Philadelphia Career Pathways Assessment

SEPTEMBER 2017
PREPARED BY THE ECONOMY LEAGUE OF GREATER PHILADELPHIA
Philadelphia Career Pathways Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Major initiatives are underway in Philadelphia to align and scale workforce development activities, with an emphasis on advancing career pathways—a sector-based workforce model that relies on employer input to articulate routes to well-paying jobs and provide support and guidance to individuals moving along the path. Developing effective strategies to support and strengthen career pathways in Philadelphia requires an understanding of the extent to which programs across the city have adopted the career pathways approach, how they are operationalizing the model, and how effective they are at helping individuals advance into family-sustaining employment. To this end, Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN)—on behalf of the Philadelphia Generation Work Initiative, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation—engaged the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia to conduct an assessment of career pathways activity in Philadelphia. This assessment relied on interviews with a wide range of stakeholders and a comprehensive self-assessment survey completed by programs throughout the city.

Understanding How Programs Align with the Career Pathways Model

Information collected via the self-assessment survey and stakeholder interviews revealed wide variation among programs in focus, capacity, and alignment with the career pathways approach. The Economy League analyzed responses to a discrete set of survey questions to gauge program fidelity to the career pathways model and divided programs into three groups based on how closely they align with the model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Pathways Fidelity</th>
<th>Key Characteristics</th>
<th>Challenges &amp; Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GROUP 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| High-Fidelity Career Pathways Programs | 14 programs met 6-8 criteria | - Clearly defined sector focus  
- Active career pathways mapping  
- Robust employer partnerships  
- Multiple eligibility requirements  
- Skew toward older populations (19-24)  
- Emphasis on skill measurement | - Capacity constraints  
- Gaps in alignment with industry credentials  
- Gaps in engaging employers for post-program supports  
- Limited use of flexible delivery options, like evening programming  
- Varied completion & employment outcomes |

| GROUP 2                   |                     |                             |
| Robust Training and Education Programs | 8 programs met 3-5 criteria | - Wide variation in program type and focus  
- Sector focus is prevalent  
- Mixed focus on occupations and career pathways mapping  
- No industry-recognized credentials  
- Limited employer partnerships | - Programs in this group serve the most participants; several are high-capacity  
- Range of program types creates challenges for developing overarching strategies |

| GROUP 1                   |                     |                             |
| Gateway Programs | 13 programs met 0-2 criteria | - General career exposure and soft skills training  
- Serve as entry points, particularly for younger participants  
- Little sector or occupational focus  
- Limited employer partnerships  
- Wide range of target outcomes  
- Few eligibility requirements | - Room to strengthen connections with other programs  
- Opportunities to engage younger participants in the workforce system  
- Extra capacity, room to grow |
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Survey Findings

Thirty-five programs responded to the online self-assessment survey conducted as part of this study. Thirty respondents completed all sections of the survey prior to the participant data sections at the end of the survey, and 23 respondents provided participant data. Below are select survey findings.

### 2016 PARTICIPANT DATA

- Nearly 6,000 participants were enrolled across responding programs.
- More than 2,600 participants completed programs in 2016.
- Nearly 400 participants served in an internship in 2016, but far fewer programs provided internship data than enrollment data.
- 625 participants were employed following program completion.

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Three-quarters of programs selected “work exposure and experience” as a descriptor of their program. While many Group 1 programs self-identified with just one descriptor, nearly all Group 3 programs selected multiple descriptors.
- Programs serve participants across age ranges. Group 1 programs are generally more likely to target younger participants aged 14–18, while Group 3 programs are more likely to target participants aged 19–24.
- Nearly two-thirds of Group 3 respondents said they target high school graduates, though the remaining Group 3 programs all noted that they target out-of-school youth with no diploma.
- The number of eligibility restrictions tends to increase by group. Group 1 programs tend to primarily only restrict participants based on age, whereas Group 3 programs tend to have additional eligibility criteria.

### SECTOR FOCUS AND CURRICULUM

- Two-thirds of responding programs focus on at least one employment sector, with healthcare, IT, and construction being most prevalent. Much of this activity is concentrated in Group 3 programs, in which all 14 programs say they have a sector focus.
- Of the programs with a sector focus, two-thirds also have an occupational focus and most say that they map out career pathways. These programs are particularly concentrated in Group 3.
- Only half of all responding programs work with employers or other partners in developing curricula. The share is significantly higher among Group 3 programs, at 71%.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key Survey Findings

CREDENTIALS AND WORK-BASED LEARNING

- **>60% of programs** provide some opportunity for participants to address remedial education needs.
- Only **one-third of programs** grant industry-recognized credentials, with most of these programs concentrated in Group 3.
- **>80% of programs** say they provide opportunities for participants to pursue additional education or training, varying from formal partnerships to informal mentoring opportunities.
- Two-thirds of programs provide an internship opportunity, but **career exploration activities are the most prevalent work-based learning experience among programs.**

Work-Based Learning Experiences (Top 5)
n=31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Number of Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career exploration activity</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship/co-op</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent job placement</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid on-the-job training</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PARTICIPANT SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

- Two-thirds of programs provide some form of academic advising, ranging from informal conversations to formal meetings with a case manager. A higher share (87%) of programs provide career advising.
- Financial literacy support and transportation assistance are the most common support services, offered by two-thirds of programs.
- Only **two programs offer childcare** support services.
- **71% of programs**—including all in Group 3—partner with employers in some fashion.
- **73% of programs partner with an educational institution or other training program.** Predominant partners for Group 3 programs are universities and community colleges; partnerships with high schools are most prevalent in Group 1.
- Post-program support is universal within Group 3, and 79% of these programs work with employers or other partners to support participants career pathway transitions.

Support Services (Top 5)
n=31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number of Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial literacy</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation assistance</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job placement</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive case management</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAM GOALS AND FUNDING

- Permanent job placement is the most prevalent key outcome cited across programs and was selected by all Group 3 programs.
- Foundation and philanthropic funding was the most prevalent funding source among programs, but was almost always accompanied by a simultaneous selection of public funding.
- **One-third of programs say they are not operating at full capacity,** although these are concentrated primarily in Groups 1 and 2.

Target Outcomes (Top 5)
n=30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Number of Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent job placement</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment retention</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving an industry-recognized credential</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving a formal diploma or degree</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landing a job interview</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosystem Insights

Analysis of survey responses and interview input yielded several key insights into the career pathways ecosystem in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia currently has an informal career pathways ecosystem with a wide variety of programs, approaches, and challenges. Several workforce programs in the city appear to adhere closely to the career pathways model, though these high-fidelity programs are not the only drivers of career pathways. Many programs have developed bilateral partnerships with other programs, educational institutions, and employers that in effect create multi-stop career pathways training for individuals. Wide variation in approach and focus, however, compels programs to take an ad hoc approach to forming partnerships with one another. This lack of alignment limits the potential for systemic connections between programs, which could make it easier for more participants to easily and seamlessly transition between programs.

More comprehensive information about the career pathways ecosystem would help strengthen connections between programs. Incomplete knowledge about what other programs offer, who they serve, and how and when they offer services limits programs’ ability to make effective referrals. Today, many post-completion referrals rely on ad hoc relationships rather than a strategic review of relevant opportunities for specific individuals. A database with comprehensive program-level information and more intentional links between providers would strengthen connections within the ecosystem and improve outcomes.

There is wide variation in program capacity for data collection and maintenance. As it stands, many programs do not have the capacity necessary to collect, maintain, and share data on their own participants, services, and outcomes. Several interviewees raised funding constraints as a major obstacle to detailed data collection; some noted that the level of tracking currently required by funders already has the downstream effect of diverting time from the mission.

Programs face several funding and policy challenges, but innovative models exist to strengthen career pathways. Funding constraints were a common theme in the survey and interviews, with WIOA’s rigidity and the growing prescriptiveness of philanthropic funding both cited as limiting flexibility and innovation. Stakeholders did cite opportunities for innovative uses of public funding, including blending funding sources and tapping into multiple WIOA funding streams. Stakeholders also see the potential to apply the career pathways model across sectors as a way of creating more opportunity for advancement. Expanding apprenticeships also rose to the fore as an opportunity for innovation, with stakeholders seeing potential to couple internship experience with dedicated work-based education and training in industries where apprenticeships are not the norm.

Conveying the value to employers of career pathways programs is essential. Focusing on career pathways as a workforce solution generates important value to employers. In addition to equipping jobseekers with providing the soft skills that employers value, career pathways programs provide a critical vetting function for employers. Still, aligning the career pathways ecosystem with employer needs is challenging. As employer engagement is at the core of effective career pathways, it is important for providers and workforce development officials to continuously convey the value that these programs bring to employers. There is particular opportunity to make this case and expand employer engagement now, with the current tight labor market in the city and across the nation resulting in record numbers of unfilled job openings and employers reporting difficulty in finding qualified workers.

Priority Recommendations

1. Direct resources to help programs collect, monitor, and share information.
2. Identify and fund an existing entity to serve as a career pathways clearinghouse and facilitate warm handoffs between programs.
3. Implement a communications campaign highlighting the economic benefits of career pathways and workforce development for employers.
1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Connecting individuals to economic opportunity is a top priority in Philadelphia, a city where more than one-quarter of residents live in poverty, labor force participation is particularly low, and many employers are struggling to fill open positions. Effective workforce development in the city is critical to both lifting individuals out of poverty and driving economic growth.

Today, major initiatives are underway in Philadelphia to align and scale workforce development, with an emphasis on advancing career pathways—a sector-based workforce model that relies on employer input to articulate routes to well-paying jobs and provide support and guidance to individuals moving along the path (see sidebar for more detail on the career pathways approach). The City of Philadelphia is preparing a citywide workforce strategy to fully maximize the levers of city government in preparing residents for successful careers. And a collaborative of philanthropic and nonprofit organizations is driving the Generation Work initiative, aiming to significantly expand the number of city residents participating in and successfully completing workforce training with a career pathways focus.

Developing effective strategies to support and strengthen career pathways in Philadelphia requires an understanding of the extent to which programs across the city have adopted the career pathways approach, how they are operationalizing the model, and how effective they are at helping individuals advance into family-sustaining employment. To this end, Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN)—on behalf of the Philadelphia Generation Work Initiative, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation—engaged the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia to conduct an assessment of career pathways activity in Philadelphia. The results of this assessment, summarized in this report, will inform both the Generation Work initiative and the City of Philadelphia’s workforce strategy.

WHAT ARE CAREER PATHWAYS?

Career pathways are a type of sector-based workforce strategy. Sector-based workforce strategies organize the training of workers in the context of a specific industry and tailor efforts to the regional economy.

Career pathways clearly articulate routes to well-paying jobs and provide support and guidance to individuals moving along the path. Individuals gain specific skill sets and achieve progressive levels of education and credentials that lead to a better job. Well-designed pathways are flexible, with multiple entry and exit points to meet the needs of individuals with different skill levels, career goals, and changing family or other personal responsibilities.

The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) summarizes career pathways programs as those that provide clear education, training, credentials, and support services; multiple entry points; and multiple exit points.\(^1\)

Employer engagement and leadership is a core component of career pathways and other sector-based strategies. Employers lead the “mapping” of career pathways illustrating how workers typically advance from position to position and the education and training needed to make those transitions. They work with education and training providers to develop appropriate curricula for courses and credentials. To ensure continued employer engagement, partnerships must have tangible value for employers such as building a better talent pipeline or providing improved training resources for their existing workforce. In the most successful examples of these partnerships employers invest money and other resources, making public investments go further.

Philadelphia Career Pathways Assessment

Drawing on findings from interviews with a wide range of stakeholders and a comprehensive self-assessment survey completed by programs throughout the city, this report presents a snapshot of current programs in Philadelphia, who they serve, what kinds of education and training they provide, how programs work with employers, and other key characteristics of these programs. While this analysis does not represent an exhaustive accounting of all workforce training programs or career pathways work in the city, it does establish a foundation for understanding career pathways activity in Philadelphia and provides insight into key opportunities and gaps within workforce development activity in the city.

Methodology

The analysis conducted as part of this project draws on two primary research instruments: interviews with key stakeholders and an online self-assessment survey of workforce training programs in Philadelphia. The Economy League interviewed 25 individuals across 18 organizations to gain insight into the current career pathways ecosystem in Philadelphia (see Appendix A for a list of interviewees.) Working with PYN staff and a small steering committee, a diverse cross-section of individuals was identified for interviews, representing program staff from a range of workforce training programs, workforce experts, education and government officials, and employers. Economy League staff proceeded to invite these individuals to participate in interviews lasting approximately one hour. The wide range of interviews provided ample opportunity to learn about strengths, gaps, and opportunities in the career pathways ecosystem, and to identify cross-cutting themes among interview participants. Key themes that emerged from these interviews are summarized in this report.

In addition to the broad perspective gathered through stakeholder interviews, the Economy League collected detailed information about workforce training programs in Philadelphia through the development and distribution of an online provider self-assessment survey. The scope and structure of the survey was informed by the experience of researchers at Northern Illinois University (NIU), who conducted a similar survey of programs in the Chicago metro area in 2016. The NIU survey, a key part of its report “Landscape Scan of Progressive Pathways in the Chicago Region,” served as a foundation for the survey conducted as part of this project. The Economy League refined questions based on lessons shared by the NIU research team and feedback from project steering committee members, and added a range of additional questions to capture information on career pathways programs in Philadelphia.

The self-assessment survey was distributed to more than 200 organizations in Philadelphia that offer a wide range of workforce-related programming. The Economy League identified this recipient group in conjunction with PYN staff and members of the project steering committee. The survey was intentionally distributed to a broad cohort of workforce providers of varying size, focus, and capacity. It was understood that not all programs receiving the survey would satisfy the full extent of “career pathways programs” as defined by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)—programs providing clear education, training, credentials, and support services; multiple entry points; and multiple exit points—but that the survey would serve as a tool for assessing the extent to which programs align with the career pathways approach. And while the results of the survey provide a rich base of information on workforce training programs, it is important to note that information gathered through the survey is self-reported by providers and was not independently verified. As such, this study does not control for the possibility of inaccuracies or errors in the data.
2. SUMMARY ANALYSIS

Top-Line Findings on Survey Respondents

Thirty-five programs representing 25 organizations responded to the self-assessment survey, which was open for four weeks in June and July of 2017 (see Appendix B for a list of survey respondents.) Below is a top-line summary of populations served by responding programs and a few general program characteristics.

ENROLLMENT

In 2016, nearly 6,000 participants were enrolled in the 23 responding programs that provided participant data. Two outliers accounted for more than half of this figure, and the remaining participants were enrolled across a range of programs with varying structures and services. Across all programs, men accounted for nearly 60% of participants. Black or African American participants were the most-represented racial group, accounting for 63% of all program participants.

TARGET POPULATIONS

Responding programs serve a wide variety of target populations. The two most-served populations are high school graduates (16 of 35 respondents, or 46%) and high school students (14 of 35 respondents, or 40%). More than a quarter of responding programs serve individuals who are pregnant or parenting, foster youth, justice-involved individuals, and out-of-school youth who do not have a high school diploma. Other populations noted by respondents include unemployed and underemployed persons; welfare-to-work participants; and out-of-school or out-of-work youth with a high school diploma or equivalent. Just 10 of 35 programs (29%) identified out-of-school youth with no high school diploma as a target population—a surprisingly low share.
AGE FOCUS
Thirty programs provided information on the age ranges of their participants. The primary target age for respondent programs is ages 19-24, with 67% of respondents (20 of 30) serving individuals in this age bracket. Fifteen programs (50%) provide services to younger participants, while 7 programs (23%) serve individuals between the ages of 25 and 29. Several programs serve multiple age brackets. Responses to this question underscore the wide range of age parameters that programs use, as 15 programs selected “other.” Several programs used this space to describe a more specific age bracket, such as 17-24 or 18-20, while six noted that they serve all adults regardless of age.

PROGRAM LANGUAGES
All 35 programs are offered in English, while only 3 are offered in Spanish. Two or fewer programs offer services in Vietnamese, Russian, or Mandarin.

PROGRAM COSTS
Nearly all responding programs (28 of 29) do not charge participants for their services. 19 of 31 programs (61%) say they provide a stipend to participants.

GEOGRAPHY
Twenty-one of the 35 responding programs (63%) are located in Center City Philadelphia, although some of those have satellite programs in other neighborhoods. Other locations of responding programs include North Philadelphia (7), Northeast Philadelphia (3), South Philadelphia (2), West Philadelphia (1), and Northwest Philadelphia (1).
Assessing Career Pathways Fidelity

Information collected via the self-assessment survey and stakeholder interviews revealed wide variation among programs in focus, capacity, and alignment with the career pathways approach. To better understand the extent to which programs align with the career pathways model, the Economy League worked with members of the project steering committee to identify a discrete set of survey questions to serve as criteria for gauging the fidelity of a program to the career pathways model. These questions are presented below.

ASSESSING PROGRAM ALIGNMENT WITH THE CAREER PATHWAYS MODEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sector focus</td>
<td>Does your program have a sector focus? (i.e. healthcare, information technology, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational focus</td>
<td>Does your program have an occupational focus? (i.e. nursing, software development, industrial maintenance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapping of career pathways</td>
<td>Do you map out specific career pathways within these sectors? (i.e. how an individual advances in a given sector - what the occupations are, what they need to do to move up the ladder, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry-recognized credentials</td>
<td>Does your program grant industry-recognized credentials?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners with employers</td>
<td>Does your program include partnerships with employers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works with partners, employers to develop curriculum</td>
<td>Do you work with any partner organizations or employers to develop the curriculum?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides ongoing post-program services</td>
<td>Does your program provide any ongoing services or support after a participant completes your program and/or is hired?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works with partners, employers for post-program services</td>
<td>Do you collaborate with employers and partners to support participants’ transitions along a career pathway over time?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Economy League analyzed responses to these eight questions and grouped programs by the number of affirmative responses they provided. Fourteen programs answered yes to 6-8 questions; eight programs answered yes to 3-5 questions, and 13 programs answered yes to 0-2 questions. These responses served as a basis for grouping programs, with **Group 1** including programs that met 0-2 criteria, **Group 2** including programs that met 3-5 criteria, and **Group 3** including programs that met 6-8 criteria.

This rubric is not perfect—there are some variations between programs in each group—but on the whole, these groups provide a useful frame for understanding the extent to which responding programs align with the career pathways model, and maintain large enough sample sizes for meaningful comparisons.
Key Findings by Group

Viewing programs through this framework of career pathways fidelity reveals a varied landscape of providers that differ substantially in terms of who they serve, the services they provide, the outcomes they work toward, and how they engage with employers and other partners. This differentiation is evident starting with the first survey question asking programs how they classify themselves. In aggregate, most programs surveyed use multiple classifications, with work exposure/experience the most prevalent. However, Group 3 programs were much more likely to select multiple program types—such as bridge program, vocational training, and career and technical education—than programs in Group 1 and Group 2, which often selected just one program type description. This is an early indication of the more comprehensive approach that Group 3 programs take.

Deeper analysis of survey results reveals additional distinctions between groups, and a full accounting of notable comparisons is presented in Chapter 3. This chapter summarizes key characteristics of each group as context for understanding the full survey results and insights into the career pathways ecosystem discussed in subsequent chapters.

GROUP 3: HIGH-FIDELITY CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>2016 Enrollment</th>
<th>2016 Completion</th>
<th>Key Characteristics</th>
<th>Challenges/Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 14       | 840*            | 598*            | • Clearly defined sector focus  
• Active career pathways mapping  
• Robust employer partnerships  
• Multiple eligibility requirements  
• Skew toward older populations (19-24)  
• Emphasis on skill measurement | • Capacity constraints  
• Gaps in alignment with industry credentials  
• Gaps in engaging employers for post-program supports  
• Limited use of flexible delivery options, like evening programming  
• Varied outcomes in terms of completion and employment |

*10 of 14 programs provided data on enrollment and completion

The fourteen programs in Group 3 (meeting 6-8 criteria) are generally those that adhere most to the career pathways model, and in several cases meet the full extent of the CLASP definition—they provide clear education, training, credentials, and support services; multiple entry points; and multiple exit points. The majority of programs in this group
say they map career pathways, and several shared detailed infographics that they have developed to articulate specific pathways.

The ten programs in this group that provided enrollment data served 840 participants in 2016—the smallest number of participants among the three groups, but with a more balanced share of men (52%) and women (48%) than in other groups where men were slightly more represented. Programs in Group 3 also report serving a higher share of black or African American participants (75%) and Hispanic participants (16%) than programs in the other groups. In general, these programs are very competitive, with many more applicants than available seats. Most programs noted that they are at capacity given current funding levels, creating an additional barrier to entry for individuals coming into the career pathways ecosystem. 598 participants completed programs in 2016 and 349 participants were employed following program completion.

On the whole, these are robust, multifaceted programs. Each has a sector focus, including healthcare, IT, construction and infrastructure, and early childhood education, among others. Most also have an occupational focus, identifying discrete occupations—such as certified nurse aide, patient services representative, HVAC technician, or IT help desk support specialist—for which they prepare participants within those sectors.

In a notable departure from programs in Groups 1 and 2, all Group 3 programs measure skill development, utilizing pre- and post-program tests, digital badging, and regular performance evaluations. Most programs also grant industry-recognized credentials. This is not, however, a universal feature among programs, and the specific credentials identified by respondents in this group range from technical credentials in IT and nursing to foundational certifications like ServSafe.

Programs in this group tend to engage employers on multiple fronts. All say they partner with employers and provide some support for participants after program completion. There are some gaps among programs, however, in working with employers to develop curricula and in working directly with employers to support participants’ transitions along a career pathway over time.

While Group 3 programs offer the most robust suite of services to participants and engage employers most intensively, they also tend to have more eligibility requirements than programs in the other groups. Most programs in Group 3 (10 of 14) require a high-school diploma or equivalent, and thereby tend to target young adults (19–24) over late adolescents (14–18). Furthermore, nearly half of Group 3 programs do not provide any flexible delivery options, such as evening or weekend programming, while completion and employment outcomes vary widely by program.

GROUP 2: ROBUST TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>2016 Enrollment</th>
<th>Key Characteristics</th>
<th>Challenges/Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 8        | 3,328*          | • Wide variation in program type and focus  
• Sector focus is prevalent  
• Mixed focus on occupations and career pathways mapping  
• No industry-recognized credentials  
• Limited employer partnerships | • Programs in this group serve the most participants; several are high-capacity  
• Range of program types creates challenges for developing overarching strategies |

*7 of 8 programs provided data on enrollment. Only 3 programs provided completion data, which has been omitted due to small sample size.

2 Some programs noted overlap between these two age groups, but few serve the full range of 14–24 year olds.
The eight programs in Group 2 (meeting 3-5 criteria) partially align with the career pathways model. Most of these programs have a sector focus, but several do not target specific occupations or map out career pathways.

Group 2 programs had the largest number of participants; among the 7 of 8 programs that provided data, 3,328 participants were enrolled in 2016. Philadelphia Academies accounted for an outsized share of that figure (2,022) participants, but the group otherwise contains a number of large-scale programs. Among all programs that provided employment data, programs with some of the highest number of participants employed after program completion included Group 2 programs such as Orleans Technical College (138) and Community Learning Center (106).

On the whole, programs in Group 2 partner with employers in some form, though not as extensively as programs in Group 3. Fewer programs in this group work with employers and partners around curriculum, and fewer engage with employers to support participants’ transitions along a career pathway over time. None of the programs in this group responded that they grant industry-recognized credentials.  

Further articulation of trends within this group is challenging as there is a wide variation in responses among a relatively small sample size (8 programs). Several programs appear to provide robust training and education services, but because of gaps in support services or limited employer partnerships they do not quite meet the threshold for Group 3. That they are so close to meeting the Group 3 threshold suggests that there may be opportunities to help these programs develop into true, high-fidelity career pathways programs.

**GROUP 1: GATEWAY PROGRAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programs</th>
<th>2016 Enrollment</th>
<th>2016 Completion</th>
<th>Key Characteristics</th>
<th>Challenges/Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 13       | 1,808*          | 1,718*          | • General career exposure and soft skills training  
• Serve as entry points, particularly for younger participants  
• Little sector or occupational focus  
• Limited employer partnerships  
• Wide range of target outcomes  
• Few eligibility requirements | • Room to strengthen connections with other programs  
• Opportunities to engage younger participants in the workforce system  
• Extra capacity, room to grow |

*6 of 13 programs provided data on enrollment and completion

The thirteen programs in Group 1 (meeting 0-2 criteria) tend to focus primarily on career exposure and general soft skills and do not meet most of the career pathways criteria. Group 1 programs enrolled 1,808 participants in 2016. Career Wardrobe accounted for nearly two-thirds of this figure, but several other programs enrolled more than 100 participants.

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3 Insufficient data was provided to detail enrollment by gender and race.
4 Survey responses from Orleans Technical College and Philadelphia Academies indicate that neither program grants industry-recognized credentials, though publicly available information on both programs appears to indicate otherwise. Such discrepancies highlight the challenges inherent to self-reported data.
Most of these programs have neither a sector nor occupational focus, and do not map career pathways. Only one grants an industry-recognized credential. Compared with programs in other groups, fewer Group 1 programs partner with employers, and advising is more limited. These programs also have a broader range of target outcomes, with no single outcome selected by more than two programs.

While these programs do not adhere closely to the career pathways model, they play an important role in introducing individuals into the workforce development ecosystem. These programs tend to focus on younger participants, with most programs noting that they target high school students and participants aged 14-18. Few programs have eligibility requirements beyond a particular age cohort, in contrast to programs in other groups, which tend to be more restrictive.

The lower eligibility thresholds of programs in this group underscore their potential to serve as gateways into the workforce system, although some foundational programs like ESL or GED programs report difficulty in recruiting participants, in part because they do not offer concrete jobs for participants at the end of that program. Developing stronger connections between these programs and higher-fidelity career pathways programs in Group 2 or Group 3 would allow these programs to effectively serve as feeders into the career pathways system without becoming career pathways programs themselves. And there appears to be opportunity to scale up within this group, as several Group 1 programs report excess capacity under current funding levels.
3. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

Of the 35 programs that responded, 30 respondents completed all sections of the survey prior to the participant data sections at the end of the survey, and 23 respondents provided participant data. The following summary provides aggregate results from all respondents, as well as relevant comparisons between the three program groups described in Chapter 2.

2016 Participant Data

### Key Findings

- In 2016, nearly 6,000 participants were enrolled across responding programs, although two outliers accounted for more than half of this figure. Group 3 programs enrolled 840 participants.
- Men accounted for nearly 60% of participants, but this figure dropped to 52% among Group 3 programs.
- Black or African American participants were the most-represented racial group, accounting for 63% of all program participants and 75% of Group 3 program participants.
- More than 2,600 participants completed programs in 2016, with one outlier accounting for half of this figure.
- Nearly 400 participants served in an internship in 2016, but far fewer programs provided internship data than enrollment data. Group 3 programs accounted for 119 participants.
- In 2016, 625 participants were employed following program completion. Four programs accounted for three-quarters of this figure, and Group 3 programs accounted for 349 participants.

### ENROLLMENT

In 2016, 5,976 participants were enrolled in 23 programs (12 of the 35 responding programs did not provide enrollment data). Enrollment at Philadelphia Academies (2,022) and Career Wardrobe (1,285) accounted for more than half of this figure. Removing those two outliers, enrollment totaled 2,669 participants ranging from 15 to 450 participants per program (with a median of 76.)

Group 2 programs had the largest number of participants; among the 7 of 8 programs that provided data, 3,328 participants (including Philadelphia Academies) were enrolled in 2016. Although less than half of Group 1 programs provided enrollment data, this group still had the second largest enrollment of the three groups with 1,808 participants.

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5 Respondents were allowed to skip individual questions, so the sample size differs slightly by question. For clarity, we have noted sample sizes for each question discussed in this summary.
Philadelphia Career Pathways Assessment

(including Career Wardrobe). Group 3 programs, in contrast, enrolled 840 participants in 2016, with 10 of 14 programs providing enrollment data.

Across all programs, 16 programs serving 1,988 participants reported enrollment by gender (neither Career Wardrobe or Philadelphia Academies provided data by gender or race.) 59% of these participants were men; 41% were women. 17 programs serving 2,035 participants reported enrollment by race. 63% of these participants were black or African American; 13% were white; 12% were Hispanic; 5% were Asian; and 8% were another race or ethnicity.

Gender and racial demographics at Group 3 programs differ slightly from the overall figures. Among the 9 of 14 Group 3 programs providing this detailed data, 52% of participants were men and 48% were women. The shares of black or African American participants (75%) and Hispanic participants (16%) were higher than the overall rate, together accounting for 91% of participants in responding Group 3 programs.

COMPLETION

20 programs reported the number of participants who completed their program in 2016, totaling 2,655 participants. Career Wardrobe accounts for nearly half of this figure, as the short-term format of its services means that all enrolled participants also complete (Philadelphia Academies did not report a completion figure.) Removing this outlier, the number of participants completing the remaining programs totaled 1,370, ranging from 8 to 245 participants per program (with a median of 50.) Among 10 of 14 responding Group 3 programs, 598 participants completed programs in 2016.

16 programs serving 1,075 participants reported completion by gender. 61% of these participants were men; 39% were women. 14 programs serving 1,011 participants reported completion by race. 61% of these participants were black or African American; 13% were white; 12% were Hispanic; 6% were Asian; and 8% were another race or ethnicity.

Among 9 of 13 responding Group 3 programs, 55% of participants who completed programs were men and 45% were women. Black or African American participants and Hispanic participants still accounted for 91% of all participants, with 72% black or African American and 19% Hispanic.

INTERNSHIPS

13 programs reported the number of participants who served in an internship in 2016, totaling 393 participants. The largest intern cohorts were through Philadelphia Academies (102), Sunrise of Philadelphia (100), Year Up (61), and Tech Impact (32). The median number of participants in internships at responding programs was 14. Only six Group 3 programs provided internships data, with a combined 119 participants serving in internships.

12 programs serving 296 participants reported internship data by gender. 57% of participants were men; 43% were women. 12 programs serving 296 participants reported internship data by race. 63% of these participants were black or African American; 14% were white; 11% were Hispanic; 9% were Asian; and 3% were another race or ethnicity.

EMPLOYMENT

13 programs reported the number of participants who were employed following program completion, with 625 participants employed following program completion. Orleans Technical College (138), YouthBuild Philadelphia (132), Community Learning Center (106), and West Philadelphia Skills Initiative (69) accounted for 72% of all employed

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6 Group 3 is the only group where sufficient programs provided detailed gender and racial demographic data to discuss meaningfully.
7 With the smaller sample size of Group 3 programs and participants for internships and employment, we decided not to report the gender and racial breakdowns, although they were similar to other metrics.
participants. 10 of 14 Group 3 programs provided employment data, with 349 participants employed following program completion.

9 programs serving 227 participants reported employment data by gender. 41% of these participants were men; 59% were women (notably, the gender shares are the reverse of enrollment metrics, but the sample size of responding programs was relatively small.) 8 programs serving 199 participants reported employment data by race. 79% of these participants were black or African American; 8% were white; 8% were Hispanic; 2% were Asian; and 4% were another race or ethnicity.
Program Overview

Key Findings

- Three-quarters of programs selected “work exposure and experience” as a descriptor of their program. While many Group 1 programs self-identified with just one descriptor, nearly all Group 3 programs selected multiple descriptors, such as bridge program, adult education, or career and technical education.

- Most programs (21 of 35) are located in Center City and only 3 programs are offered in a language other than English.

- Programs serve participants across age ranges, but generally Group 1 programs are more likely to target younger participants aged 14-18, while Group 3 programs are more likely to target participants aged 19-24.

- Among responding Group 3 programs, nearly two-thirds said that they target high school graduates (or equivalent), but the remaining Group 3 programs all noted that they target out of school youth with no diploma.

- The number of eligibility restrictions tends to increase by group. Group 1 programs tend to primarily only restrict participants based on age, whereas Group 3 programs tend to have additional eligibility criteria.

- Word of mouth is a particularly important recruitment tool for programs and several also noted their reliance on referral partners.

- Several programs cite barriers like digital literacy and low reading and math proficiency as recruitment barriers.

PROGRAM TYPES

Most programs surveyed use multiple classifications to describe themselves. The most prevalent type was work exposure/experience (26 of 35 respondents, or 74%), followed by bridge program (15, or 43%), and career and technical education (13, or 37%). The fact that 13 programs self-identified as career and technical education is notable, as none of the responding programs are formal CTE programs within the School District of Philadelphia.

7 respondents selected “other” and provided descriptions including “post-secondary preparatory;” “school-to-work transition for students who receive special education services;” “services exposing teens to different work experiences and programs that cater to post-secondary success;” and “workforce development intermediary.”
While work exposure/experience was the predominant program type selected among all three groups, there were clear differences between the groups. Group 3 programs were much more likely to select multiple program types, with just one of the 14 programs selecting a single program type. In contrast, 7 of 13 Group 1 programs selected a single program type, with work exposure/experience the most prevalent.

**PROGRAM LANGUAGES**

All 35 programs are offered in English, while only 3 are offered in Spanish. Two or fewer programs offer services in Vietnamese, Russian, or Mandarin.

**AGE FOCUS**

30 programs provided information on the age ranges of their participants. The primary target age for respondent programs is ages 19-24, with 67% of respondents (20 of 30) serving individuals in this age bracket. 15 programs (50%) provide services to younger participants, while 7 programs (23%) serve individuals between the ages of 25 and 29 (with just one serving these older adults exclusively.) Several programs serve multiple age brackets. Responses to this question underscore the wide range of age parameters that programs use, as 15 programs selected “other.” Several programs used this space to describe a more specific age bracket, such as 17-24 or 18-20, while six noted that they serve all adults regardless of age.

The 19-24 year-old demographic is served by a significantly higher share of Group 3 programs compared with other groups. Ten Group 3 programs (83%) serve this age range, while only about half of Group 1 and Group 2 programs serve this age range. Group 1 programs are much more focused on the 14-18 year-old cohort, with 9 programs (75%) serving these younger participants, compared with just 2 (17%) of Group 3 programs.

**TARGET POPULATIONS**

Programs serve a wide variety of target populations. The two populations served by most programs are high school graduates (16 of 35 respondents, or 46%) and high school students (14 of 35 respondents, or 40%). More than a quarter of responding programs serve individuals who are pregnant or parenting, foster youth, justice-involved individuals, and out-of-school youth who do not have a high school diploma. Other populations noted by respondents include unemployed and underemployed persons; welfare-to-work participants; and out-of-school or out-of-work youth with a high school diploma or equivalent.

In keeping with the target age range findings, high school students are a predominant target population for Group 1 programs, with 10 programs (77%) selecting this population. In Group 2, four programs (50%) target this population, but no Group 3 programs selected high school students as a target population. Furthermore, Group 3 has a notable concentration...
of programs that selected high school graduates (or equivalent) as a target population, with 9 programs (64%). This rate is nearly double that in the other two groups.

The number of overall programs that selected out of school youth with no high school diploma as a target population was low compared with other selections, with 10 (29%) of all 35 programs selecting this population. Group 3 accounted for six of these programs, with one in Group 2 and three in Group 1.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

86% of respondents (25 of 29) have specific age requirements for their programs, and several use other eligibility criteria as well. After age, the second-most prevalent requirement used by responding programs is residency in a specific place (15 programs, or 52%), with the most common residency requirement calling for participants to live anywhere in the city of Philadelphia, not a specific neighborhood. 13 programs (45%) have requirements related to citizenship or documentation status, while 11 programs require a high school diploma or equivalent.

Generally, Group 1 programs have very few eligibility requirements: 6 of 7 responding programs (86%) have some form of age restrictions, but no other eligibility restriction received more than one response. In contrast, requirements generally increase through the other groups. In Group 2, some criteria such as documentation status and residency were selected more often, and in Group 3 the most notable requirement is a high school diploma or equivalent. 10 of 14 Group 3 programs (71%) require a high school diploma or equivalent, whereas only one program out of 15 in Groups 1 and 2 selected this eligibility requirement.

**RECRUITMENT**

Programs use a variety of recruitment tools and partners. Many noted the importance of word of mouth, particularly from former program participants and particularly for programs that are well-established. Social media (particularly Facebook) was noted by several respondents, as well as advertising in Metro and with SEPTA.

Several noted the importance of referring partners, with the following organizations noted as effective referring partners: YouthBuild, Kensington Health Sciences Academy, Achieving Independence Center (AIC), Youth Violence Reduction Partnership (YVRP), and the Office of Reintegration Services (RISE), City of Philadelphia Office of Adult Education.

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8 There was a question on the survey asking respondents to select all recruitment tools that apply, but an error was made so that the survey only accepted one answer. As a result, we have only reported on the qualitative answers provided in subsequent questions, which still provide a snapshot of how programs recruit participants.
Some of the notable barriers to recruitment described by respondents include lack of digital literacy skills; low reading and math proficiency; reaching potential students in geographically distant parts of the city (e.g., the Far Northeast); ensuring that recruitment partners are messaging the program accurately; and brand awareness for relatively new programs.

PROGRAM COSTS

28 of 29 programs do not charge participants for their services. 19 of 31 programs (61%) responded that they provide a stipend to participants. Group 3 has the highest share of programs providing a stipend, with 11 of 14 (79%) programs providing a stipend.

GEOGRAPHY

21 of the 35 responding (63%) programs are located in Center City, although some of those have satellite programs in other neighborhoods. Other locations of responding programs include North Philadelphia (7), Northeast Philadelphia (3), South Philadelphia (2), West Philadelphia (1), and Northwest Philadelphia (1).
Sector Focus and Curriculum

Key Findings

- Two-thirds of responding programs focus on at least one employment sector, with healthcare, IT, and construction the most prevalent sectors. Much of this activity is concentrated in Group 3 programs, in which all 14 programs say they have a sector focus.

- Of the programs with a sector focus, two-thirds also have an occupational focus and most say that they map out career pathways. These programs are particularly concentrated in Group 3.

- Only half of all responding programs work with employers or other partners in developing curricula. However, the share is significantly higher among Group 3 programs, at 71%.

- The use of flexible program delivery options is relatively limited. The most common tool—online programming—was used by 41% of programs, the same share that selected “none.”

- Evening, weekend and part-time programming is not particularly common, and Group 3 programs were actually less likely to utilize these options than other groups.

SECTOR FOCUS

Of the 33 programs that responded, 22 programs (67%) focus on at least one employment sector. Healthcare is the most-represented sector (12 programs), followed by Information Technology (7) and Construction (7). In addition to other sectors such as Retail & Hospitality and Early Childhood Education, respondents also identified a handful of other focus areas, including the broader STEM field and sustainability fields like horticulture and green infrastructure. The most prevalent ways that programs identify target sectors are through organizational expertise (15), local employer input (14), and labor market information (13).

Sector focus was a significant determinant of the groups. In Group 1, 2 of 11 (18%) programs stated that they have sector focus, compared with 6 of 8 (75%) Group 2 programs and all 14 (100%) of Group 3 programs.

OCCUPATIONAL FOCUS

14 of 20 responding programs (70%) also have an occupational focus. Specific occupations mentioned were medical records administrators, patient services representatives, solar installers and
marketers, green stormwater infrastructure technicians, HVAC technicians, carpenters, IT help desk support specialists, home health aide, certified nurse aide, child development associate, construction laborer, and customer service representative. The trend between groups closely follows the sector focus patterns.

CAREER PATHWAYS MAPPING

19 of 22 respondents said they map out specific career pathways for participants. Six of these programs attached documents to the survey outlining those pathways. Three respondents said they do not map out specific career pathways for participants. Like sector focus and occupational focus, career mapping is particularly concentrated among Group 3 programs, with all 14 stating they map career pathways.

CURRICULUM DESIGN AND DELIVERY

16 of 32 respondents work with partner organizations or employers in designing program curriculum. As this was another key determinant for the groups, the share of responses increases from Group 1 up through Group 3. In Group 1, 3 of 11 programs (17%) stated that they work with partner organizations or employers in designing the curriculum, whereas 3 of 7 programs (43%) in Group 2 and 10 of 14 programs (71%) in Group 3 partner around curriculum design.

Online instruction (12) and part-time programming (9) were two of the more common choices selected in response to the survey question about the types of flexible delivery models programs utilize. One of the most prevalent responses to the flexible program delivery question, however, was “none of these,” with 12 responses. Group 3 programs are more likely to incorporate online instruction (7 of 13 programs, or 54%). However, no Group 3 programs include evening programming, and 6 of 13 programs (46%) did not select any flexible programming options. Group 1 programs had the highest share of part-time programming, with 5 of 11 programs (45%) providing part-time programming.

SKILL MEASUREMENT

Of 31 respondents, 22 programs (71%) say that they measure skill development of their participants. This includes all 14 Group 3 programs (100%), 5 of 7 Group 2 programs (71%), and 4 of 11 Group 1 programs (36%). Examples given by respondents include: attainment of industry credentials; individual instructor assessment; job placement as a measure of skill development; supervisor surveys; digital badging; rubrics blending self-assessment and staff assessment; pre-program tests compared with post-program tests; and regular performance evaluations.
Credentials and Work-Based Learning

Key Findings

➢ More than 60% of programs provide some opportunity for participants to address remedial education needs, with a slightly higher concentration among group 3 programs.

➢ Only one-third of programs grant industry-recognized credentials, with most of these programs concentrated in Group 3. Furthermore, these credentials vary considerably in occupational focus and depth.

➢ More than 80% of programs say they provide opportunities for participants to pursue additional education or training, but this takes a variety of forms, from formal partnerships to mentoring opportunities as part of the advising process.

➢ Two-thirds of programs provide an internship opportunity, but career exploration activities are the most prevalent work-based learning experience among programs. Group 3 programs have the richest mix of work-based learning experiences.

GENERAL EDUCATION CREDENTIALS

19 of 31 responding programs (61%) provide opportunities for participants to address remedial education needs, whether through partnerships with other programs or in-house delivery of remedial education. Group 3 has the highest share of programs offering some form of remedial education (10 of 14 programs, or 71%) while slightly more than half of programs in Groups 1 and 2 offer such opportunities.

9 programs (30%) grant a high school diploma or recognized equivalent, although few grant any form of formal postsecondary credentials. However, some programs do grant postsecondary credits—Year Up does so through a partnership with Peirce College.

INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

Only 11 of the 30 responding programs offer an industry-recognized credential. Most programs are concentrated in Group 3, in which 9 programs responded that they offer a credential. Two offer a certified nursing assistant credential, while three offer the CompTIA A+ credential. Other credentials offered include the OSHA-10 construction credential, ServSafe, Red Cross babysitting certificate, NTRFoundation Customer Service industry certification, and the NCCER construction credential. A few programs are actively looking at which credentials to offer.

OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE ADDITIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

25 of 31 responding programs (81%) provide participants with opportunities to pursue additional education and training, and approaches for doing so vary. Some leverage informal relationships with local colleges and trade associations. Some larger organizations connect participants to additional programs offered by that organization. For several programs, making participants aware of opportunities for further training or education is done through the advising process. Group 3
accounts for the most programs offering such opportunities (13 of 14 programs, or 93%) but most programs in each of the other groups also responded affirmatively, with 6 of 8 Group 2 programs (75%) and 6 of 9 Group 1 programs (67%).

**WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

Career exploration activities were the most prevalent work-based learning experiences reported by respondents (22 of 31 responding programs, or 71%). These activities include job shadowing, attendance at a career expo, and guest speakers, among others. Internships were the second-most prevalent work-based learning experience (20 programs, or 65%), followed by mentorship (15, or 48%) and permanent job placement (13, or 42%).

Interestingly, while the earlier question regarding program type revealed that nearly all Group 1 programs identified as a work exposure/experience program, for this question only 4 of 9 Group 1 programs marked that they provide a “career exploration activity (job shadow, attendance at a career exposition, employer site visit, etc.)” and this was the most prevalent response for Group 1 programs. The other groups have more variety of work-based learning experiences; Group 3 programs provide the richest mix, with a high prevalence of career exploration, internships, mentorship, and ultimately permanent job placement.
Participant Support and Partnerships

Key Findings

- Two-thirds of programs provide some form of academic advising, ranging from informal conversations to formal meetings with a case manager. A higher share (87%) of programs provide career advising. Some programs do not necessarily view these advising services separately.

- Financial literacy support and transportation assistance are the most common support services, offered by two-thirds of programs. Higher-touch services, such as mentorship and counseling, are found more among Group 3 programs. Only two programs offer childcare support services.

- 71% of programs partner with employers in some fashion, including all Group 3 programs.

- 73% of programs partner with an educational institution or other training program. Predominant partners for Group 3 programs are universities and community colleges, but only half of Group 3 programs have these partners. Partnerships with high schools are most prevalent in Group 1.

- Post-program support is universal at Group 3 programs, and 79% of these programs work with employers or other partners to support participants career pathway transitions. The shares of both metrics decrease in Group 2, and no Group 1 programs provide these supports.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

65% of responding programs (20 of 31) provide some form of advising to participants. 10 programs have academic advising meetings with participants at least once per month, with half of those programs responding that academic advising meetings take place once per week. This advising can take a number of forms, from informal conversations directly with the instructor to formalized meetings with an academic advisor or case manager. Responses follow the typical progression among groups, with 3 of 9 Group 1 programs (33%), 6 of 8 Group 2 programs (75%), and 11 of 14 Group 3 programs (79%).

CAREER ADVISING

A higher share (87%) of responding programs (27 of 31) provide career advising to participants. Career advising covers a wide range of activities, including discussions about career interests and goals, working with a coach to look through job listings, reviewing and editing resumes, applying to jobs, group discussions, and visits to employer sites. Eleven of these programs have career advising meetings with participants at least once per month, although several programs report that this type of advising is more flexible and informal. Again, the share of responses rises among groups, although the shares are notably higher than academic advising rates within all groups. 6 of 9 Group 1 programs (67%), 7 of 8 Group 2 programs (88%), and all 14 Group 3 programs (100%) provide some form of career advising.
INDIVIDUALIZED PARTICIPANT PLANS

22 of 31 programs (71%) said they provide some form of individualized education, career, and/or financial aid plan. Of the 18 respondents who reported on how regularly they update these plans, the most prevalent responses were once per semester (4) and once per quarter (4). The patterns between groups closely resembles the trend revealed by responses to career advising.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The most prevalent support services offered to participants are financial literacy training (22 of 31 responding programs) and transportation assistance (20). These are the leading support services in each of the three groups, but rates rise in each of the groups. While about a third of Group 1 programs offer these supports, they are offered at more than half of Group 2 programs and at nearly all Group 3 programs (93%). A key difference between groups, though, is in the other support services offered. No other support services are offered at Group 1 programs and Group 2 programs have a modest mix of additional services. In Group 3, 12 of 14 programs offer job placement support, and 10 of 14 offer counseling. Interestingly, among all programs, only two offer childcare (both in Group 3).

Most of these support services are provided in-house, with 24 programs responding that they generally provide support services in-house rather than contracting out. Eleven programs said they partner with other organizations to provide select support services, including: Mentor for Philly (support with mentoring, transportation); CORA Services (parenting classes, youth mental health); Philadelphia Federal Credit Union (financial literacy); Turning Points for Children; Philadelphia Lawyers for Social Equity (expungement and legal services); BenePhilly (public benefits access); Career Wardrobe (professional/interview attire); and Covenant House (homelessness). One respondent expressed a need for more drug and alcohol counseling, while another added that they have brought some support services in-house because it can be challenging to align timing and content with other organizations.

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIPS

22 of 31 respondents (71%) indicate that they partner with employers, although the forms of these partnerships vary widely. All 14 Group 3 programs responded that they partner with employers, while 6 of 8 Group 2 programs (75%) and 4 of 9 Group 1 programs (44%) partner with employers.

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

22 of 30 respondents (73%) partner with some other educational or training program. Community colleges are the most prevalent partner (15 programs), followed closely by universities (14). While 7 of 14 Group 3 programs partner with universities or community colleges, only 2 reported partnerships with high schools. Furthermore, 7 of the 14 programs
reported partnerships with other training programs. In contrast, while fewer Group 1 programs partner with higher education, a higher share partner with high schools (5 of 9 programs, or 56%).

**POST-PROGRAM SUPPORT**

71% of programs (22 of 31 respondents) say that they provide some form of ongoing services or support to participants following program completion. Responses varied noticeably between groups, with ongoing services or support provided by 4 of 9 Group 1 programs (44%), 4 of 8 Group 2 programs (50%), and all 14 Group 3 programs. Some continue to provide coaching services, case management, and transportation assistance, and several programs regularly follow up directly with individual students. However, many of these supports only extend 6 months to 1 year beyond program completion. Most supports extending further into the future consist of the program being open as a general resource or the presence of an alumni network.

Less than half of respondents (15) say that they collaborate with employers and other partners to support transitions along the participant’s career pathway over time. Again, this differs by group, with no Group 1 programs responding affirmatively, 4 of 8 Group 2 programs (50%), and 11 of 14 Group 3 programs.
Program Goals and Funding

Key Findings

- Permanent job placement is the most prevalent key outcome cited across programs and was selected by all Group 3 programs. Among Group 1 programs, no outcome was selected by more than two programs, highlighting the range of goals for these programs.

- Foundation and philanthropic funding was the most prevalent funding source among programs, but was almost always accompanied a simultaneous selection of public funding.

- One-third of programs say they are not operating at full capacity, although these are concentrated primarily among Group 1 and Group 2 programs.

OUTCOMES

For most programs (21 of 30 respondents, or 70%) permanent job placement is the key outcome they are concerned with, followed closely by employment retention (17). Beyond those outcomes, a smaller number also focus on helping participants receive a formal diploma, degree, or credential, or land a job interview.

Permanent job placement was a universal outcome among Group 3 programs, with all 14 programs selecting this outcome followed closely by receiving an industry-recognized credential and employment retention. In contrast, among the nine Group 1 programs, no outcome was selected by more than 2 programs.

FUNDING SOURCES AND PROGRAM CAPACITY

Among 31 programs that responded, the most prevalent source of funding was foundations and philanthropy (19) followed by government formula funds (18). However, for nearly all programs, foundation and philanthropy funding was one of multiple selections.

32% of respondents (10 of 31) say they are not currently operating at full capacity. Four of these programs were in Group 1. Among Group 3 programs, only 3 of 14 programs responded that they are not currently at capacity.
4. ECOSYSTEM INSIGHTS

In addition to detailed program-level information, data gathered through the self-assessment survey provides a solid foundation for analysis of trends and opportunities within the broad career pathways ecosystem in Philadelphia. When considered in conjunction with input gathered through Economy League interviews with stakeholders representing training programs, the public sector, education providers, philanthropy, employers, and workforce experts, several key insights into the career pathways ecosystem in Philadelphia emerge.

**Trends and Opportunities**

**PHILADELPHIA CURRENTLY HAS AN INFORMAL CAREER PATHWAYS ECOSYSTEM WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF PROGRAMS, APPROACHES, AND CHALLENGES.**

Analysis of self-assessment data and interview input reveals the broad diversity in focus, capacity, and outcomes that exists among workforce training programs in Philadelphia. As discussed in Chapter 2, several workforce programs in the city do appear to adhere closely to the career pathways model, satisfying many if not all of the components included in the CLASP definition—they provide clear education, training, credentials, and support services; multiple entry points; and multiple exit points.

However, analysis suggests that these high-fidelity programs are not the only drivers of career pathways in Philadelphia. Programs that on their own may not demonstrate high fidelity to the career pathways model have developed bilateral partnerships with other programs, educational institutions, and employers that in effect create multi-stop career pathways training for individuals.

Wide variation in approach and focus compels programs to take an *ad hoc* approach to forming partnerships with one another. For example, many programs call themselves employer-driven, but different programs use this term to mean many different things. For some, it means relying on industry advisory boards to guide curriculum development and identify credentials to offer. Others go a step further and integrate HR managers from employer partners into the training program, while several programs are demand-driven and have actual jobs for participants waiting at the end of program.

What is more, programs differ substantially in capacity to focus on specific sectors and to understand what career pathways actually look like.

This lack of alignment limits the potential for systemic connections between programs, which could make it easier for more participants to easily and seamlessly transition between programs. Pursuing strategies not only to help individual programs better align with the career pathways model but also develop and strengthen connections between programs could expand the reach of the career pathways ecosystem in Philadelphia.

**MORE COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CAREER PATHWAYS ECOSYSTEM WOULD HELP STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PROGRAMS.**

Several interviewees representing training programs noted that while they maintain individual partnerships with other training programs (as well as educational institutions and employers), program staff often lack visibility into the full spectrum of programs and offerings within the career pathways ecosystem. This lack of information at the provider level limits the potential for programs to work in concert to move individuals into family-sustaining career pathways.
Limited understanding of the full spectrum of programs and offerings within the career pathways ecosystem creates challenges on several fronts. Many high-fidelity career pathways programs indicate that they often receive applications from many more individuals than they can accept. While some programs are equipped to refer individuals to other programs, incomplete knowledge about what other programs offer, who they serve, and how and when they offer services limits their ability to make effective referrals.

More comprehensive information on what the ecosystem offers would also help programs direct their participants to opportunities for further advancement following program completion. As it stands, many post-completion referrals rely on ad hoc relationships between specific programs rather than a strategic review of relevant opportunities for specific individuals.

Several providers noted that they would benefit from a comprehensive database with detailed information on programs, while others advocated for more intentional links between programs beyond a database. For example, creating more opportunities for dual enrollment or co-enrollment, rather than relying on a referral system, was cited as a way to strengthen connections between programs and improve outcomes. Creating more “warm handoffs” between programs will help ensure that individuals continue to progress through the career pathways ecosystem. And more structured opportunities for relationship-building—such as the practitioner learning community envisioned by PYN and JOIN—can be leveraged to help programs gain a broader understanding of the full career pathways ecosystem and partner with a wider range of organizations.

Stakeholders acknowledge that any effort to develop more comprehensive information on the breadth and depth of the ecosystem would be no small task. Many raised funding to support this activity as a primary barrier, noting that securing funding for systems building and capacity is even more difficult than raising resources for direct service. Some articulated concern that without adequate, dedicated resources, systems work could force a program to divert focus from critical education and training service delivery. Others pointed to the challenge of identifying who would bear the responsibility of managing collection and maintenance of system-wide information that is of sufficient detail to be useful.

**THERE IS WIDE VARIATION IN PROGRAM CAPACITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND MAINTENANCE.**

While many providers indicate that they—and participants—would benefit from more comprehensive information on the career pathways ecosystem, many programs simply do not have the capacity or knowledge necessary to collect and maintain data on their own participants, services, and outcomes. Several interviewees raised funding constraints as a major obstacle to detailed data collection on participants; some noted that the level of tracking currently required by funders already has the downstream effect of diverting time from the mission.

Pursuing measurement beyond just job placement to retention and advancement would potentially exacerbate capacity constraints, as it would require programs to regularly keep in touch with participants. And many—if not most—programs do not currently have the resources to deeply engage participants after program completion. Some programs have alumni associations and others are currently exploring such associations as a way to bring together graduates for networking and training workshops. Where they exist, alumni groups can present the opportunity to keep in touch with participants and collect information on long-term advancement.

**PROGRAMS FACE SEVERAL FUNDING AND POLICY CHALLENGES, BUT INNOVATIVE MODELS EXIST TO STRENGTHEN CAREER PATHWAYS.**

It will come as no surprise that funding constraints emerged as a theme in both the survey and in stakeholder interviews. WIOA was cited as a constraint by several interviewees, who noted that the rigidity and requirements associated with
these revenue streams can limit flexibility and innovation. With job placement as a primary focus, it can limit the ability of programs to support participants over a longer time period. And while some noted that philanthropic funding has often been the most innovative and flexible funding source, it increasingly comes with strings attached. Often funders don’t appreciate full and true costs for programs and participants, such as covering costs for books or the cost for taking GED exam. In the latter case, limited funding can result in participants preparing for the exam but not being able to cover the cost of taking it.

There are, however, opportunities for innovative uses of public funding. For example, stakeholders cited the possibility of blending funding sources, tapping into multiple WIOA funding streams (e.g. Title II for adult education and Title IV for individuals with disabilities) as well as blending WIOA funding with Perkins funding supporting career and technical education. The fact that WIOA already allows for multiple organizations to receive credit for co-enrolled participants was raised as a tool that could be more widely used to incentivize more robust links between programs.

There are also opportunities to think more broadly about how the career pathways ecosystem prepares individuals. Although the typical career pathways model focuses on one industry, career pathways do not necessarily have to be in the same industry. For example, an individual could participate in a foundational skills program with a connected job in retail or hospitality, and with articulation agreements in place, that individual could then have the requisite on-the-job customer service experience and classroom training to move up the ladder to a customer service position in a different industry like healthcare or business services. Furthermore, several stakeholders highlighted the underutilization of apprenticeships. While formal registered apprenticeships are often more structured and more of a commitment than employers want, there could be opportunities to build out more modern versions of apprenticeships, coupling internship experience with dedicated work-based education and training.

CONVEYING THE VALUE TO EMPLOYERS OF CAREER PATHWAYS PROGRAMS IS ESSENTIAL.

Career pathways are critical to connecting individuals to opportunity, but they also are of important value to employers. In addition to providing the soft skills that employers value—flexibility, teamwork, time management, problem solving, leadership, and communication—programs also provide a critical vetting function for employers. Employers could ostensibly hire more opportunity youth independently, but the robust application process and structured training provided at many programs is valuable to employers. Not only does it save employers time and financial resources in identifying qualified candidates, but a trusted partnership with a training program can create a regular pipeline of new workers over time.

Still, aligning the career pathways ecosystem with employer needs is challenging. A number of stakeholders shared some variation of the following concept: it is critical that efforts to identify career pathways are based on deep industry knowledge and that those career pathways are “real.” In other words, work centered on building career pathways needs to get into the fine details that can define success or failure for participants, such as whether employers provide reimbursement and time off to pursue further training; whether training programs or community college courses can be co-located with easy access for participants; determining the actual internal process for advancement at firms; and creating specific articulation agreements between training programs and higher education.

As employer engagement is at the core of effective career pathways, it is important for providers and workforce development officials to continuously convey the value that these programs bring to employers. There is particular opportunity to make this case and expand employer engagement now, with the current tight labor market in the city and across the nation resulting in record numbers of unfilled job openings and employers reporting difficulty in finding qualified workers.
Recommendations

In light of the trends and opportunities discussed above, the Economy League recommends that stakeholders focus on the following areas to strengthen the career pathways system in Philadelphia.

1. **Direct resources to help programs collect, monitor, and share information.** Developing a more interconnected career pathways ecosystem starts with individual workforce programs and their ability to collect and share information. Many programs are funded to provide direct service, but few have the dedicated financial resources and technical capacity to maintain and widely share detailed information about their programs, such as a long-range schedule of cohort start and end dates; comprehensive information about prerequisites and eligibility requirements; and in-depth details about specific sector/occupational focus and employer relationships. Financial and technical assistance for this type of work will provide the information required to guide individuals through the career pathways ecosystem. Dedicated resources are also critical to achieve buy-in from programs—to see themselves as part of a more interconnected career pathways ecosystem—and to guard against the perception of an unfunded mandate.

2. **Identify and fund an existing entity to serve as a career pathways clearinghouse and facilitate warm handoffs of participants between programs.** Realizing the full value of more and better data at the program level will require an intermediary that takes responsibility for compiling that data into a useable format and deploying it in a way that makes it easy for programs across the ecosystem to access. Such an organization would be well-positioned to serve a strategic advisory role in the workforce development space, identifying opportunities to address emerging system-wide challenges such as limited evening programming or insufficient programs offered in languages other than English. This intermediary could also proactively facilitate formal referrals between programs, coordinate opportunities for co-enrollment, and ultimately help individuals advance along the career pathways continuum. Select existing organizations in Philadelphia—high-capacity providers, workforce intermediaries, or independent civic organizations—could conceivably step into this role; all would require dedicated long-term funding to effectively implement this work in a sustainable fashion.

3. **Implement a communications campaign highlighting the economic benefits of career pathways and workforce development for employers.** The tightening labor market presents an opportunity to engage employers who could be increasingly receptive to alternative recruitment streams to address hiring challenges and to boost diversity in their workforces. Many local employers have direct partnerships with workforce training programs, and there is ample room to grow the number and variety of employers engaged with the workforce development system. Increasing employer engagement will require compelling messaging that elevates the economic value of workforce programs to employers over the value that employers can provide to participants in workforce programs. Fostering a shared understanding among employers about the skills and competencies an individual coming through the Philadelphia career pathways ecosystem brings to the workplace will help bring more employers to the table and over time help cultivate a more coordinated employer voice on workforce issues.

In the near term, there exist several opportunities to move these recommendations forward. Low- to no-cost interventions, such as expanding the number of informal opportunities for providers to interact with each other and build relationships or coaching providers on how to articulate their value to employers, will help move the needle but likely fall short of having a transformative impact on the ecosystem. And leaders understandably may hesitate to make a long-term commitment of time and money to system-level interventions like those recommended here, all of which have great potential to result in positive downstream impact on program performance but do not target individual programs *per se.* A
promising middle-ground solution would be to commit resources to advance these recommendations on a pilot basis as a way of testing and incubating them and building buy-in from workforce providers and other workforce stakeholders. The timing for such a pilot investment is ideal, with the forthcoming rollout of the citywide workforce strategy by the City of Philadelphia placing an emphasis on the need for stronger career pathways infrastructure in the city and better outcomes for participants in the system.

Conclusion

The information gathered through this study establishes a strong foundation for understanding career pathways activity in Philadelphia. It is evident that many elements of a successful career pathways ecosystem are already in place. A broad spectrum of programs serves individuals at many different life stages and situations. Many programs have built individual relationships with employers and other partners and offer a range of work-based learning experiences and support services to prepare individuals for career success. There is opportunity to direct time, energy, and funds both to helping individual programs align more closely with the career pathways model and making it easier for programs to connect to one another.

In addition to direct program support, continued advancement of career pathways work in the city will require a sustained commitment to evaluating the ecosystem. This study presents a static snapshot of the state of the ecosystem during Summer 2017, and is limited in its breadth and depth. Going forward, pursuing strategies to institutionalize information collection and maintenance and establish a regular process for evaluating the ecosystem will enable the development of a more comprehensive and regularly updated database. With better and more complete information on the extent and quality of career pathways activity in Philadelphia, providers, funders, and public sector leaders will be even better equipped to understand and address challenges and opportunities at both the program level and the ecosystem level.
## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa Varon, Executive Director;</td>
<td>PowerCorpsPHL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julia Hillengas, Director, Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Coyle, Executive Director</td>
<td>Year Up Greater Philadelphia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Emerick, Executive Director;</td>
<td>YouthBuild Philadelphia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Imperato, Director of Postsecondary Career Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carolina Cabrera DiGiorgio, President &amp; CEO;</td>
<td>Congreso de Latinos Unidos</td>
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<td>Brendan Conlin, VP, Education &amp; Workforce Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexandrea Robinson-Rogers, Executive Director, College and Career Readiness;</td>
<td>School District of Philadelphia</td>
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<td>Michelle Armstrong, Executive Director, Career and Technical Education</td>
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<td>Sheila Ireland, VP, Workforce Solutions</td>
<td>University City District, West Philadelphia Skills Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barbara Chang, Executive Director</td>
<td>NYC Office of Workforce Development</td>
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<td>Jay Vazquez, President &amp; CEO;</td>
<td>Philadelphia Academies</td>
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<td>Connie Majka, Director of Learning &amp; Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheryl Feldman, Executive Director;</td>
<td>District 1199C Training &amp; Upgrading Fund</td>
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<td>Makeeda Holley, Director of Workforce Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, Director of Upskilling Policy</td>
<td>National Skills Coalition</td>
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<td>Carol de Fries, Vice President, Workforce and Economic Innovation;</td>
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<td>Waverly Coleman, Assistant Vice President, Workforce and Economic Innovation</td>
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<td>Judy Mortrude, Senior Policy Analyst, Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success</td>
<td>CLASP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heloise Jettison, Director, Talent Development</td>
<td>City of Philadelphia, Commerce Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Hollister, VP, Youth and Gateway Programs</td>
<td>JEV5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred Dedrick, President &amp; CEO</td>
<td>National Fund for Workforce Solutions</td>
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<td>Michael Pearson, President</td>
<td>Union Packaging</td>
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<td>Afeefa Murray, Workforce Development Specialist/ Project Coordinator</td>
<td>Wash Cycle Laundry</td>
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<td>Hugh Bailey, COO</td>
<td>Philadelphia Works</td>
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## APPENDIX B: SURVEY RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Program</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Goldring</td>
<td>Executive Operations Officer</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Philadelphia</td>
<td>Junior Staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheri Cole</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Career Wardrobe</td>
<td>Gateway to Success Job Readiness Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameron Virkus</td>
<td>Development Coordinator</td>
<td>Clean Air Council</td>
<td>SolarYouth</td>
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<td>Jeffrey Abramowitz</td>
<td>Director of Student Services &amp; Workforce Development</td>
<td>Community Learning Center</td>
<td>Career Kickoff</td>
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<td>Denise Brunker</td>
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<td>Congreso de Latinos Unidos</td>
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<td>Johanna Morales</td>
<td>E3 Manager</td>
<td>Congreso de Latinos Unidos</td>
<td>E3 Center</td>
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<td>Charles E. Gaus, Jr.</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>De La Salle Vocational</td>
<td>Summer WorkReady</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kristine Kochel</td>
<td>Program Coordinator</td>
<td>District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund</td>
<td>Young Adult Nurse Aide Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nita Jalivay</td>
<td>GED to Health Careers Program Coordinator</td>
<td>District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund</td>
<td>GED to Health Careers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Robbins</td>
<td>Lead Program Coordinator</td>
<td>District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund</td>
<td>STEAM Scholars: New Faces Pipeline for Diversity in Health Professions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah Robbins</td>
<td>Lead Coordinator Youth Programs</td>
<td>District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund</td>
<td>Workready Summer Work Experience and Workready Career Exposure Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christine Caputo</td>
<td>Administrative Librarian</td>
<td>Free Library of Philadelphia</td>
<td>LEAP Out-of-School-Time Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebekah Ray</td>
<td>Administrative Librarian</td>
<td>Free Library of Philadelphia</td>
<td>The Workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>LeQuyen Vu</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Indochinese American Council</td>
<td>Workforce Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth Lacher</td>
<td>Manager, Youth and Gateway Programs</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
<td>Project WOW</td>
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<td>Beth Lacher and Alia Sutton-Bey</td>
<td>Beth (Manager, Youth and Gateway Programs) Alia (Youth Supports Coordinator)</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
<td>Bridge to Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Lynch</td>
<td>Campus President</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
<td>Orleans Technical College</td>
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<td>Edison Freire</td>
<td>Director, Gateway Initiatives</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
<td>TechServ Scholars AmeriCorps Program</td>
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<td>Scott Seiderman</td>
<td>Program Manager, Youth Services</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
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<td>Tara Mullen</td>
<td>Director of Youth Engagement</td>
<td>JEVS Human Services</td>
<td>JEVS E3 Power Center</td>
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<td>Allen Brown</td>
<td>Managing Director of Operations</td>
<td>Marriott Foundation for People with Disabilities</td>
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<td>Shira Woolf Cohen</td>
<td>K-8 Principal, K-12 Dean of School and Community Programs</td>
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<td>Yania Williams</td>
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<td>Jay Vazquez</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julia Hillengas</td>
<td>Manager, Postsecondary Bridging Pilot</td>
<td>Philadelphia Youth Network</td>
<td>College Success/Postsecondary Bridging (PSB)</td>
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<td>Julia Hillengas</td>
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<td>Kasey Thompson</td>
<td>Director of Strategic Initiatives</td>
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<td>Jumpstart, From High School to the World</td>
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<td>Grace Harpole</td>
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<td>Michael Clemmons</td>
<td>Associate Director</td>
<td>Temple University - Center for Social Policy and Community Development</td>
<td>Youth Employment Project</td>
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<td>Christina Roberts</td>
<td>Director of Education</td>
<td>The Fabric Workshop and Museum</td>
<td>High School Apprentice Training Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lisa Miccolis</td>
<td>Founder/Executive Director</td>
<td>The Monkey &amp; The Elephant</td>
<td>The Monkey &amp; The Elephant</td>
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<td>Sheila Ireland</td>
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<td>Leon Pace</td>
<td>Pastor</td>
<td>Word of Deliverance Fellowship Ministries</td>
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