Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grants
Newsletter
July 2021 | Issue 12

YARG Year One Grantee Achievements, Lessons, Promising Practices

YARG grantees convened virtually in June to celebrate their Year One accomplishments. Program teams across the country made great strides in their first contract year – building structures and systems, recruiting participants, and establishing employer relationships and other partnerships – all in the face of a worldwide pandemic. Our grantees quickly learned the lesson of adaptability as they overcame multiple challenges in their organizational work and as they modified procedures and training methods to keep participants and business partners engaged. Congratulations to all!

ACHIEVEMENTS

Alaska Works Partnership
- Leveraged funding from other sources to provide several youth specific pre-apprenticeship training opportunities.
- By third quarter they had surpassed their fiscal year goal of 200 youth participants served by 31 participants.

Board of Regents, NV System of Higher Education
- Launched six new health care apprenticeship programs to date, with another one to start soon.

CareerWise CO
- Five national program sites are serving youth with new access points to economic mobility.
- In Colorado and northern Indiana, registration processes built and refined over the past year are starting to yield higher rates of apprentice registration.
- In Washington, DC, and New York City, sustained engagement with local and state-level registration leadership has resulted in approved program standards and modern occupations built on an innovative competency-based model.
- An Indianapolis program site is making steady progress in aligning ecosystem stakeholders to launch its pilot cohort of registered youth apprentices.

Delaware Department of Education
- Launched its first Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in Information Technology, specifically Financial Technology (fintech), in November 2020.

EasterSeals TriState
- Efforts to address inequalities are culminating in the creation of a video highlighting the DEI efforts of an employer who has taken on three new carpentry apprentices. The video will be used as a tool to engage new employers and recruit individuals of color and women.

Idaho Workforce Development Council
- Extensive communication and collaboration with public high school educators and counselors, state technical college and university staff, the state Department of Labor, Workforce Development Council, and industry associations is helping build support for Registered Apprenticeship (RA) and overcome the state’s underfunding and lack of infrastructure.
Successful recruitment of employer partners helped sustain the program through the challenges faced by the restaurant industry during the COVID-19 pandemic:
- 12 employers have signed partnership agreements to date.
- 20 employers are pending to date, with establishing agreements in progress.
- 124 businesses attended at least one information session.

Northwest Florida State College
- The success story of a NWFSC apprentice who took initiative on a job site, saving his employer from a project delay, is generating interest in the program among other employers.

Palo Alto College (Alamo Colleges District)
- The launch of a dynamic Pre-Apprenticeship Model designed to serve 1,200 pre-apprenticeship students is preparing participants with Career Exploration, Covey’s 7 Habits Leadership Training, and Work Readiness/Occupational Exploration, which provides opportunities for job shadowing, volunteering, and mock interviewing.

SC State Board for Technical & Comprehensive Education
- Took full advantage of the pandemic slowdown to build relationships and create a robust internal structure for their YARG program, including IT resources and necessary documentation.
- Hired four skilled Youth Apprenticeship Coordinators and built out six strong youth apprenticeship councils throughout the state.

The WorkPlace
- Designed and began implementing an innovative manufacturing pre-apprenticeship program that expands the apprenticeship pipeline for all youth. In May, the program graduated a cohort of ten pre-apprentices ready to enter machining apprenticeships with local companies.

PROMISING PRACTICES

AMIKids, Inc.
- Vetted participants at the beginning of the program to ensure that those selected were committed to the program and interested in moving from Pre-Apprenticeship to RA.
- Developed a partnership with some of the Hillsborough School District’s High Schools, which produced a high number of participants and created a talent pipeline for the program.

EasterSeals TriState, LLC
- Explored how to address the imbalance of representation in the construction industry through employer discussions and youth focus groups. This began a fruitful conversation about the benefits of adopting inclusive hiring and retention policies and workplace cultures.

Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity
- Created a structure to align the state education and workforce systems for youth RA expansion, resulting in a more productive state-level network.
- Strategic planning, communication, and well-managed processes also ensured that subrecipients were prepared to engage in the activities that would lead to program success.

National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation
- Provided online courses as an option for related training instruction, affording more flexibility to apprentices, employers, and training providers.
- Community-based training could take place remotely when the pandemic disrupted normal training program operations.
- Apprentices could access standards-based training regardless of geographic location.
- Employers could easily add courses to their own training.

Oklahoma Department of Commerce
- Launched a microsite (apprenticeshipsok.com) with infographics, success stories, and
outreach information as part of a targeted outreach campaign to provide the community with information about apprenticeships.

**Palo Alto College (Alamo Colleges District)**
- Overcame the challenges of the pandemic and a major winter storm by collaborating remotely, implementing a new approach to recruitment outreach, and modifying instructional delivery as a hybrid model.

**Board of Regents, NV System of Higher Education**
- Started screening all apprentices at intake for their eligibility in multiple funding streams to ensure an easy process for employers and the candidates they have selected.

**The WorkPlace**
- Adaptability is key in all aspects of service delivery. Employed continuous evaluation to reveal what works and what doesn’t and to enable refinements and improved implementation overall.

### LESSONS LEARNED

**Alaska Works Partnership**
- Mitigated the challenge of outreach and recruiting over a vast area by publishing a program overview in a statewide CTE Directors newsletter, which served as an information-sharing platform across a 660,000 square mile territory.
- The wide reach enabled outreach on a larger scale through Zoom video sessions with multiple classes of students, which could be followed up with smaller, more focused meetings.

**Board of Regents, NV System of Higher Education**
- Revised planning to include all departments, especially legal, in the process of drafting intake forms to assure complete and compliant questions and avoid after-the-fact revisions.

**CareerWise CO**
- As a national organization, worked to gain an understanding of the differences in localized policies and requirements for RAs and the diversity and nuances of registered systems in each state.
- Further, learned that conveying a fluency in these complexities is requisite to making businesses comfortable with the registration commitments being asked of them.

**Delaware Department of Education**
- Recognized the huge potential in Delaware for the program’s focus on information technology, construction, and hospitality, which include a combined total of more than 13,000 employers.
- Program partners are aiming to reach at least 1,100 employers in these industries.

**Idaho Workforce Development Council**
- Substantial state funding for regional positions across the state would help connect industry to education through RA and would increase the reach of RA and its subsequent impact.

**Northwest Florida State College**
- A leadership change at NWFSC, which caused a lack of access to important grant information, required a team regroup and prompted the development of a living document to ensure that the program would weather any future turnover and continue without interruption.
YARG grantees, especially performance and reporting staff, should plan to attend a webinar, Overview of Revised Apprenticeship Grants Reporting Requirements, where Office of Apprenticeship performance/reporting staff will review the recently-approved reporting changes which reduce the requirements, streamline the adult report template, introduce the youth report template, clarify important definitions, and review other reporting changes. Invitations to this event have already been distributed from the YouthAsReady.Grants@dol.gov mailbox. Be sure to look for the invitation to this event in your inbox and register as soon as possible!

WEBINAR

“Credentials: What They Are, Where to Find Them, and What Counts for Performance”
Thursday, July 29, 2:30-4:00 p.m. DST

Credentials play a key role in workforce development. For employers, credentials can assist in identifying qualified workers, upskilling their current workforce, and competing in the marketplace. For job seekers, obtaining credentials can improve employability and lead to career advancement and higher wages.

This webinar will provide information on the characteristics of quality credentials and the types of credentials available. Speakers will highlight resources and tools to locate relevant credentials to assist in determining what credentials may count towards grant performance outcomes.

Who Should Attend:
- State and local stakeholders in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act system;
- State workforce agencies and administrators;
- State workforce liaisons;
- Employment and training program grantees; and
- Educational institutions and training providers.

Virtual Symposium on Employment for Youth and Young Adults with Disabilities:
Translating Evidence Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic
Wednesday, July 28, 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. DST

This virtual symposium will examine research and strategies for improving education and employment outcomes for youth with disabilities during the pandemic and beyond with the goal of generating future research, policy, and practice recommendations from participants.

Space is limited. Register now to reserve a spot and to receive instructions for joining the meeting. Registration closes July 23.

Questions for the panelists are encouraged. Please use this link to submit queries prior to the event. Slides will be emailed to attendees beforehand.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TIP SHEET
Sustaining Your Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Grant

To reinforce the May webinar on sustainability, the YARG team has developed this tip sheet to serve as a useful quick reference as you consider ways to sustain your programs beyond the grant. It begins with the reminder that the time to start this all-important process is now.

It follows up with a checklist of suggestions and action items that will guide you through planning and determining what to sustain, instituting a sustainability culture to make it an everyday practice throughout your organization, engaging partnerships in the effort, and executing your plan. Several resources are also described that that can be accessed for more detailed information. Find it here on the YARG Community.

RESOURCES

Federal Resources Playbook for Registered Apprenticeship
This guide outlines all the ways in which Federal funding sources can be used to support registered apprenticeships. The Departments of Labor, Education, Veterans Affairs, Agriculture, Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development all offer financial assistance to companies, training providers, state and local workforce systems, community-based organizations, nonprofit intermediaries, and/or apprentices themselves. Funds can be applied to employer on-the-job training costs, GI benefits, apprentice tuition fees and support services, and more. A must-have reference that YARG grantees can use for both program implementation and sustainability planning.

Trauma-Informed Retention & Recruiting Page
This new Community page addresses a major obstacle to apprenticeship retention: the effects of past or present trauma on program participants. Trauma-informed care (TIC) can help mitigate the effects of these Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and prevent re-traumatizing young adults.

The tip sheet and other resources featured here will guide YARG grantees in developing and implementing trauma-informed care (TIC) to support trauma recovery and motivate a higher level of commitment to program and career goals among youth apprentices.

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Reminder: Next Quarterly Reporting Due Date is August 16, 2021 (for the performance period April 1 – June 30, 2021)
As you know, the current reporting period ends on June 30, 2021. Submitter-certifiers may begin uploading performance data into WIPS as soon the first day after the end of the quarter (i.e., July 1, 2021). Quarterly Narrative Reports (QNR) are also due! Avoid the mad dash to the end and begin your submissions early!

**WIPS Submitter/Certifiers**
Grantee staff who upload data files into WIPS (submitters) and those who certify the final QPR (certifiers) now have total access—meaning that one person now has full access to both upload data and certify the final report. However, an individual may only certify the data set that they also uploaded. Individuals are not able to certify a QPR for data that they did not also upload into WIPS. Grantees should also remember that a new designation letter must be submitted when requesting WIPS access for a new staff member.

**New WIPS Office Hours Coming in August**
To respond to any questions and concerns about WIPS, the Office of Apprenticeship will sponsor another brief series of **WIPS Office Hours on August 2 and August 3, 2021, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET**. The Teams invitation to these events should already be in your in-box! Grantee staff should forward the invitation to any performance and reporting staff, including submitter-certifiers, who may be omitted from this invitation. Any submitter-certifiers who do not have access to WIPS and whose names have been forwarded via the designation letter should send a message to the grants mailbox at [YouthAsReady.Grants@dol.gov](mailto:YouthAsReady.Grants@dol.gov).

**Data Collection Update**
The Office of Management and Budget recently approved the DOL-Only Performance Accountability, Information and Reporting System Information Collection Request (ICR). Implementation for revisions for PIRL 2021 will be effective the next reporting period, July 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021 (QPR due no later than November 15, 2021). In the meantime, grantees should continue using PIRL 2020 and the current Apprenticeship schema for the QPR due August 16, 2021 (for the reporting period April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021).

**New Quarterly Narrative Report (QNR) Template and Submission Through WIPS**
A new QNR template will be implemented soon where grantees will be able to upload the narrative report directly into the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS), instead of emailing it to the grant mailbox and FPO. This functionality and the new template will be available for the next reporting period when the QNR will be due no later than November 16, 2021. Attend the webinar on July 13, 2021 and watch your email for more details and instructions coming soon!

**Performance Spotlight—Employer Engagement**
As you know, one of the performance metrics which YARG grantees are responsible for includes “employer engagement”. Specifically, you will find this metric in the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA-ETA-20-06) on page 56 as item B3 under **Expanding Apprenticeship Program Outputs** indicator, as "Total number of new employers engaged due to the grant (i.e., those employers that adopt apprenticeship program as a result of your grant project). Please note that this indicator is limited to those employers that you engaged that subsequently adopted apprenticeship programs as a result of your work under this grant project. Please do not include employers you reached out to that did not adopt apprenticeship programs when reporting under this performance metric.

- When completing the table, provide only the number of employers who adopted apprenticeship programs as a result of your grant for this metric.
- Using your QNR, please tell us specifically about those employers who adopt apprenticeship programs as a direct result of this grant. Provide the employer name(s), industry, describe the program, tell us about the apprentices, how many, any success stories, any lessons learned, any other opportunities. We also recommend that you tell us about any other employer engagement (in addition to this metric).

**Optional Table YARG Indicators Table**
As we transition to using WIPS to report data we want to be sure we are accurately collecting data. In addition to submitting your data through WIPS, we are requesting that you include data...
from the nine YARG indicators outlined in Appendix A of the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA-ETA-20-06). We have previously shared an optional table (shown below) for you to copy and paste into your report. The table requests current quarter, yearly actual, yearly target, total target, total actual (cumulative program-to-date) data for the Participant Outputs and Outcomes Performance Measure Table (YARG indicators 1-6). For the Expanding Apprenticeship Program Outputs (YARG indicators 7-9), we are requesting data from the current quarter, total target and total actual (cumulative program-to-date). Please email YouthASReady.Grants@dol.gov if you need further clarification.

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<th>YARG Indicator</th>
<th>Current Quarter Results</th>
<th>Year 1 Target</th>
<th>Year 1 Actual</th>
<th>Year 2 Target</th>
<th>Year 2 Actual</th>
<th>Year 3 Target</th>
<th>Year 3 Actual</th>
<th>Year 4 Target</th>
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<td><strong>Expanding Apprenticeship Program Outputs</strong></td>
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