

Disability Inclusion, Intersectionality, and Knowledge Translation

KTDRR's 2024 Virtual KT Conference
October 15, 16, and 18

Center on
**KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION FOR
DISABILITY & REHABILITATION RESEARCH**

Leveraging KT Strategies to Address Disparities in Access to Apprenticeship Programs for Youth in Rural Communities

The Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development Project

Presenters

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Grant Information

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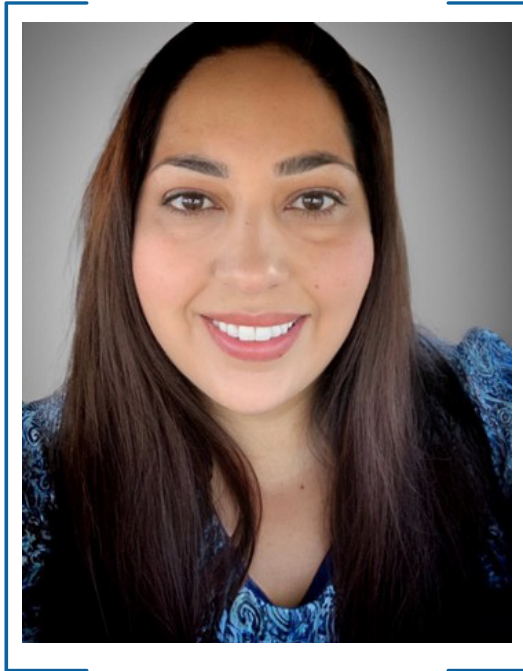


The Presenters



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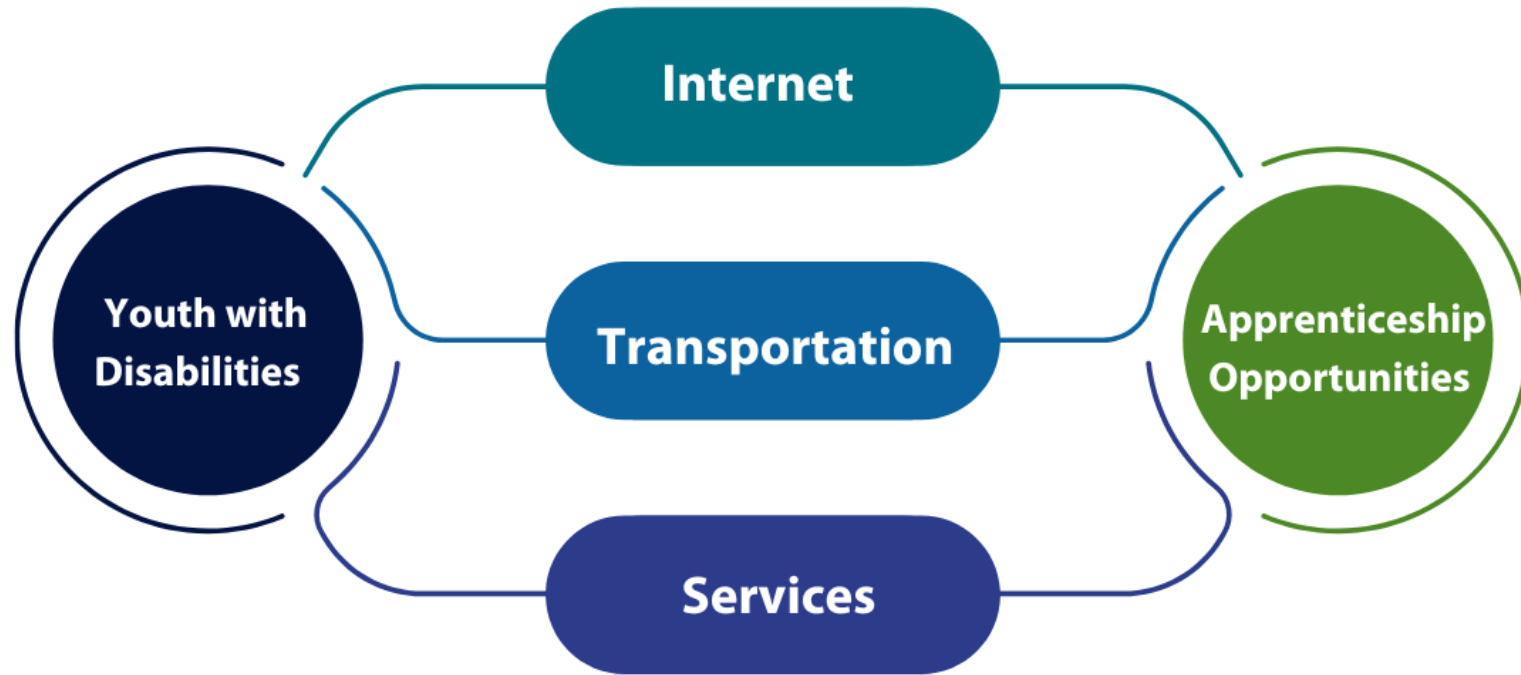
Wyoming Vocational Rehabilitation
Makerspace Coordinator

Overview

The Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development Project (RYAD)

Issues Being Addressed

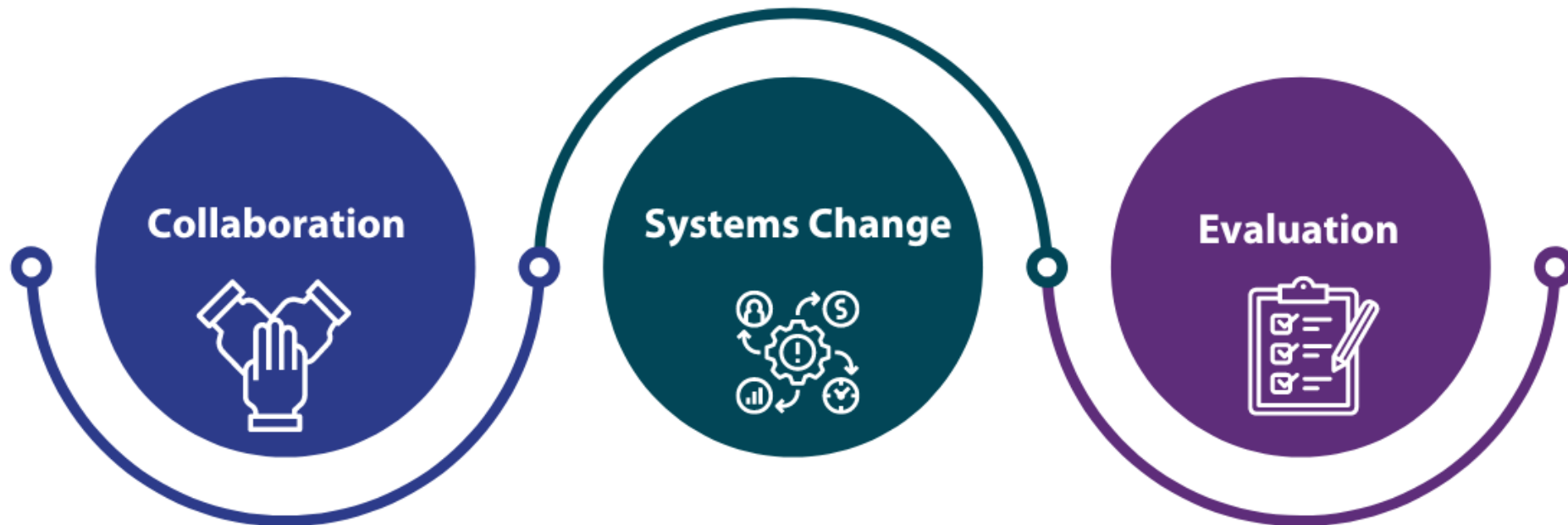
- In rural communities:
- VR caseloads have a higher rate of transition-aged students
- Youth with disabilities face lower rates of employment
- Youth with disabilities encounter compounding barriers to accessing and benefitting from apprenticeship programs



RTC: Rural Research & Training Center, 2017; (Ipsen C. & Swicewood, G., 2015)

RYAD Primary Goal

Help build the capacity of vocational rehabilitation agencies and partners to create apprenticeship programs for youth with disabilities in underserved rural communities through:



RYAD Activities

Learning Collaborative



Advisory Groups



Toolkit



Rural Youth
Apprenticeship Toolkit

Transportation

Internet Access

Business Engagement

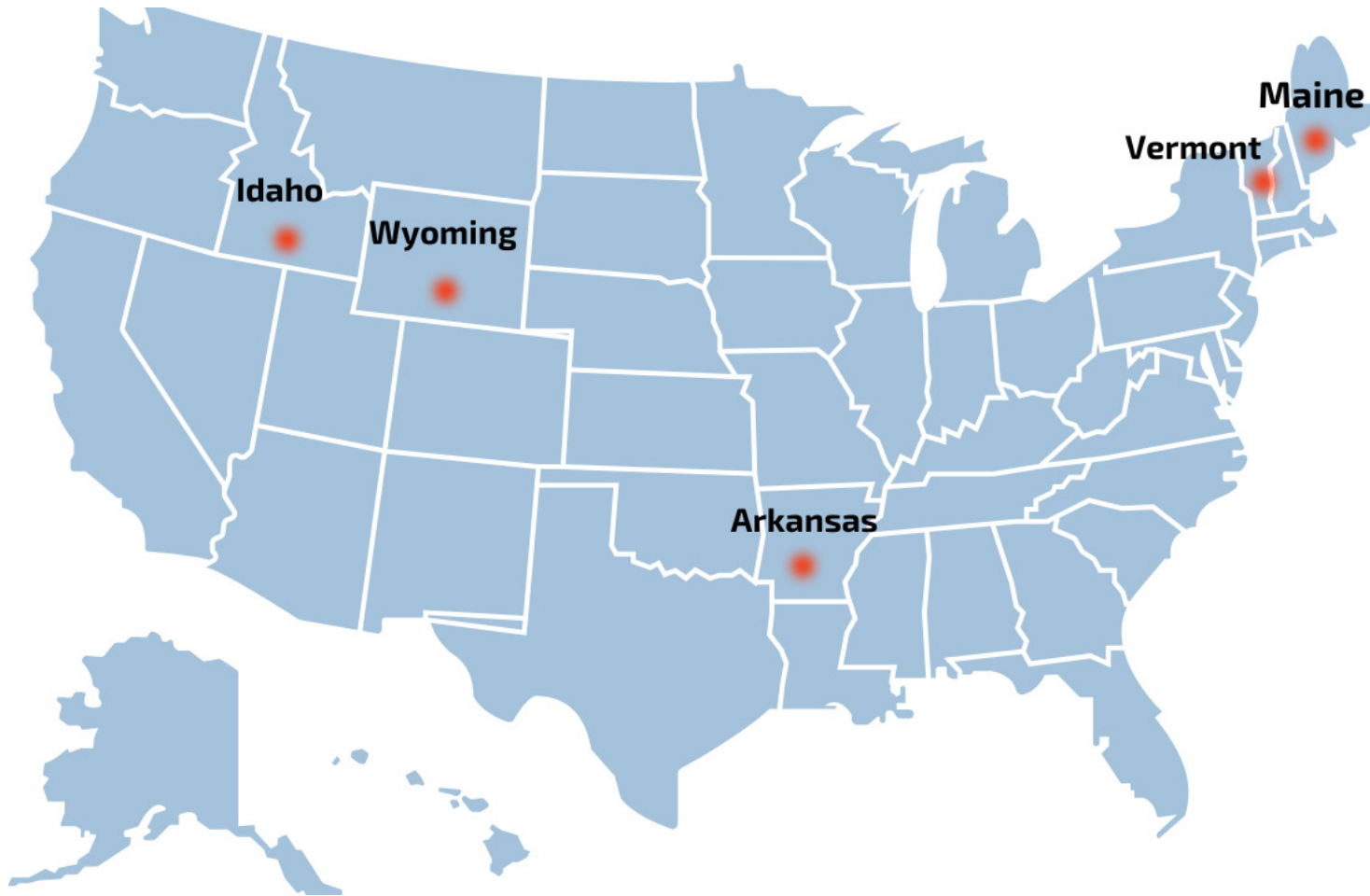
Marketing & Outreach

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion &
Accessibility

Partnerships

Resources

Participating Agencies



- Arkansas Career Development Center and Rehabilitation Services
- Idaho Vocational Rehabilitation
- Maine Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- HireAbility Vermont
- Wyoming Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Knowledge Translation (KT)

Integrated KT Strategies

VR's Key Partners for Apprenticeship Program Development

01 Agency staff & workforce partners

02 Youth with disabilities

03 Families of youth with disabilities

04 Businesses



KT Product: Rural Youth Apprenticeship Toolkit for VR

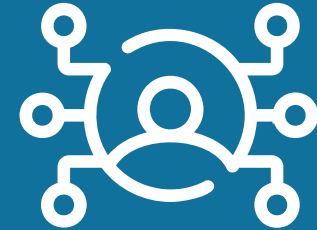
Transportation



Internet Access



Employer Networks



Marketing Outreach



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility



Partnerships



Integrated KT Approaches



Learning
Collaborative for
VR Agencies



Advisory Groups



Iterative Product
Development
Process

Advisory Groups: RYAD Advisory Council

INTRODUCTION TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, & ACCESSIBILITY (DEIA) IN APPRENTICESHIPS



Definitions

Diversity: The representation and valuing of varied identities and perspectives by honoring lived experiences of communities

Equity: Intentional distribution of access and resources to eliminate barriers in our society

Inclusion: The creation of a culture of belonging that prioritizes the contribution and participation of all people involved in an organization

Accessibility: Full and independent access for all people to employment, facilities, services, and information through intentional design, accommodations, and respect

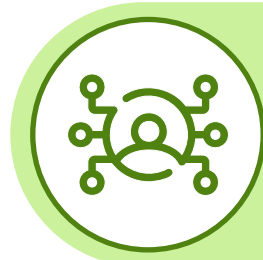
Key Goals of Inclusive Apprenticeships

- To have training models for all apprentices regardless of disability that allow apprentices to acquire the same knowledge and fully engage in the program practices, training modalities, and activities
- To implement integrative trainings and program design that leverage a variety of technologies, materials, and practices accessible to all apprentices
- To create apprenticeships where every component is designed for all apprentices to interact, benefit, and succeed within the program, from inception to implementation
- To design high-quality apprenticeship programs for everyone to engage in as a strategy for economic mobility and advancement
- To remove all barriers to participation, promote retention, and increase completion rates of apprenticeship programs
- To prioritize human-centered design and the voice/feedback of participants, not just the voice of the employer, to allow apprentices to thrive, see themselves, and benefit from all components of the model
- To center participants' goals, needs, and experiences to ensure they get what they benefit from the program

This product was created based on feedback from the [Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development Project's \(RYAD\) Advisory Council](#). The RYAD Project is funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant # 90DPK00006-01-00).



Provide input on design, tools, and implementation strategies

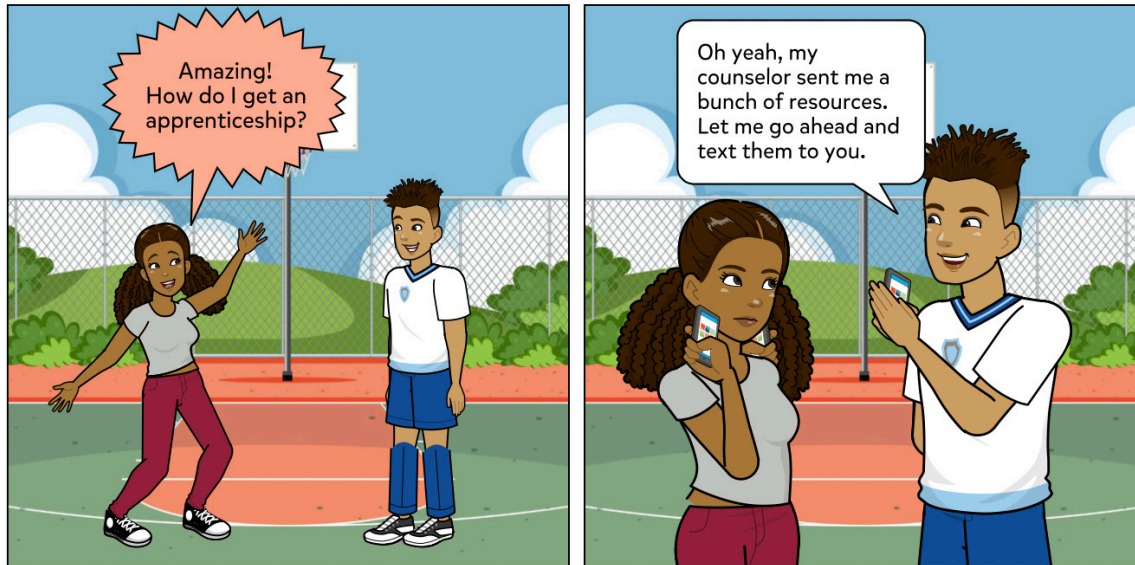


Create a network through which information and tools can be disseminated for use within those groups/systems



Discuss national implications of RYAD findings and lessons learned for systems-level policy and practice initiatives

Advisory Groups: Youth Advisory Board



RYAD comic strip excerpt

Develop

- Develop key messages that are youth-geared

Understand

- Understand what youth know about apprenticeship

Create

- Create a youth network for reviewing and disseminating info about apprenticeship

Integrated KT Strategy: Learning Collaborative for VR Agencies



Communication

Fosters dialogue between VR agencies, model experts, and researchers



Implementation Support

Creates a forum to provide guidance on apprenticeship implementation in varying agency infrastructures



Problem-Solving

Generates innovative solutions and strategies for apprenticeship implementation barriers



Resource Development

Informs the development of products and tools useful for apprenticeship implementation



Research & Evaluation

Provides research, data, and evaluation support to measure success



Iterative Product Development Process

Co-development of resources in partnership with:

- Youth with disabilities
- Project partners
- VR agencies

Implementation

Wyoming Vocational Rehabilitation Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Pilot Pre-Apprenticeship

- Primary goal:
 - Provide underserved populations that receive services from the Division of Vocational Rehab (DVR) with accessible pathways to meaningful employment.
 - Grow the pool of trained workforce in areas of labor shortages within the State of Wyoming.
- Establishing a pilot program:
 - The construction industry added the greatest number of jobs in the State of Wyoming between 2022 and 2023, driving the decision to pilot RYAD in the field of construction (Moore).

Source: Moore, M. (2024). 2023Q4 Quarterly Update: Construction Drives Wyoming Employment Growth. Wyoming Labor Force Trends, 61(7).

Pilot Pre-Apprenticeship Tiers

- Use of existing apprenticeship models to determine required competencies (Industry models | competency model clearinghouse 2024)
- Collaborating with industry experts
- Translating competencies to micro-credentials through the Maker Access Pass (MAP) program.

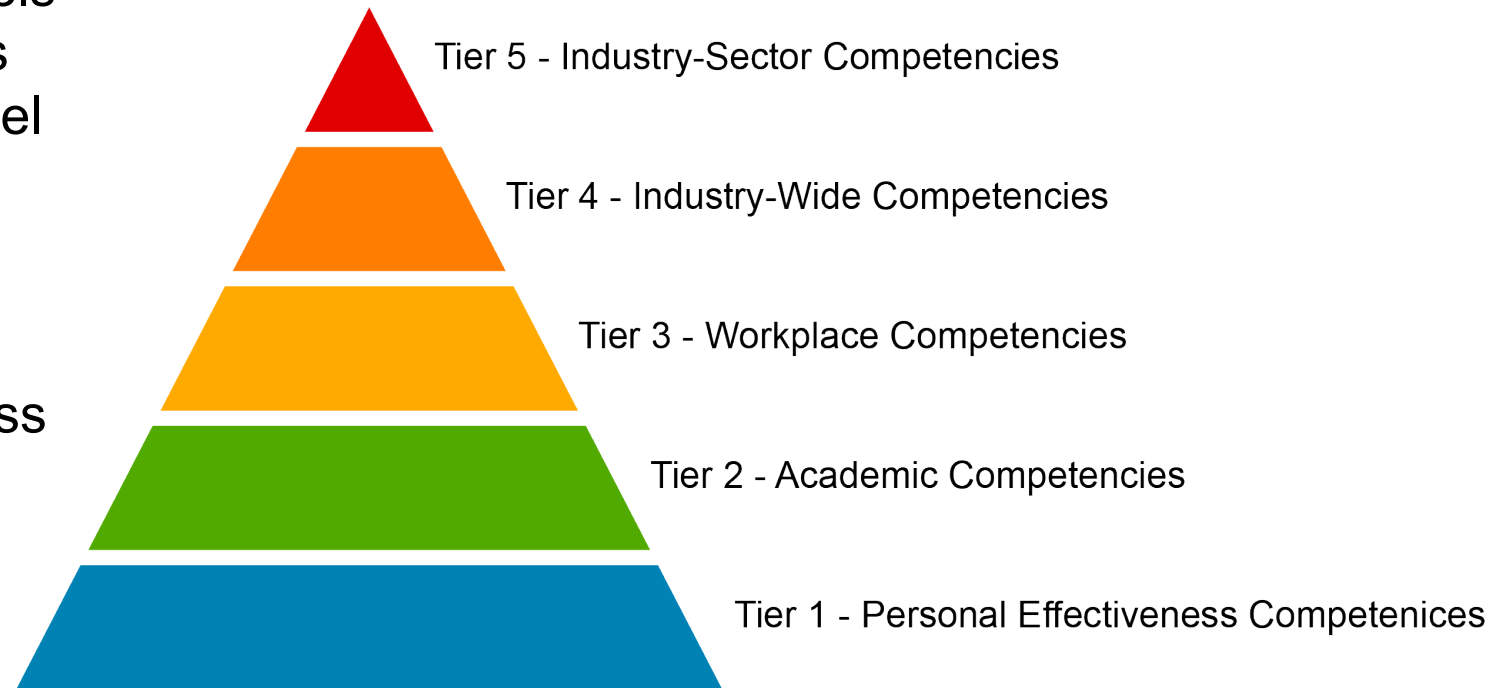


Image permission: Adobe Stock

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. (2024). *Industry models | competency model clearinghouse*. Competency Model Clearinghouse.

<https://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/competency-models/pyramid-home.aspx>

Pilot Pre-Apprenticeship: MAP Program

Pre-apprenticeships follow the format of registered apprentice programs with related instruction and on-the-job training. The MAP program is a comprehensive training system that provides workshops in accessible formats.

- Provides students access to makerspace technology for hands-on experience.
- Students are awarded badges for hard and soft skills as required competencies for the pre-apprenticeship pathway.
- After completing related instruction, pre-apprentices complete 40 hours of a DVR-sponsored work experience within the construction trade of choice.
- The MAP system includes makerspaces across the State as well as a fleet of mobile makerspaces to provide access to rural and remote communities.

Image Permission: Innovation Wyrkshop

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Pilot Outcomes

Of the initial seven students who signed up for the program, three started the program and one is on track to complete the program this fall.

- Student selected HVAC for pre-apprenticeship pathway.
- MAP badges were accessible in a variety of formats, allowing the student to independently work through content.
- The student was able to take extended breaks from related instruction when needed.
- After taking the summer off, the student will be ready to complete his DVR-sponsored work experience and earn pre-apprenticeship certification.



Pilot Pre-Apprenticeship Lessons Learned

- Challenges
 - Attrition rate and retention
 - Finding a sustainable entity to house the program
 - Estimating time of completion

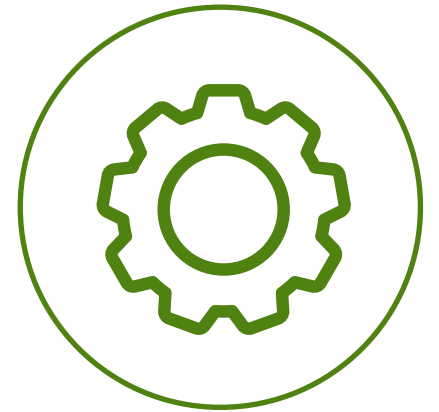


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Expansion

To determine areas of RYAD expansion, data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Wyoming Workforce Services was used to find occupations that are projected to see above average job growth.

- Healthcare and Social Assistance were found to have higher than average short and long term industry projections.
- Professions with apprenticeship pathways were selected based on:
 - Higher than average growth rate
 - Large number of projected annual openings

Alternative Pre-Apprenticeships

- Providing pathways for preETS students to earn Department of Labor certification for Vocational Rehab work experiences without a registered apprentice track.

Tony, G., & Knapp. (2019, May). Wyoming Health Care Occupation Dashboards: 2019. Health Care. http://doe.state.wy.us/lmi/health/Health_Care_Dashboards_2019.pdf

Department of Labor. (n.d.). O*Net online. O*NET OnLine. <https://www.onetonline.org/>

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Benefits of Learning Collaborative: Resources

ICI Explore VR Toolkit

- Compiled resources
- Examples of employer partnerships
- Insights on barriers to the populations served
- Access to marketing materials to develop stronger community relationships

Benefits of Learning Collaborative: Peer Interactions

Connection with Peers

- Regular meetings to discuss projects and progress
- Enhanced problem-solving through shared expertise
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Peer-to-peer support and sharing of ideas

Works Cited

Department of Labor. (n.d.). O*Net online. O*NET OnLine. <https://www.onetonline.org/>

Moore, M. (2024). 2023Q4 Quarterly Update: Construction Drives Wyoming Employment Growth. Wyoming Labor Force Trends, 61(7).

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