Transcript of DEI Career Pathways Webinar Series

Part 3: Functional Alignment at the State, Regional and Local Level”

May 22, 2018

# Introduction and Learning Objectives

>>Miranda Kennedy: Thank you for joining today. As we embark upon part three of our career pathway series, we will talk about functional alignments at the state, regional and local level. That is under WIOA title I. My name is Miranda Kennedy and I am the director of training for the DEI technical assistance team. Glad to be here. I will be serving as the moderator.

I am joined today by two presenters, we have Brian Ingram, the DEI career pathways DEI subject matter expert, as well as Sarah Loizeaux, who is the newest liaison with our team. Prior to joining our TA team this past January, she was the DRC in the round five project out of Massachusetts which was the first round focused on career pathways. They have in-depth background on career pathways and working on career pathways in DEI alignments since this started and we are in round eight so we have moved along and learned a lot from so many of you for joining us today. We hope you will see that reflected in what we are going to be talking about and presenting. We suspect you will.

Some of the newer projects are around eight projects, they may be new to you but those who have come before you, we have established a good foundation and we feel confident in the framework that we will share with you today. Along those lines, let me tell you about the learning objectives, the expectation is all of you will be coming away with a framework. We have frameworks at the local, regional, and state level for guidance. We will walk through those and that will help you develop a DEI pathway strategy that supports your goals. You can leverage the intervention strategies, the integrated resource team, the employment network, partnership and collaborations and others, to increase access to existing career pathways programs locally. We always talk about that existing career pathways program, so we will talk about that and we have examples of that in our presentation. The development of a career pathways strategy to use the outcomes generated by your project to impact the development of WIOA mandated Career Pathways systems regionally and at the state level.. It is working on all levels. That is what we will cover here today. That's why we created a little more time, we might wrap up earlier than 90 minutes, we will take questions at the end and we will go ahead and start moving forward.

# Review of Parts 1 and 2

>>Sarah Loizeaux: In 2012 the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Labor issued a joint letter with a definition of career pathways:

 ...a series of connected education and training strategies and support services that enable individuals to secure industry-relevant certification and obtain employment within an occupational area and to advance to higher levels of future education and employment in that area.

WIOA Career Pathways Definition

The term ‘‘career pathway’’ means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that also:

1. aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
2. prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships
3. includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;
4. includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
5. organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
6. enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential; and
7. helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Why Career Pathways?

A quick reminder of why we are focusing on Career Pathways, what is important about using this strategy and how is it beneficial and different than what we have done previously?

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Having a post secondary credential is the one of the major gateways to family sustaining jobs

* In 2013, associate’s degree holders earned about 19 percent more than high school graduates with no college and 65 percent more than workers with less than a high school diploma.

Long-term economic trends point to increasing demand for better-educated workers.

* By 2020, economists project that 65 percent of all jobs will require at least some postsecondary education.

Career Pathways focuses on the holistic needs of both workers and employers.

* Integrating resources into a single career pathway plan that engages service providers, training institutions, and employers creates longer term impact for more people.

Six Key Elements in Career Pathways

The WIOA definition of CP articulates the interdependence of career pathway programming with industry sector strategies and identifies the specific features and functions of a career pathway program.

Under WIOA, State Boards are responsible for aligning core partners and developing and improving the workforce system through the creation of career pathways. CP Plan must be consistent with the Unified/Combined State Plan required in WIOA.

This work requires a change of mindset. Developing career pathways involves a process of coordinating and connecting different parts of multiple public and private services and activities to make up a comprehensive education and training system. WIOA increases the emphasis on cross-system alignment, strategic planning, performance measurement and data collection/utilization.

DEI Career Pathways work connecting to Apprenticeship

We’re including this slide and the graphic showcasing the role that Apprenticeships place as one of multiple entry point for both well prepared students and targeted populations because this is a focus we want to drive home in terms of DEI projects making this connection in their Career Pathways work.

# DEI and Career Pathways Functional Alignment

>>Sarah Loizeaux: This brings us to today and our final installment of this 3 part series on DEI and CP. Today we will be discussing DEI and Career Pathways Functional Alignment. Miranda, would you be so kind and share with us just what we will be covering today?

>>Miranda Kennedy: Today we will kick things off with talking about what this is -- this is a framework for DEI projects and WIOA Title I for all the following levels: the local level, the regional level and the state level. You will recall from parts 1 and 2 that we had examples from the local, regional and state level around DEI impacting career pathways and we will use those examples. Keep that in mind as this builds upon itself but we have the worksheets, and they are straightforward. I will tell you a little bit about what is covered in each of those worksheets, which each comes from the level perspective and includes these three key pieces investigation, activities, and outcomes.

1. Investigation = Finding Out What Exists
2. Activities = Directives, Problem-Solving and Engagement
3. Outcomes = Sustainability and Expansion of Systems Impact

For each of the levels, we will have five questions to take into account to think about what exists in terms of career pathways in DEI alignment currently, and those are good questions to ponder. Things may well exist especially if you have a project that is done previous disability work with earlier rounds of DEI, the Navigator initiative, other initiatives Next we will have five activities, these are directives, problem solving activities that facilitate DEI and career pathways functional alignment. For those existing career pathways, finally we will have outcomes. There are five outcomes for the level, which is the individual job center, five outcomes for the regional level, the entities funding the centers and for the state level.

That is what we are talking about in terms of sustainability and expansion of systems impact at all levels. You can see all these different pieces fitting into gather. It is not meant to be prescriptive as much as a frame so you can figure out what falls within each and what we can do and what does this look like in terms of success.

I will go ahead and hand things over to Brian. For the local level, people talk about investigation activities and outcomes and what that looks like at the local level.

# Local Level: Investigation, Activities, Outcomes

>>Brian Ingram: Thanks Miranda, and welcome everyone, As Miranda stated we are going to be looking at the big picture today using the project examples we introduced in part two. I’ll be starting us off with our local level example which is the Kansas round 5 project. We’re going to take a moment to look closely at this example using the framework Miranda just reviewed with you, investigations, activities and outcomes and by the end we hope you have a complete picture of how to move forward at a local level to impact access to career pathways trainings and the outcomes associated with them for jobseekers with disabilities and or multiple challenges to employment, and how these local level activities fit into the larger picture of demonstrating how the Career Pathways systems being developed in your states can be made accessible to these customers as well. Lets get started.

Investigation: Local Level

So let’s look at the first level of local activity, investigation, and as the heading implies investigation begins with a series of questions that focus on the existing career pathways infrastructure in the region your project is active in. What programs exist, do the programs currently enroll WIOA customers? What are the eligibility requirements of these programs? What does the customer flow look like? How often are they held? What additional services (besides the training and certification itself) are provided? Are there placement or retention services? Case Management? The first step is to learn as much about these details as possible and to become knowledgeable about what exists currently.

Once these basics are known, the investigation can then start to focus on if and how these programs are currently serving students with disabilities. And If they are, are there challenges keeping these students from accessing or attaining the outcomes associated with these trainings?

A DRC might want to start with staff in the job center who are currently referring to these programs maybe adult/dislocated worker case managers for example, find out if and how these pathways are currently being used in your job center. You then might want to consider reaching out to the providers themselves finding out how they recruit, determine eligibility, fund, and support the students they serve.

The key here is put your detective hat on and go after the facts, it can actually be kind of fun If it were me I’d imagine I was my favorite TV detective, which in my case would be James Garner in the Rockford files, wait I might be giving away my age here, lets move on.

Example: Local Level Investigation

This slide shows how the Kansas round five project investigated their existing career pathways programs. I think this nicely demonstrates how the investigation process described on the last slide can lead to the identification of areas of focus and a place to begin. The DRCs spoke with the Title 1 staff and learned that they were currently referring many customers to existing career pathways programs but that there weren’t many customers who had disclosed disability in this group, this led to further investigation focusing on how these customers might be supported through the use of DEI service strategies to access and successfully attain the outcomes associated with these trainings. These discussions led naturally into a number of logical action steps, in other words, the next plank of our framework, Activities.

Activities: Local Level

So once the detective cap is put back on the metaphorical peg, the DRC should have learned a lot of very useful information and some logical next steps might be beginning to present themselves as options, what now? Well it’s time to take the cap back off the metaphorical peg, (or in the case of Rockford grab the keys to the firebird) and keep asking questions. The difference is in the focus of these questions, unlike the detective work you did while investigating which focused on what currently existed now you should look into what might be possible. How can the situation that currently exists be impacted to increase accessibility? Does it make sense to focus on increasing outreach to jobseekers with disabilities to increase the number of referrals to Career pathways programs? Can DEI service delivery strategies be applied, like IRTs, workforce ENs?, Can existing relationships in the WIOA system be leveraged to increase access, can new relationships in the community be developed? The possibilities are endless and the activities you ultimately land on should address the situation as it currently exists based on your investigation.

Lets take a look at what happened in the Kansas Round five project

Example: Local Level Activities

So in Kansas they discovered a number of things by investigating, first of all there were many career pathways programs in their regions, and their Title 1 programs were comfortable referring to them, however, this comfort did not necessarily extend to customers that experienced disability and or multiple challenges to employment who were referred at a much lower rate.

When the DRCs put their detective caps back on and investigated why this was the case, they discovered that these customers had complex resource needs that extended beyond what Title 1 was able to provide for them directly. Now to all you DRCs out there a solution to these issues might be coming to mind, I’ll give you a moment….. Yes IRTs! Specifically, the Active resource coordination piece, the front end of the IRT process fit the bill nicely, and this is how the Kansas DRCs supported the Title 1 Case managers and allowed them to include customers with disability and multiple challenges to employment in the pool of people they were referring to Career Pathways trainings.

But there was more.

They also discovered that there were some issues on the back end of these plans that made it less likely a person with disability and or multiple challenges to employment would reach the outcomes associated with the training, challenges with placement.

The DRCs provided support to customers and staff as the training/placement plans were implemented by supporting business services with placement strategies that included OJTs, paid work experiences and job coaching, post training, In order to:

* Address a lack of work experience for customers with limited or significant gaps in work history
* Address customers with limited or significant gaps in education
* support customers with unique learning styles to transition into new positions
* Encourage customers and staff to embrace living wage permanent employment goals (as opposed to entry level/ low wage)

But the Kansas DRCs had a strategy to address this as well, they used the IRTs they had created around these students at the front end to leverage work experiences post training using Title One or VR funding and working with the existing Business services staff in both systems to identify opportunities and design supports for these work experiences.

By addressing the issues and concerns staff had at the front and back ends of the career pathways flow the Kansas Project set the stage to create some impressive outcomes, which is what we will talk about next.

Outcomes: Local Level

So here is a list of positive local level outcomes to consider, and I think you will find that based on what we've heard about what the Kansas Round 5 project was doing, it lines up pretty well with these examples. Through using Active resource coordination and IRT facilitation consistently and advocating for the use of work experiences on top of career pathways trainings to bridge the gap they were seeing around placement, they covered points one through three pretty effectively and if those strategies were successful they should be in a pretty good position to develop a pilot or suggest that procedural modifications might be beneficial.

1. Address challenges facing job seekers with disability are shared with jobseekers who might benefit from Career Pathways trainings in other targeted demographics.
2. Engage systems have supports and resources that could be braided to more effectively support Job Seekers with Disabilities participating in Career Pathways Trainings.
3. Maximize partnering relationships that currently exist, or could be developed to more effectively support job seekers with disabilities to access Career Pathways trainings.
4. Develop local pilots to demonstrate how specific partnerships and/or strategies might increase access to Career Pathways trainings for jobseekers with disabilities.
5. Modify or adapt procedures to support increased access to Career Pathways trainings for jobseekers with disabilities.

But were they successful? Let’s look at some numbers.

Example: Local Level Outcomes

Were they successful, you be the judge

* Number of Job Seekers with Disabilities who have entered Career Pathways Trainings = 183
* Number that have completed training = 149
* Number that have entered Paid Work Experience/OJT’s = 127
* Number of individuals with disabilities employed to date = 91

So I would argue that with outcomes like these a DEI project could make the leap from acting on a local level and focusing on access for individuals to considering how to do the same thing at a regional or systems level so I’ll turn it over to Sarah to help us think about that while we look at our regional example Massachusetts, Sarah.

# Regional Level: Investigation, Activities, Outcomes

>>Sarah Loizeaux: Thank you Brian! As you can observe, the investigation questions at the regional level are pretty similar to the questions Brian went over for the local level. It might make sense for your DEI project to work on both the local and regional level questions simultaneously.

Investigation: Regional Level

Investigation questions include:

1. What Career Pathways Programs Exist Regionally? And how often are WIOA customers engaged in these programs?
2. Are any individual job centers or partners in DEI pilot regions connecting jobseekers to Career Pathways trainings at a high level, and if so do these customers achieve the outcomes associated with those trainings?
3. Are any individual Job centers or partners in DEI pilot regions serving a high percentage of jobseekers with disabilities, or focusing on a demographic that contains a high percentage of customers with disabilities?
4. What are the regional efforts going on around identifying and developing new or modifying existing Career Pathways programs in order to comply with the State’s WIOA plan?
5. Which regional Partners (WIOA Core and otherwise) are involved in the regional Career Pathways development efforts and which partners with a stake in the outcome are not currently engaged?

Let’s look at the regional example from Massachusetts we used in Part 2 of this series to see how these questions can be answered as well as what activities and outcomes resulted from it.

Example: Regional level Investigation

In Central MA, there were existing career pathway programs in three top industry sectors that were brought to my attention at the start of our Round 5 project. For this example, I will focus on the healthcare pathway of Patient Access and Registration. As we covered in Part 2, I as the DRC for this region asked questions to businesses about available career offerings that were not being filled easily. This is when we discovered that Patient Access and Registration was a CP in high demand:

* Attended Job Center sponsored Job Fair and reached out to attending employers in healthcare field
* Multiple employers in the healthcare industry identified Patient Access and Registration as a position particularly challenging to fill
* DRC researched available Career Pathways and identified Certified Healthcare Access Associates (Patient Access and registration Certification) as relevant to the available positions
* Worked with partner - Work Without Limits - to confirm Labor market research

I then was able to ask questions about the access and availability of this CP with what currently existed in my region. From what I learned, I was able to assess that our local community college was able to provide access from their disability services office for the classroom training. I learned from healthcare employers that past work experience as well as strong computer skills were important factors considered in hiring. I learned from my investigation that while we had a well-established On-the-Job Training program in our region, it was not always easily accessible to persons with disabilities based on a myriad of factors. It was with this knowledge that our region was able to create this pilot of sorts and put what was learned into action.

Activities: Regional Level

Bring together state level leadership among partners and Career Pathways programs and regularly convene this partner group in order to support the local sites partner engagement and activities and extrapolate the lessons learned from these local sites for application across the workforce system and its partners across the state.

Identify opportunities for DEI Project Leadership activities to connect and support Career Pathways implementation.

* 1. At the local level
	2. At the regional level
	3. At the state level

Identify additional funding sources that can be used or pursued at the state level to leverage and sustain DEI practices related to Career Pathways and DRC positions beyond the life of the DEI grant funding, in addition to or in place of Ticket Revenue from Workforce ENs.

Identify examples of successful regional level strategies at the local level that can be replicated (through agreements or shared efforts and procedures) across the state to increase the amount and/or effectiveness of outreach to educate and encourage jobseekers with disability to access Career Pathways trainings.

Identify policy changes at the state level to address programmatic and procedural barriers and promote and support successful inclusion of job seekers with disabilities at the local and regional level within Career Pathways programs.

Example: Regional Level Activities

This was a time to rally the troops, so to speak. Bringing partners in was an important piece of implementing this CP program in a successful manner. This included Title 1 Case Managers, our education partner (in this case, it was our region’s cc), and vocational rehabilitation offices from our region. We had an existing MOU that we used to support sharing costs between partners. We also communicated our plans and progress with our state lead as well as other regions in MA that also were a part of DEI 5. We met monthly either in person or over the phone.

If you recall, I mentioned that our region’s existing OJT program had some requirements and restrictions that made it not always accessible to people with disabilities. Using DEI funds, we created an alternative, a paid work experience for the Patient Access CP. DEI funds were also used as needed for the classroom training as well as for the certification testing. Integrated Resource Teams were also a key DEI strategy used. IRT’s are a fantastic tool to keep partners communicating with each other.

We were able to quickly identify some successful strategies through this pilot. Working with our region’s USBLN, we were able to find a strong business partner that worked with us in creating the paid work experience. We convened with community partners as well, such as the Central MA Employment Collaborative which led to referrals to our AJC. Many of the community-based organizations that are a part of this collaborative also participated in IRTs. We were also able to model how benefits counseling and a strong relationship with the cc were key elements to having success.

As noted in the last bullet point here, one lesson that we learned was that we needed to better communicate to our region all the positive impacts of this pilot in order to ensure increased access in CP trainings and programming that supports CP (such as our OJT grants and our business services team). Bottom line: When you are doing something that increases access, find a way to share that with your region’s workforce board. Work with your state lead to strategize how your successful strategies can be heard by partners at the state level.

Outcomes: Regional Level

Successful outcomes are what we all want, right? These five directives are designed to assist you take the great work you’ve done to be used for systems change and impact.

1. Systemize successful examples of customer level strategies that have been demonstrated at the local level (through agreements or shared efforts and procedures) that increase the amount and/or effectiveness of outreach to educate and encourage jobseekers with disability to access Career Pathways trainings.
2. Standardize successful center level strategies that can be implemented regionally (through agreements or shared efforts and procedures) that increase access to career pathways trainings for customers with disabilities in order to sustain DEI service delivery strategies post project funding.
3. Use successful outcomes obtained through customer level resource leveraging and regional pilots to develop outcome based MOU’s that support jobseekers with disabilities to access Career Pathways trainings.
4. Standardize DEI service strategies that have resulted in outcomes to support the regional efforts going on around identifying and developing new or modifying existing Career Pathways programs region wide.
5. Provide strategies and resources found in the successful outcomes provided by utilizing DEI strategies in Career Pathway programs to regional leadership in order to comply with the WIOA state plan.

Example: Regional Level Outcomes

As I mentioned a little earlier when discussing the MA example and regional level activities, share your successful outcomes! Pull away the key strategies that were used and observe how these strategies can be part of what your region is currently doing.

In MA, we observed a lot of success from what was done around the CP of Patient Access and Registration. DEI strategies such as IRTs and the use of ticket to work and benefits counseling led to successful outcomes. Utilizing our region’s USBLN to find a strong business partnership, and creating a paid work experience that was more accessible to individuals with disabilities than the existing OJT program were a few more strategies we uncovered. The results led to, as this slide mentions, participants with disabilities being adequately supported. Meaning, people with disabilities that were supported through this DEI 5 project’s pilot entered into careers! Keeping records of what your region is doing is important. Inform your region regularly of not only your success, but how that success is happening. Successful outcomes rarely just happen by accident. Sharing this information in a systematic way can help inform future policies and procedures for your region, and perhaps even inform your state’s WIOA state plan!

Speaking of the WIOA state plan, I am going to hand things off to Brian now to discuss functional alignment of CP at the state level and the work being done in Virginia.

# State Level: Investigation, Activities, Outcomes

>>Brian Ingram: Thanks Sarah, so now were going to look at the state level and by now I’m sure your familiar with what we will be looking at, Investigation, Activities and Outcomes and what that could look like at the state level, and also how the activities we discussed at the local and regional level might connect to these state level strategies. Up until now the strategies we have discussed have been pretty DRC focused with the state leads acting for the most part in a support role, once we start talking about state level strategies this is going to be reversed with the state leads taking the initiative supported ideally by the information strategies and outcomes the DRC’s are generating at the local and regional levels, Got it, Lets take a look.

Investigation: State Level

So the first slide is of course investigation and the bullets above direct your attention to the Career Pathways system that is mandated by WIOA and will be implemented in your state through the WIOA State plan. Also of interest would be any other related state level resources like any employment focused initiatives generally, and state level administration around activities of interest especially apprenticeships. This process is very similar to the investigation activities we discussed in the local and regional sections except conducted at the state level by the project lead, however as I mentioned just a moment ago, the WIOA state plan is unique to the state level and really is the most critical piece of the state level investigation so lets look a little more closely at it on the next slide.

It’s very important to know the what of your state plan, but for the purposes of increasing access to your state’s career pathways system, the who is equally important. Who are the stakeholders when it comes to the career pathways portion of your state’s WIOA plan, what players are responsible for the new system, how will targeted industries and demographics be determined, what offices or administrators are responsible for compliance? What partners will be operationalizing the plan? Is disability a focus? Are jobseekers with disability a targeted demographic? Do demographics that are targeted include a high percentage of jobseekers with disability?

What about your DEI project plan, is the state leads role defined or at least implied by your plan? What about state level connections and relationships? Rre there players at your DEI table that also sit at the career pathways table? Are there partners you are working with on your project that should be more involved in state level discussions about Career Pathways? Whew, let me catch my breath this detective work takes a lot out you. Let’s look at what the Virginia round 8 project has done to investigate their career pathways system at the state level.

Example: State Level Investigation

So as we mentioned in the last training, the first place the Virginia Round 8 investigated when developing their Career Pathways strategies were the two previous rounds of the DEI the state had implemented. Based on this experience they determined that building the DEI into the existing state level activities to develop and administer the state’s Career Pathways system would be the most effective way to support the local and regional efforts of the DRCs and to ensure that any innovations or strategies developed by the DRCs would be available and considered by the administrators involved.

To do this they created the DEI leadership group whose membership included administrators from all four titles of WIOA almost all of which also served on the committee tasked with Career pathways implementation. Pretty cool right? The leadership of the project was given a Career Pathways focus from the very beginning, and the members of the committee were already deeply involved in the states Career Pathways efforts.

This level of coordination might not always be possible but I would like to suggest that it should always be sought and even pushed for. If a project operates in isolation from state level activities, it runs the risk of hiding its light under a bushel so to speak and the state misses the opportunity to benefit from a DEI project’s local and regional efforts to increase access to career pathways, information that should be considered as a state implements its WIOA plan. All right let’s look at state level activities

Activities: State Level

This is a very full slide with a lot of bullets but all of these bullets represent the same basic strategy which is the state lead should be engaged in identifying local and regional activities and outcomes that are the result of DRC efforts and have relevance to the state level implementation of the career pathways system outlined in the state’s WIOA plan. The state lead should then make sure that the players responsible at the state level for implementing that system are aware of these successes and how they are relevant to their efforts to make the Career Pathways system real.

Those of you who know me will need to bear with me for a moment because I’m about to say two things I say a lot. First of all, in order for systems change efforts to be effective they need to be implemented both from the top to the bottom and the bottom to the top. At the top, the support for systems change efforts needs to flow down to ensure that things don’t get bogged down or diverted before they start or before they bear fruit. From the bottom up information must flow about what works and what doesn’t work when policies and procedures are operationalized in the field. If this communication loop is set up to flow in both directions an environment that facilitates systems change can be developed.

My second point is that a DEI project is a great opportunity for all the systems it touches, its purpose is broad and its resources are flexible. A DEI project provides a state with the opportunity to model and operationalize new strategies that increase access to services for jobseekers with disability and or multiple challenges to employment. It is effectively a systems change laboratory that allows a state to build new systems and create new relationships based on outcomes rather than theories. All right I’ll get off my soapbox and we can take a look at what activities Virginia engaged in.

Example: State Level Activities

Here we are again at Virginia’s DEI leadership team, we’ve already spent a little bit of time on this so just the highlights. The team provides oversight and guidance for the project. Its members include admin level representatives from all four titles. It is focused, like the project itself on increasing access for customers with disability to the emerging Virginia career pathways systems as defined in the State’s WIOA plan. A majority of the team membership are also involved in the state’s efforts around career pathways generally from the perspective of all four titles and because of this the project has a communication loop that spans every level and includes local, regional and state levels.

This is the ideal, with this model operational information generated from a DRC working with staff to serve a single customer can travel all the way to the state level committee in charge of implementing Career pathways in the state and the intent and purpose of the states emerging career pathways system can be disseminated all the way down to front line staff in real time. All right enough about the leadership team because as cool as it is it’s not the only strategy Virginia is using, so let’s look at some of the others.

The project will also support its primary goal of increasing access to Career Pathways by using internal project resources. Some areas of focus include:

* They will in a partnership with adult education outlined in their DEI plan review curriculum for trainings in the IT sector for accessibility using universal design principles.
* They will reach out to ticketholders using their workforce EN’s and use the EN resources to help move SSA beneficiaries through Career Pathways trainings.
* They will use IRT’s to encourage co enrollment across titles and increase the availability of resources for Career Pathways students.
* Finally they will outreach to the disability community ensuring providers and potential students know of the opportunities available in the WIOA system.

But there's more. The Virginia DEI project will focus on modeling strategies that allow cross title coordination between the WIOA titles, and other relevant systems (veterans and community colleges being mentioned by name in the DEI plan). And they will maintain a focus on outreach and inclusion of social security beneficiaries in project activities throughout the life of the project.

Okay, time for another breather before we move into outcomes, and as we catch our breath, I’ll try to summarize what we’ve looked at so far. The Virginia DEI is attempting to implement the goal of increasing access to Career Pathways trainings by coordinating project efforts at the state regional and local levels. It has created an information loop that disseminates information both from top to bottom and from the bottom up. And finally, it has aligned its internal resources to support the project’s primary goal.

Let’s look at outcomes.

Outcomes: State Level

So to begin with it needs to be stated that Virginia is a round eight project and as such it has not had the time or opportunity to generate the impressive outcomes we have seen from Kansas and Massachusetts. So in light of this for our presentation today, we will take them at their word so to speak and review the outcome goals they have set for themselves. I think this can be useful in a couple of ways. First of all, it’s a nice finish to our review of their project, secondly I think it shows how a project can focus on increasing access to Career Pathways in a way that generates the whole spectrum of DEI outcomes defined in their project plan. I’ll let you review them for yourself and add that these goals include many of the things we have been discussing throughout this series and does it by incorporating DEI service delivery strategies like IRT facilitation Partnership and collaboration, Blending and braiding of funds, business outreach, Workforce EN’s with a laser like focus on increasing access to Career Pathways.

* Use the information and best practices from the DEI that have been recognized as increasing access Career Pathways for customers with disability/and-or/multiple barriers to employment by the state leadership partners to inform and develop future workforce policy and procedure.
* Create a guide/manual that supports inclusive Career Pathway implementation that guides workforce at the local, regional, and state levels.
* Ensure that possible funding sources that can sustain DEI practices related to Career Pathways and DRC positions beyond the life of the DEI grant funding and have been committed to being utilized in this way.
* Market successful strategies that had been found at the local and regional levels throughout the state in order to educate and encourage job seekers with disabilities in accessing Career Pathway programs.
* Identify opportunities for future collaborations or Projects that supports inclusive Career Pathways and includes DEI strategies

Lets continue onto the next slide because there's more.

Example: State Level Outcomes

This slide condenses a lot of information into bullets that summarize many small goals into some larger overarching activities and I think I will go through this point by point because it’s short and I think it is the perfect way to end our conversation about Virginia.

* Develop project communication loop local-regional-state and state-regional local
* Support local level activities to engage individuals in CP trainings
* Support regional efforts to design pilots/models
* Use leadership Team’s access to state level design and implementation of the WIOA system to highlight project findings and apply them as the states CP and WIOA systems are operationalized.
* Outreach to businesses in targeted industries

And with that I’ll turn it over to Sarah to help us all consider a sample DEI career Pathways plan, Sarah.

# Sample DEI Career Pathway Plan

>>Sarah Loizeaux: Thanks Brian! We’ve covered a lot today, and maybe you’re on information overload right now. I get it! Take a deep breath, we’re here to help pull all this together with a sample DEI CP plan.

Sample DEI Career Pathway Plan

For the local level: As observed with Brain’s example from Kansas, the DRC at the local level plays a key role in providing the access into Career Pathways for the individual job seeker with a disability. They can do this by:

* Outreach to and engagement with individual jobseekers with disability to connect them to certifications, stackable credentials and multiple entry points by providing: ARC/IRT support, TTW/EN engagement (Benefits planning), Cross Partner training and TA support around shared customers, and Outreach to businesses in targeted industries.

For the regional level: Recalling the example from MA, using DEI strategies in systematically in a specific existing career pathway can lead to successful outcomes.

* Explore opportunities based on individual outcomes to develop and run a cohort group that involves partners in targeted and intentional activities, Cross Partner training and TA support around coordinated support for shared customers, and Outreach to businesses in targeted industries.

For the state level: This is where state leads can take what’s happening at the local and regional level and help efforts in their states to ensure access for persons with disabilities in all career pathways, even the DEI project.

* Develop project communication loop local-regional-state and state-regional local, Support local level activities to engage individuals in CP trainings, Support regional efforts to design pilots/models, Use DEI Project’s access to state level design and implementation of the WIOA system to highlight project findings and apply them as the states CP and WIOA systems are operationalized, and Outreach to businesses in targeted industries.

Now, I will hand things back over to Miranda who will be getting some feedback from a couple of our projects. Miranda, take it away.

# DEI Project Feedback

>>Miranda Kennedy: Thank you. We have project feedback, they saw the framework that we provided today. Alan Gallagher, New York VI DEI, cannot join us today but we have Sara Harms and thank you for joining. She is the project lead for round six. She has seen these tools and she had interesting insight having lived this for two years, which is how we could cultivate and grow these type of frameworks. Sara, we had conversations about using this and how it can assist with your project and what it might mean to you. Can you share some insight?

New York DEI Feedback

>>Sara Harms: Thank you for having me. We first saw this when we were at the Round 8 conference and realized what a valuable tool at the beginning of round six as we were trying to get a handle on things at the beginning and everything seemed overwhelming but this would've helped lay out the goals and what you are looking for. At the same time, this would be good a tool for us as we look at the third part of the sustainability piece to see where we are at and how we are in the areas and how we are maintaining the sustainability and what are the outcomes. So, I'm even using this now for my DRCs to just make sure to see how valuable it is and to see where we are and we are on track, it is still valuable and I thought it was a great tool and it will be very helpful for everyone to use at the beginning even though it may seem a little bit overwhelming now.

>>Miranda Kennedy: That is incredible feedback from someone who has been there and figuring all this out, it's taken us a while we talked about this and it would've been great to have had this at the beginning of round six but we had to live into this a bit. Thank you for being a front runner and that will be a similar experience for other people who are joining on the call who can have the same type of utility of the tool, and take this into consideration and one of your experiences. Looking at this at the local and regional level, do you feel like you can answer some of those questions in the investigation section? You have done the activities we have identified, it sounds your focus. Are we getting to the outcomes?

>>Sara Harms: Yes. It's nice to check off those activities and to see, we have done a lot already. It's nice to do that as well.

>>Miranda Kennedy: For the round six and seven project staff who are on the line, that is helpful information. We hope you can use this tool. For anyone in round eight, we will get feedback. Go back in time two years ago and imagine taking a look at this, I'm sure you had a different reaction. If you were to go back in time and talk to your people, you have worked with DRC. Any insight?

>>Sara Harms: Do not take things on yourself. It is a team effort, I would give that advice and do not make it too overwhelming, do things by pieces. You will get there in time. It is a great valuable tool.

>>Miranda Kennedy: I feel reassured hearing you say that. This is not meant to be done alone. This is a conversation starter. Take that into consideration. Thank you.

Colorado DEI Feedback

>>Miranda Kennedy: We have Steve Gold, Colorado DEI VIII. We had a number of conversations about this tool and you have been working with your state-level leadership people, and your program managers, we have been going through a lot of different exercises. What is your reaction to having been exposed to this tool? Any thoughts or comments?

>>Steve Gold: I appreciate the opportunity. It's been really great. We have DRCs that are still coming on board. We want to make sure not to take all of the work on for them but to help set up things that will make it easier for our state leadership team and the DRCs to hit the ground running. I want to echo what a couple of people have already said, it's great to have a framework, a proven framework since we are in round eight. And consult with other states, I've had conversations with others to see how things are working. We have been intentional to not re-create the wheel. We believe in the strategies and we are excited to utilize them and we feel it will help us get there to the outcomes quicker, with less headaches and also give us opportunities for innovation which we want to focus on. We want to meet the goals of our WIOA state plan. We have also been able to invite other partners to the state leadership team, outside of our core partners.

People in the community are doing work with career pathways and we're looking at expanding that to invite sector representatives to help strengthen their career pathways even further. We are excited to hit the ground running with this as a framework and be able to apply the strategies. Hopefully we have some exciting outcomes. We will be more intentional since we are demonstrating the project. We will wait until we have those outcomes but the leadership challenges us to give the strategies to other partners in the state who are not part of the grant to help them to implement things more quickly.

We are excited about that I want to say we are intentionally focus on sustainability every step of the way. That is at the top of our training materials so people remember we will be gone in a couple of years so how would this go forward when we are not here. That has been helpful from a sustainability standpoint.

>>Miranda Kennedy: The framework, when you look at it from the state level and helping the individual job centers and the boards, to use this and engage in the discussions. One of the things we hope here and we know early, we had more than we were asking them to go through and in terms of the simplicity, it's almost poetry in motion, getting to these frameworks, the three levels and the three perspectives on the steps you can take in the outcomes. Do you think this will be able to help you? There are so many different moving parts to the DEI and we have been thrown into the deep end, to be able to make this a little more clear especially you have all those different partners and players engaged.

>>Steve Gold: Absolutely. Intentionally reaching out to community partners and the business community, and doing more than outreach including them as partners, on the state leadership team and include them as partners in the community with our DRCs. That will be a heavy focus for our project and I think it's been well received from the team. We are excited to take everything, and run with it with the business community. And we will help them with what their needs are and as well as our customers at the workforce Center. We are excited to see what innovation comes out of that.

>>Miranda Kennedy: Do you feel like you can see the local level example from Kansas, can you apply that? You want to provide a framework, we're moving toward with sustainability and this is what it looks like. Has that been helpful to you? Everybody is always looking for concrete examples.

>>Steve Gold: It's been helpful to have those examples and including Massachusetts, Virginia, Kansas, the DRC, and the trainings, those have been helpful and I think it will springboard us. I said that will take things to the next level because of these things but there is room for innovation as well. We had these examples to work off of and we have the unique situation and our local areas. We are excited to team with our local partners and our regional partners are doing work as well to bridge the two areas. We will be able to come up with some unique partnerships and career pathways for our customers and use that as a springboard to sustainability as a way forward for the rest of our partners in the state. We will look at different opportunities.

>>Miranda Kennedy: It is an existing career pathway, it is great to hear your perspective and we wanted to have one of our new projects, Colorado has not had previous rounds of the DEI. They had a Disability Program Navigator that they have worked in the past. iIt’s an opportunity for the project that does not have the levels to come in and you can build upon the work and look to the examples and still be innovative and unique. And you want to have a framework that is helpful. Thank you.

## Final Words

>>Sarah Loizeaux: I would reinforce the point of making sure you are sharing your strategies that are working at the local and regional level with the state and that to the state, it needs and share that with partners at the regional level. Knowing what is working will help inform people. I cannot stress enough how important it is to take what you have learned and do not keep it a secret, share the successes, share it with your supervisors, the state leads, it is important when you talk about having real systems change.

>>Brian Ingram: What you are saying is important, this is not meant to be overwhelming. It's meant for projects to be able to coordinate themselves and locate where they are at the big picture, and develop action steps that make sense for them, with the ultimate goal of trying to impact the career pathway system that is being implemented. That is the first thing I would say. It was confusing, start at the beginning. Build from there. Secondly, developing that communication, the top to bottom, bottom to top thing it is important for sustainability, if nobody knows what you are doing, it will be hard for them to see the value, when the time comes for the project to wind down. They need to pick up and do things on their own if they will stay. Think about that a little bit and think about how your services are organized in your state and your region and make sure the good work that you are doing is getting in front of the right people.

## Resources

Career Pathways Collection Site

<https://careerpathways.workforcegps.org/>

DEI Career Pathways Part 1: Aligning DEI and Career Pathways System and Program Strategies:

<https://dei.workforcegps.org/events/2017/12/04/16/04/Part_1-Aligning_DEI_and_Career_Pathways_System_and_Program_Strategies>

Expanding Apprenticeships for Individuals with Disabilities

<https://apprenticeshipusa.workforcegps.org/resources/2017/03/10/16/09/Expanding-Apprenticeship-for-Individuals-with-Disabilities>