Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Progress Report of Activities and Outcomes

Program Year Six
(July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011)

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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 FY11, the program's sixth year of operations.

KEY UPDATES FOR FY11

ADHE received a grant award of $13,000,000 from Department of Workforce Services (DWS) in FY11 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 sixth year grant brings the total funds for the statewide initiative to over $60,000,000. 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 (FY11 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 FY11:

- *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.

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[1] 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.

[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 FY11 budget totals were divided by the goal of $1,500 to determine the number of students that could be served. The FY11 statewide enrollment goal was 7,097 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 FY11 goal for current TEA and Work Pays was set using criteria that included:

1. FY11 statewide goal for current TEA/Work Pays is 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 March, 2010 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 FY11 in this category was 864.

- *Certificates/Degrees Attained:* The certificates/degrees tracked under this initiative are educational stepping-stones. The performance goal for FY11 certificate/degree attainment was 50 percent of the enrollment goal—3,549 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:* 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 FY11 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*

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 FY11

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:

Bridges to Sustainable Communities Through College Leadership

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. Additionally, six ADHE staff became certified trainers for the Poverty Simulation developed by the Missouri Community Action group. ADHE/CPI conducted poverty simulations at two-year colleges and partnering agencies during the year. 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.

In FY11 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 provided resources, leadership and training for the three campuses. The three pilots were recognized for the exceptional results at each campus at the end of FY11. A celebration with nationally recognized speaker, Naomi Haines Griffith author of *Red*

Clay & Vinegar, was the capstone experience for the group. The project is documented at https://sites.google.com/site/sustainablecommunitiesinar/home.

Regional Workgroups

FY11 was the inaugural year for Regional Workgroups. There were five groups with five colleges in each group. The Regional Workgroups were designed as a training session as well as a best practice sharing session. The agendas consisted of an hour and half training in the morning and an hour and a half of presenting and sharing in the afternoon. Some of the topics consisted of database training, process mapping, Making Case Management Work, policy interpretation, and customer satisfaction. The Regional Workgroups provided the opportunity for the entire staff from each campus to share and learn from other colleges in their region.

Monitoring Visits

Site visits were conducted at 25 sites. Monitoring visits serves the purpose of providing an opportunity for focused reflections, studying and gathering of information which supports on-going program improvement. This year, each CPI Director was asked to complete a self-assessment of their program. The assessment focused on the categories of: program management, budget, outcomes, personnel and site activities. Preparation of the assessment required analyzing and reviewing program information and monitoring program accountability for continuous program and quality improvement. The CPI Site Auditor met with program Directors to review and discuss the strengths, weaknesses and recommendations identified in the self-assessment. The site visit was utilized to discuss the self-assessment and gather additional evaluative information. A written report was prepared for each site with suggestions and recommendations for program improvements. Suggestions were offered as a means to strengthen the program and any recommendations required a response from the Director as to what improvements would be implemented.

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 FY11 awards 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.

Developing Strategic Partnerships

The ADHE/CPI Program Director represents ADHE on the Arkansas Workforce Investment Board and is a member of the Strategic Planning Committee. The meetings provide an opportunity to link resources with other agencies and organizations across the state. This opportunity resulted in a connection with Goodwill and the state WIB staff. Other assemblies resulting in partnerships with benefits for the initiative are:

- DWS Metis Evaluation
- AEDC Planning Meeting
- LMI data Meeting
- UALR Forums
- Work Ready Communities
- Arkansas Career Development Association
- Department of Workforce Services Conference
- DWS 2010 Career Expo

Emphasis on Career Support Services

A continuing emphasis was placed on "career support services" during FY11 with monthly WebEx training sessions from national experts or shared best practices from the campuses. 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. Two CPI Career Development Facilitators became CDF instructors and attended the 2011 national meeting; training for new CPI CDF will be provided by the two instructors.

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 completed over 2,049 Employability Certificates in FY11.

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 hosts a three-day annual retreat for Program Directors. Dr. Mark Peterson, U of A Division of Agriculture, Community & Economic Development, presented a workshop on Introduction to Breakthrough Solutions Roadmap for the 25 Arkansas CPI program directors. The workshop held on February 23, 2011 was a part of the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative annual retreat.

Program Directors participated in hands-on instruction and guidance to create a Breakthrough Solution Roadmap for CPI Students and the campus initiative. An Action Plan for their campus identifying strengths and assets was developed and this theme will carry forward as training for Regional Workgroups.

Promoting the Model/Ongoing Technical Assistance to Sites

Arkansas' model for career pathways was selected to participate in Innovative Strategies for Increasing Self-Sufficiency (ISIS) planning sessions. ISIS is an evaluation research project funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Focus groups of Program Directors met in sessions to identify standard pathways practices and a group traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with other members of the ISIS planning group. CPI participated in a one-year planning period, but declined participation in the random analysis study.

The Arkansas CPI model was 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. Other presentations or publications featuring CPI as a successful model include:

- Bridges and Circles Community Building Conference in Indianapolis

- Oklahoma Pathways Conference
- Arkansas Poverty Task Force-Recommended Career Pathways program should be replicated
- National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)- identified CPI in the course of the policy audit as one of the most promising higher education programs in the state
- National Council on Student Development
- CLASP Webinar-TANF Toolkit and publication on Opportunities for Building Integrated Service Delivery-Build on Career Pathways and other existing initiatives in the community colleges.
- SHEEO Paper-College Completion, Notable Efforts by Select States
- Shifting Gears Webinar
- NTJN Conference Call and Paper
- Alternative Staffing Organizations found CPI "Well-positioned to Add Value to Community College Workforce Initiatives"
- Nomination for the 2011 Bellwether Award- This prestigious award recognizes outstanding and innovative programs and practices that are successfully leading community colleges.
- Kaiser Group, Inc., Arkansas Workforce Systems Evaluation 2011 identified Career Pathways as a significant strength in many key areas when evaluating WIB programs in the state.

On-Going Technical Assistance

Deployment and full implementation of customized budget software and updating the existing database were completed in FY11 with Information Network of Arkansas (INA). The new Management System incorporates the Budget Request and Management with the Student Tracking application. This solution empowers 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.

Monthly training for Program Directors included WebEx sessions in social networking, financial literacy and CPI New Program Director Training. To provide up-to-date technical assistance ADHE/CPI staff participated in computer classes to upgrade skills or professional development in the program specialty areas of

- Microsoft SQL and ArcGIS
- TANF Vendors Meeting provided instructions for use and reimbursement of TANF funds

- Professional Assistants Conference

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FROM THE SIXTH YEAR

Enrollments were 9,909 with 3,299 of these students being new to CPI, Table 1 and A-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 4,437 certificates/degrees during this program year, which exceeds the 3,549 attainment goal. 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 (880 awarded), technical certificates followed closely with 793 being awarded, and 662 certificates of proficiency were awarded. Campuses awarded 53 GED certificates in FY11 compared to 51 in FY10.

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 FY11 the success rate for CPI students was 13 points higher (CPI 74%, Colleges 61%) than the traditional success rate for two-year colleges. The withdraw rate for CPI students is more than 10 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 9,909 actual enrollments, TEA client enrollment was 38% 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 60%. Eighty-five percent (85%) 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
Total Enrollments	2,233	3,750	7,834	9,627	10,017	9,909

Table 2: Certificates/Degrees Attained

Type of Certificates/Degrees	FY10	FY11	Change
GEDs	51	53	+2
WAGE/Employability Certificates	2,119	2,049	-70
Certificates of Proficiency	736	662	-74
Technical Certificates	754	793	+39
Associate Degrees	763	880	+117
Total Certificates/Degrees Attained	4,423	4,437	+28

Table 3: Success Rate

The Cohort includes students who enrolled in the Fall 2010 (Academic Year 2011) 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 2011 (Academic Year 2012); 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	FY11	% FY11	Traditional Success Rate for Two-Year Colleges
Students in Cohort	529		8715
Students Completing a Cert. or Degree from Cohort	87	16.45	6.27
Students Retained	303	57.28	54.73
Students Withdrawing or Dropping from Cohort	139	26.28	38.99
Success Rate (Completing and Retained Students)	390	**73.73**	**61.00**

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

FY11 Goals	Goal	Actual
Enrollment	7,097	9,909
Current TEA/Work Pays Clients	864	1,197
Certificate or Degree Attainment	3,549	4,437

Table 4b: UI Data Match Outcomes for FY10 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 6 and 12 months. CPI Annual Plan has dates for the match process and in-depth details on the data match.

	Employment		
Institution	**Goal (55%)**	**Actual (%)**	**6-Mo Retention (80%)**
AR Northeastern College	55	65	84
AR State University—Beebe	55	64	86
AR State University – Mountain Home	55	56	82
AR State University—Newport	55	71	81
AR Tech University – Ozark	55	60	81
Black River Technical College	55	57	89
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	55	51	*
College of the Ouachitas	55	57	85
East AR Community College	55	56	80
Mid-South Community College	55	55	86
North Arkansas College	55	56	92
National Park Community College	55	57	86
North West Arkansas Community College	55	63	76
Ozarka College	55	41	*
Phillips Community College of University of AR	55	70	85
Pulaski Technical College	55	56	87
Rich Mountain Community College	55	64	92
South Arkansas Community College	55	65	91
Southern Arkansas University	55	66	85
Southeast AR College	55	65	80
U of A Community College – Batesville	55	62	92
U of A Community College – Hope	55	57	86
U of A Community College – Morrilton	55	67	89
U of A at Monticello- Crossett	55	40	*
U of A at Monticello – McGehee	55	58	81
State Total	55	60	85

***No match at 6 month; did not meet 55% Entered Employment.**

Analysis of FY11 Statistics (Presented in Appendix A)

- *Enrollment Demographics:* As shown in Table A-1 of the appendix, an enrollment of 9,909 was posted during the last program year, with the enrollment at each site ranging from 156 to 692 students. The average age of a career pathways student statewide was 30. Overwhelmingly, the students were female (89 percent), and the data on ethnicity and race indicated that nearly 64 percent were White, 30 percent were Black, and small percentages were Hispanic or other minorities.

- *Eligibility:* The program enrolled 1,197 current TEA/Work Pays clients and many students who met other eligibility requirements. As shown in Table A-2, data indicate that 60 percent of participants were single parents and a large majority of student (83 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 (48 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 23 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 2,122 students pursuing that award and 2,049 successfully completing the certificate. Associate degrees had the second-highest enrollment with 1,187 enrolled and 880 degrees attained. Third-highest enrollments were technical certificate programs with 748 enrolled and 793 certificates awarded, followed by certificates of proficiency programs with 544 enrolled and 662 certificates awarded. There were 3,299 new student enrollments.

PROMOTING SYSTEMIC CHANGE: NEXT STEPS

The sites were well positioned in FY11 to continue 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 college and go to work.

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

- Initial grant awards to campuses for FY11 ranged from $265,239-$779,975. Most campus grants were not increased, since the total Grant Award to ADHE remained the same. As a result, campus budgets 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, often the Phase III campuses do not have funds to fully staff the initiative and provided needed student support. Full time personnel at the campuses range from two to ten employees who must all 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/Single Parent
- 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	404	30	91.32	8.68	34.24	2.23	61.79	1.74
AR State University—Beebe	462	30	87.93	12.07	8.19	2.37	87.72	1.72
AR State University—Mountain Home	393	32	83.97	16.03	0	2.29	89.82	7.89
AR State University—Newport	363	30	88.15	11.85	33.61	1.38	63.91	1.10
AR Technical University—Ozark	405	31	86.17	13.83	4.44	2.22	87.65	5.69
Black River Technical College	554	30	85.59	14.41	3.56	1.42	92.53	2.49
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	463	31	85.06	14.94	22.08	4.76	66.67	6.49
College of the Ouichitas	335	30	87.43	12.57	23.95	1.20	73.05	1.80
East AR Community College	373	29	95.19	4.81	62.03	0.80	30.75	6.42
Mid-South Community College	418	30	92.09	7.91	72.18	0.96	25.18	1.68
North AR College	437	31	85.13	14.87	00.69	2.97	94.28	2.06
National Park Community College	415	32	88.65	11.35	20.00	1.45	73.73	4.82
Northwest AR Community College	274	31	92.67	7.33	4.01	16.06	73.36	6.57
Ozarka College	604	32	89.75	10.25	00.17	0.83	92.23	6.77
Phillips Community College of University of AR	373	29	95.50	4.50	63.59	1.58	32.45	2.38
Pulaski Technical College	453	31	94.95	5.05	74.73	2.86	19.34	3.07
Rich Mountain Community College	232	32	87.98	12.02	0	3.00	91.85	5.15
South AR Community College	200	32	96.00	4.00	55.50	1.50	42.00	1.00
Southern AR University —Tech	215	30	93.06	6.94	58.80	1.39	37.04	2.77
Southeast AR College	594	30	94.02	5.98	72.59	1.00	24.58	1.83
University of AR Community College at Batesville	494	32	86.44	13.56	2.83	1.82	93.32	2.03
University of AR Community College at Hope	692	31	86.99	13.01	49.57	3.47	46.24	0.72
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	435	31	89.45	10.55	17.20	3.21	75.69	3.90
University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—Crossett	156	30	92.95	7.05	36.54	1.28	61.54	0.64
University of AR at Monticello College of Tech—McGehee	165	33	86.83	13.17	77.25	1.20	21.55	0
Overall	**9909**	**30**	**89.40**	**10.60**	**30.42**	**2.43**	**63.85**	**3.30**

* 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 Criteria/Single Parent

	Single Parent (%)	Current TEA (%)	Former TEA (%)	Food Stamps/ Medicaid (%)	At/Less Than 250% of Poverty (%)
AR Northeastern College	55	15	15	74	31
AR State University—Beebe	54	9	13	81	19
AR State University—Mountain Home	48	6	7	90	11
AR State University—Newport	57	15	15	85	47
AR Technical University—Ozark	57	7	13	84	67
Black River Technical College	40	3	15	78	101
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	48	5	3	80	99
College of the Ouachitas	59	5	7	90	16
East AR Community College	71	21	18	87	89
Mid-South Community College	74	18	19	79	72
North AR College	51	7	11	86	14
National Park Community College	67	13	9	67	67
Northwest AR Community College	72	12	8	86	69
Ozarka College	45	3	11	91	81
Phillips Community College of University of AR	71	26	13	89	28
Pulaski Technical College	86	31	29	78	19
Rich Mountain Community College	40	4	9	80	21
South AR Community College	77	11	22	93	7
Southern AR University—Tech	70	15	24	86	21
Southeast AR College	81	20	29	87	39
University of AR Community College at Batesville	41	4	15	79	94
University of AR Community College at Hope	68	7	23	86	22
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	60	7	14	86	14
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett	57	10	23	90	10
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee	70	15	15	87	42
Overall	**60**	**11**	**15**	**83**	**48**

Note: Some participants are eligible under more than one 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	18	9	16
AR State University— Beebe	70	25	5	13
AR State University—Mountain Home	67	28	5	34
AR State University—Newport	69	20	10	12
AR Technical University—Ozark	64	31	5	20
Black River Technical College	72	25	3	20
Cossatot Community College of University of AR	71	23	6	6
College of the Ouachitas	67	21	12	30
East AR Community College	84	13	3	42
Mid-South Community College	77	12	11	17
North AR College	64	32	5	21
National Park Community College	62	29	9	13
Northwest AR Community College	71	28	1	28
Ozarka College	67	30	3	22
Phillips Community College of University of AR	77	13	10	33
Pulaski Technical College	68	15	17	32
Rich Mountain Community College	70	29	0	31
South AR Community College	75	22	4	38
Southern AR University—Tech	84	13	4	15
Southeast AR College	73	21	6	29
University of AR Community College at Batesville	58	31	11	18
University of AR Community College at Hope	81	16	3	29
University of AR Community College at Morrilton	67	24	9	10
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—Crossett	74	20	6	27
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology—McGehee	75	17	8	23
Overall	**71**	**23**	**7**	**23**

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	188	12	7	116	104	39	31	24	22	48	57
AR State University - Beebe	172	4	2	176	141	56	50	48	27	100	46
AR State University – Mountain Home	148	2	2	62	48	73	62	11	27	38	22
AR State University - Newport	168	1	2	101	111	49	40	49	26	22	9
AR Technical University - Ozark	67	1	1	0	0	0	3	3	66	3	63
Black River Technical College	157	0	1	147	140	22	23	87	25	82	39
Cossatot Comm College of U of AR	101	3	2	88	94	2	8	33	25	41	21
College of the Ouachitas	89	5	7	85	87	30	36	16	41	29	24
East AR Comm College	110	0	0	158	139	3	3	25	30	112	37
Mid-South Comm College	130	4	1	141	118	19	22	0	0	86	34
North AR College	172	4	5	55	69	7	8	72	52	69	36
National Park Community College	129	2	5	36	29	7	27	15	37	35	47
Northwest AR Comm College	128	0	1	114	118	9	16	3	2	112	47
Ozarka College	241	0	0	63	51	16	23	50	49	24	53
Phillips Comm College of U of AR	124	4	4	148	137	9	11	27	10	88	25
Pulaski Technical College	106	0	5	106	86	4	11	34	69	41	88
Rich Mountain Comm College	112	1	0	74	57	21	22	25	14	43	33
South AR Comm College	79	2	2	55	49	12	11	31	21	40	9
Southern AR University- Tech	45	0	0	49	58	11	19	13	12	18	9
Southeast AR College	187	0	0	103	100	27	23	59	33	40	23
University of AR Comm College at Batesville	160	1	1	2	2	40	61	13	40	31	47
University of AR Comm College at Hope	250	0	0	55	78	38	67	60	86	58	45
University of AR Comm College at Morrilton	131	3	3	82	113	11	42	4	25	22	44
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - Crossett	50	1	2	41	49	29	33	24	31	2	4
University of AR at Monticello College of Technology - McGehee	55	0	0	65	71	10	10	22	23	3	18
Total	**3299**	**50**	**53**	**2122**	**2049**	**544**	**662**	**748**	**793**	**1187**	**880**

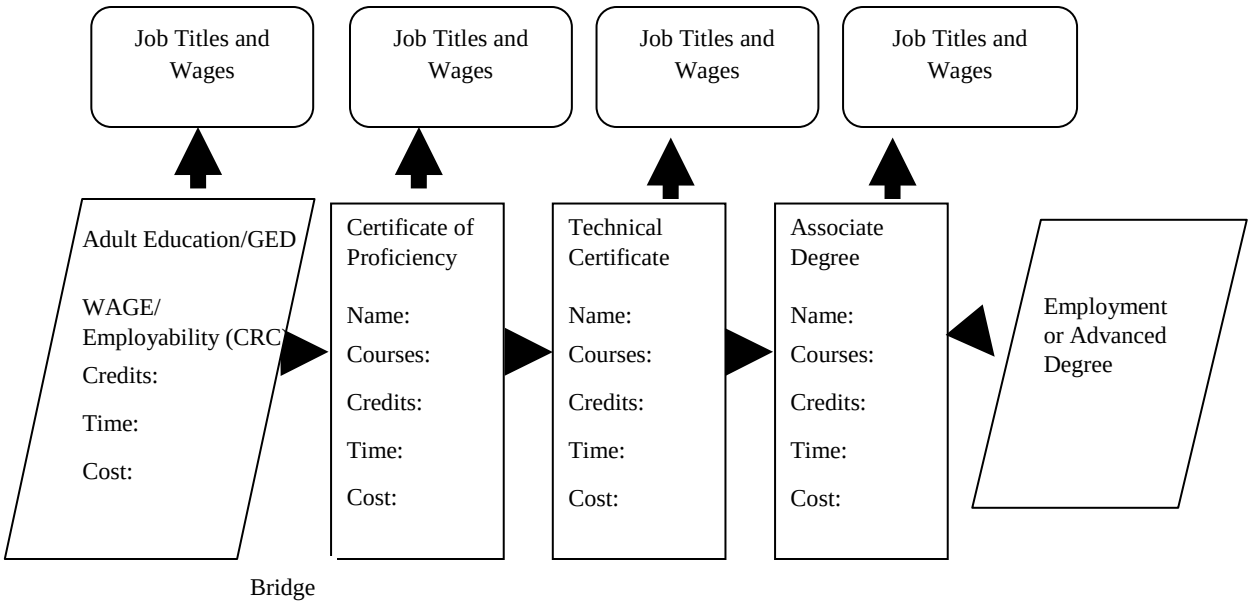
Note: Some students may have enrolled and completed more than one program during the program year.

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 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: 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 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 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 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. The site monitor also serves as the policy specialist.