



**Docket Item:**

Oregon Credentials, Acceleration, and Support for Employment (CASE) Grant Update

**Summary:**

In 2011, Clackamas Community College received an \$18.68 million dollar Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant to fund the Oregon Credentials, Acceleration, and Support for Employment (CASE) Consortium. The Consortium includes participation from all of Oregon's 17 community colleges, WorkSource Oregon centers, employers and community partners. The project focuses on three strategies – the enhancement of Career Pathway programs; the use of Career Coaches to reduce barriers to student persistence and completion, and the expansion of Credit for Prior Learning to accelerate student progress and support completion.

The grant is nearing completion and members of the CASE Management Team will present an overview of the grant, lessons learned and outcomes achieved to the Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee.

**Docket Item:**

The following pages include the grant summary as prepared by the CASE Management Team.

# **C|a** credential acceleration and **S|e** support for employment

## **CASE Summary April 2015**

### **CASE overview**

Credentials, Acceleration and Support for Employment (CASE)—a collaborative effort of all 17 Oregon community colleges, the state’s workforce investment boards, the Oregon Employment Department/Trade Act (OED/TAA), the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), employers, and community partners—aims to improve educational and employment outcomes for TAA eligible, unemployed and underemployed workers. To achieve this goal, CASE has advanced three strategies:

- **Career pathways** – Creating new and expanding existing career pathway certificate programs that target emerging and demand occupations and are based on industry driven competencies, and developing adult basic skills/developmental education bridge and career/technical education curricula. One element of this work is engaging employers in education and training programs and work based learning (e.g., work experience, industry tours, on the job training, etc.)
- **Career coaching** – Providing coaching, services, supports, connections to other community college and public and community resources, and job related assistance in order to increase retention, completion, credential attainment, and employment. One element of this work is partnering with the public workforce system.
- **Credit for prior learning** – Increasing use of credit for prior learning as a way to accelerate time to completion and, as a result, employment.

CASE is funded through an \$18.68 million, three year Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant from the US Department of Labor. TAACCCT grants are provided to community colleges and other institutions of higher education to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs that can be completed in two years or less, are suited for workers who are TAA eligible (as well as other unemployed or underemployed workers); and prepare participants for employment in high wage, high skill occupations, while also meeting the needs of employers for skilled workers.

The grant was awarded in September 2011 and, with a no cost extension, runs through September 2015.

### **CASE statewide outcomes**

CASE has served 4,755 participants to date, well over its goal of 3,525. Key demographic characteristics of CASE participants are shown in the table below:

## CASE Participant Demographics

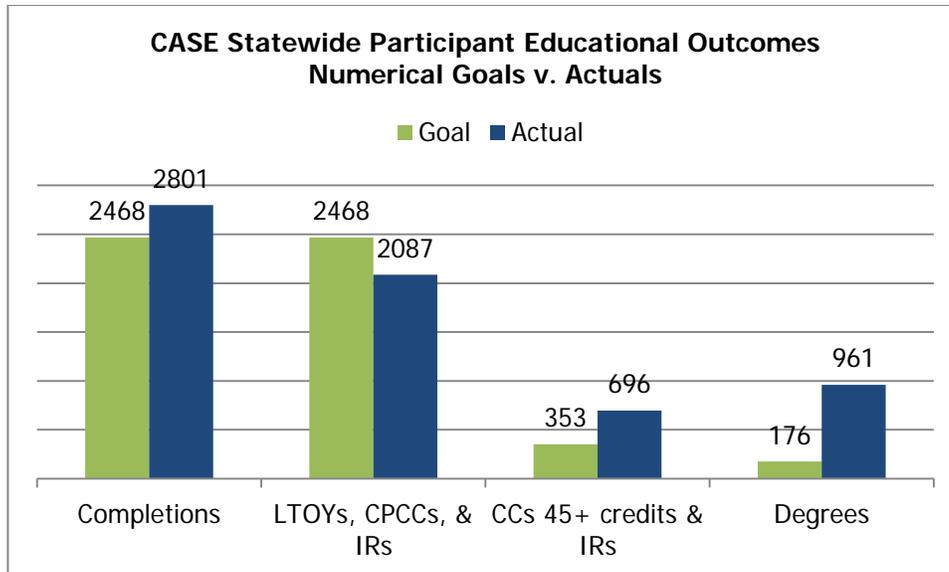
<u>Gender</u>	
Female	54%
Male	46%
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>	
Hispanic/Latino	12%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	4%
Asian	5%
Black/African American	3%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1%
White	75%
More than one race	2%
<u>Age</u>	
Mean age	34
<u>Specific Populations</u>	
Veterans	10%
TAA	6%
Food stamp recipients	28%
Single parents	10%
<u>Educational Attainment (at registration)</u>	
Less than 12 years	6%
High school diploma/GED	47%
Some college (incl. vocational technical)	33%
Associate's degree	7%
Bachelor's degree or more	7%
<u>Employment Status (at registration)</u>	
Unemployed	71%
Incumbent worker	29%
<u>Enrollment Status</u>	
Full-time	73%
Part-time	27%

All data reported in this summary are from I-Trac—the WIA based database CASE has used to track participants, services provided, and outcomes—unless otherwise noted.

### **Educational outcomes**

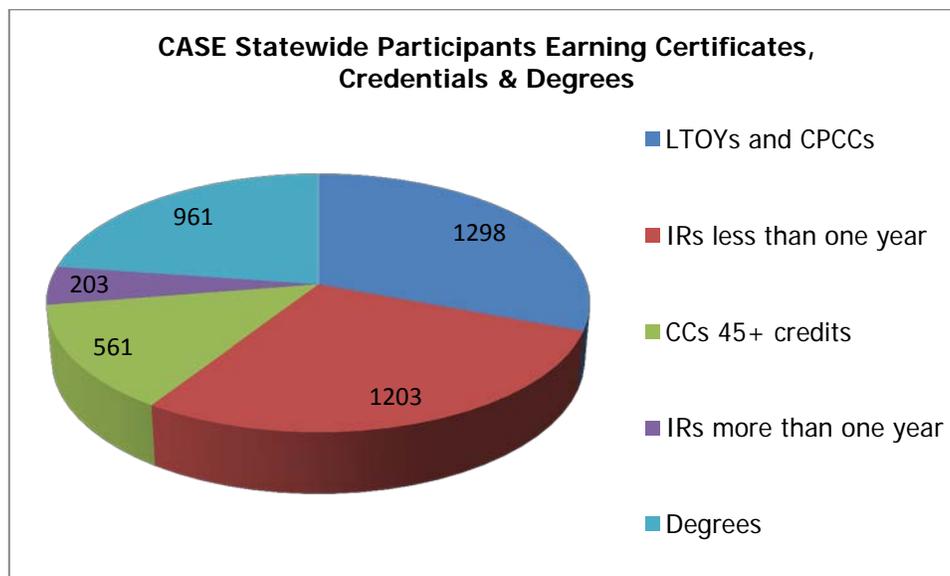
2,087 CASE participants have earned less than one year certificates (LTOYs) and career pathway certificates of completion (CPCCs) of 12-44 credits, and less than one year industry recognized credentials (IRs) to date, as shown in the chart below. 696 have earned certificates of completion of 45 credits or more (CCs 45+ credits) and more than one year industry recognized credentials (IRs), and 961 have earned degrees.

Hundreds of CASE participants have earned more than one certificate or credential and are, therefore, counted more than once in the chart below.



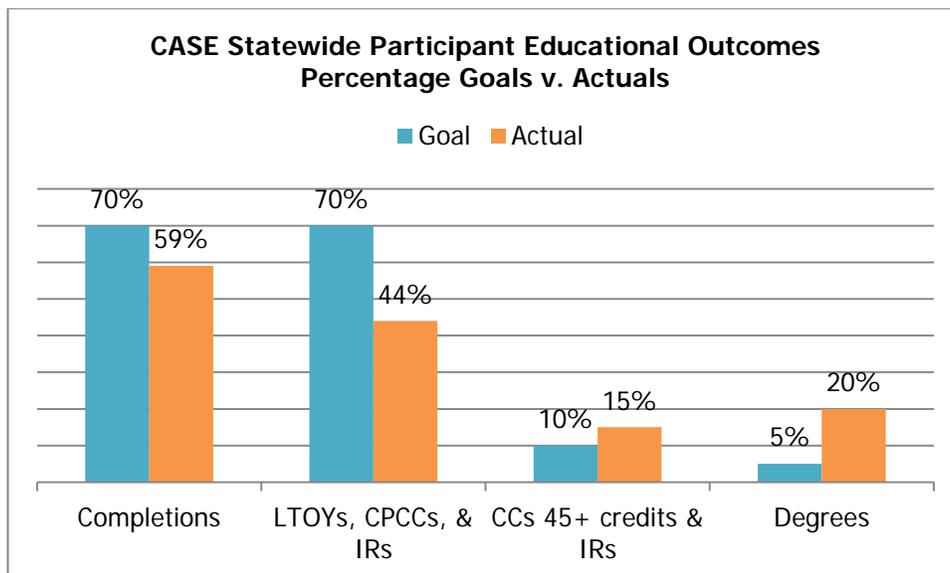
Comparing CASE’s numerical goals to actuals shows CASE has exceeded its goals for CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs, and degrees. However, it’s fallen short of goals for LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs.

Breaking these categories of certificates and credentials down further shows that the highest number of CASE participants have earned LTOYs and CPCCs (1,298), followed by less than one year IRs (1,203), degrees (961), CCs 45+ credits (561), and more than one year IRs (203), as shown in the chart below.



Comparing CASE’s percentage goals to actuals shows that CASE has fallen short of its completion and LTOY, CPCC, and less than one year IR goals, but exceeded its CC 45+ credits and more than one year IR, and degree goals, as shown in the chart below. CASE’s vision was that 70 percent of participants would earn LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs, seeing these certificates and credentials as a way to help the target population get the skills and training needed to either get a high wage, high skill job (for the unemployed) or a better job (for the under-employed); and 10 percent would go on to earn CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs, and 5 percent,

degrees. However, only 44 percent of participants have earned LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs. 15 percent have earned CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs, and 20 percent, degrees.



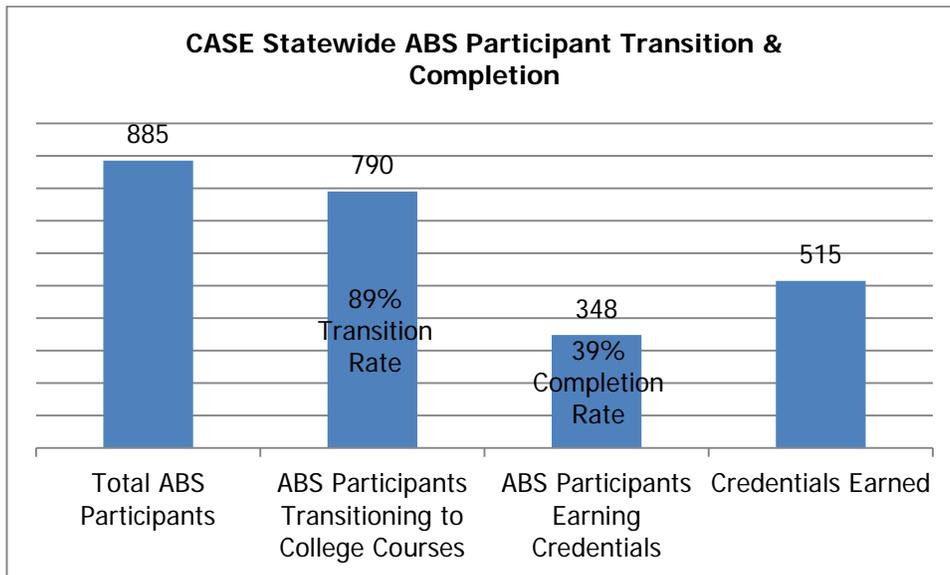
When looking at the percentage goals, not in terms of the entire CASE population, but of those who have earned certificates and credentials, 73 percent have earned LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs; 24 percent CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs; and 34 percent degrees.

Overall, 59 percent of participants have completed a program to date, compared to CASE's goal of 70 percent. The remaining 41 percent have exited without completing a program, are still enrolled in a program, or are continuing their education and training after having completed a program. Further analysis will be done as part of the CASE evaluation.

A number of factors have had an impact on the lower than projected percent of CASE participants earning LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs and the higher than projected percent earning CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs, and degrees. These include:

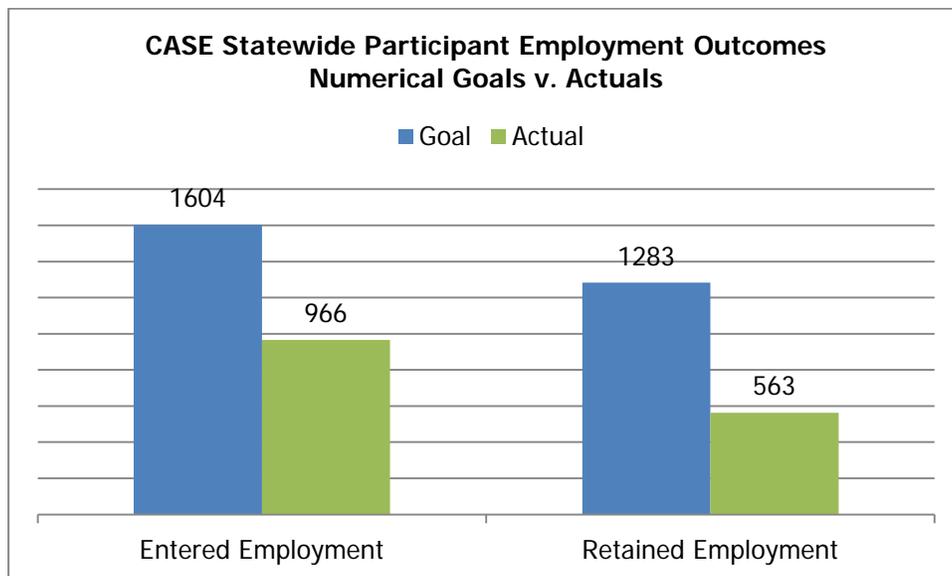
- Enrollment of CASE participants from programs across the board – LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs; CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs; and degrees.
- Enrollment of CASE participants at different points in the educational process, with some enrolled as they started their programs and others as they were about to complete them.
- Difficulty identifying students with the specific intent of an LTOY, CPCC, or less than one year IR.
- Financial aid eligibility for those identifying an LTOY, CPCC, or less than one year IR as their goal. (This issue is discussed in greater detail in the CASE Strategies section below.)

One specific population targeted by CASE is those in need of adult basic skills (ABS) training, with the goal of increasing their rate of transitioning to college level courses and earning credentials. For CASE, ABS participants include those enrolled in the following types of training: ABE, bridge class, ENL, ESL, GED, I-BEST, OPABS, and VESL. About 19 percent of all CASE participants have enrolled in ABS, as shown in the chart below. 89 percent of these participants have transitioned to college level courses and 39 percent have earned credentials. (Promising practices for helping with the ABS transition and completion are identified in the CASE Strategies section below.)



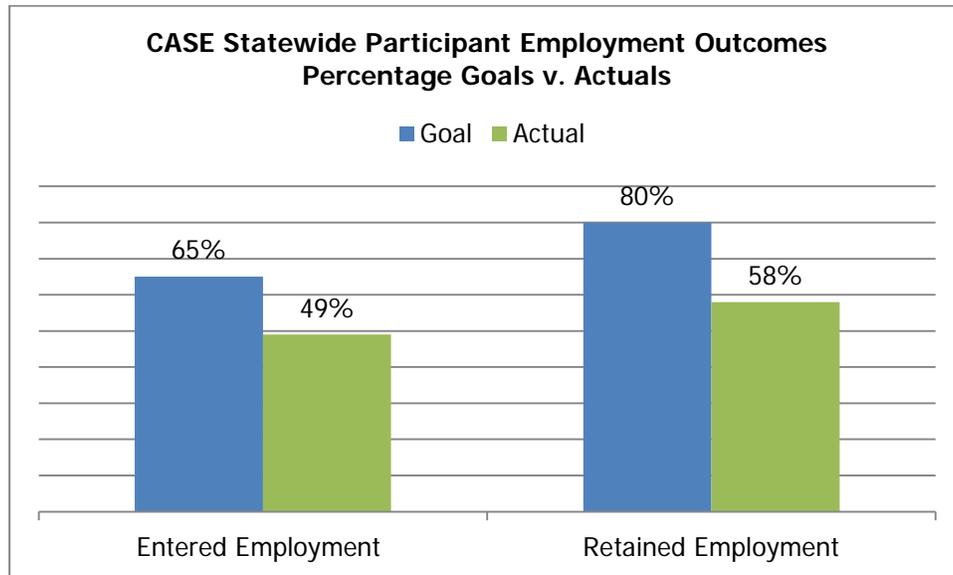
### Employment outcomes

So far, 966 CASE participants who were unemployed at registration have obtained jobs and 563 have retained them, as shown in the chart below. CASE participants are counted as having entered employment if they are unemployed at registration and get a job in their first quarter after exit. They are counted as having retained employment if they remain employed in their second and third quarters after exit. These numbers are short of CASE’s goals.



Comparing CASE’s percentage goals to actuals shows that CASE has also fallen short of its entered employment goal (49 versus 65 percent of completers) and retained employment goal (58 versus 80 percent), as shown in the chart below. One major factor affecting CASE’s employment outcomes is the state’s economy, which has been marked by persistently high unemployment, especially in the rural areas. The way in which the 17 community colleges have implemented CASE is also likely a factor – who has been served (e.g., those whose immediate interest is in earning an LTOY, CPCC, or less than one year IR, and getting a job versus those interested in

getting an associate's degree and beyond), what services and supports have been provided, how employer and workforce system partners have been engaged, etc. This will be explored further in CASE's final evaluation report. (Some promising practices for connecting people to jobs are identified in the CASE Strategies section below.)



Oregon Employment Department Unemployment Insurance (UI) wage match data allow for a more in depth look at the employment and earnings of CASE participants, both those who were unemployed at registration and those who were incumbent workers. (Data presented here are for CASE's first two years – 2011-12 and 2012-13. Data for all three years will be included in the final CASE evaluation report.)

### Unemployed

- 469 CASE participants who were unemployed at the start got jobs their first quarter after exit – 29 percent of CASE's three year target of 1,604.
- 66 percent got jobs their first quarter after exit, compared to a target of 65 percent.
- 85 percent retained their jobs, compared to a target of 80 percent.
- Median hourly wages were \$12.06 an hour for 2011-12 and \$13.30 an hour for 2012-13, compared to a target of \$16.84.
- Employment and wage rates vary by region, as shown in the table below.

	<u>Employed</u>	<u>Exited</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Median Wage</u>
Metro Region	144	201	72%	\$12.31-\$13.86
Southern Region	54	109	50%	\$10.60-\$16.02
Valley/Coast Region	177	244	73%	\$12.04-\$16.50
Eastern Region	92	153	60%	\$11.77-\$12.77
Statewide	469	712	66%	\$13.30

- Health care/social assistance is the largest industry for employment at 36 percent, followed by administrative/waste services at 15 percent, manufacturing at 12 percent, construction at 7 percent, and retail trade at 5 percent.
- Median wages vary by industry, with utilities having the highest median wage at \$19.38/hour, followed by transportation/warehousing at \$16.87/hour, and construction at \$16.37/hour. Lowest median wages are in accommodation/food services at \$9.66/hour and retail trade at \$10.97/hour. The median wage in health care/social assistance is \$13.39/hour.

### **Incumbent Worker**

- 75 percent of CASE participants who were employed at the start received a wage increase post-enrollment.
- Health care/social assistance is the largest industry for employment at 44 percent, followed by manufacturing at 11 percent, retail trade at 9 percent and accommodation/food services at 8 percent.
- 94 percent retained their jobs.

## **CASE strategies**

### **Career pathways**

CASE's career pathways strategy focuses on creating new career pathway certificate programs and expanding existing ones, targeting emerging and demand occupations. Also included is the development of adult basic skills/developmental education bridge and career/technical education curricula. One element of this work is engaging employers in education and training programs and work based learning (e.g., work experience, industry tours, on the job training, etc.)

- 53 new career pathway certificate programs have been created and approved as a result of CASE, and 24 existing career pathway certificate programs have been enhanced. These break down by broad career area as follows:
  - Agriculture, food and natural resources – 5 new career pathways certificate programs, with a focus on fire firefighting and protection
  - Arts, information and communications – 2 new career pathway certificate programs in digital production
  - Business and management – 14 new career pathway certificate programs and 12 enhanced career pathway certificate programs, covering accounting, computer support and applications, customer service, and office support
  - Health services – 4 new career pathway certificate programs and 4 enhanced career pathway certificate programs, covering nursing assistant, medical assistant, home health aide, and health informatics
  - Human resources – 13 new career pathway certificate programs and 2 enhanced career pathway certificate programs, with a focus on early childhood education
  - Industrial and engineering systems – 15 new career pathway certificates and 7 enhanced career pathway certificates, covering automotive, welding, electronics, CNC/CAD/CAM, HVAC, and manufacturing

An example of CASE helping to build out career pathways is Oregon Coast Community College's nursing assistant/nursing career pathway. The pathway now includes CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) 1, CNA 2, LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse), and ADN (Associated Degree in Nursing), with CNA and LPN training programs run as cohorts. Along the way, participants can earn career pathway certificates in acute, restorative, and dementia care. Employers were involved in developing the curriculum and provide clinical sites. The pathway has multiple exit and entry points. For example, some participants complete CNA training and then get a job at the area hospital or a nursing facility. Others complete CNA training, get a job, and then continue their education and training. And others are already working as a CNA and come back to school to get the education and training needed to become a nurse, while working at the same time.

- Many participating community colleges identify career pathways—including development of new career pathway certificates and enhancement of existing career pathway certificates—as one of CASE's greatest successes, and one that will be sustained after the CASE grant ends.
- CASE participants who have taken part in CASE created cohort training programs—including but not limited to career pathway certificate programs—and received career coaching from start to finish as well as support services have an 87percent completion rate, compared to an overall CASE completion rate of 59 percent to date. CASE created cohort training programs are programs—including VESL, LTOY, CPCC, IR, CC 45+ credits, associate degree, and customized training programs—that have been created or enhanced in terms of curriculum and/or format through CASE. Participants go through these programs as a group and receive career coaching and support services. A couple of caveats: data are preliminary and more in depth analysis is required (including further examination of the key features of these cohort training programs), which will be done as part of the CASE final evaluation.

These results are consistent with CASE's vision: TAA, unemployed, and underemployed workers participating in braided CASE strategies will have higher completion rates. It is also consistent with the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways framework, which focuses on career pathway education and training, along with career coaching or navigation, support services, and employment services and work experiences.

These results also speak to the need to expand cohort training programs, combined with career coaching and support services.

- One of CASE's intended system level outcomes is to help institutionalize the career pathway framework. Progress on this front includes the creation of new and expansion of existing career pathway certificates. However, the use of career pathways—along with their marketing and communication—appears uneven across community colleges. For example, some view career pathway certificates as stackable credentials with labor market payoffs, enabling those earning career pathway certificates to enter the labor market and get jobs, and then return for additional stackable credentials that can lead to higher wage, higher skill jobs and ultimately degrees. Others see career pathway certificates as essentially components of associate degree programs to be awarded retroactively upon completion of a degree.

Also, some career pathway certificates are seen as having limited labor market payoffs. One of the things this speaks to is the importance of community colleges continually assessing the labor market payoffs of their career pathway certificates by actively engaging employers in an ongoing way in the development, implementation, and evaluation of career pathway certificate programs; conducting labor market assessments; and making changes, as needed.

(Some promising practices for engaging employers are identified in the Employer Engagement section below.)

There is also the need for dedicated, ongoing, systemic training and professional development for those working at community colleges—as well as workforce system partners—around career pathways, along with career/technical education, employer engagement, labor market information, and related topics.

- Some of those earning career pathway certificates are not employed (or employed in lower paying, entry level jobs) or continuing their education and training. CASE data on this point show that about two thirds of CASE completers have gotten jobs to date, and at median wages of \$12.06 an hour (for 2011-12) and \$13.30 an hour (for 2012-13), below CASE's target of \$16.84 an hour, according to UI wage match data. This suggests an opportunity for community colleges to develop retention strategies to engage those who have completed LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs and entered the labor market, but need further education and training to either get a job or move along career pathways.
- Financial aid eligibility is an issue for those identifying LTOYs, CPCCs, or less than one year IRs as a goal, as already noted. This is one of the reasons why the percent of CASE participants earning LTOYS, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs is much lower than that targeted by CASE (44 percent versus 70 percent). In terms of financial aid for LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs, the Oregon Community Colleges Handbook & Planning Guide states:

Federal and state financial aid is not designed for short-term Certificate programs and does not fund most Career Pathway, Less Than One Year (LTOY), and other stand-alone 12-44 credit Certificate Programs...

While many students are not entirely certain of their major goal when they enter community college and apply for financial aid, declaring an associate degree as their major goal allows students the most options to attain a certificate or degree. Students who declare a course of study as an Associate Degree can obtain a Career Pathway Certificate, LTOY, or other stand-alone Certificate as they complete the required coursework toward attaining their degree. Career Pathway Certificates & Less than One Year Certificates are "momentum points" in student progression toward an associate degree.

An analysis of CASE participant data shows a connection between financial aid status and LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs. For example, CASE participants who are Pell eligible are underrepresented among those earning LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs and overrepresented among those earning CCs 45+ credits and more than one year IRs. Patterns and practices seem to vary across the community colleges.

One of the things this speaks to is the need for financial assistance for those pursuing LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs. One way to address this is by changing federal financial aid requirements. There has been some recent progress on this front with the partial restoration of "ability to benefit," which provides low income participants who lack a high school diploma or its equivalent access to Pell grants when enrolled in an eligible career pathway program. Eligible career pathway programs are those that concurrently enroll participants in connected adult education and postsecondary programs, provide counseling and support services, provide structured course sequences, are aligned with the education and skill needs of the regional economy, and are developed and implemented in collaboration with employers and workforce and economic development partners.

Another potential source of support for participants seeking LTOYs, CPCCs, and less than one year IRs—at least those who are on food stamps—is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T). (More information on SNAP E&T is included near the end of this document.)

- Community colleges have also developed a number of innovative approaches to help CASE participants with the adult basic skills/developmental education transition (e.g., the Integrated Basic Education and Skills

Training or I-BEST model). 89 percent of CASE ABS participants have made the transition to college courses and 39 percent have earned credentials.

For example, Mt. Hood Community College's I-BEST accounting assistant career pathway certificate program provides CASE participants cohort training; team teaching, with one instructor teaching professional/technical content and the other basic skills; contextualized instruction; an internship; peer mentoring; and wrap around supports, including career coaching. About 80 percent of participants have completed training and earned their accounting assistant career pathway certificate. And about 80 percent of those have gotten jobs with average wages of about \$13 an hour.

- \$600,000 in state general fund support (specifically, the Community College Strategic Fund) was leveraged to support CASE ABS participants in transitioning to college level courses and earning credentials during 2011-13. These funds were used for tuition and fees, books, additional staffing and instruction, and other supports. US DOL did not allow for these items to be funded through the TAACCCT grant.

One of the things this speaks to is the need for additional supports to help ABS participants successfully transition to college courses and earn credentials, and additional resources for these supports.

## **Career coaching**

CASE's career coaching strategy focuses on providing coaching, services, supports, connections to other community college and public and community resources, and job related assistance in order to increase retention, completion, credential attainment, and employment. This is in contrast to the traditional advising model of short and long term academic planning. One element of this work is partnering with the public workforce system.

- Over 4,700 CASE participants have received a wide range of coaching services, including progress check-ins, assistance with college registration, job search assistance, resume assistance, career exploration, educational plan development, assistance with financial aid registration, referrals to advising (and other college services), and referrals to TAA and WIA services (in order of frequency).
- In looking across the community colleges, a career coaching model that is effective starts to emerge. This includes:
  - Working with participants start to finish, from the point participants start training until they finish training and start their jobs (or sometimes after).
  - Targeting specific cohort training programs and/or industry/occupational areas. This makes it possible for career coaches to develop sector knowledge and positive value added relationships with faculty and employers in that program or industry/occupational area.
  - Embedding career coaching and related services and supports in the classroom, where and when possible. This makes it possible to serve groups of participants (where they are rather than trying to track them down), foster a sense of community among participants, engage faculty, etc.
- Among the most critical career coaching services and supports are:
  - A focus on supporting participants' career goals
  - Single point of contact for participants, as well as for faculty in selected programs and/or industrial/occupational areas.

- Progress check-ins, as a form of intrusive, proactive coaching
  - Facilitated referrals to services and supports, as a way to break down silos at the college and with external partners (this requires data and information sharing agreements)
  - Case notes, as part of the student information system so that participants don't have to repeatedly provide the same information and there's a record of issues, services provided, etc.
- At most community colleges, staff have been hired to provide career coaching. At one small community college, faculty in a targeted program area have served this function. And at a couple of other community colleges, WorkSource or WIA service provider staff who also work at the college have provided career coaching.
  - CASE participants who have received career coaching from start to finish, taken part in CASE created cohort training programs, and received support services have an 87percent completion rate, compared to an overall CASE completion rate of 59 percent to date, as already noted. The caveats are: data are preliminary and more in depth analysis is required, which will be done as part of the CASE final evaluation.

These results are consistent with CASE's vision: TAA, unemployed, and underemployed workers participating in braided CASE strategies will have better completion rates. It's also consistent with the Alliance for Quality Career Pathways framework, which focuses on career pathway education and training, along with career coaching or navigation, support services, and employment services and work experiences.

For example, at Portland Community College, career coaches supported CASE participants in the ABS HVAC cohort training program from start to finish. This included a college success orientation at the outset; regular progress check-ins; wrap around supports; referrals to WorkSource and WIA resources (e.g., funding for tools); and a career planning class. Career coaches worked closely with instructors as part of a team. Also part of the team was an employment specialist who developed internship sites for participants. 80 percent of participants completed training and earned HVAC installer career pathway certificates as well as two less than one year IRs. Some have gotten jobs; others are continuing their education and training (the HVAC installer certificate is part of the facilities maintenance program); and still others are both working and continuing their education and training.

These results also speak to the need to expand cohort training programs, combined with career coaching and support services.

- One of CASE's intended system level outcomes is to institutionalize career coaching promising practices. Progress on this front includes:
  - Some community colleges have shifted their career coaches from the CASE grant to state general funds. Others are looking to secure grant funds to continue these positions. Another possible funding source for career coaches is SNAP E&T, at least for those participants who are on food stamps. To this end, some community colleges are looking to become part of the state's SNAP E&T 50 percent (50/50) match program. (More information on SNAP E&T is included near the end of this document.)
  - A couple of community colleges have also altered their advising services to reflect a coaching model. (However, this requires buy-in and training/professional development opportunities.)
  - Some community colleges have increased their focus on employment, adding career services, career centers, and other job/employment resources. Some of this will be sustained through other funds after the CASE grant ends.

For example, Blue Mountain Community College has shifted its two career coaches from the CASE grant to state general fund support. Advising has also adopted the coaching model (e.g., start to finish, progress check-ins, wrap around supports, etc.). It has also developed a career center.

## **Credit for prior learning**

CASE's credit for prior learning (CPL) strategy focuses on increasing use of credit for prior learning as a way to accelerate time to completion and, as a result, employment.

- CASE has helped inform state level CPL efforts. For example, early on, CASE brought to light that CPL data were not being tracked statewide. Specific issues included no standardized definitions of CPL types; data not being included in the statewide community college data system; and few, if any, CPL standards at the community colleges. Since then, statewide standards and common definitions have been developed (discussed in greater detail below). However, not all community colleges are reporting data.
- There has been an intentional partnership and leveraging of state and CASE resources to promote statewide policy change in terms of CPL. Progress since the start of CASE have included:
  - Passage of state legislation (HB 4059) that sets out the following goals: increase the number of students who receive academic CPL, increase the number and type of academic credits accepted for prior learning in institutions of higher education, develop transparent policies and practices in awarding CPL, improve prior learning assessment practices, create tools to develop faculty and staff knowledge and experience in awarding CPL and to share exemplary policies and practices among institutions of higher education, develop articulation agreements, and develop outcome measures to track progress.
  - Development of statewide CPL standards that cover CPL learning requisites, evidence-based assessment, tuition and fee structure, transferability and transcription, data collection and reporting, faculty and staff development, quality assurance, and transparency/access.
  - Launch of CPL pilot projects that aim to identify challenges or barriers associated with implementation of the CPL standards (e.g., organizational issues, costs associated with awarding CPL credit, staff development needs, student issues, etc.).
- At the level of individual community colleges, not much appears to have changed at least yet in terms of CPL. Relatively few CASE participants have been awarded CPL. It seems as though there are few incentives—and a lot of disincentives—to expanded use of CPL. For example, the Community College Support Fund/FTE reimbursement doesn't pay for CPL.
- The CPL approach also needs to be geared to the target population. For example, portfolios that take a couple of quarters to develop may not be well suited for unemployed workers interested in getting trained and back into the labor market as soon as possible. For them, challenge exams may be a better fit.
- One bright spot is early childhood education. For example, Lane Community College and Rogue Community College have worked with CASE participants in early childhood education Vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) career pathway certificate programs to help them get CPL to meet state certification requirements. However, this can still be a time consuming, costly process.

The early childhood education example may suggest a way to approach CPL more generally: within the context of providing education and training for incumbent workers in an industry to help them move along career pathways, and with industry partnerships and employer engagement.

## Partnerships and collaboration

- Many community colleges identify partnerships and collaboration with TAA and WorkSource as one of CASE's greatest successes, and one that will be sustained after the CASE grant ends.
- Partnerships and collaboration with TAA and WorkSource have taken many forms: sharing participant data and information; leveraging services, supports, and resources; etc.
- The partnership with the Oregon Employment Department/Trade Act has made it possible for CASE to better serve one of its target populations – Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) eligible workers who have lost their jobs due to a shutdown or layoff related to foreign trade. TAA benefits include job training, job search and relocation allowance, and income support.

Elements of this partnership include:

- Data sharing agreements between OED/TAA and community colleges that make it possible to share TAA eligible worker information and, as a result, better coordinate services and supports. OED/TAA will continue sharing data under intergovernmental agreements with community colleges, post-CASE.
- Career coaching, with CASE career coaches serving as a single point of contact at the colleges for TAA training case managers and helping TAA eligible workers navigate the college system.
- A statewide TAA liaison who works with community colleges across the state. This position will continue post-CASE.

Due in part to this partnership, TAA eligible workers make up 6 percent of all CASE participants – the highest rate among TAACCCT grants across the country. Another key factor is that TAA eligible workers can enroll in any program at most of the community colleges and receive career coaching. Most TAACCCT grants are targeted to specific sectors and, as a result, limit their program options.

- Partnerships between community colleges, WIA, and WorkSource vary by community college, local WIA service provider, and WorkSource center, with some partnerships stronger than others. For example, Mt. Hood Community College is also a WIA service provider and an integrated, on-site partner in the operation of a WorkSource center, making coordination of services, supports, and resources seamless. This may be one reason why Mt. Hood has one of the highest employment rates among CASE participants – about 70 percent.

At Southwestern Oregon Community College, the career coach works at the college, but is a WIA service provider staff member. As a result, one of the things the career coach does is help bring WIA and WorkSource services and supports to CASE participants on campus, in addition to providing them facilitated referrals to services and supports not available on campus such as job search workshops and UI assistance. The career coach also provides assistance to WIA participants at the college.

- Some elements of effective partnerships, based on the CASE experience, include:
  - Institutional expectations regarding partnerships and collaboration.

- Clear roles and responsibilities for the partners, with each focusing on what it does best.
- Leveraging of partners' complementary resources (e.g., services, supports, and financial resources).
- Training and professional development to promote understanding of each partner's roles, responsibilities, and resources.
- Shared performance outcome measures.
- Data and information sharing.

## **Employer engagement**

- All community colleges developed plans for increasing employer engagement, specifically increasing employer awareness of and involvement in career pathways, increasing work based learning opportunities, increasing hiring of those completing certificates and degrees, and leveraging employer relationships at the college and with workforce system partners. The employer engagement plans included specific strategies; detailed work plans (e.g., activities, timelines, staff assignments, deliverables, outcomes, and progress to date, etc.); data (e.g., numbers of employers contacted and participating in CASE, number of CASE participants engaged in work based learning, etc.); challenges and opportunities; and lessons learned.
- At some community colleges, employer engagement as part of CASE has been limited. One challenge: both internal and external partners protecting their own individual employer contacts, and seeing employer engagement as their purview. At some community colleges, CASE staff have found ways to add value to existing employer engagement efforts of internal and external partners, to the benefit of CASE participants; and at others, not.
- Employer engagement has taken a variety of forms, including:
  - Working with program advisory committees, including helping bolster them by conducting employer outreach.
  - Developing employer databases into which everyone at the community college working with employers enters information; this makes it possible to coordinate employer outreach and engagement across the college.
  - Providing participants work based learning opportunities (e.g., cooperative work experience, industry tours, etc.), with some getting directly hired as a result.
  - Working with employers to help them meet their need for skilled workers by providing customized training, career coaching, and support services.

For example, Mt. Hood Community College is one college that has developed an employer database. Everyone working with employers at the college enters information into the database, so that employer engagement efforts can be tracked and coordinated. It also has an employer partnership committee that brings together departments across the college that engage employers to share resources and develop strategies for improving employer engagement. In addition, it has an employer partnership coordinator who goes out and talks to employers, helps line up internships and strengthen program advisory committees, connects with others at the college who work with employers, and works with the employer partnership committee.

At Clackamas Community College, the college's customized training center, WorkSource, WIA, and the career coach teamed up to help an area manufacturer meet its need for new welders/fabricators – the result of a growing backlog of orders. This included recruiting participants; conducting cohort training at the worksite, both classroom instruction and on the job projects; and providing career coaching and support services (e.g., a career development class, regular progress check-ins, tutoring, etc.). Participants earned entry level welding career pathway certificates and less than one year IRs. Almost all were hired by the manufacturer, which provided the facilities, helped with instruction, and compensated participants while in training.

At Blue Mountain Community, the career coach used career pathway roadmaps as a tool to reach out to and engage area employers and get them involved in the college's program advisory committees.

## Other points

- **Data** – One of CASE's intended system level outcomes is to promote system wide use of data for decision making. To this end, CASE has invested in the collection and analysis of data that otherwise would not have been available (e.g., certain participant demographic information; services provided; educational outcomes such as industry recognized credentials and CPL; employment outcomes; etc.)

Data on who is served, what services they are provided, and what their educational and employment outcomes are are critical for decision making. This is an area needing further investment, post-CASE.

- **SNAP E&T** – One of CASE's assumptions is that braided funding is required for participants to have the resources to take part in education and training, persist in and complete education and training programs, and earn credentials. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) is one possible funding source, at least for those who are food stamp recipients (28 percent of CASE participants).

SNAP E&T funds can be used to support a variety of employment, education, and training services for those who are on food stamps, including job search, work experience, education and training programs, support services, and job retention services. There are different types of SNAP E&T programs, including those funded through 100 percent federal funds and 50 percent federal reimbursement funds in which federal funds match or reimburse nonfederal funds spent on providing those who are on food stamps employment, education, and training services.

Oregon currently has a SNAP E&T program, but it's relatively limited in its size, populations served, and services provided (as is the case in most states). Education and training services are limited, as is the role of community colleges.

SNAP E&T is one way to help advance Oregon's 40/40/20 goal.

Several community colleges are in discussions to participate in the state's SNAP E&T 50 percent (50/50) reimbursement program. This would take effect later in 2015.

- **Student centered education and training** – The structure of community college education and training (e.g., academic calendar, course scheduling, etc.) can be a barrier for CASE's target population – TAA eligible, unemployed, and underemployed workers—in terms of persistence and completion. This speaks to the need for more student centered education and training (e.g., open entry; shorter, more intensive training; modularized curriculum; nontraditional class times; etc.).

## CASE participant stories

The stories of CASE participants help put a human face on some of the numbers.

- Mike didn't like going to school as a teen and dropped out after ninth grade. He received his GED while incarcerated. Years later, after working for the same company for over 8 years, Mike was part of a mass layoff. He was approved for Trade Act funding for retraining and, for the first time in many years, was "going to school again." He worried about homework, learning a new trade, fitting in with classmates, and taking tests. Mike met regularly with his career coach throughout training for support and problem solving.

Mike earned a manufacturing technology associate's degree and three certificates winter term, with a 2.9 GPA. After completing training, he was hired as a full time, entry level machinist, earning \$12.50 an hour. In the spring, Mike took a Friday afternoon off from work so he could walk in the college's graduation ceremony, something at age 54 he had never done before.

- Suchin was a single parent working on her English skills with WorkSource when she enrolled in the college's I-BEST accounting assistant career pathway certificate program. While in training, she received assistance and support services from both the college and WorkSource. The career coach also helped line up an internship for Suchin. Suchin earned an accounting assistant certificate and found a paid work experience with an accounting firm after graduation with the help of WorkSource. She then obtained a full time financial specialist job, earning \$26 an hour.
- Anthony had never taken a college class, and he'd never welded. However, he signed up for a special cohort training program developed by the college, the local workforce board, and an employer partner to train entry level welders. After four months of both classroom instruction and on-the-job training, Anthony completed an entry level welding certificate and got a job with the employer. He's currently working full time, earning \$12 an hour. He also earned four industry recognized welding certificates along the way.
- Stacy participated in cohort training for pharmacy technicians and was connected to one of the college's pharmacy partnerships. She was hired immediately and worked there for six months. She then applied for a position with a major medical center and was hired full time at \$19 an hour.

## Next steps

This year, the CASE data and evaluation team will conduct further analysis of CASE's outcomes at both the participant and systems level and their implications for practice, policy, and systems. This will include site visits to participating community colleges, structured interviews, and in depth analysis of I-Trac and UI wage match data. The final CASE evaluation report will:

- Summarize overall outcomes, both in terms of participants and institutional or systems change
- Document and evaluate the impact of CASE's strategies on improving educational and employment outcomes
- Summarize lessons learned and their implications for practice, policy, and systems
- Document promising practices developed through CASE and their results
- Address issues of scale and sustainability

The final evaluation report will be available in fall 2015.

## Appendix I: CASE Definitions

CASE Created Cohort: A group of CASE participants who went through a training program whose curriculum or format was enhanced or created with CASE funding in whole or part. They received career coaching from the start of their program to finish as well as other support services. Further analysis of these cohorts will be conducted as part of the final evaluation report.

Entered Employment: As defined by the DOL measure: a participant who was unemployed on the day of registration with the CASE grant, who has completed at least one training program, exited the grant/school and obtained unsubsidized employment within the first quarter of exit from the grant.

Incumbent Worker: As defined by the DOL measure: a participant who was employed in any kind of unsubsidized employment on the date of registration with the grant.

Less Than One Year Certificates: Less than one year certificates (LTOYs) and career pathway certificates of completion (CPCCs) are certificates awarded by the community college that consist of 12-44 credits. Less than one year industry recognized credentials (IRs) are credentials/licenses that are awarded by entities outside the community college system (e.g., Oregon State Board of Nursing, American Welding Society) that take 44 credits or less of classroom preparation to qualify for sitting for the credential exam.

More Than One Year Certificates: Certificates of completion of 45 credits or more awarded by the community college, or industry recognized credentials /licenses that are awarded by entities outside the community college system (e.g., Oregon State Board of Nursing) that take 45 credits or more of classroom preparation to qualify for sitting for the credential exam.

Retained Employment: As defined by the DOL measure: those that meet the definition of "Entered Employment," and retain employment in second and third quarters after exiting the grant.

CASE is a WIA Title I- financially assisted program and is therefore an equal opportunity employer/program which provides auxiliary aids and services upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 711 or 800.648.3458 TTY. The CASE grant project (\$18,679,289) is 100% funded through the US Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training program.

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