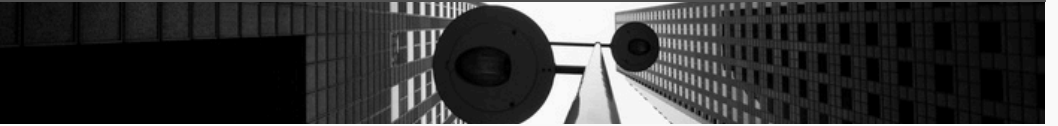


APRIL 2026

SOUTHERN 14

NEWSLETTER



Success Story

Seana Hale, at the age of 35, had been approved for the WIOA Work Experience Program working at Shawnee Development Council, a nonprofit agency. With this job Seana provided her services in helping with the CSBG (Community Service Block Grant) department working on applications, answering the phone, and filing paperwork. Seana says she chose this job position "to be able to try something new in a field I wasn't familiar with and to get training that I needed to thrive in an office setting." Her supervisor says that she is hard working, independent, successful and always wants to be a busy worker. Her performance evaluation from her supervisor states that she is above average in willingness to follow instructions, and average in all other categories, attendance, punctuality, interaction while working with others, work productivity, work initiative and quality of work. Seana states that the work experience program helped her in terms of her getting experience outside of her comfort zone. It gave her confidence in a field that she was not familiar with at all. It also gave her the background and skills she needs to be successful.

After successfully completing the Work Experience Program in 2025 she was hired right away by Shawnee Development in the WIOA Department as a Work Experience Coordinator three months later she also took the position as a Career Planner. Seana states that the work experience program changed her life because she is less stressed, she loves coming to work, she loves working in community outreach and she feels like she has a purpose rather than just going through the motions. Seana also wants to add, "You know most of my story. I've been to the absolute bottom, but I didn't stop clawing, climbing, fighting and growing until I made sure, I was back at the top. With hard work and determination anything is possible." Seana also wants to extend her appreciation to the SDC WIOA Program in saying, "Thank you for giving me the chance and the opportunity to make my life more successful."

OFFICE NOTES:

- Upcoming Board Meeting: June 9th
- Time: 7:00 pm
- Location: SIC Building G or Via Zoom

BOARD OFFICE:

- Open M-TR: 8-5
- PO BOX 186 Carmi, IL 62821
- Phone: 618-382-5024



WADI MONTHLY UPDATE

Following the Champion Labs closure, WADI has been able to add 4 participants who were laid off to the Skill Forge Program at Frontier, 8 people have been hired through the OJT program at MotoRad in Mount Carmel, 1 participant was hired by Rides Mass Transit in Fairfield through the OJT program, 5 participants have started the CDL program at SIC. In the mean time, all other training programs are still continuing as well as one new Work Experience participant being added to the Wayne County WADI office and another was placed at Fairfield Memorial Hospital.

SDC MONTHLY UPDATE

SDC has 58 enrolled for the Spring semester and have added 6 new enrollees at the mid-semester date. There are 2 employed on the State Grant at this time; 1 in Alexander County and 1 in Pulaski County. The funding has almost all been spent but the process is ongoing. For the Out of School Youth WEX, SDC has 2 employed at this time. There is 1 in Massac County, and 1 in Pulaski County. SDC is working on adding about 10 more Out of School Youth on WEX because SDC still has funding. SDC has 1 Dislocated Worker employed in Pulaski county. As of this writing, we are contacting other WEX workers specifically in Massac, Union & Pulaski counties. Our plans are to go the schools in our area and meet with Seniors that want to do work after graduation.

SOUTHERN 14 UPDATE

To say we have had a busy couple of months is an understatement. With no notice employees were notified that they would not be returning to work, as Champ Labs was officially closing. We held a series of rapid response meetings and will hold one on May 1st as well for the affected employees giving them information on services. At this moment, we do have some dislocated funds remaining in our allocated funding, but we requested additional funding in our 1E grant. Currently we have created several OJT and WEX relationships at MotoRad, Fairfield Memorial Hospital, and Rides Mass Transit to name a few. We also were able to utilize funds for the Skills Forge Lab at IECC as well as traditional classroom trainings for others. A new program was approved by the Executive Committee this month. The program is the Medical Assistant program at Southeastern Illinois College. Jessica and Sheryl completed their quarterly programmatic and fiscal monitoring of our Service Providers. Training is ongoing for our new IWDS 2.0 which included Director's meetings, User Testings, Integrated Systems such as the Referral System, and Virtual Career Planner Trainings.



CHANGES?

- Have you moved?
- Changed phone number?
- New email?
- Please notify the board office at boffice@so14lwib.com with any changes
- It is extremely important to let us know because of travel and communication! Thanks!!

EMPLOYERS...WE NEED YOUR HELP!

- Are you in need of short term help at no cost to you?
 - This is a WEX or Work Experience.
 - Contact our office at 618-382-5024
- Are you hiring for an open position and would like assistance with the cost of those wages for a short time?
 - This is an OJT or On the Job Training.
 - Contact our office at 618-382-5024

Participants hired would have to be WIOA Eligible 1st



Released: April 9, 2026

INFORMATION:

- Each issue you will see rotating information and data to keep you all informed in different ways!
- Like to see something included in the monthly newsletter?
- Email boffice@so14lwib.com

Not Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates (percent) for Local Counties and Areas

Labor Market Area	Jan 2026	Jan 2025	Over-the-Year Change
Carbondale Area			
Jackson County	5.5%	4.8%	0.7
Harrisburg Area			
Gallatin County	4.6%	4.3%	0.3
Hamilton County	5.5%	5.0%	0.5
Hardin County	5.4%	4.9%	0.5
Pope County	6.3%	4.8%	1.5
Saline County	4.9%	4.6%	0.3
White County	5.0%	4.3%	0.7
Olney - Mt. Carmel Area			
Edwards County	5.6%	4.1%	1.5
Lawrence County	5.6%	4.4%	1.2
Richland County	4.1%	3.5%	0.6
Wabash County	4.1%	3.5%	0.6
Wayne County	5.2%	4.2%	1.0
Regional Counties			
Alexander County	6.7%	7.2%	-0.5
Franklin County	5.8%	5.2%	0.6
Jefferson County	5.9%	4.8%	1.1
Johnson County	5.7%	5.4%	0.3
Massac County	4.2%	3.8%	0.4
Perry County	5.8%	5.4%	0.4
Pulaski County	7.2%	6.0%	1.2
Union County	5.9%	5.6%	0.3
Williamson County	4.8%	4.4%	0.4
Cities			
Carbondale City	5.8%	5.0%	0.8
Other Areas			
LWIA 23	5.0%	4.4%	0.6
LWIA 24	4.6%	4.2%	0.4
LWIA 25	5.4%	4.8%	0.6
LWIA 26	5.2%	4.7%	0.5
Southern EDR	5.3%	4.7%	0.6

Southern Illinois Highlights

Carbondale Area

Total nonfarm payrolls decreased by -400 jobs in January 2026, compared to January 2025.

Employment gains were posted in Construction (+225), Government (+50) and Leisure-Hospitality (+25).

Year-over-year, payroll totals were unchanged among employers in Information, Natural Resources-Mining and Other Services.

Payroll job losses occurred among employers in the Private Education-Health Services (-425), Trade-Transportation-Utilities (-125), Financial Activities (-50), Professional-Business Services (-50) and Manufacturing (-25) sectors.

Harrisburg Area

Total nonfarm payrolls decreased by -375 jobs in January 2026, compared to January 2025.

Employment gains were posted in Construction (+50), Manufacturing (+50) and Leisure-Hospitality (+25).

Year-over-year, payroll totals were unchanged among employers in Financial Activities, Other Services, Professional-Business Services and Trade-Transportation-Utilities.

Payroll job losses occurred among employers in the Private Education-Health Services (-350), Natural Resources-Mining (-75), Government (-50) and Information (-25) sectors.

Olney - Mt. Carmel Area

Total nonfarm payrolls decreased by -725 jobs in January 2026, compared to January 2025.

No sector-level job gains were posted in January 2026.

Year-over-year, payroll totals were unchanged among employers in Construction, Financial Activities, Information and Natural Resources-Mining.

Payroll job losses occurred among employers in the Manufacturing (-200), Private Education-Health Services (-150), Trade-Transportation-Utilities (-150), Government (-125), Leisure-Hospitality (-50), Professional-Business Services (-50) and Other Services (-25) sectors.