Many of the Job Corps Scholars (JCS) grantees report challenges with recruitment and re-engaging community partners that initially were to assist with recruitment. Some of these original partners have not opened their doors since the COVID-19 pandemic or are now beginning to offer services. This Building Recruitment Pipelines Tip Sheet identifies proven practices in recruiting youth and young adults. It also outlines strategies for securing the appropriate community partners to realize success as defined by the grant.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- Partner with your local American Job Center (AJC) to co-enroll participants. Grantees should offer to share progress and participant outcome data, which requires a robust, internal data tracking system.

- While existing and expanding local partnerships are critical, it is also important to look for opportunities to partner with national companies in your region to widen the pipeline of skilled workers.

- When co-enrolling, you must be careful not to duplicate services. Additionally, grantees must offer the full range of services identified in their grant.

- When re-engaging partners, give it a personal touch. A phone call to discuss their challenges and plan for reopening will help you gauge how and when their services can be accessed.

- Establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) if one was not established initially. The MOU or MOA outlines expectations of both the partner and grantee; thus, increasing the likelihood that partners will stay engaged and committed to the original agreement.

- When developing new partnerships, explore local programs with the same eligibility requirements, but different outcomes. This strategy allows you to recruit from these programs without competition. An example is recruiting from “Teen Mothers” or “Welfare-to-Work” programs. Offer to share participant progress and outcome information as part of the MOU or MOA.

- According to a 2018 report by the Pew Research Center, 71% of 18- to 24-year-olds tuning into social media use Instagram, 45% use Twitter, and 94% use YouTube. Grantees should be thinking about creating compelling videos and content that the target audience can view on their mobile device and then easily share across social media platforms.
■ Search YouTube for recruitment videos that target the same audience and model those currently trending videos when creating your program videos.

■ Focus on messaging. Some prospective participants may consider job opportunities that do not require any form of formal education and may not see the benefits the JC Scholars program offers such as job counseling, training, and assistance with job placement. Appropriate messaging and marketing of the program are extremely important in assisting applicants in understanding the positive impact of formal training in the long-term.

■ Keep the end-user in mind when developing your recruitment activities. For example:
  o Point out the convenient locations (on major public transportation routes);
  o Provide snacks or pre-packaged meals during the in-take process;
  o Offer on-hand assistance to fully complete the application process; and
  o Describe clearly what is needed to apply, i.e., photo identification, proof of income, etc., so that interested individuals will come as prepared as possible.

■ Use recent program graduates or those demonstrating success while currently in the program to assist in marketing/messaging. Give those individuals the opportunity to sell JC Scholars through first-hand experience; allow them to tell their story, which allow prospective participants to see others that they closely identify with, age, similar life experience, etc., in the program functioning and succeeding.

LESSONS LEARNED

When developing partnerships, it is best to be clear and concise about what each partner will provide and how it will operate. An MOU or MOA brings clarity to the arrangement and offers a mechanism for accountability.

PROMISING PRACTICES/SUCCESES

To successfully recruit young adults, organizations must speak their language. The Gen Z generation are true digital natives and prime users on social media; technology is a natural way to communicate. This generation is sensitive to templated language, so be creative. Developing videos to post on YouTube and other frequented platforms showcasing your program and successful participants in the same age range can boost your recruitment.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Find the American Job Centers (AJCs) near you:

- See examples of how the YouthBuild program has used social media and created two engaging YouTube videos: Find techniques to target Gen Z in job recruitment by visiting:
  https://joinhandshake.com/blog/employers/10-ways-to-include-recruit-gen-z-into-your-multi-generational-workforce/

- Examples of recruitment incentives: