

# **Career Pathways Promising Practices 2013-2014**

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# Career Pathways

## More Promising Practices

### Student Success Center

### Community Learning Center

#### Background

The Community Learning Center (CLC) Student Success Center is a centralized resource center dedicated to serving the transitional needs of adult learners attending CLC. It provides opportunities for students to build community and connect with other CLC students and alumni and have easy access to various resources to support their transition and experience at CLC. The Center also provides a centralized physical location to foster social interactions. Overall, the CLC Student Success Center acts as a tool to connect CLC students and alumni to academic and employment opportunities to become economically self-sufficient and with the ability to compete in the global economy.

#### For additional information, please contact:

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**Community Learning Center**  
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#### What services does the CLC Student Success Center offer to CLC students?

Through individual appointments, career counseling, case management services and peer support, the CLC Student Success Center provides a centralized location for CLC students and alumni to discover a path to more meaningful and satisfying careers. The CLC Student Success Center is structured to assist CLC students from their initial orientation through their entire CLC experience, helping them make vital connections between educational, career, and life choices.

Student resources include:

• Resume building and cover letter writing	• Assistance with academic and employment applications
• Employment postings	• Computer access
• Student library	• Financial aid assistance
• Labor market information	• Alumni network

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on a variety of postsecondary/ vocational education and job training programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to free resources in Philadelphia through CLC partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Career workshops</li> </ul>	

**What was needed to establish the CLC Student Success Center?**

Multi- purpose space

Computer with internet access

Computer desk

Printer

Cork boards (for job postings and academic programs)

Table and chairs

**Purpose**

Akeesha Washington, Director of Student Services Program, explains that intent of developing the Student Success Center is to make these services prominent and visible so that students will be more proactive to seek out the career coaching services that are an integral component of CLC’s holistic approach to adult education. Please feel free to contact Akeesha Washington at [awashington@communitylearningcenter.org](mailto:awashington@communitylearningcenter.org).

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## More Promising Practices

### *Continuing Your Education Catalog*

#### The Literacy Center

#### **Background**

Case managers (CMs) at The Literacy Center were concerned that adult students lacked an awareness of the availability of postsecondary education and training opportunities in the Lehigh Valley. As a means to increase this awareness, the CMs decided to investigate opportunities to establish partnerships with postsecondary (pse) institutions.

#### **The *Continuing Your Education Catalog***

As a result of this need for additional, comprehensive information, and the desire to build and strengthen partnerships, CMs worked with PA CareerLink® staff to examine the approved providers list accessible on the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). This collaboration resulted in the identification of the primary pse/training providers. Additionally, through research and student interest, CMs identified eight pse/training providers and made initial contact with appropriate staff at each institution. The CMs soon discovered that each institution's contact person was identified by a different title. To begin building these partnerships, CMs worked with admission's representatives, workforce education coordinators, TAACCCT career coaches, community relations specialists, continuing education staff, and a director of postsecondary and workforce education. CMs found that key contact people for themselves and adult students are housed in different departments within the pse/training institutions.

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After initial contact was made, CMs made appointments to visit, tour, and learn about each institution's programs, certifications, degrees, entrance requirements, job placement rate, and available financial aid.

The *Continuing Your Education Catalog*, available for adult student use at The Literacy Center.

## **Results**

The key result of these meetings was that CMs were able to collect a multitude of resources pertaining to the opportunities available at each institution. The collected resources were compiled and the result was the *Continuing Your Education Catalog*. This resource is customized to include information gathered by the CMs from each pse/training providers. Adult students can access the *Continuing Your Education Catalog* when working with a one-on-one with a CM. While still a new resource for students at The Literacy Center, CMs plan to use the *Continuing Your Education Catalog* to include mock college fairs and scavenger hunts for pse information.

In addition to the catalog, case managers were excited to report that, as a result of the face-to-face meetings with pse/training provider staff, they now have a cross-referral process in place.

*Information provided by Stephanie Fisher, The Literacy Center*

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## More Promising Practices

### Jobs vs. Careers

### Community Learning Center

#### Background

Career exploration activities are a springboard to the Community Learning Center's (CLC) holistic approach to adult education. Students enrolled in classes at CLC are continuously participating in career awareness and planning activities—from orientation through transitional planning—in CLC's Student Success Center. A key element along the continuum is emphasis on students' understanding of the differences between jobs and careers.

#### Content and Instruction

Students are introduced to the differences through instructor-led discussions and activities. Informational packets are provided that conveniently outline the following:

- *Jobs vs. Career*
- *What is a Career?*
- *Make a Career Plan*
- *What is a Career Path?*
- *Education Pays*

#### For additional information, please contact:

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Structured lesson plans with specific objectives help expand these topics. Examples of student objectives include:

- *Understand and differentiate between jobs and careers*
- *Begin to process and plan a personal career path*
- *Understand how career clusters can assist with planning a career path*
- *Explain the impact of education on income*
- *Identify education needed to pursue a personal career path*

# Career Pathways

## More Promising Practices

### Partnerships

#### Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9

##### Background

Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9 offers adult education services in the North Central Workforce Investment Area. Classes are provided in the Elk, McKean and Potter PA CareerLink® sites, which help to create organic workforce development partnerships. Students served by IU 9 typically transition to employment rather than postsecondary Education. Staff were particularly interested in building partnerships with key employers in the region as they continued to strengthen their successful relationships with other workforce development partners, primarily PA CareerLink®.

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##### Career Mapping Meeting

IU 9 staff identified Truck-Lite, a major employer in Coudersport, as a potential partner. Staff worked with human resources personnel from the company and PA CareerLink® staff to develop career maps for entry level jobs at the company. Career Pathways staff facilitated a meeting with these partners, which resulted in a detailed career pathways map highlighting hiring requirements, job responsibilities and career paths for entry-level employees.

##### Outcomes

This collaborative effort resulted in the creation of a tool which will be used by all three partners. The employer now has a visual representation of available pathways for workers which PA CareerLink® and IU staff will both use with job seekers and students to show opportunities for career awareness and employment.

# Career Pathways

## More Promising Practices

### Supporting Transitions

#### Employment and Training, Inc.

Employment and Training, Inc. has, this year, successfully transitioned fifteen students to post-secondary programs; and three more adult learners are working with Workforce Investment counselors to obtain funding so that they can enroll in a post-secondary program. To help students make these transitions, Employment and Training, Inc. adult education staff:

- **Link** students to
  - Schools,
  - Workforce Investment Counselors,
  - Funding.
- **Promote** the idea of a SHARED student or client with other organizations.
- **Demonstrate** the importance of other organizations role in supporting your student (attend meetings, observe practices and procedures, invite to observe your processes).
- **Participate** in PA CareerLink® site staff meetings so that PA CareerLink® site staff are familiar with adult educators and adult educators know the “go-to” people.
- **Become familiar with local post-secondary educational agencies** by
  - Exploring services,
  - Attending orientations,
  - Observing admittance processes,
  - Observing counseling process,
  - Learning about funding options.

For additional information, please contact:

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Other program features include:

- Strong **administrator support**,
- A **two-way referral** process between the PA CareerLink® site and the Adult Education agency so that students can easily and seamlessly receive the services and educational support that they need.

The Employment and Training, Inc. adult education administrator and teachers also:

- Hold **bi-monthly meetings** with Workforce Investment counselors to ensure that communication about students is up to date and solutions and services can be jointly planned for the learner,
- Participate on **local school advisory boards**,
- **Meet** and **cultivate relationships** with local post-secondary school administrators and staff,
- **Tour** local post-secondary schools.

Next Steps: Training and Employment, Inc. is exploring ways to ensure that students who have transitioned to post-secondary programs are successful. Staff are:

- **Checking in** with students to see how they are feeling about their schooling,
- **Talking** to students about their academic life and success,
- **Helping students access** services to support their academic and personal success.