

# Inclusive Prosperity Group Workshop

## March 7, 2022



# Today's Learning Questions and Goals

- From a program management lens, based on recommended resources document review and discussion, what types of resources and support are needed for you to more effectively collaborate to deliver holistic services?
- From a participant experience lens, what do successful participants' experiences teach us about how to better support such successes?
- Identify group interests in learning from and engaging with successful program graduates.
- From an employer lens, how is the employment landscape changing, and what are this group's plans for exploring these changes?

# Today's Agenda

1. Introduction and agenda preview
2. *Recommended Resources on Collaborations and Holistic Services* - summary of peer recommendations and discussion
3. Peer responses to participant interviews and discussion of what successful participants can teach us
4. Full membership discussion about top-selected options for engaging successful graduates
5. Preview and discussion of our plans to explore the changing employment environment
6. Key takeaway activity

# Updated Action Learning Group Framework

Dates	Exploratory Questions	Major Assignments and Activities
Dec 13 and Jan 10	<i>What does progress towards inclusive prosperity look like <u>to me</u>?</i>	Individual presentations made and common themes documented
Jan 24, Feb 14 and <b>March 7</b> <b>*You are Here*</b>	<i>What do <u>participants'</u> journeys towards family-sustaining career pathways look like?</i>	Conduct and share results of interviews with past participants who entered with multiple challenges and successfully advanced towards family-sustaining career pathway
March 28 and April 18	<i>What improvements are <u>employers</u> making in entry-level jobs and support for career development?</i>	Guest speaker and peer-to-peer activities about changing employment environment and new approaches to engaging top employers in various sectors and occupations
May 9	<i>What can we do to accelerate progress towards inclusive prosperity?</i>	Individual members or teams of members each propose one new program-specific and/or collaborative initiative that will advance progress towards inclusive prosperity

# Recommended Resources on Collaborations and Holistic Services – Overall Notes

- 7 members sent recommended resources and thoughts about them – thank you!
- Resources you recommended varied widely; However two resources were mentioned by 2 members (EMPath Mobility Mentoring and The Family Independence Initiative/UpTogether)
- One new resource was identified, a program in NYC – [Camba](#)
- We will incorporate your recommendation notes into a revised version of the document and send it back to you

*“Having a resource like this is helpful for conversations about innovation, which can sometimes lack direction. It’s helpful to have specific, researched strategies that can be used to frame the conversation.”*  
[Janice]

# Recommended Resources – Three Themes from Member Comments

<b>High Interest in <u>Client-Driven Services</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Love the idea of the “client” taking charge of his/her strategic plan [Sally]</i></li><li>• <i>This model (FII) is very different in how the client does work independently [Cristina]</i></li><li>• <i>The (US Partnership on Mobility) research was informed by the lived experiences of people who have been affected by poverty in over 30 communities [Janice]</i></li></ul>
<b>Need for <u>Customized Services</u> or <u>Experiences</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Allow for flexibility within programs....peoples’ paths are different. [Sally]</i></li><li>• <i>EMPath Mobility Mentoring is a way to provide individualized services, not a one size fits all approach. [Cristina]</i></li><li>• <i>EmPath Mobility Mentoring can lead a person to make better decisions, better planning, and better steps to meet proposed goals [Alexis]</i></li></ul>
<b><u>Longer-Term Relationships</u> Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>A program such as this (EMPath, Camba) has to be longer-term [Sally]</i></li></ul> <p>[Note: EMPATH, Family Independence Initiative and United Way’s Financial Empowerment models all emphasize longer-term client relationships]</p>
<b>Putting it All Together</b>	<p><i>LEP clients need more intensive empowerment to overcome their "feeling of" helplessness and low morale caused by linguistic and cultural barriers, which require long-term commitment. The (United Way) service model emphasized a multi-year commitment to serving clients, and individualized services via ongoing coaching relationships. [Ji-Young]</i></p>

# Discussion on Recommended Resources for Collaborations and Holistic Services

Use 'raise hands' to offer your thoughts to respond to either of the first two questions below or send a chat response.

- *Which of the three themes (client-driven and customized services and longer-term relationships) would you highlight as important and why?*
- *What kind of information and resource(s) or support would most help you to more effectively collaborate to deliver holistic services?*

Closing question (wait until this question is called to respond via chat):

- *What gets in the way of doing more of this work? (Choose either a specific area/theme of interest or consider all of them together)*

# REMINDER FROM LAST WORKSHOP: Initial Observations from Participant Interview Notes

- Total of 9 participant interview reports
- Nearly half (4) participated in an ESOL-related program
- “Confidence” and “believing” in oneself were often-repeated themes – Nearly 100% described this in some way!
- Nearly all mentioned specific people who supported their progress: case managers, teachers, specialized service providers, peers
- A little under half (4) mentioned multiple services that supported their progress
- Disorienting experiences – positive and negative - often led to enrollment in programs (4 or 5 mentioned this, in various ways)
- Participants’ descriptions of what ‘better’ lives look like sometimes referenced ‘prosperity’ or jobs and often also mentioned other life changes that they valued

We found your interview notes fascinating to review! We hope these observations are a useful jumping-off point to discuss ways to support their journeys.

# REMINDER FROM LAST WORKSHOP: In Their Words-Examples of Potential Indicators of Better Lives

- **Better Jobs:** *A better paying job, and a job with a schedule; Continue growing within my company and earn a raise*
- **Changed Self-Image or Mindset:** *A feeling of believing in my potential; I feel much more confident about my abilities*
- **Quality of Life Experiences:** *I volunteered at my kid's school; I feel comfortable with talking with people*
- **Expanded Awareness of Opportunities:** *Having people that worked with me to provide me with opportunities that I didn't know I had; Didn't realize how many opportunities were out there for me*

# REMINDER FROM LAST WORKSHOP: Program Grads' Advice to Others – Examples of Their Wisdom

- *Don't give up. Learning English takes time and you have to be patient.*
- *Stick with it. It will be hard in the beginning, but you can make it through and learn English.*
- *My advice to job seekers is to believe in yourself. Once you do so, you will be open to new opportunities and experiences.*
- *Believe in yourself, be patient, never give up, move forward, don't lose confidence. If you work hard and do these things and stay positive you can do anything.*
- *Be open to talking about who and where you are. Be open to opportunities. It doesn't have to be the exact match.*
- *Take advantage of the resources that are out there and keep pushing forward and people who are there to help you through.*

# Peer Reflections on Participant Interviews and What They Teach Us

- Christina Schoendorf, United Community
- Chris Garrett, Britepaths

After these remarks, each member will be asked to share via chat one insight learned from interviews with successful participants that can help guide our efforts to support these kinds of success journeys!

# REMINDER: How Might We Partner with Successful Graduates?

Below are the list of 6 options from which members voted for their top 2 interests.

1. Story-Based Case Review Process
2. Graduate Survey to Gather Economic Impact Data
3. Participant Story-Writing and Sharing as Empowerment Strategies
4. Graduate Panel Speakers for New Participants
5. Hiring Successful Graduates to Help Deliver Program Services
6. Training Employed Graduates for Program “Champion” Volunteer Roles

# The Top Options You Voted For

Option #4-Graduate Panels (7 votes)	Option #6: Grad Volunteers (8 votes)
<p>Janice Sally Ji-Young Cristina Vera Michael Alexis</p>	<p>Janice Sally Ji-Young Christina Vera Cristina Eliza Tatiana</p>
<p><b>“Graduate Panels’ in Which Successful Graduates Share Their Experiences to Inspire and Guide New Program Participants:</b> Participants mid-way through a workforce program may begin to doubt themselves. Program graduates who are like them can share their experiences – both challenges and successes - in a graduate panel event. These events can be like a power bar to re-energize workforce program participants for a longer-distance race towards life changes that seem more achievable after learning about others like them who have made it.</p>	<p><b>Train Successfully-Employed Graduates Become Volunteer Program ‘Champions’:</b> Successful program participants can be formally invited and trained as volunteer ‘champions’ to share their stories and refer others to the program and also how to advocate for ongoing program engagement within their places of employment.</p>

# Discussion about Your Top Two Interests in Engaging Successful Program Graduates: Grad Panels and Grad Volunteers

Please use “raise hands” to respond to the questions below when they are called, or you can send a chat to all with your response.

- *If you have some experience with one or both of these options, can you share what you’ve learned about what works?*
- *If you’ve wanted to do this kind of work with successful graduates but haven’t, what gets in the way of doing more of this?*
- *Would you be more interested in a program-specific graduate engagement initiative within your program or a collaborative graduate engagement initiative together with multiple programs?*  
[Send Chat response saying “program-specific” or “collaborative”]

# Shifting Perspectives: Exploring Employers' Experiences



Our exploratory question: *What improvements are employers making in entry-level jobs and support for career development and how do we effectively engage these employers?*

# A Seismic Shift in WFD Towards an Emerging Focus on Improving Job Quality?

1. Talent attraction, retention and development has risen to top of business' agendas (See [this](#) proposed Fairfax Co. initiative and [this](#) national report)
2. The labor shortage isn't going away anytime soon (See [this article](#))
3. In response, many businesses are conducting massive real-time experiments in re-writing job descriptions, and upgrading pay and job quality
4. These experiments are changing the employment landscape month-by-month, making traditional labor market data less useful
5. What's emerging -- a [Build Ladders AND Raise the Floor](#) movement?
6. This movement has the potential to lift up many previously-disadvantaged worker groups towards greater prosperity

**WFD providers who match employer and job-seekers Have a Front-Row Seat to Observe, Collect Real-time Data, and Respond Quickly to Advance New Opportunities for Business and Worker Success Towards Inclusive Prosperity!**

# A Few National Leaders and Resources on Job Quality

- **National Fund for Workforce Solutions:** Has [Job Quality Framework](#) and a [Guide for WFD Practitioners](#), [blog](#) and [video series](#)
- **Aspen Institute's [Job Quality Center of Excellence](#):** Has [Job Quality Tools Library](#), and [reports and blogs](#) on job quality
- **The Good Jobs Institute:** Offers research-based business tools like [The Good Jobs Solution](#) business strategy, and [guides for the journey](#) towards Good Jobs strategies
- **Talent Rewire:** Promotes business adoption of more inclusive [Opportunity Employment](#) with 6 action-oriented [principles](#) and a [toolkit of resources](#)

# Employer Perspective Discussions at Our Next Workshop on March 28th

- **National Guest Speaker/Q&A:**

- Tom Strong, Director of Employer Activation, National Fund for Workforce Solutions
- Discussion of the changing national landscape around job quality and strategies for engaging employers in this new environment

- **Peer Panel on Employer Success Stories/Q&A:**

- Panel of No. Virginia peers who partner with employers to share observations about ongoing changes in employment environment (TBD)
- Highlight recent examples of successful employer engagement

# Wrap-Up Dialogue: Your Key Takeaways from Today's Conversation

Reflect on what we've discussed in today's workshop:

***What stands out to you as something you want to remember or explore further that relates to our learning journey about inclusive prosperity?***

**Send a short chat note summarizing one key takeaway from today's workshop and conversation?**

# Next Steps

## **Staff Team Follow-Up**

- Send slides from today and possible follow up response request from all members to the 'Partnering with Graduates' activity
- Send summary notes from today's workshop

## **Group Members Follow-Up**

- Review follow up email for possible assignment (see above)