

DWDAL Adult Education and Career Pathways Workgroup  
Meeting Notes  
May 29, 2015

**Attendees:** Alice Wirth, Mary Sloat, Evelyn Reed, Patricia Tyler, Michelle Frazier, Molly Dugan, Helen Coupe, Bayo Adetunji, Alice Wirth, Rodrigue Vital, Sue Page, Bruce England, Elizabeth Sinnes, Raiana Mearns, Barbara Denman, Nancy Hauswald. By phone: Todd Elliott, Ellen Payne, David Croghan, Monica Talley, Yvonne Iscandari

Presenters: Dan McDermott (Upper Shore WIB Director), Patty Silver (Chesapeake College, ESL Coordinator).

The meeting opened at 10:00 am with brief introductions. Patricia Tyler welcomed members. She reiterated the Work Group's mission of full integration of Adult Education with other core partners for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act and to create a career pathways system approach to workforce development in Maryland. Guest presenters Dan McDermott and Patty Silver were introduced.

**Presentation: Developing A Career Pathways Model on the Upper Shore**  
(see Power Point presentation attached)

MD was one of nine states and two tribal entities that received a Career Pathways Planning Grant through the Department of Labor (DOL) in fall 2010 focused on building partnerships at the state and local level. All funded programs participated in a Career Pathways Institute and received technical assistance from DOL. All participants developed a pilot project. The team, including the WIB, adult education, Chesapeake College, community agencies and key employer to participate in a technical assistance institute for developing Career Pathways pilots.

Dan McDermott distributed a checklist from Vice President Joe Biden's *READY TO WORK: JOB-DRIVEN TRAINING AND AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY*. Report. The Job- Driven Check list includes best practices, many of which may be in practice in local workforce investment areas and are also used in career pathways.

The career pathways model allows education and career training to be combined. Designing a model involves looking at how to support a person as they move along the pathway. The Upper Shore presentation reflected on the use of the Six Key Elements in building their career pathways framework.

**Building Cross Agency partnerships**

Although it has been a few years since the Upper Shore developed their pilot and funding is not readily available to continue this process, they are able to identify some positive changes that resulted from this work and the way they do business including joint registrations, a strong referral process between the programs, integrated basic education and skills training and bridge program models.

Patty Silver stated that the college developed a new awareness of the adult education population and has begun to do outreach to adult education as another high school.

Through a great deal of work they have been able to see positive changes. Where previously the English language learners often fell between the cracks, there is now a Developmental English Bridge Program for students to transition from ESL classes to credit English courses. The students enter as a cohort and the retention is at 100%.

Other partner agencies play an important role in bringing resources to students in pathways among them Family Centers (transportation), churches (scholarship source), school system, local government, and the Chesapeake multi-cultural center, El Puente. Libraries play a significant role in the process and are very interested in working with the program. Employers advised on the changing needs of the industry and advocated for students. Genesis HealthCare provides 1 Certified Nursing Assistant training.

### **Engage Employers and Conduct Gap Analysis**

The Upper Shore Region is spread among five counties. The population is small with few young people and a growing retirement community. The healthcare industry was targeted as the leading industry in the region, with solid growth potential. Progression along the pathway was also easy to identify.

In order to prove that healthcare was the best pathway for the pilot, it was essential to look at labor market data. Dan was able to do the labor shed analysis using a three prong process: 1) information from the Census Bureau, 2) the Maryland Workforce Exchange (real time data) and 3) employer validation to account for regional variations.

### **Clarifying roles and responsibilities**

The team spent many hours in a “windowless room” in the Department of Labor developing an understanding of partner services, partner “lingo”, what was important to each partner, what each could bring to the project and mastering areas that were non-negotiable. They also created a conflict resolution plan. This process was invaluable in designing the program and support services.

### **Design programs**

Members of the team were able to travel out of state to observe some model programs including Minnesota FastTRAC and Carreras en Salud in Chicago. One of the important takeaways was the importance of wrap around support services to ensure the participants’ persistence and success.

The program designed for the pilot was a Certified Nursing Assistant program for both native born students without a high school diploma and ESL students who needed English language acquisition. The pathway was not a straight path, rather a lattice composed of academic, employability and support services leading to credentials.

Other components included using Dependable Strengths training, the Integrating Career Awareness Curriculum, a pre-class session to help to prepare students for success in the program and follow-up services.

### **Identifying Funding Needs and Resources**

The federal government was unexpectedly required to pull the RFP for the Implementation part of the Career Pathways project. The team was able to move forward with the funds that they had saved in doing the Labor Shed Analysis and begin the first Certified Nursing Assistant program.

Funding is perhaps one of the more difficult areas in establishing a career pathways program and with dwindling funding allocations and the need to meet performance outcomes.

Patricia Tyler announced that the Ability to Benefit legislation now restores Pell grant eligibility for adult student who lack a high school credential who are enrolled in career pathways programs aligned with local labor markets. (See handout). It is important to note here that this will assist students who are pursuing a career pathway in credit bearing classes, not continuing education.

A career pathway in the culinary field has also been established in the Upper Shore Region. A modified HVAC pathway will be starting though they are challenged with the remote location of the training.

Discussion items following the presentation included the following:

- Some high demand industries have very poor earning potential (i.e. hospitality)
- The challenges of bringing together the funding with every penny having its own requirements
- The WIB is constrained by only being able to refer from the approved (MHEC) training list.
- If all money is spent on career pathways, we may serve fewer people. Career pathways are not for everyone. Adult education serves individuals whose literacy skills will need to be improved before they can qualify for training, undocumented immigrants who cannot be served by the WIB and parents of young children who will not be entering the work force.
- The WIOA legislation requires that adult education applications be reviewed by the WIB for alignment with the local plan. Plans are updated annually and can be viewed online. Local programs need to work together to build awareness of how the alignment should work.
- Differences in reporting requirements, need for better coordination.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon. The next scheduled meeting is on June 12<sup>th</sup>.