

# OFFENDER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST



Since 2012 the Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas, Kansas Department of Commerce, Kansas Department of Corrections, and Sedgwick County Community Corrections have partnered to leverage and align a Certified Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) to serve the offender population relocating to the Wichita area and at the Hutchinson Correctional Facility.

This strategy has expanded to the El Dorado and Winfield Correctional Facilities and additional partners have been identified and similar referrals and strategic efforts have commenced. These partners include: Wichita Parole Office, Wichita Work Release Facility, US Probation and Pretrial Services, 18th Judicial District Court Trustees Office, Sedgwick County Day Reporting Center, Mirror, Inc., American Indian Council, Union Rescue Mission and Local Church Prison Ministries.

A total of 2,615 offenders attended Workshop/Workforce Orientation; 1,871 registered on KANSAWORKS.com; 532 received one-on-one job search assistance and 272 or 51% entered employment.

Other highlights include:

## **Sedgwick County Corrections:**

- Average wages for those receiving one-on-one assistance and entered employment increased by 16.87% from April 2012 to present.
- Agency overall employment rate has increased from 70% in 2011 to a current rate of 80%.
- The rate for high risk offenders receiving one-on-one assistance is currently 41% compared to the pre-partnership rate of 22%.

## **Wichita Work Release Facility:**

- Average wages for those receiving one-on-one assistance and entered employment increased by 33.10% since the partnership began in January 2013.
- 91% of inmates secured employment within 21 days of arrival in 2014/2015 compared to 45 days in 2013 and an estimated 60-90 days in 2012.
- 75% of inmates receiving one-on-one assistance obtained employment.

## **Wichita Parole Office:**

- Average wages for those receiving one-on-one assistance and entered employment increased by 24.22% since the partnership began in April 2012.
- A total of 388 participants have attended a monthly half-day workshop entitled "Overcoming Barriers to Employment."

The Workforce Alliance of South Central Kansas is committed to continually providing OWDS services and welcome any additional partnerships in leveraging resources and aligning services in order to scale up the outcomes of this initiative.