

News & Announcements

ARC Website Redesign

The ARC website has undergone a major redesign. Please take a little time out to view the new changes. www.workforceinfodb.org Let us know what you think!

We need your input!

The 2007 WID DBA online survey will be arriving soon. The survey is a great opportunity to provide input for ARC's planning and work activities over the next year. Results from this survey will play a key role in shaping the next WID version. Thanks in advance for your participation!

So sorry...

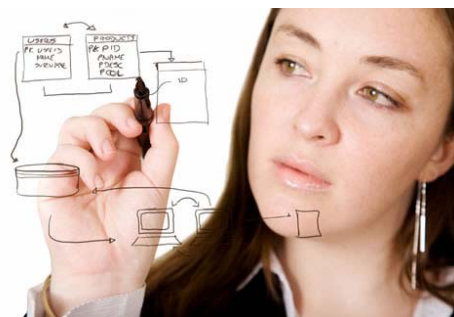
Due to circumstances beyond our control, we were unable to continue plans for our October 2007 DBA training. We will send information out as soon as a new date and location is confirmed.

**Workforce Information
Database
Version 2.4**

On July 24, 2007 the Analyst Resource Center released Version 2.4 of the Workforce Information Database (WID). This release features the following changes:

The major change in the WID, Version 2.4, is the addition of a number of tables that were previously non-standard. These include tables for data on business employment dynamics, the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Census data, job vacancy data (from job vacancy surveys), and the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) quarterly workforce indicators. Both the data tables and any necessary lookup tables have been added. In addition, a change has been made to the tables holding the employment service applicant data.

There are also some minor field changes. Some fields have been expanded to accommodate data needs. Some numeric descriptions have been changed to make them more generic; that is, less dependent on a particular platform. The introductory narrative to the data dictionary



has also been changed to explain the switch from ALMIS Database to WID. In addition, we are now including the data load order as part of the data dictionary.

As with all database changes, although less likely with this version, this release makes some changes to the database structure that may require modifications to existing applications that use the WID. States should be aware as they begin to build and populate Version 2.4 that they may at the same time have to maintain their current database structure until their existing applications can be modified.

The ARC has prepared two documents of the Version 2.4

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DBA in the Spotlight

Suzan Reagan

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What is your educational background?

BA of Mathematics with a minor in Computer Science. I did take two classes in economics at some point. Also, I've since returned to get a certificate in Website Design.

Are you originally from New Mexico?

Fourth Generation New Mexican, my great grandfather was a US Marshall for Northern New Mexico at the turn of the century. He was said to have met some of the famous gunslingers at the time and survived to die of old age.

What are your interests outside of work?

Family, reading, gardening, crocheting, cooking and exercising.

What is your favorite work-related website? Why?

I have more than one. But at the top of the list must be the National Crosswalk service Center, www.xwalkcenter.org/. Steve Rosenow is my hero and I hope to someday obtain his level of excellence.

Second on the list, I just love working with the Census website, www.census.gov and showing people how to navigate to the data they need. The coolest pages on the Census site are

really the easiest to get to: "State and County QuickFacts". On the QuickFacts you can see how rural New Mexico is as it shows we have 15 people per square mile.

Do you have any project management tools or tips you'd like to share with other DBAs?

The reality is that I use any software to leverage the capabilities for the tasks that each does quickest and without pain.

About project management, I use an Excel spreadsheet which simply lists all the tables I have or will need to update with due dates and last updated dates.

One of the tools I use to help me fix files before I load them into the database is a freeware software, PFE, which stands for Programmer's File Editor. I found it at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/people/steveb/cpaap/pfe/default.htm>. It has a wonderful macro tool that I use. It also will open any file. That's right — any file. It's most useful when my import routine bombs and I need to look at how many spaces does that QCEW file really have between fields? The tool hasn't been updated since 1999 but I still get alot of work done with it.

I just can't come to like Access or SQL as database tools. I usually

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How long have you been involved in the world of LMI?

Where has all the time gone? I've been working with economic data for more than 15 years. When I started working in this field my four children were toddlers and now the oldest is heading out to college. I was hired in New Mexico's LMI shop in 1996 but I worked four and a half years prior with Workers' Compensation Economic Data.

How long have you been a WID DBA?

Well, officially I've been the WID DBA since 1998. But, I did help the prior DBA. I remember copying lots of floppy discs and the product was called OLMID at the time. In fact we burned out a floppy disk drive in the copying of the brand new state of the art 3.25 floppy disks to be distributed to the local office resource rooms.

DBA in the Spotlight ...continued

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work in FoxPro. Yes, I know that Microsoft plans on not supporting FoxPro past 2012 but I'm hopeful they might reconsider. Well, I do see the writing on the wall and I am slowly beginning to work more in Access and SQL. I'm searching for the next up and coming database tool.

What training have you taken recently and would you recommend it to other DBAs?

I took several semesters of website design. I'm also considering taking a few classes in XML. I've been experimenting some with XML and feel that this might be a direction for the future.

What is the strangest job you ever held?

I once worked for a telemarketing company for two weeks. It was a fly-by-night operation that put 8 employees in a hotel room with several phones, telephone books and a script to read. I'd never do it again.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?

I love my job. I love the people I meet and I find that helping people understand economic data is rewarding. I find solving complex database issues and reloading data until it comes in right just as rewarding. This job has a nice mix of working with people and computer programs.

What do you see as future challenges for DBAs?

Re-inventing our methods of delivering economic information to the public. We must keep on

top of the latest and best information delivery systems to maintain the public's confidence in our data. I also see competition from the private sector eating into our funding sources. Our biggest task is to educate the public in how to use our information and how valuable it is to them. Then hopefully the funding increases will follow.

What's your hidden talent?

Recently, I've been exploring fractals. The desktop on my computer has been re-dressed with these fun but mathematically complex pictures. Software I'm using currently is Apophysis.

What's spinning on your CD player or on your iPod?

Dave Matthews, Josh Groban, and a selection of Celtic music.

What is the most interesting or awe-inspiring place you've been?

When I was first married I told my husband that Houston, TX was east. He's from upstate NY. So he and I went on a drive all the way east on I-40 to the coast and then drove up the coast to Bar Harbor, Maine. I must say everything east of Houston is much greener than I expected.

Read any good books lately (personal or work-related) that you would recommend others read?

Good books this summer include the latest installment of Harry Potter. My house with 4 teenagers needed two copies of the book.

Version 2.4 ...continued

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Data Dictionary – one that contains the structure in a standard format and the other an annotated edition that highlights the changes made from Version 2.3. These documents are available through the Analyst Resource Center at www.workforceinfodb.org/.

Questions, suggestions and other comments regarding this release should be addressed to Bill Stambaugh at bill.stambaugh@ncmail.net.

New Logo



As of July 2007, the Analyst Resource Center adopted a new logo for the Workforce Information Database. The logo is designed to present a consistent and recognizable identifier for customers.

The goal is to encourage states to incorporate the **WID logo** (shown above) on all of their online applications that use the WID. The intention is that eventually customers will come to recognize and associate the WID logo as synonymous with the highest quality of local, regional, state and national workforce information available.

Logo graphics and related information will be sent to state DBAs and LMI Directors soon.

DBA in the Spotlight

Bernie Miller

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Are you originally from New York?

No. I grew up in Saratoga Springs, NY, but I'm originally from Cincinnati, Ohio.

What are your interests outside of work?

My family. I have a 3-year-old Chinese daughter and a 1-year-old son that keep me busy.

What is your favorite work-related website? Why?

Google. Searching the Internet for solutions to programming issues is essential.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your current job?

Learning new things. Technology changes so fast it can be frustrating at times but most of the time I enjoy learning new ways of doing things to keep my skills sharp.

What do you see as future challenges for DBAs?

The line between the DBA and the Operating System Administrator is blurring. More and more of the system administration responsibilities are being pulled into the database side. The future DBA will need to know both.

What's spinning on your CD player or on your iPod?

Laurie Berkner. She's my daughter's favorite.

Who inspires you?

My wife and kids.

What is the most interesting or awe-inspiring place you've been?

Anguilla, BWI. It is paradise! My wife and I married on the beach while on vacation there.

How long have you been involved in the world of LMI?

11 years

How long have you been a Workforce Information DBA?

5 years

What is your educational background?

I have a B.S. degree in Mathematics/Computer Science from the State University of NY at Albany (SUNYA).

Workforce Information Database in Action

New York

By Bernie Miller, Database Administrator, New York State Department of Labor

The Workforce Information Database (WID) system is presented in the Workforce & Industry Data section of the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) web site at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workforceindustrydata/index.asp>

The core datasets include: Occupational Employment Survey (OES), Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW), Current Employment Statistics (CES) and Occupational Projections are also located here.

The site was developed in-house by NYSDOL/R&S staff including myself, the major database developer/DBA. Currently, version 2.3 of the WID database is being used. Our development database environment is Oracle 10g on an AIX platform while the production environment is SQLServer on Microsoft Windows. As the major database developer/DBA, I also maintain a backup of the Oracle database on a Linux server.

In addition, I developed and maintain several Intranet applications for data validation and the dissemination of

confidential WID data to NYSDOL staff. These applications include a Java version in an Apache/Tomcat environment as well as a .NET version in IIS. Each version has its pros and cons so I'm reluctant to choose only one. As you can imagine, this is becoming somewhat of a maintenance problem. For Java developers, using JSTL is a good choice. Tag libraries make coding the JSP pages very simple and easy to read. Also, for database connectivity JNDI is excellent. JNDI centralizes the database connection information and also handles connection pooling.

ARC Meeting Highlights

The Analyst Resource Center (ARC) met June 12-15, 2007 in Tampa, Florida. Following are the meeting highlights:

Introduction

Bob Cottrell led the welcome and introductions of attendees. He reported that he had talked with ETA last week and the preliminary information was that ETA is planning to continue support of the Workforce Information Database (WID), the Employer Database and the National Crosswalk Service Center (NCSC) for the upcoming year. ARC's obligational authority expires June 30, 2007. Bob has requested a "no cost extension" to utilize funds we currently have to operate the Workgroup until the budget is finalized.

ARC Discussion Items

The workgroup discussed current and potential future goals including suggestions of developing enhanced analytical tools, the benefits of having another seminar – with an expanded audience of WIA and economic development professionals, offering one-on-one technical assistance to states to train and work with new DBAs, and expanding the WID to encompass other data sets. The group considered putting a committee together to explore WID product enhancements including alternative operational approaches.

Roger Therrien mentioned the development of a white paper by the NASWA/LMI Committee that is intended to describe the LMI System. It was suggested that from a technical knowledge perspective that the ARC contribute to the white paper.

New Logos

Prototype WID and ARC logos were developed and made available for group review and comment. The workgroup approved as shown. The WID logo was designed to be an

identifier on systems that are using the WID.

ETA Update

Olaf Bjorkland of ETA joined the discussion via conference call. Olaf stated that ETA is planning to continue support of the Workforce Information Database, the Employer Database and the National Crosswalk Service Center (NCSC) for the upcoming year. However, ARC's obligational authority to use funds expires June 30, 2007. Olaf stated that he would be looking into extending the funding authority of ARC through December 31, 2007, pending a new budget. Olaf also reported that the TEGE for Core Products has been processed by every office and would be released soon.

Workforce Information Council Update

Roger Therrien updated the workgroup on current issues being addressed by the Workforce Information Council, including: the WIRED initiative, WITS, CES estimates, OES program and the National Compensation Survey, BED, WIA reauthorization, and budget.

Subcommittee Updates

Policy Subcommittee

Dan Brown and Bob Cottrell gave a status update on the Employer Database. The ARC is getting ready to go into the 7th payment (October 2007 will be the start of the 2nd extension). The original contract was for three years with two one-year extensions. The RFP process for a new contract will be under a tight timeframe. Maine and Iowa have served as "host states" for the Employer Database contract. Another state would be welcome to assume that role for the next contract. ARC is also interested in securing volunteers to serve on the RFP review committee. Interested states should contact Dan Brown (Iowa) for more information.

Education/Communication Subcommittee

Vicki Boylston updated the workgroup on the latest activities of the Education and Communication Subcommittee. The primary focus has been on the website redesign. The website is set to go live after the meeting. During the course of the meeting, the Education and Communication Subcommittee agreed upon:

- Classroom training in Raleigh, North Carolina either the week of October 1-5, 9-12, or 22-26; announcement will be made by July 2007.
- National seminar during the time period covering the end of March 2008 through first half of May 2008 in possibly Idaho, San Antonio or Austin, Portland, Saint Louis, or Tampa; an announcement on the seminar will be made this fall. Potential topics and speakers were discussed in addition to inviting an expanded audience. The workgroup had a preliminary discussion to determine and refine the event purpose. It was recommended to send an email to LMI Directors to determine interest in expanding the audience from what it has been in the past.
- DBA survey this fall to provide input on seminar topics, Employer Database questions, database applications, and other topics as determined. Need to find out which tables states are populating and using.
- The 2006 annual progress report is available in draft while still fine tuning content. Plan to have out by the end of summer. Will be printing 25 copies but the report will be primarily available through the ARC website.

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ARC Meeting Highlights ...continued

- Marilyn Skalberg and Barbara Ledvina (NCSC) presented the new ARC website.

Structure Subcommittee

Structure Subcommittee will continue ongoing review of the WID data dictionary. The Structure Subcommittee will need to consider what new data items should be included in a future version release.

The subcommittee committed to releasing WID Version 2.4 by July 2007, and to sending out an email announcement and making the release letter, annotated version, and regular version available for download from the ARC website.

[Editor's note: This has been completed, please see lead article.]

Roger Therrien reported that the subcommittee had resolved questions raised regarding Version 2.4 and made a small number of changes during the course of the meeting.

The subcommittee also spent time considering additional content for

the WID such as population demographics.

Members will be updating the Data Source Document.

The subcommittee also discussed the next version release and the general form of the database; addressing concerns regarding table sizes and that not all WID tables are in Third Normal Form. [For an explanation of Third Normal Form see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_normal_form.] The subcommittee will be looking at alternative forms as a potential way to better meet data needs.

NCSC Update

Steve Rosenow updated the workgroup on recent NCSC activities. Work has continued on school and education information addressing issues such as the lack of school-specific zip codes being contained in GIS software which limits the ability to geocode schools.

Steve is working with the Defense Manpower Data Center and the

O*NET Center to improve the military to civilian crosswalk so that it accounts for military occupations which are now obsolete.

NCSC has also been working on prototype content for population demographics. Eventually the ARC could consider an additional database of Census characteristics similar in relationship as the O*NET database to the WID. The population demographic information is on the Nonstandard page at this point.

NCSC is also maintaining and has been implementing the technical development of the new ARC website.

Future Meeting

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for San Antonio or Austin in early November 2007.



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If you have any questions regarding **ARC news** or would like to contribute information, please contact Marilyn Skalberg (541) 434-0334 or Email mskalberg@yahoo.com.

The Workforce Information Database is a normalized, relational database structure developed for the storage and maintenance of labor market, economic, demographic and occupational information. The Analyst Resource Center is responsible for the Workforce Information Database structure development, update, and maintenance. Members include North Carolina (lead), Connecticut, Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and ETA, along with support from the National Crosswalk Service Center.