



## **Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Progress Report of Activities and Outcomes**

**Program Year Five  
(July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010)**



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In today's uncertain economy, states and regions are experiencing myriad workforce challenges. In the short run, layoffs and unemployment resulting from the current economic downturn dictate an immediate need for education and training to prepare workers for key occupations. In the long run, states and regions continue to exist in a global economy where ability to compete and success are determined by how well the skills of the workforce meet the needs of businesses.

Given these realities, Arkansas—a state with a high poverty rate of almost 18 percent of individuals in poverty and only 18 percent of individuals with a bachelor's degree—needs to increase the number of low-income adults who access and complete education and training enabling them to attain good jobs and to contribute to the state's competitive position. To address this challenge, the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI), which is administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE), marshals public education and training resources to improve the employment and earnings prospects of low-income adults by preparing them to work in industries of importance in their regions. This report details the CPI activities and outcomes during FY10, the program's fifth year of operations.

## **KEY UPDATES FOR FY10**

ADHE received a grant award of \$12,000,000 from Department of Workforce Services (DWS) in FY10 and sub-contracted to 25 sites, including all of the two-year colleges in Arkansas, to establish Career Pathways Initiatives. ADHE, DWS and the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) wrote an Annual Plan for the initiative in accordance with Act 514. Performance measures with incentive amounts for institutional performance are delineated in the plan. The initiative received an additional \$750,000 for childcare in FY10. All funds are from the Arkansas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant.

## **THE ARKANSAS CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE: BACKGROUND**

Arkansas leaders recognize the need for an education and training system that addresses the state's economic challenges. Through the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI), the state has sought to coordinate publicly funded education with social services and workforce and economic development programs to produce a better-trained workforce and promote economic growth. "Career pathways" is the term for a series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector and to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Each step on a career pathway is designed explicitly to prepare workers and students for the next level of employment and education. Using the career pathways framework, the workforce system seeks to target jobs in industries of importance to local economies and create avenues of advancement for current workers, jobseekers, and future labor market entrants, as well as a supply of qualified workers for employers.

Community colleges play a linchpin role in career pathways. The career pathways framework promotes systemic reform for community colleges—providing a model that better aligns their various mission areas of workforce development, academic credentialing, transfer preparation, and remediation with the needs of employers. Pathways commonly feature community colleges working in partnership with other educational entities, workforce and economic development agencies, employer and labor groups, and social service providers to ensure that investments in education and training pay off for the region's economic vitality. Students entering into adult literacy or college remedial coursework are better able to advance to and succeed in college-level programs, and all students can more readily earn postsecondary credentials and make progress toward a career. Incumbent workers are provided training opportunities that help increase their skills and subsequent wages.

CPI, which began serving clients in fall 2005, seeks to improve the earnings and postsecondary education attainment of Arkansas' low-income "TANF-eligible" adults by enabling them to work in industries of regional importance. Administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) with funding from the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), ADHE/CPI provides an opportunity for 25 campuses to develop Career Pathways Initiatives.

## **Objectives for CPI**

CPI seeks to improve the working relationships among public systems and enhance existing programs and services to help low-income parents gain workplace skills leading to economic self-sufficiency and reduced Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reliance. It also seeks to provide employers in key industries in Arkansas with skilled workers. The initiative accomplishes these goals by enabling upward educational and career mobility in targeted career fields for low-wage individuals. This focus represents a shift from traditional programs in Arkansas, which have typically aimed to reduce TANF rolls by moving recipients into low-wage, entry-level jobs that provide little opportunity for career development and industry focus.

CPI's objectives for program participants are:

- Increased enrollment in college-level certificate and associate degree programs
- Increased attainment of college-level certificates and associate degrees
- Increased job attainment and job retention in key industries

The initiative serves students who are current or former recipients of Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA); current recipients of Food Stamps, ARKids, or Medicaid; or those earning 250 percent of the federal poverty level or less. Individuals must be the adult caretaker of a child under the age of 21 to be eligible.

Additionally, the initiative seeks to improve the level of engagement among educators and employers to generate work opportunities for students and serve the workforce needs of the private sector.

## **Phased Launch**

The initiative was officially launched during the fall semester of 2005, when \$8 million in funding was awarded by the TEA Board to carry out this work. Eleven two-year college sites were selected to develop pilots based on the number of TANF-eligible individuals in their service areas, the percent of the population that was TANF-eligible, and the existence of a Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program (see description in Appendix B). Referred to as Phase I, six of the sites were selected to run pilots in an initial round of funding in fall 2005.<sup>1</sup> The remaining five sites were funded and joined CPI during Phase II, in

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<sup>1</sup> Phase I sites: Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University–Newport, Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas, Ouachita Technical College, Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, and Southeast Arkansas College.

January 2006.<sup>2</sup> Sites were funded with approximately \$500,000 each during the first year of the initiative; those funds were used to establish at each site a new career pathways office, where staff coordinate program activities and provide guidance and support services for students, as explained in more detail in Appendix B.

During the second year of the initiative, Phase I and II sites continued operations with budgets of approximately \$500,000 per site. Also during the second year, Phase III was launched, awarding funds to build career pathways programs to the state's 11 remaining two-year colleges and three technical centers affiliated with four-year institutions.<sup>3</sup> The new sites were approved by the TEA Board in January 2007, and each received a grant award of only \$250,000 to begin building CPI on their campuses. The expectation at these campuses was that they would receive the \$500,000 received initially by Phase I and II.

### **Performance Measurements and Incentive Funding**

The initiative's legislative mandate, Act 514, requires performance to be measured in student enrollment, student-earned certificates/degrees, employment rates, and employment retention rates. TEA client enrollment was included as an additional performance measure at the request of the Department of Workforce Services. New student enrollment and Current TEA/Work Pays were also added as a measure of institutional performance in FY09. After each fiscal year, incentive funding, Performance Based Student Support (PBSS), is disbursed based on performance during the previous year. The performance measures established under the plan are as follows for FY10:

- *Enrollment:* Requests for Funds (RFF) from each campus were considered and caps were applied to some expenditures categories, e.g., administrative supplies and additional staff. A goal of \$1,500 for cost per participant was set in FY09, so final FY10 budget totals were divided by the goal of \$1,500 to determine the number of students that could be served. The FY10 statewide enrollment goal was 7,157 students.

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<sup>2</sup> Phase II sites: Arkansas State University–Beebe, Black River Technical College, East Arkansas Community College, Mid-South Community College, and Pulaski Technical College.

<sup>3</sup> These sites were Arkansas State University–Mountain Home, Arkansas Tech University–Ozark Campus, National Park Community College, North Arkansas College, Northwest Arkansas Community College, Ozarka College, Rich Mountain Community College, South Arkansas Community College, Southern Arkansas University–Tech, University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville, University of Arkansas Community College at Hope, University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton, University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Technology–Crossett, University of Arkansas at Monticello College of Technology–McGehee.

- *New Students/TEA Clients:* Since carry-forward students from one fiscal year to the new year are still enrolled and receive support in programs, twenty percent (20%) of the enrollments must have first time enrollment dates in CPI during that fiscal year to be counted as New Students.

The FY10 goal for current TEA and Work Pays was set using criteria that included:

1. FY10 statewide goal for current TEA/Work Pays clients increased over last year's ratio of 11% to 12%. The statewide TEA goal is calculated by multiplying the statewide enrollment goal by 12%.
2. TEA cases in the home county of the CPI site (TEA April, 2009 Payroll)
3. TEA cases total for all CPI sites
4. TEA clients goal was a weighted percentage of the total statewide TEA goal

To emphasize the importance of enrolling current TEA and working with TEA case managers to enroll students in Arkansas Work Pays, the campus TEA enrollment goal is based on home county data. PTC is the only exception; only North and Southwest Pulaski clients were used in the formula. Campus goals for enrolling TEA are no less than 10 students. The statewide goal for FY10 in this category was 859.

- *Certificates/Degrees Attained:* The certificates/degrees tracked under this initiative are educational stepping-stones. The performance goal for FY10 certificate/degree attainment was 50 percent of the enrollment goal—3,579 certificates or degrees.
- *Employment:* The minimum percentage of student completers who must match the Arkansas Unemployment Insurance data (UI data match – Entered Employment) is 55 percent. This target was chosen based on performance in other employment programs and input from site directors on realistic expectations.
- *Employment Retention:* Retention rates for CPI program completers are measured using Arkansas UI data from the Department of Information Services (DIS). The goal aims for 80 percent of CPI completers who entered employment initially to be retained after six months—and 80 percent of those who retained employment after six months to be retained after twelve months of employment.

ADHE/CPI distributes Performance Based Student Support (PBSS) funds, incentive funds, on a per capita basis for each benchmark reached during the previous fiscal year. Additional funding is awarded for performance that exceeds the minimum benchmark. For example, if a college with

a minimum enrollment benchmark of 20 TEA clients enrolls 25, the college will receive incentive funds for all 25 clients. However, if the college enrolls only 17 clients, it will receive no incentive funding for current TEA/Work Pays client enrollment. Incentive funds are awarded using a graduated system in which higher levels of academic completion have higher incentives (for example, a Technical Certificate is worth more funding than a Certificate of Proficiency).

The incentive structure is designed to encourage sites to advance students up the academic ladder. One million (\$1,000,000) of the FY10 budget was set aside for incentives based on institutional performance and a pro-rated formula. Per capita incentive funding is as follows:

- *Enrollment*
  - Each current TEA/Work Pays client enrolled: \$100
  - Each new student enrolled: \$100

- *Award Attainment*

| <b>Certificate or Degree Attainment</b> | <b>Enrolled Student</b> | <b>Current TEA/Work Pays</b> |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| GED                                     | \$100                   | \$200                        |
| Employability/WAGE/CRC                  | \$100                   | \$200                        |
| Certificate of Proficiency              | \$200                   | \$400                        |
| Technical Certificate                   | \$300                   | \$600                        |
| Associate Degree                        | \$500                   | \$1,000                      |

- *Employment among those who earn awards*
  - Each student employed after program completion in a targeted industry: \$500
  - Each current TEA/Work Pays client who completes an award and enters employment: \$500
- *Entered Employment Retention for Six and 12 Months*
  - Each degree or certificate awardee retained in employment in targeted industry: \$500
  - Current TEA/Work Pays client retained in employment: \$500



## **CPI ACTIVITIES IN FY10**

The state leadership and technical assistance team includes a program director, three program specialists and an administrative specialist, in FY10 ADHE filled an approved vacancy with a program specialist to perform program-monitoring activities that include site visits, review of programs implementation, and contract compliance issues for each of its sub-grantees.

ADHE/CPI developed and implemented a site-monitoring system that included an audit tool, visit agenda, campus report, and site response. ADHE/CPI conducted twenty-five site visits and sites responded with Program Improvement Plans (PIP) that are on file.

In the last three years, ADHE/CPI initiated the *Bridges Out of Poverty* workshops at the 25 sites to integrate the principles of understanding and serving students in poverty. Two ADHE staff are certified trainers and have delivered workshops for campuses and partners of the initiative. In FY10 the scope was broadened in this area to include a statewide steering committee and ADHE identified three of the CPI campuses as pilots for bridges to sustainable communities through college leadership. ADHE will provide resources, leadership and training for the three campuses. The project can be monitored at <https://sites.google.com/site/sustainablecommunitiesinar/home>.

Additionally, six ADHE staff became certified trainers for the Poverty Simulation developed by the Missouri Community Action group. ADHE/CPI will conduct poverty simulations at the two-year colleges. During a simulation, participants role-play the lives of low-income families, from single parents trying to care for their children to senior citizens trying to maintain self-sufficiency on social security. The task of each family is to provide food, shelter and other necessities during the simulation while interacting with various community resources staffed by low-income volunteers. Although the simulation uses "play" money and other props, fictional scenarios, and time limits, it is not a game. It is a simulation tool that enables participants to view poverty from different angles in an experiential setting, while empowering low-income volunteers by allowing them an opportunity to interact with leaders from their community.

## **Statewide Professional Development**

In lieu of granting funds to campuses for travel to national seminars or trainings, ADHE/CPI recruited and contracted with national speakers to provide professional development sessions based on Program Directors' requests for training. Funds from the ADHE/CPI budget paid for the presenters and all sessions include elements of the two-statewide priorities developed at the annual retreat. This resulted in a savings for CPI statewide.

Program Directors received three hours of professional development credit for designated sessions and CPI Program Director FY10 Certification requires 12 hours of professional development. The workshops topics included:

- Grant Writing
- Career Services Support Annual Workshop
- Poverty Simulation-Missouri Community Action group
- Team Leadership
- Student Success and Data-Driven Decision Making
- Understanding and Engaging Under-Resourced College Students
- CPI Annual Retreat
- Making Case Management Work
- Sustainable Communities Through Community College Leadership

## **Emphasis on Career Support Services**

In FY08, the state CPI office placed major emphasis on “employability,” which it defines as the capacity of an individual to successfully obtain and retain a job. Employability services include the range of services provided to help students do this—particularly in high-demand industries. Throughout the year, the state CPI office worked to develop a standardized system—complete with a flow chart depicting the steps involved in transitioning students from school to work, a student file for completers, and a database for recording career counseling and job placement services provided to students. The Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) is embedded in this system. To encourage CPI sites to place stronger emphasis on employment, outcomes for program completers were collected, analyzed, matched to Unemployment Insurance (UI) data for the first time. Incentives (\$1,000,000 total for institutional performance of which \$300,000 was earmarked for employment) were awarded to each site accordingly.

A continuing emphasis was placed on “career support services” during FY09. To reflect this emphasis, the employability coordinator title was changed to Career Support Service Facilitator (CSSF). Services offered provided assisting students entering employment—particularly in high-demand industries. CS staff work with students to provide services such as career exploration, counseling, interview and resume guidance, pre-employment courses covering a variety of topics, job placement, and post-placement retention services. About half of the CPI CSS Facilitators have participated in Career Development Facilitator (CDF) training, a 20-week on-line course that outlines 12 competencies needed by career service professionals. Completers of the course are certified Career Development Facilitators who are eligible for a national certification. CPI is also a charter member of the state CDF organization.

CPI is on track with continuous improvement plans in the Career Services departments and continues to use the Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) as an employability certificate. CPI serves as the local proctor of the CRC at most of the two-year colleges and CPI campus staff participate in local steering committees. CPI completers earned over 2,000 Career Readiness Certificates in FY10.

### **Adapting to Rapid Economic Change**

Recognizing that national and state economies are rapidly changing and local employers need a qualified workforce with up-to-date skills to be competitive, CPI sites are required to prepare students for jobs in high-demand fields. Coordinating program development with economic trends is intended to provide students with higher wages and economic self-sufficiency, while serving employers’ current needs for skilled workers.

Initially, each career pathways site completes a “gap analysis” for its region to determine areas where the education and training system needed improvement to meet employers’ skilled-worker needs. DWS maintains labor market data regarding industries and occupational titles throughout the state. The site provides historical, current, and projected job openings by occupational title, along with net job growth/loss in all major industries. Using this data, each site identified key industries in its community and conducted surveys with employers in these fields to ascertain skill needs. In career advising sessions, CPI advisors then encourage students to target the high-demand, well-paying occupations identified during the gap analysis.

## **Promoting the Model/Ongoing Technical Assistance to Sites**

ADHE/CPI seeks to institutionalize best practices for assisting low-income students at each college. To do so, the state office organized, developed and implemented the extensive professional development described in CPI activities. In addition Arkansas' model for career pathways was recognized nationally. The model was presented to staffers in Washington DC who are working to rewrite the TANF legislation that will be a part of TANF reauthorization. ADHE/CPI also presented the model to Georgia legislators as a part of the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute's Annual Policy Conference.

The model was also published by the Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success that is a policy and advocacy initiative within Center on Law and Social Policy (CLASP). The mission of this Center is to advocate for policies and investments that can increase the number of low-income adults and disadvantaged youth who earn marketable postsecondary and industry credentials that are essential to opening doors to good jobs, career advancement, and economic mobility.

The CPI model also received notice in *Funding Career Pathways and Career Pathway Bridges: A Federal Policy Toolkit for States*, a product of the CLASP Center on Postsecondary and Economic, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. CLASP further published a white paper on TANF Education and Training and CPI was used as the model for the report.

Monthly conference calls or face-to-face trainings to update all CPI program directors on statewide-CPI issues are a part of technical assistance provided by ADHE/CPI. An employability workshop conducted in November provided technical assistance provided by the ADHE/CPI career services program specialist. The Career Support Services system was implemented and campuses received site visits for one-on-one instruction. Eleven CPI staff were approved to attend the Career Development Facilitator (CDF) training course. Two participants assisted with the development of a training manual for this department.

ADHE/CPI signed an Interagency Service Level Agreement Statement of Work with Information Network of Arkansas (INA) to create a CPI Management System, which will incorporate the Budget Request, and Management with the Student Tracking application. This solution will empower the users of the CPI management system to complete and manage all

aspects of the CPI data/finance process while providing complete integration of the budget system with the student data system. INA in collaboration with ADHE/CPI developed the elements of the system in FY10. Deployment and full implementation will be completed in FY11.

## **DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM THE FIFTH YEAR**

Student enrollments increased by 4 percent—growing from 9,627 students to 10,017 students, Table 1. Enrollments included any student engaged in a CPI activity that fiscal year, so a student in an associate program will carry-forward and be counted as an enrollment until completion of the program. Incentives are not awarded for enrollments, but new students those with a first enrollment date in CPI, are counted as an incentive measure.

As shown in Table 2, students in the initiative attained a total of 4,433 certificates/degrees during this program year, which exceeds the 3,579 attainment goal. Employability certificates, which include WAGE, CPI Employability and the CRC, is the largest group of certificates issued; many of the campuses require this pre-employment certificate for all completers. This is the first year that associate degrees were the largest college credential category (763), technical certificates followed closely with 754 being issued, and 736 certificates of proficiency were awarded. Campuses issued fewer GED awards (61) in FY10 compared to 101 in FY09.

The success rate calculation was changed in FY09 to mirror the ADHE success rate measure used for all two-year colleges. With this change, CPI students can be compared to other students enrolled at the two-year colleges. In FY09 the success rate was 16 points higher than the traditional success rate for two-year colleges. FY10 CPI success rate of 75% was still more than 10 points higher than other two-year students at 64%.

Overall, as shown in Table 4a, the program surpassed goals for Enrollment, Current TEA/Work Pays Clients and Certificate or Degree Attainment. Student enrollment exceeded the goal with 10,017 actual enrollments, TEA client enrollment was 24% above the goal, and campuses awarded over 4,400 certificates and degrees.

Table 4b shows that 22 of the 25 sites met or surpassed the entered employment goal when completers were matched to UI data, with a statewide total of 58%. Eighty-four percent (86%) of

those meeting the goal were still employed after six months. Appendix A provides additional statistics regarding CPI participants.

**Table 1: Enrollment Growth Program Years One through Five**

|                   | <b>FY06</b> | <b>FY07</b> | <b>FY08</b> | <b>FY09</b> | <b>FY10</b> |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Enrollments | 2,233       | 3,750       | 7,834       | 9,627       | 10,017      |

**Table 2: Certificates/Degrees Attained**

| <b>Type of Certificates/Degrees</b> | <b>FY09</b> | <b>FY10</b> | <b>Change</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| GEDs                                | 101         | 51          | -50           |
| WAGE/Employability Certificates     | 3039        | 2119        | -920          |
| Certificates of Proficiency         | 660         | 736         | +76           |
| Technical Certificates              | 751         | 754         | +3            |
| Associate Degrees                   | 616         | 763         | +147          |
| Total Certificates/Degrees Attained | 5,167       | 4,423       | -744          |

**Table 3: Success Rate**

| <b>Students</b>                                   | <b>FY10</b> | <b>%<br/>FY10</b> | <b>Traditional<br/>Success<br/>Rate for<br/>Two-Year<br/>Colleges</b> |
|---|-------------|-------------------|---|
| Students in Cohort                                | 690         |                   | 8337  |
| Students Completing a Cert. or Degree from Cohort | 105         | 15.22             | 7.66  |
| Students Retained                                 | 414         | 60.00             | 56.43   |
| Students Withdrawing or Dropping from Cohort      | 171         | 24.78             | 35.91   |
| Success Rate (Completing and Retained Students)   | 519         | <b>75.22</b>      | <b>64.09</b>  |

The Cohort includes students who enrolled for the first time in the Fall 2009 (FY10) in a college program and were full-time, degree-seeking students. The retention number represents the number of students who returned in the Fall 2010 (FY11). The students completing a certificate or degree from the cohort were calculated into a percent. Percent of students retained in the cohort was calculated and success rate represents percent of student completing and the percent of students retained.

**Table 4a: Overall Enrollment, TEA Enrollment, Certificate and Degree Attainment Outcomes**

| <b>FY10 Goals</b>                | <b>Goal</b> | <b>Actual</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Enrollment                       | 7,157       | 10,017        |
| Current TEA/Work Pays Clients    | 876         | 1,147         |
| Certificate or Degree Attainment | 3,579       | 4,433         |

**Table 4b: UI Data Match Outcomes for FY09 Completers**

| <b>Institution</b>                             | <b>Employment</b> |                   | <b>6-Mo Retention (80%)</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
|  | <b>Goal (55%)</b> | <b>Actual (%)</b> |                             |
| AR Northeastern College                        | 55                | 57                | 88                          |
| AR State University—Beebe                      | 55                | 57                | 80                          |
| AR State University – Mountain Home            | 55                | 51                |                             |
| AR State University—Newport                    | 55                | 59                | 86                          |
| AR Tech University – Ozark                     | 55                | 67                | 91                          |
| Black River Technical College                  | 55                | 57                | 92                          |
| Cossatot Community College of University of AR | 55                | 58                | 91                          |
| East AR Community College                      | 55                | 55                | 86                          |
| Mid-South Community College                    | 55                | 56                | 76                          |
| North Arkansas College                         | 55                | 41                |                             |
| National Park Community College                | 55                | 59                | 79                          |
| North West Arkansas Community College          | 55                | 58                | 85                          |
| Ouachita Technical College                     | 55                | 60                | 93                          |
| Ozarka College                                 | 55                | 55                | 83                          |
| Phillips Community College of University of AR | 55                | 57                | 83                          |
| Pulaski Technical College                      | 55                | 58                | 83                          |
| Rich Mountain Community College                | 55                | 59                | 81                          |
| South Arkansas Community College               | 55                | 77                | 88                          |
| Southern Arkansas University                   | 55                | 53                |                             |
| Southeast AR College                           | 55                | 56                | 82                          |
| U of A Community College – Batesville          | 55                | 62                | 93                          |
| U of A Community College – Hope                | 55                | 63                | 95                          |
| U of A Community College – Morrilton           | 55                | 58                | 86                          |
| U of A at Monticello- Crossett                 | 55                | 57                | 68                          |
| U of A at Monticello – McGehee                 | 55                | 64                | 84                          |
| State Total                                    | 55                | 58                | 86                          |

## **Analysis of FY10 Statistics (Presented in Appendix A)**

- *Enrollment Demographics:* As shown in Table A-1 of the appendix, an enrollment of 10,017 was posted during the last program year, with the enrollment at each site ranging from 169 to 752 students. The average age of a career pathways student statewide was 31. Overwhelmingly, the students were female (89 percent), and the data on ethnicity and race indicated that nearly 63 percent were White, 32 percent were Black, and small percentages were Hispanic or other minorities.
- *Eligibility:* The program enrolled 1,147 current TEA/Work Pays clients and many students who met other eligibility requirements. As shown in Table A-2, data indicate that 58 percent of participants were single parents and a large majority of student (81 percent) received Food Stamps or Medicaid. Other students were current or former TEA recipients (26 percent) or met the eligibility criteria based on qualifying incomes (39 percent).
- *Previous Education and Employment Status:* As shown in Table A-3, 92 percent of career pathways students were either high school graduates or GED recipients upon enrollment. Over 40 percent of pathways students reported that they were employed at the time of enrollment.
- *Certificates/Degrees Attained by Type:* Table A-4 shows that enrollments in associate degree programs were the most common, with over 5,700 students pursuing that award and 763 successfully completing the degree. Employability certificates had the second-highest enrollment with 3,930 awards. Third-highest enrollments were technical certificate programs with 3,069 followed by certificates of proficiency programs with 1,524 enrollments. There were 3,758 new student enrollments.

## **PROMOTING SYSTEMIC CHANGE: NEXT STEPS**

The sites were well positioned in FY10 to affect change in the ways regional education and workforce organizations work together by enhancing partnerships among CPI campuses and workforce agencies, building stronger relationships with the employer community, and providing support services during these trying economic times to help students succeed in school and go to work.



The fast expansion of the program during the past five years speaks to the viability of the CPI concept; however, several key challenges and “growing pains” suggest opportunities for improvement moving forward.

- Grant awards to campuses for FY10 ranged from \$183,090-\$785,060. Most campus grants were not increased and were equal to the prior year’s program expenditures in spite of a greater need for transportation, childcare and education-related support services.
- Although the CPI model requires student advisors, career services staff and community outreach for successful outcomes, the Phase III campuses do not have funds to fully staff the initiative. Full time personnel at the campuses range from two to ten employees who provide case-management, an essential element of this student success model.
- Entering employment is the primary purpose for completers of the program. Many students need real- work experience in their field of training to qualify for higher-paying jobs. The addition of internships or work-based training with student stipends would be necessary for completers to gain the needed experience in the field of training.

## **APPENDIX A: TABLES**

The following tables provide descriptive statistics regarding career pathways participation:

- Table A-1: Mean Age of Participants and Percentage of Participants by Gender and Race/Ethnicity
- Table A-2: Percentage of Participants by Eligibility Requirement
- Table A-3: Percentage of Participants by Previous Education and Employment Status at Application
- Table A-4: Enrollments and Attainments by Award Type

Table A-1: Mean Age of Participants and Percentage of Participants by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

|   | Enrollments   | Age (Mean)* | Gender       |              | Race/Ethnicity |              |              |             |
|---|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
|   |               |             | F (%)        | M (%)        | Black (%)      | Hispanic (%) | White (%)    | Other (%)   |
| AR Northeastern College                                 | 456           | 31          | 91.85        | 8.15         | 39.30          | 1.97         | 57.64        | 1.09        |
| AR State University—Beebe                               | 486           | 31          | 89.71        | 10.29        | 8.38           | 1.64         | 87.12        | 2.86        |
| AR State University—Mountain Home                       | 392           | 32          | 85.71        | 14.29        | 0.25           | 1.27         | 89.59        | 8.88        |
| AR State University—Newport                             | 420           | 30          | 86.43        | 13.57        | 34.92          | 1.43         | 61.76        | 1.90        |
| AR Technical University—Ozark                           | 443           | 31          | 85.79        | 14.21        | 4.51           | 3.16         | 85.10        | 7.22        |
| Black River Technical College                           | 599           | 31          | 85.64        | 14.36        | 3.64           | 1.49         | 92.23        | 2.64        |
| Cossatot Community College of University of AR          | 443           | 31          | 86.46        | 13.54        | 21.48          | 4.92         | 67.56        | 6.04        |
| East AR Community College                               | 356           | 29          | 95.79        | 4.21         | 63.87          | 1.16         | 28.03        | 6.94        |
| Mid-South Community College                             | 428           | 31          | 92.06        | 7.94         | 73.13          | 0.70         | 25.00        | 1.17        |
| National Park Community College                         | 493           | 32          | 87.63        | 12.37        | 18.42          | 2.63         | 74.09        | 4.86        |
| North AR College  | 396           | 31          | 83.33        | 16.67        | 0.25           | 2.27         | 95.47        | 2.02        |
| Northwest AR Community College                          | 224           | 31          | 92.83        | 7.17         | 3.13           | 16.07        | 72.77        | 8.04        |
| Ouachita Technical College                              | 368           | 31          | 87.23        | 12.77        | 23.10          | 1.90         | 72.83        | 2.17        |
| Ozarka College  | 430           | 32          | 89.07        | 10.93        | 0.00           | 0.70         | 97.44        | 1.86        |
| Phillips Community College of University of AR          | 345           | 30          | 95.93        | 4.07         | 62.50          | 1.42         | 33.24        | 2.84        |
| Pulaski Technical College                               | 752           | 31          | 93.74        | 6.26         | 70.92          | 2.26         | 23.11        | 3.72        |
| Rich Mountain Community College                         | 238           | 32          | 86.50        | 13.50        | 0.42           | 2.52         | 92.44        | 4.62        |
| South AR Community College                              | 203           | 32          | 97.04        | 2.96         | 59.42          | 2.42         | 36.71        | 1.45        |
| Southeast AR College                                    | 461           | 29          | 92.62        | 7.38         | 69.35          | 0.60         | 28.43        | 1.61        |
| Southern AR University—Tech                             | 260           | 30          | 88.46        | 11.54        | 62.21          | 1.53         | 34.35        | 1.91        |
| University of AR Community College at Batesville        | 521           | 32          | 86.37        | 13.63        | 4.99           | 1.73         | 91.17        | 2.11        |
| University of AR Community College at Hope              | 639           | 31          | 88.56        | 11.44        | 51.64          | 3.44         | 43.97        | 0.94        |
| University of AR Community College at Morrilton         | 313           | 32          | 90.10        | 9.90         | 17.06          | 2.94         | 74.12        | 5.88        |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—Crossett | 182           | 30          | 89.01        | 10.99        | 36.02          | 1.61         | 61.29        | 1.08        |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—McGehee  | 169           | 34          | 81.07        | 18.93        | 72.78          | 0.59         | 26.63        | 0.00        |
| <b>Overall</b>  | <b>10,017</b> | <b>31</b>   | <b>89.19</b> | <b>10.81</b> | <b>31.80</b>   | <b>2.31</b>  | <b>62.57</b> | <b>3.32</b> |

\* In “Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative: Progress Report of Activities and Outcomes during Year One,” data reflected the median age of participants rather than the mean.

Table A-2: Percentage of Participants by Eligibility Requirement

|   | Single Parent (%) | Current TEA (%) | Former TEA (%) | Food Stamps/Medicaid (%) | At/Less Than 250% of Poverty (%) |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| AR Northeastern College                                       | 53.07             | 12.72           | 19.08          | 74.56                    | 28.73                            |
| AR State University—Beebe                                     | 47.53             | 6.79            | 10.49          | 81.69                    | 12.76                            |
| AR State University—Mountain Home                             | 48.21             | 7.91            | 0.00           | 81.12                    | 7.91                             |
| AR State University—Newport                                   | 50.00             | 14.52           | 16.90          | 83.10                    | 49.29                            |
| AR Technical University—Ozark                                 | 57.79             | 6.77            | 11.74          | 79.23                    | 56.88                            |
| Black River Technical College                                 | 37.90             | 3.34            | 13.52          | 79.13                    | 97.50                            |
| Cossatot Community College of University of AR                | 47.40             | 5.87            | 3.61           | 79.01                    | 97.07                            |
| East AR Community College                                     | 64.89             | 21.07           | 17.42          | 80.06                    | 77.81                            |
| Mid-South Community College                                   | 70.56             | 15.89           | 19.86          | 71.03                    | 16.82                            |
| National Park Community College                               | 61.26             | 8.92            | 10.55          | 65.72                    | 60.24                            |
| North AR College  | 49.24             | 10.35           | 10.10          | 85.35                    | 11.87                            |
| Northwest AR Community College                                | 67.41             | 14.29           | 8.48           | 87.95                    | 38.39                            |
| Ouachita Technical College                                    | 57.34             | 4.62            | 0.00           | 86.41                    | 12.23                            |
| Ozarka College  | 42.56             | 3.49            | 12.33          | 85.35                    | 84.42                            |
| Phillips Community College of University of AR                | 66.38             | 29.57           | 8.99           | 86.67                    | 11.59                            |
| Pulaski Technical College                                     | 85.37             | 25.80           | 32.58          | 79.52                    | 14.76                            |
| Rich Mountain Community College                               | 40.34             | 5.04            | 5.88           | 79.83                    | 20.17                            |
| South AR Community College                                    | 78.33             | 9.85            | 21.67          | 91.13                    | 7.88                             |
| Southeast AR College  | 81.56             | 26.03           | 29.72          | 84.82                    | 11.93                            |
| Southern AR University—Tech                                   | 63.08             | 10.77           | 2.31           | 81.15                    | 21.15                            |
| University of AR Community College at Batesville              | 36.08             | 3.65            | 16.51          | 78.31                    | 89.44                            |
| University of AR Community College at Hope                    | 67.61             | 7.36            | 20.34          | 86.07                    | 20.66                            |
| University of AR Community College at Morrilton               | 64.54             | 5.75            | 14.70          | 96.49                    | 8.63                             |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett | 63.19             | 9.89            | 21.98          | 87.91                    | 12.64                            |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee  | 60.36             | 12.43           | 11.83          | 59.76                    | 22.49                            |
| <b>Overall</b>  | <b>58.35</b>      | <b>11.48</b>    | <b>14.66</b>   | <b>80.93</b>             | <b>38.88</b>                     |

Note: Some participants are eligible under multiple criteria.

Table A-3: Percentage of Participants by Previous Education and Employment Status at Application

|   | Previous Education |              |                            | Employment                  |
|---|--------------------|--------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | H.S. Diploma (%)   | GED (%)      | No H.S. Diploma or GED (%) | Employed at Application (%) |
| AR Northeastern College                                       | 73.79              | 17.18        | 9.03                       | 37.67                       |
| AR State University— Beebe                                    | 69.75              | 25.72        | 4.53                       | 18.31                       |
| AR State University—Mountain Home                             | 66.07              | 26.02        | 7.91                       | 46.68                       |
| AR State University—Newport                                   | 68.57              | 20.00        | 11.43                      | 40.00                       |
| AR Technical University—Ozark                                 | 62.12              | 33.15        | 4.74                       | 22.01                       |
| Black River Technical College                                 | 71.12              | 25.38        | 3.51                       | 27.55                       |
| Cossatot Community College of University of AR                | 74.49              | 20.54        | 4.97                       | 93.91                       |
| East AR Community College                                     | 84.83              | 12.36        | 2.81                       | 48.88                       |
| Mid-South Community College                                   | 75.47              | 11.45        | 13.08                      | 50.47                       |
| National Park Community College                               | 63.08              | 28.80        | 8.11                       | 51.93                       |
| North AR College  | 65.15              | 27.78        | 7.07                       | 37.37                       |
| Northwest AR Community College                                | 64.29              | 33.04        | 2.68                       | 37.05                       |
| Ouachita Technical College                                    | 72.01              | 19.84        | 8.15                       | 41.85                       |
| Ozarka College  | 62.79              | 31.86        | 5.35                       | 1.40                        |
| Phillips Community College of University of AR                | 76.81              | 9.86         | 13.33                      | 54.20                       |
| Pulaski Technical College                                     | 69.28              | 16.09        | 14.63                      | 46.68                       |
| Rich Mountain Community College                               | 67.93              | 30.80        | 1.27                       | 49.79                       |
| South AR Community College                                    | 73.40              | 18.72        | 7.88                       | 43.35                       |
| Southeast AR College  | 71.15              | 18.22        | 10.63                      | 38.18                       |
| Southern AR University—Tech                                   | 82.31              | 11.92        | 5.77                       | 43.46                       |
| University of AR Community College at Batesville              | 59.12              | 25.91        | 14.97                      | 42.23                       |
| University of AR Community College at Hope                    | 80.56              | 15.83        | 3.61                       | 42.79                       |
| University of AR Community College at Morrilton               | 71.25              | 20.13        | 8.63                       | 39.30                       |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett | 63.74              | 27.47        | 8.79                       | 25.82                       |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee  | 72.78              | 15.98        | 11.24                      | 10.65                       |
| <b>Overall</b>  | <b>70.45</b>       | <b>21.52</b> | <b>8.03</b>                | <b>40.51</b>                |

Table A-4: New Enrollments and Completions by Award Type

|   | New Enrollments in FY10 | GED        |           | Employability Certificate |              | Certificate of Proficiency |            | Technical Certificate |            | Associate Degree |            |
|---|-------------------------|------------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
|   |                         | Enr        | Comp      | Enr                       | Comp         | Enr                        | Comp       | Enr                   | Comp       | Enr              | Comp       |
| AR Northeastern College   | 179                     | 16         | 5         | 151                       | 87           | 105                        | 68         | 52                    | 30         | 247              | 46         |
| AR State University - Beebe                                     | 178                     | 9          | 3         | 309                       | 206          | 73                         | 66         | 80                    | 38         | 307              | 47         |
| AR State University – Mountain Home                             | 150                     | 12         | 2         | 44                        | 42           | 79                         | 71         | 49                    | 11         | 240              | 28         |
| AR State University - Newport                                   | 229                     | 15         | 2         | 322                       | 122          | 51                         | 46         | 68                    | 43         | 74               | 10         |
| AR Technical University - Ozark                                 | 170                     | 7          | 2         | 78                        | 6            | 6                          | 6          | 249                   | 66         | 269              | 43         |
| Black River Technical College                                   | 254                     | 11         | 3         | 171                       | 171          | 32                         | 23         | 280                   | 51         | 311              | 35         |
| Cossatot Comm College of U of AR                                | 157                     | 12         | 1         | 173                       | 66           | 21                         | 18         | 135                   | 23         | 229              | 30         |
| East AR Comm College  | 176                     | 0          | 0         | 89                        | 105          | 25                         | 18         | 101                   | 31         | 315              | 35         |
| Mid-South Comm College  | 201                     | 43         | 3         | 303                       | 126          | 219                        | 34         | 1                     | 0          | 122              | 21         |
| National Park Community College                                 | 175                     | 25         | 7         | 146                       | 81           | 33                         | 11         | 104                   | 30         | 276              | 38         |
| North AR College  | 163                     | 10         | 4         | 107                       | 88           | 7                          | 5          | 161                   | 35         | 229              | 26         |
| Northwest AR Comm College                                       | 92                      | 3          | 2         | 124                       | 74           | 20                         | 16         | 3                     | 1          | 198              | 24         |
| Ouachita Technical College                                      | 120                     | 25         | 2         | 167                       | 90           | 72                         | 52         | 92                    | 44         | 150              | 21         |
| Ozarka College  | 141                     | 6          | 2         | 35                        | 35           | 12                         | 5          | 166                   | 41         | 249              | 29         |
| Phillips Comm College of U of AR                                | 81                      | 29         | 3         | 210                       | 139          | 43                         | 19         | 39                    | 14         | 202              | 29         |
| Pulaski Technical College                                       | 148                     | 92         | 4         | 316                       | 140          | 34                         | 11         | 218                   | 75         | 598              | 91         |
| Rich Mountain Comm College                                      | 159                     | 2          | 1         | 60                        | 56           | 35                         | 33         | 35                    | 15         | 194              | 26         |
| South AR Comm College   | 65                      | 11         | 0         | 107                       | 44           | 20                         | 12         | 83                    | 27         | 93               | 12         |
| Southeast AR College  | 134                     | 18         | 0         | 184                       | 56           | 38                         | 22         | 177                   | 35         | 148              | 27         |
| Southern AR University- Tech                                    | 81                      | 1          | 0         | 157                       | 50           | 26                         | 14         | 42                    | 20         | 109              | 22         |
| University of AR Comm College at Batesville                     | 217                     | 12         | 0         | 105                       | 10           | 86                         | 53         | 120                   | 29         | 345              | 42         |
| University of AR Comm College at Hope                           | 285                     | 2          | 0         | 96                        | 92           | 379                        | 74         | 567                   | 46         | 601              | 39         |
| University of AR Comm College at Morrilton                      | 89                      | 1          | 1         | 138                       | 76           | 50                         | 14         | 67                    | 13         | 168              | 27         |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - Crossett | 71                      | 4          | 2         | 178                       | 60           | 31                         | 18         | 106                   | 14         | 26               | 6          |
| University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - McGehee  | 43                      | 11         | 2         | 160                       | 105          | 27                         | 27         | 74                    | 24         | 21               | 9          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>3,758</b>            | <b>377</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>3,930</b>              | <b>2,127</b> | <b>1,524</b>               | <b>736</b> | <b>3,069</b>          | <b>756</b> | <b>5,721</b>     | <b>763</b> |

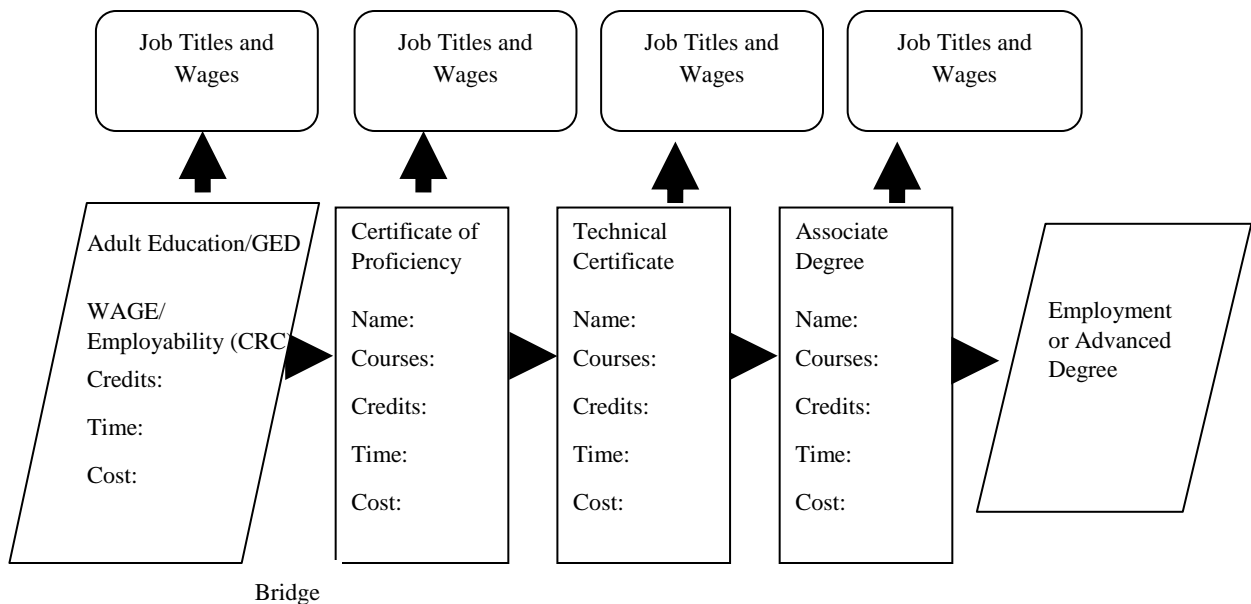
Note: Some students may have enrolled and completed more than one program during the program year.

## APPENDIX B: THE CPI MODEL

Before CPI began to serve clients in fall 2005, two-year colleges, workforce entities, social service providers, community- and faith-based organizations, adult education providers, and economic development agencies operated in relative isolation from one another. CPI brings together these agencies to provide low-income participants with employability skills, basic skills, remediation, advanced skill training in high-demand occupations, and college coursework.

The educational stepping stones that comprise the career pathways include Adult Education/GED programs, Career Readiness Certificate, WAGE/Employability programs, contextualized bridge programs, credit-bearing certificate programs, and associate degree programs at the college level. Each site adopts the career pathways framework from the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) approved programs at their campus and is required to complete a flowchart developed by ADHE/CPI that depicts educational stepping-stones comprising a career pathway, as shown by the sample in Figure 1. The educational stepping-stones adopted by the CPI initiative are described below.

*Figure 1: CPI Flowchart Template*



- *Adult Education/GED*: Adult Education provides Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and GED programs. CPI refers enrolling students without a high school diploma or GED to Adult Education.
- *WAGE or Employability Certificate/Career Readiness Certificate*: The WAGE program is a work-oriented adult education program that delivers basic skills training to low-skill clients. Employability certificates earned through the WAGE program teach computer literacy and soft skills for workplace environments. If there is no WAGE program at a two-year college, the institution is permitted to develop a CPI employability certificate program that delivers comparable training. The Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) is an equivalent employability certificate, also.
- *Bridge Program*: Bridge programs create easy transitions between different levels of education. Developed under CPI, these programs prepare educationally disadvantaged students to enter academic courses by teaching developmental or basic skills. They enable students who are not ready to enter directly into credit-based courses to raise their academic competencies in preparation for entering these courses.
- *Certificate of Proficiency*: The Certificate of Proficiency is awarded to students who have demonstrated proficiency in skills or knowledge within specific fields. The award is granted for programs that range from 7–18 semester credit hours depending on the field. Credits earned during Certificate of Proficiency coursework can be applied toward earning a Technical Certificate and associate degree in the same field.
- *Technical Certificate*: The Technical Certificate is awarded to students who successfully complete a one-year planned program of classroom and laboratory work at the collegiate level (24–42 credit hours depending on the field). It recognizes the completion of a specified level of competency in an occupational field. Upon completion, credits are applicable toward earning an associate degree in the same field.
- *Associate Degree*: An associate degree is awarded to students who successfully complete a program of collegiate-level work with an occupational objective. The majority of occupational courses and all general education courses are transferable toward a baccalaureate degree (60–72 credit hours). Some associate degrees articulate with four-year institutions in the state.



## **Description of CPI Sites**

To help low-income students succeed in their educations and advance in careers, each CPI site opens a career pathways department generally staffed with a program director, community outreach coordinator or student advisor, intake/data/administrative and career services staff. Depending on budget availability, sites may have from two to ten of these program specialists. CPI staff members seek to develop programs and establish new partnerships with social service organizations, education and training providers, and workforce and economic development organizations. They also work with local employers to identify high-demand occupations, job requirements, and pathways for advancement in local business and industries.

The program director is the overall manager of campus career pathways operations. The student advisor assists students to overcome both academic and non-academic barriers by developing individual career plans, holding regular one-on-one meetings, and referring students to support services as needed. The community outreach coordinators serves as the liaison between CPI campuses, the local TEA caseworkers, DHS, and community- and faith-based organizations to enroll TEA clients into CPI programs. The intake/data/administrative support specialist collects and maintains student data and assists with completing applications and verifying eligibility. The career services staff develops and oversees campus employability programs and tracks completers entering employment and job retention rates.

CPI budgets fund staff salaries and benefits, office equipment, classroom facilities, instructional equipment and software, instructional and administrative supplies, advertising, student support services, and employability training. The source of funding for CPI is a DWS-approved TANF grant. All participating colleges have contributed in-kind funds to the career pathways effort.

## **The Role of the State Career Pathways Division**

The ADHE Career Pathways Division (ADHE/CPI) oversees CPI and provides guidance with leadership and training to career pathways sites for running local offices. The CPI director, who reports to the ADHE deputy director, is responsible for the overall management of the division, including the career pathways grant. The division is organized into program specialist areas: career services, data, finance, internal auditing, and an administrative specialist. The FY10 plan included the addition of a site monitor to provide program monitoring at campuses.

- *Career Support Services:* CPI strongly focuses on developing employability skills among the target group. To accomplish this, CPI mandates that all sites establish an employability program and other career support services. Campus career services staff perform some specific kinds of tasks that help individuals learn about themselves, learn about jobs, make career choices and plans, and then carry out those plans. Facilitators in this department track student completion data that is analyzed for continuous improvement. ADHE/CPI provides training and leadership for campus staff in this area.
- *Curriculum:* ADHE/CPI provides guidelines to develop educational pathways and institutional strategies for assisting students to advance educationally along their chosen paths. Specifically, colleges develop and implement processes for shortening the time requirement to improve students' basic skills and meet their developmental education needs. Initiative innovations include bridge programs, open-entry/open-exit courses, modularized coursework, specialized training, and effective use of instructional software. To help develop these innovations, the state office provides technical assistance, workshops, and assistance in developing educational pathways for all approved programs at the campus.
- *Data/Accountability:* CPI promotes data sharing across state agencies—a practice not previously undertaken in measuring employment and educational outcomes for TANF-eligible students. The CPI database has created linkages between multiple agencies and data systems, enabling a more comprehensive view of outcomes for career pathways students. ADHE provides data on enrollment and completion, remediation, and student demographics to CPI partners, while DWS through DIS provides data from the Unemployment Insurance (UI) system to monitor job placement, wages, and job retention. The Department of Health and Human Services matches data to verify student eligibility.
- *Finance:* The financial structure of CPI is designed to provide flexibility for colleges as they implement career pathways. The ADHE/CPI finance staff administers the grants to local CPI sites and works monthly with DWS for reimbursement of campus expenditures.
- *Site Monitoring:* ADHE designates a program staff person to perform program monitoring activities that include site visits, review of programs implementation, and contract compliance issues for each of its sub-grantees.