

Using Career Pathways Webinar for ROSS Service Coordinators, 8/14/18

Julie Strawn: -- but you can submit your questions anytime during the webinar. Just use the Q&A box at the upper right-hand part of your screen. And if you have any technical problems, use the chat function to let us know and we'll try to help you troubleshoot them. We're going to start off with Tremayne Youmans, from HUD, to welcome us to the webinar. Trey, you may be on mute. I'm not hearing Trey. I hope he'll be able to join us in a minute. But why don't I go ahead and jump right into our agenda so as to make the best use of your time.

So what we're going to do today is first, we're going to briefly share with you an overview of career pathway strategies and things for housing authorities to consider as they seek career pathways partners. We're then going to devote the rest of the webinar to insights on career pathways and other employment services for public housing residents from two experienced Seattle area partners, the King County Housing Authority and Neighborhood House. Next. So what are career pathway strategies, and why use them?

So the main reason to consider -- well, first of all, let me start off with what career pathway strategies are. So here are some of the key concepts behind them. Career pathway strategies offer connected education and training steps between jobs in an industry sector. So that might be health care, manufacturing, logistics, etc. A second concept underlying career pathways is that education and training is combined with support services, including things like transportation, financial aid, etc., but also importantly individualized, intensive case management or career coaching.

Career Pathways Education and Training is broken down into manageable pieces, so these may be as short as 10 weeks long. And ideally, that education and training spans the full spectrum of skill levels from high school diploma all the way up to a four-year degree. And this allows people to enter and exit training within a career pathway at whatever level they're starting from and then exit to jobs all along the way at each training step. They can then stack those short-term certificates on top of each other to earn more advanced certificates, technical diplomas, and degrees over time in order to move up to higher skills, to earn more industry credentials, and to enter better jobs with higher pay.

We're going to take a closer look at career pathways in a minute to make it a bit less abstract. But first, let's talk about why to consider using these strategies. So the first reason is that career pathways approaches are a smart response to changes in the labor market over the last several decades. As I know you're all well aware, skills and credentials beyond a high school education are increasingly important for jobs that pay enough to lead self-sufficiency. So this chart shows that educational attainment of people working in middle class jobs. The bar on the left is from 1970. The bar on the right is from 2007.

So if you look at the light and dark green sections at the bottom of the chart on the left, you can see that back in 1970, 3/4 of those working in middle class jobs had just a high school education or less. If you look at the bottom on the right, you can see that by 2007, only 39 percent of those

in middle class jobs did. And that trend toward employers requiring higher skills for jobs paying families with livable wages is projected to continue for the foreseeable future.

One thing I just want to be clear about before we move on is that in this webinar, when we talk about college or postsecondary education, we don't mean just four-year degrees. In fact, mostly what we mean are occupational certificates, apprenticeships, technical diplomas or associate degrees. All of those are examples of postsecondary credentials that can pay off in the labor market. In fact, about half of all job openings over the next decade are expected to be in middle skill jobs that require some education or training beyond high school, but less than a four-year degree.

So if employer demand for higher skills is the first reason to adopt career pathway strategies for public housing residents, the second reason is the low educational attainment of residents right now. So if you look at the blue bar at the right of this chart, you'll see that too few public housing residents -- only about 1/4 -- possess any education beyond high school. The blue bar on the left shows that more than 1/3 have not even completed a high school or equivalent diploma. You can also see here in the contrast between the green and blue bars that residents have much less education than the general population, and that's an important reason why they have low earnings, are more likely to be unemployed, and need housing assistance.

This lack of education not only stands in the way of competing for jobs and higher pay, it can also bar residents from entering training if they can't meet required minimum basic skill levels or if they lack a high school diploma or both. Because career pathways can offer a starting point for those with lower skills, they may help close the gap for residents between their current skills and what's needed to qualify for jobs that can lead to self-sufficiency. So let's get a little more concrete now about what career pathway strategies look like. So we know from the research on employment and training, that effective programs have certain features.

What career pathways tried to do was bundle those effective practices together. So these include partnerships between employers, technical and community colleges, workforce board, community organizations, and agencies like yours that serve particular groups of low-income people and understand their needs. They also offer "stackable" credentials, like I mentioned before. So this breaks up education and training into small, manageable chunks. But those chunks all build on each other, so over time, workers can earn even a degree if they choose to go that far. They also offer a clear road map through education and training and through jobs in a particular pathway.

So that's important because, as many of you have been on a college campus know, it can often be very confusing, especially for people who maybe don't have family members who've gone to college before, to walk in, get handed a college catalog or look it up online, and understand how all those myriad choices of courses add up to something that will get them the kind of job they're looking for. Career pathways also offers support services and financial assistance to address barriers that might get in the way of completing training. Work-based learning is also often a feature of these programs. So these might just be a short unpaid internship that helps them get a foot in the door with an employer and build their resume.

And finally, they offer bridge courses that combine basic skills instructions with occupational training so that folks can move through education and into jobs faster. Providing such a comprehensive set of services requires many partners and funding sources. We're going to hear in a moment from Grace and Shelan about how they've built those kinds of partnerships in Seattle and leveraged different kinds of funding. Next.

Here's an example of one state's vision for career pathways for its technical college system. The blue row of boxes at the top shows the spectrum of education and training services, beginning on the left with work readiness and basic skills instruction for those with lower skills and maybe less work experience. The bridge instruction you can see spans those basic skills classes to the left with the job training to the right so that people can improve their math, reading, English language skills while also earning what Wisconsin calls, "embedded credentials." So these are the kinds of short-term certificates I mentioned that stack on each other toward more advanced credentials.

The green row of boxes at the bottom shows how each education and training level corresponds to different levels of jobs. This example from Pima Community College in Tucson takes a closer look just at that basic skills bridge piece and how it's different from traditional services. So time is the enemy here. You know, if you look at that top row, people come for training and their immediate goal is to get a job; they tend to just drop out if they're told they first have to go off to a separate academically focused basic skills class and not come back until they can reach a certain entry test score or earn a GED.

By contrast, the bridge class at the bottom there, what they call, "IBEST" at Pima -- and that IBEST is a model that actually started in Washington State, but many other states are replicating it -- the IBEST program at the bottom is allowing people to improve their reading and math skills in the context of whatever occupation they're trying to enter, also work toward their GED, and also be in job training at the same time. So that kind of contextualized basic skills might be something like if you're in a healthcare pathway, you learn certain math concepts as part of a lesson on measuring dosages for patients.

If you're in manufacturing or construction, maybe you're learning to read a blueprint while also mastering some of those math concepts. Here's another example from Pima. And this shows the full pathway. So if you think about the bridge class I just showed you, that Pima IBEST class, it might be what's offered in that first step on the left of this slide. And it might be something that prepares people to enter the healthcare occupations generally, so teaching medical terminology and things like that. From that initial bridge, they can then enter any one of these four different healthcare pathways. Some are in direct patient care. Some are in medical office, etc.

And you can see that each level is offering different kinds of short-term certificates in the lower parts of the pathway ultimately leading up to degrees at the higher end of the pathway, and that each of those levels of training correspond to specific kinds of job opportunities. This example is from La Crosse, Wisconsin. And I know it's a bit complex. So let me walk through it a little bit. If you look at the blue box on the left, you can see the process that make up the basic skills bridge, which combines contextualized math and reading with all the manufacturing classes needed for that first certificate.

So if you look to the right of that blue box, that first certificate is CNC operator certificate, and continuing on over to the right, that qualifies people in that first job in the pathway, CNC operator. Then you can see there are higher level education and training steps going down this slide from the CNC operator certificate and higher level jobs corresponding to those training steps toward the right of the slide going down from the first CNC operator entry-level position. CNC machine is actually a relatively higher skill pathway to start in, but there are also lower skilled places to start in manufacturing, such as welding pathways that ultimately can link up with machine or other kinds of manufacturing jobs.

So there are challenges to expanding career pathway services to residents, which I really just want to acknowledge up front. And then we'll be talking more about those during the rest of the webinar. So one course is that -- and this isn't just the challenge for career pathways, but for any kind of employment services for residents -- is the fear of losing public housing subsidies. A second challenge is that many residents have children. Some may already be working but need to go back to school to get a better job. And so they're going to go tackling those competing challenges, those competing demands on their time.

Another set of barriers have to do with low basic skills. As I mentioned, that can keep people out of training unless you can find bridge classes and things like that to help them get started. Self-doubt -- many folks who have not done well in school in the past or had bad experiences at the schools they attended don't believe they can make it. So self-doubt is definitely one of the most common barriers we hear about. Lack of role models -- they may not know others in their family or have friends who have succeeded in college before, so that may make it harder for them to navigate through those systems.

Personal family challenges -- so this might be as simple as transportation issues. It might be as complicated as caring for a child or other family member who has chronic health problems. Or they may have chronic health problems themselves, physical or mental. But I want to underscore that the research on career pathways program shows that others with similar challenges can be successful. And for them to be successful, it's really critical to have the right partners to provide holistic services to help them succeed. So with that, I'm going to turn it over to Nick Codd with Seattle Jobs Initiative for his insights into how to find the right partners. Nick?

Nick Codd: Great. Thanks, Julie. I just want to make sure you can hear me okay. Julie?

Julie Strawn: Yes. We can hear you.

Nick Codd: Okay. Thanks. Good. Great. So let me just quickly tell you, I'm with Seattle Jobs Initiative. So obviously we're located in Seattle. We're a nonprofit. We oversee an employment and training program ourselves. We have a small research and policy department. And we have a consulting wing. And that's where I work. So I do a lot of consulting around employment and training, particularly around the SNAP employment training program. And then I have a particular interest in the intersection of housing, homeless services, and the need for employment and employment services.

What I want to talk about -- and this really just is a flow from what Julie talked about -- is really what you want to look for in partners. So thinking about what Julie talked about, I think you're

looking for partners that can do two really important things. First of all, you want a provider that is truly employer driven, that has employer partnership, that has the capacity to get people into good jobs, and is thinking about credentials and certificates and what employers are really looking for.

So you want a provider that can do that and at the same time has the capacity to work with individuals that are going to be at varying levels of readiness, and in particular can work with people that have a number of complex challenges, some of the things that Julie talked about, some of the things you guys are very, very familiar with. So it's really this provider or this partner that can put these two things together. And these providers, they do exist. And in just a minute you're going to hear about the King County Housing Authority and Neighborhood House, their partnership. And you're going to see an example of how this can be played out.

But again, I think these are the things to keep in the back of your mind as you're looking at partners. I want to just highlight a couple models and approaches that I think lead you in this direction that will get you to where you need to be. So I think you want to look for organizations that have models that include this navigator approach and navigator position. And sometimes these positions have different titles. They could be a career coach. They could be employment navigator, housing employment navigator, good old-fashioned case manager. But you want a partner that's employer driven, but also has this capacity, that has this navigator function. So that type of model is important.

At the same time, you're looking for programs that base themselves on the short-term training programs that could be a matter of weeks or a few months. And oftentimes, you're going to find these at community colleges, low-tech schools, and sometimes offered by a community-based organization. So you want a program that's centered around that versus just general job search and job placement. You want this type of thing in place if you can, and ideally paired with a navigator role. So a couple other things, other types of models to be thinking about or looking for -- one would be a social enterprise model. So Goodwill is your classic social enterprise. There's many, many others.

And I'm sure in your community you could identify social enterprise operations that give people this opportunity to get some good training, but also provides structure and support. Transitional or subsidized work programs kind of go along with that. And then for people with more complex situations, the individual placement and support model or evidence-based supported employment. So that's another model that can be very effective in meeting these two goals that you're looking at as far as partnerships go. So I wanted to talk a little about the federal workforce programs that are out there, starting with the WIOA/WIOA youth, workforce investment boards, American Job Centers.

So this is something that's going to be present in all of your communities, whether you're an urban area, midsized, rural. In thinking about your partnerships, you really should be talking to these people and reaching out. You could even consider having somebody from your housing authority join the workforce investment board. Get involved in some way into their committees and their workforce investment boards.

An advantage to the American Job Centers is that they are free. They're available to the public. So this should also be part of your partnership approach. The one thing I will say is that traditionally the WIOA system is probably going to be stronger in the employer-focused and job-driven category, and maybe struggle a little bit in the capacity to engage a broad range of people with varying levels of readiness. I'd also encourage you to think about SNAP employment and training. Go to this website if you want more information on this. This is an employment and training program that's available to non-TANF SNAP recipients, so anybody that's on SNAP but not on TANF.

This is something to ask about as you're looking at partners, whether they're a SNAP Employment and Training program. It provides funding for a broad range of employment services, supportive services, and can be a really good partner if it's available in your community. And you're going to hear a bit more about that with Neighborhood House. You'll hear about Washington's program which is called, "BFET." So these are two federal programs to definitely consider as part of your partnership search.

So in creating partnerships, as you guys all know, it's a two-way street. I mean, it's not all about what the partner can do for you guys, but what you guys can bring to the table. So I would really encourage you to think about as a ROSS program or a housing authority, what is that you offer that would be of interest and assistance to a workforce partner? And so I have a couple ideas here. And I would encourage you to think about what makes sense for where you are in your community. But I think there's a couple things that are important. One, is that you are representing people that are actually housed. And they're not experiencing a heavy rent burden.

So if you compare the people you're representing to people who are in a shelter or couch surfing or literally homeless -- or housed but heavily, heavily rent burdened because they don't have a subsidy of any kind -- you're representing people that are in a different space. And so that's good. That's a benefit. And as a ROSS program, at least in part, theoretically, you have the ability to help manage the impact of increasing income on people's housing subsidy and assistance. You should be able to provide some good information and guidance.

Dealing with the emotional and change aspect of that is, that's a little different conversation, of course. But as far as being able to handle the logistics around that, those are things you can offer and bring to the table, which I think are really important. Again, you have the ability to inform and communicate with residents, promote opportunities. You can link them with needed resources -- childcare, healthcare -- in many cases. And to a certain degree, you can offer employment contact and case management and residential service. And I understand some of that can be quite limited, but you have something there to offer.

So think about what you can offer and bring to the table in this partnership that's going to be beneficial and attractive to a workforce partner, because you do have plenty to offer. So finally, here are things to look for in a partner. You will hear more from King County Housing Authority Neighborhood House. But obviously, you want a partner where you can have a referral and service coordination agreement. So you know how to refer people. You are in communications. People go through services. You have a point of contact. And you can communicate when people miss, when people are doing well, when things happen in people's lives, and that back and forth can occur, which is really necessary.

You want a partner that can help with these core issues around transportation. And this is a plug for the SNAP Employment Training Program. That's a program that does respond well to some of those needs. So I would look for that in the community. It's not always available, but I would look for that. And you are looking for a partner that has a funding model that allows access for your residents. So you need to ask about that obviously. All employment and training programs are funded. And they're funded oftentimes, as you know, to their particular group. So you want to see what those groups are, what the qualifications are, and where you find alignment with your residents.

And again, the American Job Center, some of the WIOA programs, they may be a good option for a broad range of people as far as eligibility goes. And then I think ultimately you're looking for a few strongly committed partners. You don't necessarily need a partner or a resource or a long list or somebody for everybody that you serve. You need some good strong partners that you can work with and have a relationship you can really nurture and grow. So those are some thoughts. You're going to hear a whole lot more from King County Housing Authority and Neighborhood House about how this can happen in real life.

And I would think about some of this stuff as you listen to them talk and think about how some of this applies to you in your community and what might be out there for you. So with that, I'm going to turn things over to Grace Adriano, from the King County Housing Authority. And she's going to talk to you about their program in their partnership with Neighborhood House. So Grace, I'm turning it over to you. Thanks.

Grace Adriano: Great. Thank you very much, Nick. So my name is Grace Adriano, and I am a program manager in the resident services department here at King County Housing Authority. Just to give you a little bit of background of who King County Housing Authority is, we are an MTW Housing Authority. So we probably have a little bit more flexibility than many housing authorities out there. But we serve one of the largest counties in the country. Population-wise, we are the 13th largest county in the country. We have about 1.8 million people in the region. And we cover 33 cities, including unincorporated areas of the county.

But we do not serve Seattle and another smaller city. They have their own housing authorities. The map that you are seeing before you represents the scattered housing program that KCHA manages all over the county. It includes public housing, tax credits, and bond properties. It does not include our tenant-based voucher housing. So again, just a little bit of background on who we serve. Last year we served close to 16,000 households, including over 38,000 individuals, including close to 15,000 children. Our tenant-based voucher program is a large program at 11,000 households. And then our public housing and project-based program has almost 5,000 in households to it.

So our households comprise about 30 percent elderly households -- 29 percent are nonelderly, and the biggest household units are families. Children make up about 38 percent of our population, which is anyone under 18. And adults between 18-62 are the next big chunk of our population. And then the rest are young adults and elderly and near elderly population. KCHA serves a very diverse background. Our population identify themselves as black, followed by white. And then there are smaller categories of Asian and Hispanic population. But this doesn't

truly reflect who we serve, as we serve many immigrant and refugee populations from Africa, Asia, and parts of Europe.

So despite the strong job market and economy in King County, KCHA still serves an extremely low-income population. Our median income last year was about \$12,000. The county median income for the same period was over \$70,000. Four percent of our population reports \$0 income, 34 percent report income from wages, and 64 percent with benefit income. The need to increase income and financial stability is really critical for KCHA residents. Because of the diverse population we serve, we have determined that we really need to offer a diverse set of programs that meet different needs.

So we have three different tiers of services that we have identified which aim to put individuals in a career pathway track regardless of where they may be in their career or work history. So the first level, we identify those or label those as the pre-employment services, which would include basic skills, systems navigations, referrals, etc. Level 2 would be employment readiness services, including resume building, interview skills or practice, job search, and skills assessment. The third level is what we consider the employment and career pathway services. This is where we start talking more about wage progression or if there's additional training and education needed to help individuals move towards that career pathway to increase their earnings.

So King County Housing Authority, or the county in general, is really fortunate to have many resources and programs that we can rely on. We have a very robust social service nonprofit sector, including Neighborhood House and the YWCA. And we also have very strong education and training institutions, including those offering certificate programs, two- or four-year degrees, and beyond. And because we do serve such a large geographic region, we are fortunate to be able to partner with other cities and local government.

And finally, we do have a supportive private sector to these Starbucks or BECU and these other banks are not necessarily direct partners with KCHA, but they do fund our nonprofit partners. So what KCHA can offer in these partnerships is that we do have a captive audience in our housed residents. And we are fortunate enough to have had the opportunity to build community centers in many of our housing developments. And we do have some funding that's available for services that are nonprofit or other partners can compete for. So when KCHA is looking for partners, we are looking for agencies that have cultural competency. This is really important for our diverse population.

And we look for partners who listen and use community voice in their program design and delivery. And obviously, as we've heard, leveraging resources is really important. And not everyone has enough resources to provide everything. So that's really critical. And we definitely look for agencies or partners that are strong collaborators and really have that spirit of continuous improvement. And the last two are really critical so that when we are trying to change things or tweak things, there's open communication and open dialogue between us and our partners to make sure that we are using our resources efficiently and are successful in providing services and programs to our residents.

So when we seek partners, the housing authority employs several strategies, including looking for partners that have mutual interests and goals that the housing authority has. Sometimes we

also submit joint grant applications, whether that's for private funding or government funding. And we also conduct requests for proposals when we are seeking for additional partners or other partners to provide services for us. One such partnership that we have is with Neighborhood House. And I will turn it over to Shelan, who can provide her community partner perspective.

Shelan Aldridge: Thank you, Grace. So I wanted to tell you a little bit about Neighborhood House. I am the associate director overseeing a department that offers all types of education and community services, which range from youth programs to family and social services, citizenship, employment, housing, and health. The other half of our agency covers early childhood education and child development. So within this department, we have the career center, which we established in 2011. And this was a career center that had been operated by a different nonprofit previous to us coming into this program and being awarded the grant. And so we were in some sense starting out a little bit fresh in terms of the center.

The center opened in 2011, and there were a broad range of goals that were a part of that contract and project. Essentially, the intention of the center there was to be a resource for public housing residents, as well as Section 8 recipients that were living within that community, as well as a few of the neighboring public housing communities. Now, there were a number of goals all structured towards moving residents towards self-sufficiency. Our goal was to help residents engage in a number of programs, such as ESL classes, job search, job placement, soft skill workshops, financial literacy workshops, technology training, vocational training, and a whole gamut in terms of anything and everything to move residents towards self-sufficiency.

So the building itself is located in the front of a public housing community where there are residents throughout. And as Grace mentioned before, it's a mix of residents, so some elderly, some working adults, many children, and families. A little bit further down into the neighborhood, there's also a youth center, and they do after-school programming with youth to engage in tutoring, as well as other enrichment activities for children. So one advantage to the building that we are located in is that we already have a couple of other things going on, at least we did when we started.

So there's an ESL provider who has long been operating two concurrent ESL classes in the morning. There is also a head start and a preschool downstairs. And then there's also a public health office which serves women and children through our WIC program. So one of the advantages in coming in although we were starting our services fresh is that we were in a building where there was already some traffic for low-income individuals, as well as residents. So where we started with this was with a career center coordinator who has 32 hours a week and a little bit of management time. So we were very ambitious.

And we wanted to tackle all those things and had great ideas on how we would operate in the same way that we did with our other employment and training programs. However, we quickly realized that resident participation and engagement was more difficult than it was with some of our other low-income populations. So I want to fast forward to where we are now. Over the period of seven years, we've been able to leverage a number of resources for programs that are operated within Neighborhood House, but funded through other entities. And we've been able to bring those to the center and house those staff there.

And so one of the reasons we did that, as I mentioned before, when we were starting out with that coordinator and trying to get residents engaged in a number of services, we also quickly realized that one strategy was not going to work for all residents. So the effort to bring in a number of different programs to meet various needs was really to help us expand our approach in creating programming that was diverse, really held a lot of different goals and offerings, so that we'd be able to capture a number of folks. So I also want to talk about how we structured our site to get where we are now in 2018.

One of the things we were very intentional about was the person we hired to be the career center coordinator. And I call her the "partnership builder" here. So one thing that she does is she helps to be the glue in the office to really bring together all of those staff who are not directly supervised by her. But she's got to coordinate all those efforts to make sure that folks are there during the hours that residents need to access services, and also that the coordination is happening and the integration of services across all of those individuals, and that we're also regularly able to get this information out to residents. So she also engages residents and builds a presence.

I'll often see her doing outreach within the neighborhood, as well as externally she's at community meetings where people are also serving mutual clients, where they're serving public housing residents or Section 8 recipients. And the Section 8 recipients are a bit more challenging to contact because they can be all throughout the county, and they're using vouchers to reside with individual landlords. And so in order to capture that population, we've engaged in a number of community meetings, as well as community places of interest, such as libraries and things of that nature.

So I talked about this a little bit, how we are targeting organizations where residents are engaging in services. Just to provide a few of those resources that I think will be available in a number of cities and whether they're rural or populated areas some of the places that we connected with were the Department of Health and Human Services, where people are accessing public benefits, as well as food banks, community colleges. We really tapped into local mosques and churches and other faith-based organizations utilizing our staff, many of which who are bilingual, to help bridge those relationships and really be members of those communities and effectively outreach.

We also have tapped into cultural stores, clothing banks, other nonprofit organizations, cultural centers. We've got things up at bus terminals, libraries. We've engaged with local city government, as well as chamber of commerce. So we also look to tailor marketing materials to match audience. So sometimes that meant taking a number of flyers and having different versions depending on the communities that we were outreaching to.

So for one of our programs it's focused on the vocational training aspect. Instead of saying, "free training, free jobs," we specifically marketed training programs with our partners, such as the forklift training at the community college, as well as listing the labor market information. And we really took a look at what are these communities missing? And how can we fill in the gaps and really appeal to different audiences? So our material changed if we were outreaching to refugee resettlement groups versus posting things at the colleges or the food banks. We really

tried to tap into each organization that we were reaching out to, which is a bit more work, but we found it more effective in the end.

We also really are seeking out organizations where we can provide complementary services. So one of the benefits and challenges of being in a large county such as King County, which includes 33 cities, is that you have different areas where incomes are higher. You have a number of organizations. And if you're not careful, you can trip over each other and provide duplicate services or be competing for clients who are offering the same services. So we surveyed all of our organizations that we were partnering with and those we wanted to reach out to, and we really looked at how to map out what our services were and where we could fill in those gaps and really motivate the direct service personnel to refer clients our way.

One of the ways that we did that, we made sure to set up a regular communication plan with partners. But in that process where we were developing relationships, I want to emphasize it's not as important -- the organization that you're reaching out to is not as important as it is the individual at the organization. So it's super important to get someone who is a champion of that organization in your program and someone who really wants to partner. And finding a win-win relationship is essential. And sometimes you have to end a meeting saying, I don't think this is best partnership for this program, but we'll keep you in mind for X.

So I know that was one thing we had to work with our staff to try and cut off some of those relationships, or just to evaluate that it maybe wasn't the best return on investment. The other thing, we really made sure to get onto all of the list serves of the organizations, and when other communities had events, to make sure that we had presence there and the right presence, that we had our partnership builders and our networkers.

And to also be really engaged in community partnerships through meetings, regular meetings that are happening either with local chambers or other common providers that are offering similar services, because within those community meetings, those are the venues where we were able to have conversations around mutual projects or grants or opportunities that offered a bit of financial backing to move things forward. Next slide.

I wanted to spend a little bit of time and talk about what this looks like an action. And I chose two projects I wanted to talk through. And they're case studies. So how does a partnership turn into a career pathway? How do we make that a reality and get people the skills they need? What are some best practices? What are some things we thought we were going to be best practices that didn't work so well? So I have two examples. One of them was a little more successful than the other, and I want to talk through both of them.

For the first one, it was a certified nursing assistant class. And what we were doing was helping individuals move through the nursing assistant class at the community college. We had already developed a strong partnership with our local community college. One thing that they had come up against was students not getting to their campus. Even though their campus is about four and a half miles away from our office, it is tucked away a little bit. And the bus drops don't quite get folks there. And we saw a big gap in terms of public housing residents and low-income families just getting on campus. And so our idea was to bring the CNA class to the public housing community.

So we were able to leverage some space at the youth center, one of the upstairs classrooms. And we arranged it during hours where there was also programming for children if there were parents engaging in the class and they needed childcare, so the kids could engage in some of the reading or literacy activities, which could also benefit the youth organization. We already had labor market information to know that there was a shortage of certified nursing assistants. We also knew as an agency that we had been very successful in placing people into healthcare jobs across our entire employment division.

We also had heard high demand from clients as well at large. And so we really wanted to assess what the community wanted and make sure we had enough available participants. So we started out doing some information sessions and orientations. And we had 30-40 public housing residents express interest and attend the initial orientation. And a number completed initial enrollment. We also had nonresidents as well. So we, overall, had about 60 people that expressed interest. So knowing what we do about outreach and recruitment, we know that 60 could easily go to 20-30 after you have attrition and people decide whether to stay or not stay.

And we were feeling pretty confident about those numbers and about both nonresident engagement, as well as resident engagement. And I did want to emphasize that we target all of our services to public housing residents and those receiving vouchers. However, we keep it open to other low-income individuals as well. So oftentimes, our program is a mix between the two populations. Here are the results. We had about five people enroll in the class with four total completions. So as we neared the beginning of the class and we had folks register with the school and complete that, we were very disappointed with the low turnout.

And after that, I think one of the things we really did well was we sat down and first of all, we said, hey, at least there's four people in it. But how can we do this better? So we reached out to those who had signed up for orientation. We also talked to our case management direct service staff to find out, what happened? Why was there just a low interest? And why didn't it work? One of the things that came out from that was that there was too much time between the orientations and the classes. So we had folks set up. And there was maybe a month gap between when the orientations ended and when the classes started.

In order to get into this class, people still had to go on campus to complete some registration paperwork. And they also had to complete a computer assessment. Now, we work with a number of immigrants and refugees. And we did do some screening prior to ensure that English levels were where they needed to be. However, the computer assessment went through the questions very quickly. And so we got feedback that had there been some more time for people to read through those questions, or if there had been some language accommodations just for length of time so they could go through it longer without it being timed, that they would have had higher successful completions.

The other thing is people had to get a TB test. And they had to get that taken care of and results before enrolling into the class and program. So a number of people did not follow through with that. So what we saw overall was a high level of commitment in the orientation, but a small percentage of follow-through. So the last thing that I want to mention, we spoke to some clients and our case managers. And the client expectations were high. They wanted to get through something, get through it easy, be able to get a job as a nursing assistant, and to move forward.

But overall, the time commitment was too difficult. And also just getting on campus was a really big barrier for folks.

So in between case study 1 and 2, we did try some other things. We tried forklift classes, sending folks to one-day training, and other things, and had some successes here and there with programs. But there was not a consistent cohort-based model of learning until we started to do this childcare class. So the childcare class came out of a couple of things. We had been long working with our immigrant and refugee populations looking for some type of vocational training that would fill the gaps and help our clients move forward.

So within the Seattle area -- which is about a 60- to 90-minute bus ride from our South King County location -- there were some other programs that were provided for refugees, including electronic assembly, warehouse, and a similar childcare training program. However, as rent costs and housing costs moved up and just the need overall for low-income individuals skyrocketed in South King County, we saw a big boom in terms of high need, but low levels of programming. And also, for the public housing residents, in order to access any of those other training programs, it was a very long commute and not something that was very sustainable for folks on public transportation.

So we had developed a partnership with childcare resources, which is the organization in Seattle that, they do a couple of things. They do a lot of education around early childhood education doing the childcare careers curriculum that helps people get the initial certificate needed to work in a childcare center. It's called the star certificate. And it's early learning, learning all about child development and all of the skills needed to really get into an entry-level childcare worker position. They also connect people to different Childcare Resources and day cares. And they also help people set up their own day care businesses.

Through our conversations with Childcare Resources, we had expressed interest to bring this type of programming out to South King County where there was a high need and they were also looking for a provider. Now, they provided instruction, but they did not provide employment case management, job placement, or any of those opportunities. So we found that it was a really good match for us because we had complementary programming and there wasn't an overlap. So we developed a clear memorandum of understanding and ensured that those organizations would benefit. And we had clear and different roles.

We also made sure that we had looked at the model -- has this been successful before? And we'd seen similar models or programming. We knew that there had been community interest. We also took a look at the residents in our community and took a look at skill matching. And one reason that this really resonated with us and with some of the public housing residents was we had a number of people who had been out of the workforce for some time, mostly women who had been mothers. So many had had informal training and experience, but not formalized training. So in terms of someone who'd been out of the workforce for 5, 7, 10 years even, it was not as scary as a jump to get into this type of training because they'd done it before.

One thing that we also had learned from the previous training with the nursing assistant, the jump to attaining that certificate just seemed too far for a lot of folks. And so in designing this, we really dialed it back to say, okay. What's the step before college? And how do we get

someone ready and just get them some basic skills so they can move forward, but really make sure their quality skills are recognized in the industry and they get certificates around it. So just quickly, I'll go through some of the information that they learned in the 10-12 week class with Childcare Resources. They're learning all about the early childhood development.

They're learning some classroom management. They are also getting CPR for state, bloodborne pathogens. They also get a department of early learning certificate as well. They learned about child safety. They learned a little bit of communications, how they would communicate with children and parents, nutrition, all of the really basic elements needed to be successful in a center and on a job. We also assisted to get them registered in the state database for childcare workers, which includes a portable background check. So by the time they are finished with the class, they are ready to go and very appealing to an employer who doesn't have to do all of that leg work. And so we provided a case management and support services around that.

Another thing I don't have on the slide but I'll tell you about, in addition to the education piece, we also paired the skills with the internship within a childcare preschool facility while they're doing the class. So in that way, they can put all of their skills to action right away, and also get a letter of reference from the internship site where they're volunteering. And because they already have the background check and they're registered in the state system, they're able to go through and volunteer at different head start facilities or other formal preschool facilities. And that's what we really seek out. We do have a couple that may have gone through home-based internships, but most of them are with organizations that are well established.

And we provided the employment case management and job placement services. And then we also worked really closely with the childcare instructor each week as they were going through the classes. So I think what we learned in this is that when we first started out with the center, we just wanted to put everybody into college right away. And we'd seen it work in a lot of our other programs with employment and training, and didn't see why it wouldn't work with public housing residents, not really knowing intimately the barriers that some of these families and individuals faced.

The second thing, I think we did what a lot of colleges or other organizations do, we looked at data, we looked at other programs, we looked at where there had been success, which was in healthcare, college certification. But the reality was that wasn't a match with the populations that we were working with. So we really wanted to make sure to gauge interest within the public housing community especially. You know, our first cohort of classes that we did, we put a lot of work into the orientation, the outreach. We did a lot of outreach to our housing communities. Probably 25 percent has been, 25 percent of the class is made up of Section 8 recipients or public housing at any given time on average.

But through it all, we are gaining more interest, and word-of-mouth is continuing, especially in the resident population. And one thing that we found is we are doing more cohorts. We've enlisted a resident who's been through the program to go be the ambassador and go talk to neighbors and go talk to those within the community for recruitment for visits. And KCHA has been able to offer a stipend through the community builder. And that's been helpful because it's word-of-mouth from someone who is within their community.

So what we've learned along the way, we definitely want to do more programs, even outside of early childhood education, that we can hone in on and really focus on what's going to work to be that step before college for folks. What's going to be that onramp? Or what are some programs that they can go directly into? And in terms of ensuring sustainable success, the number one thing -- I put it on top -- don't be afraid to fail and try new things. We could have thrown in the bucket with the nursing assistant class and said, no one's going to be interested in going to any training. But we didn't. We tried a number of things in between. We looked at what was sticking and what wasn't. We really focused on what was working.

And sometimes that's where you have to put aside a really great idea that you were attached to and say, okay. We're not going to do that anymore if it's not really meeting the community's needs. We've also looked to frequently solicit stakeholder and resident input -- not always the easiest thing. Focus groups don't necessarily work in terms of high levels of participation. But there are other avenues that we've implemented. We were getting the case managers to engage with the clients and get some feedback. Most of our case managers and staff were working day in and day out with residents to really get ideas from them and the feedback that they're hearing from their clients.

The other thing is we've continued to engage with employers and try to understand their needs and paired that with labor market research. So you can do labor market research and get people in, but if you don't have the connection with employers, you're still going to find some challenges getting folks employed. So we implemented the same employer partnership strategy that we did with community partners -- really evaluating return on investment, making sure to communicate on a regular basis, and making sure that we are in tune with what their needs are. And again, company is not as important as is the individual and champion that you've got at that organization or employer.

We've also tried to seek out other innovative and replicable programs. So sometimes the program you bring to your office is not going to be something that's new and never been tried before. It may have been tried before in a different area, region, or with a different population. But take a look what has been successful and really lean on the expertise of other agencies. Also, what we really strive to do is to also extend our expertise to other agencies and partners. As we have earned success in one area, we are talking to others to share best practices because we know we're not always going to be in the situation that we're successful. We may need to lean on them in the future.

Also, I can't emphasize enough continuing to build new partnerships and to foster existing ones is so important. New opportunities, new grants, new projects to collaborate on, they come quickly. And those that are at the table in regular communication are the ones that people call. You know, those are all some of the things that we've done to ensure success. And I would say we are still learning, still learning each and every day. And we are still facing the same challenges that many of you probably are in working with high barrier populations. So I want to close with that. And I'm going to turn it over to Trey. And then I know after that, we'll have some time for some Q&A.

Tremayne Youmans: Hello, everyone. This is Trey. I'm the ROSS program manager. And we do want to leave some time for Q&A, but I wanted to welcome everyone -- I'm sorry I wasn't able to

do that before -- and also, let you know that, one, this presentation so far has been amazing. I've learned a lot. And so I thank all the presenters, as well as, I think, Shelan just hit on a lot of really, really, really good points. And I had a whole bunch of questions, and I think she got to a lot of it as well. So hopefully, you guys still have questions that we can get to that. A couple of questions that I'm anticipating -- is this session going to be recorded?

And yes. We are recording it. I may have mentioned this last time, but we do plan to have an online resource guide. And on that online resource guide, which will be on the HUD Exchange site or our ROSS page, will also be the webinars that we have done and will continue to do, so the past one on resident engage, as well as this one on career pathways and the future on that we will have on motivational interviewing. And we will send around that date.

And I just want to highlight to get us going with the Q&A that there are no perfect programs. And I really do appreciate Shelan's and everyone's transparency, but especially with Shelan talking about those challenges and how to really build out a Career Pathways Program from the ground up. And you heard her say seven years, so we know that this doesn't come overnight. But this is something that each of you guys can strive for. So I appreciate all the presenters, and I'm ready to turn it over to Julie for Q&A.

Julie Strawn: Thanks, Trey. I think actually Colleen is going to do that. Colleen, are you able to be heard? Okay. I know she was having some technical difficulties earlier. So I'm looking at the Q&A box. I'm actually not seeing questions right now. If folks have questions, I'd encourage you to submit. If there aren't questions, we can go ahead and wrap up the webinar, and we'll send you the slides and the link for the recording later on. I did want to remind folks this is part of a series of webinars for ROSS coordinators. And this is the second in the series. And we will have other ones in the fall. And I think Colleen is now on the line.

Colleen Moore: Yes. Hi, Julie. I think we just have one or two questions. I'm going to ask Anna to share those with the group.

Anna Mahathey: Hi, everyone. One of the questions we got was, what was the response? What was the enrollment or completion and comparison to case study 1 and 2?

Response: Okay. So for the first enrollment for case study 1, we had five participants enroll and four complete, so 80 percent completion rate, but low enrollment rate. For the second one, we are still gathering all of the information for the five cohorts, because the fifth one just completed not too long ago. But we had approximately 60 people enroll throughout all five cohorts, so about 15 on average and at 80 percent completion rate.

Colleen Moore: Great. Thank you. One of the other questions we got, it is for Trey, asking when people can register for the motivational interviewing webinar.

Shelan Aldridge: Trey, I might be able to help answer that. The registration typically for these webinars opens just about two weeks -- it's two weeks or slightly less -- prior to the webinar. Right now we're finalizing the scheduling of that. It will be September 12 or 13. So the registration should open just about the end of this month.

Anna Mahathey: Great. Thanks, Shelan. Next question is how do you get residents motivated? It almost seems like want to stay where they are.

Shelan Aldridge: Is that a question for everybody?

Colleen Moore: Yes. I think any of the panelists can probably speak to that.

Shelan Aldridge: I don't hear anyone speaking right now, I will go ahead and speak up. One of the ways that we keep residents engaged and motivated is persistence. Looking at different offerings on things are not being successful, right, to say, well, what is that you are looking for? And engaging with people at a personal level, but also looking at goals in smaller increments. Oftentimes there's a desire or need to jump into a certain job. However, all of the steps in between are not often well thought out. Or either there's a lot of discouragement or barriers in the way. And so really focusing on small goals and engaging folks. And also looking at the successes that others have had and other public housing residents.

And I would say our staff are the best motivators when it comes to public housing residents. The challenge is getting people in the door, but once they are that continued engagement of folks is what we see work. And sometimes it takes a number of meetings or times and then the light bulb goes off when someone is engaging in activities and really motivated. And we don't know what exactly that was that tipped them off.

But we really focus on motivational interviewing and really focus on what's important -- what's in the heart. Is it that they want to get a job so they can be a good example for their kids? Do they want to move out of public housing? What is it that's going to drive them when they get discouraged? And if you identify that in the onset, it makes those subsequent conversations a bit easier.

Nick Codd: This is Nick from SJI. Shelan, I thought that was a great answer. The thing I would add to this from my experience is that I do think being able to answer in an accurate and informative way this question about what increasing your income means to your housing subsidy and what that means for the individual, the family, and the future, I think being able to talk about that and to lay something out that makes sense to people is important.

We all hear and are very familiar with the hold the benefit cliff aspect. And in particular at a time like this where housing costs are so out of control in certain parts of the country, it's a very valid question. What will increasing my income actually do to my personal situation? Where will I go? And will I be okay? So I think that's another thing that has to be part of this conversation, and it relates to motivation and people making steps in a certain direction.

Anna Mahathey: Great. Thanks to both of you for that. One quick clarifying question we have from somebody is, what does MTW Housing Authority mean?

Grace Adriano: This is Grace. It's Moving to Work. It's a designation of about less than 50 housing authorities. And it allows these housing authorities to be a lot more flexible with rules and regulations and oftentimes the way we spend our funding.

Anna Mahathey: Great. Thank you. Next question, this is to Shelan. Did the developed program meet SNAP or Welfare-to-Work requirements?

Shelan Aldridge: Yes. It does. So SNAP E&T is the -- it's a feedback program here locally, Basic Food, Employment, and Training. What we did in terms of enrolling people into the class, we had a SNAP E&T case manager working on enrollment. And we also had our refugee employment case manager as well. And they're working with families that are receiving TANF. So the way we structured the class in terms of hours so that it would meet requirements is they did their internship in the mornings Monday through Thursday, so 8:00 to 12:00 on the Monday through Thursday hour. And then Friday was a full day internship.

And then they had the job readiness training and the Childcare Resources class Monday through Thursday in the afternoons. And so within that time frame, they would need full participation. So what we tried to do is have everybody who enrolled into the program be eligible for one of our other existing case management programs. And for any who were not eligible but were a resident, we had our coordinator of the center work with those participants one on one.

Nick Codd: This is Nick. Can I just add that this does meet SNAP or TANF requirements, but in addition, it also provides funding to Neighborhood House. The SNAP E&T does. So it helps with those work requirements or participation requirements, but it's also a unique and very helpful funding source that I think can support a variety of different employment and training services and supportive services. So that's something that I talked about in my section at the beginning. So I would encourage people to look into that in your communities, because I think it can be quite helpful.

Anna Mahathey: Great. The next question is, what documentation do you use to track your residents partnering with your providers?

Grace Adriano: I'm going to assume that the question's for the housing authority. We use a variety of documentation. I say the documentation is mostly housed with our partners. And we usually just get aggregate data. So it all depends on what we're trying to seek or find. And that's all laid out in our contract with our service partners.

Shelan Aldridge: And this is Shelan, with Neighborhood House. One thing we do with anyone that comes into the center, we as an agency, have a one-page, double-sided enrollment form. And so anyone enrolling into a program within our agency fills out that form. And then in addition to that, the next step would be to fill out an enrollment into a specific program. We do have staff that refer clients to other partner organizations. And that's a follow-up with the organization and the resident.

Most of the time, people that are coming into the center are engaging with us with enough participation that we're able to get ahold of them and confirm that they're participating. However, if somebody comes into the center, learns about something, grabs a flyer, and at some point later on engages with that partner, we may not be capturing that information if that participant never engaged deeply with one of our case management staff. So I think you always run the risk of not knowing everything your residents are doing, but we try.

Anna Mahathey: Thank you. That's helpful. The next question asks, did you collaborate with experts in their field? For example, literacy, did you let board-certified tutors train your students? Or did you do it yourself?

Shelan Aldridge: Now, I'm assuming that it's talking about the childcare training class or it could be the certified nursing assistant class. With both programs, we worked with someone who was certified. So with the CNA class, it was a certified instructor from the college. And with the childcare resources class, it is an instructor who's certified to deliver the department of early learning materials. So there's a process that they go through to get certified for that.

So that's where we leveraged the resources of the other organization, because what we were bringing to the table was case management and support services in the job placement, but not the instructional pieces. And we have tried to do instructional pieces with case managers implementing that before, and it's not always successful. The quality is not the same because the case manager skillset and the instructor skillset, they're just different.

Anna Mahathey: Next question is, "How many ROSS coordinators are working with the housing authority populations discussed?"

Grace Adriano: What was the question -- "How many ROSS coordinators --"

Colleen Moore: Yes. That was the question.

Anna Mahathey: -- "are working with the housing authority populations discussed?"

Grace Adriano: KCHA is currently funded with two ROSS coordinators. But we have a blended workforce development program, so our population has access to our ROSS service coordinators, or FSS coordinators, and also our partnerships through nonprofits like Neighborhood House.

Anna Mahathey: I think that is it.

Julie Strawn: Okay. Those are all the questions that we received through the Q&A box. There are a couple of other things that I wanted to just mention. One is know that we have a number of Jobs Plus grantees joining us today. Welcome. I know this is really useful information that's applicable to your programs as well. I know there was a question about access to other ROSS trainings for Jobs Plus grantees. Actually, there has been one prior webinar. And there'll be a third webinar, as we mentioned earlier, that will be at the beginning of September.

All three have been or are being recorded. And those recordings will be embedded in a ROSS online resource that'll be available through the HUD Exchange. I'm not exactly sure when that will be available, but it will be probably sometime in the next six weeks. So that will be the best way to get access to those recordings. And that online resource will be available through the HUD Exchange. And that goes for all of the ROSS grantees as well, the service coordinators who are joining us today. If you have colleagues that would like to listen to the recording that would be the best way for them to access it as well.

We will have copies available of the slides from today. And those can be obtained just by emailing the contact information that you got when you registered for the training. And we'll be

happy to send those slides out. Just want to thank everyone for their participation today, especially our presenters. And if any of you have anything to add just in our last moment, please go right ahead. But I'm sure everyone that's on the line would join me in thanking you all for all the great information you shared with us.

Okay. Well, if you don't have anything else to add, thanks again. And we'll look forward to hearing from a lot of you on the next ROSS webinar.