

The Upjohn Institute's Employment Management Services Division (EMSD) was established in 1974 to manage Kalamazoo County's publicly funded employment and training programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). CETA established local advisory boards to identify the barriers to employment of low-income individuals, and local authority to develop mechanisms to eliminate those barriers.

Kalamazoo County retained responsibility for advisory committee staffing and planning until 1978, when the county's Office of Job Training merged with EMSD. For the next four years, EMSD's responsibilities included planning, program development, fiscal management, information systems, advisory committee staffing, contracting, monitoring, and program evaluation.

The passage of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) in 1982 placed a greater emphasis on program performance and private sector involvement. Locally, the Kalamazoo program expanded to include St. Joseph County, and EMSD added service delivery to adult job seekers as part of its mission.

The adult services component provides counseling, assessment, and job placement and retention support for low-income adults, older workers, and laid-off individuals who have a low probability of reentering the workforce. This has resulted in a substantial increase in community involvement and coordination for EMSD with other nonprofit organizations and public institutions.

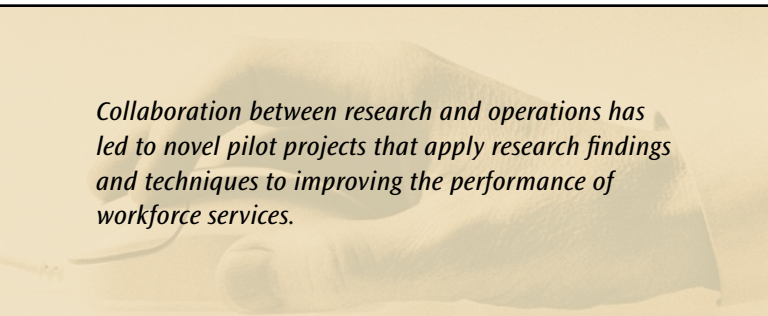
The Institute's research staff and EMSD staff began exploring opportunities to collaborate in the late 1980s. By 1991, the staff

was engaging in joint projects to apply research knowledge to local program design outside of Kalamazoo, including in countries in Eastern Europe.

The 1990s brought other significant changes to EMSD. At the state level, Michigan's governor began systematically folding all publicly funded employment and training programs into the authority of the local Workforce Development Boards. Because of this, EMSD had responsibility for the management of welfare-to-work programs, school-to-work programs, the public employment service, and the federally funded employment program for dislocated workers and low-income adults and youth, known as WIA (Workforce Investment Act).

Michigan's governor also mandated the separation of administrative functions from direct service delivery. Under this arrangement, the Institute and the local Workforce Development Board contract out service delivery while retaining the administrative functions at EMSD.

EMSD has partnered with Institute research staff to pilot several programs that apply research findings and techniques to improving the performance of workforce services. Among these ventures, the two groups have used statistical methods to target employment assistance to welfare recipients and to adjust performance measures to more accurately capture the contribution of employment programs to participant outcomes.



*Collaboration between research and operations has led to novel pilot projects that apply research findings and techniques to improving the performance of workforce services.*