

## OPC/UPEP PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEW GUIDE

(e.g. VR; AJC, Employers; Secondary Education; Other External Partners)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview focused on your involvement with the [Onondaga Pathways to Careers (OPC) Program/Universal Pathways to Employment Program (UPEP)]. This is the college's name for the Pathways to Careers: Community College Interventions for Youth and Young Adults, an initiative funded by the Department of Labor. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for a company called Social Dynamics, an independent research firm located in Gaithersburg, Maryland. Social Dynamics is acting as subcontractor to Westat, an independent research firm in Rockville, Maryland who is contracted by the Department of Labor to conduct these interviews as part of the evaluation of the program.

As was explained in the initial invitation, your participation is voluntary and you can choose to not respond to any question for any reason. But keep in mind that the information you provide will be kept private to the extent provided by law. The information collected will be analyzed and published in aggregate form and we will not identify any individuals in any report or presentation.

Your participation will help provide valuable information that will assist the Department of Labor in making decisions regarding future program activities and their structure.

The interview will take approximately an hour. We would like to audio-record it to ensure accuracy. Only the team will have access to the recording for analytical purposes and the recording will be destroyed once the project is completed. Do I have your permission to continue?

Today's conversation is going to focus on a handful of specific topics and activities within the OPC/UPEP. Our goal is to learn more about **your role in the initiative, the goals of the program, collaboration among stakeholders, and the participation of students in the program**. We may follow-up with you to obtain additional details on these, and additional program topics, at a later date.

## Staff Role in OPC/UPEP

Let's start by discussing your role as a partner with [OPC/UPEP].

1. Name of Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROBE (if needed):**

- Is your organization a private or public entity?

2. What kinds of services does your organization provide, for example, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation, career planning?

**PROBES (if needed):**

- What kinds of services do you provide to college faculty and/or students?
- Is your organization/agency co-located at the college?

3. Briefly describe your role and responsibilities with your organization.

**PROBES (if needed):**

- What is your position title within your organization?
- What are your responsibilities with your organization?

## Outreach

4. Did a partnership between your organization and [OCC/PSCC] exist prior to the start of [OPC/UPEP]? If so, what was the nature of that relationship before the program started?

5. How did [OCC/PSCC] reach out to your organization to participate in [OPC/PSCC]? What made your organization want to participate?

## Partnership Role

6. Now tell me about your organization's role in [OPC/UPEP]?

**PROBES (if needed):**

- How does your organization collaborate with or support [OPC/UPEP]?
- What is your role within [OPC/UPEP]?

- Is there a formal (interagency) agreement between your organization, the college, and [OPC/UPEP]?
- What was your role in the development of the grant and the design of the program?
- Do you serve on a working group or committee within the college or the program? If so, which one? What is your role on the group/committee?
- Does your organization provide technical assistance and/or training to program staff or students? If so, what kind of T/TA do you provide?

## Partnership Objectives

**With technical assistance from USDOL and IEL, [OPC/UPEP] will develop models for providing integrated education and career development services to youth and young adults with disabilities. The goal is to help youth and young adults with disabilities to acquire the skills and credentials needed to obtain competitive jobs.**

7. **What are your organization’s specific objectives for your work with [OPC/UPEP] that align with this goal?**

## Involvement of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Development (asked of VR OR WF partners only)

8. **How is [OPC/UPEP] connecting with vocational rehabilitation and workforce development agencies to support educational and employment outcomes for students with significant disabilities?**

**PROBES (if needed):**

- Do VR and WF development agencies make referrals to [OPC/UPEP]? What is the process for making a referral from VR or WF to [OPC/UPEP]? Does [OPC/UPEP] make referrals to VR and/or WF?
- What, if any, services are available to [OPC/UPEP] participants through VR or WF?

## Involvement of Employers (asked of Employer partners only)

9. **What kinds of job training and work experiences does your organization offer to students?**
10. **How many students from [OPC/UPEP] has your organization interacted with, provided work-based learning experiences, or hired for a paid position?**

11. Has your organization had to provide workplace accommodations to any of the students? If so, please tell me about them.
12. What efforts are made by your organization to make your place of business accessible, inclusive, and accommodating of students with disabilities?
13. To what degree do you think [OPC/UPEP] has prepared their students for technical careers?

### **Involvement of Secondary Education (asked of Secondary Education partners only)**

14. How is [OPC/UPEP] connecting with secondary education programs to support post-secondary educational and employment outcomes for students with disabilities?

**PROBES (if needed):**

- Does your secondary education program make referrals to [OPC/UPEP]? What is the process for making a referral to [OPC/UPEP]? How many referrals has your program made?
- In what ways do secondary students participate in [OPC/UPEP]? How many have participated thus far?

### **Challenges and Successes**

15. Based on what you've experienced so far, what more is needed for [OPC/UPEP] to succeed?
16. From your perspective as a partner, what have you observed are the main challenges faced by the community college in getting [OPC/UPEP] up and running?
17. What are some of the promising practices, or observed successes of the program?
18. What do you attribute these promising practices or successes to?
19. Is there additional information you'd like to share with us?

Thank you very much for participating in this discussion. We have learned a lot about your partnership with [OPC/UPEP]. We may contact you in the coming weeks with follow-up questions about the program.