Advancing WIOA for Individuals Facing Barriers to Employment: Perspectives on State & Local Planning

#WIOAplanning
March 3, 2016
1pm to 2:30pm CT
This webinar will begin in 15 minutes.

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Advancing WIOA for Individuals Facing Barriers to Employment: Perspectives on State & Local Planning

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March 3, 2016
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Housekeeping

• Use the Questions/Chat box to send a question.
• Q & A session @ the end of the webinar.
• Video & slides will be made available on our website.
• Tweet with us!

#WIOAplanning
Melissa Young, National Initiatives Director
National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity

We are dedicated to ending chronic unemployment & poverty.

We work at the intersection of practice, policy, and research to catalyze change that is practical, informed by evidence and grounded in experience.
Goals of the public workforce system under WIOA:

Expand access to employment, training and support services for low income individuals and jobseekers facing barriers to employment.
Advancing **Access to Workforce Services through WIOA** Requires Many Stakeholders

Everyone has a role to play in WIOA Planning & Implementation. What’s yours?

- Advocates
- Community-Based Service Providers
- Public System Leaders
- Philanthropy
- Researchers

WIOA Planning & Implementation Toolkit

Shows how you can help ensure WIOA increases employment & economic opportunity for jobseekers facing barriers to employment.

See it all here: bit.ly/WIOAtoolkit
Today’s Speakers

**Melissa Young**
National Initiatives Director
*Heartland Alliance’s National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity*

**Rebecca Allen**
Program Officer
*Melville Charitable Trust*

**Erika Rincon Whitcomb**
Senior Associate
*Policy Link*

**Brian Paulson**
Program Officer
*Pohlad Foundation*

**Chaer Robert**
Manager of Family Economic Security Program
*Colorado Center on Law and Policy*

**Matt Joyce**
Director of Strategic Partnerships
*Center for Employment Opportunities*
Erika Rincon Whitcomb, Senior Associate
WIOA Implementation in California

Presented by Erika Rincón Whitcomb, PolicyLink
About PolicyLink and the Alliance for Boys and Men of Color

Visit us online: policylink.org and allianceforbmcoc.org
Stakeholder Involvement in State WIOA Planning Process

- WIOA Implementation Workgroup Meetings
- Preliminary Comments
- Request to Extend Public Comment Deadline
- Roadshow Meeting
- Public Comment Letter
California’s Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan

Goal: “Between 2017 and 2027, the state will produce a million “middle-skill” industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials”.

Policy Objectives:

• Foster demand driven skills attainment
• Enable upward mobility for all Californians
• Align, coordinate, and integrate programs and services
Strengthening Equity in California’s WIOA Plan

- Ensure youth participation at state and regional level
- Promote strategies to reduce racial disparities in employment and foster job attainment
- Disaggregate state and regional assessment and performance data
- Address CA’s high school drop out rate
- Expand definition of “out of school youth”
- Integrate complementary anti-poverty and education programs
- Emphasize federal priority of service requirement
Moving Forward

• Review Final Plan

• Regional Advocacy

• Connect with Local Partners

• AB 2642 (Garcia) Breaking Barriers to Employment

• Investment in Training and Job Placement for Re-entry Populations
Strategies for Involvement

• Strong partnerships

• Facilitate meetings with staff/board members

• Strengthen public participation process

• Regional Engagement

• Legislative Advocacy
Thank you!

Erika Rincón Whitcomb
PolicyLink
ewhitcomb@policylink.org
Chaer Robert, Manager of Family Economic Security Program
What has CCLP done?

1. CCLP coordinated **Skills2Compete Colorado** for 4 years. A multi sector policy advocacy coalition affiliated with National Skills Coalition, past work included creating and passing legislation and policy change on Skills for Jobs Act Report, IBEST, funding Adult Education, and adopting all 3 high school equivalency tests.

2. S2C set weighing in on **WIOA implementation** as their #1 goal. Collectively, we shared updates on what was happening each month.

3. S2C frequently contacted the staff person assigned to put together the **WIOA state plan**. We signed up to get updates, invited him to present to our coalition, attend regional briefing, etc.

4. S2C functioned as one of the **focus groups** giving input into the plan.

5. When the draft plan came out, we asked for different members to read different chapters. S2C then had a group discussion at our meeting to decide what comments to include. S2C also convened a separate **roundtable discussion to develop comments** on the eligible provider training list, and developed a separate set of comments about it.

6. S2C testified at the **public hearing** on the draft plan.

7. Attended innumerable **WIOA webinars**, including those from Center on Law and Social Policy (CLASP), National Skills Coalition and other.

8. Our work as **S2C coordinator** gave CCLP a base of understanding and involvement in WIOA policy.

9. S2C encouraged a broad range of groups to **submit their own comments**, providing the link and background.

10. **CCLP also hosted a roundtable** for the All Families Deserve a Chance (AFDC) Coalition to gather input for a set of **comments regarding serving single parents** through WIOA.
What has CCLP done regarding serving homeless Coloradans through WIOA?

1. CCLP applied for and received grant funding to recruit and hire a dedicated person for advocacy work regarding homeless Coloradans and WIOA. We did a very public announcement via email to 3000 and featured the new initiative in our annual policy preview. We hired Laura Ware in mid February.

2. We read the Heartland Alliance WIOA toolkit, and have used it as a roadmap for our project.

3. We held two roundtable discussions to gather input into the WIOA Plan on serving Coloradans who have experience homelessness.

4. We met with Metro Denver Homeless Initiative Employment Subcommittee to get input on suggested comments. We also provided the link and information for organizations to submit their own comments.

4. We made comments at the WIOA public hearing, submitted comments in writing through official channels and shared a copy of the comments widely.

5. Chaer and Laura presented at a workforce directors meeting on the project and began to identify both what actions workforce centers were taking as well as how they saw the challenges. We shared copies of our comments on the state WIOA plan, and “It Takes a Community” from toolkit.

6. Laura is identifying opportunities for follow up, both with input into regional and local plans, proposed outcome measures and with resources and best practices.
What can you do?

1. **Insert yourself!** Be pleasantly, obnoxiously persistent.
2. **Reach out.** Contact your local workforce center, or Vocational Rehabilitation, or Adult Education or state officials. Ask to have a conversation, a presentation, etc. The new WIOA required prioritization of service for people with barriers to employment requirement gives you reason to ask how they plan to operationalize that.
3. **Speak up or weigh in on every opportunity** - e.g. public hearing, public comment process, etc. Encourage peers to weigh in by providing a shortcut to the process.
4. Host a roundtable for programs who serve those who are homeless. **Sharing perspectives** can be validating and can help define needed outcomes. Some will share information among peers that they are reticent sharing directly. Develop a network of organizations who share your concerns. A broad survey can test and document concerns.
5. **Broaden your base** - Are there other coalitions who are also involved in policy advocacy for overlapping populations? Who is advocating for employment opportunities for Opportunity Youth, people with disabilities, single moms, formerly incarcerated, etc.
6. **Identify current experiences and current practices.** Are there best practices to share? Are there specific barriers clients experience? Collect data- See *Community Asset Mapping* to start.
7. **Develop relationships.** Ask how you can be helpful to WIOA funded programs, even while you identify how they can be helpful to you and your participants.
8. **Formalize relationships** through MOUs or institutionalized practice. Formalized relationships may outlast staff changes.
Rebecca Allen, Program Officer

MELVILLE CHARITABLE TRUST

#WIOAplanning
Brian Paulson, Program Officer
Matt Joyce, Director of Strategic Partnerships
WOIA Engagement and Learnings to-date
The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) is dedicated to providing immediate, effective and comprehensive employment services to men and women with recent criminal convictions. Our highly structured and tightly supervised programs help participants regain the skills and confidence needed for successful transitions to stable, productive lives.

CEO’s vision is that anyone with a recent criminal history who wants to work has the preparation and support needed to find a job and to stay connected to the labor force.
CEO’s Program Model

1. **RECRUITMENT**
   - Participants attend a 4-day life skills education course

2. **LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION**
   - All Life Skills Education graduates are placed into transitional employment on CEO work crews

3. **TRANSITIONAL EMPLOYMENT**
   - Participants are placed into unsubsidized employment

4. **JOB COACHING**
   - Preparing “Job Start Ready” and eligible for placement services

5. **JOB DEVELOPMENT/PLACEMENT**
   - Matches participant with potential employment opportunities

6. **RETENTION SERVICES**
   - 12 months of ongoing support after placement including monetary incentives (Rapid Rewards)
CEO’s National Offices

![Map showing CEO’s National Offices in the United States with highlighted current states and cities.]

- Current States
- Current Cities
CEO’s WOIA Engagement to-date

- Current support in San Bernardino through the California WIB Accelerator

- Participated in public comment from California Boys and Men of Color Alliance

- Written into draft State guidance in Pennsylvania resulting from our collaboration with the PA Dept of Corrections

- Submitted public comment in New York focused on specific support for transitional jobs and men and women with convictions
CEOs’ WOIA Advocacy: Celebrate positive steps

- Inclusion of formerly incarcerated individuals among the prioritized population of people with high barriers to employment
- An emphasis on and dedicated funding for programs serving youth and young adults
- Dedicated funding to provide young adults with high quality work experience
- Dedicated funding for transitional work opportunities for priority populations
- Inclusion of transitional work programming on the list of eligible training opportunities and a prioritization of those training opportunities to serve populations with barriers to employment
CEO’s WOIA Advocacy: Push for commitments & definition

❖ Specific funding guidance to support formerly incarcerated individuals

❖ Looser wage expectations for the highest risk populations

❖ Definition of “Transitional Jobs” as ensure high quality experiences for participants (per federal WOIA language)

❖ Specific training funds dedicated to transitional work
CEO’s Key Learnings

❖ Important to encourage meaningful definition (training, transitional work, barriers)

❖ Opportunity to encourage inter-agency dialogue in state government (Human Services, Corrections, Executive Office, Labor)

❖ Opportunity to identify potential upcoming challenges/adaptations for local WIBs and align programming to help solve problems
Questions...?
Next Steps

The webinar recording & slides will be available on our website, and we’ll also email them to you.

Via email, we’ll try to answer any questions we didn’t have time to address today.
National Initiatives' Toolkits

WIOA Planning & Implementation Toolkit

Opportunity Youth Employment Toolkit

Employer Engagement Toolkit

Working To End Homelessness Toolkit

Transitional Jobs Programs Toolkit

TANF and Transitional Jobs Toolkit

www.heartlandalliance.org/nationalinitiatives
Thank You!

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