



Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative

Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Progress Report of Activities and Outcomes

**Program Year Seven
(July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012)**



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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 FY12, the program's seventh year of operations.

KEY UPDATES FOR FY12

ADHE received a grant award of \$13,000,000 from Department of Workforce Services (DWS) in FY12 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 of 2007. Performance measures with incentive amounts for institutional performance are delineated in the plan. The seventh year grant brings the total funds for the statewide initiative to almost \$90,000,000. All grant funds are from the Arkansas Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant with the colleges and higher education providing many in-kind contributions.

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 through 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 an adult caretaker, parent or relative of a child living in the home under the age of 21 (FY12 MOA).

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 2005.¹ The remaining five sites were funded and joined CPI during Phase II, in January 2006.² 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.³ 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 of 2007, 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 measures 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 FY12:

- *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.

¹ Phase I sites: Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University–Newport, Cossatot Community College of the University of Arkansas, Ouachita Technical College (now College of the Ouachitas), Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas, and Southeast Arkansas College.

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

³ 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.

A goal of \$1,500 for cost per participant was set in FY09, so final FY12 budget totals were divided by the goal of \$1,500 to determine the number of students that could be served. The FY12 statewide enrollment goal was 7,089 students.

- *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 FY12 goal for current TEA and Work Pays was set using criteria that included:

1. Statewide goal for current TEA/Work Pays is 12% of enrollment. 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 2011 County Office Operation Report, 1 adult and 2 adult cases).
3. TEA cases total for all CPI sites.
4. TEA client's 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 FY12 in this category was 860.

- *Certificates/Degrees Attained:* The certificates/degrees tracked under this initiative are educational stepping-stones. The performance goal for FY12 certificate/degree attainment was 50 percent of the enrollment goal—3,540 certificates or degrees.
- *Employment:* The minimum percentage of student completers who must match the Arkansas Unemployment Insurance data from the Department of Information Services (DIS) (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:* Employment retention rates for CPI program completers are measured using Arkansas UI data from (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 earns 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 FY12 budget was set aside for incentives based on institutional performance and a pro-rated formula. DWS notified ADHE that the FY13 budget would be decreased by \$2,000,000 as a result of federal cuts to state TANF funds. Consequently incentive funds were reduced to \$500,000, so campuses received only half of the expected PBSS for each measure. Per capita incentive funding is as follows:

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

- *Award Attainment*

Certificate or Degree Attainment	Enrolled Student	Current TEA/Work Pays
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 FY12

The ADHE/CPI state leadership and technical assistance team includes a program director, and four program specialists that provide guidance for the 25 sites; the statewide program director networks with outside agencies to sustain the grant within the guidelines of the Memorandum of Agreement and provides campus Program Directors assistance with day-to-day operation. The finance specialist provides guidance with Grant Awards, budgets and reimbursements for expenditures. Database training and development, along with verification of student eligibility are provided by another program specialist and each campus receives a monitoring visit annually from a site monitor who also serves as policy analyst. Assistance in inventory tracking and all administration of the program is provided by a program specialist/administration. ADHE/CPI not only provides technical assistance, but provides numerous opportunities for continuous improvement at the 25 sites with strategic activities throughout the year including:

Monitoring Visits

The purpose of the FY12 audit was to monitor program compliance and review of the TANF funded activities and services prescribed in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Workforce Services. As participants in the Career Pathways Initiative, institutions are required to maintain complete and accurate records concerning the receipt and expenditure of TANF funds. Annual monitoring visits are necessary to provide assistance with any problems programs may have with management of their grant. The FY12 audits were modeled after the audit process utilized by DWS. An audit team was assembled comprised of a team leader along with peers from CPI programs and colleges across the state. Each team member was assigned sections of the audit documentation to review. Upon conclusion of the audit, the team discussed issues/problems noted in their section. Team members then compiled and submitted a section report to the ADHE/CPI team leader who combined all comments into an overall report. An audit report was submitted to the CPI Director noting any recommendations for improvement. All recommendations were addressed in a Program Improvement Plan submitted to ADHE/CPI by all 25 sites.

Institutional Performance Recognition

Performance Based Student Support (PBSS) funds are awarded to the 25 sites based on institutional performance on the annual performance goals. ADHE/CPI hosts a recognition luncheon at the annual meeting of Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC) and recognizes the performance of each CPI sites. The awards', based on FY11 institutional

performance, range was \$17,153-\$89,405; funds are Program Director discretionary funds added to annual Grant Awards and must be spent on direct or indirect student support.

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 (<http://www.discoverarkansas.net/>). 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.

Sites receive annual UI Data Match reports for all completers that enter employment and retain employment for six and twelve months. Details on the report include:

- Name of Institution,
- Name of Student,
- Educational Career Cluster,
- Award Type,
- Occupational Career Cluster,
- List of Wages for the Quarter,
- If Wages are greater than \$1,000 (Y/N),
- If Student earned Certificate/Degree (Y/N),
- If Student Entered Target Job (Y/N),
- If Student is TEA/WP (Y/N),
- Total Wages,
- PBSS earned for Entered Employment, attained certificate or degree,
- PBSS earned if student is TEA/WP,

- Total Incentives Earned by Student,
- Number of Students Seeking Employment at Institution,
- Number of Students entered employment, attained certificate or degree and amount PBSS earned,
- Number of Students entered employment, attained certificate or degree, current TEA/WP and amount PBSS earned,
- Total Incentives earned, and
- Entered Employment percentage for the institution.

Annual Retreat

ADHE/CPI hosted a three-day annual retreat for Program Directors at the Winthrop Rockefeller Center. Arkansas 4-H Center and the ExCEL program provided the training with outdoor activities that challenged participants to work together more efficiently and effectively while providing activities on team trust, creative problem solving and communication.

Promising Pathways

In FY12, US Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Family Assistance (OFA), Promising Pathways Initiative identified Arkansas Career Pathways as one of ten existing TANF programs/practices “most promising” nationwide. The Arkansas program was identified by ACF Regional TANF Program Manager to represent Region VI made up of *Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas*. Promising Pathways Initiative sought to capture promising strategies for improving the outcomes of TANF recipients and other low income individuals through a 6-8 month technical assistance activity that included 1-3 site visits, some on site discussions, a kick-off meeting, an interim meeting to discuss progress, and a closeout capstone meeting to bring together all of the programs from across the country. The capstone experience for the ten programs was held in Washington, DC with CPI recognized during the Innovation Institute for completing a logic model and Return on Investment during the Promising Pathways study (see Appendix C).

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM THE SEVENTH YEAR

FY12 enrollments were 9,354, see 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 4,480 certificates/degrees during this program year, which exceeds the 3,542 attainment goal, Table 4a. Employability certificates, which include WAGE, CPI Employability and the CRC, is the largest group of certificates awarded; many of the campuses require this pre-employment certificate for all completers. For the second consecutive year, the associate degrees were the largest college credential category (871 awarded), while technical certificates with 714 awarded and 717 certificates of proficiency awarded followed closely. Campuses awarded 48 GED certificates in FY12 compared to 53 in FY11.

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 are compared to other students enrolled at the two-year colleges. In FY12 the success rate for CPI students was 18 points higher (CPI 78%, Colleges 60%) than the traditional success rate for two-year colleges. The withdraw rate for CPI students is more than 18 points lower than other students, See Table 3.

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 9,354 actual enrollments, TEA client enrollment was 48% above the goal, and campuses awarded 4,480 certificates and degrees.

Table 4b shows that all 25 sites met or surpassed the entered employment goal when completers were matched to UI data, with a statewide total of 65% and eighty-six 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

	FY06	FY07	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12
Total Enrollments	2,233	3,750	7,834	9,627	10,017	9,909	9,354

Table 2: Certificates/Degrees Attained

Type of Certificates/Degrees	FY11	FY12	Change
GEDs	53	48	-5
WAGE/Employability Certificates	2,049	2,111	+62
Certificates of Proficiency	662	717	+55
Technical Certificates	793	714	-79
Associate Degrees	880	871	-9
Certificate of Completion	25	19	-6
Total Certificates/Degrees Attained	4,437	4,480	+43

Table 3: Success Rate

The Cohort includes students who enrolled in the Fall 2011 (Academic Year 2012) in a college program who were first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students. The retention number represents the number of those students (cohort) who returned in the Fall 2012 (Academic Year 2013); percent of students retained in the cohort was calculated. Students completing a certificate or degree from the cohort were calculated into a percent. Success rate represents percent of student completing plus the percent of students retained.

Students	FY12	% FY12	Traditional Success Rate for Two-Year Colleges
Students in Cohort	436		8532
Students Completing a Cert. or Degree from Cohort	82	18.81	7.29%
Students Retained	257	58.94	53.00%
Students Withdrawing or Dropping from Cohort	97	22.25	39.71%
Success Rate (Completing and Retained Students)	339	77.75	60.29%

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

FY11 Goals	Goal	Actual
Enrollment	7,089	9,354
Current TEA/Work Pays Clients	860	1,264
Certificate or Degree Attainment	3,542	4,480

Table 4b: UI Data Match Outcomes for FY11 Completers

Entered Employment and Job Retention are measured by matching the social security numbers for completers to Unemployment Insurance (UI) data. Fifty-five percent of completers should match the UI database, and 80% of those who match should retain employment at six and 12 months. CPI Annual Plan has dates for the match process and in-depth details on the data match.

Institution	Employment		6-Mo Retention (80%)
	Goal (55%)	Actual (%)	
AR Northeastern College	55	79	87
AR State University—Beebe	55	69	90
AR State University – Mountain Home	55	67	82
AR State University—Newport	55	60	90
AR Tech University – Ozark	55	58	82
Black River Technical College	55	57	85
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	55	67	82
College of the Ouachitas	55	75	85
East AR Community College	55	72	85
Mid-South Community College	55	61	81
North Arkansas College	55	64	88
National Park Community College	55	65	86
North West Arkansas Community College	55	56	81
Ozarka College	55	65	91
Phillips Community College of University of AR	55	56	*
Pulaski Technical College	55	56	89
Rich Mountain Community College	55	56	88
South Arkansas Community College	55	64	86
Southern Arkansas University	55	63	95
Southeast AR College	55	68	81
U of A Community College – Batesville	55	68	90
U of A Community College – Hope	55	68	80
U of A Community College – Morrilton	55	76	87
U of A at Monticello- Crossett	55	55	81
U of A at Monticello – McGehee	55	64	89
State Total	55	65	86

* Did not meet 80% Retained Employment.

Analysis of FY12 Statistics (Presented in Appendix A)

- *Enrollment Demographics:* As shown in Table A-1 of the appendix, enrollments of 9,354 were posted during the last program year, with enrollments at each site ranging from 153 to 626 students. The average age of a career pathways student statewide was 31. Overwhelmingly, the students were female (90 percent), and the data on ethnicity and race indicated that 65 percent were White, 30 percent were Black, and small percentages were Hispanic or other minorities.
- *Eligibility:* As shown in Table A-2, data indicate that 61 percent of FY12 enrollments were single parents and a large majority of student (82 percent) received Food Stamps or Medicaid. Other students were current or former TEA recipients (28 percent) or met the eligibility criteria based on qualifying incomes (47 percent).
- *Previous Education and Employment Status:* As shown in Table A-3, 94 percent of career pathways students were either high school graduates or GED recipients upon enrollment. Over 27 percent of pathways students reported that they were employed at the time of enrollment.
- *Certificates/Degrees Attained by Type/New Students:* Table A-4 shows that enrollments in Employability certificates were the most common, with 1,993 students pursuing that award and 2,111 successfully completing the certificate. Associate degrees had the second-highest enrollment with 1,008 enrolled and 871 degrees attained. Third-highest enrollments were technical certificate programs with 603 enrolled and 714 certificates awarded, followed by certificates of proficiency programs with 486 enrolled and 717 certificates awarded. There were 2,993 new student enrollments.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

The following tables provide descriptive statistics regarding career pathways participation:

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

Table A-1: Mean Age of FY12 Enrollments and Percentage by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	Enrollments	Age (Mean)*	Gender		Race/Ethnicity			
			F (%)	M (%)	Black (%)	Hispanic (%)	White (%)	Other (%)
AR Northeastern College	397	29	90.93	9.07	29.47	1.76	66.75	2.02
AR State University—Beebe	469	30	88.94	11.06	7.23	2.34	88.51	1.91
AR State University—Mountain Home	376	31	87.77	12.23	0.27	2.93	90.69	6.12
AR State University—Newport	330	29	85.11	14.89	27.27	1.52	70.30	0.91
AR Technical University—Ozark	329	31	86.93	13.07	3.34	1.82	90.27	4.56
Black River Technical College	550	31	85.09	14.91	2.91	1.45	94.18	1.45
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	299	32	84.62	15.38	18.06	7.02	70.90	4.01
College of the Ouichitas	376	31	89.89	10.11	24.73	1.60	72.34	1.33
East AR Community College	336	29	95.24	4.76	60.42	0.60	37.20	1.79
Mid-South Community College	349	30	95.13	4.87	69.91	1.15	27.51	1.43
North AR College	408	31	85.54	14.46	0.49	3.92	93.63	1.96
National Park Community College	358	32	89.39	10.61	19.55	2.51	73.46	4.47
Northwest AR Community College	262	32	92.34	7.66	4.20	13.36	77.86	4.58
Ozarka College	615	33	86.91	13.09	0.16	1.29	92.73	5.82
Phillips Community College of University of AR	392	29	96.95	3.05	61.32	1.78	35.11	1.78
Pulaski Technical College	483	32	94.00	6.00	70.19	2.48	23.60	3.73
Rich Mountain Community College	212	31	88.26	11.74	0.00	4.23	94.37	1.41
South AR Community College	204	33	97.55	2.45	60.78	1.96	37.25	0.00
Southern AR University —Tech	195	30	95.38	4.62	63.59	1.54	33.33	1.54
Southeast AR College	590	30	97.12	2.88	75.30	0.51	22.84	1.35
University of AR Community College at Batesville	475	31	86.74	13.26	3.79	1.68	92.63	1.89
University of AR Community College at Hope	626	32	87.86	12.14	49.68	4.15	45.05	1.12
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	408	32	88.24	11.76	15.69	3.19	77.45	3.68
University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—Crossett	153	31	89.54	10.46	44.44	1.96	52.94	0.65
University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—McGehee	162	33	84.57	15.43	82.10	0.00	17.28	0.62
Overall	9354	31	89.87	10.13	30.06	2.53	64.87	2.54

Table A-2: Percentage of FY12 Enrollments by Eligibility Criteria/Single Parent

	Single Parent (%)	Current TEA (%)	Former TEA (%)	Food Stamps/Medicaid (%)	At/Less Than 250% of Poverty (%)
AR Northeastern College	61	20	14	77	23
AR State University—Beebe	56	10	12	80	20
AR State University—Mountain Home	54	10	9	89	11
AR State University—Newport	58	11	18	78	64
AR Technical University—Ozark	51	6	14	81	79
Black River Technical College	41	4	15	77	100
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	52	7	3	66	100
College of the Ouachitas	65	7	9	91	35
East AR Community College	74	20	22	84	100
Mid-South Community College	72	24	22	84	62
North AR College	51	7	11	87	14
National Park Community College	65	18	11	82	39
Northwest AR Community College	68	18	6	82	96
Ozarka College	46	4	13	84	32
Phillips Community College of University of AR	71	27	12	88	27
Pulaski Technical College	83	40	21	70	33
Rich Mountain Community College	39	5	5	73	26
South AR Community College	79	11	26	91	8
Southern AR University—Tech	74	13	19	85	15
Southeast AR College	83	25	27	88	69
University of AR Community College at Batesville	45	8	13	74	88
University of AR Community College at Hope	71	8	24	84	30
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	59	7	13	87	13
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett	56	12	17	89	11
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee	73	24	17	83	17
Overall	61	14	15	82	47

Note: Some participants are eligible under more than one criteria.

Table A-3: Percentage of FY12 Enrollments 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	71	19	11	16
AR State University— Beebe	70	25	6	13
AR State University—Mountain Home	65	30	5	34
AR State University—Newport	66	28	6	12
AR Technical University—Ozark	70	26	4	20
Black River Technical College	75	22	2	20
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	71	24	5	6
College of the Ouachitas	66	19	15	30
East AR Community College	85	15	1	42
Mid-South Community College	79	9	12	17
North AR College	67	30	4	21
National Park Community College	57	32	11	13
Northwest AR Community College	72	27	1	28
Ozarka College	66	32	2	22
Phillips Community College of University of AR	78	14	8	33
Pulaski Technical College	69	17	14	32
Rich Mountain Community College	69	30	1	31
South AR Community College	76	20	4	38
Southern AR University—Tech	87	13	1	15
Southeast AR College	75	20	4	29
University of AR Community College at Batesville	63	29	8	18
University of AR Community College at Hope	82	15	3	29
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	71	20	9	10
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett	75	18	7	27
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee	75	18	7	23
Overall	72	22	6	23

Table A-4: Enrollments and Attainments by Award Type

	Enrollments in FY12	GED		Employability Certificate		Certificate of Proficiency		Technical Certificate		Associate Degree	
		Enr	Comp	Enr	Comp	Enr	Comp	Enr	Comp	Enr	Comp
AR Northeastern College	191	12	8	134	112	42	28	20	24	50	39
AR State University - Beebe	136	2	1	253	205	47	38	45	25	91	35
AR State University – Mountain Home	117	5	1	64	53	67	54	17	15	42	36
AR State University - Newport	222	3	4	320	204	52	50	76	48	48	18
AR Technical University - Ozark	95	0	0	16	11	37	78	45	41	47	37
Black River Technical College	170	1	1	147	123	16	14	63	48	123	52
Cossatot Comm College of U of AR	109	1	1	132	125	4	5	38	16	49	17
College of the Ouachitas	100	2	3	97	66	25	30	19	36	2	18
East AR Comm College	151	0	0	176	107	0	6	41	44	142	40
Mid-South Comm College	117	5	0	244	158	18	7	0	2	111	23
North AR College	111	1	1	45	53	7	13	65	46	57	48
National Park Community College	145	13	12	127	102	5	26	33	25	77	52
Northwest AR Comm College	73	1	0	103	39	12	56	0	1	51	42
Ozarka College	157	0	0	72	44	22	22	43	24	79	48
Phillips Comm College of U of AR	90	9	4	214	114	10	8	24	11	83	22
Pulaski Technical College	95	3	4	169	144	4	12	23	44	39	33
Rich Mountain Comm College	87	1	0	89	55	31	25	33	18	46	33
South AR Comm College	53	2	0	34	39	7	21	28	39	18	12
Southern AR University- Tech	77	0	0	80	60	25	19	10	9	32	14
Southeast AR College	180	0	0	118	104	23	36	56	35	51	24
University of AR Comm College at Batesville	172	3	5	9	7	50	48	51	21	61	41
University of AR Comm College at Hope	198	0	0	72	69	40	38	58	57	65	53
University of AR Comm College at Morrilton	43	3	5	36	30	4	29	1	31	2	53
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - Crossett	77	0	0	52	43	38	29	44	24	11	10
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - McGehee	56	0	0	97	72	21	3	31	19	9	5
Total	3022	67	50	2900	2139	607	695	864	703	1386	805

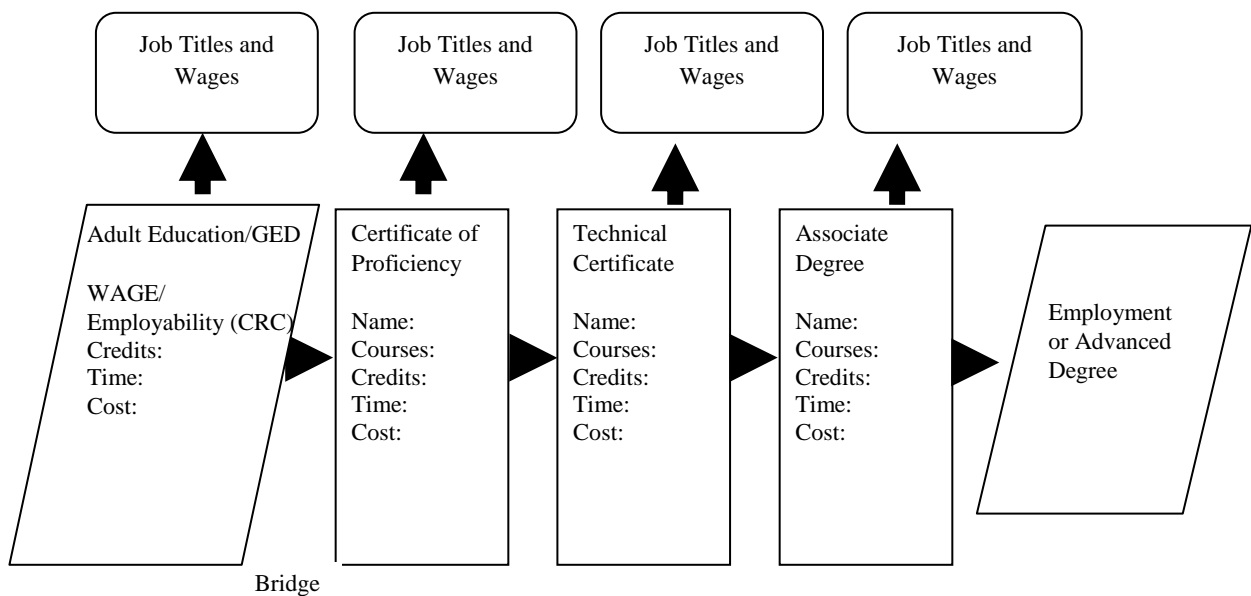
Note: Some students may have enrolled and completed more than one program during the program year.

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 maps educational pathways 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 generally 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, if available at the college.

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. All positions are trained to serve as case managers for students.

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 and ADHE 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 Program Director is responsible for the overall management of the division, including the ADHE Grant Award. The division is organized into program specialist areas: data, finance, internal auditing, and an administrative specialist.

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 performs 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 completer data

that are analyzed for continuous improvement. ADHE/CPI provides a list serve and monthly WebEx for sharing best practices, and access to two certified CDF instructors for 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 guidance for colleges. The ADHE/CPI finance staff administers the Grant Awards to local CPI sites by monitoring and providing training/development for the processes associated with monthly Request for Funds Transfers from DWS to ADHE. A budget-software system was developed to expedite Grant Award requirements.

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. The site monitor also serves as the policy specialist.

APPENDIX C: PROMISING PATHWAYS CASE STUDY

Case Study

Introduction

Across state and federal agencies there is a growing recognition of the need to support increased transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in programs. The desire for enhanced performance and accountability has solidified the preference to use practices for which effective evidence is available. While there is a widening recognition on how evidence-informed practice helps increase the efficient use of resources, serious challenges remain to integrating this approach into the TANF field. For too long a majority of program outcomes have been measured anecdotally and additional efforts are required to develop consistent documentation and data collection strategies across programs.

Ten promising programs have been selected to participate in a national initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance. The Promising Pathways Initiative provided these programs with individualized technical assistance designed to improve their capacity to collect evidence that articulates their program outcomes.

Through a series of technical assistance activities each site had the opportunity to build capacity by identifying their program components and practices; developing and documenting evidence; and sharing data that depicts program effectiveness. Each site had a dedicated team consisting of a coach, data specialist and support specialist assigned to provide targeted technical assistance while documenting the aspects of the site's program that allowed it to be promising in its use of evidence informed practices.

Site Description:

The **Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative** (CPI) is an education and training initiative administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) at Arkansas two-year colleges which is designed to enable low-income parents to acquire the degrees and credentials required to obtain and hold jobs in selected high-demand, high wage industries. The CPI model was first initiated in Arkansas in 2003, when the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC), the Southern Good Faith Fund (SGFF), and the Governor's Office, with a grant from the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, piloted the first career pathways effort to develop a strategy for improving educational attainment for low-income and low-skilled adults in partnership with Southeast Arkansas College in Pine Bluff. The model was unique in that it focused on non-traditional students by combining extensive student support, developmental education offerings, and a focus on high-wage and/or high-demand occupations. Following the pilot, the state TANF agency, the Arkansas Transitional Employment Assistance program (TEA), in partnership with ADHE replicated the program at 10 additional two-year colleges throughout the state. The initiative became codified by state mandate in 2005 under the state's Department of Workforce Services (DWS), and by 2007 had expanded to an additional 11 two-year college sites and 3 technical college campuses affiliated with four-year universities, for

a total of 25 campuses statewide (see Exhibit 1). These community and technical college campuses provide a comprehensive set of academic and support services that allow CPI participants to earn degrees and credentials ranging from GEDs and vocational credentials to Associate degrees leading to higher paying jobs in their local areas.

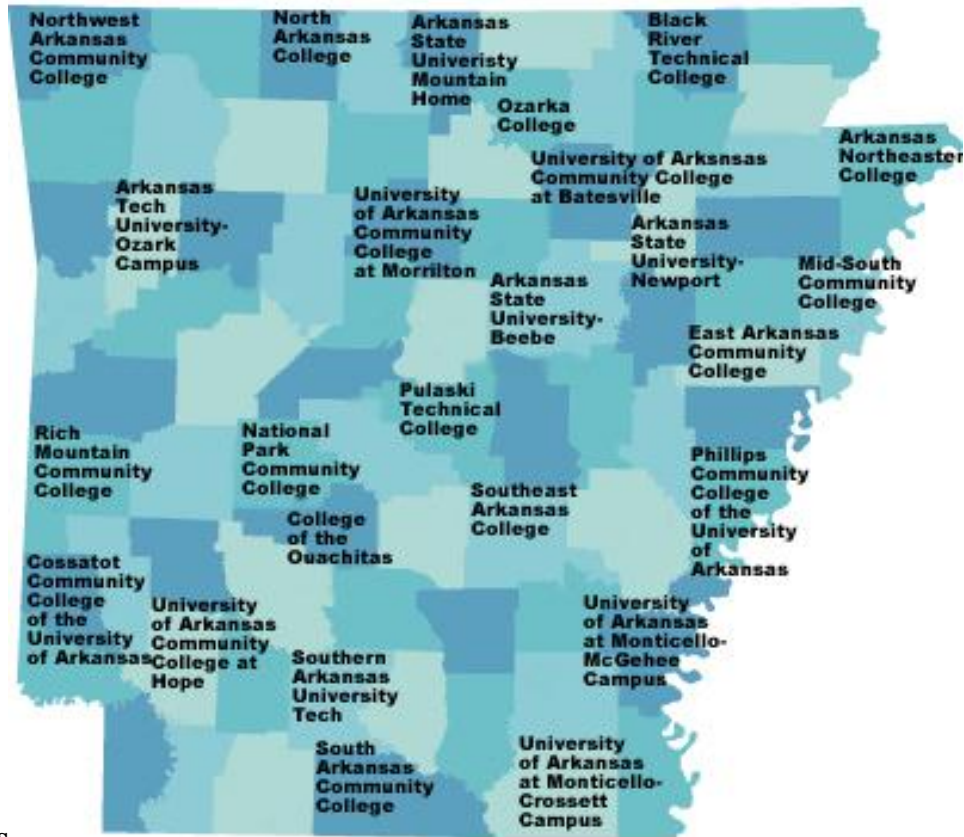
Specifically, state statute Act 514 of 2007 mandates that the Career Pathways Initiative shall:

- Increase the access of low-income parents and other individuals to education credentials that qualify them for higher-paying jobs in their local areas;
- Improve the preparedness of the Arkansas workforce for high-skill and high-wage jobs; Develop training courses and educational credentials after consulting local employers and local workforce boards to identify appropriate job opportunities and needed skills and training to meet employers' needs;
- Improve the preparedness of the Arkansas workforce for high-skill and high-wage jobs; Develop training courses and educational credentials after consulting local employers and local workforce boards to identify appropriate job opportunities and needed skills and training to meet employers' needs;
- Provide resources on the basis of performance incentives, including participants:
 - Enrolling in courses;
 - Completing the courses; then
 - Obtaining jobs in the targeted job categories; and
 - Staying employed in the targeted job categories.

CPI currently receives \$13,000,000 in state TANF funding annually which it allocates to individual CPI sites located on campuses across the state. While CPI is funded with TANF dollars it is not solely limited to recipients of TANF cash assistance, or TEA clients as they are called in Arkansas. Basic eligibility requirements include: An adult caretaker, parent or relative of a child under the age of 21 living in the home, who is receiving TEA now or has received TEA in the past; or, is receiving food stamps or Medicaid; or, who has an annual family income below 250 percent of the federal poverty level (about \$46,000 annually for a family of three). Given the high poverty rates across the state of Arkansas, a significant percentage of custodial parents meet the low-income requirements and since only 18% of Arkansas residents have a postsecondary credential, the potential pool of Career Pathways students is quite large. Arkansas currently has the highest percentage in the U.S. (tied with WV) of adults ages 18-64 who have a high school diploma but are not earning a living wage. And Arkansas ranks 46th in the nation in the percentage of adults with an associate's degree and 49th in the nation with the percentage of citizens with a bachelor's degree. Preference in the CPI is given to individuals who show an aptitude for successfully completing a credential and gaining employment, although campuses are given a quota for how many TEA (extremely low-income) students they must enroll.

In FY 2010 the Career Pathways Initiative enrolled 10,017 students, and awarded 2128 employability certificates, 755 technical certificates, 763 Associate degrees, 51 GEDs and 736 Certificates of Proficiency.

Exhibit 1. Map of Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative



sites

How Does the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Define Their Practice?

The CPI has developed more than 400 tiered educational pathways bringing together two-year colleges and workforce entities to provide participants with employability skills, basic skills, remediation, and advanced skills training in high-demand occupations. Students can earn a Career Readiness Certificate (CRC), college-level Certificates of Proficiency, Technical Certificates or Associate Degrees in a wide range of career technical programs. The Department of Workforce Services has worked to establish agreements with businesses across the state to give priority status to applicants who have earned an employability certificate like the CRC, and the certificate has become widely recognized as a measure of job readiness.

Entering CPI students receive career assessment counseling using the Kuder (Arkansas College and Career Planning System) as well as WorkKeys training and assessment which include modules assisting students with basic academic, computer and job readiness skills. CPI sites also utilize local labor market data to identify local job opportunities. Other available services provided on as needed basis include: support for tuition, fees, books, child care, transportation as well as tutoring and counseling support.

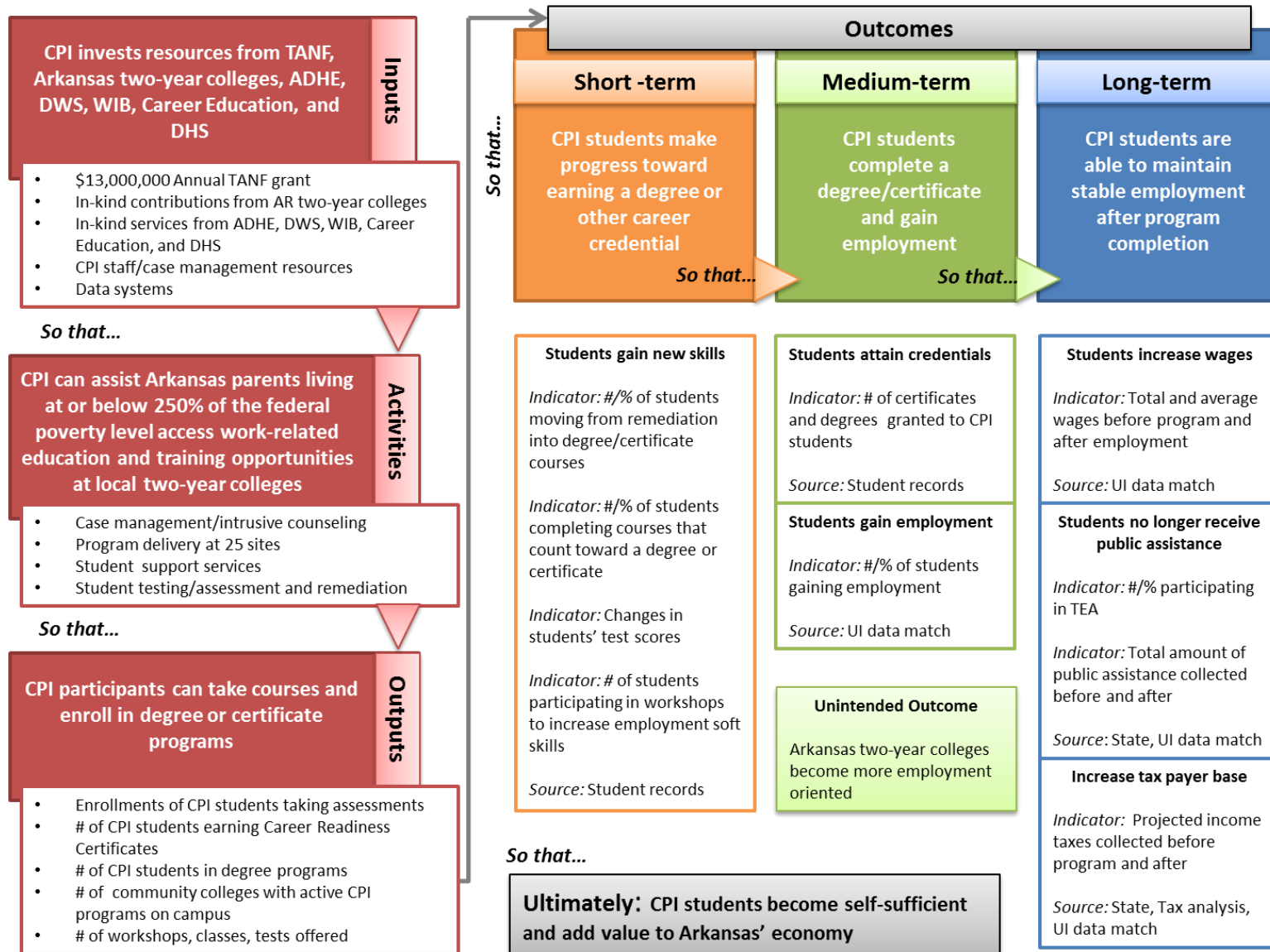
In keeping with their Memorandum of Understanding with the DWS and with state statute, the ADHE has drafted performance measures with incentives for each CPI site. The measures include goals for student enrollment, attainment of certificates and degrees, entering employment in targeted job categories and continued employment in targeted job categories at six and twelve months. DWS requested the addition of a performance goal for enrolling TEA and Work Pays clients. One million dollars of the CPI annual allocation is set aside each year and used as Performance Based Student Support funds, awarded to different campuses on the basis of institutional performance in fulfillment of CPI goals.

Development of a Logic Model

Prior to the Promising Pathways Initiative, CPI did not utilize logic models in the design or monitoring of their program. One aspect of the technical assistance provided by the Promising Pathways team in Arkansas focused on helping CPI to develop a logic model and map the data they already collect to evidence-based outcomes. Together, CPI staff and the Promising Pathways team developed a logic model (see Exhibit 2) that demonstrates the process CPI utilizes to turn investments from TANF, Arkansas two-year colleges, ADHE, the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), Career Education, and the Department of Human Services (DHS) into long-term self-sufficiency for CPI students and added value for Arkansas' economy.

Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Case Study

Exhibit 2. Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Logic model



How does the Career Pathways Initiative use data?

ADHE incorporates a rigorous data collection and analysis system into its CPI program model. Data is collected and used to determine program eligibility, career clusters, and to measure program outcomes, progress, and performance. CPI employs system-level Program Specialists who are dedicated to data collection and analysis and each CPI site generally has an individual assigned to data collection and data entry. ADHE staff manages the statewide collection and analysis of campus data to report to the state Department of Workforce Services and to the TANF agency. ADHE use Access and Excel software to track and capture data. Community and technical college campus use sophisticated student information system (SIS) data bases to track individual student academic records.

Data Collection

The CPI data collection system consists of documented eligibility information taken upon student admission to the program, program level and regional workforce data. Data is collected from participants prior to acceptance into the program (from the participant application), then again at several points during the program and for up to one year after the participants have departed or completed a degree or certificate in the CPI. Unit record data collected on each participant include eligibility documentation, certificate/degree completions and employment outcomes. Program level data includes information on attendance, completions, certification/degrees earned, and support services utilized.

Documentation used for admissions into the CPI includes information on a potential participant's enrollment in public assistance programs, such as TEA cash assistance, Food Stamps, or Medicaid, and federal tax returns to document low-income status. Demographic information on age, race, marital status, and citizenship is collected on the application as well as information on education and employment history including educational attainment, goals, potential programs of study, and GPA. Employment information includes a history of all jobs held, job responsibilities, starting and ending salaries, and average hours worked per week. Also included is information on military service and personal references.

Program level data track the numbers of students enrolled and the numbers that attained certificates and degrees by career cluster. CPI utilizes occupational and industry sector projections collected from DWS and private sources to evaluate the job categories that offer potential for growth in Arkansas. The system also tracks post completion employment

information by occupation, industry sector, and starting salary. ADHE also has access to unemployment insurance (UI) wage data maintained by the DWS that allows them to do a match of social security numbers of CPI completers to track employment history, retention, and wages for past participants. Employment is tracked for up to one year after completion.

Use of Data

To determine career clusters, ADHE has utilized outside contractors to complete gap analysis studies and provide regional labor market overviews. Gap Analysis studies analyze occupations and industries projected to be in high demand and analyze educational attainments to determine where workforce “gaps” are likely to exist. Using this regional labor market information, ADHE has identified occupations in manufacturing, health care and social assistance, transportation and warehousing, professional and technical services, and management of companies and enterprises that are projected to need additional trained workers. CPI participants are encouraged to earn degrees or certificates that prepare them for these high wage/high demand fields.

As mentioned earlier, ADHE also conducts an annual study measuring campus performance in meeting program goals that is linked to incentive funding. Performance measurements include enrollment levels by year, number of certificates/degrees attained by type, success rates of students, and employment retention rates. Past years are compared to measure the change in performance. The number of certificate/degrees attained, are measured against a performance goal, which in 2010 was 50% of enrollment. Success rates of students are measured by analyzing information on particular cohorts as they enter and complete the program. Information by cohort includes the number completing a certificate or degree, the number that are retained, and the number withdrawing or dropping out. An additional performance measurement includes employment retention rates. Retention rates for CPI program completers are measured using UI data (described above). The stated goal is to have 80% of program completers who entered employment, be retained in their employment after the first six months and 80% of those workers remain employed for at least twelve months.

In addition to the above performance measures, descriptive statistics such as demographic data, educational attainment, and eligibility data is also documented in the progress report. Total enrollment is compared for five years, measuring growth in the number of participants served. Participant demographics, such as age, gender, and race, are documented. Educational

attainment measures the number of certificates/degrees attained by type; which include GEDs, WAGE/Employability Certificates, Certificates of Proficiency, Technical Certificates, and Associate degrees. Educational attainment data is shown for two years, measuring year-over-year change. Eligibility data, such as the number of participants enrolled in various public assistance programs and qualifying incomes are also documented. Finally, the progress report also includes a plan promoting systemic change and next steps for the program.

The ability to track participant employment and wages through the use of UI data provides a unique opportunity to measure long-term outcomes and performance. Although, currently CPI only uses UI data to track participant employment and wages for one year, it is possible to look at long-term performance using real data, rather than rely on small sample sets or surveys. This information allows CPI to study the long-term impacts of its program at both the individual participant level and at a macro-level, such as the impact on state and local tax revenue generation and the regional economic impact of its programs. One such study that CPI is interested in conducting is a Return-On-Investment (ROI) study. A model that simulates state tax revenue generation and saving in public assistance payments was created for ADHE as part of the Technical Assistance provided by the Promising Pathways team. A small sample set of UI data of past participants was used in the model to estimate the ROI that CPI provides the State of Arkansas. With the collection of further UI data, a robust ROI can be projected for the CPI program, showing the positive contribution that is being generated for the tax base of the State of Arkansas as a result of the investment of TANF funds into the education and training of low-income citizens across the state. The ROI study will be discussed in more detail in the Technical Assistance section of this case study.

Data/Results Dissemination

Because of the size, scope and unique success of the program, the CPI has generated significant interest across the country and has received particular attention and recognition from federal authorities, requests for information from other states, and praise from philanthropic foundations. ADHE disseminates CPI program performance data through various publications, including newsletters, fact sheets, and annual reports. The individual community colleges may also periodically produce publications that describe program performance. As mentioned above,

yearly progress reports are also conducted, but their dissemination is typically limited to ADHE staff and other state agencies.

Technical Assistance Provided by the Promising Pathways Initiative:

The Promising Pathways team discussed a number of potential areas for technical assistance during its four month interaction with the ADHE. Over the course of three site visits and a series of conference calls, Promising Pathways and ADHE staff worked together to identify and address several areas of the program where additional evidence informed practices could further strengthen the work of the CPI.

1. Identifying Long-Term Program Outcomes

ADHE would benefit from developing greater capacity in its focus on long-term outcomes of the CPI program. ADHE has a robust system in place to measure short-term outcomes, such as completion rates, degrees/certificates earned, and employment information. What is missing, however, are systems that allow ready tracking of participants by cohorts and beyond one year of program completion. Long-term outcomes of the program on individuals include wage gains, decreases in reliance on public assistance, economic self-sufficiency, and subsequent increases in state and local tax revenue collection. Also missing is a macro-analysis of the impact of CPI contributions to job and economic growth in various regions of the state and by workforce sector. Information on the contributions of CPI in delivering these long-term outcomes and how that success differs among career clusters and service offerings could greatly inform decisions made at both the state and local levels regarding public investments in particular education and training programs and interventions.

2. Development of a Logic Model

Program outcomes were also discussed and technical assistance provided in the context of developing a comprehensive logic model for the CPI. A logic model can identify and visually depict how program inputs, activities, and outputs generate short, medium, and long-term outcomes and how those outcomes can be measured by specific indicators.

3. Identifying CPI's ROI

A particular area of great interest to ADHE was measuring how the \$13 million dollar TANF investment in the CPI program impacts Arkansas fiscally. Significant public visibility among

policymakers and key stakeholders regarding the success of this investment in education and training has generated interest on the part of other social service agencies in accessing TANF funds to support delivery of their own services. With many agencies in the non-profit and public sectors experiencing significant budget cuts due to the economic downturn, there has been increased demand and competition for limited TANF dollars. While ADHE has been able to document individual successes of participants in CPI programs, it has lacked the capacity to accurately measure long-term macro-level impacts on state budgets and ultimately tax revenues. The Promising Pathways team introduced the ROI concept to ADHE as one method of calculating the impact of public CPI investments on the state's fiscal bottom line.

4. Communicating CPI's Mission

Closely related to the previous discussion on increasing competition for TANF funds, is the issue of effectively communicating the mission and impact of the CPI with key stakeholders and policymakers. ADHE and its CPI staff expressed interest in exploring how other workforce education and training programs communicate about their program impacts to key external audiences.

Technical Assistance Activities

Dr. Katherine Boswell, the CPI Promising Pathways Coach, made an initial site visit in early October to Little Rock to meet with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education staff and particularly with CPI Program Director, Dr. Karon Rosa, in order to learn about the CPI program. This meeting included a discussion of potential next steps and provided the foundation for the Promising Pathways TA with the CPI.

In mid-October, shortly after the initial site visit, Dr. Rosa from ADHE and Phil Harris Assistant Director for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program in the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, traveled to the Promising Pathways kickoff meeting in Washington DC, where they participated in interactive discussions about the Promising Pathway's project and met with additional staff and project leaders. The kickoff meeting introduced the Promising Pathway sites to the logic model concept and began the process of creating individual models for each program.

The first full-team site visit occurred in November at the ADHE office's in Little Rock. During this site visit the Promising Pathways team provided an interactive overview of the logic model and discussed in detail all components of CPI and how they relate to the program logic model with a focus group of ADHE staff, representatives from CPI campus sites, and the Arkansas Association of Two Year Colleges. The ROI concept was also introduced at this site visit and the benefits of such a study as well as the data needs were discussed. This site visit also included visits to two CPI sites, at ASU-Newport and National Park Community College in Hot Springs. These visits provided the opportunity to view the program at the point of delivery and learn many of the operational details.

In January a 1.5 hour conference call was conducted by Promising Pathways and ADHE staff. The conversation focused on the type of data needed to complete an ROI study of the CPI program. Plans were made to use a small sample set of data from a CPI cohort as an example for discussing the ROI approach and methodology during the upcoming site visit.

A third and final two day site visit to ADHE offices in Little Rock occurred in February. In addition to finalizing the CPI logic model, an intensive session of TA was provided on the ROI concept. Promising Pathways staff developed a model to project the ROI for the State of

Arkansas as a result of the CPI program. As mentioned above, this model analyzes the changes in income and generates estimates in additional tax revenue collection and saving in social assistance payments that result from the funding of the CPI program. Promising Pathway staff worked with ADHE to compile a small sample set of UI data for a CPI cohort to simulate the ROI. Methodological details and sources of data for the ROI model were presented to ADHE staff. The ROI demonstration was concluded by a discussion and interpretation of the results. Also on the agenda was a discussion of models used by other state community college systems to communicate about the value of investing in education and training programs in support of workforce development.

Date	Promising Pathways Staff Involved	Career Pathways Initiative Staff Involved	Nature of the Technical Assistance Activity
October 5th, 2011	Dr. Katherine Boswell	Dr. Karon Rosa, Program Director	Site visit. Met with Karon Rosa and members of her team for an introduction to and review of documents regarding the Career Pathways Initiative. The meeting included brainstorming about possible technical assistance needs in Arkansas and a discussion of potential next steps.
October 18th, 2011	Dr. Katherine Boswell	Dr. Karon Rosa, Program Director	Katherine and Dr. Rosa met over dinner after the Promising Pathways kick-off meeting to discuss the Arkansas Career Pathway Initiative's needs in more depth and to follow up on the meeting
November 17th – 18th, 2011	Dr. Katherine Boswell Dominic Modicamore Colleen Wolfe	Dr. Karon Rosa, Program Director Mark Lane, Program Specialist	Team site visit. Gave an overview of logic modeling process to Dr. Rosa and selected CPI staff and other agency and campus representatives. Visited ASU-Newport and National Park Community College. Debriefed with Dr. Rosa and Mark Lane the data specialist and discussed data sources and possibility of ROI study.
January 12th, 2012	Dr. Katherine Boswell Dominic Modicamore Colleen Wolfe	Dr. Karon Rosa, Program Director Mark Lane, Program Specialist	Conference call. The conversation focused on what data CPI would need to have available at the site visit in order to complete an ROI study. It became clear in the conversation that the site has access to a wide range of data, but that it is very time consuming to collect and clean that data. Plans were made to use sample data to set up the methodology for an ROI during upcoming site visit.
February 7th – 8th, 2012	Dr. Katherine Boswell Dominic Modicamore	Dr. Karon Rosa, Program Director Mark Lane, Program Specialist	Site visit. Finalized logic model details. Worked with CIP staff to collect data for an ROI model. Presented ROI model and discussed methodology, sources of data, and the ROI results for the State of Arkansas using a small sample set of preliminary data. Also shared communication materials from other states that support a campaign around "Education Pays."

Technical Assistance Activities

Preliminary Outcomes of the Promising Pathways Initiative in Arkansas:

Development of a Logic Model -- Although the CPI has long generated public information on its program activities and short-term outcomes, the new logic model summarizes the flow and processes of the program in a visual format that allows persons not familiar with the program to quickly and easily understand program activities and outcomes. Such a tool may be particularly valuable to the CPI as it seeks to build public support among stakeholders and secure additional funding from various public and private sources.

Development of an ROI Model -- A critical element in completing a Return-On-Investment study is access to pre- and post-program participant data. ADHE is particularly fortunate in comparison to most other TANF related education and training programs in having access to UI wage data for more than 30,000 student records of completers who have participated in the CPI program. Using UI wage data, ADHE can potentially track participants' employment and wages for any number of years after program completion. When participant income at entry into the CPI program (as documented in initial application materials) are measured against subsequent wage increases related to improved employment opportunities, the program is able to document a significant benefit to the state through aggregated increases in income and sales tax revenue and a decrease in spending on public assistance. These positive benefits are then weighed against costs related to the public investment in the CPI. Promising Pathways staff developed a model to project the ROI realized by the State of Arkansas as a result of the CPI program which shows a positive return within a two to three year time frame, despite very conservative assumptions. A very small sample set of participants from a past cohort was used to test the model.

An un-anticipated but very positive outcome of these discussions was the engagement of the Director of the state data warehouse for Arkansas, who was invited by ADHE to participate in the ROI discussions. His participation in the ROI meetings and discussions led to an exploration of further areas of cooperation between ADHE and the data warehouse that has the potential to greatly enhance the ability of the CPI to collect and analyze data that can inform their practice. He will also be participating as a member of the Arkansas Promising Pathways team at the Washington Innovation Institute meetings in Washington in March.

Communication Advocacy – At the initial team visit to Little Rock participating CPI campus representatives were exposed to the process of developing a logic model and given the opportunity to practice a short “elevator speech” that CPI representatives can use to quickly describe its program to potential stakeholders. The creation of the CPI logic model and subsequent discussions during the final TA visit of the uses of data to communicate outcomes and the provision of various other models and communication campaigns with the theme “education pays” will help ADHE in communicating their program and success to a range of stakeholder audiences.

Lessons Learned:

One particularly important innovation that has been implemented by the CPI is the effective use of performance funding to serve as an incentive to the 25 site based programs to improve their student outcomes. This is a good example of using evidence to better inform and influence practice. The use of these incentive funds (which must be used in support of TANF eligible one-time investments such as a new computer labs or additional career assessment resources) are highly valued by the different programs, and a source of significant pride to those campus-based programs recognized as successful. The incentive funding formula measures an individual college’s success against a baseline of its own past performance, thus ensuring an even playing field amongst institutions.

The CPI database with more than 30,000 student records is a veritable gold mine that really needs to be extensively researched in support of a more comprehensive ROI study that could measure the ultimate impact of investing in the education and training of low-income TANF eligible participants. Such research could document not only the aggregated return to the state and federal governments, but the long term impact on participation in a CPI to individual participants and their dependents as well. Another potential area of research would be on the return of investment in particular career technical degrees over time. The Promising Pathways team hopes to partner with ADHE to seek for additional grant funds from either the government or from philanthropic foundations to continue this very important research.

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative is a mature well-run program with quite an extraordinary success rate. More than 74.5% of the TANF-eligible students who participate in the Career Pathways Initiative successfully complete some type of degree or certificate preparing

them for entry into the workforce. That is a completion rate that any higher education institution or state system in the country would aspire to. But it is clear that technical assistance to document and support effective data collection practices as well as support for communication and advocacy efforts around program outcomes can be valuable to even a mature successful program like the Arkansas Department of Higher Education's CPI.