

Workforce Development Update, February, 2009

HOT NEWS

ACLS TO JOIN WITH OTHER STATE AGENCIES TO ADDRESS POLICY BARRIERS TO COLLEGE TRANSITION FOR ABE STUDENTS

ACLS has joined with several other state agencies on an interagency policy group to focus on ABE Transition to Community College. The project, called *Bridges to Success*, is funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. The goal of the group is to identify and propose strategies for overcoming institutional barriers to successful transition of ABE students to community college. In addition to ESE/ACLS, partners include the MA Department of Higher Education, MA Executive Office of Community Colleges, Commonwealth Corporation, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, and the Department of Transitional Assistance. The group is expected to meet from February through June of 2009.

UNEMPLOYMENT

As you know, unemployment has skyrocketed and many of our students are likely to be among the newly unemployed. (See excerpt from Secretary Bump's press release):

“Boston – January 29, 2009 --- The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development reported today that the Massachusetts unemployment rate increased from 5.9 percent in November to 6.9 percent in December. Job losses for the month of December totaled 16,800. The recent job losses and increase in the total unemployment rate reflect the national economic recession's deep impact on Massachusetts during the fourth quarter.”

We have been informed by the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development that over 40% of Unemployment Insurance claimants have basic skills development needs. Contact your local WIB director to identify training strategies for these workers that may be implemented upon passage of the Economic Stimulus Bill. Local authority will be the guiding feature in developing such plans.

If your students need to apply for unemployment benefits, note that the Division of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) has two call centers for customers to file claims:

Teleclaim:

To file an initial claim, to reopen a claim, to resolve problems, customers are advised to use the Teleclaim system, where they will speak with a live representative.

1. The best times to call are after 2:00 pm and later in the week. Callers are also encouraged to call on Saturday (8:00am to 1:30pm), where there is currently little or no wait time.
2. Teleclaims Centers are open on President's Day between 8:30 am to 6:30 pm.

Telecert:

After the initial claim is filed on Teleclaim, another call center -- the Telecert system -- allows individuals to claim their weekly benefit through an automated system by telephone.

1. Sunday hours: extended to 10:00 p.m. to allow more claimants to certify for prior week's benefits on the first day.
2. The DUA has developed Tips for Weekly Claim Certification.

NEXT STEPS Strategies

Are you looking for education and training opportunities for students after they attain their G.E.D.? In this space, opportunities will be highlighted from now through the July mailing:

Consider **CityLab Academy at BU**:

Encourage your Students who are Strong in Math and Science to Apply to CityLab Academy!

- Free Tuition and 12 Boston University Credits
- Two semester degree track program (September through May)
- Certificate in Biomedical Laboratory Science
- Free Books & Calculators
- Science and Laboratory Classes
(Evening program: Mondays through Thursdays 5:30 pm - 8:30 pm)
- Training For Biomedical Lab Job
- Boston University Medical Campus (in Boston's South End)
- PLUS: laboratory internship, academic and laboratory classes, tours of hospital and research labs, guest speakers, assistance with job search. Applicants must be Boston residents, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and be eligible to work in the USA. Check out their website: <http://www.bumc.bu.edu/citylabacademy/description/> ; Call: 617-638-5664; Email: medacad@bu.edu

NEW WEBSITE: Find **Pathways to Success by 21** Information at <http://resources21.org>

Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board

The ABE/ESOL Subcommittee of the MA WIB met on Tuesday, January 27 at Commonwealth Corporation to be updated on plans to implement recommendations approved by the MA Workforce Investment Board in 2008. One of the subcommittee's recommendations, the establishment of a dedicated fund for workplace education, is moving forward, with recommendations having been sent to the Secretaries of Education and Labor and Workforce Development. Anne Serino (ACLS) and Harneen Chernow (Board of Education) have been active participant in these discussions.

Upcoming Events

SkillWorks and the Commonwealth Workforce Coalition are offering an information session on the **Food Stamp Employment and Training Program (FSET)**. As funds become more difficult to secure, this is a potential revenue source for community organizations, intermediaries, and other workforce stakeholders. This session will provide an overview of the program, answer questions regarding how the funding works, and will also provide an eligibility training on Food Stamps that can help to increase the number of Food Stamp recipients in your programs (and therefore increase your ability to increase FSET funding). The training will be held on: Thursday, February 26th from 9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. at BESTCorp, 33 Harrison Avenue, Boston, 3rd floor (two blocks from the Chinatown Orange line T stop). RSVP to Rebecca Harris at CEDAC/CWC at rharris@cedac.org to register for the session. The registration deadline is Monday, February 23rd.

Conferences

The **3rd Annual New England Workforce Development Professionals Conference**, "Delivering Professional Workforce Services in Tough Times", is on March 27 at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester.

The Call for Proposals is online at <http://thecenter-hcc.org/newfdp/index.html>. The format is changed this year to offer four tracks to offer workshops that cut across various sectors: 1) Working with Individuals; 2) Employer Partnerships; 3) Strengthening the System; and 4) Tools of the Trade for the Profession. For more information, contact Keith Hensley at Holyoke Community College at khensley@hcc.mass.edu.

Sharing Skills – Building Connections: Annual Commonwealth Workforce Coalition (CWC) conference: March 11, 2009 at the DCU Center in Worcester. Many ABE folks are presenting, and ABE providers who are concerned about next steps to employment and education are encouraged to attend this conference. There is a strand on CORI. Contact Rebecca Harris at 617-727-5944, Ext. 101 or e-mail her at rharris@cedac.org.

National Career Development Association Global Conference, June 30 – July 3, 2009, at the Hyatt Regency at Union Square, St. Louis, Missouri. For info, go to www.ncda.org

Research

The **Shared Youth Vision Federal Partnership** has released a report: *Common Sense, Uncommon Commitment: A Progress Report of the Shared Youth Vision Partnership*. In 2007, the Department of Labor, in conjunction with the Federal Partnership commissioned Abt Associates to conduct a study to document the evolution of the Shared Youth Vision, and identify key “success strategies” driving its progress at the federal and state levels. This report captures and documents: 1) the work of the Federal Partnership beginning in 2004 through 2007 in support of system transformation recommended in the White House Task Force Report of Disadvantaged Youth; 2) the work of the state pilot teams, including how they coordinated and integrated services for their target populations; how multiple partners agencies worked together at the service delivery level to serve targeted youth populations that reflects the state’s overall shared youth vision; how well policies and practices were identified and implemented based on their gap analysis.

JFF Newswire – Jobs for the Future disseminates information on a variety of publications related to “next steps for students” (For info, go to www.jff.org and click on “November Newswire”)

Better Together: Realigning Pre-College Skills Development Programs

Flexible Learning Options for Students

Learning and Working: Year One of the Jobs to Careers Initiative

Transforming Education in New England

An Agenda for the Obama Administration and the 111th Congress

Materials/Curriculum Tools

Commonwealth Corporation provides access to a youth-driven, youth directed public information piece featuring young people sharing their personal experiences and wisdom on

dropping out of school. A video, guide, and handouts are included. Go to www.commcorp.org for information located right on their home page.

The Career Development Toolkit is a new product launched by The Skills Library and developed by Jennifer Leonard. Jennifer had been a consultant with ESE's Connecting Activities unit for many years, and is experienced working with programs that serve youth. A particular highlight of this toolkit is the information it provides on industry sectors in Massachusetts, including health care, the arts, building trades, hospitality, and entrepreneurship. An electronic copy is available to schools and colleges for free. For information, go to <http://skillslibrary.com/careers>.

SABES:

Next Steps Workshops: Southeast SABES: SABES SE has planned a 2 day *Adult Ed Institute*. The theme and focus for this institute is “transitions” – transitions to work, higher education and/or community. Scheduled for two Saturdays in March (March 7 & March 21), they will be all day events.

Contact your **SABES Workforce Coordinator** for information on SABES WFD activities. Laurie Sheridan is the statewide SABES Workforce Coordinator; Contact her at 617-482-9485 or lsheridan@worlded.org. Go to www.sabes.org and scan the calendar for workforce related sessions. SABES Workforce Development Specialists include Dori McCormack at SABES West; Cathy Gannon at Central SABES, Kathleen Howell at SABES SE, Patricia Pelletier at SABES NE, and John Zhang at the ALRI.

For more information, contact Andrea Perrault, ACLS Workforce Development Specialist at 781-338-3852 or e-mail at aperrault@doe.mass.edu.