Kern County’s unemployment rate was 15.3 percent in June 2011, up from 14.9 percent in May and mostly unchanged from the rate of 15.8 percent in June of 2010. The unemployment rates for April, May and June of 2011 are about one half of a percentage point lower than the same times last year.

The total number of jobs in all industries showed a slight loss of 100 jobs in June of this year over June of 2010. A total of 279,200 people were employed in all industry sectors in June of 2011. This represents a gain of 8,000 jobs (3 percent) over May of 2011. Most of these added jobs were in farm related work. A total of 6,500 farm jobs were added in June as the agriculture sector geared up for spring.

Nonfarm industry sectors made an overall rise in the number of jobs, gaining 900 jobs in the past year, June of 2011 over June of 2010. The leading industry sectors in this period were Mining and Logging, which includes the oil industry with 700 job gained and Manufacturing, with 600 jobs.

A net gain of 1,500 jobs was also made in the period from May 2011 to June 2011. The nonfarm sectors with gains from May to June include, Mining and Logging (200 jobs gained), Construction (400 jobs gained), Manufacturing (200 jobs gained), Financial Activities (100 jobs gained), Professional and Business Services (500 jobs gained), Education and Health Services (200 jobs gained), Leisure and Hospitality (600 jobs gained), and Other Services (100 jobs gained). Industry sectors with losses from May to June include Trade, Transportation and Utilities (500 jobs gained lost), and Government (300 jobs lost). The Government Industry Sector includes federal, state and local government and public education. The Information sector showed no change during this period.

Bakersfield showed a jobless rate of 10.8 percent in June of 2011, down 1.6 percent from March of 2011 when it was 12.4 percent. This is still well below the county average. The areas of Kern County dependent on agricultural jobs benefited from drops in their unemployment rates although these rates remained very high. The cities of Arvin, Delano, Lamont, McFarland, Wasco and Shafter had their rates drop about 3.6 percentage points, but they still averaged around 31 percent unemployment.

California’s unemployment rate edged up slightly from May to June 2011, to 12.1 percent, while the rate for the nation gained .2 percent to 9.3 percent. These rates have changed very little over the past year.
Employers’ Training Resource (ETR) and the Career Services Centers (CSC) continue to provide workforce development services to Kern County residents, serving a total of 2,507 first time visitors during the second quarter of 2011. A total of 42,240 units of service were accessed by these first time and repeat visitors during this time period. ETR and CSC staff provided these visitors with a variety of activities including case management services, job search workshops, skills assessments, supportive services and partner referrals. Customers also had use of the resource room in which they could access fax, phone and copy services. On a weekly basis Job Club is conducted by our job developers and allows our customers to hear information about all jobs available that week. Job openings reported to ETR for the second quarter of 2011 totaled 2,301.

ETR’s Rapid Response Team offers assistance and services to Kern County employers to provide services and reduce the impact of job loss on their workers, families and the larger communities. A total of four employers announced closing or layoffs in the second quarter of 2011 resulting in approximately 149 jobs lost. Employees served by the Rapid Response Team attend an orientation where they learn about the employment services, programs and resources they can access at no cost through the CSC’s.

In addition to receiving WIA formula funds for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth, ETR received a number of new competitive grants during the past quarter. These included a Green Jobs grant to conduct a pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with the Kern Community College District and the Sheet Metal Worker’s JATC to serve unemployed, underemployed, and incumbent workers. ETR was the subrecipient of a Multi-Sector National Emergency Grant (NEG) in partnership with several other subrecipients. This grant will offer on-the-job training to individuals who have been laid off from specified agribusiness and grocery companies. ETR is a partner with the Department of Human Services in the CalWORKs Placement MOU. This grant places CalWORKs recipients in employment in order to enhance their skills. ETR has also received the competitive National Farmworker Jobs Program grant. Since 1981, ETR has served migrant and seasonal farmworkers with this nationally directed program of job training and employment assistance.

Refer to Attachment A for reports on visitor information and services, Attachment B for visitors and activities offered in specific CSC’s and affiliates, Attachment C for unemployment rates of selected Kern County cities and Attachment D for CSC activities for the period ending June 30, 2011.

Therefore, It is RECOMMENDED that your Board receive and file this report.

Very truly yours,

Verna Lewis
Director

Attachments