# Onondaga Pathways to Careers Demonstration Project at Onondaga Community College

# Welcome & Introductions

## Discuss OPC Model

- Rebecca Hoda-Kearse
- William Myhill

## Facilitate Discussion

- Michael Morris
- Meera Adya

# Others Joining Us

1. NY Community Colleges & CUNY Institutions
2. Georgia VR
3. Kentucky VR
4. Nebraska VR
5. Virginia VR
6. DEI TA Representatives
7. DEI Projects

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# Review: OPC Impetus & Model

- Federal Priority:
  - 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

- OPC Model:
  - Partnership between Onondaga Community College (OCC), Syracuse University (SU), Syracuse City School District (SCSD), public workforce system, regional economic development, disability service agents

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# 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:
    - 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
    - Early exposure to technical programs through concurrent enrollment courses, Early College partnership with SCSD, and a new school for technology at SCSD.

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# Syracuse City School District

- Primary school-based partnership/recruiting pipeline

- Formal agreement defining terms of partnership that assist in key OPC programmatic elements, including:

  - Designate an administrator to participate in planning meetings, identify gaps, and contribute to the development and design of the program;

  - Disseminate information and resources to teachers, counselors, students with disabilities, and parents;

  - Promote opportunities for students to participate in career exploration and work-based learning opportunities that are developed through the program;

  - Encourage teachers, counselors, parents, and students to participate in workshops and information sessions and to build career planning and work-based learning activities into their Individual Education and Transition Plans;

  - Work with partners to coordinate participation of students in career exploration and educational planning events supported through the project;

  - Participate in evaluation activities to support continuous improvement of programs.

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# What is the OPC Scholars Program?

A program offered by Onondaga Pathways to Careers at Onondaga Community College. The OPC Scholars Program is for current Syracuse City high school seniors with disabilities who are ready to explore their opportunities for the future.

Do you have **technology-related skills** you want to build on?

Would you like the chance to **explore** or even **shadow** a local professional in a **career field that interests you?**

Need help with your **college applications?**

Does the chance to **join** other academically and career-minded **SCSD seniors** in strengthening and exploring opportunities that **promote success** appeal to you?

How about year-long opportunities to establish new **friendships** and **enjoy** Syracuse's social and cultural scene together?

...then the **OPC Scholars** program is for you.

# Be Empowered.
# Be an OPC Scholar!

**Email us at opcscholars@sunyocc.edu or visit the Scholars page at SUNYOCC.EDU/OPC (315) 498-2945**

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**4585 West Seneca Turnpike Syracuse, NY 13215**

## Onondaga Pathways to Careers
*for young people with disabilities*

### Syracuse City School District

## Scholars Program

*Opportunity + Performance = Confidence*

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# Program Components

**COLLEGE PREP:**
- Learn about college admission processes (application, course, advising)
- Learn new adaptive technology tools
- College entrance exam prep
- Financial Aid 101

**CAREER 101:**
- Job shadowing and community service
- Company site visits
- Employability skills

**CULTURAL ENRICHMENT:**
- Special Events
- Conferences

**LIFELONG LEARNING SKILLS:**
- Budgeting
- Financial planning
- Self-Advocacy
- Disability 101

## TO BE ELIGIBLE, YOU MUST:

- Be a high school senior and on track to earn a high school diploma
- Be in good academic standing
- Provide two letters of recommendation from school staff
- Have a documented disability
- Have access to transportation to attend campus and community-based workshops/events
- Be willing to develop and model socially-responsible behavior across settings
- Have a satisfactory record of school attendance
- Have an interest in exploring any of the careers described in this brochure

# Examples of OPC Scholar CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:



- Computer Programmer
- Scientific Programmer
- Business Programmer
- Network Support Provider
- Technical Support Provider
- Computer Forensics Investigator
- Web Designer
- Webmaster
- Web Maintenance Provider
- Health Information Technician
- Electrical Engineer
- Electrical Technician
- CAD Drafter
- CAD Designer
- Test Control Technician
- Quality Control Technician
- Mechanical Lab Technician
- Materials Lab Technician
- Machinist
- Machine Operator
- Tool & Die Maker
- Machine Setter



## BEFORE YOU DECIDE...

Use the self-assessing questions below to help determine how well your skills and interests align with these careers.

- ☐ Do you enjoy analyzing situations, organizing information and tracking details?
- ☐ Are you a hands-on person?
- ☐ Do you enjoy learning how things work?
- ☐ Are you a natural at fixing gadgets?
- ☐ Do you like to keep up with technology?
- ☐ Do you enjoy working independently?
- ☐ Do you have a talent for creating designs?
- ☐ Do you enjoy bringing ideas to life and reaching solutions?

If you checked any of these boxes, consider becoming an OPC Scholar.

# Additional partnership responsibilities:

- Establish a working group comprised of special education faculty representative of each of the SCSD high schools and Career & Technical Education programs, the SCSD transition coordinators, and representative secondary guidance counselors, whose charge it will be:

- to attend OPC professional development at OCC in summer 2015;

- to collaborate with representative special education faculty and guidance counselors from OCM-BOCES, and from other area secondary education programs;

- and in concert with OPC staff and other representative faculty/staff, to develop a coordinated outreach strategy to inform families of students with disabilities, students with IEPs or 504 plans, and the secondary faculty and staff in the Syracuse area about OPC opportunities for career exploration;

- Develop, in concert with OPC staff and other representative faculty/staff, model transition goals and objectives, which can be adapted and incorporated into IEPs and 504 plans for students (ages 14 and older) who wish to explore technology-related careers.

- Provide access and support for OPC staff to conduct career exploration activities during SCSD middle school summer school).

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# Other Educational Partners:

- OCM-BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) provides continuing training and education programs, serves high schools in three counties, and serves as referral source.

- Syracuse Educational Opportunity Center provides community-based academic and workforce development programs to adult learners and serves as referral source.

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# VR Agency: Access-VR

- OPC partner and member of leadership team

- Referral to OCC and other educational institutions part of their ongoing efforts

- Supported OPC program development and refinement and continue to support recruitment and ongoing services to clients

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# AJC/Workforce System: Pipeline in Development

- In discussion with local AJC and OPC partner, became apparent that formal referral is not typical.

- "Options" are presented to clients who pursue on their own

- BUT, recently new certificate programs have developed processes for AJC to identify likely candidates and now in discussion to adapt this process for OPC

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# Disability services organizations

- Local disability services organizations receive recruitment materials and serve as referral sources, as well as provide wrap-around services and support as needed.

- Sample elements of partnership:
  - Designate staff member to serve on OPC Advisory Board.
  - Provide OPC program information & brochures to eligible youth and families.
  - When at community outreach events such as transition & resource fairs, distribute OPC materials.
  - Provide quarterly report of # of events attended, brochures distributed, and families referred.
  - Provide feedback on program materials.

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# OPC Recruitment Status & Challenges

- 36 students from 1/1/16 to 3/31/16

- Challenges:
    - Generally: dropout rate for community colleges in general is high and this impacts OPC program too – particularly for our program, poverty and food insecurity are significant problems
    - Lesson learned: ABSOLUTELY need a dedicated recruited specialist from day one of program starting.
    - Name recognition and awareness takes a while to build.

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# Georgia E³: Explore, Engage, Employ

- Raised a key issue for them:  targeting out of school youth.

- Possible strategies:
    - Reach out to a broad base of community organizations
    - Have school counselors identify students considering dropping out to discuss options and agree to contact after they drop out
    - Allow enrollment through website
    - Facilitate client enrollment into other community agency programs through partnerships and automatic enrollment.

- Other suggestions?

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# Other CoP Members:

- What are your recruitment strategies?

- What are your recruitment challenges?

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# New Members & Resources Are Welcome!

- Please send Meera ([madya@syr.edu](mailto: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.

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# Next Meeting: Date & Topic

- Our meeting schedule will be every 2 months, the 4th Thursday of the month, from 12:00-1:00 EST.
  - So, our next meeting is July 28, 2016, Noon EST

- Topics to be addressed?

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