



***Get Into Energy***  
***Outreach and Student Support***

***A Report for the Center for Energy  
Workforce Development***

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## ***Get Into Energy Outreach and Student Support***

The nine states identified for study under the Career Pathways Project Plan vary greatly in the quality of career coaching and career development resources they provide. Some are working hard to be innovative and help their constituencies achieve career success, exemplifying best practices in services offered and knowledge of employment opportunities available, while others are doing the bare minimum to maintain funding, often due to staff size and lack of creative leadership. Few, however, offer active career advising services for individuals.

### ***Methodology***

For each of the nine states, we researched both education and workforce career development programs, and in some cases, identified programs outside of these two areas to highlight. Where there were true instances of best practices, these are highlighted. We spoke with between four and six people per state, supplemented by Web research. At the end of each state section, there is a numeric rating of the state's efforts related to career advising for those ages 16-26, with 1 representing "no evidence of career advising" and 5 representing "exemplary use of career advising."

In gathering the data, we identified questions in several areas, but were not able to get specific responses to all questions:

- Use of career coaching/advising and the types of services offered
  - Who qualifies?
  - Do you use assessments?
  - Do you identify training and education gaps?
  - Do you discuss short and long term goals? Job vs. career?
- Barriers to receiving services
- Communication/outreach channels
  - Traditional
  - New media
- Tracking of outcomes
  - What methods are used?
- Other agencies to contact for information
  - Are there programs that you know of that you would call exemplary?

### ***California-***

**Career Coaching/Advising Services –** There is great awareness of the needs of the energy industry within California and many resources point high school and college students in that direction. For those not in school, though, there are fewer resources available. Some advising services are offered through

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the state's One-Stop system, but these are not extensive and are generally intake sessions where the individual may identify career goals and be steered toward other resources, such as online tools. One such resource is the California Career Resource Network, which offers tools for those interested in learning more about careers, whether students or out of school. There are many games and activities, some for individual use, others classroom or group-based, to help participants identify career goals, life needs, and determine a plan for fulfilling those goals and needs. There is a great deal of emphasis on finding the *right* job, not just any job, but no indication that there is individual advising to help clients make good decisions.

**Client Demographics** – One-Stops offer basic career exploration programs for those 14-21, paid for by WIA.

**Barrier to Receiving Career Advising Services** – California's economic issues are proving a huge barrier to developing any innovative programs or outreach methods to the target population. Other identified barriers include transportation and language.

**Communication/Outreach** – There are posters in One-Stop centers and in career centers in colleges and high schools, but for anyone outside of that system, entrée to programs is likely to come by word of mouth or online research if young adults have that access.

**Outcomes** – We were unable to access information on outcomes in California.

#### **Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old**

- Southern California Edison is partnering with ten community colleges around the state to offer assistance to financially needy students who are interested in studying for green jobs. Each school will receive \$100,000 for use in areas where workforce demand is expected to grow, including biofuels production, environmental compliance, and transportation and alternative fuels.
- Energy is featured in the state's Apprenticeship Program, which offers opportunities for learning while earning including line erector, power lineman, electrician, and solar energy installer.

RATING: 2

#### ***Florida-***

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Florida is a leader in the area of career development *for students* generally, and in its awareness of the opportunities presented by the energy industry. As with nearly all the states, however, there is little linkage between those who are *out of school* and services like career advising that might lead those individuals to an energy career path. The One-Stops use online-based tools to assist with career planning, but there is no active advising to accompany this beyond basic case management services.

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**Client Demographics** – Workforce offices like One-Stops offer WIA-funded programs for 14-21 year olds.

**Barrier to Receiving Career Advising Services** – Transportation, particularly in rural areas. Language is also an issue in certain areas of the state.

**Communication/Outreach** – Florida recently adopted a State Strategic Plan for Workforce Development 2010-2015 and one of the goals of that plan is to provide greater outreach to jobseekers in rural and distressed urban areas. These efforts will include use of broadband, transportation assistance, and increased choices in training and education to be made available through distance learning opportunities.

**Outcomes** – We were unable to access information on outcomes in Florida.

#### **Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old**

- The State of Florida has established 12 Banner Centers that are linked to community colleges and serve as resources for training, education, and information on specific industries, including separate centers for energy and alternative energy. The Banner Center for Energy works with input from energy industry partners to customize education and training to meet the industry needs. A primary goal is to provide a pipeline of skilled workers, entry level to advanced, for the energy industry. Funding is provided by Workforce Florida, Inc., which oversees and monitors the administration of the state's workforce policy, programs, and services
- The state also has a program called Florida Ready to Work which issues a credential using the WorkKeys National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) assessments in Applied Math, Reading for Information and Locating Information.

Rating: 2

### **Georgia**

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Georgia One-Stop and Career Centers use the self-serve Georgia Career Information System (GCIS) to assist individuals in their search for employment, but there is also active participation by a career counselor, at least early in the process. GCIS includes self-assessments on interests, skills, and values, and the students create portfolios of their assessment results, resumes, and research on careers.

**Client Demographics** – Demographics info not available.

**Barriers** – Like many workforce systems, Georgia's is facing higher caseloads per counselor and those needing assistance may not be able to get the level of attention that they require.

**Communication/Outreach** – The Georgia resources are advertised where they are used; that is, if an individual can find his way to the Career Center, there will be posters and brochures about the services

offered. There is not much in the community, though, that would bring someone in the door specifically for the advising services.

**Outcomes** – We were unable to obtain outcomes data for Georgia.

#### **Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old**

- The State of Georgia's Work Ready Program through the Governor's Office of Workforce Development uses ACT's WorkKeys assessments in applied math, reading for information and locating information to award Work Ready Certificates. Scores on the three tests determine the level of certificate awarded, and employers can use the certificate levels in their hiring process. The exams are given in Georgia high schools and in assessment centers around the state including technical colleges, GoodWill centers, and even through some employers.
- The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) saw a 4 percent increase in enrollment in FY 2008. The Technical Colleges also saw a 7 percent increase in enrollment in the Adult Education area, with a 12 percent jump in the number of GED diplomas earned.
- Georgia provides scholarships and grants to those attending four-year or technical colleges under the Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally (HOPE) program. HOPE Grants can be used toward a certificate or degree at a technical college, while the HOPE Scholarship is for those who will be attending a public or private college or university and can maintain an average of "B" or better and meet other curriculum requirements. Even those who have left school most likely know of it. They may not realize, however, that it can still be of benefit to them. The HOPE program is supported by revenues from the Georgia State Lottery.
- Rating: 3

#### ***Indiana***

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Indiana Career Connect, the state- funded official career site for the State of Indiana, is a comprehensive web-based service that offers individuals and employers the opportunity to learn more about each other. There is, however, no career advising that accompanies use of this resource.

**Client Demographics** – No data available

**Barriers** – The lack of any readily evident advising program

**Communication/Outreach** – The Career Connect site and its resources are promoted through these same social service agencies and through school counseling offices and One-Stops. If an individual is not using any of these services, however, it may be difficult for him to find his way to the site.

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**Outcomes** – We were unable to locate any formal career advising services for those in the target population in Indiana and therefore have no outcomes data.

#### **Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old**

- Ivy Tech Community College participates in a program with the Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce to find internships for young people who are still in school. The program benefits students in high school and two- and four-year colleges. Over 400 Ivy Tech students are currently registered to participate in the program. This program has no component to serve those who are out of school.

**Rating:** 1

#### ***Minnesota-***

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – While not traditional career coaching, Minnesota's Wired for 2020 is a state-funded yearlong effort to get more mentors involved with Minnesota youth in order to spark their occupational interests and expand their thinking about possible careers. Many of the programs help out-of-school youth and accept referrals from schools, but also from social service and community agencies.

The Minnesota Youth Program offers short-term training and employment services to low-income, at-risk youth whether in school or out. Services include training, work experience, mentoring, and career advising.

**Client Demographics** – Wired for 2020 includes youth ages 16-18. The Minnesota Youth Program serves ages 16-21.

**Barriers** – Identified barriers to participation in the career advising programs offered in Minnesota include language, transportation issues, and lack of computer knowledge.

**Communication/Outreach** – Wired for 2020 is using many resources and social media tools to generate the conversations between students and mentors, including YouTube, Twitter, Linked In, and Flickr.

Positively, Minnesota uses a variety of methods to reach teens and young adults, including outreach to schools, community centers, adult learning centers, and juvenile detention centers.

**Outcomes – Minnesota Youth Program results for FY 2009:** There were 3,270 participants and 75 percent were in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Over 80 percent participated in work experience and nearly half received guidance on career and post-secondary education. Nearly four percent were dropouts who returned to school. Of all participants, nearly 66 percent remained in school, obtained a GED or graduated. Over four percent became employed, and 3.5 percent entered postsecondary education, an apprenticeship, or the military.

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### Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old

- Through a 2008 federal grant, Minnesota high school counselors in schools serving large numbers of low-income students and students from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education received training on more effective methods of providing guidance toward postsecondary education. In addition, the grant funded new ***training for educators, community leaders, counselors and others to build their capacity to present college access material to families across the state.*** With a focus on low-income communities and communities of color, parent presentations were developed and given in English and other languages to ensure that parents understand the opportunities presented by college and financial aid.

Rating: 4

### **North Carolina-**

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – North Carolina officials cite out-of-school youth and those most at risk of dropping out as an important part of the new workforce “supply pipeline” that businesses need to fill job vacancies in the knowledge-driven economy. Through WIA funded programs, these young people receive training and job search skills, and also benefit from ongoing career guidance to try to re-connect them to education or prepare them for high growth industries in the state.

Local service providers determine what program elements each youth needs through an assessment of the youth’s skills and needs. An individualized strategy is developed from assessment results, detailing the services needed as well as the sequence in which they should be provided. Youths may participate in multiple elements as indicated by assessment results and receive follow-up services for a minimum period of twelve months. Services include tutoring, skills development, mentoring, and career counseling.

**Client Demographics** – This program, through the North Carolina Department of Commerce, serves youth between 14 and 21 using WIA funding.

**Barriers** – Barriers to participation may include transportation, developmental issues, and childcare needs.

**Communication/Outreach** – Workforce resources for those 16-26 are not well promoted for those who are outside of a school environment. There are many programs for those in school that use a variety of social media and more traditional outlets to communicate their availability and services, but the workforce system has not followed this path.

**Outcomes** – We were unable to access information on outcomes in North Carolina.

### Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old

- North Carolina offers extensive options in online learning for those still enrolled in high school. Under the Learn and Earn program, high school students can take college courses online for free

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while completing their high school requirements. The credits are transferable to any public college or university in the state. The online approach appeals to many students who find that traditional classroom settings are boring or to students who want to get a head start on the type of learning opportunities they will have in college.

Rating: 4

### ***Ohio***

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Ohio's workforce centers use a variety of Workforce Investment Act funded programs to assist youth in the state. These programs include the use of interest and skill assessments, computer training, resume and interview assistance, and a work experience program that will pay wages for up to six months for an individual who has matched his or her interests with an opportunity offered by a local employer. While workforce staff provide some advising services, they say their caseloads are often too large to provide the extensive service many young people require to make good decisions about their career paths.

**Client Demographics** – WIA programs serve those 14-21 years of age

**Barriers** – The largest barrier appears to be the ability of staff to provide adequate services based on time and budget constraints.

**Communication/Outreach** – There is not a concerted communication/outreach effort related to career advising services.

**Outcomes** – We could not obtain information on outcomes in Ohio.

### **Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old**

- In 2002, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ohio Department of Education created the Early College High School (ECHS) model in response to the state's high dropout rate. Since that time, five stand alone ECHS facilities have been established in economically distressed areas of the state and 2,200 students have participated in the program. More than 30 percent of students graduate with both a high school diploma and two years of college credit or an associate's degree. In 2009, more than 91 percent of the ECHS students graduated, more than six percentage points higher than the state average. Despite these results, funding for the program was left out of the last state budget.
- The University System of Ohio has also identified adult learners as an important target for the foreseeable future and has laid out several steps to achieve the goal of improving the state's level of education attainment. There is no indication whether any of these include career advising:

- The establishment of a network of adult education programs focused on helping adults become college ready by offering convenient and affordable “college prep” opportunities around the state.
- Integration of programs offered at adult workforce centers and technical courses offered at community colleges to develop an efficient system for students who complete programs at adult workforce centers that are equivalent to technical programs offered at community colleges to earn college credit and develop clear pathways. These adult education programs often include people in the 16-26 year-old group.
- Allow adult learners to build their academic and technical skills by earning a series of pre-college and college-level “stackable certificates” that provide a pathway to career-oriented postsecondary training and economic success.

Rating: 2

## **Texas**

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Achieve Texas offers a variety of tools for students and working adults related to 16 career clusters. Achieve Texas resources are used by those who have left school to help with interest and values matching in career planning. Workforce centers around Texas use the program in conjunction with other resources such as the program through Workforce Solutions of Greater Dallas where those out of school can get short term vocational training, paid work experience for up to 90 days, post-secondary education assistance of up to \$15,000, and participate in Project CEO, a program where individuals act as the CEO of their own lives. The program is part of WIA-funded services.

Project CEO participants develop basic employability skills like communication and time management, along with resume development and interviewing skills. Career advising in individual and group settings is part of the program.

**Client Demographics** – We were unable to obtain demographic info for career advising in Texas.

**Barriers** – Language, transportation, childcare, and illiteracy were the most commonly cited barriers.

**Communication/Outreach** – Outreach efforts related to career advising are mostly traditional methods such as brochures and posters in the One-Stops.

**Outcomes** – We were unable to obtain outcomes data for career advising in Texas.

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### Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old

- The Texas Education Agency cites best practices around the state related to career development. One such program, the Hidalgo Early College High School (HECHS) program, is through the Hidalgo Independent School District. The curriculum includes an interest inventory, an online career planning program, and incorporation of career activities in other classes.

Rating: 2

### **Washington**

**Career Coaching/Advising Services** – Washington’s Job Corps is a federally funded career readiness program aimed at low-income youth. The program offers a variety of services, including educational, career technical and social skills training and counseling on a variety of issues including career goals.

WIA Youth Services provides eligible youth with counseling, tutoring, job training, mentoring, or work experience. Other service options include summer employment, study skills training, or instruction in obtaining a GED or equivalent.

**Client Demographics** – Job Corps: 16-25 years old; economically disadvantaged; no history of serious behavioral problems. Runaways, homeless, foster children, and parenting youth are all given priority consideration. Over 1,320 participants were served by Job Corps centers in Washington State during July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007.

WIA: 4,841 young people (14-21) were served by the program during July 1, 2006-June 30, 2007.

**Barriers** – Transportation, language, illiteracy, and computer knowledge

**Communication/Outreach** – The programs are advertised through churches, community and social service agencies and mainly traditional methods such as posters, brochures, and speakers are used.

**Outcomes** – Job Corps: Outcome measures include attainment of a GED or high school diploma, completion of a vocational program, number and quality of job placements, and long-term retention in the workforce after separation from the program.

### Other Programs Available to Those 16-26 Years Old

- The Center of Excellence for Energy Technology at Centralia College offers students the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to be successful in the industry. The Center is led by a partnership of industry and labor leaders and provides clear pathways for students interested in jobs in energy.
  - The State of Washington has adopted a strategic plan for workforce development called High Skills High Wages. A major goal of the plan is to ensure that everyone receives the

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education, training and support they need for success in postsecondary education and/or the workforce. One objective is related to “older youth” with a goal of reducing unemployment rates in this population through a series of job and apprenticeship programs. There is no specific mention made, however, of career advising as part of the initiative. Washington is the only state surveyed that is specifically addressing the issue of unemployment among older youth.

Rating: 3

### ***Overall General Observations:***

- Throughout the nine states, many organizations are doing what is required to receive funding, but true innovation is rare. One-Stops are providing basic services for anyone out of work and are adapting some of these services for those in the target age group in accordance with WIA youth program guidelines. Both education and workforce systems provide many tools related to career exploration and development, but actual career advising services to accompany these self-service tools varies greatly. For those who are out of school and/or out of work and struggling for direction, this is a major problem. One-to-one or even group advising could be a great confidence-builder for this population. A significant majority of the individuals interviewed during the course of this research were unaware of the opportunities the energy industry offers. Many spoke of the interest of young people in “green” jobs, but said they weren’t quite sure what these jobs were and how they could steer people to them.
- Also significant was the number of individuals working in education or the workforce system who were unaware of the services the other system offered. There is a great need for more sharing of services available to meet the needs of the target population.
- Marketing efforts around career exploration programs for those 16-26 are very basic, at best, with few agencies or departments using social media. Most are relying on posters and brochures at schools, One-Stops, churches, and community agencies to get the word out about the services they offer.
- Outcome tracking systems varied, but most followed the guidelines set by their funding sources and gathered basic demographic information and program results on an annual basis.

### ***Recommendations:***

- Develop career coaching manuals for each state encouraging a more integrated approach to career development that include the elements of a basic career coaching program and more specifically educate career advisors/counselors from high schools, colleges, One-Stops, and community organizations about the issues facing the energy industry and the opportunities this presents for those with whom they are working. This would include information about the many different types of jobs available in the industry, the requirements for these jobs,

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definitions and examples of “green” jobs, energy career pathways, and how to partner with the energy industry to fill these positions with viable candidates from the target 16-26 population. (CAEL)

- Cost for basic manual: \$12,000; Customization per state: \$5,000
- Offer virtual training in five to nine states for counselors/advisors on how to best use these manuals to the benefit of their job-seeking candidates and the energy industry. (CAEL)
  - Five to nine three-hour training webinars for up to 50 participants: \$3,000 each
- Offer live training in five to nine states for counselors/advisors on use of the manuals. While more expensive, CAEL believes that the in-person approach to training on this topic allows for greater interaction, use of different tools such as role-play, and can be augmented by short follow-up webinars to assess integration of knowledge and skills.
  - Five to nine daylong in-person trainings: \$7,000 each plus travel
  - One-hour follow up webinars: \$1,000 each