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**CJC Implementation Research Protocol:  
College Services Overview**

OMB Control No.1290-0012  
OMB approval expires 02/29/2020  
Abt Associates IRB approval No.0917

Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. Respondents' responses are voluntary.

**Introduction of and Informed Consent for the Study** *(read to all respondents)*

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview today.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and this is \_\_\_\_\_ and we are researchers from MDRC. We are here because MDRC and our partners, Abt Associates, are conducting a five-year study of the Cascades Program on behalf of the United States Department of Labor (DOL).

We are visiting to conduct in-person interviews with center staff and partners (such as referral partners and employers) to learn what is happening on the ground and what are the challenges of implementing this new program. Interviews will cover the organizational characteristics of the center, as well as its mission and vision, and how it fits within the Job Corps network.

These interviews will provide important qualitative information on the implementation at Cascades. We will use what we learn from these interviews to contribute to a report about the impacts and implementation of the Cascades program. This report will be submitted to DOL to inform the federal government about this new model.

**Privacy Statement** *[Interviewer must read this to all respondents]*

Before beginning the interview, **we** want to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and remind you that your participation is voluntary. **We** know that you are busy and will try to be as brief as possible. We have many questions and are going to talk to many different people, so please do not feel as though we expect you to be able to answer every question. You may also refuse to answer any question. The interview today should last about **60 minutes**. This interview is *not* part of a Job Corps audit or a compliance review. We are interested in learning about your ideas, experiences, and opinions about Cascades' implementation. There are no right or wrong answers. We want to know what you think.

In addition, before we start, I want to let you know that although we will take notes during these interviews, information is never repeated with the name of the respondent in any reports or in any discussions with supervisors, colleagues, or anyone from DOL. When we write our reports and discuss our findings, information from all the people we speak with is compiled and presented so that no one person can be identified. There is a small risk of loss of privacy, but we have many procedures in place to ensure your information does not get lost.

To help me accurately report on the information you share, it would help if I could tape record this call; of course, I could turn off the recorder at any point if you so desire. I do not have a recorder on now; is it okay with you for me to turn it on? Great, once I turn it on, I am going to ask you to state your name and verbal consent to being recorded.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Start recorder.

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Do I have your permission to begin and record the interview?

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Staff Title: Title

Staff Role:

Staff Initials:

Interviewer: Interviewer last name

Write-up: Last name of person doing write-up

INTERVIEW DATE/TIME: **Date/Time**

### **Staff Background**

1. Please describe the major responsibilities of your position. Describe
2. How long have you been at this center? 0.00 years
3. How long have you been in your current role at this center? 0.00 years
4. Have you worked at other Job Corps Centers? For how long? 0.00 years
5. Where did you work prior to Job Corps? Describe
6. What role did you have at your previous employer? Describe
7. What is your educational background? Describe
8. What made you interested in working at this center? Describe

### **Staffing and Management**

9. Who do you directly report to?
10. What staff report directly to you?
11. What training or professional development opportunities do you think staff benefit the most from?  
Describe
  - a. Do you think the training or professional development at this center differs from other centers?
  - b. Are there additional training or professional development opportunities you think staff need?  
Describe

### **Center Values, Center Environment, and Relationships**

12. How would you describe this Job Corps center's values and philosophy? Describe
  - a. Do these values and philosophy differ from those of other Job Corps centers? Describe
13. How would you describe the culture and environment at this Job Corps center?
  - a. Do you think the culture and philosophy of this center is different than other Job Corps centers? Describe
14. **[Cascades and Ottumwa only]** How would you explain student-centered design?
  - a. How does the center incorporate a student-centered design? Examples
15. What do staff relationships with the students look like?
  - a. Do you think these relationships at this center differs from other Job Corps centers? Describe

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16. What do the relationships between the students look like?
    - a. Do you think these relationships at this center differs from other Job Corps centers? Describe
  17. [Cascades Only] What affect, if any, does the cohort system have on students?
    - a. Does it affect student relationships?
    - b. Does it affect student progress?
  18. How diverse is the student population?
    - a. Does this have an effect on the center? Culturally, Socially?
    - b. What are the pros and cons of having older students at the center?
  19. [Cascades only] Does the fact that students at Cascades are younger (ages 16-21 only) have any effect on the center? How? Why not? Describe
  20. [Cascades only] Does that fact that students at Cascades had additional screening during intake have any effect on the center? How? Why not? Describe
  21. How do you think the typical student that attends this Job Corps center compares to the students at other Job Corps centers?
  22. [Cascades only] Do you think that Cascades students are better prepared for Job Corps or for college than typical Job Corps students? Why? How? Describe
  23. Overall, what, if anything, do you think sets this center apart from other Job Corps centers?

### **Education & Training Planning**

24. Describe the process you use to determine what academic services are appropriate for an individual student and the process of putting together a plan.
  - a. Do you use assessments? When? What kind? Academic assessments? College-readiness assessments? Soft-skills assessments? Describe
  - b. Is this part of a larger plan that also includes other individual goals such as for Non-Cognitive Social and Workplace Skills Development?
  - c. Is this a group process or a one-on-one process? Which staff are involved in determining what services students need? Are the students themselves involved? How? Describe
  - d. Do students take ownership of the plan or plans and of their future? How? Describe
  - e. Does this differ from the process or plans at other Job Corps centers?

### **Education & Training Services**

25. [Ottumwa only] Does this center offer an option to go to college? Describe what this looks like.
  - a. Are there requirements to participate?
  - b. When and how do students transition into college services?
  - c. What are the procedures students go through to enroll in the college? (Probe for details of the application procedures.) Describe

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- Do you assess students for college-readiness?
  - Do they need to take reading and math placement exams to determine if they can take college-level courses or need remediation? Describe
- d. Do college courses count towards the trade pathway? Are any students taking college courses outside of the pathway?
  - e. How does the center support the students in college? Where remediation services are offered if needed? At the center? At the college?
  - f. How many students participate?
26. **[Tongue Point only]** Can you describe the Advanced Career Training (ACT) college-level program?
- a. What are the requirements for participating in ACT?
  - b. When and how do students transition to college services?
  - c. What are the procedures students go through to enroll in the college? (Probe for details of the application procedures?)
    - Do you assess students for college-readiness?
    - Do they need to take reading and math placement exams to determine if they can take college-level courses or need remediation? Describe
  - d. Do college courses count towards the trade pathway? Are any students taking college courses outside of the pathway?
  - e. How does the center support the students in college? Where remediation services are offered if needed? At the center? At the college?
  - f. How many students participate?
27. **[Cascades only]** Can you describe the college services provided at this center?
- a. When and how do students transition into college services?
  - b. What are the procedures that students go through to enroll in the college? (Probe for details of the application procedures.) Describe
    - Do you assess students for college-readiness?
    - Do they need to take reading and math placement exams to determine if they can take college-level courses or need remediation? Describe
  - c. How does the center support the students in college? Where remediation services are offered if needed? At the center? At the college?
  - d. What components of the center do you feel are most valuable to students when going to college?
28. What, if any, types of college-level academic services are provided at the center – as opposed to at the college campus (such as advanced college-level course work, dual enrollment, early college high school courses)?
29. **[Cascades Only]** Since our last visit how have these services changed? Describe
- a. Why did services change? (Was is staff driven or conceptually driven or market driven?)
30. How do the college services offered at this center differ from the other Job Corps centers?

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31. Can you describe the particular strengths and challenges of providing college services to Job Corps students? Describe

- a. What non-student related challenges do you face delivering college services [Probes: Staffing, facilities, curriculum, etc.]? Describe

### **Measures of Academic Progress, Student Challenges, and Support Services**

32. How do you measure academic progress?

- a. How do students generally do at college?

33. What challenges do students face academically? Describe

34. **[Cascades only]** Are Cascades students better prepared for college-level work because they met the educational threshold level established at program entry [i.e., the level established for the STAR 360 assessment]?

- a. Do students typically need to take remediation classes at the college? Describe

35. What type of supplemental education & training support services, such as on-site tutoring, online classes and evening classes are offered? Describe

36. What other types of extra support or guidance do students receive if they fall behind in their studies? Describe

- a. Is some kind of education & training improvement plan created?
  - When, at what point?
  - Who participates in creating the plan?

37. How do staff coordinate with each other to provide college services and supports? Do different departments coordinate? How?

### **Community Culture, Student Support Systems, Student Rewards & Recognitions, and Disciplinary Policies**

38. Other than education & training, what do the students struggle with? Culture issues? Addiction? Mental health? Other? Describe

- a. Are there sufficient supports outside the classroom for these students?

39. How do you think the student support systems available at this center differ from those at other Job Corp centers?

### **Student Retention and Separations**

40. What is your sense of why students leave the center early?

41. At what point do students tend to separate? What are the biggest drop-off points?

- a. Do students drop-out during trade/pathway services? Describe
- b. About what percentage of students do you think end up dropping-off before completion?

42. What are the center's policies with regard to student retention?

- a. How does the center attempt to retain students?

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- b. What actions are taken? By what staff?
  - c. How are students involved/engaged in this effort?

**Partnerships**

43. Describe the partnerships you have with local community colleges.
- a. To what extent and how are local colleges or post-secondary institutions involved in your academic program or the day-to-day operations of your academic program? Describe
  - b. What resources does the college provide you? (Probes: Books, equipment, training, food, transportation, staffing) Describe
    - Is it easy to communicate and get what you need from the college? Describe