

# Workforce Pipelines

**Customized Training Partnerships  
Framework and Project Examples**



Bureau of **Rehabilitation** Services

**BRS Employment Services Conference 2023**

# Workforce Outreach Team: Business Services



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# Bureau of Rehabilitation Services is Connecticut's Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, Operated out of the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS)

The purpose of the VR Program is, in part, “to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society”

1. ensuring that **individuals with disabilities** receive the support they need to **acquire the skills necessary** to obtain, maintain, and advance in competitive integrated **employment**; and
  2. ensuring that **employers** receive the **necessary training and technical assistance** needed to better understand and receive the talent potential individuals with disabilities can bring to the workforce.
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# VR Partner of Workforce System

- The Public Workforce System, as defined by the US Department of Labor, is a network of federal, state, and local government-funded agencies and programs that provide services to workers, job seekers, and employers

*“to support economic expansion and develop the talent of our nation’s workforce.”*

american**job**center

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# NET

- The NET is a cross-state team of business specialists who collaborate, but also function as single points of contact for the VR agency at the state level.
- The NET's infrastructure facilitates a team approach to support individual employers of all sizes. The goal is to develop ongoing relationships with and provide a variety of services, not just job placement, to both public- and private-sector employer customers based on a strong understanding of their business operations and unique workforce needs.



# Building Business Partnerships

Our business service team helps businesses of all sizes and industries build an inclusive workforce.

- Services and resources in the areas of...
  - Recruitment and Incentive Programs
  - Training
  - Consultation and Technical Assistance
  - Collaboration and coordination with workforce system partners

# Workforce Needs



Recruitment



Onboarding



Training



Pipeline Development



Workplace Accessibility and Technology



Financial Incentives

# Partnership Examples 1

## Mohegan Sun

- Training in all phases of the hospitality sector
- Ability to advance within career ladder
- Classroom Training and On the Job Training (OJT) Experience prior to employment offer
- Job Coaching available
- If OJT experience position not a good fit, can try alternative roles
- In process of aligning training with industry credentials to adjust to business talent pipeline needs.
- Work directly with point of contacts within Mohegan's HR to establish communication channels.
- Some positions are not eligible for OJT and candidate can be hired directly after completing classroom training

## Wyndham

- Classroom training 13 days and 22 days of paid training
  - Trained in Dishwashing, Laundry and Housekeeping (2 weeks per job)
  - Based on performance during OJT recommended for hire in one of those roles
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# Partnership Examples 2

## Advanced Auto Warehouse

- Workers are trained in either processing or packing products in 3 different departments (Spurs/Pack-out/Modes).
- Trainees learn the policies and procedures of Advance Auto and practice required job functions using simulation equipment.
- Based on performance during OJT recommended for hire in one of those roles

## Walgreens Retail

- Classroom training by contracted provider based upon Walgreen Redi curriculum. Classroom and OJT training for 3-4 weeks.
- Based on performance during OJT recommended for hire in one of those roles

## Walgreens Distribution

- Workers are trained in processing and packing.
  - Trainees learn various roles through a combination of classroom and OJT training.
  - Based on performance during OJT recommended for hire in one of those roles
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# Partnership Examples 3

## Launch IT

- 2 potential tracks IT Support Professional or Accessible Web Design and Development
- Individuals receive soft skill, business training along with industry certifications
- Can be utilized with wage reimbursement programs through BRS or businesses can directly hire candidates that meet their needs.
- Establishing buy in with sector-based employers

## Digital Accessibility Training

- 12-week training offered in collaboration Western Connecticut State University and New England Assistive Technology
  - Curriculum aligns with Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies Exam.
    - Candidates then apply for positions such as: Accessible Content Creation, Tester UX Design
    - Digital Accessibility jobs within Marketing, Web Design, Social Media- content creation, Education, IT and large corporations
    - Earn and Learn option available- OJT Experience available
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# Partnership Examples 4

## United Health Group

- 15-week paid internships available in Customer Service, Business Operations, Finance, IT and Clinical
- Applicants apply through UHG Portal, and interviewed by UHG internally
- Orientation, Culture training, Mentors and intern meetings. Trained on the job with goal of conversion to permanent employment.

## Travelers

- Targeted “classes” based upon business needs. (Ex. Call center specific class)
- BRS pre-screens based upon position using SHL assessments
- Vendor agency works with Travelers to assist with training candidates in program

# Customized Training Projects

Many of these programs started out small, have evolved and expanded as business, economy and workforce has changed.

Customized training projects are applicable to all industries, sectors, scalable to companies of all sizes.

Many innovative projects currently in development or in infancy stages of implementation.

Customized training can be developed in rural and metropolitan landscapes.

Existing projects can be customized to meet the needs of diverse job seekers and business needs.

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# Overview of Steps

## Identify Training Needs

- Establish current and future workforce needs.

## Develop Training Plan

- Candidate Assessment/Identification
- Determine: Training curriculum, provider and delivery method
- Timeline and program partners
- Auxiliary supports and training resources

## Implement Training

## Evaluate, monitor and revise as needed

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# Candidate Pre-Screen: Identification Strategy

- Potential Options:
  - Vocational Assessment, Vocational Rehab Pre-Screen based upon the skill areas identified for roles.
    - Successful completion of vetted program
    - Access to tools such as SHL, WOWI, Conover and more

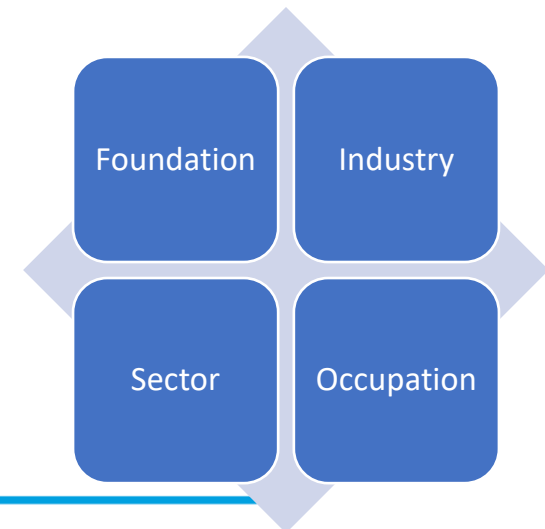
SHL.



Conover®

# Determine: Training curriculum, provider and delivery method

- A time-based program where workers complete a specific number of hours
- A competency-based program, where workers demonstrate skills through proficiency testing.
- A hybrid program with the best of both models.
- May customize an existing training to meet the specific needs of your company.



# Training Delivery Options

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On-the-Job Learning- Develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting.

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Classroom Learning - Improves job-related skills through education in a classroom setting (virtual or in-person).

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Mentorship - Provides apprentices with the support of a skilled worker to assist and enhance critical hands-on learning.

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Credentials - Offers a portable, nationally recognized credential to be issued at the completion of the program.

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# Sampling of Current Training Partners:

Workforce Development Board Programs

Technical High Schools

Community Colleges

4 Year Colleges/Universities

Community Partners and OJTs

Online Trainings (Metrix, Skills 180, ED2go)

Registered Apprenticeships

Industry Recognized Credential

Community Partners



# Demand Driven:

- Shaped by business needs
  - Flexible; designed for continuous improvement. Able to evolve as business needs change
  - Skill based; based upon skills needs, utilizing industry-recognized standards and certifications
  - Blending and braiding resources
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# Helpful Resources:

- Advance CTE: <https://careertech.org/hospitality-tourism>
  - American Hotel and Lodging Education Institute:  
<https://www.ahlei.org/>
  - Competency Model Clearing House:  
<https://www.careeronestop.org/CompetencyModel/competency-models/pyramid-download.aspx?industry=hospitality>
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# Questions



# Assistive Technology and Accommodations

**Arlene Lugo, Program Director**  
**CT Tech Act Project**



# What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

- “Assistive Technology (AT) device is *any item*, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to *increase, maintain, or improve* the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.”

· - 21<sup>st</sup> Century AT Act

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# AT Continuum

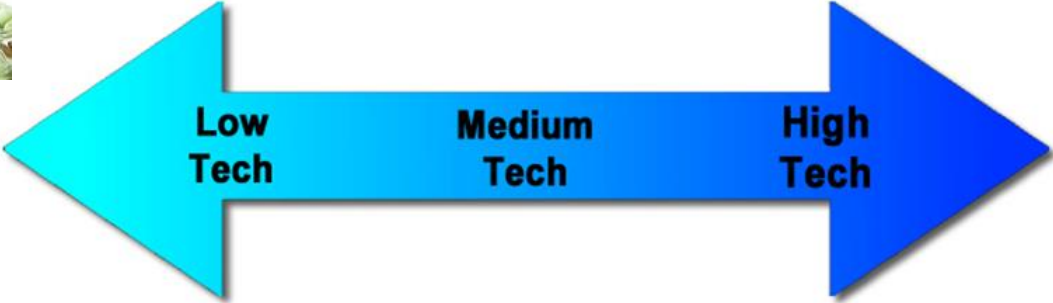


Cost, mechanics & complexity increase as you move up the continuum

31% of accommodations ***cost nothing***  
50% cost less than \$50  
69% cost less than \$500

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# Example of AT Continuum





# Examples of AT Devices



# AT & Reasonable Accommodations



- When the right AT or Accommodation is put in place
  - The individual is shown / provided training on how to use the AT or Accommodation
  - It allows the employee to effectively perform the essential functions of their job.
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# Reasonable Accommodations

- A reasonable accommodation is ***any change or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done*** that would allow a person with a disability to
    - apply for a job,
    - perform job functions, or
    - enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace.
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# Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

- Flexible work schedule and/or modified break schedule
- Changing work station to a quieter area
- Providing a larger screen monitor
- Adaptive Software for magnification or Speech Recognition, and more



# What is Universal Design?

“Universal Design is the ***design of products and environments to be usable by all people***, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” Ron Mace (coined term)



# Examples of Universal Design

- **Multi-Model Approach**

- Larger text
- Visuals and images to accompany text
- Braille on signs
- Videos with audio and closed captions
  - Narration if there is just text on the screen



# Equality Vs. Equity

## EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.



In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.

# The Connecticut Tech Act Project Mission

To increase independence and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities through increased access to Assistive Technology for work, school and community living.



## Our Core Service

- AT Demonstrations
- AT Lending
- AT Recycling
- AT Financial Loan
- Public Awareness
- Information & Assistance
- Training & Technical Assistance



# Additional Resources

- CT Tech Act Project: [www.CTtechact.com](http://www.CTtechact.com)
- Job Accommodation Network
  - Employer's Guide to Reasonable Accommodation
  - Workplace Accommodation Toolkit
  - A to Z of Disabilities and Accommodations
  - <https://askjan.org>

# Disability Awareness Training

**BRS**

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services



# Changing Perspectives

- Disability Ability Awareness Training is designed to discuss disability related concerns in a forum without fear of saying the wrong thing or possible legal ramifications to break down associated stigma, promote the discovery of either unconscious or unintended bias and better inform a path forward to the most diverse and capable workforce.
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# Objectives

- Build knowledge and comfort around disability
  - Explore attitudes and beliefs regarding disability
  - Identify unconscious bias
  - Identify resources and strategies for interacting with people with disabilities
  - Improve communication with and about people with disabilities
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# Strategies

- Create a comfortable place for open discussions
  - Interactive activities
  - Provide resources and contacts to allow for further discussion and future guidance
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# Example Activity

- Let's review a situation and identify some potential solutions.
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# Scenario

- Sam has just returned from being on medical leave after a stroke. She reports that she is struggling with memory and is frustrated by challenges she is experiencing.
  - A critical function of Marta's role is to take notes during team and department meetings. She is finding it challenging that the team does not follow the agenda- bouncing from topic to topic, individuals interrupting one another during meetings and recalling the names of her team members for note taking.
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# Potential Solutions



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# Deliverables

- Changes perspective and allows for a more open-minded approach to working with people with disabilities
  - Identifies strategies for trainees to implement with their own systems and organizations
    - Universal Design, etiquette, onboarding, etc.
  - Identifies next steps, networks and opportunities for training in specific areas (accommodations, AT, etc.)
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#NDEAM | #RehabAct50  
dol.gov/odep

# ADVANCING ACCESS & EQUITY

National Disability Employment  
Awareness Month

Celebrating 50 years of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



# Questions

