, TennCare consumer advocacy	Davidson
Commercial Driving Institute	Certified training provider	All
Community Career Center	Certified training provider	All
Dede Wallace Center	Job placement and supported employment	Davidson, Rutherford
Social System Alternatives	Job readiness, development, placement	Davidson and surrounding counties
Easter Seal Society of TN	Info and referral	All
Epilepsy Found. of MT	Job acquisition, development, placement	Middle TN
Fugazzi Business & Technical College	Certified training provider	All
Goodwill Industries	Community based work evaluation, Job Placement, work adjustment	Davidson
Inciteful Directives	Job placement, supported employment Domestic violence, A&D counseling, trauma	Davidson
Johnson's Transportation	Transportation for visually impaired	Davidson and surrounding counties
Matthew 25	Assessments, Follow-up and case mgmt Job placement, residential services	Davidson
Name	Services Provided	County
Manpower	Certified training provider	All
Middle Tennessee Supported Living	Supported employment and related services	Davidson
Middle Tennessee State University	Certified training provider	All
Nashville State Technical Institute	Certified training provider	All
New Horizons	Job placement, supported employment	Davidson
Operation Stand-down	Life skills training, work adjustment, Residential treatment for transitional individuals Job readiness and placement	Davidson, Rutherford
Outlook Nashville	Job placement, supported employment	Davidson
Park Center	Job placement, supported employment Vocational evaluation, work adjustment Occupational therapy	Davidson
Bill Wilkerson Center	Work transitioning, neuropsychological testing	Davidson and

	Job coaching, individual therapy	surrounding counties
Progress, Inc.	Job coaching, development, placement, Supported employment, vocational evaluation Work adjustment	Davidson, Trousdale
IAM CARES Re-employment Center	Job readiness, development, placement Follow up	Davidson, Rutherford
Renewal House	Job readiness, placement, residential A&D treatment	Davidson, Middle TN
Rochelle Center	Job placement, supported employment Work adjustment	Davidson
Samaritan Recovery Community, Inc.	Job Placement, Residential A&D services	Davidson
Senior Citizens, Inc.	Janitorial Training, job placement	Davidson
Technology. Access Center Of Middle TN	Assistive Technology and training	Trousdale, Davidson
TN Protection and Advocacy, Inc	Client advocacy for disabled persons	All Counties
TN. Rehabilitation Center	Job placement, training, vocational evaluation Work adjustment	All Counties
Tennessee Technical College Of Hartsville	Certified training provider	All
Tennessee Technical College Of Murfreesboro	Certified training provider	All
Tennessee Technical College Of Murfreesboro	Certified training provider	All
Tennessee State University	Certified training provider	All
United Cerebral Palsy	Construction of wheelchair ramps, Supported employment, related services	Middle TN
Vanderbilt University Return To work program	Job club and resume services, development Placement	Davidson, Rutherford Wilson
Volunteer State Community College	Certified training provider	All

The project also recognizes that individuals with disabilities may be prohibited from utilizing the workforce investment system due to lack of transportation. Although local public transportation systems exist, many individuals, especially those who live in the more rural sections of the LWIA, may not have access to the transportation they need. Although none of the current partners provide transportation solutions, resources have been included in this grant to contract for those services through a competitive bidding process.

Tennessee, through the TennCare waiver, has already utilized the Medicaid “buy-in.” Medicaid benefits, through the TennCare program are automatically extended for many

individuals with disabilities when they go to work. Other supports individuals with disabilities need to go to work can be identified and coordinated using the resources of the Special Services Facilitator.

Collaboration/Coordination Strategy

Initiatives for linking individuals with disabilities to employment currently exist throughout the LWIA. However, these job-related programs and services exist in isolation, linked only minimally through contracts state agencies such as Voc Rehab and the DMR or through community development partnerships with agencies such as the United Way of Metropolitan Nashville. This project seeks to capitalize on the job development and employment expertise, know-how, and relationships that already exist in the community and network of provider agencies by linking those initiatives more closely to the workforce investment system. This expanded linkage will provide increased competitive, unsubsidized employment by connecting individuals with disabilities who come first through the One-Stop to the community-based initiatives capable of meeting their employment needs and by linking individuals with disabilities who begin their journey towards employment at the community level to the expanded career and job development resources of the workforce investment system.

The current structure of the workforce investment system nationwide is not yet as comprehensive in the employment and training services that it offers as it could be. Other systems, Federal, State, and local, designed to facilitate employment and training for individual populations in the community, continue to operate separate and apart from the Department of Labor One-Stop system. This grant provides an opportunity for several of those funding streams and population-specific initiatives to link, utilizing the career center system as a hub for truly one stop service. The consortium of partners applying for this grant include programs that represent

the Federal Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, as well as Labor, the Tennessee State Departments of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Human Services, and includes the city and county governments of all four counties represented. This partnership of non-traditional players and partners could easily be replicated nationally, thereby enhancing the workforce development system as a whole.

The funds provided by the grant will facilitate the development of a customer driven career planning system integrated into the WIA employment and training system of the One-Stop. This newly enhanced system will be designed so the workforce investment system truly is a One-Stop for individuals with disabilities, offering information and access to the employment and training resources available to them both through the WIA system as well as opportunities for employment and training services throughout the community.

Within the auspices of the grant, a resource directory of training opportunities available in the community as well as through Voc Rehab, and WIA will be developed. In addition, part of the role of the Special Services Facilitator is to understand and be able to explain the processes for accessing the training that is available. The customer, based on his or her employment needs, will choose the training opportunity, and the Facilitator will arrange for the administration of the referral for obtaining the funds for training, be they the Voc Rehab funds, WIA dollars, Ticket to Work vouchers, or other appropriate resources.

The Ticket to Work program could be integrated easily into the current plan for utilization for Work Incentive grant funds in the Middle Tennessee Region as an additional resource. The flow of the customer through the project-enhanced services in the One-Stop will already be based on “customer informed choice.” Through the “high touch” services provided by

the Special Services Facilitator, the customer will be able to make choices about employment and training services that may include the TWWIIA program.

With Middle Tennessee in a “Full employment” economy, the youth of our community must be transitioned to the work place successfully. The Youth One-Stop Council has been designed to develop and contract for services that will assure this smooth transition to the workforce, and the transition for disabled youth must be assured as well.

The Work Incentive grant-funded outreach staff will provide connections to the schools through linkages with community partners already working with this special needs population, strengthening the link to the Middle Tennessee One-Stops. In LWIA9, there are community partners already participating in School to Work (STW) programs; it is critical that these partners link back to the One-Stop in order to unify the efforts of all of these agencies and strengthen the workforce investment system as a whole. The link from STW to the Special Services Facilitators will assure that young people with disabilities become knowledgeable customers about their choices for employment and training, and the impact these choices may have on disability-related benefits.

Core partners such as Voc Rehab, providing much needed services to this special needs population in the schools, would be able to identify and refer disabled youth to the One-Stop for employment information and resources. Students not able to access Voc Rehab services will still have access to the Special Services Facilitator, and will be able to take advantage of One-Stop services in much the same way as their adult counterparts.

Job Development and Job Carving are examples of services not provided well under Title I of WIA and the MTCC model of service delivery. It is therefore the job of the staff funded through this grant to bring job opportunities developed and fostered by community providers into

the MTCC for all disabled Middle Tennesseans to access. This partnership with community providers will fill a critical gap in One-Stop services for the disabled.

Employer-Related Linkages

The MTCC has already participated in the creation of several employer-based projects directly related not only to job development, but also to the support of individuals in the workplace. These projects will be enhanced by the addition of the Work Incentive grant's initiative, and provide a resource for job development, job carving and other employment exploration ventures for individuals with disabilities within the Middle Tennessee Region.

One example of an employer-based initiative to facilitate job development and retention is the development of the Learning and Development Center (LDC) currently operating in the Opry Mills Mall. The LDC, a One-Stop satellite career center, located in the heart of the 200 store "shoppertainment" facility, provides job development as well as retention support to employees and provides employers a place to interview, learn about employment issues (such as ADA compliance), and offer training classes to employees. ESL and GED classes are offered on site by the Nashville State Technical Institute.

This partnership is also an example of how the disability community in the area has already participated in the development of a work-site based satellite of the MTCC. United Way of Metropolitan Nashville, a partner in the development of the LDC at Opry Mills, utilized its network of service providers, including agencies that traditionally focused on individuals with disabilities to contribute to the design and implementation of this One-Stop satellite located on-site at an employer. The core community of disability-related service providers continues to provide ongoing vigilance in making sure that the LDC reaches out to and meets the needs of its disabled clientele.

Other employer-based projects currently being developed to support individuals in the workplace will benefit the customers of the One-Stop with disabilities as well. NCAC is working with St. Thomas Hospital to develop a satellite One-Stop center that will address the career development needs of their employees. St. Thomas is especially committed to meeting the needs of the underserved, and individuals with disabilities are no exception. Staff proposed in the Work Incentive project will provide technical assistance during the development of the St. Thomas career center as well as on-going support to the center in order to better meet the needs of individuals with disabilities who use the center.

In addition to employer-based career center initiatives, other partners in the Work Incentive project maintain employer initiatives that create employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities and could be integrated into the One-Stop delivery system. For example, Voc Rehab partners closely with area businesses in a variety of industry clusters including finance, publishing, hospitality, manufacturing and health care. These businesses include Bank of America, Suntrust Bank, the United Methodist Publishing House, Ingram Books, Gaylord Entertainment, the Doubletree Hotel, Marriott, Aladin (M.F.G.), Nissan, Sprint, Bell South Mobility, and area hospitals such as St. Thomas, and Centennial Medical Center.

IAM CARES also draws upon the expertise of its nearly sixty member Business Advisory Council (BAC) that spans Davidson, Wilson and Rutherford Counties to develop relationships with and the support of area employers in order to establish employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Composed of representatives from business, labor and people with disabilities, the BAC's mission is to promote the hiring of people with disabilities. Some of Middle Tennessee's largest employers such as Vanderbilt University & Medical Center, the Alvin C. York Medical Center, Warnaco and SunTrust Bank participate on

the BAC. More than 67% of the members are representatives of business, including representation from the following Fortune 500 companies: BellSouth, SunTrust, UPS, VF Workwear and Toys R Us. Creative Endeavors and Access America represent the perspective of small business. People from protected classes comprise 75% of the BAC membership (e.g. people with disabilities, women and people from minority backgrounds). The BAC is committed to continually developing its diversity.

BAC members have an extraordinarily strong record of providing project participants with access to placements that feature career paths. To facilitate employment for people with disabilities, the BAC engages in a number of activities including: 1) Organizing, participating in and recruiting other employers for membership on the BAC and involvement in various project activities; 2) Presenting at the project's Employment Search Seminars on a variety of job readiness issues; 3) Conducting mock, real and informational interviews; 4) Serving on sub-committees including Program Marketing; Employment; Website Development; Employment/Disability Forum and BAC Recruitment; 5) Hosting BAC sub-committee and full committee meetings; 6) Representing the project at business and community events and 7) Serving as links to the Local Workforce Investment Board.

The Work Incentive grant partnership creates opportunities for greater coordination of these and other community-based employer-related initiatives. Through the grant partnership, each of these separate work initiatives will be better integrated, thus developing employment and employment support opportunities for individuals with disabilities that may not currently be available. This increased partnership will also provide opportunities for the greater community of service providers and employers to address other employment opportunities for individuals

with disabilities such as targeted tax incentives for employers, individualized job development, job carving, and career development and retention services.

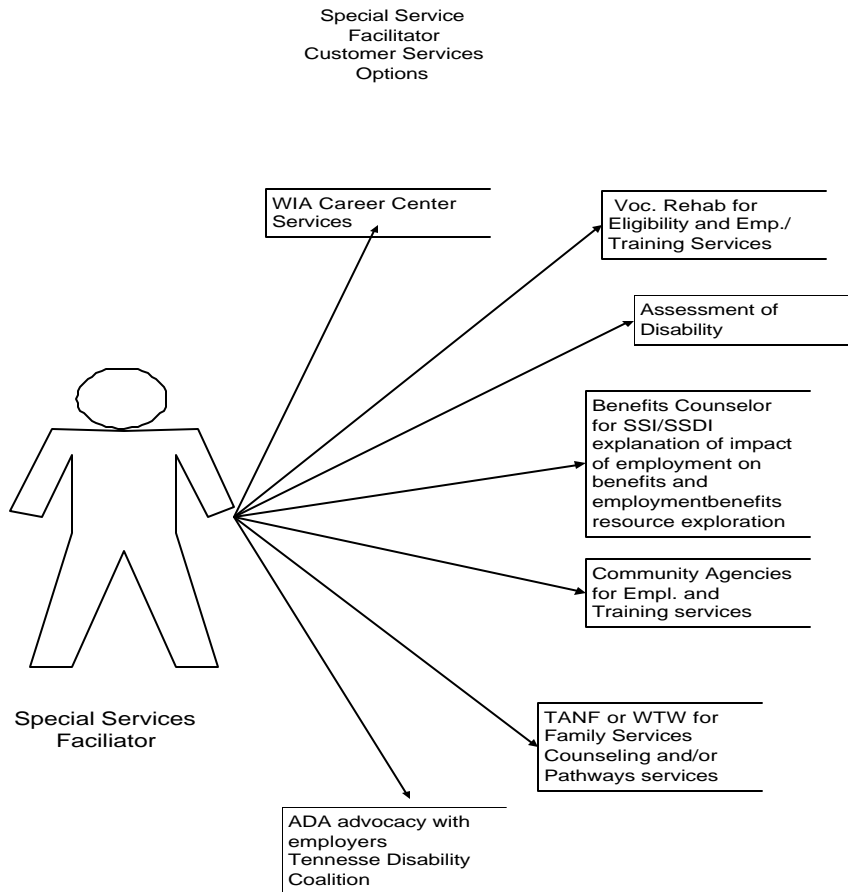
Implementation and Project Management Plan

The Workforce Incentive grant funds will provide the following to strengthen the Middle Tennessee workforce development system for disabled individuals:

1. The development of a staffed position in each satellite one stop to facilitate the following:

Services for the customer:

- a. One on one service in the resource center for core services of each one stop to facilitate usage of employment resources
- b. General education about employment as it relates to the continued receiving of disability benefits



- c. Education about options for WIA training and resources, or referral to the TTWIIA initiatives as appropriate.
- d. Disability assessments to document disability as needed for referral to Voc Rehab

Services for the community

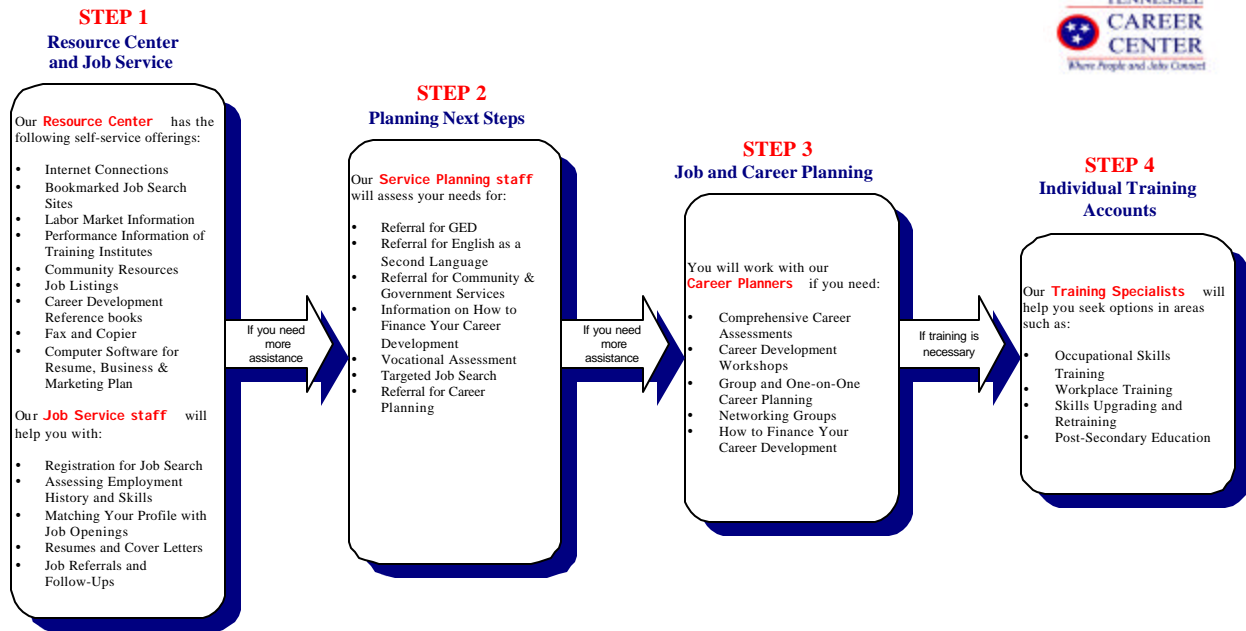
- e. Outreach to community agencies already working with the disabled in order to draw them into the one stop as appropriate for employment and training opportunities.
- f. Provision of technical support to One-Stop staff in order to better identify and or serve customers within the WIA system.
- g. Referral to DHS for TANF and WtW funded programs and services as appropriate

Services for the employer

- h. Education of employers about the disabled, including tax incentives for hiring and working the disabled employees
 - i. Education for employers about ADA compliance The development of a resource manual for the customer that will be presented by the SSF to facilitate making choices about community services
2. The development of marketing materials for outreach to both community providers, prospective customers and employers in direct regard to One stop services in the Middle Tennessee region.
 3. Money set aside for the improvement of technology beyond what has been done to make the career center more accessible.
 4. Funding for assessments to determine identification of disability in order to receive pertinent employment assistance.

This staff person, known as a Special Services Facilitator, will be located in range of MTCC core services currently offered in the resource center. The plan below has been established for WIA explaining the services available in the MTCC system.

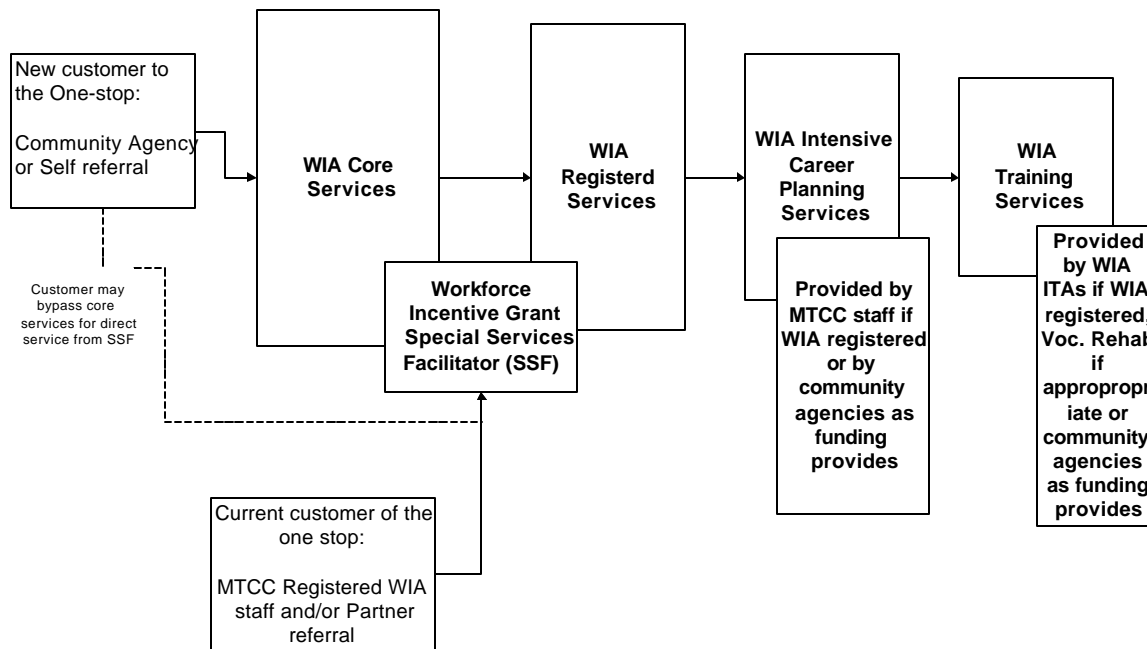
Middle Tennessee Career Center Services



August 1, 2000

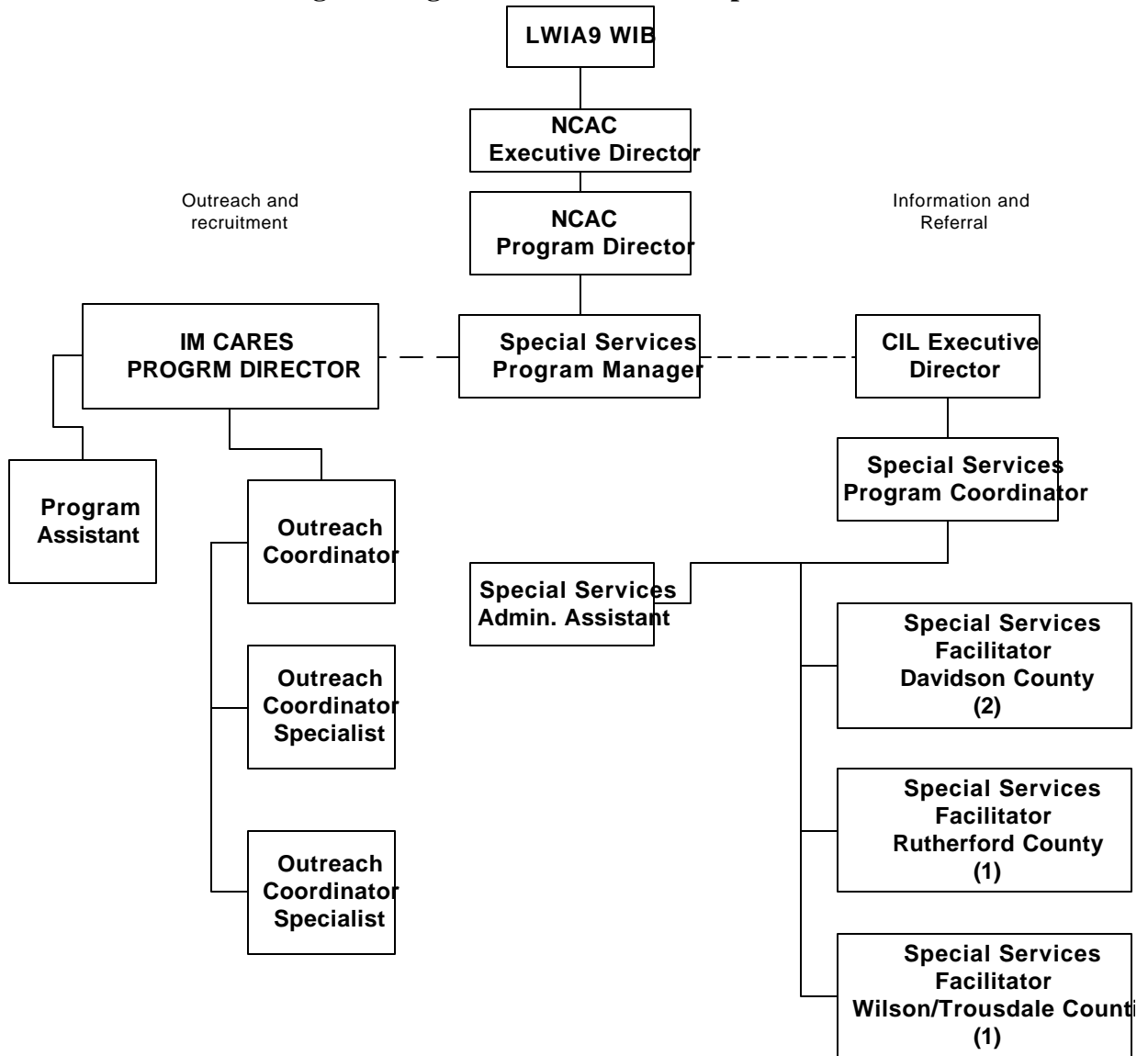
The successful integration of the disabled One-Stop customer will rely on the ability of the SSF to appear a seamless contributor to core services. It is critically important that the disabled customer not feel as if they are being “tracked” toward specialized services, rather that the individual feel more as though he or she is taking advantage of these special services offered as he or she chooses. It is just as important for this staff member to offer a menu that provides the full range of opportunities for the disabled customer in order for that person to make an informed choice of employment and training services. The WIG flow chart, attached below, is the plan for service delivery within the WIA system.

**Workforce Incentive
Grant
Customer Service Chart**



The above chart indicates the intent of the WIG partnership to provide imbedded services for the disabled customer. There are several pathways that lead to the SSF, thus strengthening the WIA system. The customer can opt immediately for SSF services, or can go through WIA services and be referred or self-refer for SSF services. As the customer's path continues toward employment, the model shows how WIA can be a pathway to pay for employment, career planning or WIA funded training services (from an ITA) or the customer can choose from a menu of services in the community that will enable him or her to receive a desired service ranging from employment support, career planning or training.

Staffing and Organizational Relationship Plan



Staff responsibilities

NCAC Staff:

Program Manager: Full program accountability, Outreach to community leadership, coordination of subcontractors

CILMT staff:

Program Coordinator: Staff coordination, employer outreach,

Special Services Facilitator: Provides outreach, education, referral and general support to disabled individuals utilizing the One-Stop.

Program Administrative Assistant: General Program Support

IAM CARES staff:

Program Director (%): Outreach Program accountability

Program Asst. (%): Provide programmatic support to outreach staff

Outreach Coordinator: Supervises outreach staff and provides recruitment support to program

Outreach Coordinator Specialist: Recruits individuals with a disability to the MTCC and satellite centers.

Timeline for planning and implementation activities:

Grant timeline

Timeline	Task
3months	Hire NCAC Program Mgr. Develop subcontract with CILMT and IAMCARES Hire subcontract staff Train subcontract staff
6 months	Develop Marketing materials Develop Employment and training resources IAM CARES Begin outreach to community CILMT begins work in MTCC
9 months	Employer council meets to begin employment coordination MTCC builds data base/web site for employment postings
12-30 months	Program fully operational Employment council's meet monthly Contractors meet monthly for coordination TWIA network in place TWIAA system begins (if funding is in place)

Goals, Objectives and Outcomes of the Work Incentive Grant

Goal 1: To create a system of outreach and referral that will increase patronage of the One-Stop among job seekers with disabilities

Outcome: This information will initially be calculated based on contracts for community-based outreach and will eventually be benchmarked against first-year figures for One-Stop usage.

Goal 2: To ensure that One-Stop services are fully accessible to people with disabilities

Objective 1: Knowledgeable staff will provide accurate and meaningful information to assist job seekers with disabilities in making informed decisions about employment and training.

Objective 2: To staff the MTCC and its satellite offices to meet the needs of job seekers with disabilities.

Objective 3: To continuously maintain appropriate assistance for individuals with disabilities who use the One-Stop through access to available technology and resources, and guidance to One-Stop personnel about accessibility issues.

Outcome: Customer satisfaction surveys will indicate that services provided through the One-Stop to individuals with disabilities are value-added

Goal 3: To fill the gaps in identification of possible customers for criteria-based services such as Voc Rehab by providing gate-keeping assessments not otherwise funded.

Outcome: 100 individuals who receive assessment services will be able to access criteria-based programs such as Voc Rehab who would not have been able to access such services without the benefit of said assessment.

Goal 4: To increase and improve employment opportunities for One-Stop customers with disabilities

Outcome: 200 job seekers with disabilities will enter employment

Goal 5: To meet the disability information needs of Middle Tennessee employers

Outcome: 50 employers will access ADA and disability tax benefit technical support over a period of 30 months.

Goal 6: To make the workforce investment system more accessible through improved transportation for individuals with disabilities

Outcome: To provide transportation vouchers to 250 job seekers with disabilities for the purpose of utilizing One-Stop services

Experience of the Applicant in Serving People with Disabilities

The applicants for this WIG each bring exceptional experience in the managing of programs for customers facing significant barriers to employment. **The Nashville Career Advancement Center**, formally the PIC in Nashville, has a long history of managing workforce development programs. The current program staff has managed the needs of the “hard to serve” through the JTPA, Families First and Welfare to Work programs. While not specifically experienced in regards to the needs of disabled individuals, the staff is well versed in the barriers that face those who are less able to manage the complications of today’s workplace. WtW customers have taught the staff that the systems designed to bring an individual into self sufficiency are nearly as complicated as the personal barriers they face on the way to becoming truly independent o those systems.

The **CILMT**, is perceived in the Middle Tennessee region as advocates and peer counselors to the disabled, and will enhance the One-Stop system and streamline an otherwise unmanageable process. They provide peer advocacy services, independent living skills training, peer support, housing consultation, and information and referral services to disabled adults.

IAM CARES, a strong workforce development partner, has been located in the public housing units of Nashville, providing outreach to minority job seekers, and have worked closely with the CILMT on other projects. IAM CARES will bring strengths of knowledge of the disabled community as well as a commitment to serving minority populations that are not having their needs met in the MTCC.

The **Tennessee Disability Coalition** serves as the DBTAC for Tennessee, and will lend its technical expertise around ADA compliance, advocacy services for those moving from a State

Developmental Center, and will provide access to the MTCC of their partner agencies in the Middle Tennessee region.

DMR will contribute their ability to bring additional resources for the significantly disabled to the consortium. Services for individual with mental retardation are coordinated through three regional offices. Community based services are provided by private not-for-profit agencies that contract with the State. Services include adult day training, vocational programs, supported employment, community participation, early intervention for preschoolers, residential and supported living services, family support services and array of other services for this hard to employ population.

Vocational Rehabilitation is already a partner in the MTCC. Services available for Voc Rehab eligible job seekers are business enterprises for the blind and visually impaired, blindness prevention, disability determination, participation in the Council of the Hearing Impaired, vocational rehabilitation and training, treatment, prosthetic appliances, maintenance and transportation, counseling and guidance, post employment follow-up and rehabilitation technology. Voc Rehab is represented on the LWIA9 WIB, and continues to advocate for the disabled among employers through successful relationships with their contractors. Voc Rehab is also involved in Middle Tennessee's School to Career initiative, and will play a key role in referral to the one stops so that this special needs customer will receive meaningful employment and training services.

The strength of this consortium of providers lies in the expertise and resources that each bring. It is the responsibility of this group to provide a wide variety of services for the disabled job seeker in order to connect them with the employment and training resources that are needed to ensure long-term job stability and personal success.

