



## INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLES

### Lessons Learned and Innovative Strategies

In June 2019, America's Promise held the first set of industry roundtable calls focused on peer-to-peer sharing. Grantees shared promising practices and strategies to address challenges and opportunities in expanding regional workforce partnerships, leveraging and aligning resources, upskilling incumbent workers, and retaining participants until job placement. All of these areas can help cultivate strong sector partnerships to help meet local workforce needs and impact economic development.

#### WISDOM FROM THE CROWD

*General lessons learned and promising practices shared by grantees during the roundtable calls.*

##### **Have the employer at the table from the beginning of the program.**

Employers are a valuable source of information and can provide input on the curriculum, employment requirements, and in demand skills in their industry. This will help develop a strong training program that meets the needs of employers.

##### **Keep employers engaged throughout the program through activities such as classroom visits, interactions with students, and employer presentations.**

These activities can have a profound impact on retention in the program, job placements, and retention after job placement. Students gain exposure to the industry and employers while employers become familiar with students and help set expectations for jobs and skills. Interaction between employers and students during the program encourages the students to continue with the program and employers begin to identify students for employment.

##### **Invite employers to be a part of a taskforce, advisory board, or consortium to foster continued engagement and guidance of the program.**

Meet and connect with your employer group regularly to get feedback on training curriculum and provide continual guidance for the program.

##### **Utilize community partners, industry associations, and vendors as intermediaries to engage and build a relationship with employers.**

Reach out to local chapters of industry associations, leverage current community partners, or work with your third-party vendor to connect with local employers. Intermediaries can be a strategic ally to help navigate the industry and assist with employer engagement and job placements.

##### **Utilize social media and traditional media, such as radio and newspapers, for recruitment.**

These tools can inform the public of your program and contribute to recruitment efforts. Disseminating information about the program through a variety of outlets can increase recruitment.

##### **Implement earn and learn models to help participants receive a wage while enrolled in trainings.**

Earn and learn models allow participants to earn a wage while in training. This can remove the stress of not having an income, reduce the need for supportive services, and encourage participants to continue the program while providing hands on experience.

## INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

*Strategies and promising practices shared amongst grantees that were not specific to an industry.*

- ★ Utilize referrals from past participants and success stories as tools for recruitment. – *United Way of Central Iowa*
- ★ Create a Return on Investment (ROI) slide deck to showcase the benefits of the program and employer involvement. – *RFCUNY*
- ★ Align training curriculum and equipment purchases to address employer's needs and job skills for jobseekers. – *West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and Southeast Michigan Community Alliance*
- ★ Invite employers to contribute to the sustainability plan to continue the program after the grant closes. – *Grand Rapids Community College*
- ★ Communicate program objectives to partners frequently and meet regularly to ensure partners understand the program and are working to meet performance measures.
- ★ If you're a community college, work with local workforce development boards on recruitment, intake, and developing apprenticeship programs. – *Monroe Community College and Grand Rapid Community College*

## INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC STRATEGIES



### INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

- ★ Many companies are looking to partner to provide curriculum, help develop curriculum, or provide on-the-job IT related training. These partnerships can help expose participants to in-demand trainings and skills as well as help segue participants into jobs into the IT industry. – *RFCUNY*
- ★ When looking for instructors for IT training programs, think about recruiting students that did well in the training program to be mentored and upskilled as instructors. Also reach out to local coding boot camps and "IT Meet Ups" to recruit instructors. – *CareerSource Brevard*
- ★ There are companies with existing programs in IT that focus on re-entry, apprenticeship, career pathways, and other target areas relevant to your program. Devise a list of companies, reach out to the program contacts by calling or sending an email with program information to engage companies to partner and support your program. – *RFCUNY*



## HEALTHCARE

- ★ Work with the hospital and training provider to identify gaps in the curriculum and make adjustments so that the curriculum aligns with industry and the employer. *Full Employment Council (member of Employ Milwaukee Consortium)*
- ★ Match participants with employers that are able to pay wages so students can earn while they learn. – *Monroe Community College*
- ★ Identify additional funding to enable participants to engage in professional development opportunities and connect with other healthcare professionals. – *United Way of Central Iowa*
- ★ As incumbent workers complete training and move to new positions, work with employers to train under and unemployed participants to fill those new openings.– *Worksystems, Inc.*
- ★ Develop a resource development team that includes healthcare partners to examine ways to sustain programming and potentially have employers co-invest in expanding the program. – *Worksystems, Inc.*



## ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

- ★ Leverage your instructor's and faculty's networks to engage employers and connect students to internships and job placements. – *MiraCosta College*
- ★ Invite employers to the classroom to share actual challenges from their workplace with students and have students use class time to build or prepare solutions that will be shared back with the employer. This allows the students to gain exposure to real-life industry situations and builds the relationship between the student, employer and the program. – *MiraCosta College*
- ★ Increase student engagement in training programs through classroom competitions for industry-related and curriculum-based projects. – *Delaware Technical Community College*
- ★ Employer partners and vendors can help support training programs by offering discounts on equipment and training opportunities or access to facilities for hands-on training. – *Southeast Michigan Community Alliance*