Creating Inclusive Career Pathways: Leveraging the Resources of Workforce Partners

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TODAY’S SPEAKERS

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The National Center on Leadership for the Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities (LEAD) is a collaborative of disability, workforce and economic empowerment organizations led by National Disability Institute with funding from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, Grant No. #OD-23863-12-75-4-11.

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LEAD CENTER MISSION

To advance sustainable individual and systems level change that results in improved, competitive integrated employment and economic self-sufficiency outcomes for individuals across the spectrum of disability.

www.leadcenter.org
Nuts and Bolts of the DEI
Since 2010, the U.S Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded DEI grants to forty-nine projects in twenty-eight states.

DEI expands the capacity of American Job Centers (AJCs) to improve education, training, and employment outcomes of three population focus areas:

- 1) adults (ages 18 and older) with visible and non-visible disabilities, including those who have acquired disabilities in adulthood;
- 2) youth (ages 14-24) with visible and non-visible disabilities, including those who have chronic health conditions; and
- 3) individuals (ages 14 and older) with significant disabilities.

Starting in 2014, DEI grantees are increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities through a career pathways framework in support of WIOA.

- In partnership with vocational rehabilitation, community colleges and other education, human service, and business partners.

DEI is jointly funded by the DOL’s Employment and Training Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy.
A Visual DEI Landscape Map

Currently Active DEI States
Inactive DEI States

Guam

Virgin Islands

Puerto Rico
Historical DEI Projects

There have been seven (7) rounds of projects funded to date. **Key to population focus:** Adults with disabilities = A; Youth with disabilities = Y; Individuals with significant disabilities = S.

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DEI and WIOA Implementation

• DEI projects are vehicles for driving implementation of several of WIOA’s disability related provisions.
• Provide effective strategies for the public workforce system to promote competitive, integrated employment.
• Provides more and diversified job-driven training opportunities including work-based training approaches such as on-the-job training, summer youth employment, Registered Apprenticeships, internships, and other paid work experience.
• Helps to build effective community partnerships and collaborations across multiple service delivery systems that leverage public and private resources to improve services to individuals with disabilities.
• Promotes more active engagement with the business sector to identify the skills and support that workers with disabilities need and to better communicate these needs to the workforce system and its partners.
• DEI strengthens the connection between the AJCs and Vocational Rehabilitation state grantees through co-location, joint training, and other partnership activities.
INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS
WHAT ARE INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS?

- Programs and approaches designed to support people whose career options have been limited
- They are designed for people who may lack the academic and/or technical skills necessary to complete the credentialing requirements of many key high-demand high-growth career opportunities.
WHO BENEFITS FROM INCLUSIVE APPROACHES?

- People with disabilities, returning citizens, people without a high school diploma and/or little-to-no post-secondary education, English language learners, and others who might require additional support.

- Inclusive approaches bring together employers in key industries with community colleges, disability partners, government agencies, community partners, and social service agencies to develop and implement strategies for overcoming the workforce barriers.
WHAT ARE AMERICAN JOB CENTERS (AJCS)?

- AJCs, formerly called One-Stop Career Centers, are designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof.
- AJCs provide training, referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services.
- A job seeker can visit a center in-person or connect to the center's information remotely through a computer.
- Services are free.
- Staff are available to help people look for work, find training, and answer employment-related questions.
WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE FROM AN AJC?

Services vary by location but can include:

- Resource rooms with computers, printers, phones, internet access, resume-writing tools and fax machines available that people can use in their job search.
- Employment plan development
- Job training services
- Job search assistance
- Career counseling
- Practice interviewing
- Skills testing
- Labor market and employer information
- Employment Workshops
DOL’S COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION IN WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

- LEAD Center and Disability Employment Initiative
- Investment in Employment First through the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)
- Promotion of Customized Employment as a Universal Design
- Promotion of Universal Design Strategies and Practices
FOCUS OF DOL PROJECTS NATIONALLY

- Developing promising practices that leverage resources across organizations and systems.
- Developing promising practices in select states and local areas that are implementing universal design and career pathways initiatives with Federal funding.
- Funding training and technical assistance centers, like LEAD Center and DEI, that focus on strengthening employment outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities
- Supporting financial education and capability
- Supporting employer engagement
- Creation of a Knowledge Translation Consortium
Strategic Approaches to Promote Inclusive Career Pathways

• Developing collaborative partnerships at the state and local levels across multiple service delivery systems;

• Supporting job-driven approaches in career pathway systems and programs to equip individuals with disabilities with the skills, competencies, and credentials necessary to help them obtain in-demand jobs, increase earnings, and advance their careers;

• Promoting physical, programmatic and communication access for individuals with disabilities;
Strategic Approaches to Promote Inclusive Career Pathways, cont.

• Blending and braiding of funds and leveraging of resources to promote the participation of individuals with disabilities;

• Providing flexible approaches to designing and providing training, supportive services, and innovative workplace strategies; and

• Expanding the public workforce systems capacity to become an Employment Network for beneficiaries under the Social Security Administration’s Ticket to Work program.
INCLUSIVE CAREER PATHWAYS

Using the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways, identify promising practices for including people face barriers to employment in education, training, retraining, and advancement in systems that:

1. Build cross-agency partnerships
2. Identify industry sectors and engage employers
3. Design education and training programs
4. Identify funding needs and sources
5. Align policies and programs
6. Measure systems change and performance

CAREER PATHWAYS KEY ELEMENTS

Career Pathways: Six Key Elements

1) Build Cross-Agency Partnerships & Clarify Roles
2) Identify Sector or Industry & Engage Employers
3) Design Education & Training Programs
4) Identify Funding Needs & Sources
5) Align Policies & Programs
6) Measure System Change & Performance
What ideas do you have to increase access to career pathways for people with disabilities?”

Additional prompts focused the discussion on Successful Strategies, Barriers and Challenges, and Suggestions for Training and Technical Assistance.
TOP FIVE (5) IDEAS FROM THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE

1. Need to raise parental expectations that their children, as adults, will work in inclusive settings in jobs that capitalize on their strengths and interests

2. Need for reliable transportation, which can result in people in marketable skills missing out on opportunities for employment

3. Need for integrate and support people with disabilities into credentialing programs for high-demand high-growth industries

4. Importance of career assessments for youth that align with the “discovery” process

5. Importance of business/school partnerships so that youth can gain hands-on experiences, have business-based mentors, have opportunities for practice skills that will be needed to get and keep a job, and so on.
WIOA PARTNERS

WIOA Core Partners

- Title I: Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Workers
- Title II: Adult Education and Literacy
- Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act (Employment Services)
- Title IV: Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Title I

Career Pathways

WIOA Additional Partners/Combined Plan (may include one or more)

- Postsecondary Education (Carl D. Perkins Career & Technical Education)
- State Human Services Agency (TANF)
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)
- SNAP Employment & Training
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Program (Trade Act of 1974)
- Veterans Employment & Training
- Unemployment Compensation
- Older Worker Programs (Senior Community Service Program)
- HUD Employment & Training
- Community Service Block Grant
- Second Chance Act of 2007 (formerly incarcerated)
CAREER PATHWAYS PARTNERSHIP
WORKPLAN CONSIDERATIONS

ALIGN POLICIES AND PROGRAMS
INFUSE CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVES INTO STATE PLANS AND INTO GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL PLANS
ACCESS AND ALIGN RESOURCES
TARGET SECTORS

REVIEW AND REVISE CURRICULA
PROMOTE LINKAGES WITH EMPLOYERS
DEVELOP WORK-BASED LEARNING
DEVELOP AND FACILITATE MARKETING STRATEGIES

IDENTIFY NEW OR EMERGING FIELDS
BUILD POLICIES FOR BRIDGE PROGRAMS
PROVIDE STAFF DEVELOPMENT
DEVELOP CAREER SERVICES

PROMOTE ADVOCACY
IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE SUPPORT SERVICES
DEVELOP COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES
MEASURE SYSTEM CHANGE AND PERFORMANCE
DEI Career Pathways Readiness Assessment and Action Planning Tool

- The DEI version is adapted from Section Two of the Career Pathways Toolkit to meet the DEI focus to increase participation of individuals with disabilities into career pathways.

- It follows the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways Framework and includes a complementary “Next Steps Action Planning Tool” (adapted from the Career Pathways Toolkit) to help DEI grantees capture and carry out prioritized action steps.

- It incorporates into some of the elements references to disability specific needs for consideration to engage cross partnerships that include the disability focus.

https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/05/11/11/30/Career_Pathways_Readiness_Assessment_Tool_for_DEI

The Reference Guide was jointly developed by:

- Civil Rights Center (CRC)
- Employment and Training Administration (ETA)
- Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)
- With support and assistance from ODEP’s LEAD Center at National Disability Institute
Recurring Themes of Promising Practices

- Partnerships with diverse disability groups
- Resource mapping and coordination
- Disability knowledge of staff
- Training opportunities around disability
- National/State/Local disability resources
Recurring Themes of Promising Practices

- Interactive process and procedures for reasonable accommodations
- Legal practices around Asking, Telling, Using, and Storing of disability-related information
- Representation of people with disabilities in all AJC services and programs
- Referrals of people with disabilities to separate programs are *not* automatic
WHY IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN IMPORTANT TO THE WORKFORCE SYSTEM AND WHY DO THEY NEED PARTNERS?

Universal design makes services, jobs and learning accessible to all people, thereby serving the largest number of youth and adults, even without expertise in disability or knowledge of someone’s specific disability.

Section 188 regulations prohibit discrimination in registration, provision of assistance, benefits, services, and training including core, career, training and support services.
ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENT: GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY

- LEAD Center innovation that utilizes the Discovery process – the most widely embraced aspect of Customized Employment – in a small-group, facilitated model.

- AJCs partner with disability service providers and/or vocational rehabilitation serving working-age youth and adults with disabilities.

- AJCs often host Guided Group Discovery at AJC (similar to other workshops held at AJCs) but other organizations can host.
GUIDED GROUP DISCOVERY (CONT’D)

- AJC staff person and staff person from disability service provider **co-facilitate** the Guided Group Discovery process

- Disability service provider **offer supports to individuals** participating, as needed, both during the Guided Group Discovery sessions, in-between those sessions and for job development and/or job retention support

- **Resources of the AJC** and its partners (e.g., VR, community colleges, training providers, employer connections) can be **made available to individuals** to pursue the employment goal they identify through the Guided Group Discovery process
DEI Strategies

TIPS
HELPFUL
Partnership and Collaboration

Integrated Resource Team (IRT) Model
https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/10/25/13/18/Integrated_Resource_Team_Information_and_Resources
Brings together public and private sector representatives at the AJC/community level to integrate services and supports, blend and braid funds, and leverage resources across multiple service delivery components.

- IRT FAQ: breaks down the main tenets of the IRT model.
- IRT Information Brief -- Details how Disability Program Navigator (DPN) Initiative projects utilized this model to improve the employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities.
- WIOA IRT Flow Chart – Describes a “sample” flow through WIOA Title 1 intensive and training services.
- IRT Video - Portland, Oregon -- Highlights how the DPN initiative facilitated an IRT within a One-Stop Career Center with a job seeker who is deaf.
- Webinar Archive - How IRTs Achieved Outcomes - covered the IRT approach and how it assisted WIA program staff in serving and achieving employment outcomes and performance measures for populations that experience multiple challenges to employment. Implications for this practice under WIOA were also discussed.
DEI Business Engagement Community of Practice

https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/12/15/12/06/DEI_Business_Engagement_Community_of_Practice

Provides a platform that identifies DEI projects that have achieved successful outcomes integrating job seekers with disabilities in the AJCs efforts to engage business and industry partners.

- **Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Experiences (Adult)**
  - Using DEI funds to create unique paid work experiences – successful strategy in creating more effective career pathway training programs and outcomes for participants with disabilities.
  - While many job seekers are a fit for career pathways training programs, these paid work experiences provide opportunities based on special goals.
  - Partnering with organizations like the Massachusetts Business Leadership Network – support business engagement activities and create opportunities to develop relationships with business committed to employment of people with disabilities.
Business Engagement, cont.

• Alaska’s Multi-Faceted Business Engagement (Youth)
  – A collaboration with Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and other partners served as catalyst for a deeper engagement with the business community.
  – Their Transition Camps, career pathways, and youth work experience projects have engaged businesses to the point that they have become true partners in the effort to train and employ youth.
  – Business engagement efforts include; business mentors, work experience, internships, paid employment, and driving curriculum content within the career pathways programs.
  – With DVRs 15% set aside for in-school youth with disabilities and the DEI project’s focus on career pathways leading to sustainable employment for youth with disabilities, it set the stage to develop an approach that maximized the ability to reach youth where they are by coordinating services.
DEI Workforce EN Community of Practice
Workforce EN operations and practices that has led to meaningful and sustainable employment outcomes for ticket holders accessing their Workforce EN.

Minnesota Getting Ticket Holders into Career Pathways (Adult)
- Disability beneficiaries often require retraining to achieve self sufficiency
- Career pathways model is an effective strategy to support Workforce ENs.
- Increased Ticket Holders access to Career Pathways
- Career Pathway planning with all customers has been incorporated into the Individual Work Plan (IWP).
- Use the IRT model to incorporate career pathway planning of all partners.

Resources for EN Operations in the Workforce System
https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2016/03/29/14/43/LP_EN_Workforce_Resources_and_DEI_Sustainability
Contains links to tools and resources for Employment Network Operations in the public workforce system.
New CoP on Career Pathways

- Cross agency/cross projects collaboration: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)-funded Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) and the Job Driven Technical Assistance Center (J DVRTAC), the DEI Technical Assistance Center and Youth Technical Assistance Center (Y-TAC)

- This core team will lead the development and implementation of the CoP, which will be open to DEI project staff and VR leadership and counselors.

- Still in its infancy stages with the key players working together to build what this opportunity may look like. DEI projects will play a key role in the CoP helping to bring VR to the table to have a collaborative CoP across the two agencies.
WHAT CAN YOU DO?
WHAT CAN WORKFORCE SYSTEM PARTNERS DO TO CONTINUE TO IMPROVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?

CREATE PARTNERSHIPS!

› BUSINESSSES:
  › Create information and networking opportunities together
  › Collaborate to build the business case for hiring people with disabilities
  › Incorporate universal design strategies into recruitment, hiring and retention practices.

› JOB SEEKERS:
  › Pursue Customized Employment in the AJC and/or with partners.
  › During orientation for all customers in all programs, review service and support options that are available (through partnerships) and their rights to equal opportunity.

› STAFF:
  › Provide training and coaching for staff on promising practices, disability-specific topics, support available from partners, support for Integrated Resource Teams, assistive technology, accommodations, materials and approaches that address different learning styles and reading levels, etc.
WHAT ELSE CAN WORKFORCE PARTNERS DO?

- Identify partners who can support the inclusion of people with disabilities (e.g., AJCs, vocational rehabilitation, Centers for Independent Living, behavioral health organizations, developmental disabilities organization, special education partners, adult education and training programs, etc.)
- Ensure that all staff know the standards for physical and programmatic accessibility for AJCs and career pathways partners, and on accommodations so that people with disabilities can complete credentialing programs
- Partner with the workforce system and people with disabilities to inform standards for accessibility in career pathways programs
- Use disability data, which now must be reported to track progress, to look at performance outcomes over time to determine the effectiveness of AJCs, partners and career pathways programs
LEAD CENTER WEBSITE RESOURCES

What Disability Advocates Need to Know about WIOA Equal Opportunity Provisions

View this webinar archive to learn what disability advocates need to know about changes in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Acts (WIOA's) Equal Opportunity Provisions (Section 180).

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COMPREHENSIVE EMPLOYMENT FIRST RESOURCE SITE & MOST INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT SETTING SELF-ASSESSMENT

National Snapshot

2014 National Population: 318,857,056

2014 Number of people with disabilities (all disabilities, ages 18-64): 20,460,136

2014 Number of people with disabilities who are employed (all disabilities, ages 18-64): 7,030,317

2014 Percentage of working age people who are employed (all disabilities): 34.36%

Change from 2013 to 2014:
- 0.86%
- 0.68%
- 1.23%
- 0.55%
WEBSITE RESOURCES

- https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org – Workforce GPS site for Career Pathways Community of Practice and Toolkit
- www.leadcenter.org – LEAD Center website
- www.employmentfirst.leadcenter.org – Comprehensive Employment First website
WIOA FROM A DISABILITY PERSPECTIVE: KEY WEBINAR RESOURCES

Creating an Inclusive Workforce System: Implementing WIOA Section 188’s Equal Opportunity Provisions (January 2016)


What Disability Advocates Need to Know about New WIOA Equal Opportunity Provisions (February 2017)


Webinars on Guided Group Discovery, Cross System Collaboration, WIOA from a Disability Perspective and more at http://www.leadcenter.org./webinars
WorkforceGPS DEI Collection Site

https://dei.workforcegps.org/

Welcome to the DEI Grantee site

The Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) Grant helps expand the capacity of American Job Centers (AJCs) to improve employment outcomes of individuals with disabilities. This site provides tools and resources to all key stakeholders to provide effective and meaningful participation of individuals with disabilities within the workforce system.
WorkforceGPS Resources

- WorkforceGPS Communities of Practice
  https://www.workforcegps.org/communities
  • Career Pathways
  • Disability and Employment
  • Innovation and Opportunity Network

- WorkforceGPS Collection Site – DEI / Landing Pages (LP)
  https://dei.workforcegps.org/
  • DEI CoPs on Workforce EN and Business Engagement
  • Integrated Resource Team Information and Resources
  • Resources for Employment Network Operations in the Workforce System
  • Disability Resource Coordinators: Tools and Resources
Short, simple multiple choice questions on varied disability topics that provide information on employment and disability-related topics, with a resource link for further research.

- **Business 30-Second Training Series and Business Guide**
  Designed to educate businesses, hiring managers and supervisors about proven strategies and easy-to-use resources that can assist in retaining and accommodating existing employees who experience onset of a disability.

- **Mental Health Awareness 30-Second Training Series**
  Designed to increase awareness and promote knowledge around mental health. Support AJC staff and partners to support working with customers to raise awareness and point to some potential resources.

- **National Disability Employment Awareness Month**
  Designed to promote and increase awareness of the benefits and resources available to employers hiring and accommodating qualified job applicants and employees with disabilities.

[https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/05/09/14/47/LP-Disability_Employment_Initiative_30-Second_Training_Library](https://dei.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/05/09/14/47/LP-Disability_Employment_Initiative_30-Second_Training_Library)
The Playlists
Disability Resources for WIOA Practitioners

- Developed jointly by the U.S. Department of Education and DOL.
- High-quality service to individuals with disabilities is a critical goal of WIOA partners and practitioners. You may obtain a wealth of technical assistance resources to help you reach that goal with these ten playlists.
- Each playlist is a carefully selected set of links to resources such as toolkits, reports, online courses, and videos on a specific topic related to improving service to individuals with disabilities.
- The resources are intended for use by workforce development professionals, employers, rehabilitation services providers, adult educators, and other practitioners.

https://disability.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/02/15/22/14/The_Playlists_Disability_Resources_for_WIOA_Practitioners
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