



# Fact Sheet NO WORKER LEFT BEHIND

## No Worker Left Behind Partners

Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Growth

Michigan Works! Association

25 Michigan Works! Agencies

Michigan Community College Association

28 Michigan Community Colleges

Michigan's 4-year Colleges and Universities

Michigan Proprietary Schools

## *No Worker Left Behind*

Enabling workers to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in the fast-changing global economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is central to Michigan's strategy for economic transformation. In her 2007 State of the State Address, Governor Jennifer Granholm announced the *No Worker Left Behind (NWLB)* free tuition program to help Michigan workers create a prosperous future. Since it was launched in August 2007, over 20,000 people have entered training through *NWLB*. The Governor continued to stress the importance of education, training, and lifelong learning for our adult workforce in her 2008 State of the State Address and budget. The vision for *No Worker Left Behind* is to:

- Accelerate worker transitions through learning
- Support the state's employers and economic development needs
- Align the use of existing training resources

## *The Case for NWLB*

- Michigan's economy is transforming into one that is knowledge-based, as more and more manual labor is mechanized and computerized. In order to accelerate this transformation, Michigan needs to continue to attract and create good jobs, while also fostering a culture of entrepreneurship to help individuals launch and grow their own businesses.
- A critical piece of this equation is equipping Michigan workers with the right sets of skills and educational attainments to seize new opportunities in the emerging economy. Jobs in knowledge-based industries require significant postsecondary training or a bachelor's degree. In fact, 70 percent of the fastest growing jobs by 2010 will require a postsecondary degree, and one recent study projected that by 2012, the state will have a shortage of 334,000 skilled workers.

The *No Worker Left Behind* free tuition program is an opportunity to prepare the state's workforce for success in this

changing economy. *NWLB* aims to help 100,000 workers who are either unemployed or working in low-wage jobs get the right skills and credentials for jobs in the emerging economy of advanced manufacturing, health care, biotech, renewable energy, and other growing sectors. *NWLB* also complements the efforts underway to attract and support more high school students to engage in post-secondary education, such as the Michigan Promise Scholarship.

- *No Worker Left Behind* is a paradigm shift for Michigan, and it is exactly what we need to accelerate worker transitions and contribute to the state's economic transformation and global competitiveness. *NWLB* will make Michigan a symbol of lifelong learning in the United States.

## *NWLB Features*

- Up to two years worth of free tuition at any Michigan community college, university or other approved training program;
- A skills assessment test administered by the Michigan Works! Agencies (MWAs);
- Must pursue a degree or occupational certificate in a high-demand occupation or emerging industry, or in an entrepreneurship program;
- Free tuition program is a one-time offer; and
- Three years to sign up for the program beginning August 1, 2007.

## *Eligibility*

- Any person who is currently unemployed; or
- Any person who has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment; or
- Any employed person whose family income is \$40,000 or less.
- Participants must be at least 18 years old, must not have graduated from high school in the last two years, and must not be full-time college students.

## Tuition

- Tuition includes instructional costs, books, materials, fees (such as application costs, registration, and laboratory fees), and academic supportive services (counseling and career advising).
- Tuition assistance is capped at \$5,000 per year for two years, or a total of \$10,000 per person.

## Training

- *No Worker Left Behind's* primary focus is on the attainment of certificates or associate's degrees of value in the labor market leading to a job in high-demand occupations, emerging industries, and entrepreneurial endeavors. However, bachelor's degree completion and even master's programs are allowable if the educational program meets all other core criteria (two years or less needed; will lead to job in high demand, emerging sector, or entrepreneurial endeavor; etc).
- Local Michigan Works! Agencies will be able to help participants identify high demand occupations in their region.
- Eligible participants can receive up to two years worth of tuition for education or training.
- Once enrolled, participants need to complete training within four years of starting the program.
- Education and training providers must be licensed by the State of Michigan and/or be accredited in order to have participants funded by *No Worker Left Behind*.

## Placement

Upon completion of coursework and the attainment of a degree or certificate, many *NWLB* participants will require support in re-entering the workforce. MWAs will be

responsible for placement, but will collaborate with the education/training providers to leverage employer connections and institutional placement services already available.

## Funding

- *No Worker Left Behind* is currently being funded with a mix of federal training resources across several programs. Efforts to obtain sufficient funds are underway on three fronts: every available dollar of existing federal funds is focused in support of *NWLB*; the state is working to secure extra federal dollars to accelerate and expand the number of workers getting retrained; and the fiscal year 2009 Executive Budget Recommendation for the Department of Labor and Economic Growth proposes expanding *NWLB* using \$40 million from the General Fund.
- In determining how free tuition will be funded for each participant, Michigan Works! Agencies and training providers will leverage federal and state financial aid grant resources, federal employment and training programs, as well as other resources, such as educational benefits included as part of a buy-out from a previous employer.
- Financial aid officers at educational institutions will work with their local MWA to negotiate a financial aid package for each eligible student.

## Projected Outcomes

- Raising the number of at risk workers who attain certificates and degrees;
- Increasing the number of participants who gain employment related to the training they undertake; and
- Increasing the percentage of participants who achieve wage increases due in part or whole to their participation in the program.

**For more information:**  
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Partner Websites:

No Worker Left Behind  
[www.michigan.gov/nwlb](http://www.michigan.gov/nwlb)

Department of Labor &  
Economic Growth  
[www.michigan.gov/dleg](http://www.michigan.gov/dleg)

Michigan Works! Agencies  
[www.michiganworks.org](http://www.michiganworks.org)

Michigan Community  
College Association  
[www.mcca.org](http://www.mcca.org)