



**REDC Regional Workforce Analysis
and Labor Market Assessment
Phase I: West Tennessee-East Arkansas Counties
December 2009**

Introduction

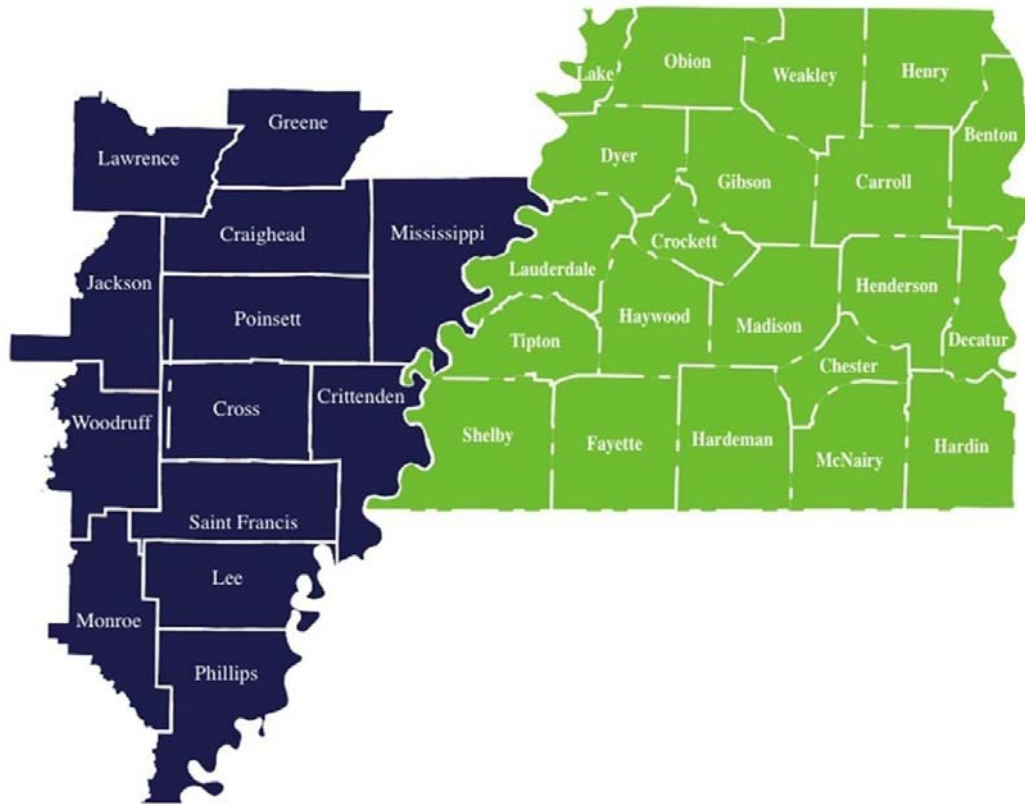
Younger Associates (YA) conducted a comprehensive workforce analysis for the Memphis Regional Economic Development Council (REDC). This research is an update to the 2006 workforce study conducted by YA for REDC. The objectives of this workforce analysis were to:

- Document the current strengths and weaknesses of the workforce
- Quantify labor supply and quality
- Quantify hidden labor resources (parents returning to workforce, early retirees, separating military, persons with disabilities, underemployed, etc.)
- Assist in engaging those who are not in the workforce but want to be
- Identify unmet training needs
- Assist existing businesses in finding qualified workers
- Help workforce agencies match workers with jobs and training programs
- Guide training providers in preparing the workforce for existing and emerging employment opportunities
- Provide the current, accurate information for business prospects and site consultants
- Provide high quality information for decision making
- Provide economic developers with comprehensive workforce data for completing requests for information and for devising business attraction plans

Study Area

The final study area will consist of 54 counties in West Tennessee, East Arkansas and North Mississippi. Phase I of the study, which encompasses the Tennessee and Arkansas counties, was completed in November 2009. The results of Phase I are included in this report.

Phase II, which encompasses the Mississippi Counties, will be launched in January 2010. When that portion of the research is complete the results from Phase I and Phase II will be combined. The map below shows Phase I of the study area.



Scope and Methodology

Data collected in the labor availability and labor demand surveys is original primary research. The YA methodology is to collect extensive primary data and combine it with pertinent secondary research data from highly reliable sources. The resulting in-depth labor market and workforce information is not available from any other source.

Labor Supply Analysis

- A survey was conducted among a statistically valid sample of the region's population between the ages of 18-65. The survey is conducted in person through field interviews using a set of questions designed specifically to meet the research objectives.

- A minimum of 3,600 surveys will be completed in the REDC region, which will provide more than enough primary data to achieve a confidence factor of 95% and a margin of error of $\pm 3\%$. For the Phase I counties, a total of 3,110 surveys were completed for a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of $\pm 1.75\%$.
- The large number of surveys completed allows YA to accurately extrapolate the data to the entire population of the REDC region so that projections of the actual number of people who are in the hidden labor pool can be quantified. It will also allow for the quantification of the number of workers with particular skills, training needs, certifications, and many other critical workforce factors.
- The YA survey methodology is the best way to gather statistically valid information on an area's working age population (including the employed, not employed and the underemployed). Other methods give inadequate or misleading information.
- The labor supply survey results document all labor-market resources (e.g., under-employed residents, second-income earners, out-commuters, residents not currently employed but interested in employment and students). Characteristics of the labor force including occupational skills, educational levels, willingness to be trained and preferred fields of training are assessed. Our survey also addresses skill levels, training needs and desires, technology competency, propensity for job changes, and commutation patterns.

Labor Demand Analysis

- A series of surveys were conducted among the employers in the region to determine current and projected labor demand by occupational category.
- The survey asked employers to rate the quality of the workforce in terms of several skill sets. It will also examine recruiting practices and experiences along with compensation, emerging skill set needs and other factors critical to the long term growth of the region's economic base.
- All for-profit employers with 50 or more employees would be surveyed, with the exception of the retail and public administration sectors, where those entities with 100 or more employees would be surveyed.
- Within the Phase I counties, 191 employers participated in the labor demand survey and provided data on 2,280 occupations.

Online Workforce Data Delivery System

- The Workforce Data Delivery System is a user-friendly graphic interface that allows users to easily select a group of counties and generate reports for any combination of counties in the study area.

- The Workforce Data Delivery System contains most of the data from this analysis. It allows the user to view the data from several different perspectives and to create custom reports.
- The Workforce Data Delivery System is located on the REDC website at www.memphissuperregion.com.

Complete Study Contents

This CD version of the study results contains all of the information prepared for the REDC Workforce analysis, except the custom reports that can be created online via the Workforce Data Delivery System. Included on this CD:

Executive Summary

Commute Zones Demographic Profiles including a:

- Population Map
- Income Map
- Education Map

Labor Supply Survey Results

- Full Survey Results
- Not Employed But Interested Survey Results
- Underemployed Survey Results

Labor Demand Survey Results

- Full Survey Results
- Labor Demand by Occupation Survey Results

Tennessee & Arkansas Education Data

- Public School Data
- Post Secondary School Data

Union Data

Arkansas Major Employers List

West Tennessee Major Employers List

Covered Wages Data

West Tennessee Counties' Demographic Profiles

Arkansas Counties' Demographic Profiles