



Poverty Simulation Hosted by ADHE/CPI and PTC

Career Pathways staff at Pulaski Tech and ADHE/CPI staff collaborated to host a Poverty Simulation at the campus on November 9. Campus staff, community partners, state agency personnel and students participated in four 15-minute weeks which simulated a person or family living with issues associated with poverty, or living in the “tyranny of the moment”.

Five ADHE certified trainers provided the simulation as a resource for institutions of higher education and their partnering stakeholders. Most organizations choose to host a poverty simulation because they know there are current poverty issues and sometimes if you have an opportunity to have someone “**walk in their shoes**”, then **action** will happen in the form of changed behaviors.

In Arkansas, a state where 18% of the population lives in poverty, people feel they “know” what poverty is. Unfortunately, the misconception that those are the people that are lazy and don’t want to work is often the stereotype for “working poor”. Many individuals don’t realize that most low income people that work minimum wage jobs have to work 1.7 jobs to even make a living wage.

The poverty simulation is effective for social service providers and educators working with clients/students, or a teacher realizing a child’s acting out on Friday afternoon which may be because the child knows they will not have adequate meals until Monday when they return to school.

The session provided a debriefing for participants to bridge the Simulation to **transformation, change, action, and outcome attainment**. ADHE used The Learning Cycle as a framework for the debriefing. While enjoying lunch provided by the PTC Culinary Class, participants shared experiences that happened during the simulation. Discussions focused on transformation, outcome attainment, and social action. Questions from the moderator challenged participants to associate the simulation with “real life”. At the end of the simulation and debrief. Participants were challenged to utilize their new knowledge, attitude and/or skills. The day ended with “What are **YOU** personally going to do about poverty?”



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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.

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



To Help Families Locally, Changes Are Needed at the State Level

Karon Rosa, Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative

This commentary is part of a series highlighting the work of the 2012 [Ideas for Action Award](#) winners, sponsored by The Northwest Area Foundation, University of Minnesota, and University of Washington. This award recognizes organizations that take practical and innovative approaches to helping low-income individuals.

Despite an unemployment rate that is almost a full percentage point below the national average, Arkansas is one of the poorest states in the nation. Its median income is the second lowest in the country, and it ranks among the ten worst states in terms of poverty and lack of health care coverage. Compounding this problem, only 18 percent of Arkansans have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. How can a state so deeply entrenched in poverty begin to dig its way out?

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) was developed as an innovative tool to help Arkansans fight their way out of poverty. CPI is the result of a partnership between the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. We have found that greater integration and cooperation among state departments and agencies can help the citizens of our state to achieve economic security.

Arkansas has traditionally used its Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to provide assistance to low-income families through cash assistance, case management, work subsidies, and supportive services.

Yet these resources are often nothing more than a short-term fix. They don't provide families with the services needed to escape generational poverty and achieve self-sufficiency. Families are able to address their immediate problems, but something more is needed if we are to help Arkansans become economically secure in the long-term.

In 2005, state agency heads made a move to tackle high poverty and low education rates by linking state resources. Two state agencies took the lead—the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services. This state partnership created the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative model.

CPI provides low-income individuals with a comprehensive set of academic and support services in order to earn a degree or the credentials needed to acquire a high-demand, high-paying job. In addition to career training and college classes, participants may also receive other benefits, such as textbooks, childcare, and transportation.

The Initiative is funded through the TANF block grant, with the Department of Higher Education providing administration of TANF funds from the Department of Workforce Services. This unique partnership has allowed state agencies to work closer together in order to more efficiently address the needs of low-income Arkansans.

This approach benefit families in two ways that we believe other states can replicate.

First, it streamlines the administration of resources and benefits, allowing low-income individuals to receive services through one simplified program.

Before CPI began to serve clients in the 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.

With this model in place, low-income individuals no longer need to visit each of these agencies and organizations to receive services. Instead, one comprehensive program provides them with basic skills, job search services, remediation, advanced skills training in high-demand occupations, and college credentials.

The second benefit of this model is that it can be individualized to meet the needs of each student. Different families need different supports as they work towards self-sufficiency, and programs of this nature allow participants to access the specific resources that can help them the most.

Students enter CPI at various stages of educational attainment. Some may not have earned a high school diploma, while others are ready to earn the college credit needed to perform a high-demand job. Other participants may need more focused help building basic skills they were never able to acquire.

Because participants are working towards a determined career path, CPI is able to tailor its program to meet the needs of each student and provide them with the specific resources that will help them to best achieve their goals.

Since 2005, over 27,000 students that meet the TANF criteria have used CPI to earn over 24,000 certificates and degrees. Ninety percent of our participants have been female-custodial parents. Student success rates are ten points higher than other community college students, and all mandated performance measures in enrollment, attainment, entering employment, and job retention have been met or exceeded.

There is no doubt that families need multiple supports in order to make their way out of poverty. In addition to a well-paying job, social services, skills training, childcare subsidies, and many other resources are needed to achieve long-term financial security.

Whereas families may have found the administration of these resources confusing and repetitive in the past, CPI has helped Arkansans escape the red tape that often hinders low-income families from receiving these critical services.

Greater cooperation at the state level leads to better service delivery at the local level. In order to help individuals in poverty, states must restructure their resources. When state agencies and departments work together, low-income families win.

Karon Rosa is a program director at Arkansas Department of Higher Education for the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative.



Nancy Sparks

CPI Site Visits – Campus Audits

Pursuant to the MOA between the Arkansas Department of Higher Education and the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services, CPI ensures that all participating two-year colleges are informed of any applicable audit requirements and that all necessary audit requirements are complied with. Program monitoring activities including site visits are conducted to ensure contract compliance and review of program implementation for each of the 25 sites located on two-year college campuses across the state.

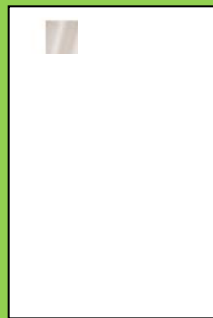
The purpose of the campus visit is to monitor program compliance and review of the TANF funded activities and services prescribed in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Department of Higher Education and the Department of Workforce Services. As a participant in the Career Pathways Initiative, each institution is required to maintain complete and accurate records concerning the receipt and expenditure of TANF funds. The monitoring visits are necessary to provide assistance with any problems that programs have with management of their grant.

The FY13 audits focus on effective and efficient standard systems. ADHE/CPI conducted a desk audit of database reports and budget data prior to the visit and reviewed the information for any issues, etc., that were addressed once on site and reviewed additional exhibit documentation supplied by the program for compliance. Although the ultimate responsibility for accuracy of data lies with the CPI Director, it is an integral part of the role of all CPI staff to ensure that they follow guidelines/processes to maximize the accuracy, timeliness and quality of data that is collected, recorded, analyzed, and reported.

Site visits are scheduled for each of the 25 CPI programs annually. Notices of audit dates along with a list of documentation to be reviewed during the audit are provided to programs two weeks prior to the site visit. Two weeks after completion of the audit, programs receive an audit letter with suggestions and recommendations based on audit results. All recommendations must be addressed on a Corrective Action Plan and submitted to ADHE/CPI within two weeks of receipt of the audit letter.

Audits have been conducted at five CPI sites during the 1st quarter of FY'13. Copies of those reports are sent to DWS. Recommendations are provided as continuous improvement for programs and require a Corrective Action Plan to address those issues. Although there are recommendations listed for each of these sites, all programs are within TANF guidelines. Sites visited this quarter were:

- UACCM
- UACCB
- ATUO
- UAMC
- CCCUA



Annual Progress Report

Career Pathways Initiative publishes a Progress Report annually that summarizes each fiscal year of the initiative. The report includes an Executive Summary, Key Updates for the year, Background, Activities detailed for year, and Descriptive Statistics of the CPI participants. The Descriptive statistics are also provided as tables in the report, as is a CPI model. The FY12 Progress Report includes the Promising Pathways Case Study. The Case study resulted after CPI was identified as one of the ten most promising pathways in the nation.

As in past years, CPI student success rate is more than 10 points higher when compared to other two-year college students in the state. Success Rate is calculated using a student cohort who enrolled in the Fall 2011 (Academic Year 2012) 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 2012 (Academic Year 2013); percent of students retained in the cohort is calculated. Students completing a certificate or degree from the cohort are calculated into a percent. Success rate represents percent of students completing plus the percent of students retained. CPI students were completed or retained at a rate of **77.75%** while traditional students' success rate was **60.29%**. The FY12 Progress Report is available on the CPI web site.

CPI Current Data on Programs/Enrollments

1. Health Science
2. Employability / CRC
3. Business Management and Administration
4. Education and Training
5. Manufacturing

Enrollments – FY13 to date – 6,551

Enrollments – Total to date – 27,944

New CPI Website Coming Soon !

The new CPI website will include:

- Background and objectives of CPI
- Performance measures and reports
- Publications and recorded webinars
- Links to campus CPI with contact info
- And more



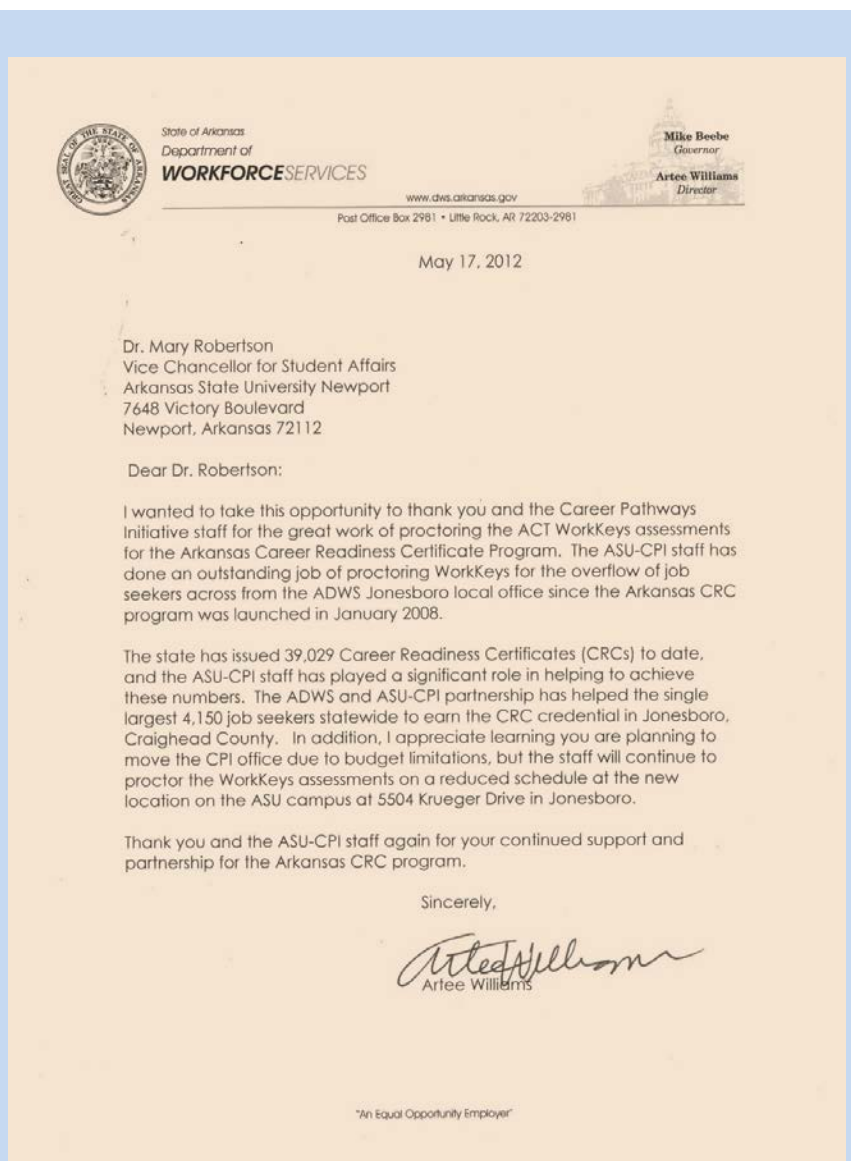
ASUMH CPI Presents “Getting Ahead”

Arkansas State University - Mountain Home

Based on research and field work by Dr. Phil DeVol, Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting'-By World is a seminar that invites individuals to examine different situations and discover solutions as a group to prevent “fires” and to learn how to transition from living in the NOW to planning for a future.

This is **not** a lecture type class – but rather a “seminar” set in a kitchen table type of setting where individuals will “investigate” poverty issues as a team and learn skills that will allow them to identify the “fires” of life and develop steps to prevent fires as opposed to putting them out. The class is made possible by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation and ACCESS, a local consortium focusing on poverty.

Our first pilot class, led by CPI staff member Sarah Brozynski, began on June 11 and continued until August 6, 2012. There were 15 participants.



ANC Partnerships

Arkansas Northeastern College

Gold, Silver, and Bronze CRCs

Joe Franklin, from the DWS office in Little Rock recently spoke to the Mississippi County Personnel Manager Association in Blytheville. Pictured with Mr. Franklin are Dwayne Mays, President of the HR Association, and representing ANC are Pauline Linam-Parks, CPI, CSSF and Louis Parchman, ANC Placement Services. Since the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate Program was launched in January 2008, 33,136 CRCs have been issued. Currently CPI administers the test at the college.



BRTC

Black River Technical College reported the data below on recent graduation:



Ramonda Housh, Director of Nursing, with CPI graduate, Jean Ann Dugger.

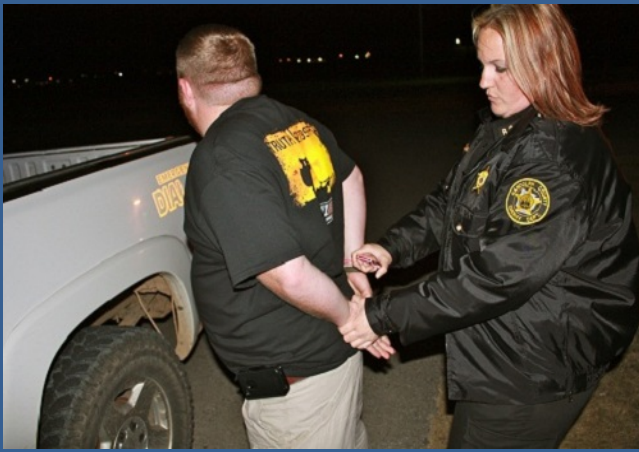
38 RN graduates – 17 were CPI – 45%
17 Respiratory graduates – 8 were CPI – 47%
18 LPN graduates – 5 were CPI – 28%

CPI STUDENT SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

October, November, December 2012

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BRTC Black River Technical College - Law Enforcement



ASUN Arkansas State University – Newport

High Voltage Lineman Technology



Nursing



ATUO Arkansas Tech University – Ozark

Nursing



PTC

Pulaski Technical College

Heating, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration



Culinary Arts



Phlebotomy



Collision Repair Technology



UACCH University of Arkansas Community College – Hope

Diesel Mechanic



Nursing



Industrial Technology



Welding



Industrial Electrician



**RMCC – Rich Mountain
Community College
Nursing**



NAC North Arkansas College

Nursing



Emergency Medical Science



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:

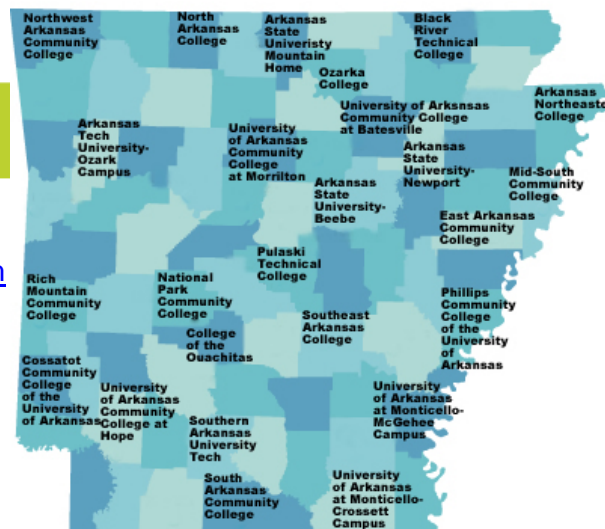
- Improved work participation rates
- Enhanced basic skills
- Increased attainment of college-level certificates and associates degrees
- Improved job retention, advancement and wage progression
- Reduced welfare recidivism
- Increase self-sufficiency
- Wage/Employability

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.

Arkansas
Career PATHWAYS

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