NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

Community College Strategies to Serve Adults in Transition: Dislocated Workers, Older Job Seekers, and Job Seekers with Disabilities

November 14, 2012

Audio Dial-In Information

866.740.1260

Access Code: 9324100

Closed Captioning

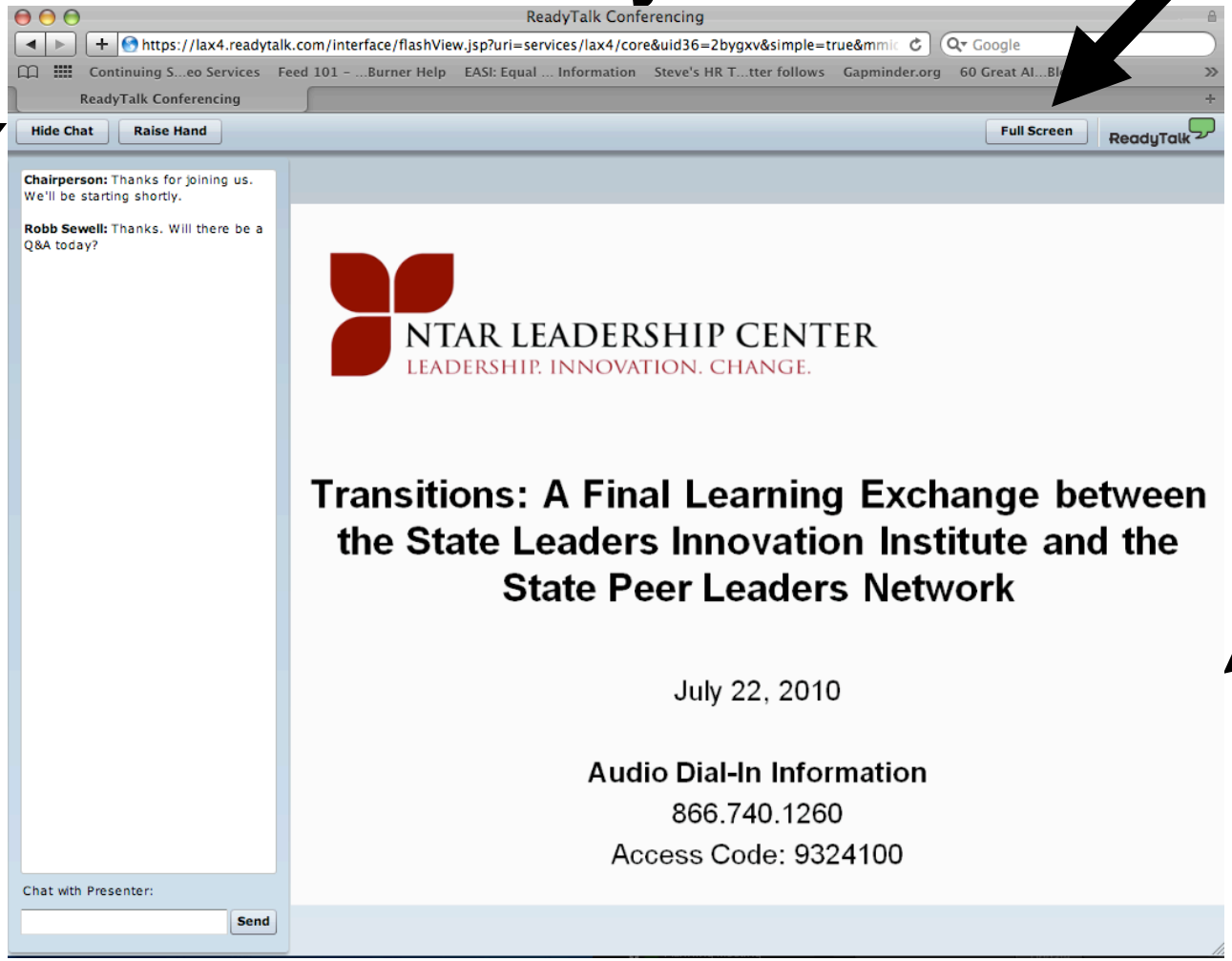
- For closed captioning of this webinar, please open the following link in a separate browser window:

http://www.ccproductions.com/ccp_streaming.asp?event=Rutgers

NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

Webinar Classroom Layout

Select **Full Screen** to maximize presentation; minimizes chat feature



Use **Hide Chat** for a cleaner, uncluttered webinar

Use **Chat box** to communicate with chairperson

Presentation Slide Area

Access to Webinar Materials

- A direct link to the webinar materials, including web and audio content, will be posted on the NTAR Leadership Center Web site by 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time, Thursday, November 15, 2012.

www.ntarcenter.org

The NTAR Leadership Center

- Established in September 2007 through a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP).

- A collaboration of partners with expertise in workforce and economic development, disability employment, financial education and asset building, and leadership development.

- Created for the purpose of building capacity and leadership at the federal, state, and local levels to enable change across workforce development and disability-specific systems that will increase employment for adults with disabilities.

Guiding Principles

- Increasing partnerships and collaboration among and across generic and disability-specific systems.
- Increasing the use of self-direction in services, and integration of funding across and among systems.
- Increasing economic self-sufficiency through leveraging work incentives, financial education, or other strategies that promote profitable employment and asset building.
- Increasing the use of universal design in employment services and as a framework for employment policy.
- Increasing the use of customized and other forms of flexible work options for individuals with disabilities and others with barriers to employment.

Presenters

- Dr. Michelle Van Noy, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
- Maria Heidkamp, Heldrich Center for Workforce Development
- Dr. James Shanahan, Shanahan Resources Inc.

Economic Climate for Postsecondary Education Among Adults

- Older workers (55+) — a growing proportion of the labor force — have lower unemployment rates than younger/prime-age adults but are at higher risk for long-term unemployment.
- Many job seekers are turning to community college education and training as part of their reemployment effort.
- How are community colleges serving older students, including dislocated workers and older students who may have disabilities?

Older Job Seekers and Community Colleges

- Older job seekers and dislocated workers may benefit from attending community colleges but have unique needs:
  - Financial and family pressures — need to get back to work quickly, may face greater barriers external to schooling
  - Been out of school for a long time — may be reluctant to return, have basic skills challenges, and need guidance and transition assistance
  - Need for education to be relevant to immediate work needs and to relate to prior experiences
  - May have age-related disabilities, which may affect their chance for success in school

Review of Research on Community College Practices to Serve Adults

Community Colleges and Adults

- Numerous initiatives to serve adults at community colleges

- Many target specific sub-populations of adults:
  - Dislocated workers
  - Incumbent workers, including underemployed
  - Low-skill adults
  - Near completers
  - Older adults

- Community colleges have a long tradition of serving a range of adult populations, yet questions exist about how to best do so

Methods

- All research publications on “adults” and “community colleges” from 2007 to July 2012
- Study methodologies were assessed and coded as rigorous or descriptive
- Rigorous methods determine the effect of a college program on students using student-level data and causal methods (either experimental designs or designs with a comparison group and strong statistical controls)
- Degree of evidence was assessed across studies for individual community college practices

An Assessment of the Evidence on How Community Colleges Serve Adults

- Most research does not use rigorous methods with some exceptions

- I-BEST research
  - The I-BEST model includes contextualized basic skills instruction, strong labor market alignment, career pathways development, and student supports and counseling
  - Analysis with rigorous comparison group using multiple statistical techniques found improved educational outcomes among I-BEST students

- Financial aid research
  - Opening Doors experiment — flexible financial aid provided throughout the semester leads to improved student retention
  - Performance-Based Scholarship Program experiment — flexible scholarship funds linked to performance lead to improved outcomes

A Review of Practices to Improve How Community Colleges Serve Adults

- Review college practices in the existing research to determine which are most common as an indication of the extent to which they are promising.
- Most initiatives use multiple strategies to address adults' needs to improve how community colleges serve adults.
- However, determining which sets of strategies to use is a challenge.

Practices to Make Instruction Relevant to Work and Adults' Prior Experiences

- Key practices include:
  - Labor market alignment
  - Multiple entry and exit points
  - Contextual instruction
  - Prior learning assessments

- Despite rich knowledge on their implementation, little is known about the impacts on student outcomes

Practices to Help Ease Adults Transition to College

- Key practices include:
  - Dedicated advising and counseling
  - Proactive and comprehensive advising and counseling
  - Assistance in selecting a major to ensure a good match between adults' skills and interests and labor market demands

- Challenges persist in finding resources to provide this support and assessing its impact on students

Practices to Address the External Time Pressures in the Lives of Adults

- Key practices include:
  - Flexibility in the timing of courses
  - Allow for online instruction
  - Offer accelerated learning

- Need for an examination of the possible trade-offs of these practices

Practices to Address the Stresses that Arise from Life Outside of School

- Key practices include:
  - Student supports in the form of financial support are most commonly mentioned
  - Students supports for low-income adults such as case management, transportation, child care, mental health services
- Financial support provided in a flexible manner is linked to improved outcomes; more research is needed on other practices
- Challenges exist in offering support in the context of limited funds

Implementation Issues and Lessons

- Relationships are key to implementing these reforms
- Internal relationships in the college require:
  - Clear communication and collaborative relationships
  - Investments in college staff, including professional development and communities of practice
- Partnerships with businesses, Workforce Investment Boards, and community-based organizations are key external relationships
- Need for more research on adults at community colleges that is designed at the outset of the initiative and focuses on sub-groups of adults, like dislocated workers and near completers

Research on Community Colleges and Older Students with Disabilities

Older Students with Disabilities and Community Colleges

- Older students face a range of disabilities, both identified and unidentified, that may affect their education

- How do community colleges serve the needs of older students with disabilities?
  - How do they identify older students with disabilities?
  - How do they address the needs of these students?

Methods

- Selected community colleges with the highest enrollment of students with disabilities, > 8 percent of students reported a disability
- Reviewed college Web sites
- Conducted interviews with community college staff in disabilities services offices at 20 community colleges

Identification of Older Students with Disabilities

- Older students are less likely to identify themselves as having a disability prior to attending college than younger students, but are more likely to self-report than younger students.
- Many older students went to school pre-IDEA and did not benefit from improved assessment and documentation.
- Many older students may not identify themselves as having a disability and may not take advantage of disability services.

Awareness Among Faculty and Staff

- Education and awareness is essential to help faculty and staff better serve older students with unidentified disabilities.

- Outreach and training for faculty and staff helped increase awareness of disabilities.

- Training on the behavioral clues or signs and symptoms of "hidden disabilities" included:
  - how to identify students with disabilities,
  - how to appropriately and legally refer students to the disability services office, and
  - how the students' disabilities may affect their learning.

Strategies to Identify Older Students with Disabilities

- Faculty and staff members, particularly tutors, can have a critical role in identifying older community college students with disabilities who might benefit from targeted support services.
- "Early alert" systems enable faculty to identify and refer struggling older students who may have an unidentified disability to the disability services office.
- Placement tests present an opportunity to identify older students with unknown disabilities.
- Efforts to raise awareness about different "learning styles" may help identify older students with disabilities.

Strategies to Serve Older Students with Disabilities

- Strategies to help older students access costly assessment services are important.

- Staff with specialized knowledge on the use of assistive technology may be particularly important to ensure its availability to older students with disabilities.

Case Study Research on Community Colleges and Dislocated Workers

Community Colleges and Dislocated Workers

- Dislocated workers are thought to bring unique needs to community colleges since many are older, have been out of school for a long time, and are in need of job transition assistance.

- Little research in the current economic environment has been done on the extent to which dislocated workers at community colleges have these specific needs and how community colleges are addressing them.

- Need to first identify key practices for further rigorous analysis.

Methods

- In-depth case studies of five community colleges with reputations for serving dislocated workers in states with high numbers of dislocation

  - Macomb Community College, Warren, MI
  - Lorain County Community College, Elyria, OH
  - Skyline College, San Bruno, CA
  - Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte, NC
  - Portland Community College, Portland, OR

- Interviews with college staff (credit and noncredit, counseling staff, and displaced worker program staff where applicable)

Research Questions

- How do dislocated workers come to enroll at community colleges?
- To what extent do dislocated workers have unique needs compared to other community colleges students? How do community colleges address these needs?
- How do dislocated workers select programs of study at community colleges? How do community colleges help guide these choices to help dislocated workers gain skills to become reemployed?
- What are the implications for older students of colleges' strategies to serve dislocated workers?

Encouraging Enrollment: Reaching Older Dislocated Workers

- **Partnerships with the public workforce system** help colleges reach dislocated workers:
  - Portland Community College is the region's WIA provider.
  - Lorain County Community College has a satellite One-Stop co-located on the college's campus.
  - Central Piedmont Community College's Re-Careering Services Center participates in Rapid Response.

- **CBOs refer students** to community colleges:
  - Skyline College gets referrals from veterans groups like *Swords to Plowshares.*

Encouraging Enrollment: Reaching Older Dislocated Workers

- Colleges **target marketing and events** to dislocated workers:
  - Macomb Community College's Adult Return to Learn events
  - Lorain County Community College's "Stimulate Your Career" orientations

✓ ***Colleges report that motivating dislocated workers to enroll soon after their layoff remains a challenge***.

Providing Career Guidance and Counseling to Workers in Transition

- Providing **dedicated, front-end counseling** for dislocated workers can support these and other older workers' needs but is limited by college resources:
  - Lorain County Community College provides support through the **Adult Transitions Program**.
  - Central Piedmont Community College's **Re-Careering Services Center** provides counseling to help dislocated professionals choose new careers.

✓ ***Both are supported by external grant funds and may be difficult to sustain.***

Providing Career Guidance and Counseling to Workers in Transition

- **Online and self-service tools** can equip some older dislocated workers with relevant information to help guide their choices:
  - Portland Community College has an online **Road Map** for each of its **Career Pathways.**

Academic and Personal Support for Older Dislocated Workers

- Strategies, such as **stackable credentials and embedded basic skills**, address the academic and financial constraints of older dislocated workers:
  - **Skyline College's stackable credentials** help job seekers acquire job training and contextualized basic skills to return to work quickly. Model relies on cohorts and multiple exit and entry points.
  - **Central Piedmont Community College's Emporium Math** offers modularized and customized remediation. Students only take courses in the areas of math where testing has shown that they need assistance.
  - **Portland Community College's "Bridge to Healthcare"** is a one-term, non-credit course targeted to career changers that integrates basic reading, writing, and math with an overview of high-demand health professions.

Academic and Personal Support for Older Dislocated Workers

- **Flexible financial support** can help older dislocated workers facing financial stress due to long-term unemployment.
  - CLASP/AACC **Benefits Access for College Completion**:
    - Skyline College's **SparkPoint Center** is a one-stop site where students access services for career development, employment, asset building, and public benefits.
    - Macomb Community College will build on the **Michigan Benefits Access Initiative** and **Dreamkeepers Emergency Assistance Fund** for non-academic financial emergencies (housing, auto repairs, gas, food, energy).
  - Lorain County Community College's **Success Pass**: Faculty are trained to identify students who are struggling financially and whose academic success might be enhanced by small amounts of cash ($25 to $100) to help with small but necessary financial needs.

Serving Adult Workers Who Lost Jobs During the Great Recession

A Holistic Model

Lorain County Community College

Realistic Plans to Sustain Principles and Practices

Partnership with Public Workforce System

- Agreement on In-Demand and High-Growth Jobs and Careers
- Joint Outreach and Recruitment Processes (Stimulate Your Career)
- Agreement on Required Career Discovery and Decision (Embedded in Stimulate Your Career)
- Leveraged Financial Sources and Scholarships (Embedded in Stimulate Your Career)
- Joint Use of Centralized Client Data Management System
- Coordinated Approaches to Employment Preparation, Job Search Assistance, and Business Services

Integrated Student Services

- Career Decision Informs Education and Employment Plans
- Personalized and Coordinated Intake (applications, assessments, financial aid, and admissions processing) and Student Support (post enrollment through completion)
- Internal Student Referral Protocols
- Early Alert Systems on Student Academic Progress
- Leveraged Supportive Services (Campus-based and external)

Academic Innovations

- Cohort Training (Faculty Engagement in Student Support)
- Job Search Strategies and Career Services Embedded in Academic Program (credit-bearing)
- Prior Learning Assessments
- Effective Academic Catch-Up
- Customized Career Pathways
- Accelerated and/or Fast Track Technical Training

Who Were These Adults in Transition?

- Initially, most were over 45 years of age; by Year 3, most were under 45.
- They were workers who recently lost jobs, were not working, and came to the college to help them with career change.
- They are a mix of workers with no postsecondary experience and those with degrees, or at least completed some college.

What are Basic Outcomes?

As of September 30, 2012:

- 458 transitioning adults had been accepted into the Adult Transitions Program.
- Year 1 was largest cohort of 195 due to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.
- In three years or less, 63% of 2009-2010 students complete their credential.
- Another 14% are still progressing for a total 53% overall either completed or are still working toward a credential.

So Why are Students No Longer Progressing?

- Of the 174 stop-out students, we were able to reach two-thirds of them to discover why they stopped out.
- Taking a job was predominate reason for stopping out of college — 52%
- Personal issues and never starting at Lorain County Community College accounted for rest.

What About Completion?

- 35% of 2009 class already completed degree in three years or less — an impressive result for Lorain County Community College students; 77% have completed their certificates.

- Even with less time in which to complete, completion is issue for certificate seekers, especially after Year 1.

- Completion rate of degree seekers fell to 11% by Year 2, but with one less year in which to complete.

Outreach to Displaced Workers in Partnership with One-Stop

- Stimulate Your Career one-hour orientation for displaced workers to stimulate and challenge them to prepare for gaining reemployment through training and access of job search resources available at LCCC and One-Stop.

- Attended by over 1,000 displaced workers each year.

- Designed as first step in their decisions.

But, Did They Get a Job?

As of September 30, 2012

- 97 of 155 student completers found jobs (63%).
- Jobs were in IT, Manufacturing, and Office Support occupations.
- Half of these jobs were directly linked to major completed — training related.

New Job Requirements

According to those who found jobs:

- A college degree was not a factor in their getting the job.
- About one-third of the jobs required an industry or occupational credential or licensure.
- About a third of those hired said that the education completed at Lorain County Community College was a factor in their being hired.

Main Reason for Taking a Job

- Opportunity to learn and advance — 22%
- Needed a job — 20%
- Good salary and benefits — 17%
- Experience so I can get a better job —15%

Most say they are using skills they learned at Lorain County Community College on their job, at least occasionally.

Shortcoming of Job

About half of those taking jobs noted these shortcomings:

- Earn a lot less
- No health benefits
- Job is temporary
- Not challenging

Yet most say they are satisfied with job while half say they are still looking for a (better) job.

Student Overall Rating of ATP

- 77% say they are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with efforts of Lorain County Community College to help them achieve their goals and overcome barriers.

- 73% say they are very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with how well Lorain County Community College and ATP prepared them for the job they now have.

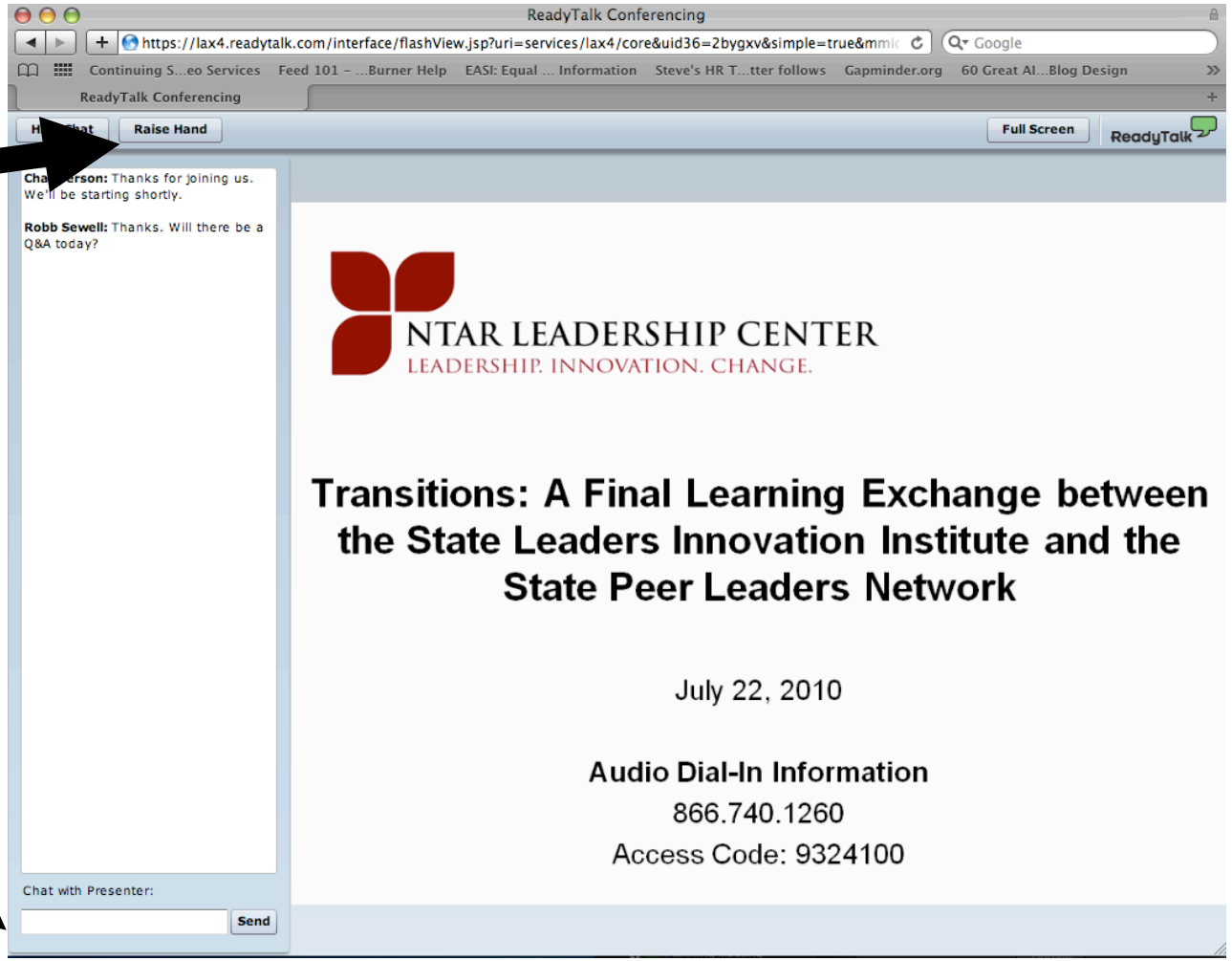
Student Centered-Process: Critical Elements to Success

- Build the pipeline of students from adults motivated to achieve career employment and advancement.
- Design and deliver education and training based on competencies that employers emphasize and value when filling internships and job openings.
- Success of student hinges on their making a career and educational choice early on, and interventions to ensure academic success that culminates in completion and job placement.
- College assumes primary role to connect employers with students who are successfully completing education and training and are employer-ready.

NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

Submitting Questions for Q&A

Click **Raise Hand**



Use **Chat Box** to send your question(s) to the chairperson

Question-and-Answer Period

NTAR LEADERSHIP CENTER
LEADERSHIP. INNOVATION. CHANGE.

NTAR Leadership Center Web site

www.ntarcenter.org