

Onondaga Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project at Onondaga Community College



Welcome & Introductions

Introduce OPC

- Rebecca Hoda-Kearse
- William Myhill



Introduce CoP

- Michael Morris
- Meera Adya



Federal Government Priorities

- Expand capacity of community college to respond to workforce needs
- Prepare youth with disabilities with the necessary skills for jobs in high-growth, high-demand industries
- Promote community-wide partnerships of institutions of higher education, workforce partners, youth-serving agencies, and organizations serving individuals with disabilities
- Involve local employers in curriculum design and development; use industry-recognized credentials to provide participants with needed skills
- Utilize ODEP's Guideposts for Success as project framework

Onondaga Pathways to Careers

- Partnership between Onondaga Community College (OCC), Syracuse University (SU), Syracuse City School District (SCSD), public workforce system, regional economic development, disability service agents
- Demonstration project to determine what works to help young people with disabilities acquire the skills, degrees, and credentials for high-wage, high-skills employment, so that these effective practices can be replicated at community college nationwide (1 of 2 funded sites)

A Transformational Approach

- Align IEP transition planning with programs and services that support access, completion, and subsequent employment into 4 OPC educational and employment pathways in priority high-growth industries identified by the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council:
 - Advanced Manufacturing/Mechanical Technology
 - Health Information Technology
 - Computer Information Systems
 - Electrical Technology

5 Central Goals

1. **Capacity-building:** develop and implement coordinated, comprehensive, sustainable system of support that promotes access, success, and career entry for individuals with disabilities
2. **Career exploration and educational access:** increase access and enrollment among youth and young adults with disabilities into 4 targeted programs
3. **Educational attainment:** increase persistence and completion rates
4. **Employment:** increase living-wage employment
5. **Dissemination:** to enable other community colleges to adopt the OPC model

Transition Planning and Support

- **Challenges**

- Only 27% of students with disabilities go on to college, compared to 68% of those without
- Lack of information about college admissions and financial aid processes
- Lack of clarity about different levels of support from secondary to postsecondary

- **What we will do**

- Syracuse City School District partnership: career awareness, IEP transition planning, early awareness of OPC employment pathways
- Provide career awareness activities in high schools, support the transition planning process, assist with financial aid application, orientation for all OPC students



Educational Access and Success

- **Challenges**

- Supports for psychosocial adjustment, academic development, self-advocacy
- Lack of clarity about different levels of support from secondary to postsecondary

- **What we will do**

- Provide career assessments, educational planning, financial literacy, mandatory advisement, work-based learning, tutoring, adaptive technology, leadership development, wraparound services

Employment Pathways

- **Challenges**

- Students often enter college with undefined career goals
- Students with disabilities are underrepresented in career and technical education programs at OCC

- **What we will do**

- Early exposure to technical programs through concurrent enrollment courses, Early College partnership with SCSD, and a new school for technology at SCSD.
- Employer-based curriculum development
- Articulation agreements with local BOCES and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and over 50 colleges and universities

Capacity Building

- Coordinated and integrated approach with all community and workforce partners; cross-institutional leadership team to mitigate administrative barriers and leverage existing infrastructure
- Community of Practice: other community colleges will be recruited to participate in and contribute to virtual meetings for collaboration and resource sharing to improve education and employment pathways for youth and young adults with disabilities
- Professional development for inclusive pedagogy and universal design, provided for educational agencies, service providers, and employers

OPC Year 1 Key Activities

- Building community partner relationships
- Developing outreach & recruitment resources and activities
- Surveying campus need for assistive technology and barrier removal
- Enrolling OPC Students
- Preparing supplemental hands-on training
- Providing individualized case management

OPC Year 1 Key Challenges

- Establishing formal agreements with partners
- Identifying data sources, needs, and tools for project evaluation
- Recruiting students with disabilities

OPC's Community of Practice

At this meeting, we are officially announcing the kickoff to our Community of Practice (CoP):

a capacity-enhancing collaboration tool to assist dissemination of project learning, learn from others, and share practices to achieve common goals of enhanced inclusion of students with disabilities in education and training programs that lead to career pathways in high growth industries.

The OPC project members of the CoP will openly discuss and share our strategies, interventions and learning acquired through this project to stimulate productive discussions of challenges of serving this population.

Others Joining Us

1. NY Community Colleges & CUNY Institutions
2. Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
3. Kentucky VR
4. Nebraska VR
5. DEI TA Representatives



Six Key Elements of Career Pathways

1. Build cross-agency partnerships
2. Identify industry sectors and engage employers
3. Design inclusive education and training programs
4. Identify funding needs and resources
5. Align policies and programs for effective and meaningful participation of individuals with disabilities
6. Measure systems change and performance

Features of Career Pathways

- Multiple entry points
- Understanding customer flow
- Building relationships
 - Employer
 - Workforce development system
 - Community college
 - VR
 - Other supports
- Assessment
- Career Navigation
- Align with skill needs of industry
- Align support resources for student with a disability



Needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions



Career Pathway Definition

- a) Aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved
- b) Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or post-secondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the Act of August 16, 1937
- c) Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals

Career Pathway Definition (part 2)

- d) Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
- e) Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable

Career Pathway Definition (Part 3)

- f) Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential
- g) Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster

CoP Topics

- Cross Agency Partner Development
 - Employers
 - Workforce Development Boards
 - Education and Training Providers
 - Other Community Partners
 - Other Service Delivery Systems
- Leveraging and Coordinating Public and Private Resources
 - Resource Mapping
- Employer Engagement
 - Identification of skill competencies in high demand jobs and training needs



CoP Topics (cont.)

- Design Education and Training programs
 - Develop and validate career ladders
 - Flexible delivery methods
 - Reasonable accommodations
- Refining Policy and Programs
- Performance Measurement

CoP

- Peer Learning
- Group Problem Solving
- Identification of Promising Strategies
- Scalability and Sustainability



Your Projects - Discussion

- What has been easiest to implement so far?
- What has been most challenging to implement so far?

CoP Next Steps

- Identify members of CoP.
- Conduct brief needs assessment of members to identify key issues for initial focus of group.
- Hold meeting to discuss findings of needs assessment, initial findings of OPC project evaluation, and introduce the GVRA project.

Next steps.

- Please send Meera (madya@syr.edu) recommendations for additional members, especially students and employers.
- Please connect us to any people we should be including in the project.
- Please send us (or point Meera in the direction of) any resources you have or know about that you think we should use.