

One Workforce Grant
Peer-to-Peer Session: Participant Outreach and Recruitment Strategies
Tips and Best Practices
July 12, 2022

Participant Outreach and Recruitment Strategies

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS WITH YOUR:

Employers

- Work with the Human Resources (HR) departments of your employer partners to utilize reverse referrals.
- Evaluate employer needs and align your training program to those needs. This way, you can train workers in the skills those employers need and build a pipeline of potential incumbent workers to recruit.
- Work with employer partners to endorse your training program. Ask them to commit to interviewing successful graduates of your program ahead of time and advertise that opportunity as part of your outreach strategy.

Educators

- An institution of higher education (or your education and training partner) can:
 - Attend academic and/or technical classes and recruit potential students to your program.
 - Encourage referrals from education and training providers, as they often have relationships with employers.
- Partner with minority serving institutions, like Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) or Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), to recruit traditionally underrepresented populations.
 - View the “[Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Workforce System Partnerships](#)” webinar on Workforce GPS to learn more about how Delaware Department of Employment and Training and Delaware State University partnered to move the needle to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility for historically underserved communities.
- Partner with local high schools and plant the seed with graduating students that manufacturing careers could be a good fit for them (while ensuring you are not using grant funds to serve students under the age of 17 that are currently enrolled in secondary school). Bring successful graduates of your program to local high schools to share their career journey stories. Offer “boot camps” for graduating high school students to begin to prepare them for employment or additional education in your target industries.

Public Workforce System

- Ensure your local American Jobs Centers (AJCs) have information about your programs, so that they can refer potential participants to your program.
- Leverage any existing recruitment strategies you utilize for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs.
- Leverage workforce development relationships—invite partners to come to trainings and have them hold recruiting events in and around your service area.
- Align your program with Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in the area.



Peers

- Join the “[H-1B One Workforce/Rural Healthcare Grantee Group Page](#)” on LinkedIn to meet and connect with other grantees to ask questions and share best practices.
- Reach out to your fellow grantees. If you need a suggestion of someone to talk with, or an introduction, we can help!

TIPS

Utilize Media and Technology

- Create YouTube videos as a recruitment tool.
 - See this [video](#) that Metropolitan Community College created to advertise for their Rapid I.T. Employment Academy.
- Use QR codes to make the registration process easy. By scanning a QR code on their phone, a student could fill out the initial interest questionnaire on their phones in a matter of minutes. (Just make sure you follow up by phone call or face-to-face meeting afterwards!) By collecting initial student information via an online form, you can easily build a database to track this information and follow up with prospective participants.
- Post your program resources on multiple digital platforms to make sure they are easily available.

Meet Students Where They Are

- Use leveraged funds to offer tuition scholarships to ensure that target populations can partake in your training program.
- Offer shorter duration courses or break down programs into “micro-credentials.” These can be easier for students to commit to and complete. Long-track courses can work, but you must build them with intentionality and a long-term commitment from employer partners.
- Provide “soft skills” training support for students. Consider integrating skills like conflict resolution, managing emotional intelligence, resume and cover letter writing, and business email writing into your training programs.

Focus on Quality over Quantity

- Rather than holding fewer large information sessions, hold more regular (i.e., weekly) and smaller open houses. This will allow you to go through individual applications more thoroughly to ensure students are the right fit for your program. It is important to ensure that students have the aptitude and willingness to work through a demanding training program.
- Make sure employer partners are offering good-quality opportunities to program participants. Look for trends when many people are leaving On-the-Job Training (OJT) early and see whether it is stemming from the employer not providing a competitive salary, positive work environment, etc. Focus on cultivating employer partnerships that offer your participants quality opportunities.

Highlight Your Program’s Successes

- Tell potential recruits about the past success stories from your program. Factors like a high job placement rate or high starting salaries post-training will be an incentive for students to enroll and retain.

Use Supportive Services as a Recruitment and Retention Strategy

- Employ a “Career Navigator” or another similar position to work exclusively on student engagement. This person can help connect students to supportive services and help them navigate course scheduling, enrollment, getting their course materials, etc. This will help students overcome any barriers that may get in the way of training completion.



- Build relationships with students and think about how and when you communicate with students to meet their needs. When students see you as an advocate for them, they will know they are not just a “number” and will feel supported to complete training.
- Supportive services are often necessary for students to be successful in these training programs. Consider offering benefits like gas cards, childcare, transportation, or lunch to keep students coming back.
 - Consider partnering with a ride share company or public transit authority to provide rides to and from training programs (e.g., [Uber’s partnership program](#)).

