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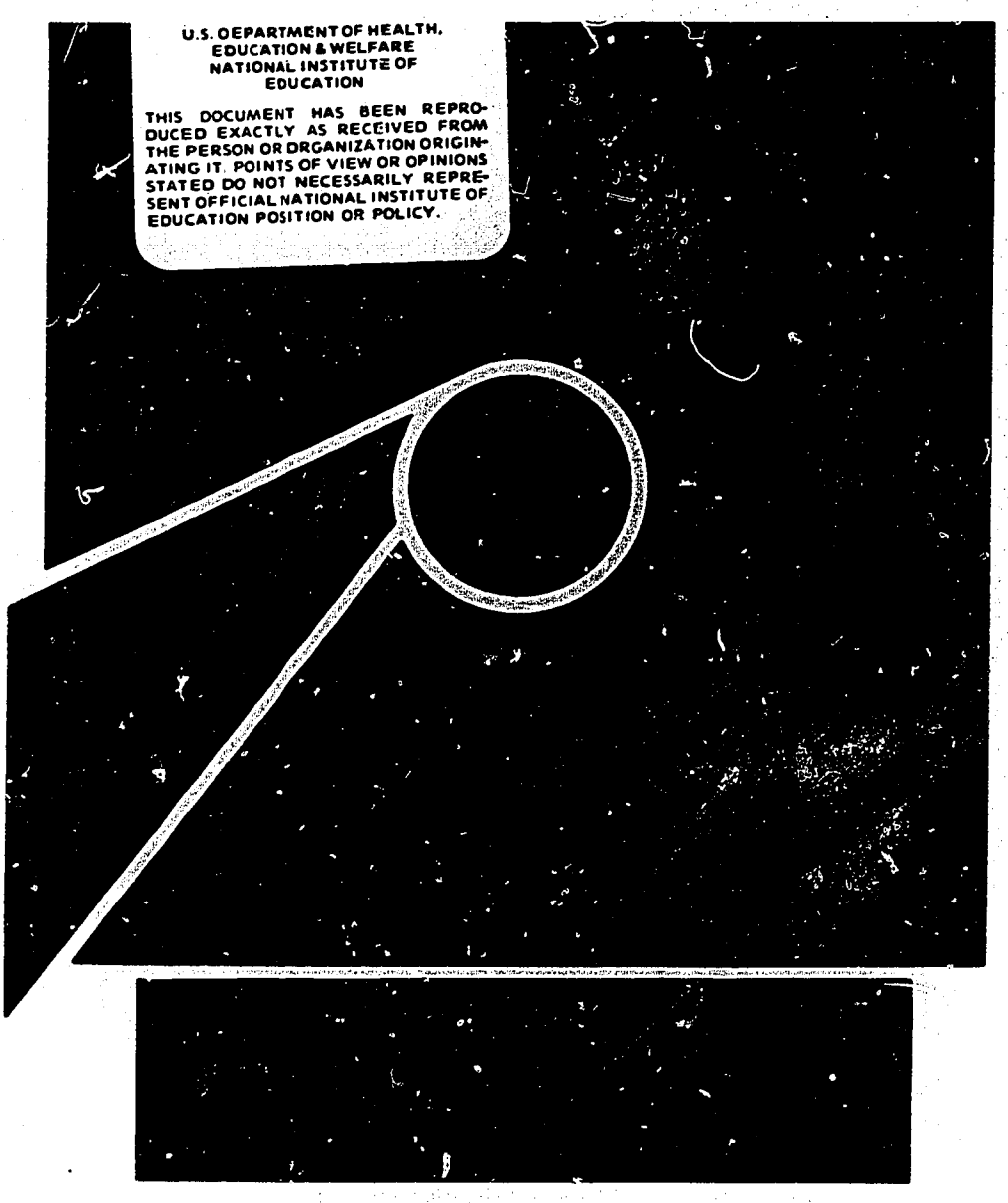
ABSTRACT

The Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962 established a "small" grants program for the support of dissertation research of candidates for the Ph.D. degree whose topics are related to manpower. The report presents the budget details of the awards in 1972; total grant proposals submitted; the geographical distribution of awards; the fields of discipline; sponsors; research topics; personal information; and postgrant activities of the recipients. (JMF)

The Doctoral Dissertation Grant Program

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



Manpower Administration
1973 Revised

THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION GRANT PROGRAM*

The passage of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962 not only directed the Department of Labor to select and place workers who were trained or retrained under the Act, but it also directed the Secretary of Labor to conduct a contractual research program which was to "...give promise of furthering the objectives of this Act."[1] Congress specified that the purpose of the Act was to require the Federal Government to appraise the manpower requirements and resources of the Nation and to develop and apply the information and methods needed to deal with the problems of unemployment resulting from automation and technological changes and other types of persistent unemployment.

After the Office of Manpower Research was established in 1963 and after we fended off most of the experts who had all the answers to manpower problems emanating from automation and technological change, we managed to take stock of the kinds of proposals we were receiving and evaluate the researchers who were submitting proposals. It soon became apparent that research in the manpower field appeared to be dominated by a very limited number of specialists. We discussed this matter with the Subcommittee on Research of the National Manpower Advisory Committee in 1964. As a result of that dialogue, and a specific recommendation by Dr. Eli Ginzberg of Columbia University, who is Chairman of the full Committee, the Department of Labor asked Congress to authorize grants as well as contracts for research. The purpose of this request was to develop more researchers who might help the Department in carrying out its responsibilities under the act.

The April 1965 amendments to the MDTA enabled the Department to conduct three grant programs. The first program enabled us to develop the Manpower Research Institutional Grant Program to create centers at universities for conducting research as well as the training of specialists for the manpower field.

Although I am aware that the primary interest concerns our experience in producing doctorates, I should like to note in passing that by June 1972 our investment in human capital through the institutional grant funds had enabled us to provide substantial financial support to about 400 students. In addition to those receiving financial aid, at least 1,000 other students participated in the Manpower Centers' programs.

The second grant program enabled us to provide "small" grants to established researchers who were interested in conducting exploratory or feasibility studies which may be preliminary to larger undertakings. The third grant program is the central topic of this paper—the support of dissertation research of candidates for the Ph.D. degree who have completed all course work and whose dissertation topics are related to manpower.

The second and third grant programs are referred to as the Small Grants Program. The small grants are awarded to universities or other nonprofit institutions, not directly to the individual.

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*This report is based on a speech originally presented by Dr. Howard Rosen, Director of the Manpower Administration's Office of Research and Development, at the Conference for the Manpower Field held at the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, in Ithaca, N.Y., on October 12, 1970. It has been updated through June 30, 1972, to provide more current information on the program.

[1]Sec. 102, U.S.C. 2571 et seq. P.L. 87-415, March 15, 1962.

As of June 30, 1972, 373 small grant awards had been made. Doctoral candidates received 252 awards, or approximately two-thirds of the total.

The annual appropriation for the Small Grants Program has been $700,000. From July 1, 1965, through June 30, 1972, about $2.9 million had been expended for doctoral grants; $1.6 million went into small grant research products. In all, $4.5 million has been spent on this program.

During the first fiscal year of the program in 1966, $310,000 went to research grants for established researchers and $277,000 went to doctoral dissertation applicants. In this past fiscal year—1972—only $269,000 went to established researchers and $420,000 was spent for doctoral dissertations.

Academic institutions receiving grant awards are required to make a "more than token" contribution to the total cost of a project. Individual doctoral grants are funded for a maximum of $10,000 per year in direct costs; research grants, for $15,000 per year. Universities may, under certain conditions, receive additional allowances in lieu of tuition and fees for doctoral candidates. Indirect costs based on audited and established rates may also increase the total grant amount. Grant support is currently limited to 1 year for doctoral dissertations.

In fiscal year 1972, the Department of Labor gave $312,000 in support of 33 doctoral dissertations. (See table 1.) The students received $132,000 in stipends or salaries. They also received $90,000 for other direct costs related to the preparation of their dissertations. The universities' allowances or tuition amounted to $69,000. They also received $22,000 for indirect costs. The universities made a separate contribution of some $24,000 to this program.

Thus, the average amount per grant, including university contributions, in FY 1972 was $10,171. The universities made contributions amounting to 7.2 percent of the total dissertation research budgets and received 6.4 percent in indirect costs. The students received directly in hand about 39 percent of the funds awarded in stipends and salaries. Their other direct costs amounted to about 27 percent. Thus, the students received 66 percent of the grant funds directly in salaries or stipends or for the direct costs needed to prepare their dissertations.

Table 1. Budget Details of the 33 Doctoral Dissertations Awarded in FY 1972 (not including modifications of previous grants)

Budget detail	Amount (thousands)		Percent distribution
	Total for 33 grants	Average per grant	
Total project budgets	$335.6	$10.2	100.0
Total Manpower Administration grants	311.6	9.4	92.8
Stipends or salaries	131.7	4.0	39.3
Other direct costs	89.8	2.7	26.7
University allowance[1] or tuition	68.5	2.1	20.4
Indirect costs	21.6	.7	6.4
University contributions	24.0	.7	7.2

[1]In lieu of tuition, fees, general supplies, and minor administrative costs.

NOTE: Detail may not add to totals because of rounding.

A five-member panel meets four times a year to review the proposals. The membership of the panel, which consists of representatives of the various social sciences, is rotated approximately every 2 years. The current panel members are: Dr. Rashi Fein of Harvard University, Dr. Juanita Kreps of Duke University, Dr. Herbert Meyer of General Electric Corporation, Dr. Hylan Lewis of City College of New York, and Dr. Glen Cain of The University of Wisconsin.[2]

The panel members receive copies of proposals well in advance of each meeting. The copies contain review comments by experts from both in and outside Government on the proposals being reviewed. Comments from at least three persons per proposal are solicited.

The panel review is also a screening process. If the panel believes that a researcher has selected a topic which is unmanageable or that data for a particular subject are not available or that the subject is not worthy of study, the panel will turn down the proposal. Remember that this screening takes place after the sponsor and the school have both determined that the dissertation has merit.

Fewer than 1 of every 2 doctoral proposals submitted is approved. (See table 2.) This high rejection rate is not based on an arbitrary quota but on the proposal's failure to meet the criteria guiding the panel. These require that the proposal demonstrate some originality and offer evidence that the candidate can prepare a creditable study.

Table 2. Total Grant Proposals Submitted to the Department of Labor through June 30, 1972

Action	Total	Doctoral dissertations	Research projects
		Number	
Total	927	583	344
Awarded	373	[1] 252	121
Rejected	554	331	223
		Percent distribution	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Awarded	40.2	43.2	35.2
Rejected	59.8	56.8	64.8

[1] Seven grantees will not complete their dissertations (for professional, personal, or psychological reasons) and their awards have been revoked.

To those interested in rewards to free enterprise and the competitive system, the awards to schools may be of particular interest. The University of Michigan received the largest number of awards, 19, followed by Columbia with 18. The University of Wisconsin and the University of California at Berkeley are tied for third with 17 each. Michigan State is fifth with 12, Massachusetts Institute of Technology has 11, and Harvard has 10.

[2] Earlier members of the panel were: Dr. Neil Chamberlain of Columbia University, Dr. Curtis C. Aller of San Francisco State University, Dr. Gerald Gurin of The University of Michigan, Dr. Peter Barth of The Ohio State University, and Ralph Seward, an arbitrator.

Geographical Distribution

Sixty-three schools have received doctoral dissertation grants. Universities in the East North Central region were awarded one-third of the doctoral dissertation grants, 31 percent. (See table 3.) The individual State with the largest number of grants, however, was New York; its 41 grants accounted for 16 percent of the total number. Four States had more than half of the grants—130 out of the 252. These were New York with 41; Michigan, 32; California, 30; and Massachusetts, 27.

Table 3. Doctoral Dissertation Grants Awarded, by Region and Selected States,[1] through June 30, 1972

Region and State	Number	Percent distribution
Total	252	100.0
New England	36	14.3
Connecticut	8	3.2
Massachusetts	27	10.7
Middle Atlantic	50	19.8
New Jersey	5	2.0
New York	41	16.3
East North Central	78	30.9
Illinois	14	5.5
Indiana	6	2.4
Michigan	32	12.7
Ohio	9	3.6
Wisconsin	17	6.7
West North Central	16	6.4
Missouri	13	5.2
South Atlantic	19	7.5
Maryland	6	2.4
East South Central	2	.8
West South Central	15	6.0
Texas	8	3.2
Mountain	3	1.2
Pacific	33	13.1
California	30	11.9

[1] Only those States with five or more grants are shown separately.

Fields of Discipline

The doctoral grants awarded represent not only every discipline within the social sciences but also several related fields. However, almost half of the grants were sponsored by departments of economics. (See table 4.) Sociology departments were the next largest group with one-fifth of the grants.

Table 4. Doctoral Dissertation Grants Awarded, by Discipline, through June 30, 1972

Discipline	Total awarded		Completed by June 30, 1972	Active on June 30, 1972[1]
	Number	Percent distribution		
Total	252	100.0	143	102
Economics	121	48.0	63	53
Sociology	48	19.0	25	22
Industrial and labor relations	16	6.3	12	4
Business administration	13	5.2	10	3
Education	11	4.4	8	3
Psychology	11	4.4	8	3
Political science	7	2.8	2	5
Other[2]	25	9.9	15	9

[1] These figures do not include seven grants which have been revoked.
[2] Includes such departments as social welfare and social research, population studies, administrative sciences, counseling, geography, and interdisciplinary studies.

The grant awards do not always tie in neatly with the schools that lead in doctoral output. For example, during the 1964-66 period, New York University, The University of Michigan, and Purdue University led the country in granting doctorates in psychology.[3] The University of Chicago, Columbia University, and the University of California at Berkeley, were the leaders in granting degrees in sociology. Harvard University, the University of California at Berkeley, and the University of Wisconsin were the leaders in conferring doctorates in economics and econometrics.

Sponsors

The one man who has sponsored the largest number of successful applicants is Dr. Gerald G. Somers of The University of Wisconsin. Nine applicants sponsored by Dr. Somers have received awards. His nearest competitor is Dr. Lloyd Ulman of the University of California at Berkeley with eight successful applicants. Dr. John T. Dunlop of Harvard and Dr. Louis A. Ferman of The University of Michigan are tied for third place with seven each.

[3] *Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities, 1958-66* (Washington: National Academy of Sciences, 1967), Publication 1489, p. 14.

Research Topics

The dissertation topics selected by applicants having interesting patterns. In the same way that their seniors responded to newspaper headlines and magazine articles which frightened the public about the horrible effects of technological change, the early doctoral candidates elected to study the impact of automation on specific sectors of the labor force, on specific occupations, or on the labor requirements of particular industries. Interest in the subject waned as fear of technological displacement abated during the economic growth of the 1960's.

We have also noted interesting clusters about particular topics that suddenly seem to converge in the dissertations submitted in a single quarter. There appears to be no easy explanation for the clustering patterns.

The most popular subject category of the 143 doctoral dissertations completed by June 30, 1972, is that of labor force analysis and policy, including studies of welfare and of urban poverty. Attitudinal and motivational studies are the second most popular subject. The balance of the areas studied includes the evaluation of training and apprenticeship programs, minority groups, occupational mobility, migration, and the problems of scientists and engineers and of women workers.

Table 5 shows the distribution of dissertation subjects already completed. A tabulation of the dissertations currently underway would show substantial emphasis on poverty and family assistance plans, resulting in a growing number of studies of the poor and the near-poor, the underemployed, and income maintenance proposals.

Table 5. Primary Subject Category of Doctoral Dissertations Completed by June 30, 1972

Category	Number	Percent distribution
Total	143	100.0
Labor force analysis and policy—various aspects of, including urban unemployment, welfare	22	15.4
Attitude and motivation studies, including job satisfaction	16	11.2
Training and apprenticeship programs, evaluation of	11	7.7
Minority groups (including braceros)	10	7.0
Occupational mobility (of unskilled workers, of Cuban refugees, military to civilian)	10	7.0
Migration (intercity, rural to urban)	8	5.6
Specific industry studies, including theoretical models	7	4.9
Scientists and engineers	6	4.2
Women workers	6	4.2
Education studies, including dropouts	6	4.2
Cost-benefit analysis	5	3.5
Technological change	5	3.5
Youth	5	3.5
Health manpower	4	2.8
Social or economic mobility	3	2.1
Projections	3	2.1
Other	16	11.2

NOTE: Although the subjects of several dissertations overlap many of these categories, for the purpose of this table each dissertation was allocated to the single category considered most descriptive.

Percent distribution may not add to total because of rounding.

Completion of Dissertations

For the 143 doctoral candidates who finished their dissertations by June 30, 1972, the average time elapsed between award and completion was 23 months. Almost one-half of the dissertations were completed within 18 months. (See table 6.)

Table 6. Time Lapse Between Doctoral Dissertation Grant Award and Completion, Fiscal Years 1966-72

Item	Total		Fiscal year work began[1]						
	Number	Percent distribution	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Grants completed	143	100.0	9	32	29	36	23	13	1
Average months elapsed between award and completion	22.5	—	37.2	26.8	26.3	19.3	16.8	13.6	8.0
Grants completed in:									
1 year or less	30	21.0	1	6	4	5	6	7	1
13 to 18 months	38	26.6	1	5	8	13	8	3	—
19 to 24 months	26	18.2	2	4	1	10	6	3	—
25 to 30 months	21	14.7	—	7	4	7	3	—	—
31 to 36 months	7	4.9	—	2	5	—	—	—	—
More than 3 years	21	14.7	5	8	7	1	—	—	—

[1] Not necessarily year in which award was conferred.

NOTE: Percent distribution may not add to total because of rounding.

Although we do not have data on the A.B.D. (all but the dissertation) population, we do know that a good share of the professional labor force of the Federal Government consists of A.B.D.'s. We believe that we have an unusually high completion rate. Of the 252 doctoral candidates awarded grants, only seven will not complete their dissertations and their grants have been revoked.

We originally started the program by permitting a maximum of 3 years of support. The precedent for this period of time came from the guidelines used by other Federal agencies. We soon discovered that there existed in the doctoral dissertation population a minority of students who decided that they liked the good life and wanted to make a permanent career out of writing a dissertation. When this matter was brought to the attention of the Small Grant Panel, it recommended shortening the maximum to 2 years. The recommendation went into effect on June 1, 1970. The above table shows that the reduced period of time results in faster achievement of the goal of the candidates. Accordingly, the Panel has recommended a further shortening of the maximum to 1 year, except under very special circumstances.

Personal Information

Since the beginning of the program, women have received 44 doctoral grants—18 percent of the total. Women made up one-fourth of the recipients receiving grants in 1972, eight out of 31.

The median age of the 143 men and women who completed their doctorates was 29 years. One hundred twenty-five of the 143 completors were men.

The National Academy of Sciences' data on doctoral degree recipients from U.S. universities, last published in 1967, provided us with some information on the educational level of the parents of 46 of our early grantees. The information for this study is supplied by graduates just as they complete all requirements for their doctoral degrees. Two had fathers with a Ph.D., nine had fathers who had earned only a baccalaureate, and six had mothers who had only this degree. Nine had fathers who achieved 8 years of education or less and seven had mothers who had not gone beyond the eight grade.

We went to another source on American science manpower compiled by the National Science Foundation to examine the fields of specialty competence our grantees had designated in supplying information for the National Register of Scientific and Technical Personnel. We learned that, of the 30 grantees identified in the Register, nine had specified "manpower" as their field of special competence.Other respondents referred to welfare programs and social organizations as their fields of specialization. Twelve of the 30 gave their professional identification as "economist" and five as "sociologist."

Salary data for 1968 were available for 15 individuals, 11 of whom were academically employed. Seven of these reported salaries ranging from $7,800 to $12,500 on a 9- to 10-month employment basis; four individuals reported salaries ranging from $11,000 to $22,000 on an 11- to 12-month employment basis; four other individuals were nonacademically employed and reported salaries ranging from $11,300 to $22,000.

Post-Grant Activities

You will recall that the basic reason for starting the doctoral program was to develop a cadre of experts who could help the Department with some of the manpower problems facing this Nation.

We have tried to keep up with our grantees by sending them a questionnaire several months after dissertations are completed. We have inquired about the nature of their work and the possible utilization of the research they conducted in completing their dissertations.

This regular annual survey indicated that 9 out of 10 grantees were teaching and, at the same time, were also engaged in some research activity related to manpower. Many had published articles or books related to their dissertation topics or had been invited to be guest lecturers or panel discussants on their research topics. They are publishing in the *American Economic Review* and other professional journals and presenting papers at the Allied Social Science Association's meetings.

Interest in specific dissertations has been shown by the Senate Subcommittee on Manpower, Employment, and Poverty, the Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor, the President's Committee on Urban Housing, the National Committee on Household Employment, Congressmen, State legislators, and city planners. Private companies and foundations and other members of the academic community have also requested information about specific dissertations.

Several grantees reported that prospective employers were impressed by their having been awarded a grant by the Department of Labor. In other instances the grant had opened doors to specific research or administrative opportunities. Some of the grantees are involved in our contractual research program. They are working on professional manpower problems, employment in the construction industry, labor market information systems, and recruiting and absenteeism in local labor markets.

About 2 years ago, because of publicity about the difficult time many Ph.D.'s in the physical science fields were having in finding jobs, we decided to do a special telephone survey of the 34 Department of Labor grantees who had completed their dissertations in the past year—between September 1969 and August 1970.

All 34 had jobs. Our grantees followed the same pattern as most doctoral degree recipients. Twenty-nine were on the staffs of universities, either as teachers or researchers. The Council of Economic Advisers, the Rand Corporation, and the AFL-CIO each employed one of our grantees. One man who majored in psychology was doing personnel research in a large corporation. The last person was employed as an administrator at a university.

Annual Conference of New Manpower Researchers

Doctoral candidates who are awarded grants by the Manpower Administration are invited to attend a 2-day conference held each September under the sponsorship of the National Manpower Policy Task Force. The NMPTF is a private nonprofit organization of academicians who advise the Secretary of Labor on policy issues and also promote manpower research.

The conference fills several purposes. It provides the candidates with an opportunity to meet their peers as well as members of the task force, members of the Grant Review Panel who made the original selections of grant recipients, and government personnel associated with manpower research. It also gives the candidates an opportunity to discuss the problems and findings of their research. Selected participants give formal presentations on their theses, which are followed by discussion sessions.

Annual Publication on Projects Supported

Each fall a catalog, *Manpower Research and Development Projects*, is published which includes lists of current and completed grants and contracts, guidelines for potential applicants, and information on the availability of completed projects. The guidelines for applying for research project grants, or for contracts, may be of particular interest to doctoral grant recipients after they have completed their dissertations.

Gary Becker in his pioneering paper, "Investment in Human Capital: A Theoretical Analysis," defined investing in human capital as "...activities that influence future real income through the imbedding of resources in people."[4] The Department of Labor's investment in the human capital of manpower specialists, which is expressed through the grant program, did not originate because we were primarily interested in influencing the future real income of our grantees. Instead, we hoped that the work that they would eventually do would affect the income of certain groups in the economy as well as the general economy. We also hoped that our grantees would work with us on the difficult social problems we face.

The Federal Government is spending more than $2 billion a year on manpower training and retraining programs. Those of us who have been involved in manpower activities in the past 10 years (1962-72) are the first to admit that we are still involved in a fairly small experimental and demonstration program. The administrators have made drastic changes—by emphasizing certain activities—adding, dropping, or changing other programs. The very dynamism of our experiments is a confession that neither the bureaucrats who implement nor the Congressmen who legislate have the final answers as to the best direction of our programs. At one level, we face specific issues of motivation, alienation, educational deficiencies, institutional resistance to change, cultural

[4] *The Journal of Political Economy*, October 1962, Supplement, p. 9.

differences, economic demand, poorly organized and inefficient labor markets, discrimination, and control of entry into occupations and industry. On another level, we face broader problems of the relationship between inflation, unemployment, and fiscal and monetary policies.

The problems referred to are not simple. They cannot be solved by experts in narrow, scholarly disciplines who refuse to recognize the real complexity of social and economic problems. Hopefully, the men and women who have been supported in the doctoral program have become sensitive to the difficult manpower problems this Nation now faces and will face in the years ahead. If the people we have supported will apply their knowledge and trained minds to helping us alleviate—not necessarily solve—our problems, we will have invested well and wisely.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

For more information on manpower programs and services in your area, contact your Regional Manpower Administrator at the address listed below or the nearest office of your State employment service.

Location	States Served	
Room 1703 John F. Kennedy Federal Bldg. Boston, Mass. 02203	Connecticut Maine Massachusetts	New Hampshire Rhode Island Vermont
Room 3713, 1515 Broadway New York, N.Y. 10036	New Jersey New York	Puerto Rico Virgin Islands
P.O. Box 8796 Philadelphia, Pa. 19101	Delaware Maryland Pennsylvania	Virginia West Virginia
D.C. Manpower Administrator Room 220, District Bldg. 14th and E Streets, NW. Washington, D.C. 20004	District of Columbia	
Room 405 1371 Peachtree Street, NE. Atlanta, Ga. 30309	Alabama Florida Georgia Kentucky	Mississippi North Carolina South Carolina Tennessee
300 South Wacker Drive Chicago, Ill. 60606	Illinois Indiana Michigan	Minnesota Ohio Wisconsin
1100 Commerce Street Dallas, Tex. 75201	Arkansas Louisiana New Mexico	Oklahoma Texas
Room 300, Federal Bldg. 911 Walnut Street Kansas City, Mo. 64106	Iowa Kansas	Missouri Nebraska
Room 16015, Fed. Office Bldg. 1961 Stout Street Denver, Colo. 80202	Colorado Montana North Dakota	South Dakota Utah Wyoming
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