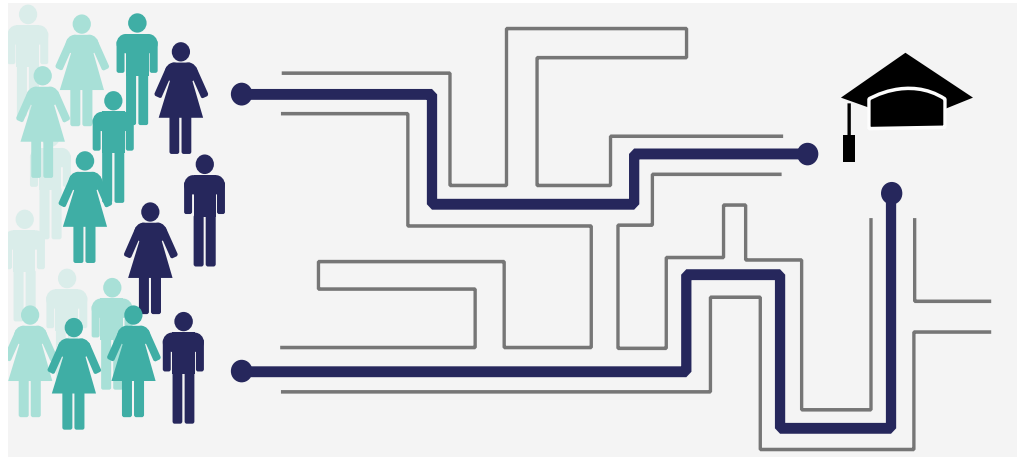


Supporting Low-Skilled Adults in College and Career Pathways: A Story of Supports and Partnerships

Theresa Anderson, The Urban Institute
Rachel Pleasants McDonnell, Jobs for the Future
Lisa Soricone, Jobs for the Future

August 19, 2014

Accelerating Opportunity: An Overview



- Multi-state, multi-college career pathways initiative
- Started with a planning year in 2011
- Approaching the end of the three-year implementation phase now
- Primary emphasis: redesigning Adult Basic Education and Career/Technical Education to enable more low-income adults to complete postsecondary credentials that are of value in the labor market.

A National Need for Pathways to Marketable Credentials

By 2018, nearly 2/3 of all jobs will require a postsecondary credential.

But right now . . .

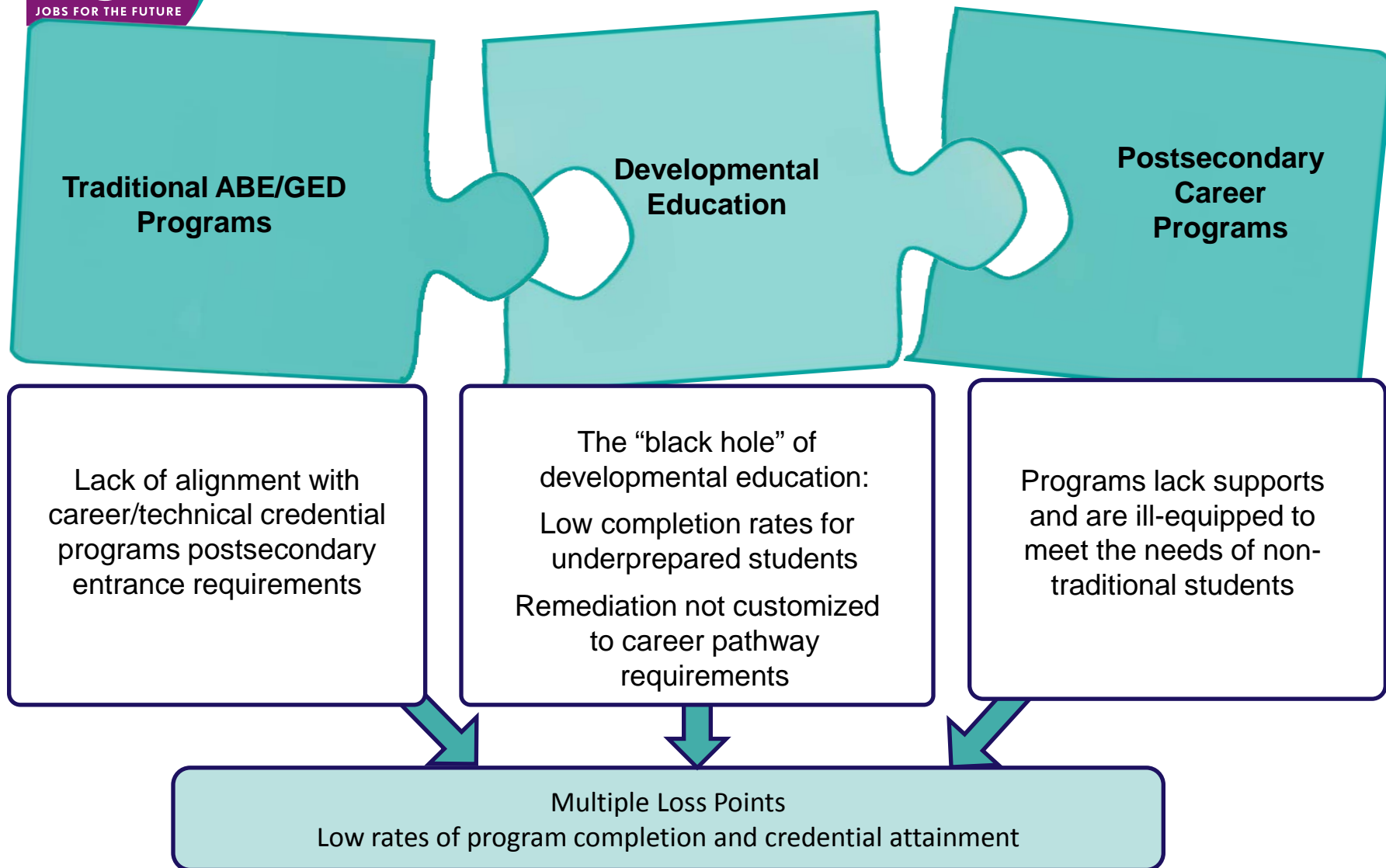
- 13% of adults ages 18 and older have less than a high school credential
- 30% have a high school credential but no college
- Another 19% have some college but no degree

62% of adults 18 or older lack the credentials needed for family-supporting careers





Disconnected Educational Pathways





Streamlined Adult Education Pathways

Accelerated and Integrated
ABE and GED programs

Articulated Career
Pathways

Stackable
Credentials with
Labor Market Value

- Career exploration
- Contextualized learning
- Skill-building for postsecondary/career success
- College and career counseling

- Accelerated skill-building integrated with credit coursework
- Support through gate-keeper courses
- Intensive transition counseling

- Comprehensive supplemental services
- Intensive counseling
- Flexible program options
- Job placement

More Adult Learners Succeeding in ABE to Credential Pathways

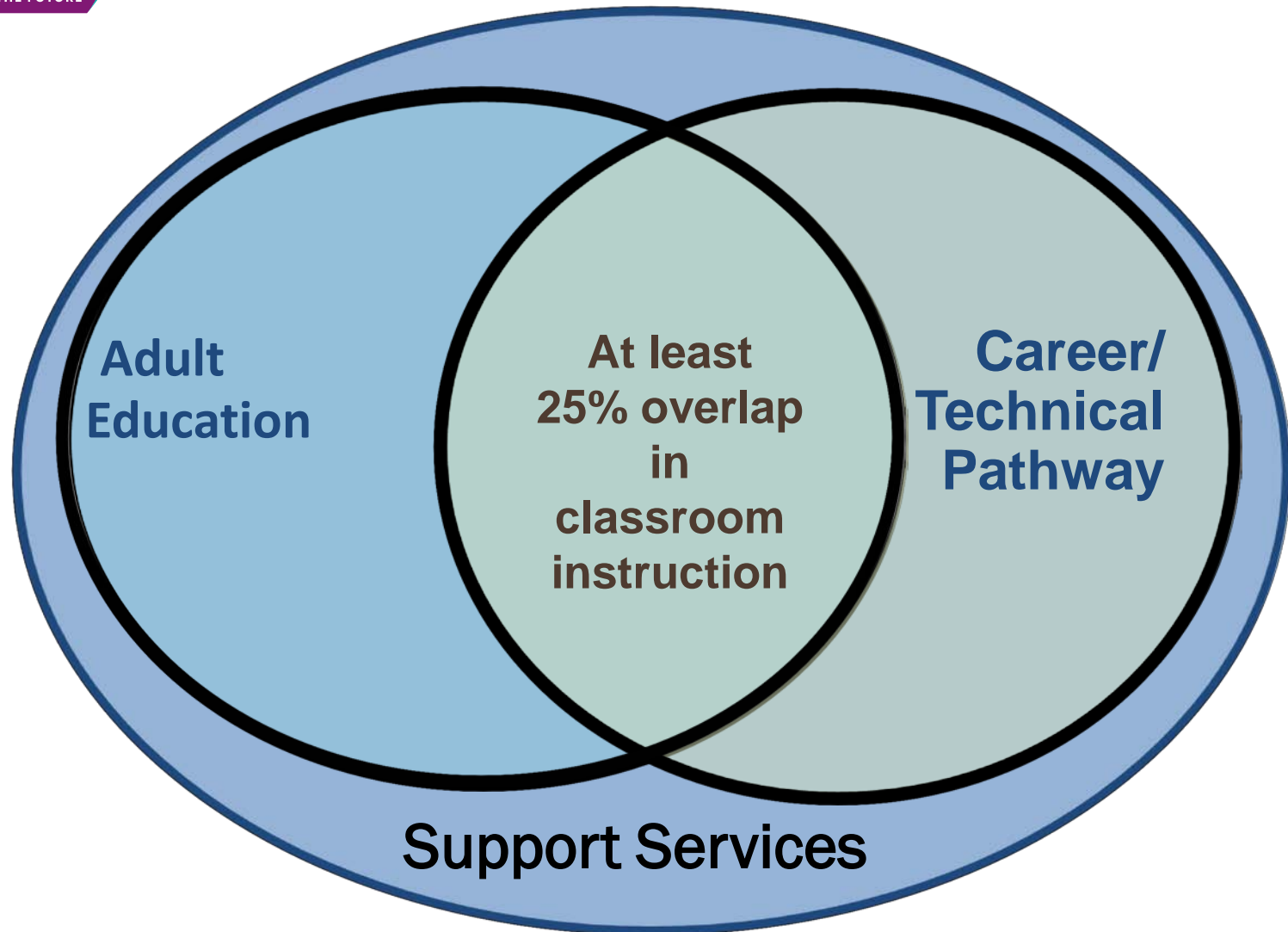


Accelerating Opportunity's Core Components

Accelerated Credential Attainment	Linkages to Comprehensive Career/Technical Pathways
Team Teaching	Credit-Bearing Pathways
Supplemental Instruction	Intensive Support Services
Demonstrated Alignment with Labor Market Demand	Partnerships with WIBs and CBOs

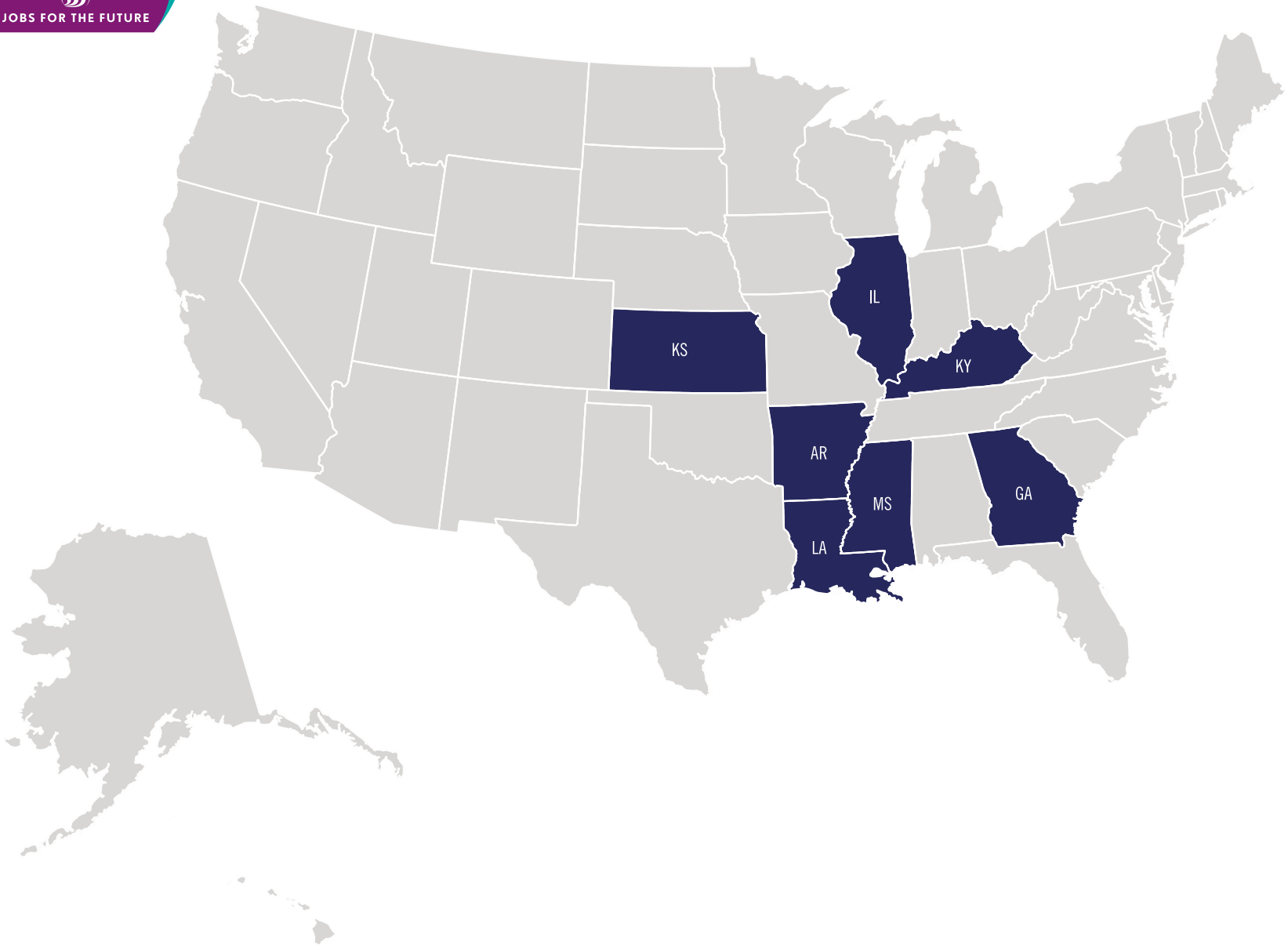


The Accelerating Opportunity Instructional Model

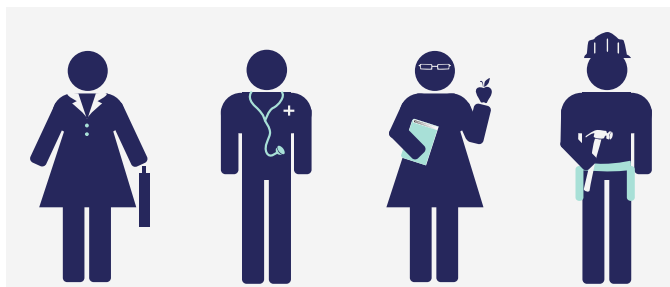




7 States, Over 85 Colleges



Accelerating Opportunity's Goals



- **Scale** the model to new colleges and states
- **Increase** the number of adults who earn the credentials and skills for family-sustaining jobs
- **Sustain** the work
- Create **systems change** - integration of ABE into college pathways
- **Promote policies** to dramatically increase post-secondary credential attainment

Supports & Partnerships in Accelerating Opportunity

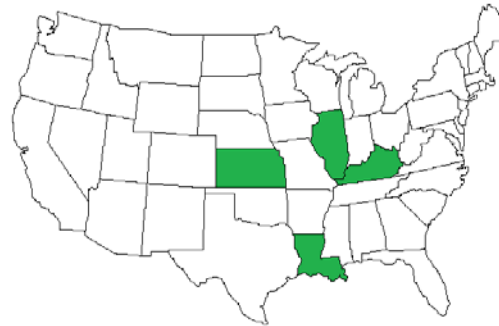
Theresa Anderson
The Urban Institute

August 19, 2014

Prepared for the annual workshop of the
National Association for Welfare Research & Statistics (NAWRS)

Some Basics about AO

- Started in 2012
- Four states in the evaluation:
 - Illinois
 - Kansas
 - Kentucky
 - Louisiana
- Requires at least 8 colleges per state, 2 pathways per college
- All received buy-in from state executive
- Grants administered by state agencies



Some Basics about AO

- Career pathways in high-demand and high-growth fields
- Targets adults with low basic skills
 - 6th-12th grade in math or writing
 - Low English language skills
- Helps participants earn career & technical credentials
- Promotes co-enrollment with extra supports
 - Team teaching, navigation/coaching, academic & social supports

Today We Discuss a Small Piece of the AO Evaluation

- 3 evaluation components:
 - Implementation
 - Impact (non-experimental)
 - Cost-benefit
- Based on:
 - Site visits
 - Quarterly calls with states & colleges
 - 3 college surveys
 - 2 participant surveys
 - De-identified student records (treatment & comparison)
 - Document review

Primary Data Source Today Is the AO College Survey

- Covers calendar years 2012 & 2013
- Focusing on three states: Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky
- Colleges
 - Year 1: 25 colleges
 - Year 2: 32 colleges
- One section also based on 1st participant survey
 - 444 respondents from 4 states (incl. Louisiana)
 - Students enrolled in spring 2014

AO Numbers for 3 States in 2 Years

68
pathways in 1st year

96
pathways in 2nd

1,373
students did work-
based learning

31,252
credits earned

1,005
students hired into a
job related to AO
training

5,143
credentials
granted

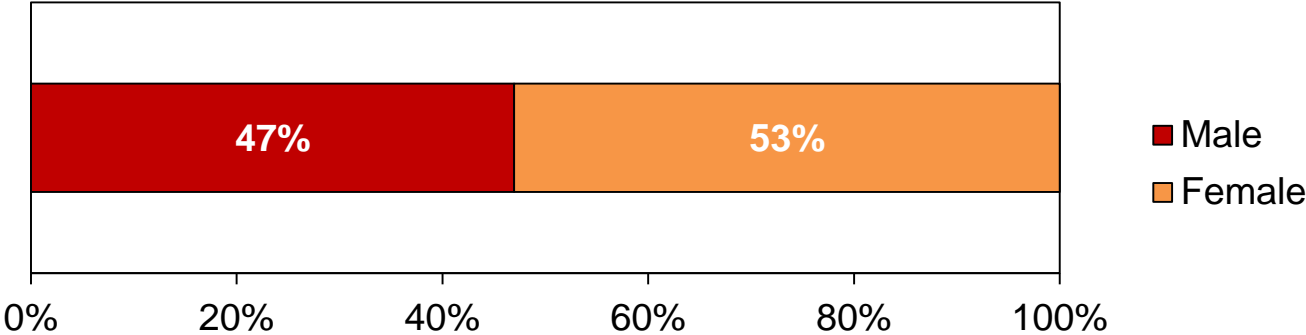
1,161
students hired into
a job

4,187
students
enrolled

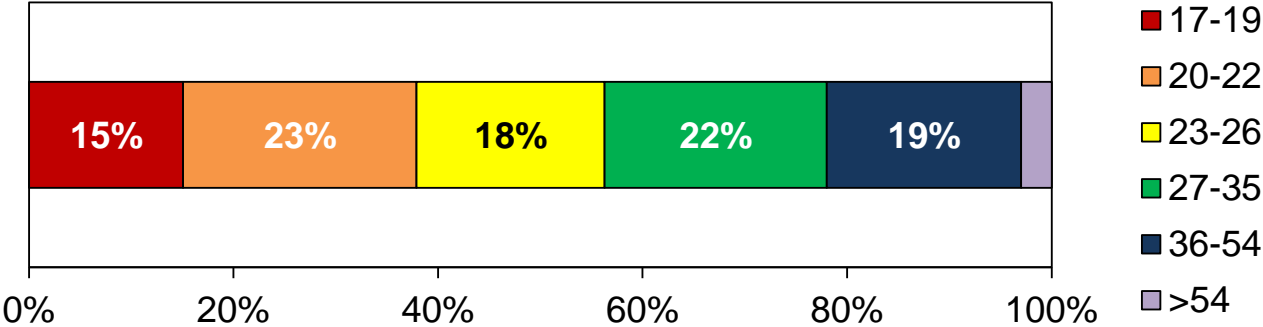
PARTICIPANTS

AO Participants Are Both Genders, All Ages

Gender

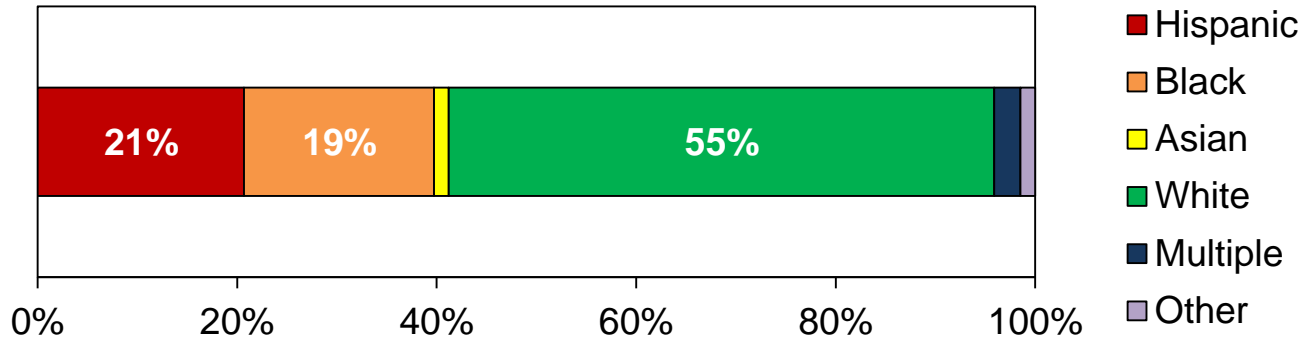


Age

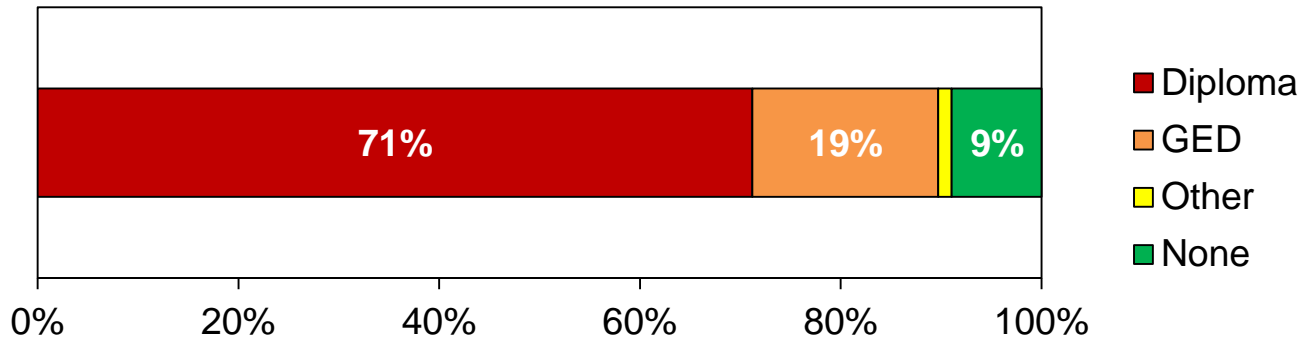


Mostly White, also Hispanic & Black; Many with Diploma

Race

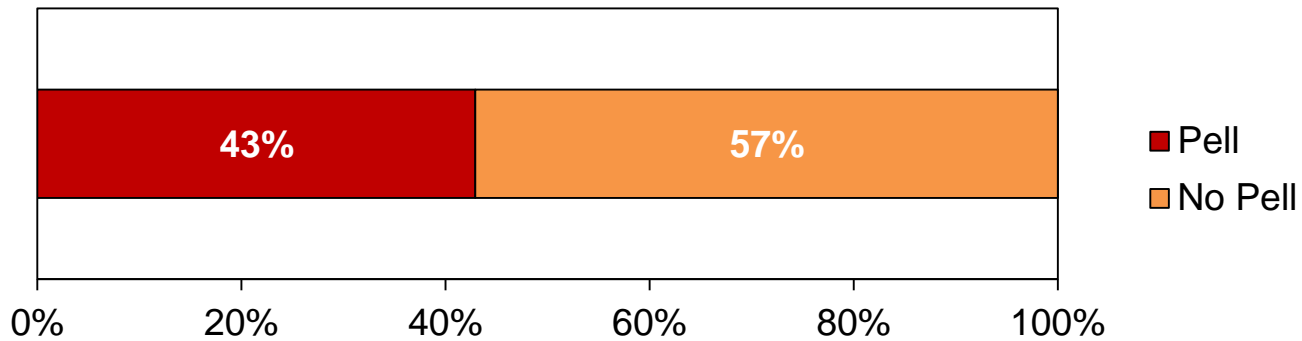


High School Credential

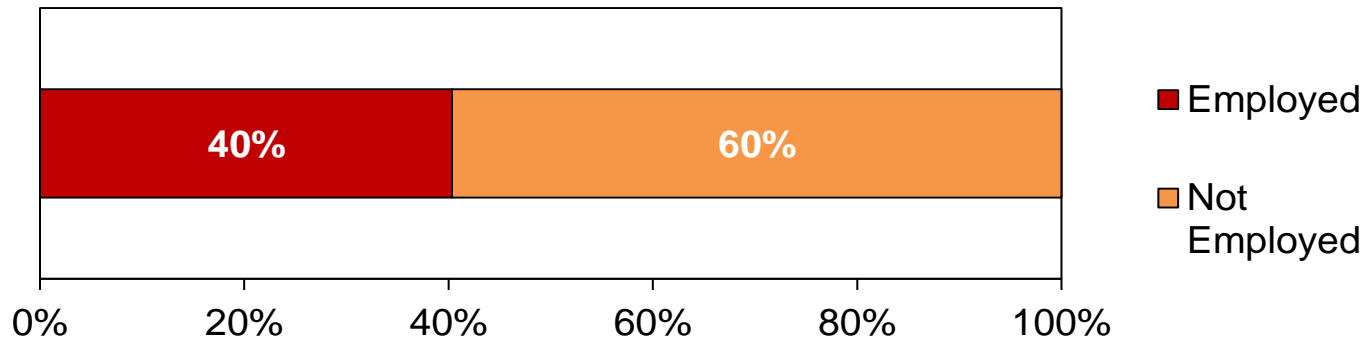


Many Receive Pell & Are Employed

Pell Grant Receipt



Employment



SUPPORTS



Supports to AO Students Are Crucial but Still Developing

- AO students eligible for college support services
 - Change for adult education students
- Most colleges utilize a coach, navigator, or transition coordinator
- Team teaching identified as a crucial support

Participants Reported Some Support, but Suggest They Want More

Support	Received by	Wanted More Time
Team teaching	72%	49%
General job readiness	46%	7%
Job search skills	41%	11%
Tutoring or extra class sessions	43%	42%

Support	Financial Assistance	Referrals
Transportation	18%	13%
Emergency assistance	10%	8%
Child Care	9%	6%

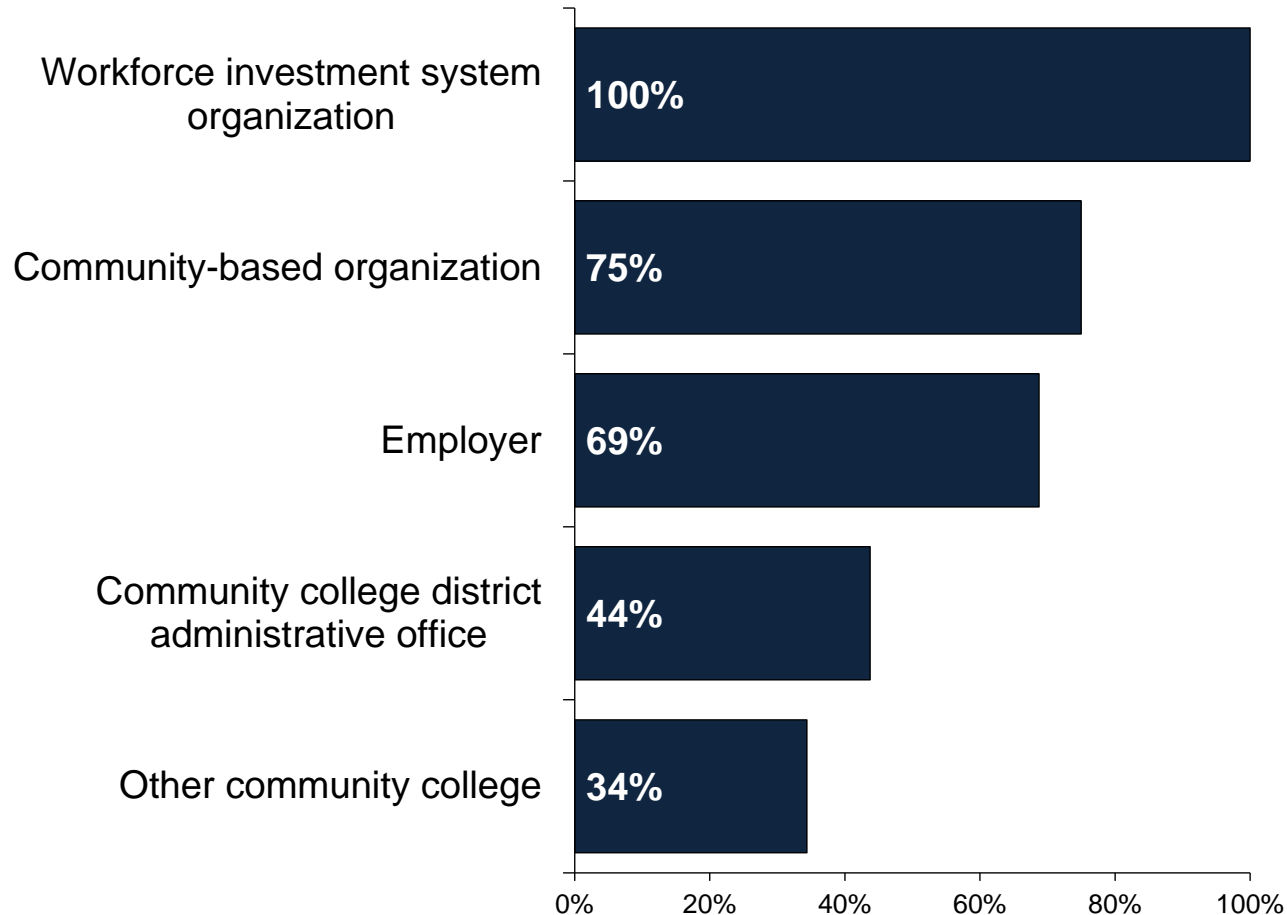
College Staff Provided Support to Students

Issue	Received by
College/Academic Issues	82%
Job Issues	30%
Personal Issues	24%
Financial Issues	18%

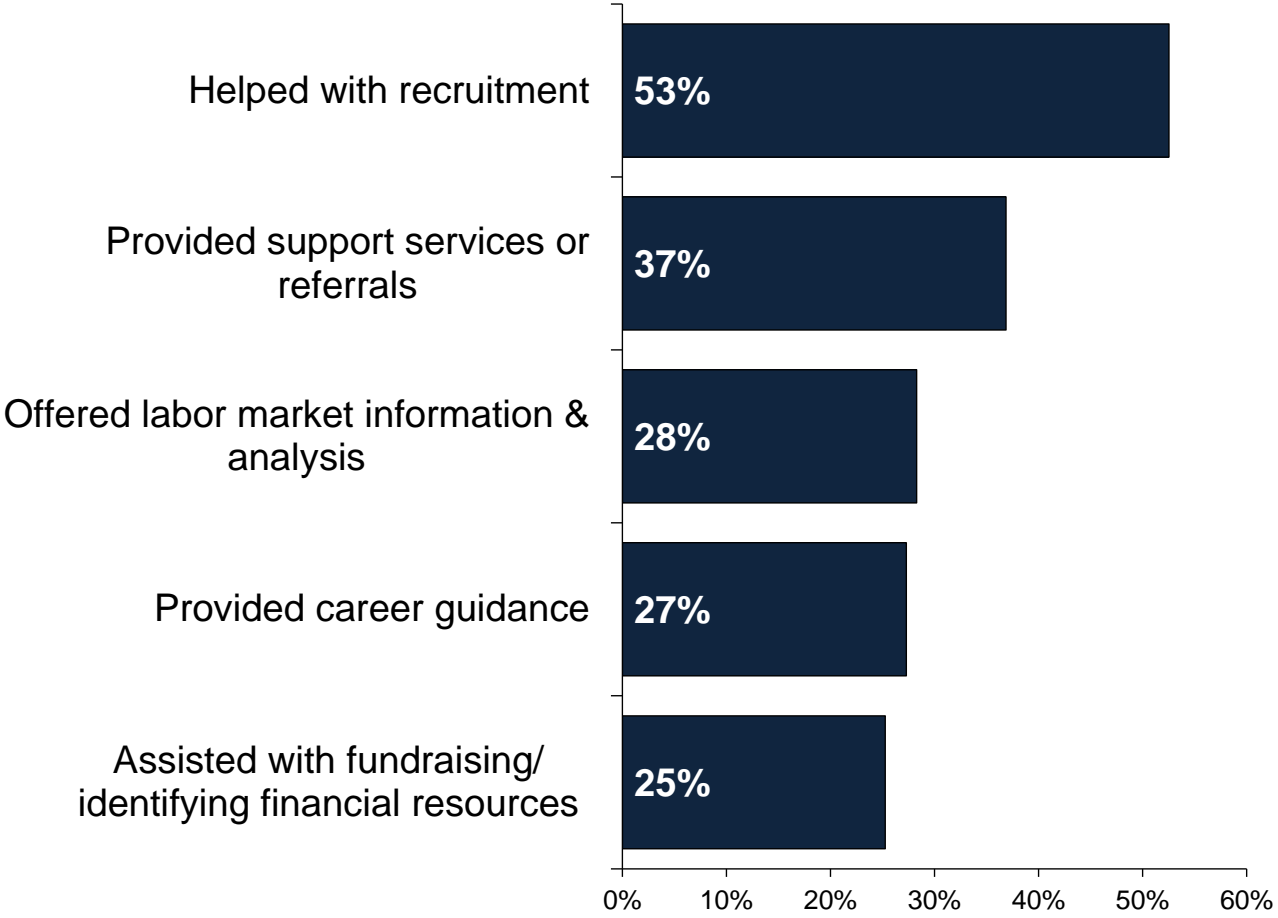
- Pretty much all students satisfied with the support & advice received

PARTNERSHIPS

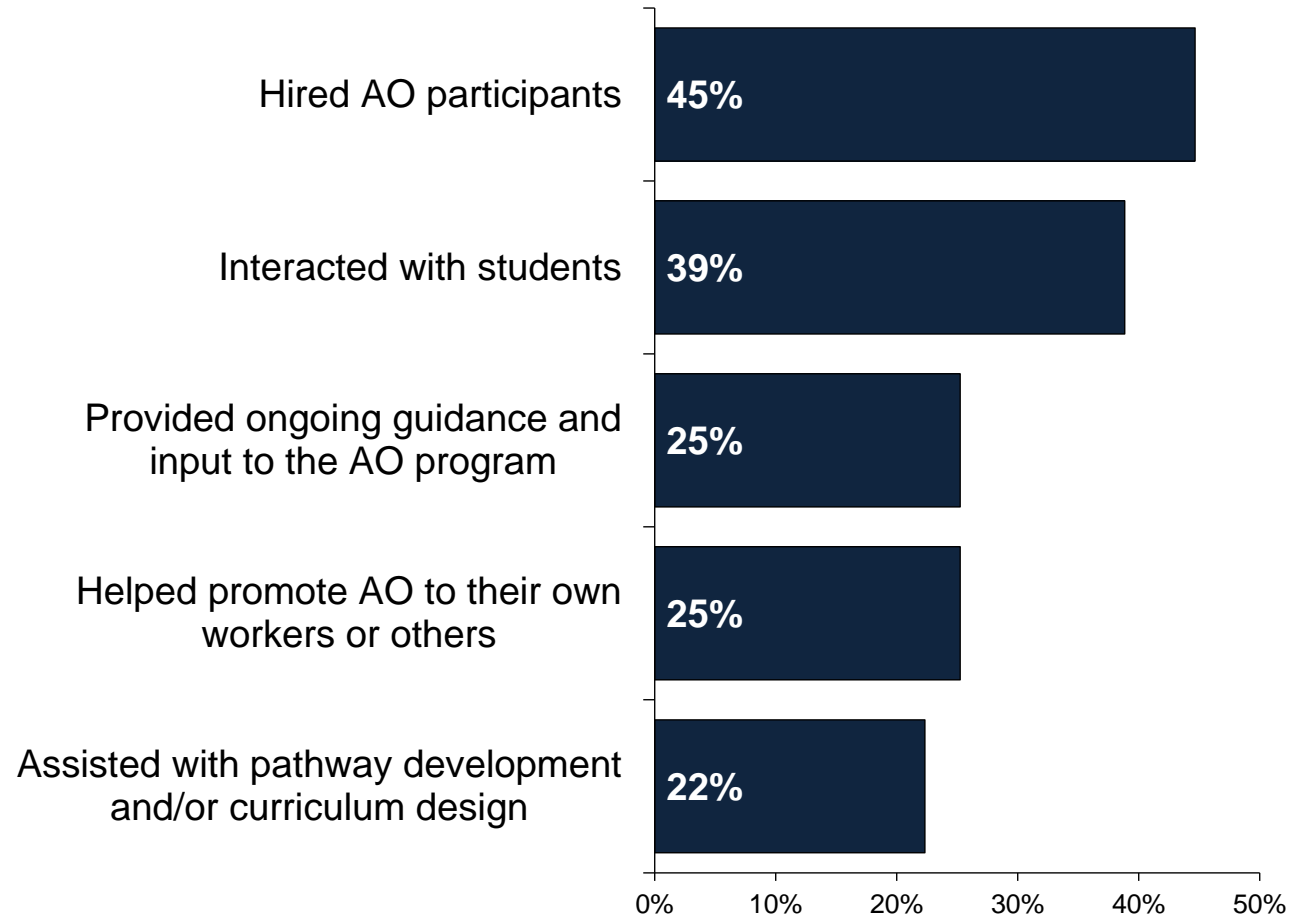
Colleges Have Built Partnerships with WIBs, CBOs, & Employers



Partners Helped with Recruitment & Provided Support Services



Employers Did More Than Hire AO Students



States have Forged Partnerships to Further AO Goals

- Rachel will describe some neat examples
- States also achieved policy changes:
 - GED Accelerator legislation in Kansas
 - Common core standards in Kentucky
 - Allowed Perkins funds to be used for AO in Illinois; will integrated AO structures into state strategic plan

Thank you!

Theresa Anderson

The Urban Institute

tanderson@urban.org

(202) 261-5847



Partnerships with TANF Agencies in Kansas & Arkansas

TWO APPROACHES TO SERVING LOW- INCOME STUDENTS

Complementary Goals

*TANF Statutory Purpose: End the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by **promoting job preparation, work, and marriage***

*AO Goal: enable more low-income adults to **complete postsecondary credentials** that are of value in the labor market and **attain family-supporting employment***

TANF funds can support:

- Career pathway partnership and curricula development
- Ongoing costs of providing education and training
- Ongoing support services

Participation in a career pathway program can reasonably be counted as either “vocational educational training” or “job skills training directly related to employment.”

- Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative
 - Designed to improve the **earnings** and **post-secondary education attainment** of Arkansas's **low-income TANF-eligible** adults.
 - provides funding for two-year colleges to develop career pathways programs that assist TANF-eligible adults to earn a marketable educational credential for immediate entry into a high demand occupation.
 - Emphasizes such program components as job readiness skills, basic academic skills preparation, remediation, and college credentials tied to high wage, high demand occupations.
 - Intensive student services are provided for students in the program



Career Pathways Eligibility and Objectives

- Eligibility:
 - Adult caretaker of child under 21
 - Income 250% of Federal Poverty Level
- Objectives:
 - Improve **work participation** rates
 - Enhance basic skills
 - Increase **attainment** of college-level certificates and associate degrees
 - Improve job retention, advancement and wage progression
 - Reduce welfare recidivism
 - **Increase self-sufficiency**



Removing Barriers to Persistence

- Tuition for college courses
- Book loan program
- Childcare assistance
- Gas money
- Tutoring
- Soft skill training
- Employability certification
- One on one counseling with a case manager.
- Job placement assistance
- Job search

- Students wanting to enroll in AO are sent to Career Pathways first prior to enrolling in Adult Education.
- College staff work with students to complete the CPI application and conduct a face-to-face interview.
- Student is given an individualized “To Do list:”
 - Visit financial aid
 - Complete FAFSA
 - Fill out college application
- Student enrolls in AO pathway and receives support through Career Pathways.

Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas is all about jobs, prosperity for individuals and economic growth for Kansas

- January 2012: Implementation of Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas begins
- Fall 2013: Partnership formed between the Kansas Board of Regents and Kansas Department for Children and Families (TANF agency)
- Common population
- Common agency goals – more Kansans employed in jobs that earn a family sustaining wage and less reliant on public assistance



Results of Partnership

- MOU between DCF and Regents supports AO-K enrolled TANF eligible students with tuition scholarships
- Must be co-enrolled in both adult education and career technical education programs in an AO-K career pathway
- Colleges reimbursed at full composite rate (includes student tuition, fees up to \$300, and college cost such as instructors, support costs and extraordinary costs)
- Colleges reimbursed at two points: on enrollment and at completion of the 12 credit hour pathway
- To date 64 TANF recipient adults are enrolled in AO-K career pathways and applications continue!

- Communication is essential:
 - DCF Central Office passes on information to local offices
 - Presentations to staff and administrators
 - Ensure that everyone understands the goals and rules of the scholarship
- Develop processes to streamline referrals from DCF to the college
 - Standardized referral form
 - Clear understanding of who is eligible
 - Make sure colleges understand how reimbursement works

SUPPORTING ADULT LEARNERS WITH COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT SUPPORTS





Why worry about student supports?

- Few ABE learners enter and complete post-secondary education
- 38% of enrollees in occupational certificate programs – and –
60% of enrollees in occupational Associate degree programs
...fail to earn a credential/degree within 6 years



Nontraditional Student Barriers





Components of Comprehensive Supports

- **Academic Advising:** to support academic success
- **Nonacademic Advising:** to foster students' sense of connection to the college, enhance self-confidence, ability to access resources and make decisions
- **Career Services:** to identify student goals, share information, ensure alignment of courses with goals and facilitate transition to employment
- **Financial Services:** to support financing of studies and build students' self-efficacy around managing finances
- **Social Services and Counseling:** to help manage personal lives to support persistence and completion

Questions to consider

- Who needs to be involved?
- What services should be mandatory vs. optional?
- How can services be seamlessly embedded into existing programs?
- Which services need to be available at what point during students' journey through college?
- Which service should a college provide vs. having a partner provide?



AO Support Service Options

- Career planning
- Case Management
- Childcare
- College navigation support
- Disability Services
- Financial Aid
- Financial aid advising and application support
- Job search assistance and job placement activities
- Transportation Assistance
- Tuition vouchers
- Tutoring or other academic support
- Veterans Services



Strategies & Recommendations

- Develop partnerships
- Coordinate service provision
- Ensure adequate resources

- Reduce barriers to access
- Make supports part of the program
- Strengthen nonacademic supports
- Foster creation of relationships

- Communicate the availability of services to faculty, staff and students

Promoting Persistence Through Comprehensive Supports



<http://www.jff.org/publications/promoting-persistence-through-comprehensive-supports>