



**Wider
Opportunities
for Women**

Fact Sheet: Women Need Investments in Job Training

August 2011

Increasingly, America's families depend on women's earnings for financial stability. As the [Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything](#), declared in 2009, "For the first time in our nation's history, women are nearly half of all U.S. workers and mothers are the primary breadwinners or co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds of American families."

Despite the clear and demonstrated need for investments in a skilled workforce to help sustain our economic recovery, Congress cut more than \$1 billion in funding for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), career and technical education, and other workforce programs in Fiscal Year 2011. Now Congress is considering additional, much deeper appropriations cuts for Fiscal Year 2012— further reducing our ability to get America back to work and to compete in the global economy.

Women are more than 50% of WIA customers nationally and depend on its training and education programs to upgrade their skills and prepare for high quality employment. Women need skill training if they are to get jobs in higher paying, growing sectors of the economy, many requiring technical skills and credentials. A recent study published by the [Pew Research Center](#) (*In Two Year of Economic Recovery, Women Lost Jobs, Men Found Them*) found:

- In the first two years of the recovery (June 2009 through May 2011), the unemployment rate for men has fallen from 10.6% to 9.5%; for women, it has increased slightly, from 8.3% to 8.5%.
- From May 2009 through May 2011, men gained 768,000 jobs, while women lost 218,000 jobs.
- During the recovery, women lost a total of 120,000 jobs in manufacturing, while men gained 86,000 jobs.

Low-income and unemployed women around the country will be greatly hurt by any additional cuts to the Workforce Investment Act, a universal system that funds programs designed to serve all job seekers of all ages.

Facts about the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

- WIA funds **3,000 one-stop career centers** in every part of the country.
- Demand for services under WIA adult and youth programs **grew by 234%** in the last two program years.
- WIA serves employers as well as workers, often providing customized education, training and credentials needed for local job openings.
- Last year, **WIA programs helped 4.3 million people find jobs** out of the 8 million who entered the program.
- **Women are more than 50% of WIA customers** nationally



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WIA Funds, Already Reduced, Are in Danger of Even Deeper Cuts

- Adjusted for inflation, **WIA state grants have been cut by nearly 40% since 2002.**
- In a recent survey by the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals and National Association of Workforce Boards, **187 respondents (55.2%) said they anticipated case manager layoffs** as a result of 2011 cuts funding cuts made earlier. **75.4% said expected reduced training opportunities,** and **28.9% the closing of locations.**
- The pending debt ceiling deal promises to focus the first dose of new funding cuts on domestic discretionary programs, including WIA and other job training programs.

In addition to WIA, certain members of Congress have threatened to “consolidate” job training programs that serve particular sets of clients, such as youth and farm workers, with services tailored to address specific barriers they face in certain industries. One of these is Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO).

Facts about Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO)

- Enacted by Congress in 1993, **WANTO authorizes \$1 million per year** for competitive grants to recruit, hire, train, and retain women in apprenticeships and nontraditional occupations in which they are less than 25% of the current workforce.
- Administered by DOL’s Women’s Bureau and Employment Training Administration.
- Most frequent placements are in building trades, information technology and transportation.
- **In 2008, served 1,527 women** (“Multiple Employment and Training Programs,” GAO, Jan. 2011).
- Building Futures in Washington, DC, partly funded by WANTO, **placed 76% of its graduates** into construction or green jobs averaging \$12.30 per hour.
- In 2000, **11 grantees around the country placed 89.8 %** of 275 women who had completed WANTO training programs. **The following year, the placement rate was 71.4%,** according to Westat, which conducted the analysis for the Women’s Bureau in 2003.