

Career Pathways Initiative Newsletter Report

July, August, September 2011

Vol. 1 Issue 1



United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, was in Little Rock to recognize and acknowledge the successes of Arkansas' Career Pathways Initiative. Among those on hand for the meeting held at Pulaski Technical College was **BRTC's** Pathways Director, Tom Baker, seen with Dr. Karon Rosa & Sec Sebelius (Pocahontas Newspaper).



Pulaski Technical College (from left) PTC Career Pathways Director Gloria Maddox-Powell; Brittney Bryant-Turner, Pulaski Technical College graduate, former Career Pathways Initiative participant and LPN at Stonehaven Assisted Living Facility; Secretary Sebelius; and Jim Thomas, owner, Stonehaven Assisted Living Facility in Maumelle (**PTC Website**).

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USHHS Secretary Visits PTC/CPI

September 29

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR – US Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius visited **Pulaski Technical College** to talk about what she says is this country's biggest challenge: creating jobs.

In a room full of school administrators, educators, small business owners, and recent graduates, Secretary Sebelius heard firsthand how investing in education will create jobs and prepare students for the workplace.

"By partnering higher education credentials at 2-year colleges with the funding from DWS (Department of Workforce Services), we're doing a great job of changing the landscape of the local job market," says Dr. Karon Rosa, the Statewide Director of the Career Pathways Initiative.

Sebelius says the best way to keep business flowing is to make sure college students have effective job training programs, like the Career Pathways Initiative at Pulaski Tech.

"Passing the American Jobs Act would not only put real dollars in the pockets of Arkansas business owners, cut their payroll taxes in half, allow them to hire more of these trained workers, but actually have more money available so programs like this can be replicated across the country."

Brittney Bryant-Turner is a **Pulaski Tech** success story. She says without the Career Pathways Initiative she would not have been able to afford school, would not have received the job training she needed to find a better job.

"Education is the only way to get out of the standstill, the turmoil of poverty and low income level" (Fox 16 Report).



US Office of Family Administration, OFA, identified ten existing TANF programs/practices as "most promising" nationwide to participate as learning laboratories for developing the capacity for becoming evidence informed practice. At least one program was identified in each of the ten ACF regions for inclusion in the initiative. Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative was chosen to represent Region 6 that includes **Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas**.

Criteria used for inclusion was primarily focused on programs being cited as "promising" by an external source, or programs that have undergone an external evaluation and have been designated as innovative or promising and high performing. This initiative will focus on developing and measuring effective solutions that foster healthy families and strong communities.

Program Progress

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) is making progress toward meeting TANF Goal Number Two: "To end the dependency of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation and work."

The initiative provides funding for two-year colleges to develop career pathways programs that assist TANF-eligible adults to earn a marketable educational credential for immediate entry into a high demand occupation. The Career Pathways Initiative emphasizes such program components as job readiness skills, basic academic skills preparation, fast-track remediation, and post-secondary credentials tied to high wage, high demand occupations.

Intensive student services with direct student support for tuition, transportation, childcare, textbooks, loaner lap tops and other ancillary materials are provided for students in the program.

CPI fosters strong connections among two-year colleges, students, community-based organizations, state agencies, and employers.

Program Barriers

SACC

Child care issues are always barriers. We have students using a daycare that does not accept vouchers or using a family member for their childcare. This becomes a huge expense for them, but for whatever reason they choose not to pursue CPI childcare. Problem pregnancies and various surgeries have been problems for some students. Funding for the Career Center as far as staff and resources. CPI has offered to utilize some of our PBSS funds to help provide materials for job seekers and we have already purchased Job & Career Accelerator which can be used in the center. Those students who require extremeremediation become easily frustrated. We are also seeing students running out of Pell grant because so many of their grant hours have been used for remediation courses. Again we make every effort to have students utilize the services of Adult Ed, online resources such as PLATO, and services available through our Learning Center to ensure they complete remediation prior to enrolling in college. However, some students continue to ignore available services and opt to enroll in college anyway. And last, job market in the area is extremely slow; part-time positions in particular are difficult to find. We work continually to provide assistance with the removal of these barriers, and to improve our program as much as possible to meet the changing needs of our students.



Program Update

ADHE/CPI and CPI Campuses Provide Many Program Activities & Strategies for Students and CPI Staff

Professional Development at **COTO** for CPI staff-Web of Life training picture above, provided in partnership with Dept. of Volunteerism.

Student Orientation at **ATUO**-Career Pathways New and Returning Student Orientations were held in August in the Conference Room of the Student Services Building. The theme was "The Ever Evolving You!" This theme was to show new students how many changes are in their future and returning students how far they've come. CPI staff provided entertainment in the form of dancing to the Evolution of Dance. Students also did team building by dancing in teams for door prizes.

Student Workshops at **ATUO-CPI**, in coordination with the Student Success Center and campus organizations, has hosted a series of workshops to help students improve study and life skills. CPI has been working to make sure that workshops are being offered at various times to meet student schedules. Workshops are also being recorded and uploaded to Blackboard so students can complete their workshops online.

SACC-Serving as an **advocate for our students** in various areas is an important function for our CPI staff. During this quarter we have had the opportunity to assist students in the area of financial aid matters. Specifically we successfully assisted several students with financial aid appeals.

CPI Student Success

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CPI is Working

UAM-Crossett



Kirk C. found out about Career Pathways after he was encouraged to go to the school and find out what was available. He enrolled in Fall 2010 at UAM-CTC in the Computer Maintenance and Networking course. He now works for the Chicot Memorial Medical Center as an IT Professional.

SACC former student, who majored in radiologic technology, came into the program with two children and on food stamps and ARKids. SACC/CPI assisted her with gas vouchers and child care – two needs that would have prevented her from continuing in school. She graduated a year ago and is now employed in a clinic in El Dorado making \$15.50 per hour and being trained to do CAT Scans.

ATUO

Jennifer Williams graduated in May of 2011 with her Associates Degree in Allied Health as a Physical Therapist Assistant. In September of 2011, she took and passed her state boards to be certified as a PTA. As of October, she took a position with Little Angels Therapy in Clarksville, AR. She is extremely excited about her new career.



NPCC

Anna Eye—Picture Above, Allied Health completer and mother of 5

"I can't imagine what my experience at **National Park** would have been like without Career Pathways. Thank you Career Pathways, for all that you have done to be an answer to prayer at every crossroad in my life in these last few years! "



ASUMH

AR Career Pathways was very instrumental in my completion of my EMT class. I am a wife and mother of two children and our family is on a tight budget, without the assistance of Career Pathways I don't believe I would have been able to take the class at the time that I did. The gas allowance helped me to get back and forth to the class and knowing that my text book and other needed supplies were going to be covered was a great burden lifted off my shoulders. I am currently a para-professional and bus driver for the Cotter School district, and also a fire fighter at the Gassville Fire Department. Since receiving my EMT certification from ASU, I have been able to serve the community of Gassville not only as a fire fighter but now also as an EMT. I have also recently started working part-time as an EMT for Ozark EMS in Calico Rock. I am a people person and love having the opportunity to serve both the Gassville and Calico Rock communities. Without the help of AR Career Pathways I would not be able to serve these communities in the capacity in which I now do! Thank you ASU- Mountain Home, AR Career Pathways!!!

Program Goals and Objectives

The goal of Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative is to improve educational and employment outcomes for TANF-eligible adults. Among the key objectives, listed in the MOA, for TANF-eligible adult participants are the following:

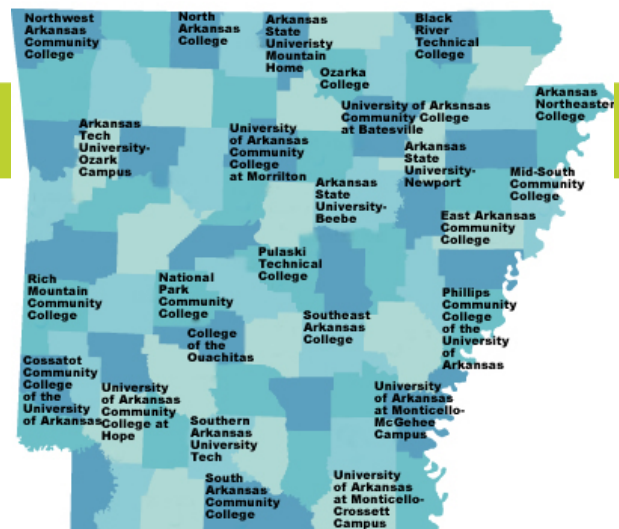
- Improved work participation rates
- Enhanced basic skills
- Increased attainment of college-level certificates and associates degrees
- Improved job retention, advancement and wage progression
- Reduced welfare recidivism
- Increase self-sufficiency
- Wage/Employability

Driven by two-state agencies, Arkansas Department of Higher Education and Department of Workforce Services, Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) is a partnership between community colleges, workforce development agencies, employers, and social service providers. Arkansas CPI is aimed at providing marketable educational skills through higher education credentials to low-income individuals for immediate entry into targeted occupations. Arkansas CPI improves working relationships between public systems and pre-established programs and services in order to assist low-income individuals in acquiring workplace skills that ultimately lead to economic self-sufficiency.

The primary purpose of the initiative is to address the “education gap” as a vehicle through which the “economic gap” can be closed.



www.arpathways.com



ANC – Arkansas Northeastern College, Blytheville
 ASUMH – Arkansas State University, Mountain Home
 ATUO – Arkansas Tech University, Ozark
 CCCUA – Cossatot Community College U of A, DeQueen
 EACC – East Arkansas Community College, Forrest City
 NAC – North Arkansas College, Harrison
 NWACC – Northwest Arkansas Community College, Bentonville
 PCCUA – Phillips Community College of the U of A, Helena
 RMCC – Rich Mountain Community College, Mena
 SAUT – Southern Arkansas University Tech, Camden
 UACCB – University of Arkansas Community College, Batesville
 UACCM – University of Arkansas Community College, Morrilton
 UAMM – UAM College of Technology- McGehee

ASUB – Arkansas State University, Searcy
 ASUN – Arkansas State University, Newport
 BRTC – Black River Technical College, Pocahontas
 COTO – College of the Ouachitas, Malvern
 MSCC – Mid-South Community College, West Memphis
 NPCC – National Park Community College, Hot Springs
 OZC – Ozarka College, Melbourne
 PTC – Pulaski Technical College, North Little Rock
 SACC – South Arkansas Community College, El Dorado
 SEAC – Southeast Arkansas College, Pine Bluff
 UACCH – University of Arkansas Community College, Hope
 UAMC – UAM College of Technology-Crossett