CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

> Celebrate the progress made over the past three years to redesign the way Adult Basic Education and Career and Technical Education are delivered so that students attain credentials that lead to family-supporting employment;

> Participate in lively discussions with peers across the country about effective implementation and sustainability of integrated pathways; and

> Provide content and support as teams and states continue to implement integrated career pathways.
JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Jobs for the Future works with our partners to design and drive the adoption of education and career pathways leading from college readiness to career advancement for those struggling to succeed in today’s economy.

THE NATIONAL COLLEGE TRANSITION NETWORK

The National College Transition Network at World Education, Inc., supports adult education staff, programs, and states, and regional and municipal agencies in establishing and strengthening college transition services. NCTN accomplishes this through technical assistance, professional development, collegial sharing, advocacy, and publications that focus on the needs of the field. NCTN connects policy and research and practice to help build the capacity and expertise in adult education.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR WORKFORCE EDUCATION

The National Council for Workforce Education is committed to promoting excellence and growth in workforce education. As an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges, NCWE provides a national forum for administrators and faculty in workforce education and basic skills, as well as representatives of business, labor, military, and government, to affect and direct the future role of two-year and other postsecondary institutions in workforce education and economic development. NCWE provides the link between policy and workforce education and economic development by providing support, research, and critical information to members on current and future trends and policies.

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD FOR COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGES

The State Board for Community & Technical Colleges administers the Community and Technical College Act and provides leadership and coordination for Washington’s public system of 34 community and technical colleges. The SBCTC is governed by a nine-member board appointed by the governor. Washington serves as a lead state, drawing upon its success developing and scaling up I-BEST. SBCTC provides technical assistance to implementation states around program and curriculum development, data and research, and policy and funding strategies. SBCTC co-hosts annual integrated basic skills pathways institutes with JFF and provides technical assistance to states on I-BEST and I-BEST-like implementation.
AGENDA
TUESDAY, APRIL 29TH
INTEGRATED PATHWAYS INSTITUTE

After the welcome and overview, the Institute features three separate strands: a TRADITIONAL SITE VISIT (see below), a TRAIN-THE-TRAINER ORIENTATION (see page 5), and an INTERACTIVE SESSION FOR COLLEGE COORDINATORS (see page 6). All participants have been pre-assigned; please see your state or consortium lead with any questions. Note that timing varies with each Institute option, but all strands include lunch and site visit attendees will return to the hotel in time for Team Time at 3:30 p.m. (with the exception of Everett, as noted).

7:00 A.M.–4:30 P.M. REGISTRATION
REGENCY FOYER

7:00–8:00 A.M. BREAKFAST & OVERVIEW OF THE DAY
REGENCY BALLROOM

Maria Flynn, Vice President, Building Economic Opportunity, Jobs for the Future
Marlene Seltzer, President & CEO, Jobs for the Future

INSTITUTE STRAND I

TRADITIONAL SITE VISIT
Participants will visit an I-BEST college where they will have the opportunity to observe team teaching in action as well as engage with I-BEST faculty, students, and administrators.

Please note that bus departure times vary; buses leave promptly at the times listed.

8:00 A.M. EDMONDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Edmonds Community College offers several I-BEST programs, such as:
>
> Accounting Fundamentals
> Allied Health—Human Body
> Medical Terminology
> PC Basics
> Intro to Electronics
> Intro to Family Support Services
> Materials Science—Quality Assurance

Visitors will have the opportunity to observe an I-BEST team-taught course and engage with a campus panel of faculty, students, and I-BEST administrators. They will have lunch on campus with the opportunity for continued discussion of I-BEST with the campus personnel seated at their tables.
8:15 A.M. **RENTON TECHNICAL COLLEGE**
Renton Technical College has been a strong I-BEST college since the program’s inception with programs centering around Allied Health occupations such as: CNA, Pharmacy Tech, Surgical Tech, and Anesthesia Tech. Visitors will have the opportunity to observe a team-taught I-BEST Allied Health course as well as engage with a panel of I-BEST faculty, students, and administrators.

8:30 A.M. **LAKE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**
Lake Washington Institute of Technology (LWIT) was among Washington’s first colleges to offer I-BEST programming for students at every academic level. The college first offered a professional-technical I-BEST section in 2005-06, as part of the state’s second wave of pilot programs. Since that time, it has offered professional-technical I-BEST programs in Building Plant Maintenance; Business Administration Support; General Service Technician; Accounting; and Early Childhood Education.

Beginning in Fall 2010, the college became one of ten pilot sites in developmental education I-BEST coursework, offering a combined developmental mathematics/automotive repair program that has now been expanded to integrate math with such programs as Diesel Mechanics; Marine, Motorcycle and Power Equipment; Machining; Electronics; and Culinary Arts.

Within the last 2 years, the college also initiated an On Ramp I-BEST that integrates math, computer applications, and basic literacy content for beginning ESL students and an Academic I-BEST that assists high-level ABE and ESL students in gaining transferrable academic credits. The site visit will include an introduction to the statewide implementation of the comprehensive I-BEST pathway that supports students from the lowest levels of ABE and ESL through degree completion; LWIT’s implementation of the comprehensive pathway; the opportunity to observe developmental education I-BEST courses; and the opportunity to interact with administrators, faculty, and students who work in the I-BEST department and represent each aspect of the various I-BEST models implemented at LWIT.

8:45 A.M. **NORTH SEATTLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
North Seattle Community College will welcome 25 visitors to their campus. The visit will highlight their I-BEST Accounting program. Visitors will have the opportunity to observe the team-taught QuickBooks class as well as observe a portion of the I-BEST support class. Visitors will also engage with a panel of I-BEST faculty, students, and administrators.

9:15 A.M. **BELLEVUE COLLEGE**
Bellevue College will host 25 visitors on their campus. The day will include a welcome from College leadership, and observation of the team-taught Business Math—Accounting I-BEST program. In addition, visitors will be able to engage with a panel of I-BEST faculty, students, and administrators. Lunch will feature campus table hosts that will continue the I-BEST conversation.
EVERETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE SITE VISIT

PRE-SESSION: INTEGRATED PATHWAY MODELS OUTSIDE ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY

Lisa Soricone, Senior Project Manager, Jobs for the Future

This site visit is geared towards the teams from Connecticut, Oregon, and Washington, DC. Prior to the site visit, participants will have the opportunity to share with each other their diverse approaches to developing integrated pathway models. The pre-session will run from 9:00-11:00 a.m.; the bus to the college will depart promptly at 11:15 a.m.

SITE VISIT

Everett Community College will welcome visitors to their campus with a lunchtime start. The visit will include a welcome from college leadership, a panel of I-BEST faculty, staff, and students, and will highlight the college’s Sustainable Office I-BEST program. The co-taught portion of the classes runs from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Mon-Thurs, and students are in class from 1:00-4:30 p.m.

INSTITUTE STRAND II

9:00 A.M.–3:15 P.M. TRAIN-THE-TRAINER ORIENTATION

Louisa Erickson, Program Administrator, Adult Education, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges

Sandy Goodman, Director of Career Pathways, National College Transition Network, World Education, Inc.

Ellen Hewett, Director, National College Transition Network, World Education, Inc.

This session will focus on professional development planning to sustain and scale your state’s integrated career pathways. It is geared towards those responsible at the state level for developing and implementing an overall professional development plan as well as any state or campus level trainers who have been invited by their state leads to participate in the session.

During this session:

> The presenters will articulate the main elements of a professional development plan that is geared to building the growth and sustainability of integrated career pathways.

> NCTN will train participants to use two trainer manuals that local and statewide trainers can use to deliver training for navigators and campus leads.

> Washington SBCTC will facilitate a discussion on recruiting and selecting trainers for team teaching in preparation for state-based Training of Trainers for team teaching (to be scheduled in each state in the summer and fall of 2014).

> Participants will learn how to incorporate the training for trainers into their state’s broader thinking about professional development.
INSTITUTE STRAND III

9:00 A.M.–3:15 P.M. **COLLEGE COORDINATORS SESSION** CEDAR A

**Israel Mendoza**, Coach, Accelerating Opportunity
**Lucretia Murphy**, Program Director, Jobs for the Future

This interactive session will provide college coordinators with a deeper understanding of how their role contributes to the development, implementation, and scaling of integrated pathways. Participants will learn about effective strategies for engaging both internal and external stakeholders; tools and resources to support their role; and potential action steps for promoting scale and sustainability at their colleges. Through this session, participants will build a stronger community of practice with other coordinators across states and will leave with at least one new peer connection and one new actionable idea.

END OF INSTITUTE STRANDS

3:00–3:30 P.M. **BREAK** REGENCY FOYER

3:30–4:30 P.M. **STRUCTURED TEAM TIME**

Teams will debrief the day with their coaches and discuss which concurrent sessions to attend. See below for room assignments.

ARKANSAS
GEORGIA
ILLINOIS
KANSAS
KENTUCKY
LOUISIANA
TEXAS

COTTONWOOD
MAPLE
JUNIPER
LARCH
CEDAR A
CEDAR B
BALSAM

3:30–5:30 P.M. **GULF COAST IT CONSORTIUM PEER-LEARNING MEETING** LAUREL

**Terri Berryman**, Project Director, Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN)
**Marianne Krismer**, National Director, H2P Consortium

6:00–7:00 P.M. **RECEPTION** REGENCY BALLROOM
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30TH

7:00-8:00 A.M.  BREAKFAST  REGENCY BALLROOM

8:00-8:30 A.M.  WELCOME  REGENCY BALLROOM
Maria Flynn, Vice President, Building Economic Opportunity, Jobs for the Future
Jan Yoshiwara, Deputy Executive Director, Education Services Division, Washington State Board for Community & Technical Colleges

8:30-10:00 A.M.  EVALUATION: ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY YEAR ONE FINDINGS  REGENCY BALLROOM
Theresa Anderson, Research Associate, The Urban Institute
Susan Fish, Director of Adult Education, Kansas Board of Regents
Jennifer Foster, Associate Vice President for Adult Education & Workforce Development, Illinois Community College Board
Harmony Little, Accelerating Opportunity State Coordinator, Kentucky Community and Technical College System
Sean Martin, Executive Director, WorkReady U, Louisiana Community and Technical College System

MODERATOR: Barbara Endel, Program Director, Jobs for the Future

What have we learned from the first year evaluation of Accelerating Opportunity, and what does it mean for AO states and colleges? How have the initial AO states progressed, and what are their key challenges? In this session, the Urban Institute will present findings from the initial implementation of AO, with responses from states featured in the evaluation, who will identify progress points in key areas from the evaluation and discuss how they are communicating AO successes to their stakeholders.

10:00–10:30 A.M.  RESPONSE TO ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY YEAR ONE EVALUATION FINDINGS  REGENCY BALLROOM
John Colborn, Director, Skills for America’s Future, Aspen Institute

John Colborn will place the evaluation findings in the context of national work, including Skills for America’s Future, an employer-led policy initiative of the Economic Opportunities Program at the Aspen Institute that links economic development and skills development and works to demonstrate the efficacy of employer/community college partnerships.

10:30-10:45 A.M.  BREAK  REGENCY FOYER
I. ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY STATE LEADS AND COORDINATORS AND CONSORTIUM LEADS (INVITATION ONLY)

Mary Clagett, Director, Workforce Policy, Jobs for the Future
Barbara Endel, Program Director, Jobs for the Future
Maria Flynn, Vice President, Building Economic Opportunity, Jobs for the Future

This invitation-only session will focus on topics such as Ability to Benefit reinstatement, sustainability, scaling, and use of data to build champions. States will share their promising practices and discuss what their next phase of Accelerating Opportunity might look like.

II. ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: CREATING A NEW CULTURE

Bevan Gibson, Director, Southern Illinois Professional Development Center
Aimee LaFollette Julian, Co-Director, Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support

Join the professional development team from Illinois as they share their journey from supporting the launch of AO to scaling up from 8 to 18 programs, using national experts as well as state and local experiences. Included in Illinois’ professional development model are: the Transitions Academy, online professional development, social media, transitions newsletter, mentoring, and much more. See how this joint professional development structure has shifted college culture through the integration of CTE and Adult Education worlds.

III. VIRTUAL CAREER NETWORK: MORE THAN A CAREER EXPLORATION TOOL

Terri Berryman, Project Director, Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN)
Marianne Krismer, National Director, H2P Consortium
Monique Sheen, Project Manager, Jobs for the Future

The Virtual Career Network (VCN) is a publicly accessible, Web-based healthcare and green economy career platform that helps its users manage their own learning and career pathways through three vital functions:

- A Learning Exchange that enables users to find, compare, enroll in, and take online remedial and technical skills development courses that provide a pathway into healthcare and green economy careers;

- A Career Management Account that enables users to store testing, assessment, counseling, course completion, and other credentialing data to document and present to third parties (e.g., counselors, employers); and

- A Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) tool that provides a way to earn college credit for what you already know based on training or work experience user may have received in previous jobs.
IV. A NEW BEGINNING: ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY IN ARKANSAS

Sherry Organ, Coordinator of Career Pathways, Arkansas State University-Beebe
Natasha Richards, Coordinator of Adult Education, Arkansas State University-Beebe

This session will focus on the recent addition of Accelerating Opportunity (AO) into the state of Arkansas. It will highlight the four schools that are currently involved with the program and focus on specific implementation procedures used at Arkansas State University-Beebe. The presenters will discuss the strategies they are using to help align Arkansas’ Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) as an entry point for Accelerating Opportunity students, and the additional support that CPI offers to our AO students.

V. PARTNERING WITH YOUR LOCAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD TO MAKE INTEGRATED PATHWAYS WORK

Vic Adams, Vice President, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College
Jeff Whitehead, Executive Director, Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program

This session will highlight the partnership between Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College and the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program in implementing Accelerating Opportunity. The Accelerating Opportunity program at Southeast involves the team teaching of under-skilled adults in an accelerated program. Four career pathways (Welding, Industrial Maintenance, Health Care and Heavy Equipment Operations) have seen dramatic increases in student persistence and success. This presentation will cover the lessons learned while integrating Adult Education and Technical Instruction in these programs as well as the braided funding approach used to make the program successful.

VI. ACCELERATE TEXAS: BRAIDING FUNDING TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS

Tamara Clunis, Dean, Academic Success, Amarillo College
Amy Girardi, Project Manager, Jobs for the Future
David Joost, Director of Adult Education, Houston Community College
Linda Muñoz, Senior Program Director, Adult and Developmental Education, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Martha Neely, Program Director, Lone Star College System
Melissa Sadler-Nitu, I-BEST/ABE Director, Alamo Colleges

Braiding funding to engage more students in integrated pathway programs and support various program functions is an ongoing challenge for colleges seeking to expand educational and economic opportunity for lower-skilled adults. This session will present how these Texas colleges are tying together local, state, and federal resources to serve and advance student success. Learn about some of Texas’s innovative strategies and come prepared to share your own ideas.
VII. ADVANCING SYSTEM-WIDE PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT POLICIES

COTTONWOOD

Gail Baldwin, Consortium Content Lead, Retraining the Gulf Coast Workforce Through IT Pathways Consortium
Ellen Hewett, Director, National College Transition Network, World Education, Inc.

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) is an emerging acceleration strategy to promote learners’ completion of credentialing programs. With PLA, adults with college-level learning gained outside the classroom can earn credit for that learning through a variety of assessments. The nine community and technical colleges in Louisiana and Mississippi that make up the Retraining the Gulf Coast Workforce through IT Pathways Consortium are implementing and promoting PLA that reflects national and regional best practices. As a partner, the National College Transition Network (NCTN) at World Education is helping the Consortium develop new PLA policies or update existing ones to help establish a streamlined approach to the assessment of prior learning.

This session will spark a dialogue about PLA at participants’ states and colleges by presenting the lessons, accomplishments, approach, and strategies of this effort. Tools and resources used to support the promotion of an integrated statewide and institutional policy will be shared.

LUNCH PANEL AND PRESENTATION

REGENCY BALLROOM

INTRODUCTIONS
Maria Flynn, Vice President, Building Economic Opportunity, Jobs for the Future

I-BEST STUDENT PANEL
Randy Bailey, Student, Lower Columbia College
Taleah Mitchell, Student, Seattle Central Community College
Maria Muñoz, Student, Bellevue College

MODERATOR: Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education

A panel of Washington State I-BEST students representing Bellevue College, Seattle Central Community College, and Lower Columbia College will share their I-BEST pathway experiences. Join Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education, as she engages the students in a conversation about their educational journey.

THE FEDERAL PERSPECTIVE
Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education

Briefing to the audience on federal adult education perspectives, and reaction to the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Report.
1:45–2:45 P.M. **STRUCTURED TEAM TIME**
Teams meet to debrief the morning sessions and discuss reactions to the lunch plenary and student panel. See below for room assignments.

- **ARKANSAS**
- **CONNECTICUT, OREGON, & WASHINGTON, DC**
- **GEORGIA**
- **GULF COAST IT CONSORTIUM**
- **ILLINOIS**
- **KANSAS**
- **KENTUCKY**
- **LOUISIANA**
- **TEXAS**

2:00–3:00 P.M. **ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY STATE ABE DIRECTORS MEETING (INVITATION ONLY)**

2:45–3:00 P.M. **BREAK**

3:00–4:15 P.M. **CONCURRENT SESSIONS II**

**I. U.S. RESPONSE TO THE PIACC FINDINGS**

*Cheryl Keenan*, Director of Adult Education and Literacy, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) released *Time for the U.S. to Reskill? What the Survey of Adult Skills Says*, which is based on the survey from the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). The findings show that the U.S. has a significant low-skilled workforce challenge. As a follow-up to the lunch plenary, this concurrent session will permit participants to ask more detailed questions about the findings, offer input about the suggested strategies, and help contribute solutions and promising practices from Accelerating Opportunity and other integrated pathway initiatives to support the administration’s work to address the significant challenges noted in the study.
II. IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO: PARTNERING WITH LOCAL INDUSTRY

Gwenn Evans, Executive Director of Adult Education, Athens Technical College
Charlene Ford, Dean of Adult Education, Savannah Technical College

Successful implementation of the Accelerating Opportunity initiative requires that college programs identify local industry partners to ensure career pathway alignment with regional industry needs and local demands, as well as leverage resources for students. This session will discuss:

> Strategies for how to develop partnerships with industries with the potential to provide access to jobs and other opportunities for students participating the AO program;
> Approaches to identifying partners across the community to help provide supports to students;
> Ways to develop scale, sustain, and expand programs as industry demands and student interests grow; and
> Marketing and recruitment efforts that attract eligible students.

III. ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY STUDENT SIMULATION EXPERIMENT

Melissa Chmura, Project Coordinator, Accelerating Opportunity, Somerset Community College
Amanda Vanhook, Success Coach, Accelerating Opportunity, Somerset Community College

This interactive student simulation session is designed to promote awareness of the target audiences that can benefit from Accelerating Opportunity.

Session participants will break up into small groups of 3-4. Each group will be given a different student to advise and will be provided with information such as the student’s age and gender; current lifestyle; current work situation; whether they have earned a high school credential; their Compass placement test results; and what the student’s career interests are. The group will advise their student as to whether they should be a full-time or part-time student and whether they should participate in AO as well as determine what support services the students should be referred to.

Participants will compare each of the student scenarios as a larger group and discuss why certain choices were made for that student. Predetermined outcomes will be assigned to the students based on if they were referred to AO or not. The group will discuss how the outcomes could have been different if other choices were made.

IV. COACHING TO COLLEGE: ADULT BASIC EDUCATION TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Stephanie Dreiling, Transition Coach, Hutchinson Community College
Kathy Petz, Coordinator of Adult Education, Hutchinson Community College

In this session participants will learn about the integrated approach that The Learning Center at Hutchinson Community College has implemented for its Adult Education students. A contextualized approach to Orientation has proven beneficial to students headed into Postsecondary Education. Presenters will share their layout including the new web-supported design and changes in instructional delivery methods. Participants will also hear about the program’s decisions to discuss personal interest inventories, learning styles, self-advocacy, and values with our students starting on Day One.
V. EXPANDING STUDENTS’ HORIZONS

Brenda D. Keisler, Adult Education Instructor, College of the Ouachitas

This session will present ways team teaching can deliver much-needed one-on-one attention to students who need extra assistance. The session will expand on the use of methods implemented to help students excel. Participants will look at one student in particular, an ELL student, advancing both her education and career by participating in the Medical Terminology event at the state SkillsUSA competition. This session will show how this student and others have benefited from Accelerating Opportunity.

VI. NEW HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY EXAMS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR INTEGRATED PATHWAYS

Amy Girardi, Project Manager, Jobs for the Future
Sean Martin, Executive Director of WorkReady U, Louisiana Community and Technical College System
Reecie Stagnolia, Vice President, Kentucky Adult Education

In this interactive session participants will discuss practice and policy implications of the new high school equivalency exams (GED, HiSET, TASC) and lessons for states implementing integrated pathways. More specifically, the discussions will highlight how states are planning to leverage the new equivalency assessments to develop policies and practices that promote acceleration and integrated approaches to curriculum development and instructional delivery for ABE and support a culture of transitions to and completion of credentialing programs in high-demand fields.

VII. I-BEST AND ACCELERATING OPPORTUNITY ON-RAMPS

Peggy Heinrich, Dean of Adult Education, Elgin Community College
Israel Mendoza, Consultant, Accelerating Opportunity
Darlene Snider, Dean of Transitional Studies, Walla Walla Community College

What can colleges do to ensure that all students—including those in lower-level ABE—can eventually access and succeed in integrated pathway programs? This session will explore the development and implementation of on-ramps to integrated career pathways. Participants will learn about the design and implementation of on-ramps to I-BEST programs in Washington State and to AO programs in Illinois. Presenters will describe how their work supports the transition of students from on-ramps into college-level programs, highlighting successes, challenges and lessons learned through their experience.

4:15-4:30 P.M. WRAP-UP

Barbara Endel, Program Director, Jobs for the Future
Maria Flynn, Vice President, Building Economic Opportunity, Jobs for the Future

4:30 P.M. ADJOURN
SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

VIC ADAMS
Vice President and Chief Workforce Officer Dr. Vic Adams has almost 20 years’ experience at Southeast Kentucky Community & Technical College (SKCTC) in Workforce, Community & Economic Development.

Dr. Adams has served in many positions while at SKCTC including Training & Development Coordinator, Associate Dean of Community & Economic Development, Dean of Community & Economic Development and was recently named Vice President. The Workforce Solutions Division he oversees has seen an increase of 200% in the number of industry workers trained.

During his tenure at SKCTC, he has implemented several new initiatives including: the Kentucky Safety Training Institute, which provides training nationwide to various organizations including the U.S. Department of the Interior; Breaking Through, a program that takes underskilled adults and provides training and support to gain employment in high-wage, high-growth jobs; and Accelerating Opportunity, which provides short-term training in high-wage, high-growth industry sectors to underskilled adults in Eastern Kentucky. This program also includes additional training along career paths that enable employees to advance in their careers.

RANDY BAILEY
Randy Bailey left high school in the 10th grade needing to find work in order to support his family. He spent many years in the workforce, but the importance of education forced him to evaluate his options. Randy enrolled at Lower Columbia College in the GED program in hopes of attaining his GED and spent two quarters learning new skills and preparing for the test. Randy struggled daily to overcome fears of test anxiety and feelings of doubt, and then heard about the HS 21+ program at LCC that would offer him a second chance at being a student, focusing on the subjects he missed in high school. After obtaining his transcripts from his previous high school, Randy had 6 credits toward the 19 credits he needed to graduate. He was enrolled in the subjects he needed and finished 13 credits in 8 weeks.

Randy transitioned to the I-BEST manufacturing program and made the Dean’s list in fall. He embraces college life and credits the I-BEST program with helping him increase his self-confidence and skills needed to better his future. Often you can find Randy in the welding building honing his skills even on days he doesn’t have class. Randy is the biggest advocate for HS 21+ and the I-BEST program on campus, recruiting new students and encouraging existing ones. “This program and my instructors have changed my life, so let it change yours!”

THERESA ANDERSON
Theresa Anderson is a researcher at the Urban Institute in Washington, DC, and is project manager of the Accelerating Opportunity program evaluation. At Urban, she evaluates workforce development programs and researches issues relevant to low-income populations. Previously, Theresa studied the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Unemployment Insurance at the USDA Economic Research Service. At the George Washington Institute of Public Policy, she researched disability and other social policy issues for the Social Security Administration and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. She also has worked at organizations that provide direct legal and social services to low-income families in Washington, DC, and Worcester, MA. She earned her Master of Public Policy from the George Washington University and her B.A. from Hampshire College.

GAIL BALDWIN
Gail Baldwin serves as project advisor/content knowledge lead for the Retraining the Gulf Coast Workforce through IT Pathways Consortium, better known as the Gulf Coast IT Consortium. Prior to coming to the consortium, she spent fifteen years teaching at the secondary level, three years teaching at the college lever and led career and technical programs at the secondary and post-secondary level. She sixteen in administration where she served the last six as Dean of the Career, Technical and Workforce Education division at Copiah-Lincoln Community College in MS. She currently assists nine community colleges across the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast region. She works with the colleges and with technical assistant partners to accomplish the goal of the TAACCCT grant in the area of curriculum, prior learning assessment, articulation, business and industry engagement, and with community based partners. She is active in local, state and national educational and economic organizations.
**TERRI BERRYMAN**

Dr. Terri Berryman is the Project Director for the Illinois Green Economy Network Career Pathways grant at the College of Lake County in Grayslake, IL. In this role, she coordinates the grant deliverables for a 17-college consortium creating online hybrid green career degrees and certificates. She has 15-plus years of experience in career and workforce development. Prior to her current position, Dr. Berryman was the Director of the Lake County Workforce Development Department and Director of Career Services for Roosevelt University and the College of Lake County. She has been an active member in many state and regional organizations committed to assisting adults with career decision-making.

Dr. Berryman has a doctorate in Higher Education from Loyola University Chicago, a Master of Arts in Human Resource Management from Truman State University, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Western Kentucky University.

**MELISSA CHMURA**

Melissa Chmura is the project coordinator for Accelerating Opportunity at Somerset Community College, a member of the Kentucky Community & Technical College System. Melissa is passionate about student success and motivated in implementing an integrated basic skills pathway model for students.

Prior to joining the higher education platform five years ago, Melissa had previous experience in corporate accounting and finance. She earned her Bachelor’s in accounting from Bryant University in New England. She was also an entrepreneur in the retail food service market. Melissa’s financial and customer service background enables her to provide excellent support services and direction in preparing Kentucky’s workforce.

**MARY GARDNER CLAGETT**

Mary Gardner Clagett is the director of workforce policy at Jobs for the Future. Ms. Clagett works with workforce policy leaders and practitioners from around the country to shape effective policy recommendations to meet the skills needs of America’s workers and the U.S. economy. She and her team work to identify best and promising practices particularly for meeting the education, training, and placement needs of low-skilled workers—translating practice into policy. Ms. Clagett has more than 25 years of experience working with Congress in the fields of education, workforce development, and human services policy. Before joining JFF, Ms. Clagett served in a similar capacity for the National Center on Education and the Economy, and before that served as the lead staff for Republicans on the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce, responsible for legislation such as the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the National School-to-Work Opportunities Act, and numerous other measures related to the workforce, education, and human services. She has also served in the U.S. Senate on the Labor and Human Resources Committee for West Virginia Senator Jennings Randolph. Ms. Clagett earned her undergraduate degree from Marshall University in Huntington, WV, and carried out her graduate work at the George Washington University in Washington, DC.

**TAMARA CLUNIS**

Tamara Thornton Clunis is the Dean of Academic Success at Amarillo College in Amarillo, Texas. She is responsible for creating a strategic plan for student success for both developmental education and college ready students. Prior to joining Amarillo College, Tamara worked as the Director of Developmental and Adult Education at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. In that position, she was responsible for developing a statewide plan for developmental education, with an emphasis on improving student outcomes and increasing alignment between adult basic education and post-secondary education. She has 12 years experience teaching developmental education and learning framework courses in two-year and four-year institutions. She earned a Master’s Degree in Developmental and Adult Education and a Ph.D in Adult, Professional, and Community Education from Texas State University-San Marcos.

**JOHN COLBORN**

John Colborn is the Director of Skills for America’s Future, an employer-led workforce development initiative of the Aspen Institute. SAF works with leading national firms to identify and champion solutions that improve the competitiveness of the U.S. labor force and advance economic opportunity for American workers. SAF focuses on community colleges and community college leaders to enhance the effectiveness of these critical institutions in meeting the workforce development needs of employers and communities.

Previously, John served as Vice President of Operations at the Ford Foundation, where he was responsible for overseeing grants administration, information technology, knowledge management, NY headquarters operations, and overseas operations. He joined the foundation as a grantmaker in the workforce development field working on industry-targeted workforce development, community colleges, and national policy. He remains active in several foundation-related groups, including serving as a board member of the Foundation Center and as a member of the Advisory Board of the Center for Effective Philanthropy.
Prior to joining the foundation, John worked for over 12 years for a variety of nonprofit organizations, including The Reinvestment Fund, a community development financial institution serving the greater Philadelphia region. There he headed up the capacity building, training and technical assistance affiliate of the Reinvestment Fund and served as director of the Fund’s Jobs Initiative, a job training and placement effort, targeting low-income communities and focused on the manufacturing and data intensive sectors of the regional economy. In addition to workforce and economic development, his professional background includes stints in affordable housing development, community organizing, and trade association management.

John holds Bachelor’s degrees in Government and Economics from Oberlin College and a Master’s of Business Administration from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

She received her Ed.D. in educational leadership, with a dissertation analyzing access to higher education for welfare recipients, from Johnson and Wales University.

**STEPHANIE DREILING**

Stephanie Dreiling impacts the personal and educational lives of students daily by helping them make successful educational and career decisions. In her role as the Transition Coach for the Adult Learning Center at Hutchinson Community College, she guides students to find and use strengths and abilities to further their education in their chosen career field or preferred educational pathway.

**BRENDA DANN-MESSIER**

Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier was nominated by President Obama as Assistant Secretary for Vocational and Adult Education on July 14, 2009. On October 5, 2009, she was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and began her official duties on October 13, 2009.

Brenda leads the Department’s efforts in adult education and career and technical education, as well as efforts supporting community colleges and correctional education. She oversees the administration of 11 grant programs in these areas, totaling approximately $1.9 billion annually. She is committed to collaboration, both within the Department and across federal agencies, including working with the U.S. Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Commerce.

From 1993 to 1996, Brenda worked for the Clinton administration under Secretary Richard Riley, serving as the Secretary’s Regional Representative for Region I, which includes CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, and VT.

Prior to returning to the Department, Brenda served for a decade as President of the Dorcas Place Adult and Family Learning Center, a community-based adult education agency based in Providence, RI. Under her leadership, Dorcas Place expanded to serve more than 1,000 adults statewide through a range of programs, including adult basic and secondary education, ESL, GED, financial literacy, and sector-based job training.

Brenda earned her B.A. in history and secondary education, plus a teaching certificate, at Rhode Island College, where she went on to complete her Master’s in instructional technology with another certificate in Adult Basic Education.

**BARBARA ENDEL**

Barbara Endel co-leads Jobs for the Future’s Accelerating Opportunity initiative, which enables low-skilled adult learners to complete technical and occupational degrees across more than 55 community colleges nationwide. Before joining JFF, she served as a policy consultant to the organization on the Developmental Education Initiative, a six-state subproject of Achieving the Dream focused on mining and utilizing data to improve student success in community colleges. Dr. Endel also coaches Cincinnati’s Partners for a Competitive Workforce Network, a nationally recognized regional collaborative with multiple career pathways for over 6,000 participants through a project funded by the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. She has also developed career pathways and managed policy initiatives for KnowledgeWorks Foundation and designed and implemented community college assessments and research solutions for ACT. Dr. Endel has a Master’s and Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. She earned her Bachelor’s from The College of Wooster in Ohio.

**LOUISA ERICKSON**

Louisa Erickson is a program administrator at the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, where she serves as the agency lead for I-BEST (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) programs in Washington State and provides technical assistance to other states and their educational institutions seeking to replicate I-BEST. Before joining SBCTC, Louisa was with the Washington State Department of Commerce. Louisa has over 17 years of experience successfully designing, implementing, and managing programs designed to remove barriers to success for at-risk youth and adult populations. Her areas of professional expertise include organizational and community assessment, policy analysis and development, community collaboration and partnership building, prevention-based programming, offender reentry, and employment and training programs.
GWENN EVANS

Gwenn Evans began her career in adult education in 1994, teaching GED classes in a church basement. Today she serves as Executive Director of Adult Education at Athens Technical College, located in Athens, GA, where she manages a 10-county service delivery area.

Ms. Evans is a graduate of Athens Technical College, Truett-McConnell College, and Brenau University. She is a board member of Athens-Clarke County Literacy Council.

Ms. Evans lives with her family on a farm in North Georgia, where she and her husband homeschool their two teenage sons.

SUSAN FISH

Susan Fish is the Director of Adult Education at the Kansas Board of Regents, which is the state agency responsible for administering funds from the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Title II of the Workforce Investment Act. Before coming to Kansas, she worked with Adult Education and Developmental Education in community colleges in Oregon and Washington. She holds a Master’s degree from Auburn University and a Ph.D. from Oregon State University.

MARIA FLYNN

As vice president of Jobs for the Future’s Building Economic Opportunity Group, Maria Flynn leads JFF’s work to help low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Ms. Flynn guides the activities of several key JFF projects and partnerships, including the National Fund for Workforce Solutions and Breaking Through. Ms. Flynn has nearly 20 years of experience in the workforce development field. As the administrator of the Office of Policy Development and Research in the U.S. Department of Labor’s Employment and Training Administration, she oversaw the assessment and development of employment and training policies, managed the design of the agency’s research and evaluation strategy, and provided direct support to agency budget and appropriations activities. Ms. Flynn’s responsibilities at the Labor Department included coordinating the agency’s legislative, regulatory, and international affairs agendas and outreach to philanthropic organizations. As the agency’s policy director, Ms. Flynn played a key role in the development and implementation of the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development Initiative (WIREd). Within the ETA, Ms. Flynn led the Division of One-Stop Operations, where she developed the policy and technical assistance framework necessary to enable states and local communities to establish comprehensive One-Stop delivery systems designed to provide quality services to jobseekers, workers, and employers. She also served as team leader for the interagency policy group charged with implementing the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. In the 1990s, Ms. Flynn played key roles in the National School-to-Work initiative and in the launch of the Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Initiative. Ms. Flynn earned her Bachelor’s in international relations and economics at Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia and a Master’s of Government Administration at the University of Pennsylvania.

CHARLENE FORD

Charlene Ford is the Dean of Adult Education at Savannah Technical College in Savannah, Georgia.

JENNIFER FOSTER

Jennifer Foster is the Associate Vice President for Adult Education and Workforce Development/State GED Administrator at the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB). She serves as the State Director for Adult Education and Family Literacy and GED Testing in IL. Jennifer has been with the ICCB for almost 14 years and in adult education for more than 24 years. Jennifer also serves as the chair of the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NSDAE). She is also the team lead for the Illinois Accelerating Opportunity Project.

BEVAN GIBSON

Bevan Gibson is the director of the Southern Illinois Professional Development Center and has 20-plus years of experience in adult education. She worked with the Illinois Shifting Gears project and works closely with the Accelerating Opportunity colleges in Illinois and the Illinois Community College Board to provide professional development and technical assistance. She and her team have developed statewide Bridge curricula in health care and manufacturing and are currently creating Transportation, Distribution and Logistics curriculum. They have delivered Bridge Basics training throughout the state and provide an online Transitions Continuum of Professional Development. Bevan facilitated the development of a Career Pathway Graphic for the state. She has collaborated with the career and technical education professional development provider in IL to develop and provide a Transitions Academy for scalability of Accelerating Opportunity and Bridge programs in the state.
AMY GIRARDI

Amy Girardi works with several Jobs for the Future projects focused on creating career pathways for lower-skilled adults, including Breaking Through, Accelerate TEXAS, and Jobs to Manufacturing Careers. Ms. Girardi has more than 10 years of experience assisting low-income populations, specifically immigrants, ex-offenders, substance abusers, and the homeless. Most recently, she was a GED and ABE instructor in Bunker Hill Community College’s GED-to-College Pathway program in Boston. She also coordinated Project Lighthouse, the adult education and employment resource center under the Boston Public Health Commission. Ms. Girardi has a Master’s of Education in instructional design from the University of Massachusetts. She earned her Bachelor’s in literature and philosophy from Bradford College.

SANDY GOODMAN

Sandy Goodman is the Director of Career Pathways for the National College Transition Network. Her work includes designing and overseeing college transition and career pathways initiatives and providing technical assistance and professional development to individual programs and state adult education systems. In 2011, Sandy led the National Career Awareness Project, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education and offered in 16 states. Through this project, she assisted state teams in developing dissemination plans for scaling up professional development to incorporate career awareness and planning activities into Adult Basic Education instruction and counseling activities.

Sandy is the lead author of the College Transition Toolkit and editor of the Integrating Career Awareness into the ABE & ESOL Classroom curriculum guide. She wrote the two Accelerating Opportunity online courses on providing comprehensive supports: Finding True North—The Role of the Navigator; and Navigating Pathways to Opportunity. Both of these courses have recently launched and are open for enrollment.

Sandy has a B.A. in Women’s Studies/Social Thought and Political Economy from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and an M.P.A. from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

PEGGY HEINRICH

Peggy Heinrich is currently the Dean of Adult Education at Elgin Community College in Illinois, where she is responsible for the oversight of the Adult Education and Workforce Transitions division. She has worked in the field of adult education for 17 years at both local program and state system levels. Peggy has been instrumental in implementing three adult education bridge programs at ECC, as well as the Accelerating Opportunity program in four pathway areas. Peggy holds a Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics with a TESL concentration from Northeastern IL University in Chicago and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Community College Leadership from Ferris State University.

ELLEN HEWETT

Ellen Hewett directs the National College Transition Network at World Education, Inc. Her experience includes providing system-wide professional development to strengthen college and career readiness programming and policy. Before joining NCTN, as an administrator and faculty member at Springfield College, Ellen led the development of effective prior learning assessment (PLA) policy and practice among the college’s multistate campuses. Faculty engagement, administrative support, alignment with state policy and adherence to regional accreditation standards ensured implementation integrity. Ellen is now guiding the Retraining the Gulf Coast Workforce Through IT Pathways Consortium effort to build a streamlined PLA policy.

DAVID JOOST

David Joost joined the Houston Community College System as its Director of Community and Adult Education in October of the year 2000. He was previously employed as the Director of Resource Development and Adult Education at Wharton County Junior College in Wharton, Texas. His current title is Director of Adult Education Programs. His responsibilities include management of Texas largest grant supported adult education and literacy program, the college’s adult high school program, and its Community Education Integrated Education and Training Programs.

He is a native Texan, born and schooled in La Grange, Texas. He graduated from Texas A&M University with both a Bachelor of Science and Master’s degree in Education. He holds an Education Administrator’s Certificate for the University of Houston—Victoria and completed doctoral degree from the University of Houston Central Campus in December 2008. His dissertation topic was “Comparing the General Education Development (GED) Tests to the ACT Computer-Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS) Placement Tests As Predictors for College Readiness.”

Starting out as teacher in Columbus High School in Columbus, Texas, David has been involved in education for nearly thirty years and has been involved in adult education and literacy
programs for more than fifteen of those years. He has served as the President of the Texas Council for Adult Education Cooperative Directors (TCAEC). He was a founding member of the Texas Council for Adult Basic Education (TCABE) and currently acts as Legislative Committee Chairman of that organization. David is one of Texas’ recognized leaders in the adult and literacy movement and was a member the Texas Adult Education State Advisory Committee as well as a member of the State Leadership Consortium for Recruitment and Retention of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. He is a member of the State Adult Education Distance Learning Committee and also currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Literacy Advance of Houston, Texas' largest all-volunteer-tutor literacy organization. He is also a member of the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Board and a member of the board of the Houston Center for Literacy.

CHERYL KEENAN

Cheryl L. Keenan is the Director of the U.S. Department of Education’s Division of Adult Education and Literacy in the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education. In her role as the national director, she oversees the office which funds almost $600 million in state and local grant programs to enable adults to become literate and complete high school so they can succeed as workers, parents, and citizens. She is responsible for overseeing the Office of Corrections Education and the Adult Education National Programs Account, including resources to assist further development of the field of adult education/literacy.

Prior to her appointment to the U.S. Department of Education in June of 2002, she served as the Pennsylvania’s State Director of Adult Education and Literacy where she developed Pennsylvania’s first state-funded family literacy program supporting literacy of parents and their young children. During her tenure in Pennsylvania she also held positions in the Bureau of Special Education. Ms. Keenan holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in the field of education, has performed fieldwork in the area of early childhood special education, and served on numerous committees to advance the education of children and adults.

BRENDA D. KEISLER

Brenda Keisler has been involved in education for 35 years, 29 of those in adult education. She earned her BSE in secondary education and B.A. in psychology from Ouachita Baptist University in 1976, and her Master’s in Adult Education from the University of Arkansas in 1995. Brenda discovered her love of education while teaching night GED classes and was thrilled to be able to make adult education her life career. As adult education changed, Brenda adjusted. This year has been another such adjustment while learning how an Accelerating Opportunity classroom operates!

MARIANNE KRISMER

Marianne Krismer’s career at Cincinnati State spans over 35 years having served as faculty, program chair, associate dean, and dean in the health and public safety professions. She is now directing a $19.6 million Department of Labor, Trade Assistance Act Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant for 9 community colleges, 5 with a focus on transforming health education pathways to employment in health care.

Dr. Krismer has been a community leader and innovator in health and public safety education. Of her many accomplishments Dr. Krismer is one of the founders of the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati, a college access program for entry-level health care workers into nursing and allied health careers. She has been the visionary in securing several governmental and private grants to support education and access for “at promise” students.

Her most recent accomplishments include implementation of the Bridge to Employment Program sponsored by the Johnson and Johnson Foundation and acquisition and oversight of three Department of Labor grants in excess of $26 million. These funds have resulted in an increase capacity, diversity, and entry into the health care workforce for the greater Cincinnati community.

Dr. Krismer has spoken to various groups such as the Conference Board in New York City, American National Standards Institute, and the Workforce Council in Seattle.

Dr. Krismer is a Registered Dietitian and earned her Doctorate in Education from the University of Cincinnati in 2005.

AIMEE LAFOLLETTE JULIAN

Aimee LaFollette Julian, Ph.D., is the co-director of the Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSPS) in the College of Education at Illinois State University. Aimee has worked extensively with the implementation of the Perkins legislation through the Illinois Community College Board, the State Board of Education, and with her current position at ICSPS. She is a member of the State Leadership Team for the STEM Equity Pipeline Project and a member of the Programs of Study State Planning Team. Aimee is an experienced lecturer and facilitator working to build capacity for understanding of programs of study and career pathways, as well as improving services for Special Populations. She serves
as a technical assistance evaluator for the Early School Leaver Program, and is a certified DACCUM trainer/facilitator. Aimee works in collaboration with the adult education professional development providers in IL to develop and deliver the Transitions Academy—IL scalability of Accelerating Opportunity and bridge programs.

HARMONY LITTLE

Harmony Little is a project coordinator with the Kentucky Community & Technical College System and serves as the coordinator for the Accelerating Opportunity initiative, which helps low-skilled students earn the skills they need to succeed in school and compete in the workforce. Harmony is an experienced project manager having worked with nonprofit organizations, government, and social service agencies serving low-income and low-skilled individuals working toward financial empowerment and reducing barriers to the workplace. Harmony earned her Master’s at the University of Kentucky’s Martin School of Public Affairs and her Bachelor’s in Political Science and World Politics from Hamilton College.

SEAN MARTIN

Sean Martin, executive director of WorkReady U for the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), is responsible for leading the planning, development, and implementation of the WorkReady U initiative to offer an inclusive system of educational and support services for adults in Louisiana. Sean is tasked with ensuring the establishment of a comprehensive delivery system that will expand the traditional role of adult education by creating pathways for adult learners to succeed in postsecondary and workforce preparation efforts leading to sustainable employment. He serves as the state executive director of adult education for Louisiana and represents the WorkReady U initiative to the public as well as state and federal agencies, business and industry representatives, and community partners.

Prior to joining the LCTCS team as the executive director of WorkReady U, Sean served as state coordinator for Accelerating Opportunity. Prior to his service on the Accelerating Opportunity initiative, Sean worked at Delgado Community College in New Orleans for almost 15 years. He has experience in academic and student services, in addition to noncredit/workforce development and advocacy. He has served as the director of teacher and adult education, regional director of the Tech Prep Consortium, and enrollment advisor. Sean was the coauthor of Louisiana’s first statewide community college block transfer degree and the founding director of the adult education program at Delgado Community College.

ISRAEL DAVID MENDOZA

Israel David Mendoza, one of eleven children in a farmworker family, worked for Cesar Chavez and the United Farmworkers Union. He started with the Employment Security Department in 1972 as a participant in the Emergency Employment Act program as a seasonal assistant interviewer. He worked his way up to acting commissioner in 1990. During that time, he worked on welfare reform, employment and training programs, business resource programs, policy development, communications, legislative activities, and constituent relationships for the Employment Security Department. He has been the Washington State Director of Adult Basic Education at the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges since 1996. He is past chair of the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education.

Mendoza is a graduate of the Program for Senior Executives in state and local government at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. He attended Washington State University and received a B.A. from Evergreen State College, where he emphasized studies in economics and minority business development.

TALEAH MITCHELL

Taleah Mitchell is a 26-year-old Gypsy-American and proud first-generation college student at Seattle Central Community College. She is a graduate of the amazing I-BEST program. Since completion, Taleah has gone on to be the Executive of Student Issues and Concerns on the Associated Student Council and sits on many different boards, such as the Foundation scholarship board at SCCC. She believes strongly in the power education has to change the world and is pursuing a double major in Women and Gender Studies as well as Computer Science.

LINDA MUÑOZ

Linda Muñoz is the Senior Program Director of Adult and Developmental Education for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

MARIA MUÑOZ

Maria Muñoz was born in Sunnyside, WA, to a lively family of eight. She left high school in the 12th grade to work a full-time job to support herself and her husband. She worked for
six years at a number of jobs, in each starting at the bottom and working her way up, but she wanted more. After several years of hard work and searching, Maria realized that to improve life for herself and her daughter, she needed to go back to school and get her GED. So, she took that first step back into the classroom. It was perhaps the hardest step she’d taken in a long time, but she made it and was now on her way to getting her GED.

In class one day, she saw a presentation about I-BEST and immediately knew that she wanted to join the program. “One of the biggest draws was the fact that there would be two teachers,” she said. After being out of the classroom for so long, and never having taken college classes before, the idea of having extra support and an Academic Skills Class played a crucial role in her decision. She enrolled in the Office Assistant Certificate Program, which offered the skills she wanted to continue her education and improve her employment choices.

Now, just one year after taking that big step back into the classroom, Maria has completed her GED, earned an Office Assistant Certificate, is on her way to another certificate in Accounting, and plans to earn an Associate’s in Business Technology Systems in the next year. Not bad for a girl from little Sunnyside, WA. “Having the extra support of I-BEST has made it doable for me. I don’t know how else I would have done it.”

**LUCRETIA MURPHY**

Lucretia Murphy is a program director in the Building Economic Opportunity Group at Jobs for the Future, helping low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Dr. Murphy’s work focuses on place-based initiatives developing integrated education and workforce development pathways that enable young people and adults to earn credentials that are in high demand in their local economy. This work also includes addressing structural barriers to success for low-income and minority individuals. Prior to working for JFF, Dr. Murphy was the executive director of the See Forever Foundation and Maya Angelou Schools. As executive director, Dr. Murphy oversaw the operations of three schools—a middle school, high school, and school for young adults aged 16-24—that served young people either at risk of or who had already dropped out of school. In this role, Dr. Murphy also served on policy and program committees with district agencies to develop policies to support the success of opportunity youth in the District of Columbia. Prior to serving as executive director, Dr. Murphy worked for JFF advancing community efforts to improve outcomes for opportunity youth. Dr. Murphy did research and programming for the Kellogg Forum for Higher Education for the Public Good at the University of Michigan. Dr. Murphy has a Ph.D. in Higher Education Policy from the University of Michigan, a J.D. From the University of Texas at Austin, and a B.S.F.S in International Politics, Law and Organization from Georgetown University.

**SHERRY ORGAN**

Sherry Organ is currently the Coordinator of Career Pathways at Arkansas State University-Beebe. Career Pathways is a grant-funded program that works to remove barriers so that students with children can go to college. She also serves as the co-coordinator for the Accelerating Opportunity program that was implemented last year.

Sherry’s background includes 16 years in public school as an elementary classroom teacher and principal. She also spent 5 years as adult education instructor as well as 7 years working in Career Pathways.

Sherry received a BSE in Early Childhood/Elementary Education and a MSE in Administration from Arkansas State University.

**KATHY PETZ**

Kathy Petz is the Adult Education/Accelerating Opportunity Director at Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson Kansas. She is the Adult Education representative on the Local Workforce Investment Board, serving as chair of the Youth Committee.

**NATASHA RICHARDS**

Natasha Richards is the Coordinator of Adult Education at Arkansas State University-Beebe. She has worked in the adult education department for over 12 years. Mrs. Richards serves as the secretary for the AR Adult Education state advisory council. She is also the co-coordinator of the Accelerating Opportunity program, where she is responsible for promotion of the program, budgeting, and providing adult education instruction.

Mrs. Richards earned an undergraduate degree in Agriculture Business and a graduate degree in Business Administration from ASU. She earned a second graduate degree in adult education from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, and is a licensed AR adult education instructor.

**MELISSA SADLER-NITU**

Melissa Sadler-Nitu is the I-BEST and Adult Education Director in San Antonio, TX. Prior to working for Alamo Colleges, she served as Director of Adult Basic Education in the Guadalupe,
Comal, and Kendall County area. Her program provided services to 1,200+ adult learners annually. She attributes program success to stellar professional development. She has created curriculum and professional development for career and educational pathways. This PD spans the beginning levels of ESL to college and careers.

Ms. Sadler-Nitu’s program consistently meets 100% of their performance measures. She has over 15 years experience teaching and serving all levels of ESL, Adult Basic Education, and at-risk youth from dual language homes. She has been successfully transitioning these students into higher education and the workplace throughout her career.

MARLENE SELTZER

Marlene Seltzer is president and CEO of Jobs for the Future. With the goal of helping more Americans obtain the skills they need to succeed in today’s economy, JFF has grown since its founding in 1984 to become one of the nation’s leading research and policy development organizations focused on education and workforce strategies. Ms. Seltzer launched a Washington, DC, office to significantly augment JFF’s capacity to affect federal policy. She also has enhanced JFF’s research activities to give new ideas and practices room to grow, at the same time focusing the organization and its partners on results that lead to measurable outcomes. A nationally recognized thought leader, Ms. Seltzer is a frequent consultant and speaker on systemic reforms in secondary and postsecondary education and the ability of the labor market to serve low-income workers, employers, and local and state economies. Her commentaries and other writing help the nation think in new ways about policy and program delivery at all levels of government. Ms. Seltzer’s expertise is sought after not only in the United States but abroad as well.

Before joining JFF in 1996, Ms. Seltzer held a number of prominent positions in nonprofit management, government, and the field of workforce development. From 1987 to 1989, she was commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training, after serving as deputy commissioner for four years. She administered MA’s $1 billion federal- and state-funded employment and training programs. As president of Seltzer Associates, a for-profit consulting firm, Ms. Seltzer provided policy development assistance to the U.S. Department of Labor on its workforce development initiatives. She also served as co-founder and president of Employment Resources, Inc., a nonprofit, community-based workforce development organization. Ms. Seltzer serves on the boards of the Boston Children’s Museum; WomenWork!, a national policy and advocacy organization working for the economic equity and advancement of women; and the Rural Policy Research Institute, which provides unbiased analysis and information on the challenges, needs, and opportunities facing rural America. Ms. Seltzer holds a B.A. in urban economics and American history from American University, an M.A. in labor economics from Northeastern University, and a certificate from the Harvard University Employment and Training Institute.

MONIQUE SHEEN

Monique Sheen manages Jobs for the Future projects that help low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. She provides training, technical assistance, research, and analysis to Accelerating Opportunity, a national initiative to redesign Adult Basic Education programs to ensure that more underprepared adults gain marketable skills and achieve credentials that lead to family-supporting employment. Ms. Sheen also co-developed and delivered training for the Virtual Career Network and provided research and project management support for Breaking Through and Jobs to Careers.

DARLENE SNIDER

Darlene Snider is dean of Transitional Studies at Walla Walla Community College. She oversees a large program with multiple areas, including Adult Basic Education, developmental education, I-BEST, and On Ramp to I-BEST. Her goal is to create highly successful programs for basic skills and developmental students, as she sees education as the very best way to ensure that adults have every opportunity to contribute to their communities as engaged citizens, engaged and empowered parents, and highly skilled workers.

LISA SORICONE

Lisa Soricone serves on Jobs for the Future’s Building Economic Opportunity Group, helping low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Specifically, she helps evaluate the success of programs that help adults succeed in community college, such as Accelerating Opportunity and the Adult Degree Completion Project. Before joining JFF, Dr. Soricone was a research and evaluation analyst at Commonwealth Corporation where she evaluated workforce development programs in MA, including the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund and the MA Learn at Work Program. Before that, she served as research associate for the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, where she coauthored a series of guides for training adult education practitioners on how to integrate health
literacy skill development into ABE/ESOL. Dr. Soricone has a doctorate in Community Education and Lifelong Learning from Harvard University, a Master’s in International Education (also from Harvard), a degree in literature, linguistics, and French as a foreign language from Université Paul Valery in France, and a Bachelor’s in French and political science from Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

REECIE STAGNOLIA

As KYAE’s associate vice president, Reecie Stagnolia provides support to the vice president and leadership in administrative areas, including contract and agreements, budget, finance, policy development and legislative issues.

Reecie has been part of the adult education team for 14 years and has served in several capacities. He is a graduate of the University of Kentucky with a degree in business administration.

Reecie’s great passion for adult education comes from personal experience. “I’ve seen firsthand the impact of obtaining a GED, transitioning to postsecondary education, becoming successful in the workplace and impacting a local community for many years,” he said. “That describes my father. What we do every day is so important because it ripples on many lives for years to come.”

Reecie lives in Lexington with his wife, Kathi, 14-year old son, Matthew, and 11-year old daughter, Kaitlyn. He spends his free time volunteering as president of the local Babe Ruth baseball league and as an elder in his church.

AMANDA VANHOOK

Amanda Vanhook currently serves as the Success Coach for Accelerating Opportunity at Somerset Community College. Amanda has a Bachelor’s degree in general studies from Eastern Kentucky University. She started her education at SCC before transferring to EKU. Amanda has worked as a testing administrator and GED examiner for the past three years in the assessment center at SCC. Her familiarity with the college system, along with various community partnerships, gives her a great advantage in coaching the students in Accelerating Opportunity.

JEFF WHITEHEAD

Jeff Whitehead is the executive director of the Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program, Inc. (EKCEP) and its Local Workforce Investment Board, which provide workforce and employer services to 23 rural Appalachian counties in Eastern Kentucky. Jeff has led various aspects of operations at EKCEP for more than 23 years, including the last six as executive director.

In times of surging unemployment rates and shrinking budgets, Jeff is working to ensure his agency becomes more relevant than ever to jobseekers and employers across its service area by being nimble, creative, and responsive in its approach to delivering its array of services—which operate with the mission to prepare, advance, and expand the workforce of Eastern KY.

To build this relevance, Jeff is embracing new partnerships and service strategies that better align workforce development with the needs of the region’s employers needs by addressing recognized skills gaps with targeted, customized training. By doing so, he believes workforce development can prove itself an invaluable catalyst toward local and regional economic development.

JAN YOSHIWARA

Jan Yoshiwara currently serves as Deputy Executive Director of Education Division at the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. She has been with the State Board since 1984. Her primary responsibility is education policy on behalf of the community and technical college system. She works with college presidents and vice presidents for instruction and for student services, university provosts, state superintendent of public instruction, legislators, and governor’s policy staff on education goals, strategies, and policy for the community and technical college system. Areas of responsibility include workforce development, Adult Basic Education, academic transfer, eLearning, student services, student achievement, and education research. She received her B.S. in Zoology from the University of California, Davis, and a M.Ed. from Western Washington University.