ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FORUM

Milwaukee  4.6.2016
Barriers to Unemployment: Who Are Milwaukee’s Unemployed Jobseekers?
Primary Research Questions

Are certain barriers to employment particularly common among the chronically unemployed in Milwaukee?

If so, what policy changes could be considered?
Male Unemployment & Labor Force Participation - 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Unemployed OR Not in Labor Force</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>54%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>9%</td>
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FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT & LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION - 2013

- Black/African American: 19% Unemployed, 45% Unemployed OR Not in Labor Force
- Hispanic/Latino: 13% Unemployed, 48% Unemployed OR Not in Labor Force
- Asian: 11% Unemployed, 43% Unemployed OR Not in Labor Force
- White/Caucasian: 6% Unemployed, 27% Unemployed OR Not in Labor Force
Data Sources/Programs Analyzed

Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board
- WIOA Adult
- WIOA Dislocated Worker
- FoodShare Employment and Training
- Windows to Work

Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
- Transform Milwaukee Jobs

YWCA Southeast Wisconsin
- Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration
**Employment Barriers**

**Limited education/skills**
- No high school diploma or GED

**Limited transportation options**
- No valid driver’s license

**Criminal backgrounds**

**Parental status and responsibilities**
- Head of household / Non-custodial parent
Mawib Program Participants

(N = 6,948)
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) — Adult

Participation
1,295 total participants in 2014

Qualifications
• 18 years of age or older
• Citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in US
• Meet military registration requirements (males only)

Priority is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and veterans and eligible spouses.
WIOA Adult — Demographics

- Female: 59%
- Under age 40: 68%
- African American: 73%
- Head of household: 90%
WIOA Adult Participants – Barriers

- No high school diploma or GED: 7%
- No driver's license: 38%
- Criminal background: 31%
- Multiple barriers: 15%
FoodShare Employment & Training Program (FSET)

**Participation**
3,915 total participants in 2014

**Qualifications**
- 18 years of age or older
- FoodShare recipient
- Citizen or noncitizen authorized to work in US
FSET – Demographics

- Female: 52%
- Under age 40: 64%
- African American: 80%
- Head of household: 64%
FSET – Barriers

- No high school diploma or GED: 29%
- No driver's license: 66%
- Criminal background: 28%
- Multiple barriers: 42%
Transform Milwaukee Jobs

Participation
964 total participants (January 2014 – June 2015)

Qualifications
• 18 years of age or older
  o If age 24 or older, at least one dependent child
• Unemployed for previous four weeks or longer
• Ineligible for unemployment compensation and not receiving W-2

At least one of the following:
• Child support order in place
• Child reunification plan in place
• Ex-offender
Transform Milwaukee Jobs
Transform MKE Jobs Demographics

Male: 85%
Under age 40: 77%
African American: 95%
Non-custodial parents: 89%
Transform MKE Participants: Barriers

- No high school diploma or GED: 20%
- No driver's license: 58%
- Criminal background: 95%
- Multiple barriers: 61%
**All 6 Programs — Demographics**

N = 8,668

- **Male**: 54%
- **Under age 40**: 58%
- **African American**: 72%
All 6 Programs – Barriers

N = 8,668

- No high school diploma/GED: 23%
- No driver's license: 50%
- Criminal backgrounds: 42%
- Multiple barriers: 39%
All 6 Programs – Barriers

Male
- Criminal Background: 60%
- No Criminal Background: 19%

Female
- Criminal Background: 19%
- No Criminal Background: 0%
Potential Barriers

- Limited education/skills
- Limited transportation options
- Criminal backgrounds and incarceration
- Parental status and responsibilities
- Lack of work history
- Length of unemployment
- Poor basic employment ("soft") skills
- Physical and mental health issues/disabilities
- AODA issues/drug testing
- Lack of stable housing/affordable housing near jobs
- Limited spoken and/or written English
- Discrimination for any reason
Observations

1. Half (50%) of the unemployed Milwaukee residents who take part in workforce development programs lack valid driver’s licenses.

2. Criminal backgrounds are an issue for a majority of men (60%) who participate in workforce programs in Milwaukee.

3. Lack of high school diploma/GED is an issue for fewer people (23%), but may be more difficult to overcome with new GED exam.

4. Data on many workforce barriers is not tracked by agencies, and in some cases, would be difficult to measure.
Transit Research

Getting to Work:
Opportunities and obstacles to improving transit service to suburban Milwaukee job hubs

Picking Up the Pace:
An analysis of best practices for improving bus speeds and their potential applicability to Milwaukee
Common Transit Challenges

Trip time on transit is prohibitive
  • Brookfield

Last mile challenge
  • Oak Creek, Mequon

Bus service was attempted before but eliminated
  • New Berlin, Menomonee Falls, Franklin

Transit exists, but not designed for reverse commuters
  • Menomonee Falls
Possible Solutions to Improve Transit Speed & Efficiency

- Bus stop consolidation
- Transit signal prioritization
- Bus-only lanes or shoulders
- Bus rapid transit (BRT)
Marijuana Laws in Milwaukee

The second in a series of two reports addressing municipal marijuana policy

An overview of municipal marijuana in Milwaukee and other U.S. cities
Marijuana Laws in Milwaukee

1st Time Marijuana Possession Cases

January 2012 - March 2015

4,554 total (first-time) marijuana possession cases

12 cases (11 individuals) resulted in jail sentences
Next Steps

- Transit “last mile” study
- Research on policy options to address criminal backgrounds