

# **Innovative Employment Approaches and Programs for Low-Income Families**

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Center on Labor, Human  
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**INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT APPROACHES AND PROGRAMS  
FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Innovative Employment Strategies project, conceived and funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (HHS/ACF/OPRE), is designed to provide information on innovative strategies for promoting stable employment and wage growth among low-income populations. The project seeks to identify directions for future programmatic and evaluation development by building on key lessons from research to date in this area and from the experiences of operational programs.

Over the past three decades, a substantial amount of research has been undertaken on how to move low-income individuals and those on welfare or at risk of dependency into the labor market, how to help them remain employed, and how to assist them in career advancement and wage growth. This cumulative body of research has resulted in a knowledge base about programmatic strategies that are effective in achieving these goals and those that are not. This research also suggests future directions for policies and programs that warrant additional examination but remain untested. At the same time, program innovation has outpaced research efforts to identify effective employment strategies, resulting in a range of new approaches and programs that are potentially effective but have not yet been formally evaluated.

Based on past research and continuing innovations, this project identifies approaches and programs that could potentially improve the employment prospects for low-income individuals. For this project, we define approach as a type of intervention. By program, we mean a specific initiative that is an example of a particular approach. We examine approaches and programs that target low-income individuals, including those who are employed but at low wages, as well as individuals who receive cash assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, who are likely to have greater barriers to employment. Because of the wide range of approaches and programs that exist, criteria were developed to select those highlighted as “innovative.”

The project is designed to assist states and localities by identifying and describing innovative approaches and programs that could potentially improve employment outcomes for low-income populations. Because many of the approaches and programs identified in this project have not been rigorously evaluated, the information is intended only as guide for program administrators and operators as they consider supporting or sponsoring strategies to improve outcomes for workers and their families.

### Study Context: The Employment and Economic Status of Low-Income Families

In the past decade, overall, the employment rates among low-income parents have risen dramatically. This is particularly true for single mothers, especially those who had previously been on welfare. However, employment rates for most groups of less-educated men have declined in this same period. Further, despite increases in employment rates, the annual earnings and income of many individuals remain quite low. Several factors appear to limit the earnings of low-income adults, including (1) a lack of basic skills and credentials; (2) a lack of access to quality jobs that provide opportunities for advancement; (3) limited access to key work supports

such as child care and transportation; and (4) severe or multiple barriers to employment, including physical or mental health problems, domestic violence, substance abuse, criminal history, or other crises that cause individuals to be unable to find or keep jobs.

A range of employment strategies have been undertaken to influence the employment and earnings patterns of low-income parents, and particularly those of welfare recipients. Key findings from this past work are discussed throughout this report, particularly as they relate to identifying innovative yet untested employment approaches. However, this program and policy evaluation literature indicates that there are no “magic bullets.” While a number of programs have shown success in improving employment and earning levels for welfare recipients, some have had limited effects. Moreover, few programs have had effects on improving longer-term employment retention and advancement for low-income populations or on improving the economic status of those individuals with multiple barriers to employment.

Given past successes and challenges, there is strong interest across a range of service delivery systems in developing new approaches to assist low-income individuals in succeeding in the labor market. Agencies operating the TANF program at the state and local levels have increasingly recognized that welfare reform must encompass helping poor parents not just find work but keep work and remain financially stable and avoid dependency. This has broadened the focus of TANF agencies to think beyond cash assistance and explore ways to more generally help both welfare and nonwelfare poor families improve their economic well-being. In addition, the 2005 Deficit Reduction Act (DRA), which effectively established significantly higher TANF participation rate requirements for states, means there will be an interest in developing new strategies and approaches for engaging TANF recipients in employment-related activities. One-Stop Career Centers established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) are increasingly involved in efforts to move TANF recipients and other low-income workers up the career ladder, while also meeting employer demands for skilled workers. Community colleges and other community-based organizations in many states and localities are also looking for new and innovative approaches for serving low-income populations.

Finally, it bears noting that much of the research for this project occurred before the enactment of DRA. Therefore, although it is likely that some of the programs identified in this report would help states meet DRA participation requirements, this paper does not focus primarily on identifying or highlighting programs that could lead to higher TANF participation rates. Overall, this report provides information on some approaches and programs that may be useful in developing strategies to meet the new TANF participation rules, but the primary goal of the project is to identify programs that could prevent or reduce dependency and improve the economic status of low-income individuals generally, including not only current TANF recipients but others as well.

## Study Methodology

A set of criteria was established to help us define and identify the kinds of approaches and programs included in this report. Based on guidance from HHS, we purposively developed criteria designed to ensure that the review did not result in an uncritical “laundry list” of approaches and programs, but also was not so rigid that potentially innovative approaches or programs were ruled out due to overly prescriptive criteria.



To identify innovative approaches, we determined that the approach must meet one or more of four criteria: (1) address at least one (and preferably more than one) of the causes of low earnings among low-wage workers; (2) provide an untested intervention, but one that is grounded in research to date; (3) address the specific policy interests of federal or state policymakers and/or program operators; or (4) have some potential for being adapted in other states and localities.

To identify innovative programs within each of the approaches, we relied on a more operational set of criteria. Again, to ensure that a relatively broad set of programs was identified, we include those that met one or more of four established criteria: (1) strong program design and services; (2) relatively mature programs that are operating at “steady state” implementation or for relatively long periods of time; (3) programs that operate on at least a moderate scale; or (4) evidence of positive results or outcomes, particularly economic outcomes.

Once the criteria were established, the Urban Institute research team reviewed past and current research on employment programs and used a multi-pronged approach to identify new and untested approaches and programs. An extensive consultative process with a wide range of experts that included federal, state, and local public officials and program administrators, researchers, advocacy groups, and academics was conducted. The expertise of more than 35 individuals from 27 organizations was tapped through this consultative process. Through the reviews and consultations, a range of approaches and programs were identified, which we then explored further through additional phone interviews, Internet searches, and reviews of research reports and program documents. For the vast majority of the programs identified, we also conducted phone interviews with a program manager to gain a more in-depth understanding of the program design and services to determine if the programs met the established criteria.

## Innovative Approaches and Programs Identified in This Study

Through the application of the criteria, we developed a typology that groups the innovative approaches and strategies we uncovered into four overarching categories. Overall, we identified 12 innovative approaches and 51 programs that are illustrative of the approaches. The typology includes:

- **Service-focused employment preparation.** Targeted at the “hard-to-employ” population with significant barriers to employment, the *service-focused employment preparation* approach focuses on strategies to improve the employability of individuals through addressing special needs and providing special targeted interventions (i.e., substance abuse treatment, mental health services, etc.) in combination with employment services.
- **Employment-based experience.** Approaches in this category focus on providing short-term subsidized jobs, usually with additional personal supports or wage subsidies. We examine the following approaches: (1) *subsidized employment* programs that subsidize wages with employers for a specified period of time, usually using public funds; participants work in a position where they receive a paycheck and receive a range of other supports and assistance, and (2) *temporary employment* programs that provide job-

brokering services through temporary agencies to place individuals into temporary jobs, sometimes with additional supports such as job coaching and support services.

- **Skill development.** Aimed at both TANF recipients and low-wage workers, this model includes a set of strategies designed to increase individuals' human capital and skill levels. We examine individual-based strategies, including *instructional and curricula changes* for basic skills and postsecondary education and *financial aid*. We also examine employer-based strategies: (1) *sectoral or industry-based initiatives* and two subsets of these initiatives, *career ladders* and *credentialing programs*; and (2) *employer-provided job training for incumbent workers*.
- **Income and work supports.** We broadly define income and work supports as a model that includes a number of approaches that provide assistance in helping working families maintain employment and make ends meet. In particular, we examine three income and work support approaches: (1) *post-employment assistance* programs that assist workers in accessing publicly funded financial supports such the earned income tax credit and child care assistance, and personal supports such as career and financial counseling provided to individuals when they are working; (2) *financial incentives* that encourage and improve the rewards of work; and (3) *asset-building strategies* that help individuals build financial reserves to support their career goals and family needs.

The full report provides details of each approach, including why the approach is innovative, particularly based on a review of past research in the area, and a description of the key components of each approach. Then, it provides examples of several programs illustrative of each approach. This includes a description of the key components of each program, including the program design and services, key organizational partners, target group, funding sources, and contact information.

## Conclusions

This study finds that a range of employment approaches have the potential to improve the economic success of low-income individuals and that there are multiple areas that warrant further research and study. In documenting these innovative approaches and learning about creative programs across the country, we observed several trends that should be considered as federal, state, and local policymakers and program administrators move forward in supporting and evaluating these kinds of efforts.

**Many innovative initiatives combine elements from multiple models and are relatively comprehensive in the range of the services they provide.** While there are some programs that clearly represent a singular approach, we observed numerous programs that mix multiple approaches such as combining skill development with subsidized jobs, linking access to work supports with skill development and asset-building strategies, and integrating curricula and instructional adaptations for low-skilled individuals into employer-driven training programs. From a programmatic perspective it makes sense to link these different elements and, indeed, efforts to connect different strategies in new combinations often represented the most innovative aspect of the programs we reviewed. From an evaluation standpoint, however, it is important to

understand whether specific components are important for participants' economic success or whether it is the packaging of service elements that is responsible for improved outcomes.

**Many of the initiatives that represent innovative future directions for efforts to improve employment outcomes are more broadly focused on low-income individuals that include, but are not limited to, the TANF population.** In part this is because TANF agencies are now more likely to focus on preventing welfare dependency and supporting working families than in the past, due to the flexibility allowed in spending TANF resources. But it also reflects the unmet needs of many low-income workers, many of whom remain entrenched in poorly paying jobs despite existing policies and programs to assist them. It should be noted that due to passage of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006 (which occurred while this study was underway), many states are now required to involve a greater portion of their TANF caseload in work activities. This could result in an increased focus on developing employment strategies for the TANF population.

**Many innovative programs involve partnerships of multiple public- and private-sector organizations, many of whom have not collaborated in the past.** This generally includes some combination of workforce development agencies, community colleges, TANF agencies, unions, community-based organizations, and employers. While establishing these partnerships was no doubt difficult in some circumstances, the prevalence of interagency and private-public collaborations indicates that addressing the needs of the low-income populations may require the commitment of a range of partners that can provide expertise and support in different areas. Some of the partners involved in these efforts have not traditionally worked together—particularly community colleges, employers, and intermediary organizations—so there is much about the nature of the collaboration that is innovative.

**Innovative programs are often financed through a number of public funding streams (such as workforce development, postsecondary education, and TANF).** The multiple sources of funding occur in part because many of these programs involve collaboration across different service delivery systems and serve relatively broad target populations. Foundations and private contributions have also played a pivotal funding role, in terms of both seed money and ongoing support. Employers play an important financial role in some programs, particularly those involving employer-based skill development. Program administrators generally had to commit significant time and energy to develop the level of resources needed to operate the programs, particularly those that are more comprehensive.

**Significant innovation and activity for low-income parents at the state and local levels focus on making skill-development programs more accessible to low-income workers and more tailored to employer needs.** While other types of initiatives, particularly work supports and employment-based options such as subsidized or temporary employment, receive continued attention, skill-development approaches are a strong area of innovation at this time. Innovations in pre-employment training for low-income students has shifted from an individual-based approach—where training is typically more general and tries to give students a range of skills that can be used in different jobs—to one more focused on employer needs that sacrifices some of this generality to improve the fit of the skills to specific jobs. There is also increased attention to building career ladders, with a focus on providing training that current workers need for moving up to higher-quality jobs. These initiatives focus on making training more accessible to

workers in terms of schedule, curriculum, and linking skill-upgrade programs directly to job advancement opportunities.

Compared with many of the past programs evaluated, many of the approaches and programs identified here include strong involvement from the private sector. There are a range of innovative initiatives that potentially benefit both individuals and businesses, particularly regarding approaches focused on skill development or work supports. Many of these initiatives take place at the worksite or strongly reflect employer training and skill needs. Many of these initiatives that involve private-sector employers, particularly sectoral training and work support programs, use third-party intermediaries to build in-depth knowledge of the industry, establish relationships with multiple employers, coordinate training options, and conduct research to monitor industry's changing needs. While many of the innovative efforts identified here involve employers, further growth in this area may require attention to create incentives for employer participation in initiatives that address the needs of low-wage workers, particularly in tight labor markets.

Case management services appear to be an important component in the design and operation of innovative programs. While some past research efforts have focused exclusively on the role that case management services (individualized assistance to plan for future activities and address issues that arise in school, at home, or on the job) can play in improving outcomes for disadvantaged populations, this review indicates that case management services are ubiquitous across a range of different service models, including service-oriented interventions for the hard-to-employ, subsidized employment and temporary jobs, skill-development approaches at both educational institutions and employers, and work support programs.

This study cannot point to the effectiveness of any of the highlighted approaches or programs identified. Nor does this study address the operational strategies and attendant implementation challenges and lessons involved in administering the range of program approaches discussed here. However, this review documents some of the innovative efforts being undertaken by a number of states, localities, and organizations to build on past research and promote the economic success of low-income parents. These efforts warrant future attention by researchers and program evaluators, and also provide direction to those looking for innovative employment strategies for low-income populations.

## I. Introduction

The Innovative Employment Strategies project, conceived and funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (HHS/ACF), is designed to provide information on innovative strategies for promoting stable employment and wage growth among low-income populations. The project seeks to identify directions for future programmatic and evaluation development by building on key lessons from research to date in this area and from the experiences of operational programs.

Over the past three decades, a substantial amount of research has been undertaken on how to move low-income individuals and those on welfare or at risk of dependency into the labor market, how to help them remain employed, and how to assist them in career advancement and wage growth. This cumulative body of research has resulted in a knowledge base about programmatic strategies that are effective in achieving these goals and those that are not. This research also suggests future directions for policies and programs that warrant additional examination, but that remain untested. At the same time, program innovation has outpaced research efforts to identify effective employment strategies, resulting in a range of new approaches and programs that are potentially effective but that have not yet been formally evaluated.

Based on past research and continuing innovations, this project identifies approaches and programs that could potentially improve the employment prospects for low-income individuals. For this project, we define approach as a type of intervention. By program, we mean a specific initiative that is an example of a particular approach. We examine approaches and programs that target low-income individuals, including those who are employed but at low wages, as well as individuals who receive cash assistance under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, who are likely to have greater barriers to employment. Because of the wide range of approaches and programs that exist, criteria were developed to select those highlighted as “innovative.”

The project is designed to assist states and localities by identifying and describing innovative approaches and programs that could potentially improve employment outcomes of low-income populations. Because many of the approaches and programs identified in this project have not been rigorously evaluated, the information is intended only as guide for program administrators and operators as they consider supporting or sponsoring strategies to improve outcomes for workers and their families. This report is organized as follows:

- Section II provides the policy context for this project, particularly the current status of low-income families in the labor market and factors that limit their success.
- Section III discusses how the approaches and programs included in the report were selected and describes the criteria used to identify the highlighted approaches and programs.
- Section IV presents a typology for the approaches identified in the study.
- Sections V through VIII describe each approach individually, including why the approach is innovative and a description of the key components of each approach. They also provide examples of several programs that exemplify each approach.

- Section IX concludes by identifying trends that should be considered for future development and evaluation of innovative employment strategies.
- Appendix A provides short profiles of each of the illustrative programs included under the innovative approaches identified for this project, including information on the program model, target population, key partners, and funding sources.<sup>1</sup>

## II. The Employment and Economic Status of Low-Income Families

Overall, the employment rates among low-income parents have risen dramatically in the past decade. This is particularly true for single mothers, especially those who had previously been on welfare, but not for most groups of less-educated men who experienced a decline in employment rates during this same period. For instance, labor force participation rates among single mothers rose from 67 percent in the early 1990s to 78 percent by the end of the decade; among those who had been on welfare in the previous year, labor force activity rose from about 30 percent to nearly 60 percent (Blank and Schmidt 2001). These increases in employment, along with declining welfare rolls, are widely attributed to welfare reform, the strengthening of supports for working families (like the earned income tax credit and child care subsidies), and the strong economy of the late 1990s.<sup>2</sup>

But, while their employment rates are now fairly high, the annual earnings and income of many individuals remain quite low. Acs and Loprest (2004), for example, found that, among those leaving welfare, average earnings remained below \$3,000 per quarter and below \$10,000 per year. Those who left TANF for work in 2002 had a median wage of \$8.06 per hour (Loprest 2003), and about 52 percent of those who left welfare in 1999 had incomes below the poverty level (Loprest 2002). More broadly, the annual earnings of parents with less than a high school diploma, weak skills, and limited or spotty work experience are similarly low (Acs and Loprest 2005). In particular, employment rates and labor force activity for most groups of less-educated men have declined over the past decade (Holzer and Offner 2002).

Low-income individuals are a heterogeneous population with a range of employment patterns. Some individuals work very little, because they face significant barriers to work and instead rely primarily on cash assistance and other public benefits to support themselves. At least some of those who are able to work have high rates of job turnover, or low job retention; they lose or leave their jobs frequently, and sometimes experience lengthy periods of time between jobs. This joblessness directly reduces annual earnings, and also inhibits wage growth over time. Finally, even when working steadily, their wages and benefits are very low. Prospects for earnings growth through advancement in their current jobs (or other jobs) are very limited.

There is evidence that a number of individual and employer characteristics affect employment and earnings outcomes:

- **Lack of basic skills and credentials.** A wide range of research indicates that educational attainment and basic skill levels are linked to employment outcomes (see Martinson and Strawn 2003 for a summary). High school dropouts account for about 20 to 30 percent of the heads of low-income families where employment levels are fairly high, and about 40 percent of those where employment levels are low (Acs and Loprest 2005). These patterns are exacerbated by a major shift in the U.S. economy where new jobs that pay

premium wages require postsecondary education or specialized training but where those with low skills see little or no real wage increases. Over two-thirds of all jobs require little education and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projections indicate this trend is likely to continue over the next decade, suggesting the skills gap will persist (Nightingale 2002).

- **Nature of employers and jobs.** While poor education and skills among individuals contribute to their retention difficulties, the characteristics of their jobs and employers can be important as well. A recent study by Andersson, Holzer and Lane (2005) found that while most low earners enjoy substantial earnings growth, only about a fourth or fewer seemed to permanently escape their low-earnings status (in part because growth occurs from a very low initial wage level).<sup>3</sup> Employment in higher-wage sectors of the economy—such as construction, manufacturing, transportation or health services—led to higher rates of advancement for lower earners than employment elsewhere. Working in large firms and those with low turnover rates also helped raise advancement prospects, as these firms generally offer more on-the-job training and opportunities for promotion (Holzer and Reaser 1999). Some low-wage workers also lack access to existing good jobs due to discrimination, “spatial mismatch,” transportation, and limited information or contacts in the labor market (Holzer 2001).
- **Problems with work supports.** Low wages and benefits (resulting both from low worker skills and low-wage jobs discussed above) often make it hard for parents to afford necessary work supports. For example, low-income parents often have trouble finding reliable, convenient child care, sometimes because they work nonstandard hours. High rates of worker absenteeism, often associated with child care and transportation problems, frequently results in quits or discharges for this group (Holzer, Stoll, and Wissoker 2004). State studies of employed former welfare recipients found that between 15 and 40 percent of parents report they have left a job or are not working because of child care problems (Wilkins 2002).
- **Employment barriers.** Some low-income parents experience physical or mental health problems, domestic violence, criminal history, substance abuse, or other crises that cause them to be unable to find or keep jobs. Research has found that welfare recipients with little employment experience generally experience multiple and severe barriers in these areas (Danziger et al. 2000; Zedlewski and Loprest 2001).

A range of employment strategies have been undertaken to influence the employment and earnings patterns of low-income parents, and particularly those of welfare recipients. Over the past 30 years, a significant body of research has accumulated on “what works” as well as what does not in moving individuals from welfare to work and helping them keep and advance in the job market. Several research syntheses of this accumulating body of research evidence to date have been conducted (Berlin 2002; Holzer and Martinson 2005; Martinson and Strawn 2003; Michalopoulos 2005; Nightingale 2002).

This program and policy evaluation literature indicates that there are no “magic bullets.” While several programs have shown success in improving employment and earning levels for welfare recipients, some have had limited effects. Moreover, few programs have had effects on

improving longer-term employment retention and advancement for low-income populations or on improving the economic status of those individuals with multiple barriers to employment. Key findings from this past work are discussed throughout this report, particularly as they relate to identifying innovative yet untested approaches.

Given past successes and challenges, there is strong interest across a range of service delivery systems in developing new approaches to assist low-income individuals in succeeding in the labor market. Agencies operating the TANF program at the state and local levels have increasingly recognized that welfare reform must encompass helping poor parents not just find work, but keep work and remain financially stable. This has broadened the focus of TANF agencies to think beyond cash assistance and explore ways to more generally help both welfare and nonwelfare poor families improve their economic well-being (Martinson and Holcomb 2002). In addition, the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2006, which had the effect of establishing significantly higher participation rate targets for states, means states will be interested in developing new strategies and approaches for engaging TANF recipients in employment-related activities. One-Stop Career Centers established by the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) are increasingly involved in efforts to move TANF recipients and other low-income workers up the career ladder, while also meeting employer demands for skilled workers. Community colleges and other community-based organizations in many states and localities are also looking for new and innovative approaches for serving low-income populations.

Finally, it bears noting that much of the research for this project occurred before the enactment of DRA. Therefore, although it is likely that some of the programs identified in this report would help states meet DRA participation requirements, this paper does not focus primarily on identifying or highlighting programs that could lead to higher TANF participation rates. Overall, this report provides information on some approaches and programs that may be useful in developing strategies to meet the new TANF participation rules, but the primary goal of the project is to identify programs that could prevent or reduce dependency and improve the economic status of low-income individuals generally, including not only current TANF recipients but others as well.

### III. Methodology for Identifying Innovative Approaches and Programs

As discussed above, the primary goal of this project is to identify innovative approaches and programmatic examples of these approaches that warrant further research. A secondary goal is to provide policymakers and practitioners with a framework for conceptualizing and sorting through the wide range of employment strategies that have developed over time. HHS expressed interest that this study not be overly rigid in the types of approaches and programs that are identified, but that the determination of what is “innovative” be guided by established criteria. Thus, as described below, a set of criteria were established to identify the approaches and programs included in this report.

In terms of identifying innovative approaches—defined as a type of intervention—particular approaches were included if they met one or more of four established criteria. This ensured that a relatively broad set of approaches was included. Specifically, we included approaches that (1) address at least one (and preferably more than one) of the causes of low earnings among low-



wage workers (discussed above); (2) provide an untested intervention, but one that is grounded in research to date; (3) address specific policy interests of federal or state policymakers and/or program operators; and (4) have some potential for being adapted in other states and localities (known as generalizability). A more detailed explanation of these criteria is provided in appendix C.

A more operational set of criteria were developed to identify innovative programs within each of the approaches. By programs, we mean specific interventions, initiatives, or even program components that operationalize a particular approach identified above. Again, because HHS is interested in being relatively inclusive when canvassing programs, the programs identified met more than one, but not necessarily all, of the established criteria. Specifically, we used the following criteria to identify innovative programs: (1) strong program design and services; (2) relatively mature programs that are operating at “steady state” implementation or for relatively long periods of time; (3) programs that operated on at least a moderate scale; and (4) evidence of positive results or outcomes, particularly economic outcomes. While programs included are meant to provide strong examples of a particular approach, this report does not provide a universal listing of all the innovative programs in a particular area.

To identify both the approaches and programs to be included in this project, the Urban Institute research team reviewed past and current research on employment programs and used a multipronged approach to identify new and untested models and programs. An extensive consultative process with a wide range of experts that included federal, state, and local public officials and program administrators, researchers, advocacy groups, and academics was conducted. The expertise of more than 35 individuals from 27 organizations was tapped through this consultative process. Appendix D provides a complete list of organizations contacted for this project. Through the reviews and consultations, a range of approaches and programs were identified, which we then explored further through additional phone interviews, Internet searches, and reviews of research reports and program documents.

Overall, we profile 12 innovative approaches and 51 programs in this study. For the vast majority of the programs identified, we also conducted phone interviews with a program manager to gain a more in-depth understanding of the program design and services, to determine the programs the criteria established to determine innovativeness. Appendix E details the study criteria met by each the programs included in this project.

#### IV. Overview of Innovative Approaches

Through the application of the criteria discussed above, we developed a typology composed of four relatively broad categories, as shown in box 1. Within each category in this typology, we delineate a number of “innovative” approaches. Two categories—service-focused employment preparation and employment-based experience—focus on approaches and strategies that generally address the needs of a “harder-to-employ” population with at least some barriers to employment. The other two categories—skill development and income and work supports—focus more broadly on low-income workers (e.g., individuals working at low wages or with unstable hours), among which TANF recipients represent an important but smaller share of the overall population.

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**Box 1**  
**A Typology of Innovative Employment Approaches**

**Service-Focused Employment Preparation.** Targeted at the “hard-to-employ” population with significant barriers to employment, the *service-focused employment preparation* approach focuses on strategies to improve the employability of individuals through addressing special needs and providing a combination of special targeted interventions (i.e., substance abuse treatment, mental health services, etc.) in combination with employment services.

**Employment-Based Experience.** Approaches in this category focus on providing short-term subsidized jobs, usually with additional personal supports or wage subsidies. We examine two approaches:

- *Subsidized employment* programs that subsidize wages with employers for a specified period of time, usually using public funds. Participants work in a position where they receive a paycheck and receive a range of other supports and assistance.
- *Temporary employment* programs that provide job-brokering services through temporary agencies to place individuals into temporary jobs, sometimes with additional supports such as job coaching and support services.

**Skill Development.** Aimed at both TANF recipients and low-wage workers, this model includes a set of strategies designed to increase individuals’ human capital and skill levels.

- We examine individual-based strategies, including *instructional and curricular changes* for basic skills and postsecondary education and *financial aid*.
- We also examine employer-based strategies: (1) *sectoral training* and two subsets of these initiatives, *career ladders* and *credentialing programs*; and (2) *employer-provided job training for incumbent workers*.

**Income and Work Supports.** We broadly define income and work supports as a model that includes a number of approaches that provide assistance in helping working families maintain employment and make ends meet. In particular, we examine three income and work support approaches:

- *Post-employment assistance* programs that assist workers in accessing publicly funded financial supports such as the earned income tax credit and child care assistance and personal supports such as career and financial counseling provided to individuals when they are working;
  - *Financial incentives* that encourage and improve the rewards of work; and
  - *Asset-building strategies* that help individuals build financial reserves to support their career goals and family needs.
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As discussed above, this project identified innovative programs and approaches that generally targeted low-income individuals. Some of the programs target a subset of this broad population, particularly TANF recipients. While some of the programs have a predominantly female clientele (particularly those with a focus on serving TANF recipients or operating within a female-dominated occupation such as nursing), many served both men and women. Many of the efforts also served a large proportion of parents, although some did not specifically target this population. Aside from TANF recipients, we did not identify programs that specialize in specific populations such as noncustodial parents and ex-offenders, although it is likely that some are served through some of the initiatives highlighted in the report. Some of the programs did include a focus on non-English speakers, because they represent a significant portion of the low-income and welfare population in some areas.

Overall, we describe 12 innovative approaches and profile 51 programs that are illustrative of the approaches. The remainder of the report describes the innovative approaches identified within each broad category, the rationale for including the approach, key elements that define each approach, and programs that serve as examples of each approach. This is based primarily on phone discussions with program managers, but also includes information drawn from program reports and documents.

## V. Service-Focused Employment Preparation

Targeted toward the “hard-to-employ,” this approach focuses on strategies to improve the employability of welfare recipients experiencing a range of conditions that pose special barriers or challenges to successful participation in employment preparation or training activities, and ultimately employment.<sup>4</sup> While there are many kinds of barriers that can reduce welfare recipients’ ability to engage in employment preparation and succeed in the job market, an intensive service-focused approach is often used when addressing conditions not attributable to external forces (e.g., lack of child care or transportation) and that may in fact be treatable, controllable, or reversible with adequate and appropriate resources. These barriers include physical disabilities, mental health issues, substance abuse, learning disabilities, domestic violence, and homelessness. Research also suggests that welfare recipients often experience multiple barriers to employment and suffer from one of more of these conditions (Danziger et al 2000; Zedlewski 1999).

Research shows that even the most successful welfare-to-work initiatives for the “most disadvantaged” welfare recipients increase earnings about the same as they do for less disadvantaged groups. However, because the earnings of this hard-to-employ group are so low they are far from achieving economic well-being (Bloom and Butler forthcoming; Michalopoulos and Schwartz 2000). While studies have shown a supported work approach (discussed in the next section) can have success with a hard-to-employ population, there are few studies that have examined whether specialized services that focus on specific barriers can improve employment and economic outcomes. One exception is the Substance Abuse Research Demonstration, an experimental evaluation of a case management intervention for women on TANF who were substance abusers. The intervention used a combination of services, sanctions, and incentives to get these women to first participate in treatment and then transition to employment and leave welfare. The program increased participation in treatment and led to some

reductions in substance use, but these gains did not translate into impacts on employment and earnings (Morgenstern et al. 2002).<sup>5</sup>

Because of the continued lack of success of the hard-to-employ in many TANF employment programs, states and localities increased their attention on implementing strategies to identify barriers and provide interventions to alleviate barriers, particularly in the late 1990s when welfare caseloads were declining and ample resources were available (Martinson and Holcomb 2002). In general, we found from discussions with experts and scanning programs and initiatives for hard-to-employ welfare recipients, that while some interesting efforts have occurred in the area of supported employment (see section VI), most initiatives focused on hard-to-employ welfare recipients appear more oriented toward a service and treatment approach.<sup>6</sup> Particularly because of the continued level of interest in approaches than include services designed to address specific employment barriers and their potential to address a cause of low earnings, we include this approach as one that is important to consider in future program development and evaluation.

Models in this area range from those that take a “treat first” approach, emphasizing preparing individuals for employment by reducing the barrier to the point that an individual can take advantage of more employment-oriented activities, to those that integrate employment and treatment interventions in some fashion (Farrell and Elkin 2006). Because of the welfare system’s strong emphasis on employment, we focus on service-oriented programs that provide some integration of treatment and employment. However, while this employment focus is an important aspect of this approach, its primary emphasis is on identifying barriers through assessment, determining interventions, and providing or arranging for services or treatment.

Although the design of a service-focused approach varies by the type of limitation, elements that are commonly identified as important include the following (Bliss, London, and Tanguay 2005; Brown 2001; Danziger and Seefeldt 2002; Farrell and Elkin 2006; Holcomb and Thompson 2000; Pavetti and Kauff 2006):

- *Screening and comprehensive assessments for barrier identification.* While it is important for assessments to be thorough, given the difficulties faced in maintaining consistent attendance among those with severe barriers, emphasis should also be on developing and using assessment tools that can be completed relatively quickly.
- *A plan to assess progress and determine next steps that is regularly monitored and updated.* The plan should encompass short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals. Regular and frequent communication between case managers and clients is important.
- *Partnering with other public and community-based organizations that provide expertise with the barrier* being addressed (e.g., substance abuse, mental health). This includes cross-program or -agency efforts to coordinate services and build on existing expertise and case conferences that facilitate joint decision-making.
- *Maintaining a focus on employment and financial goals.* While some individuals may require intensive interventions, strategies should be developed that maintain a focus on employment as the ultimate goal and establish clear (although perhaps small) steps appropriate toward this goal, such as participation in job readiness or financial management classes or in subsidized or sheltered employment options.

Appendix table A.1 outlines several programs we identified that are strong examples of this service approach in terms of the activities offered, the ways in which employment services are incorporated, and their structure (e.g., partnerships for treatment and services). Two programs are in Minnesota and are part of the state’s Integrated Services Project, which seeks to coordinate services across a range of delivery systems for TANF recipients approaching their time limits. The Partnerships for Family Success (PFS) program in Anoka County provides a team-based approach for working with TANF families with multiple barriers. The program is staffed by an interagency team with expertise in child protection, criminal justice, public health, vocational rehabilitation, and mental health. Participants continue to work with TANF staff on employment issues while enrolled in PFS. An initiative in Ramsey County seeks to address the needs of TANF recipients with mental health problems by integrating staff with mental health rehabilitation expertise into the county TANF program. Certified mental health workers focus on a treatment plan with functional goals, while individuals continue to participate in the TANF program.

Two other examples of this approach operate in New York City, where intensive efforts have been made to address the needs of hard-to-employ welfare recipients. These include WeCARE (Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment), a recently implemented initiative by the Human Resources Agency in New York City (see box 2) and the Substance Abuse Case Management (SACM) program in the Bronx. SACM provides substance abuse and case management services to those diagnosed with an abuse problem, and makes immediate referrals to intensive employment services once participants are stabilized and making progress in treatment services.<sup>7</sup>

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#### Box 2

#### Service-Focused Employment Preparation: New York City’s WeCARE Program

WeCARE (Wellness, Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation, and Employment), recently implemented by the Human Resources Agency in New York City, is an intensive program model providing employment-focused services to public assistance clients with physical and mental health challenges. The model emphasizes comprehensive assessment, case management, and customized service planning, linked with specialized employment services that accommodate limitations. All WeCARE referrals are given a comprehensive assessment that includes a medical examination and an interview about the client’s psychological and social history. Those determined unable to work are given assistance in applying for federal disability benefits. Others are engaged in some kind of work activity—including vocational rehabilitation services, specialized employment services including work settings that accommodate limitations, skills training and education, and, if necessary, medical treatment. Job placement assistance and post-employment services are also important service components of the model.

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## VI. Employment-Based Experience

To help individuals make the transition to unsubsidized employment, approaches in this category focus on providing direct work experience with wage subsidies and additional personal supports. These approaches are sometimes targeted to persons with a range of barriers to employment, who could benefit from working in a supportive environment where they learn both job skills and work behaviors. We focus on two employment-based experience approaches: (1) subsidized employment approaches provide at least partial reimbursement for wages with public, nonprofit, and for-profit employers, usually with public funds. Participants work in a position where they receive a paycheck as well as a range of other supports and assistance, and (2) temporary employment where job-brokering services are provided for placement in temporary jobs, sometimes with additional supports such as job coaching and support services.

### 1. Subsidized Employment

A subsidized employment approach entails subsidizing the wages paid to participants by employers with public funds. Participants work in a position where they receive a paycheck, pay taxes, and qualify for the EITC. Employers are typically from the public or nonprofit sectors, but can include for-profit businesses as well. Subsidized jobs are typically time limited (e.g., six or nine months), and also provide a range of services that are designed to support individuals in their jobs and provide additional training, above and beyond what is typically available to employees in unsubsidized jobs. In contrast to the temporary job approach discussed below, this strategy is often targeted to hard-to-employ individuals with barriers to employment, including TANF recipients.

This approach has been referred to by a variety of terms over the years. When used in the TANF system, subsidized employment is often referred to as “transitional” employment or subsidized jobs, especially in the nonprofit or public sector. On-the-job training is another common term that is used more in the workforce development system, referring to activities where a wage subsidy is provided to reimburse the employer (usually, but not always, in the private sector) for providing training.

Past research shows that subsidized employment approaches have potential for improving outcomes for low-skilled individuals. While disadvantaged groups tend to earn much less than others and have not made substantial gains in most previous welfare-to-work studies (Brown 2001; Michalopoulos 2004), an exception is the 1970s Supported Work demonstration project which provided transitional work experience along with some training and supports to the “hard-to-employ.” Post-program earnings of welfare recipients increased quite substantially for participants relative to those in the control group. Since this evaluation, there have been few random assignment evaluations of subsidized employment programs, although a random assignment study of one such program is currently under way.<sup>8</sup> A number of nonexperimental studies have found positive effects on employment rates and income gains over time for those who complete subsidized employment programs (Burchfield 2002; Kirby et al. 2002). Studies of workforce development strategies have also found more positive effects from on-the-job training than other strategies such as job search (Orr et al. 1996).

Because of its potential to improve the job skills of low-income individuals, particularly those with employment barriers and strong but limited past research results, we include subsidized

employment as an innovative approach. Based on the discussions with experts and program managers for this project, there appears to be a growing interest in expanding subsidized employment across the country for TANF recipients, particularly in light of the new TANF requirements that emphasize participation in work-based activities, but also for other hard-to-employ populations like ex-offenders. The National Transitional Job Network, a coalition of transitional jobs programs, policy organizations, and other sponsoring organizations helps develop and expand transitional jobs programs nationwide.

Experts have identified several key features that are important components of a subsidized employment model. These include (Baider and Frank 2006):

- *Paid, time-limited employment.* Workers earn a wage in exchange for the work performed, and the work placement is limited.
- *Life-skills and job-readiness programs.* Workers sometime participate in short classes that focus on skills needed to succeed in the workforce and resolution of challenges at work, such as drug treatment, compliance with parole and probation requirements, and family services interventions. Classes may also include guidance on continuing job-search activities.
- *Support and supervision.* Workers typically receive some type of support and supervision before, during, and possibly after the placement, by job coaches and on-site mentors, including case management and job-search assistance.
- *Skill-building component.* Transitional jobs programs often include a skill-building component, offering classes and training in areas such as GED preparation, vocational English, and computer training.
- *Range of jobs available.* Programs generally offer a variety of job placements in government agencies, nonprofits, and the private sector, to accommodate a range of skills and interests.
- *Post-placement support.* Some programs continue to offer support for up to a year after a participant obtains permanent employment.

Many subsidized employment programs are developed and operated at the local level, but there are a growing number of state programs. Appendix table A.2 profiles six subsidized programs identified for this project that serve TANF recipients or other low-income workers. While all are noteworthy for their strong content, they vary in terms of their scale and target population. Two are statewide initiatives that have been operating in Georgia and Washington (see box 3) since the mid-1990s and are established strategies in each state's TANF program for addressing the needs of a significant number of hard-to-employ recipients. Two are local initiatives—a program in Philadelphia operated by the Transitional Work Corporation that has one of the most developed and largest transitional jobs programs in the country, and another in San Francisco that is operated by Goodwill Industries, an organization with significant experience operating these types of programs.

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### Box 3

#### Subsidized Employment: Washington's Community Jobs Program

Since 1997, Washington State has offered statewide paid transitional employment program for hard-to-serve TANF recipients. The program is operated by 18 service providers across the state that are primarily community-based organizations. After being referred to a provider by the TANF agency, participants develop an employment plan and work 20 hours per week in a temporary, paid job for up to six months (with extensions available to nine months). Most job placements are in nonprofit agencies. An additional 20 hours per week are spent on individualized barrier management, which can include soft-skills training, mental health or substance abuse counseling, and basic-skills training. Individuals receive support services, such as transportation subsidies, work clothing, and child care assistance. Program staff maintain close relationships with participants and their supervisors and conduct monthly workplace visits. Participants receive some job-search assistance and receive support services for up to 60 days after obtaining unsubsidized employment. The Community Jobs program serves approximately 2,100 participants per year.

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Finally, two are social enterprise initiatives—defined as an activity that advances a social mission through entrepreneurial revenue-generating strategies. At Rubicon, Inc., and the Enterprising Kitchen, low-income individuals are hired for transitional jobs in a nonprofit enterprise that creates or sells quality products—bakery and landscaping services in the case of Rubicon, and soaps and beauty products at the Enterprising Kitchen. These endeavors are financed by the revenues from the sales of their products, but also receive public and private contributions.

## 2. Temporary Jobs

One innovative approach for potentially improving low-income workers' access to better quality jobs involves using third-party intermediaries in the labor market—such as temporary help (“temp”) or staffing agencies. The temporary sector is a growing part of the labor market in the United States. A wide range of for-profit companies and nonprofit organizations provide temporary staffing services for companies, with some placements intended to be purely temporary and others likely to result in a permanent hire. Many companies use temporary employees as a way of screening (or trying out) workers or reducing the costs or risks associated with making a permanent hire. For the low-wage worker, using a temp agency can potentially provide a route to higher-wage jobs that low-wage workers might otherwise not gain access to due to discrimination, “spatial mismatch,” transportation, and limited information or contacts in the labor market (Holzer 2001).

The specific approach to temporary employment that we highlight in this report shares many of the same characteristics associated with a traditional temporary employment agency model but differs in important respects. Conventional temporary agencies connect workers and jobs from a wide range of income and skill levels and are typically operated by for-profit agencies. There are, however, some temporary employment agencies, sometimes called “alternative” or “social



purpose” staffing agencies (Carre et al.; 2003; Eisenberg 2003) that specialize in placing workers who have a range of barriers or obstacles to employment. Unlike typical staffing agencies, they are primarily nonprofit, community-based organizations that engage in temporary and temporary-to-permanent job brokering specifically for disadvantaged workers, often in conjunction with other supports such as career counseling and transportation assistance. Also, unlike sectoral initiatives (described later in this report), temporary or “temp-to-perm” strategies do not involve partnerships related to industry practices or supervisor training, but instead emphasize placement into existing, competitive jobs.

The underlying structure of this approach involves using intermediary organizations to place workers in temporary jobs, typically with the employer paying an hourly amount to the agency, and the agency, in turn, paying the worker. When used explicitly as a strategy to help the employment prospects of low-skilled individuals, including TANF recipients, the temporary agencies sometimes provide workers with a range of supports such as transportation, job-readiness classes, or job coaching.

There is limited research literature on the effects of temporary or social-purpose staffing agencies in improving the employment outcomes for the disadvantaged, but some evidence that these agencies may provide a valuable port of entry for low-skilled employees (Andersson et al. 2005; Giloth 2004; Holzer 2004). Other recent quasi-experimental evidence based on data from one TANF office in Michigan finds that the positive employment effects for those placed in temporary employment faded over time, and those achieved by individuals placed directly into jobs were more persistent (Autor and Houseman 2005). In general though, research in this area is less extensive than other types of employment strategies. Interest, particularly at the local level, has increased since the passage of welfare reform and there are a number of implementation and case studies in this area.<sup>9</sup> However, these studies do not address the key question of whether these lead to improved outcomes—in terms of starting wages and benefits or growth potential—above and beyond what individuals might obtain on their own.

Because of their potential to increase access to quality jobs, we include temporary employment, arranged by alternative temp agencies or social purpose staffing agencies as an innovative approach for improving employment outcomes of low-wage workers. Key components of services offered through temporary agencies, particularly those that focus on low-income workers, include (Carré et al. 2003).

- *Improving job access through a strong marketing approach with employers and through dedicating staff resources to identifying possible employment options for individuals.* Significant upfront resources are dedicated to marketing the agencies services to employers (emphasizing the benefits they can provide, such as screening and work supports and the skills of applicants from certain stigmatized groups) and also making careful matches between individuals and jobs.
- *Facilitating job transitions and job progression.* Some temporary staffing agencies focus on temp-to-perm placements through developing an in-depth understanding of employer needs and preparing workers, perhaps by providing customized training or not charging a conversion fee when hired by a business (unlike other conventional temporary agencies).

- *Focusing on quality permanent jobs.* Staffing agencies generally look for businesses whose entry level permanent jobs pay a certain level above the minimum wage, and if possible provide advancement opportunities to upper-level jobs.
- *Providing support services.* One of the key features of alternative staffing agencies is their provision of pre- and post-employment supports to workers, which are seen by business customers as key to participation. These can include preplacement job readiness, assistance with child care and transportation, educational supports, and supervisory supports such as job coaching and mediation.

As described in appendix table A.3, we highlight two alternative staffing agencies that focus on providing temporary employment to low-skilled workers, many of whom have barriers to employment. Harborquest Staffing Services, located in Chicago, Illinois, provides an intensive job readiness workshop prior to a temporary placement, job coaching while in the temporary jobs, and permanent job placement services (see box 4). FirstSource Staffing, located in Brooklyn, New York, provides less intensive pre-employment services but includes a focus on offering retention services that help workers access support services such as child care and transportation, and address other issues that will facilitate their transition to permanent employment.

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#### Box 4

#### Temporary Employment: Harborquest Staffing Services

Harborquest Staffing Services, a nonprofit staffing agency, provides temporary placement services to disadvantaged individuals in the Chicago area. Participants are referred to the program from a variety of public and community groups, and many also learn about it through word-of-mouth. Participants first attend an orientation, which provides an overview of Harborquest's services and expectations of its clients. Those who are still interested are interviewed by a Harborquest staff member and undergo math and reading assessments as well as drug testing. Participants then attend a structured two-week job-readiness and job-search workshop operated by STRIVE, a nonprofit employment agency that recently merged with Harborquest. This is followed by two months of paid work experience coupled with on-site job coaching. These jobs are generally in light manufacturing, hospitality, or the service sector and pay an average hourly wage of \$6.50 to \$8.00. During this time, Harborquest expects participants to work at least 200 hours over the two-month period, without any undocumented absences. Participants then return to Harborquest classrooms to work on their job application and interviewing skills for approximately one week. Harborquest job developers assist participants with setting up job interviews and locating permanent employment. In 2005, Harborquest placed about 1,000 people in temporary jobs with approximately 60 different employers.

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## VII. Skill Development

A significant body of research shows that higher levels of education are closely associated with increased earnings and lower rates of unemployment. For example, those with postsecondary credentials earn substantially more and work more hours than those with a high school education or less (Duke, Martinson, and Strawn 2006). Between 1973 and 2003, the real wages of workers with less than a high school diploma declined by 20 percent, while the real wages of those with a college education increased by 18 percent (Ganzglass 2006). However, the education and skill levels of low-income individuals remain low.

Given these trends, an important approach for improving the employment retention and advancement of low-wage individuals is through increasing their skill levels and human capital. Education and training has primarily taken the form of providing education (primarily English as a Second Language (ESL), basic education, and GED programs) and job training. Skill development is not a new approach for improving the economic status of low-wage individuals—numerous service delivery systems and funding streams are dedicated to providing a wide range of education and training services—but there are some strategies that, building on past research evidence, appear to be innovative and merit further research. This section first reviews the research evidence on skill-development approaches.

Because of its prevalence in addressing the needs of low-wage workers, a significant body of research has accumulated regarding the role education and training can play in improving economic success for low-income populations. This past work is critical for understanding what is “innovative” in this area and shows that the nature and content of education and job training at least partly determines their effectiveness. Key findings from this past work that are important in identifying innovative skill-development approaches can be summarized as follows.

**Providing a “mix” of services, with a strong link to employment, is essential.** Welfare-to-work evaluations have found that providing a mix of services—including job search, education and training, and case management—while maintaining pressure on most individuals to gain employment, can produce strong results (Hamilton 2002). The Portland, Oregon, site in the multisite National Evaluation of Welfare-to-Work Strategies (NEWWS) used this approach and generated large increases in employment, earnings, and job stability—surpassing the other sites in the NEWWS evaluation as well as results from other evaluations. The Portland program is also notable because, while it stressed the need for clients to gain employment fairly quickly, it also encouraged them to find higher-wage jobs and employers, whenever possible.

Programs with a strong focus on basic education but only limited linkages to employment or job training—an approach that was more common before the implementation of TANF—have generated limited earnings gains, with most performing worse than mixed service- or job search-focused interventions (Martinson and Strawn 2003; Pauly 1995). It is likely that the kind of basic education provided in these programs—with a focus on building basic skills and obtaining a GED—was not conducive to labor market advancement. Much of what was provided was unrelated to specific jobs that were available in the local labor market and, as discussed below, did not generate an increase in credentials that would be recognized or rewarded by private-sector employers. In contrast, the Center for Employment Training (CET) in San Jose, California, also used an approach that integrated basic education and job training, and included

strong links to employers. This program produced strong results in early studies (Burghardt et al. 1992). Efforts to replicate this model in other sites have thus far proved disappointing, though the impact evaluations to date may understate the benefits of this approach.<sup>10</sup>

There have been fewer studies of education and training efforts as a post-employment strategy. Several initiatives in Riverside, California, focus on increasing participation in education and training among low-wage workers, with one targeting welfare recipients who are working but remain on assistance. Early evidence from the experimental studies of these programs indicates they are not affecting labor market outcomes, although the follow-up timeframe in some may be too short to see the impacts of an education-focused intervention (Bloom, Martinson, and Scrivener 2005; Fein et al. 2003).

**Job training has been effective.** Some studies have shown some positive effects of job training on earnings for disadvantaged adult women. This result emerged in the national evaluation of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), which was the forerunner to WIA. This program produced modest earnings impacts for low-income adult women, with on-the-job training producing larger earnings gains than more standard classroom training, again suggesting the importance of training linked to the workplace or to a particular job or employer (Orr et al. 1996). Even a nonexperimental analysis of three sites in the NEWWS evaluation (not including Portland) found that high school nongraduates in basic education activities had substantially larger increases in longer-term earnings if they also participated in job training (Bos et al. 2001). One concern, though, is that many individuals with low skills and/or limited English have restricted access to existing training programs due to entry requirements. About 40 percent of community college students nationally need to take at least one remedial course when they begin their programs, and this can be even higher in urban areas (McCabe 2000).

**Importance of obtaining credentials.** Training efforts that lead to established credentials that are recognized and valued by employers have produced particularly strong results. A number of nonexperimental studies have found that for those who obtain associates degrees and other certification at community colleges, the returns have been fairly positive (Grubb 1996; Kane and Rouse 1999; Leigh and Gill 1997; Mathur et al. 2004). In addition, the successful Portland program in the NEWWS evaluation increased the proportion of high school dropouts who obtained a high school diploma or GED and a second education or training certificate (usually a trade license or certification) (Hamilton 2002). None of the other NEWWS sites produced increases in receipt of this type of credential.

**Encouraging program completion and reducing dropout rates is difficult.** National studies indicate that retention in job training and education programs is a problem. For example, nearly half of students attending a community college do not obtain a degree or enroll in another college or university within six years. In part this is due to their part-time attendance—nearly two-thirds of community college students attend college less than half time, and it is difficult to attend more than one-quarter time (Kazis and Leibowitz 2003). Research suggests that many students want to earn a degree but are overwhelmed by the competing demands of work, family, and school (Gardenhire-Crooks, Collado, and Ray 2006). Institutional barriers, such as poorly tailored instruction or inadequate advising may also impede students' academic progress (Brock and LeBlanc 2005).

**Financial supports may be critical.** The primary need-based financial aid program for postsecondary education is the federal Pell Grant program, which makes awards to students based on the cost of attendance at an institution less the expected family contribution. This program has had significant effects on the enrollment of nontraditional adult students in higher education, but less so on the collegiate attainment of traditional students (Turner forthcoming). A recent experimental study shows that enhanced financial aid designed to help low-income students with their expenses and provide an incentive to make good academic progress resulted in higher levels of enrollment, passing more courses and earning more credits, and higher rates of completion in subsequent semesters (Brock and Richburg-Hayes 2006).

Even when taking into account the existing financial aid available through the federal Pell Grant Program, most low-income students have substantial unmet needs. In 1999–2000, the average unmet need for Pell Grant recipients attending community colleges throughout the United States was over \$3,000 (King 2003). In addition, while working students who enroll less than half time are technically eligible for federal aid, very few individuals actually receive federal aid because of limited funding (Choitz and Widom 2003).

Overall, we find that skill development is an important approach for improving the employment prospects of low-income persons. While not a new approach, it clearly addresses one of the major causes of low earnings, and past research indicates new directions that are important to develop and evaluate. Given the widespread number of systems and funding sources involved in education and training, understanding innovative directions in this field is of major interest to a wide range of federal, state, and local policymakers.

For this report, we focus on two broad types of skill-development approaches: individual-based (supply-side) education and training that occurs through public and private institutions,<sup>11</sup> and employer-based (demand-side) education and training that occurs at employers or involves a significant level of involvement by employers to ensure that training meets their needs. Individual-based training is typically more general and tries to give students a range of skills that can be used in different jobs, while employer-based training gives up this generality to improve the fit of skills to specific employer needs. We first discuss strategies that are focused on individual-based skill development, and then move to a discussion of those strategies that are employer based.

### ***A. Individual-Based Approaches to Improve Skill Development***

Innovation that builds on past research evidence about individual-based skill development for the low-wage population is underway in many states and localities. Much of the innovation is occurring at community colleges, which are a major provider of education and training for this population, although some community-based organizations are involved as well. To group innovative program examples of the individual-based skill-development approach, we initially examined the same three strategies for improving education for low-skill populations identified by MDRC in its Opening Doors Demonstration:<sup>12</sup> instructional reform, financial assistance, and student supports (Brock and LeBlanc 2005). However, given the pervasiveness of student supports in the vast number of skill-development programs we identified, for the purposes of this study, student supports are considered an element of an innovative program rather than a stand-

alone approach (see discussion below). Thus, in this area, we focus only on instructional reform and financial assistance as innovative skill-development approaches.

## 1. Instructional and Curricular Adaptations

Several curricular reforms have been identified as having the potential for improving outcomes for low-income students, although most have not been evaluated (Kazis and Leibowitz 2003). It is useful to think of instructional adaptations in terms of two groups: programs for working adults who may not have the skills to qualify for higher-level training or college programs, including those with limited English skills, and programs for working adults who qualify for college degree programs. For those who are not ready for college or training in terms of their skill levels, we discuss “bridge programs,” a strategy to increase low-skill individuals’ access to a higher level of training. For those who qualify for college degree programs, we examine strategies for instructional adaptations that address the needs of low-income families juggling work and family responsibilities.

**“Bridging” the connection between basic skills development and entry-level training.** “Bridge” programs are designed to address two of the shortcomings of education and training programs identified in past research. First, for those who do not have the skill levels necessary for postsecondary education, these programs are designed to bring the students’ academic skills up to the level required for entry into college-level credit programs, and thus improve individuals’ access to training provided through a range of institutions and, possibly, to regular degree programs. Second, they also attempt to improve outcomes compared with stand-alone basic skills and training programs by integrating vocational and education or basic skills with a focus on employment. There are several components of bridge programs that appear important (Henle 2004):

- *Contextualized learning strategies.* Courses such as remedial English, reading, and math are modified to incorporate materials from specific occupational fields. Contextualization is frequently one element of a broader package of instructional and structural innovations that include a “learning community” of students who take classes together with more applied learning opportunities.
- *Instruction in job-specific competencies.* This includes efforts to tailor instruction to the needs of different employment fields by identifying the specific competencies required by a job. Some programs focus on one particular industry while others may provide students with multiple options.
- *Paid apprenticeships or internships in the relevant field.* These can provide a strong connection to employment as well as providing a source of income to low-income students.
- *Strong links to credit-bearing degree or certificate programs.* Integrating noncredit and existing credit programs can help students move from precollege to credited academic programs that are valued by employers.

Developing bridge programs that provide low-wage workers with better access to higher education programs is an area of growing interest, particularly at community colleges, although the development of these programs is certainly not widespread at this point. We identified five innovative bridge programs that are profiled in appendix table A.4—these include the Kentucky

Ready to Work and the Washington I-BEST program, both of which are statewide programs lead by the community college system; a bridge program in biotechnology industry operated by a community-based organization, San Francisco Works; and a multioccupational program at Denver Community College. These programs are all relatively strong in terms of their program design and services, and all have been operating for at least two years.

While the programs profiled are similar in terms of the basic application of a “bridge” strategy, they vary along key dimensions. Some are focused exclusively or primarily on TANF recipients (Kentucky Ready to Work and Denver Community College) while others focus more generally on low-wage workers (San Francisco Works), and one is designed specifically for non-English speakers (Washington State). Some are relatively large-scale statewide initiatives (Kentucky and Washington), while the remainder were developed at the local level and have the capacity to serve a limited number of participants each year. Box 5 highlights a multioccupational program at Denver Community College that focuses primarily on TANF recipients.

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#### Box 5 Curricular and Instructional Reforms: Denver Community College

The Essential Skills Program (ESP) operated by Denver Community College is a multioccupational certificate “bridge” program that prepares individuals with low skills for entry-level jobs and higher-level training programs. Training is available in five areas: information technology, early childhood education, financial services and accounting, community health, and medical clerking. With a focus on serving TANF recipients, ESP classes provide work-readiness preparation followed by short-term basic skills and occupation-specific training combined with job experience in a career pathway. The program takes five months to complete, and results in approximately 16 community college credits and an essential skills certificate in the chosen field. In the first month, students are required to take a full-time course combining work-readiness activities and vocational training specific to each track. This is followed by a three-month internship that counts toward a degree if the student stays in the same vocational area (wages are set at the entry-level wage for the employer). During these three months, students are simultaneously taking about 15 hours of contextualized classroom instruction that also teach competencies for the intended job. Staff provide academic and career counseling, referrals to financial benefits they may be eligible for, and job placement services throughout the program. Retention services, job coaching, and referral to support services are provided for one year after placement in unsubsidized employment. The program enrolls approximately 200 students per year.

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**Program redesign of college credential programs.** For students who qualify for postsecondary education, the structure and curriculum of postsecondary education, even at community colleges that are more geared toward low-income students, may make it difficult for them to succeed. An approach for increasing the skill levels of low-income adults that addresses this problem is instructional adaptations that make it easier for students in credential programs to earn their certificate or degrees by reducing the amount of total time spent in classes, or through shorter sequenced modules that yield interim credentials with value in the labor market. This strategy can make it easier for individuals to combine work and school and to address the competing

demands of school, work, and family. These innovative initiatives generally share a number of design characteristics:

- *Modularized curricula.* To assist students in combining education and work or to enter and exit education as their circumstances permit, curricula can be modularized by breaking certificated and degree programs into smaller sets of courses.
- *Identifying multiple entry and exit points tied to jobs and further education.* These can include “road maps” that graphically outline the “ladder” for an occupation or career. While formal efforts in this area—known as career ladder programs—are discussed in the next section on employer-based strategies, many individualized skill-development strategies are also adopting this career-mapping exercise into their program design in order to strengthen their links to employment.
- *Accelerated programs with flexible scheduling at night and on weekends.* These allow students to more easily combine work and learning, by lessening the time spent in class and providing training that accommodates work schedules.
- *Establishing credentials (including degrees, certificates, and industry certifications) that provide easy articulation across programs and institutions.* These provide employers with information about individuals’ skills in a specific occupational area, thereby demonstrating job seekers’ qualifications and skills.

Box 6 provides a profile of Portland and Mt. Hood Community colleges in Oregon, two postsecondary institutions that have done extensive work in redesigning their curricula and instruction to be more accessible to low-income working families (also see appendix table A.4). Their work, which covers instruction in a broad range of instructional areas, forms the basis for a statewide initiative that will be implemented in the near future.

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**Box 6**  
**Curricular and Instructional Reforms: Portland Career Pathway Program**

Portland and Mt. Hood Community colleges’ Career Pathways program provides a wide range of short-term training programs designed to be flexible for working students. Key components include “chunked” curriculum (offering courses in one or two terms to build skills for an entry-level job), cohort learning, 33 hours of job-readiness instruction focused on job requirements and advancement options in a specific industry, 3–12 week internships, and job placement services. Most programs are between 14 and 18 college-level credits and last either one or two semesters. Students can enter at four different points of the year. Students earn an employment skills training certificate for 12–44 credits. Career Pathways coordinators work with clients directly to provide support services and career counseling but are also responsible for developing new trainings, developing curricula, coordinating internships, and providing job development and placement services. Students are assigned a case manager who provides support services and career counseling. Skill areas include accounting/bookkeeping, criminal justice, phlebotomy, medical coding, medical customer service, and CNC operator. The success of this program, begun in 1998, sparked interest at the state level. Oregon is now developing a more comprehensive career pathway program that includes the development of 29 career pathways and the participation of all seven state community colleges in the initiative.

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## 2. Financial Assistance

Another approach that appears important for improving the skill development of low-income students is the provision of additional financial assistance. As discussed above, while the federal Pell Grant program is available to provide assistance to low-income students, the amount of this assistance is often insufficient to cover the costs of school or training. In addition, most state grant programs tend to have eligibility requirements that are similar to federal grant programs, which may make them less accessible to nontraditional students. Further, many state programs restrict eligibility to students coming directly out of high school.

We identified five innovative financial aid programs that are profiled in appendix table A.5. Arkansas, Georgia (see box 7), and Washington have examples of major statewide efforts to improve financial assistance to low-income students. Arkansas' Workforce Improvement Grants program is a need-based financial aid program for nontraditional adult students. While a high school diploma is required, it targets working families who want to enroll part time (who often do not qualify for a federal Pell Grant because their income is too high). Washington State will launch a new initiative in fall 2006 to provide funding to eight community colleges to develop financial assistance programs that are directly linked to participation in career pathway programs, an innovative program that combines employment-focused education and financial assistance.

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### Box 7

#### Financial Aid: Georgia's HOPE Grants Program

Operating statewide since 1993, Georgia's HOPE Grants Program covers tuition, fees, and books for nontraditional students (including those without a high school diploma or GED) to enroll in certificate and nondegree programs, even if they are attending part time or taking only one course. This program supplements Georgia's widely recognized HOPE Scholarship Program that provides merit-based scholarships to high school graduates. While it is not a need-based initiative, the HOPE Grants Program is designed to address the financial needs of adults who do not qualify for the scholarship program or for the federal Pell Grant program.

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Minnesota has pursued a different strategy to provide funding for skills development for low-income workers. Instead of expanding financial assistance for education through the state's higher education system, Minnesota established a grant program in 2001 under the umbrella of its incumbent worker training program and funded through the Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax system, to cover the costs of short-term training that is not reimbursed through other sources, to individuals with income below 200 percent of the poverty level. A range of private and public training organizations apply for grants and then allocate financial "awards" (i.e., assistance) to participants when they enroll in training programs.

### 3. Enhanced Student Services and Support

Many low-income students could potentially benefit from a more intensive set of services to support their participation in skills training and help counter the ongoing challenges related to meeting work, school, and family demands. Student services are typically defined to include academic guidance and counseling, academic supports (such as tutoring), personal guidance and counseling, career counseling, and support services (child care, transportation, and book and supply resources) (Purnell and Blank 2004).

Most colleges offer at least some student services, but there is wide variation in how the services are provided and arranged. Moreover, because services are in short supply and poorly funded, many schools have extraordinarily high student-counselor ratios (Keim 1989). Research on counseling and student services suggests that such programs can play an important role in retention and graduation, although much of the research has occurred in four-year institutions rather than community colleges (Baily and Alfonso 2005).

As discussed above, while there are programs that focus primarily or exclusively on providing enhanced student supports, our scan suggested that most of the innovative skill-development programs identified through this project (including some of the employer-based strategies discussed in the next section) combine student supports with curricular and other adaptations for low-income individuals. While part of a package of broader services, program administrators widely acknowledged them as critical to the success of their programs. The support services are generally provided by school staff assigned to work with students enrolled in the program, and are above and beyond what was typically offered to students through the educational institution. For example, in the Kentucky Ready to Work program, students are assigned a case manager who works with them throughout their tenure in the bridge program. The Denver Community College Essential Skills Program “fast-track” occupational certification program uses a similar strategy to combine vocational training, work readiness, case management, and internships in a sequence that gains participants entry into high-demand occupations with good wages. Case managers continue to work with staff for one year after they find employment.

#### *B. Employer-Based Strategies for Improving Skill Development*

Employers can play an important role in providing demand-driven skill development to their low-wage workers, either at the worksite, through working with educational institutions to design appropriate training, or through providing financial assistance to pursue further education. In general, employer-based skill-development approaches fall into two broad categories: (1) sectoral or industry-based training programs that involve multiple employers and (2) individual employer-provided training programs (commonly known as incumbent worker or customized training programs).

##### 1. Sectoral Training Programs

Sectoral training programs focus on providing training to a cluster of employers in one segment of the labor market. These initiatives seek to strengthen connections between supply-side and demand-side systems in ways that promote economic growth and the advancement of low-wage, low-skilled workers. Sectoral strategies strive to accomplish this by strengthening the connection between low-income or other targeted job seekers and employment opportunities in local or regional economies, primarily through the provision of skill training that is directly linked to

employer needs. These industry-based training strategies allow common workforce needs to be addressed across a number of employers, rather than through developing more narrow customized training programs for just one employer. Because their competitors share the investment, the economies of scale for employers in sharing training costs make training more affordable; they may also view joint training endeavors as less risky than individual efforts.

Sectoral training programs can vary significantly in terms of overall scale and scope, including the number of industries and employers involved. A key element of this approach is to have industry knowledge and understand employer needs when developing and designing training programs. This is generally accomplished through the use of an intermediary—an organization that builds in-depth knowledge of the industry, establishes relationships with multiple employers, coordinates training options, and conducts research to monitor the industry’s changing needs. Many different kinds of organizations can perform the function of a sector intermediary, including workforce investment boards, community-based organizations, business associations, educational institutions such as community colleges, and union organizations. Sectoral initiatives also generally involve a range of private- and public-sector partners. In the sectoral programs identified as innovative for this project, employers, workforce investment boards, community colleges, and union organizations were particularly important partners.

There are a large number of sectoral initiatives in operation (see for example Pindus et al. 2004) as well as an organization dedicated to the development of these initiatives, the National Network of Sector Partners. While sectoral initiatives have not yet been rigorously evaluated, nonexperimental longitudinal studies of participants in several initiatives found they experienced improvements in employment rates and wages (Conway and Rademacher 2004; Elliot et al. 2001). One rigorous experimental study that includes the evaluation of four sectoral programs, the Sectoral Employment Demonstration conducted by Public/Private Ventures (PPV), is underway.

We consider sectoral training an innovative approach because it meets several of the criteria identified for this study. The approach addresses the lack of skills and the lack of access to higher-quality jobs among low-wage workers. Sectoral training strategies are an area of growing interest across the country, with a number of new initiatives developing in recent years. Sectoral strategies have generally been considered a local strategy, but some states are now moving toward more systematic development of this approach.<sup>13</sup> In addition, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded grants to states to develop and expand regional employment and economic development strategies, and these grants are likely to support skills training in high-demand sectors.<sup>14</sup> There are several important components of sectoral training programs:

- *Provision of training linked to specific jobs in a particular field.* Sectoral initiatives generally incorporate many of the innovations in skill-development for low-income individuals discussed above—fast-track remediation programs that allow individuals at lower skill levels (including those with limited English skills) to enter training programs, modularization of courses to allow entry and exit at different points, flexible schedules that are amenable to working families, and contextualized instruction where learning is facilitated by simulating actual work conditions. They differ from some of the innovative individual-based programs discussed above because of the significantly higher level of employer involvement in designing training programs, the practice of working across the

industry to develop skill standards for particular jobs, and a commitment by employers to hiring graduates.

- *Linking low-income individuals with quality jobs by making changes within industry in terms of hiring, training, promotion, and compensation practices.* This occurs in several ways. Many of the initiatives only provide training in jobs that pay a certain level and provide employee benefits. In addition, most of the initiatives have improved access for low-income individuals to the training through better recruitment and partnerships with local community-based organizations and public programs such as TANF and One-Stop Career Centers. Finally, some initiatives have also taken steps, including the provision of technical assistance, to help industry make structural changes to improve wages and benefits associated with particular jobs in ways that benefit both businesses and workers.
- *Provision of support services and career counseling.* These programs also generally cover the cost of tuition, books, and necessary supplies, provide assistance with child care, and include career and academic counseling to ensure high completion rates.

As shown on appendix table A.6, for this project we profile some of the larger and more mature sectoral programs, some of which have been involved in longitudinal research studies and two of which are involved in the Sectoral Employment Demonstration.<sup>15</sup> We describe a range of different types of sectoral programs to illustrate the diverse nature of the initiatives. These include three initiatives—Project Quest, Capital Idea, and the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)—that provide training in a number of industries; the District 1199C Training Fund and Cooperative Home Care Associates (CHCA) that focus on the health care industry; and the Culinary Training Institute (CTI) that trains entry-level and incumbent workers on the Las Vegas hospitality industry. Some of the programs are designed to accommodate working individuals, while others require a full-time commitment. Several, including WRTP, the District 1199C Training Fund, CHCA, and CTI, have established their own training facilities. Most operate at a relatively large scale, ranging from approximately 100 participants annually at Capital Idea to more than 4,000 at the 1199C Training Fund. Box 8 highlights two of these programs.

**Structured career ladders.** A subset of sectoral initiatives focuses on developing career pathways that lead to higher-paying jobs. Although job responsibilities and earnings tend to correlate roughly with skill sets and levels, this strategy responds to the reality that enabling people to move up from entry-level jobs can take more than education and training. Often there is no pathway for low-wage workers to advance through a progression of more responsible and better-paying jobs as they gain skills and experience (Fitzgerald 2006). Career ladder programs explicitly attempt to address this issue by providing a set of connected courses and programs, with extensive supports for students and information to track their progress. These programs enable students to advance to better jobs within a firm or industry through obtaining higher levels of education and training. The components of a strong career pathway program include:

- *A “road map” describing jobs in industries of importance to the regional economy and illustrating the connection between education and training programs at a range of levels.* This road map details the requirements to enter programs at each level, including basic skills training, entry-level training, and upgraded training and education (Alssid et al. 2002).

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## Box 8

### Sectoral Training Programs: Capital Idea and the 1199C Training Fund

**Capital Idea.** Initiated in 1999, Capital Idea, a nonprofit community-based organization in Austin, Texas, operates several training programs to provide low-income individuals, who traditionally have not had access to college-level careers, with precollege- and college-level training in growth occupations. The program focuses on providing training in jobs that pay at least \$13 per hour and provide benefits and opportunities for advancement in the health, technology, and accounting fields. Capital Idea works with area businesses to develop the programs and training components according to employer specifications, and then contracts with or refers individuals to community colleges and private vendors for training. The program targets unemployed and underemployed adults with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Programs generally require a full-time commitment, with at least 20 hours per week of class time. Most of the training programs are long term, and most students complete the requirements in three to four years. The program pays for all training costs including tuition and fees and also provides child care, transportation, and emergency assistance. The program offers several on-site programs, including a College Prep Academy that provides intensive (25 hours per week for 12 weeks) preparation in reading, writing, and math to pass the Texas Higher Education Assessment (required to take college-level courses); a GED prep program (20 hours per week); and an evening English as a second language (ESL) program. Another key element is the services provided by career counselors, including career advice and counseling and peer group meetings. Placement coordinators help connect students to jobs during the classroom phase and after they finish the program.

**The 1199C Training Fund.** District 1199C, Philadelphia's largest health care worker union, founded its Training and Upgrading Fund in 1974 with the goal of promoting entry into the health care field and providing health care employees the training necessary to advance on a career ladder. The Fund operates the Thomas Breslin Learning Center, which provides courses ranging from basic skills for entry-level jobs to college degree programs in the health field. After enrollment, students are placed based on an academic assessment and a career counseling session that outlines an educational plan. Four levels of remedial programs (including ESL) and a high school diploma program are available, with instruction contextualized for the health care field. Training programs include prenursing bridge programs; nursing assistant programs; an 18-month part-time practical nursing program; and a program to help practical nurses receive credits toward and link with a RN degree program. The Center also offers career counseling and placement services. Each student is placed with a case manager to provide ongoing career and personal counseling. Basic skills offerings at the Center are available free to all students, and some employers cover tuition costs for upper-level classes; 1199C members are eligible for up to \$5,000 a year in tuition reimbursement. The Learning Center has 40 full-time staff plus 70 part-time faculty members and is open 14 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- *Easy-to-navigate transitions from noncredit to credit programs and from multiple entry, exit, and reentry points.* This includes transitions from certificate programs to degree programs and multiple connection points between industry and professional certifications and four-year degrees.
- *A modular curriculum that breaks certificated and degree programs into smaller sets of courses.* This allows students to work while pursuing their education and to enter and exit education as their circumstances permit.
- *Support services.* This includes access to services such as career counseling, tutoring, child care, financial aid, and job placement.

Our scan of innovative career pathway initiatives found some noteworthy variations. First, as shown in appendix table A.7 several states are developing innovative statewide initiatives that provide grants to partnerships of training providers (typically community colleges), employers, and public-sector partners to develop career pathway programs that meet local industry needs. State funds are often used for these initiatives, but some also include federal or foundation grants. Examples of states with sectoral strategies that include this collaborative partnership dimension include Kentucky, Arkansas, and Ohio (see box 9). These states are all operating statewide career ladder initiatives with the state community college agency as the lead agency, but working in close collaboration with employers. Massachusetts also has a statewide career ladder, the Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative, focused specifically on job advancement in the nursing home industry, particularly for certified nursing assistants but also extending to higher levels of the allied health profession.

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#### Box 9

#### Career Ladders: Kentucky's Career Pathway Initiative

The Kentucky Career Pathways initiative, overseen by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, gives grants to local partnerships of community colleges and businesses to develop and implement career ladders that focus on job and educational advancement for low-income individuals and meet business needs. Based on employer input, these career pathways lay out a sequence of connected skill upgrading and job opportunities, with each education step on the ladder leading to a job or further training. Each college received a grant to design a career pathway in partnership with employers and other stakeholders (all 16 are developing health career pathways; 3 are also including manufacturing pathways; 1, construction; and 1, transportation). Colleges are encouraged to develop bridge programs that teach basic skills in the context of training for jobs. The career pathways are primarily credit-based training that may be augmented with noncredit customized training as necessary. Pathways at the two-year institutions articulate with certificates, diplomas, and associate's and bachelor's degrees for those students who wish to pursue additional education. Community colleges are encouraged to offer curricula in modularized formats, at alternative times (such as evening and weekends), and at alternative sites, such as at the workplace. The colleges are providing case management that may include access to child care and transportation, financial aid, tutoring, academic advising, career coaching, and job placement.

Second, some of the innovative local sectoral initiatives have an explicit focus on developing career ladders discussed above, with the training primarily designed for incumbent workers in the industry (most of these programs also include a pre-employment training component). As shown in appendix table A.6, these sector-based career ladder initiatives include the Boston SkillWorks program (which focuses on developing both entry-level training and career ladders in four industries: health care, automotive, hospitality, and building management) and the Instituto Progreso in Chicago (which has developed a career ladder in health, specifically for Spanish-speaking immigrants). The Culinary Training Institute and the District 1199C Training Fund discussed above also focus on career ladder training. For example, the Culinary Training Institute provides free upgrade training in higher-paying classifications of the hospitality industry for incumbent workers after 6 months on the job. District 1199C provides skills training for several levels of health care workers with schedules and courses developed specifically for working parents.

**Industry-based certifications.** Another potentially innovative element of sectoral training programs are occupational skills certificates for individuals who complete training programs that award a credential that is portable from one employer to another. Occupational skills certificates provide a mechanism for individuals to document that a specific set of job skills has been mastered. If businesses identify the competencies required to earn the certificate, then the skills certificates provide a uniform way for business to communicate the skills they require for specific jobs and for community colleges and other providers to standardize the training they offer. States have sought to incorporate industry-based or state-developed occupational certifications into their public workforce and community and technical college offerings (National Skills Standards Board Institute 2003). As a strong example of this approach, shown in appendix table A.7 and box 10, we profile a statewide credentialing program in Georgia.

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**Box 10**  
**Credentialing: Georgia's Certified Specialist Program**

Developed by the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education in partnership with groups of businesses, this program is designed to assist businesses in finding skilled workers by developing standardized, statewide, credit-bearing curricula and credentials provided by the state's technical colleges in key occupational sectors: manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, construction, customer service, and life and health insurance. Employer-created, standardized statewide credentials and curricula are offered for college credit in five high-demand occupational areas: manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, construction, customer service, and life and health insurance. While more than 500 for-credit technical certificate programs are offered in the state, only five are part of the Certified Specialist Program (CSP). Students can enroll each quarter, and colleges can offer classes more often if a business or a group of small businesses has enough workers to train to create a class. The CSPs are 15 to 16 credit hours (about 160 hours of class time), with tuition costs usually covered by the Hope Grant (see description above). Efforts are made to schedule classes at times when workers can attend. The CSPs, as well as the other technical certificates offered by the technical colleges, are for-credit so that students can build toward diplomas or associate's and bachelor's degrees. CSPs are marketed to potential students as a way to advance in their careers and branded with the logos of businesses that helped to create the credential. As of 2005, more than 20,000 certificates have been issued.

Overall, it is important to recognize that while sectoral approaches offer powerful advantages, there are some formidable barriers to carrying them out successfully. Many of the large-scale sectoral initiatives, including most of those profiled in this report, require the involvement of multiple systems, including workforce development, community colleges, the business community, unions, and community groups. It can be difficult to gain the cooperation of all parties needed to enact the type of major changes required by many sectoral initiatives. Such collaborations also require employers who are willing to contribute staff time and financial resources. Indeed, competition among firms can prevent them from working together in a cooperative way. Sectoral initiatives can also require substantial resources to plan and implement effective initiatives. While some have developed innovative programs using primarily public funds, many of the most advanced that are profiled here received significant resources from private foundations to launch and maintain the initiatives. The recent and new DOL grants for high-growth job training and regional employment and economic development may support new programs in this area over the next several years.

## 2. Incumbent Worker Training

Job training provided directly at the workplace or through employers to their existing workforce is another innovative skill-development strategy. Sometimes known as customized training programs, these are typically state-administered programs that provide grants to businesses to partner with training providers who offer job-specific training for incumbent workers and new hires at a given business (rather than focusing on a industry sector or general job classification). While they vary widely in size and scope, many of these programs are funded through employer taxes (Simon 1997). According to research by the Government Accountability Office, 23 states reported using employer tax revenues in 2002—including UI tax offsets, UI penalty and interest funds, and separate employer taxes—to fund training programs (GAO 2004).

The best evidence on the impact of workplace-based education and training indicates that workers who receive it earn significantly higher wages than those who do not. (Ahlstrand, Bassi, and McMurrer 2003). For example, the wage rate benefit of 40 hours of workplace education is estimated to be 8 percent, which is as large as the return from an entire year of schooling (Frazis and Loewenstein 1999). However, it is also clear that low-wage workers are less likely than higher-wage workers to reap the potential benefits of workplace-based incumbent worker training. In 1995, only 22 percent of workers at the bottom of the earnings distribution received education at work compared with 40 percent of those in the top level (Mikelson and Nightingale 2004).

There are several possible reasons for the lack of employer-provided training for low-wage workers. Businesses are more likely to invest in workers expected to contribute to the long-term profitability of the company—that is, those with longer tenure. Low-skill workers and those at the low end of the salary structure have higher turnover. In addition, businesses are unlikely to invest in training workers who may leave, thereby transferring the returns on their original investment to a new business. In order to qualify for skills-upgrade training, some workers might first require basic skills remediation or English-language training, which are often necessary prerequisites for more advanced, job-specific training. Often these types of services are not allowed under state incumbent worker training programs, which typically provide funding only for technical training.



These challenges notwithstanding, the research findings to date give us strong reason to hypothesize that education and training provided within the workplace context and targeted on entry-level (lower-skilled) workers may improve their earnings potential (Holzer and Martinson 2005). Because the training needs of low-income workers are somewhat different than those of other types of workers, certain program features appear important to include in order to maximize the potential for this to serve as an effective skills-development strategy for this population:

- *Paid release time.* Many low-wage workers hold multiple jobs and have children, making it difficult to pursue training that occurs outside of work hours. Providing full or partial release time so workers can easily attend training appears critical to attendance and completion.
- *Portable training skills.* Allowing and encouraging the use of funds to support training projects that can benefit more than one employer can help ensure workers are gaining portable skills. It can also reduce the competitive risks to companies of investing in training if they and their competitors make similar investments.
- *Providing basic skills and ESL as part of training.* Because many low-wage workers require these type of skills before they can benefit from more technical training, incumbent worker training programs can better meet their needs if they provide this type of service.
- *Focus on job quality.* Certain types of jobs are associated with higher-than-average wages and provide opportunities for wage progression.
- *Targeting low-wage workers.* In order to effectively serve this population, it may be necessary to set aside funds or give preferences to training focused on low-income workers.

While most states operate customized or incumbent worker training programs, as shown in appendix table A.8, we identified several that include innovative features designed to explicitly address the needs of low-wage workers, including state programs in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. We also profile a TANF-funded local incumbent worker training program in Florida, which includes a focus on developing quality jobs for low-wage workers. These particular state-operated programs are notable for their scale—they train several thousand individuals per year (although a smaller number are low income)—and have been in operation for several years.

The profiled programs also include at least some of the features noted above that address the needs of low-income workers. For example, all the incumbent worker programs highlighted here require an employer match to receive training funds, primarily paid through providing paid release time to attend training. To address the issue of portability, Pennsylvania’s relatively new incumbent worker training program gives priority to funding training for multiemployer partnerships. It also emphasizes aligning training with steps on a career ladder that offer workers opportunities for advancement. New Jersey established a separate incumbent worker training program that specifically provides resources to employers who provide basic skills and ESL training to their workers, and also gives priority to funding initiatives that serve low-wage workers (see box 11). The Florida program gives “points” in the grant application process based on growth in the target occupations, the existence of career paths that provide wage increases and skill advancement, the availability of tuition reimbursement, and benefits and flexible scheduling.

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### Box 11

#### Incumbent Worker Training: New Jersey Workforce Development Partnership Program and Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills

The New Jersey Workforce Development Program provides grants to partnerships of employers and training providers for technical training to incumbent workers at businesses across the state. It is complemented by the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills, which provides similar grants for “literacy” training (basic reading and math and ESL). While the state covers the cost of the training (through employer Unemployment Insurance taxes), employers are required to contribute an equal match with their funds going toward employees’ wages while they attend training (usually at the worksite). Because of its basic skills component, the program reaches a range of low-skilled workers, including immigrants and TANF recipients. Employers apply to receive customized training grants, literacy grants, or a combination of the two to provide services to their employees. The program also provides grants directly to community-based organizations and community colleges to deliver basic skills training to unemployed and underemployed individuals in the community. This feature is designed to meet the needs of small businesses that may not be able to meet the employer match because of the small number of workers they employ. Workers in these firms can attend basic skill courses offered in the community.

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## VIII. Income and Work Supports

Income and work supports represent a broad range of policies and programs intended to help low-wage workers make ends meet, provide greater economic stability for their families, and promote job retention.<sup>16</sup> As noted above, low wages combined with frequent lack of employer-provided benefits (i.e., health, pension), high levels of job turnover, limited opportunities for advancement, and the costs associated with working (e.g., child care, transportation) all contribute to low levels of earnings. Without taking into account costs associated with working, such as child care and transportation, the household income for a family of three with one full-time worker earning the federal minimum wage is just 67 percent of the 2005 federal poverty level (Anderson et al. 2006).

This section highlights three strategies for providing income and work supports: (1) post-employment assistance, including accessing publicly funded benefits and financial supports such as food stamps, the EITC, child care subsidies, and personal supports such as career counseling; (2) financial incentive programs that encourage and improve the rewards of work; and (3) asset-building strategies that help individuals build financial reserves to support their career goals and family needs.

### 1. Post-Employment Assistance

A range of post-employment strategies focus on helping low-wage workers, particularly individuals transitioning off welfare, access the range of publicly funded income supports available to them (e.g., the EITC and child care assistance) and improve their ability to retain employment and advance through personal supports such as assistance with job-related problems and career counseling. In many programs, these services are provided through program staff who

offer a range of “case management services” to address a wide range of issues that individuals encounter once they find jobs.

The existing research base on the impact of these kinds of post-employment supports and services is mixed. Post-employment programs evaluated to date generally have not produced effects on job retention and advancement, although studies currently underway should provide more information in this area. In the Post-Employment Services Demonstration (PESD) of the late 1990s, welfare agency staff sought to contact individuals who found employment and provide them with counseling and support, job-search assistance, resolution of benefits issues, and service referral. This approach generated disappointing results, particularly in terms of promoting greater retention (Rangarajan 1998). But the employment services rendered there were quite limited, especially since case workers managed very large caseloads and targeting of the services to those in need of help was quite poor.

Several sites in the national multisite Employment Retention and Advancement evaluation, sponsored by HHS and conducted by MDRC, are also testing the effectiveness of post-employment case management services. One program in Illinois targets a group of TANF recipients that appear to be “stuck” in low-wage jobs. The program provides a range of post-employment services to help them increase their earnings in their current job or find a better job, and has shown early effects on increasing earnings and reducing welfare receipt. Other programs in this study that also provide post-employment case management services have shown limited effects (Bloom et al. 2004; Hamilton 2006). Most of these programs delivered services through the TANF agency, although some also involved the workforce development system and one program—the Achieve Program in Cleveland—also directly involved an employer and provided post-employment services at the worksite (Anderson and Martinson 2003).<sup>17</sup>

At the same time, nonexperimental research indicates that the receipt of financial work supports is associated with increased employment rates, increased family income, lower rates of return to welfare, and improved job retention (Holt 2006; Loprest 2002; Patel et al. 2002). While limited experimental research has been completed in this area, recent studies show that delivering a package of supports that includes health insurance, child care subsidies, and a wage supplement (the effect of which is similar to receiving multiple benefits in the current work support system) can increase work effort, decrease poverty, and increase the well-being of young children (Zedlewski et al. 2006). Employee utilization of available work supports can also benefit employers in that they can enhance job retention, thereby reducing the costs associated with high job turnover. (Frank, Greenberg, and Zdenek 2006; Relave 2005).

Increasing awareness of the challenges low-wage working families face in making ends meet and the desire to support work, especially in connection with welfare reform, motivated the federal government and many states to create, expand, and improve access to key financial work support programs. These efforts include major expansions in the EITC and Medicaid, the creation of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), increased child care resources for low-wage working families, and increased flexibility to support state efforts to simplify, streamline and increase participation in the Food Stamp program. Federal and state spending on EITC, Medicaid/SCHIP, food stamps, and child care increased by 27 percent (in real terms) between 1996 and 2002, the period following the 1996 federal welfare reforms, with Medicaid/SCHIP accounting for the greatest share of the increase (Zedlewski et al. 2006).

In spite of these expansions, participation in financial work support programs is often low. For example, estimates from the late 1990s indicate that 80 to 85 percent of eligible tax filers received the EITC (Berube 2006). However, among working poor families in 2002, only 7 percent received all EITC, food stamps, Medicaid/SCHIP, and child care subsidies for which they were eligible (Zedlewski et al. 2006). Several factors are consistently cited in the research literature as key to understanding the under use of work support programs among low-wage workers. These include lack of awareness of programs or how to access them, a complex and fragmented system with varying eligibility criteria and program rules that are administered by multiple bureaucracies in different locations, burdensome application and recertification processes, stigma due to association with the welfare system, unavailability of opportunities to access due to work schedules, and in some cases (e.g., child care) insufficient funding (Frank et al. 2006; Patel et al. 2002; Relave 2002; Sawhill and Haskins 2002).

Given these trends, one innovative approach for helping low-wage workers is to develop better methods for delivering post-employment assistance, including financial and personal work supports. Based on a review of the literature and discussions with experts, cutting-edge approaches to increase access tend to be marked by two key characteristics.

- *Connecting low-wage workers to multiple work supports at a single point of access in places other than welfare offices they are more likely to frequent.* There are a variety of organizational bases that could provide a convenient point of access. We focused on strategies to provide access to work supports at the workplace, One-Stop Career Centers, and neighborhood community-based organizations offering employment services. All of these locations provide an organizational setting that is not associated with “welfare” and are already in contact with a significant share of individuals likely to be eligible for work supports. In addition, they can maximize the impact of work supports by facilitating access to a bundled package of benefits in a single location and by making this linkage in conjunction with other employment-related services.<sup>18</sup>
- *Using technology to overcome the challenge of navigating a diverse range of work support programs, each with different and often complicated eligibility criteria that have different interactive effects at different income levels.* State and local agencies and nonprofit organizations have developed web sites that provide information about public benefit programs, and some states have advanced to providing interactive eligibility screeners and benefit calculators, a few of which offer multiple program screeners and benefit calculators (Schott and Parrot 2005). In addition, other web-based systems, such as benefit calculators, have also been developed that perform a variety of functions that allow individuals (either on a self-serve basis or together with a staff person or advocate, such as a coach or case manager) to screen for eligibility, facilitate application submission and tracking, calculate wages against cost of living, and estimate the impact of various work supports on budgets at various wage levels (NHSA 2005; Seedco 2003; WOW 2006). These kinds of technological applications streamline access to benefits as well as serve as an educational tool that illustrates the value of packaging work supports in clear and concise terms.

This study highlights several programs that connect workers with financial work supports within a broader array of services aimed at enhancing job retention and career advancement through

resolution of job-related and personal problems. Some of these programs also include financial services that help workers better budget existing resources, reduce debt, and increase assets. We include those programs that have tackled the challenge of bundling benefits to facilitate access, utilizing nontraditional pathways and mechanisms for improving awareness, accessibility, and availability of work supports.

Box 12 highlights two programs—The SOURCE and EarnBenefits—that illustrate a multifaceted approach to providing work supports. In appendix table A.9, we highlight several programs that facilitate access to work supports at the place of employment. For example, through its TJXtra! initiative, TJX Companies, Inc., strives to increase employees’ awareness of public benefits—including the EITC, SCHIP, and food stamps—by providing brochures and other information in all employee lounges. Marriott International employees can call its Associate Resource Line, a resource and referral service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to get assistance with accessing and applying for public benefits, as well as referrals for other personal, legal, and professional issues. Cascade Engineering employs two on-site caseworkers from the human services agency that work with employees who are former TANF recipients to access support services and address work- and family-related problems.

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#### Box 12 Post-Employment Service Programs: The SOURCE and EarnBenefits

**The SOURCE.** This employer collaborative, in operation since 2003, serves employees of eight companies located in close geographical proximity to one another that employ a large share of low-wage workers. The underlying concept of this model is to increase job retention through a conveniently located employee resource center sponsored by multiple businesses and supported through public and employer funds. This pooled model enables small to medium employers to function as a large firm in terms of their capacity to provide a wide range of employee supports and resources. The SOURCE employs two caseworkers who help employees and their families access available public benefits, resolve transportation and child care issues, partner with Employee Assistance Programs, refer individuals who need counseling to providers that offer a sliding pay scale, and enroll employees in education and training programs. A variety of services are offered on site, including technical training, GED tutoring, ESL, financial management, free tax preparation, and EITC assistance. SOURCE case managers also provide career advancement counseling and planning and help workers gain better positions across the member companies if upward advancement within one employer is not possible.

**EarnBenefits.** Launched in 2004, the EarnBenefits model seeks to help low-wage workers access and manage a wide array of work supports and asset-building benefits through three major program components: 1) user-friendly marketing and outreach materials—including a public access website, [www.earnbenefits.org](http://www.earnbenefits.org)—that provide information, eligibility guidelines, application forms, and submission requirements for public and private benefits and work supports (e.g. Food Stamps, child care subsidies and tax credits); 2) eligibility screening and facilitated access services through EarnBenefits Online (EBO), a web-based technology tool that enables service providers to perform eligibility screenings and generate benefits applications on behalf of applicants for more than 25 different public and private benefits; and 3) on-going benefits management services to ensure that recipients recertify for benefits, and to re-engage individuals and facilitate access to other asset-building products and services that best meet their needs as their household income increases.

Other programs that we highlight are operated out of One-Stops or other social service agencies. Seattle’s King County One-Stop attempts to bridge workforce and work support services to promote job retention and advancement. The Centers for Working Families/LISC initiative in Chicago provides community residents access to work supports, workforce services, and financial coaching at neighborhood-based organizations in low-income communities. Finally, illustrating another type strategy, Connectinc.’s Work Central Call Center in North Carolina operates a telephone-based case management and referral system for low-income workers and former TANF recipients to connect participants to a wide range of services to including assistance with applications for child care, referrals to low-cost skills training, and assistance in accessing financial aid and financial guidance.

## 2. Financial Incentives

Another innovative approach for promoting the employment and income levels of low-income workers are financial incentives. Policymakers have used financial incentives to improve the rewards associated with low-wage work a great deal since the 1960s, beginning with the earned income disregard policies in public assistance programs. More recently, tax credits, wage supplements, and bonuses have been used more extensively. The primary goal of these efforts is to raise the rewards associated with work, and thus to increase the levels and duration of employment.

Evaluations of these efforts—many of which involve rigorous research designs—generally support the view that financial incentives that reward work can raise employment rates and earnings among low-wage workers. The clearest example of a financial incentive program is the EITC, which now provides a roughly 40 percent earnings subsidy to low-income working parents up to about \$10,000 of earned income. In addition, 14 states and the District of Columbia have implemented their own Earned Income Credits to supplement the federal program (Ross Philips 2004). Indeed, the research suggests that the federal EITC has succeeded in raising employment levels among low-income single mothers (e.g., Berube 2006; Eissa and Liebman 1996; Meyer and Rosenbaum 2001).

Other programs have focused on providing earnings supplements to welfare recipients after they leave cash assistance and work full time. These include the Canadian Self-Sufficiency Program (SSP) and the Texas Employment Retention and Advancement (ERA) program.<sup>19</sup> SSP operated outside the welfare system, while the Texas initiative was part of the local TANF welfare-to-work program. With about one-third of enrollees using the incentive, SSP showed large effects on employment, earnings, and job stability of program enrollees, and unlike most other welfare-to-work initiatives, resulted in more individuals moving out of poverty (Michalopoulos and Berlin 2001). However, while only preliminary results from the Texas ERA evaluation are available, they show relatively small effects on employment levels of welfare recipients in only one of the three sites where the program was studied (Martinson and Hendra 2006).<sup>20</sup>

Many states have provided financial incentives for welfare recipients to work through the TANF earned income disregard, which allows individuals to work and still remain eligible for benefits. The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) was the most successful of these efforts, which like SSP, had large gains in employment and earnings and reductions in poverty that were attributable to the financial incentives. However, while the program produced impacts among long-term recipients, it had limited effects for welfare applicants and new recipients, and the

impacts faded after the treatment ceased (Miller, Knox, and Gennetian 2000). Financial incentives also figure prominently in the Jobs Plus demonstration, where public housing residents were offered a drop in the rate at which their rents increased with higher earnings, although it was unclear exactly which part of the treatment contributed most to the improvement.

The research of SSP and MFIP indicates these programs are most successful when subsidies are tied to full-time work in the labor market or when accompanied by other work or job-search requirements. Unless the subsidies are permanent, their positive effects on work tend to fade over time, although they may not completely disappear. The research evidence also indicates some potential limitations of these approaches. Tax credits or subsidies tied to family income—like the EITC—phase out as income rises. This could create incentives for those in the phaseout range to reduce their work effort. In addition, it is not clear whether or how well financial incentives for work improve retention or advancement outcomes for those already in the labor market.

We include financial incentives as an innovative approach because of their relatively strong research results in increasing the incomes of some low-income families, particularly when they are linked to full-time employment or work requirements. However, aside from the TANF earned income disregards, we did not find extensive use of financial incentives at the program level in the review done for this study. While many programs are using more incremental financial incentives such as gift cards to promote participation and finding and keeping jobs, in general we did not find much innovation in this area, particularly among those that involved strong incentives or operated at significant scale.

As shown in appendix table A.10, there are exceptions. To encourage both working and meeting child support obligations, there are efforts to extend the EITC benefit to noncustodial fathers who are paying child support. New York recently implemented this effort for state-level taxes. In terms of TANF, Arkansas (see box 13) and Hawaii recently implemented an innovative statewide financial incentive to those who leave cash assistance for work. While these programs are very new, they are being implemented statewide and individuals that receive the financial incentive will count toward the states' TANF participation rate. On a smaller scale, Florida has been operating the Passport to Independence program in three counties, providing significant financial incentives on an individualized basis. Case managers work with TANF recipients individually to determine appropriate milestones, and clients receive approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000 annually if they meet their individualized benchmarks.

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**Box 13**  
**Financial Incentives: Arkansas Work Pays Program**

Arkansas Work Pays, implemented in July 2006, offers employed former TANF recipients a monthly payment as well as retention bonuses, to provide incentives for individuals to find and keep their jobs and to supplement their earnings. To be eligible, applicants must have been on TANF for at least three months, and their case must have closed within the past six months. Participants must also currently be working in paid employment for a minimum of 24 hours per week, meet the federal work requirement by participating an additional six hours in a countable work activity, and have an income below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. Families who then enroll in the program receive \$204 a month (the maximum TANF benefit for a family of three) for up to 24 months. Families continue to work with a case manager and are eligible for the same support services as TANF recipients, including child care. In addition, the program plans to provide post-employment services such as career counseling to promote retention and advancement. The program includes a series of bonuses to encourage retention: after three months of continuous earnings, participants receive \$400, after an additional six months they receive \$600, and those who meet the Work Pays participation requirement for 21 out of the 24 months receive an exit bonus of \$800. Participants who exit the program at any time with earnings above 100 percent of the federal poverty level receive an additional bonus of \$1,200. Individuals who receive a monthly payment in the Work Pays program count toward the state's TANF participation requirement.

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### **3. Promoting Asset-Building among Low-Income Families**

Not surprisingly, poor families save less and have fewer assets than those with higher incomes. With little to no income left over after paying for necessities, it is difficult to generate savings. In addition, savings or assets may affect poor families' eligibility for income support programs which may affect their incentive to save. Many low-income families are renters and cannot afford to purchase their own homes. The lack of existing assets among low-income families means they do not have the same access to financial institutions or receive the same incentives to save as higher income families do (Cramer, McKernan, and Sherraden 2005).

Asset-based policies and programs are growing rapidly across the country, with a strong interest in the public and private sector in developing these types of programs for low- and middle-income families. Key components of this approach include:

- *Individual Development Accounts (IDAs)*. IDAs are subsidized savings accounts targeted to the poor. Participants are required to deposit a minimum monthly amount (often around \$20). Savings are matched by public or private funds, provided that assets are used for purposes that promote well-being and self-sufficiency. 2:1 is most common match rate, but many programs offer higher match rates in order to increase participation. Common approved uses of IDA funds include home purchases and repairs, postsecondary education or vocational training, and microenterprise ventures.



- *Loans and staff support to establish microenterprises.* Some programs emphasize careful self-assessment and screening to determine the appropriateness of self-employment, often accompanied by training periods and incubator models. Other programs collaborate with larger organizations, firms, or unions to establish partnerships between the participant and established entities through networking events and mentoring relationships. Programs help participants access capital for start-up funding, often through IDAs or microloans. Program staff help participants develop a business plan, and continue to work with microentrepreneurs during businesses' early stages.
- *Financial education and literacy.* Most programs require financial literacy classes on topics such as money management and budgeting, to increase the saving rates of program participants. They can potentially increase the efficacy of IDAs by enhancing participants' knowledge regarding budgeting, savings, and the benefits of asset ownership. Ongoing reminders or follow-up by staff to encourage regular deposits are often a part of this strategy.

Most asset-building strategies have not been rigorously evaluated. The Tulsa, Oklahoma, IDA program, one of the 14 IDA programs initiated under the American Dream Demonstration (ADD), is the only IDA program in the country that has been evaluated by random assignment. Results of the evaluation demonstrate that saving in an IDA had a positive impact on low-income families' asset accumulation, particularly in the form of homeownership (Mills et al. 2004). Another nonexperimental study of the American Dream Demonstration found that IDAs can help low-income individuals save and accumulate assets (Schreiner, Clancy, and Sherraden 2002).

Research on microenterprise as an asset-building strategy is also limited. Studies have found that it can be difficult for low-income, as well as other individuals, to start their own businesses. However, a five-year nonexperimental evaluation of TANF recipients who enrolled in microenterprise programs found positive results after two years: participants were more likely to be employed and earning higher incomes and less likely to be receiving welfare (Klein, Alisultanov, and Blair 2003).

Because of the level of interest in asset-building for low-income families as well as evidence of some limited but positive effects (although some of it is from nonexperimental studies), we include this approach in our study. As shown in appendix table A.11, among the many initiatives, we profile three innovative programs in this area, which are strong and relatively mature programs that represent different types of asset-building strategies for low-wage workers. EARN, based out of San Francisco, offers IDAs for participants to save toward higher education, home purchase, or small business start-up. Parents and children can also save together by opening a Savings Account for Education (SAFE). Women's Initiative for Self Employment (WISE) is the largest microenterprise training program in the country. WISE provides training in business management and access to seed, startup, and operating loans, as well as coaching and networking opportunities for new business owners. Finally, the Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI) in Columbus, Ohio, integrates financial literacy training, IDAs, and microenterprise support into a comprehensive package (see box 14).

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#### Box 14

#### Asset-Building: Economic and Community Development Institute

The Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI), a nonprofit organization, offers numerous financial services targeted at low- to moderate-income individuals. Services include financial literacy classes, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), microenterprise training, consulting services, and microloans. Participants are referred to ECDI by One-Stop Centers, local community- and faith-based organizations, and through word of mouth. Before receiving any of ECDI's services, all participants must complete economic literacy training. This four-session class teaches individuals the importance of saving and budgeting their money. Participants then choose which asset goal they want to concentrate on (microenterprise, homeownership, or secondary education) and begin saving money toward their goal in a matched savings account, or IDA. Match rates range from 2:1 to 4:1, depending on the program.

The majority of ECDI participants enroll in the microenterprise program. These individuals undergo a 10-session training workshop where they learn the skills necessary to start their own business. Upon completion, all participants have developed a business plan, which ECDI staff help them to implement. At this point, many participants receive an ECDI microloan for business start-up or expansion. ECDI staff continue to work with business owners, providing technical assistance and conducting on-site visits. Participants who enroll in the homeownership program enroll in the 10-session Homebuyer Education and Counseling Program designed to prepare them to be a homebuyer and homeowner. Their IDA savings can be used toward a down payment, home inspection, house closing, or any other cost associated with purchasing a home. ECDI caseworkers work one-on-one with those interested in saving toward secondary education. Savings can be used toward books, tuition fees, or transportation.

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## IX. Conclusion

This review study has shown that a range of employment approaches has the potential to improve the economic success of low-income individuals and that there are multiple areas that warrant further research and study. In documenting these innovative approaches and learning about creative programs across the country, we observed several trends that should be considered as federal, state, and local policymakers and program administrators move forward in supporting and evaluating these kinds of efforts.

One issue that clearly emerged from this review was that many of the initiatives identified combine elements from multiple models and are relatively *comprehensive in the range of the services* they provide. While there are some programs that clearly represent a singular approach, we observed numerous programs that mix multiple approaches such as combining skill development with subsidized jobs, linking access to work supports with skill development and asset-building strategies, and integrating curricula and instructional adaptations for low-skilled individuals into employer-driven training programs. From a programmatic perspective it makes sense to link these different elements, and, indeed, efforts to connect different strategies in new

combinations often represented the most innovative aspect of the programs we reviewed. From an evaluation standpoint, however, it is important to understand whether specific components are important for participants' economic success or whether it is the packaging of service elements that is responsible for improved outcomes.

While much of the past research on effective employment strategies for disadvantaged workers focused on cash assistance recipients, this study shows that many of the initiatives that represent innovative future directions are more *broadly focused on low-income individuals* that include but are not limited to the TANF population. In part this is because TANF agencies are now more likely to focus on preventing welfare dependency and supporting working families than in the past because of the flexibility allowed in spending TANF resources. But it also reflects the unmet needs of many low-income workers, many of whom remain entrenched in poorly paying jobs despite existing policies and programs to assist them. It should be noted that due to passage of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2006 (that occurred while this study was underway) many states are now required to involve a greater portion of their TANF caseload in work activities. This could result in an increased focus on developing employment strategies for the TANF population.

As a result of the comprehensive nature of many of the programs identified in this study, *many involve partnerships of multiple public- and private-sector organizations*. These generally include some combination of workforce development agencies, community colleges, TANF agencies, unions, community-based organizations, and employers. While establishing these partnerships was no doubt difficult in some circumstances, the prevalence of interagency and private-public collaborations indicates that addressing the needs of low-income populations may require the commitment of a range of partners that can provide expertise and support in different areas. Some of the partners involved in these efforts have not traditionally worked together—particularly community colleges, employers, and intermediary organizations—so there is much about the nature of the collaboration that is innovative.

In part because of the different service delivery systems and relatively broad target populations, the initiatives discussed here are often *financed through a number of public funding streams* (such as workforce development, postsecondary education, and TANF), and many also rely on private foundations and contributions for support. Employers also play an important financial role in some programs, particularly those involving employer-based skill development. Program administrators generally had to commit significant time and energy to develop the level of resources needed to operate the programs, particularly those that are more comprehensive.

Outside the TANF system, it is notable that *significant innovation and activity for low-income parents at the state and local level focuses on making skill-development programs more accessible to low-income workers and more tailored to employer needs*. While other types of initiatives, particularly work supports and employment-based options such as subsidized or temporary employment, receive continued attention, skill-development approaches are a strong area of innovation at this time. Innovations in pre-employment training for low-income students have shifted from an individual-based approach—where training is typically more general and tries to give students a range of skills that can be used in different jobs—to one more focused on employer needs that sacrifices some of this generality to improve the fit of the skills to specific jobs. There is also increased attention to building career ladders, focusing on providing training that current workers need to move up to higher quality jobs. These initiatives focus on making

training more accessible to workers in terms of schedule and curriculum and linking skill upgrade programs directly to job advancement opportunities.

Compared with many of the past programs evaluated, many of the approaches and programs identified here include *strong involvement from the private sector*. Particularly regarding approaches focused on skill development or providing work supports, there are a range of innovative initiatives that potentially benefit both individuals and businesses, many of which take place at the worksite or strongly reflect employer training and skill needs. Many of these initiatives that involve private-sector employers, particularly sectoral training and work support programs, use third-party intermediaries to build in-depth knowledge of the industry, establish relationships with multiple employers, coordinate training options, and conduct research to monitor industry's changing needs. While many of the innovative efforts identified here involve employers, further growth in this area is likely to require attention to create incentives for employer participation in initiatives that address the needs of low-wage workers, particularly in tight labor markets.

A final observation from this study is the *prevalence of case management services* that provide participants with individualized assistance to plan for future activities and address issues that arise in school, at home, or on the job across the different approaches. While some past research efforts have focused exclusively on the role that case management services can play in improving outcomes for disadvantaged populations, this review indicates that case management services are ubiquitous across a range of different service models, including service-oriented interventions for the hard-to-employ, subsidized employment and temporary jobs, skill-development approaches at both educational institutions and employers, and work support programs.

This study cannot point to the effectiveness of any of the highlighted approaches or programs identified. Nor does this study address the operational strategies and attendant implementation challenges and lessons involved in administering the range of program approaches discussed here. However, this review documents some of the innovative efforts being undertaken by a number of states, localities, and organizations to build on past research and promote the economic success of low-income parents. These efforts warrant future attention by researchers and program evaluators, and also provide direction to those looking for innovative employment strategies for low-income populations.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Appendix B provides contact information for all of the programs highlighted in this report.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Meyer and Rosenbaum (2001) for an attempt to disentangle these determinants of higher employment among single mothers. Other supports for working women with families in the past two decades include Medicaid extensions, implementation of the State Children's Health Insurance Programs, and increased subsidies for child care.

<sup>3</sup> In this study, low earners were those who were consistently earning less than \$12,000 a year early in the study period. By the end of the study, roughly 27 percent of initial low earners were consistently earning above \$15,000 per year.

<sup>4</sup> This section limits its discussion of the hard-to-employ service strategies to TANF recipients. Strategies focused more generally on low-income individuals are discussed in other sections of this report. Segments of populations such as ex-offenders or young noncustodial parents are also often considered hard-to-employ and may be the focus of targeted interventions and service strategies, but are not specifically addressed in this report.

<sup>5</sup> Although results are not available at this time, MDRC's national Enhanced Services for the Hard-to-Employ evaluation, sponsored by ACF and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at HHS, will provide further evidence on the effectiveness of a range of approaches for those with significant barriers to employment.

<sup>6</sup> In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests that the momentum around further developing service-intensive strategies for hard-to-employ welfare recipients has dwindled in the last five years as states' TANF resources have been spread thin, given budget constraints in many states and family needs increasing with the downturn in the economy in 2000.

<sup>7</sup> The Substance Abuse Case Management program is being evaluated as part of MDRC's Employment Retention and Advancement evaluation, sponsored by HHS/ACF.

<sup>8</sup> An experimental study of the Transitional Work Corporation in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, is currently underway. Conducted by MDRC, this study is part of the National Hard-to-Employ evaluation sponsored by HHS/ACF.

<sup>9</sup> Private/Public Ventures is conducting a four-site study examining the motivations, operations, and services provided through alternative staffing firms. See also Carré and coauthors (2003) and Eisenberg (2003).

<sup>10</sup> The 30-month evaluation of nationwide CET sites (Miller et al. 2003) showed modest impacts on earnings for women only. But this might be partly attributable to the strong labor markets that generated unusually strong employment opportunities for controls as well as the treatment group. A 54-month follow-up study is being conducted.

<sup>11</sup> A range of institutions and systems play a role in providing education to low-income individuals, including community colleges; the Workforce Investment Act system, which provides a range of services through local One-Stop Centers; the adult education system; and nonprofit and for-profit providers.

<sup>12</sup> The Opening Doors Demonstration examines the role of community colleges in improving the skill levels of low-income students.

<sup>13</sup> For example, Michigan's Regional Skill Alliances initiative has funded 25 sectoral projects across the state in a range of industries. Although these programs were generally not developed enough to include in this report, they could strengthen over time.

<sup>14</sup> The new WIRED grants program will complement the ongoing DOL grants program for High Growth Job Training Initiatives and Community-Based Job Training, both of which support hundreds of programs that involve partnerships among businesses, workforce agencies, community colleges, and that support economic development to expand industry and sectoral training.

<sup>15</sup> Project Quest and the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership are participating in PPV's Sectoral Employment Demonstration.

<sup>16</sup> There is no standard definition of what constitutes a financial work support although the earned income tax credit, the child tax credit, and child care subsidies are typically considered among the core publicly-funded work supports (Stoker and Wilson 2006). Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program, and food stamps, while not just for working families, are important supports that help in the transition to self-sufficiency. Other types of benefits such as rental assistance, transportation assistance, earned income disregards through TANF, nutritional assistance through free or reduced-price school lunch also serve as supports for families, including those with working members.

<sup>17</sup> The Pennsylvania GAPS initiative, which operated in Allegheny County, used a similar approach to PESD, although services were provided by community-based organizations. A nonexperimental study of this program

found participants experienced some earnings gains, but incomes remained low and job benefits were poor (Wood and Paulsell 2000).

<sup>18</sup> It should also be noted that despite the potential effectiveness for facilitating access to work supports, none of these organizational entities have a record of serving in this role and barriers such as lack of resources and interest raise significant challenges and questions about how best to increase the role and scale of their involvement (Anderson et al. 2006; Frank et al. 2006; Grote et al. 2004; Relave 2006).

<sup>19</sup> The Texas ERA program is part of a HHS/ACF-sponsored national ERA evaluation conducted by MDRC.

<sup>20</sup> For more information on the differences between these financial incentive programs, see Martinson and Hendra (2006).

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## APPENDIX A

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS



**Table A.1  
Service-Focused Employment Preparation Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Anoka County Partnerships for Family Success (PFS) Program</b></p> <p>Anoka, MN</p> <p>To better coordinate a wide range of services for TANF families reaching their time limits, PFS developed a service team with an expert representing each of five departments under the Human Services Division (Corrections, Community Social Services and Mental Health, Community Health and Environmental Services, Income Maintenance, and the Job Training Center) to address client needs in these areas. Enacted in 2005 (but building on a previous similar effort), the program includes an emphasis on bringing expertise on a range of issues into the program, refining service needs, and reducing the number and level of outside service providers involved with each family.</p>	<p>The Anoka County Human Services Division is the lead agency, with each of the five departments playing an important role in providing services. Central Center for Family Resources, a community-based mental health center, provides assistance on mental health issues. The Minnesota Department of Human Services provides guidance and funding.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>The program targets families receiving services from multiple systems in Anoka County who have multiple barriers to attaining sustained employment. Most participants are TANF recipients, and are generally referred by the TANF program.</p> <p>As of December 2005, 254 families had enrolled in the program. The enrollment goal for the ISP is 300 families per year.</p>	<p>Staff specialize in certain areas, including child protection, criminal justice, public health, vocational rehabilitation, mental health, developmental disabilities, and TANF eligibility. Clients are assigned to a staff person based on their specific needs. A plan for addressing individual and family goals and issues during the assessment phase is developed. Other PFS team members or professionals may be used for consultation or assigned to families as a secondary worker, where appropriate. PFS workers try to provide services to clients within the team whenever possible and, at a minimum, to consolidate services for clients. PFS also has established liaison support from the Child Care Assistance unit, Child Protection, and the Job Training Center. Clients continue to work with a TANF Employment Counselor on employment issues.</p>
<p><b>Ramsey County Integrated Services Project (ISP)</b></p> <p>St. Paul, MN</p> <p>Initiated in 2005, the Ramsey County program is designed to develop and integrate rehabilitation expertise in mental health into the county TANF program, while accessing new funding outside of TANF. The ISP provides financial support to all county TANF Employment Service Providers to meet capacity and certification standards to provide services under Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS). Services provided by ARMHS-certified providers help individuals with mental illness or poor mental health to improve functionality while they continue to participate in TANF employment services.</p>	<p>The Ramsey County Community Human Services is the lead agency, with guidance and funding provided the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Several TANF employment service providers in the county (Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Employment Action Center, Hmong American Partnership, HIRED, Lifetrack Resources, Goodwill/Easter Seals) are under contract to provide ARMHS services, in addition to providing standard TANF employment services. Staff at Ramsey County Community Human Services, Mental Health Division played a lead role in staff training and program development.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>The ISP is targeting TANF participants with serious mental illness. Potential participants are generally identified and referred by the TANF program.</p> <p>As of December 2005, 104 families had enrolled in the program.</p>	<p>Through an application process, TANF employment service providers become certified to provide ARMHS services, and then are able to deliver the services to eligible TANF clients. Certified staff are able to bill to Minnesota's Medicaid program for the services provided. In this way, the program is designed to be self-sustaining and not rely on special grant funding. Before ARMHS services may begin, clients must receive a diagnostic and a functional assessment by a mental health professional, indicating the clients' medical necessity for receiving mental health services. Once clients are deemed eligible, an ARMHS Case Worker develops a treatment plan with the client, which identifies functional goals. Services under ARMHS may include training on basic living skills, education on mental health symptoms, medications, and side effects, or engaging and training individuals in the community such as employers or family members to support the clients. Staff generally provide services in the community, and often in the clients' homes. When participating in ARMHS services, clients remain enrolled in TANF and continue to work on their TANF employment plan.</p>

**Table A.1**  
**Service-Focused Employment Preparation Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>The Substance Abuse Case Management Program</b></p> <p>New York, NY</p> <p>This program, which began in 2001, provides intensive case management to New York City welfare recipients with substance abuse problems to encourage and assist participants to enroll in treatment, access employment services, and obtain and retain employment.</p>	<p>The New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) contracts with University Behavioral Associates, a behavioral health managed-care program, to operate the program.</p>	<p>The program uses funds from a variety of local, state, and federal funding streams.</p>	<p>The program targets TANF and General Assistance (known as Safety Net) recipients who have been diagnosed with a drug or alcohol addiction.</p> <p>The program has served approximately 4,700 individuals over the past three years.</p>	<p>After a client has been referred for services, an intensive assessment is conducted to determine whether a substance abuse problem warranting treatment is present, whether the problem is severe enough at the present time to deem the client temporarily unemployable (and therefore exempt from work requirements), and the treatment modality and provider that would most benefit the client (e.g. methadone maintenance, intensive outpatient, etc.). Staff also determine whether there are other barriers present that require follow-up and will either address the barriers themselves or make appropriate referrals. Staff facilitate client engagement in the treatment program, monitor their progress, and hold the treatment provider accountable for the services a client receives. Staff provide intensive case management services, with active outreach (e.g. seeing client at treatment provider, etc.) to ensure that clients continue with treatment. Contacts typically occur in the field. Once participants become stabilized and make progress in treatment, they are referred for employment services, with some participating concurrently in treatment and employment services.</p>
<p><b>Wellness Comprehensive Assessment, Rehabilitation and Employment Initiative (WeCARE)</b></p> <p>New York, NY</p> <p>WeCARE was implemented in 2005 to address the barriers of New York City's hardest-to-serve public assistance recipients through a continuum of comprehensive assessments, rehabilitation services, and education and training activities. The program's ultimate goal is to get participants working at least part-time or onto federal disability rolls.</p>	<p>The Customized Assistance Services Division of the Human Resources Administration (HRA) contracts with Federation Employment and Guidance Services (FECS) and Arbor Education and Training to operate WeCARE.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars as well as state and city general revenues.</p>	<p>WeCARE serves TANF recipients who face multiple and/or severe barriers to employment.</p> <p>As of March 2006, 68,608 individuals had been referred for WeCARE assessments. Approximately 36,000 individuals had completed all phases of the assessment and received diagnoses and/or referrals to services.</p>	<p>Participants undergo a biopsychosocial assessment to determine their employability, during which they are screened for medical, mental health, and social issues, including substance abuse, domestic violence, and child welfare, child care, housing, and legal problems. Participants who are deemed fully employable are referred to HRA's standard TANF employment program. For those who have limitations to employment, WeCARE service providers develop a Comprehensive Service Plan tailored to participants' unique set of needs and barriers. Depending on the severity of participants' barriers to work, Service Plans may include a combination of further vocational assessments, vocational rehabilitation, education and training activities, or medical treatment. WeCARE also provides case management, job placement services, and retention support after participants gain employment. WeCARE assists participants who are deemed unable to work to apply for federal disability benefits.</p>

Source: Anoka and Ramsey County program profiles are based on summaries in Martinson and Koralek (2006). The New York Substance Abuse Case Management profile is based on a summary in Anderson and Martinson (2003) and discussions with MDRC staff. The WeCARE profile is based on information City Council of New York (2006), Human Resources Administration (2005), and McMillan (2005).

**Table A.2  
Employment-Based Experience: Subsidized Employment Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Community Jobs Program</b> San Francisco, CA</p> <p>Initiated in 1999, Goodwill Industries of San Francisco County offers a two-tier transitional jobs program for TANF and General Assistance recipients. Individuals who are less job-ready undergo a two-month workplace assessment in one of Goodwill’s retail stores, while those who are more job-ready are placed in a subsidized job at a nonprofit agency for six to nine months.</p>	<p>Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties operates the Community Jobs Program in conjunction with the Human Services Agency (HSA) of San Francisco and the Private Industry Council of San Francisco.</p>	<p>TANF money pays for TANF participants’ wages, while General Assistance participants are funded by San Francisco County resources.</p>	<p>TANF and General Assistance recipients who have not recently been employed and/or have been unsuccessful at finding or keeping a job are eligible to enroll in the Community Jobs Program.</p> <p>Program enrollment varies over time. Currently, there are about 60 participants enrolled, although the program has the capacity to serve approximately 80 participants.</p>	<p>Employment specialists at HSA refer participants to the program. Less job-ready individuals are placed in a two-month situational work assessment at a Goodwill retail store where their job readiness skills are evaluated. Based on this assessment, Goodwill makes a recommendation to HSA as to whether the participant is able to move to the next tier. Those who are more job-ready begin the work experience internship. Based on their work history and goals, these participants are placed in a job at a nonprofit agency where they work for 25 hours a week for six to nine months. While working, participants choose if they want to remain on their TANF grant or receive a wage of \$8.82 an hour (subsidized by TANF dollars). For the first four months, participants attend professional development classes for seven hours a week in addition to working. In the last two months, participants continue to work and are sent back to the HSA where counselors assist them with job search. Throughout their placement, career advisors check in with participants and supervisors on a weekly basis and help participants to access community resources as needed. Retention services are provided by HSA.</p>
<p><b>The Enterprising Kitchen</b> Chicago, IL</p> <p>The Enterprising Kitchen, a nonprofit soap-making business founded in 1996, offers underemployed, low-income women transitional jobs and workplace training.</p>	<p>The program is operated by the Enterprising Kitchen, a nonprofit social enterprise.</p>	<p>The Enterprising Kitchen’s operating budget primarily comes from product revenue and foundations. A small portion comes from private donors, a DOL grant, and city Community Development Block Grant funds.</p>	<p>The program serves low-income, underemployed women. Participants must be referred by a social service agency, have stable housing, have been substance-free and/or enrolled in a treatment program for at least four months, and be motivated to work.</p> <p>Program enrollment has doubled from 30 women in 2003 to 60 women in 2005 due to a growing business and referral network. The Enterprising Kitchen is expecting to serve 60 to 70 in 2006.</p>	<p>Participants work Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. for up to six months and are paid \$6.50 an hour. About 70 percent of the workday is spent on the production floor making, packing and labeling the soap, tracking orders, and providing customer service, while the remainder is spent in workshops and job readiness activities. An eight-week training seminar on basic work and life skills is offered as part of the paid workday for one hour each week. Topics covered include ethics, goal setting, self discipline, professional behavior, diversity, and effective communication. Other workshops are offered throughout the year, including an art therapy group for domestic violence survivors, nutrition classes, stress relief and relaxation techniques, and beginning computer classes. An on-site volunteer helps participants with resumes and interviewing skills, and an ESL tutor is available on a limited basis (women with limited English skills are required to attend an ESL class outside of work). The Enterprising Kitchen refers participants to the local workforce center for job placement services.</p>

**Table A.2  
Employment-Based Experience: Subsidized Employment Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Georgia GoodWorks!</b> Georgia (statewide)</p> <p>Started as a pilot program in Augusta, GA in 1999, this paid transitional employment program for hard-to-serve TANF recipients is now offered statewide.</p>	<p>Georgia GoodWorks! is run by the Georgia Department of Labor. Partners include the Georgia Department of Families and Children’s Services (DFCS), Georgia Department of Labor Vocational Rehabilitation Program, and 35 local service providers throughout the state.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>The program targets TANF recipients with multiple barriers to employment.</p> <p>Currently, there are 700 individuals in the program.</p>	<p>TANF recipients are referred to a provider by DFCS. All participants are paired with a personal advisor to identify and address barriers. During the first phase (1-4 weeks), clients undergo 20 hours of hands on work experience to assess their skills and job readiness and 20 hours of other activities, such as soft skills and job training or GED prep, per week. With an effort to match skills and interests, clients receive a temporary, paid job placement and progress into the second phase, during which clients work 32 hours per week for minimum wage for up to five months. After this phase, participants may move into subsidized employment for three to six months. During this final phase, the employer pays all wages, but the TANF check is diverted to the employer to offset training costs. Follow-up services continue for six months.</p>
<p><b>Philadelphia@Work</b> Philadelphia, PA</p> <p>Founded in 1998, The Transitional Work Corporation (TWC) is a nonprofit organization that places and supervises TANF recipients in transitional, subsidized jobs.</p>	<p>The Transitional Work Corporation (TWC) runs Philadelphia@Work. The City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Public/Private Ventures, and The Pew Charitable Trusts are key partners.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>The target population is TANF recipients who have been on public assistance for at least two years, have not succeeded in other programs, and/or face other barriers to employment.</p> <p>The program will serve 2500 individuals in 2006.</p>	<p>As a first step, participants attend a two-week orientation for 25 hours a week, during which they undergo job readiness workshops in resume writing, interviewing, and workplace behavior. Participants are paid a stipend at the end of the orientation (based on minimum wage) and are placed in a transitional job, generally in a nonprofit or public agency, where they work 25 hours per week for up to six months. In addition, participants undergo 5 to 10 hours per week of unpaid professional development and training. Participants have access to an array of support services, including free transportation and emergency rent assistance. Job coaches work closely with participants and their supervisors, visiting the workplace biweekly. Program staff guide participants through an unsubsidized job search. Participants receive retention services for six months after obtaining unsubsidized employment, including funding for additional training and a transportation assistance. Workers are also eligible for an \$800 bonus over the six-month period if they remain employed.</p>

**Table A.2**  
**Employment-Based Experience: Subsidized Employment Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Rubicon Programs, Inc.</b></p> <p>Richmond, CA</p> <p>As part of its comprehensive strategy to serve homeless, impoverished, and disabled individuals, Rubicon operates a bakery and landscaping business as job creation and training tools. While temporarily employed in one of Rubicon's businesses, participants gain transferable work skills. Rubicon has been serving the Bay Area since 1973; the landscaping business has been in operation since 1978 and the bakery since 1993.</p>	<p>Rubicon Programs, Inc.</p>	<p>The majority of Rubicon's funding comes from business revenue generated by the bakery and landscape ventures. In addition, Rubicon receives some public funding, including HUD grants and TANF dollars, and foundation support.</p>	<p>Rubicon serves three main populations: those who are homeless, very low-income, and/or have a mental health disability or other barrier.</p> <p>Rubicon's two businesses employ approximately 120 people. Every year, about 30 new positions become available.</p>	<p>Rubicon's businesses offer temporary or permanent jobs and training for those who are having a difficult time obtaining competitive employment, as well as generate revenue that helps to support Rubicon's other programs. Rubicon's bakery operates a 12-week work skills training program that is integrated into its daily operation. Approximately 10 percent of trainees are offered permanent employment in Rubicon's bakery, while the rest find employment with private employers. This training is particularly apt for entry-level manufacturing and biotechnology jobs, which also require close adherence to a recipe or set of instructions. Several biotechnology firms, including Bio-Rad and Chiron, have contracted with Rubicon to train their new hires and cover trainees' wages for a portion of the training program.</p>
<p><b>Washington Community Jobs</b></p> <p>Washington (statewide)</p> <p>Since 1997, Washington state has offered this statewide paid transitional employment program for hard-to-serve TANF recipients.</p>	<p>The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) operates Washington Community Jobs. Partners include the Employment Security Department, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and 18 local service providers throughout the state.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>The program targets hard-to-employ TANF recipients who have been unsuccessful in other WorkFirst activities.</p> <p>Community Jobs serves about 2100 individuals per year.</p>	<p>TANF recipients are referred to the program by DSHS. After developing an employment plan and within 30 days, participants begin to work 20 hours per week in a temporary, paid job for up to six months (this can be extended to nine months). Most job placements are in nonprofit agencies. The other 20 hours a week are spent on individualized barrier management, which can include soft skills training, mental health or substance abuse counseling, and basic education. Individuals receive support services, such as transportation subsidies, work clothing, and child care assistance. Program staff maintain a close relationship with participants and their supervisors and conduct monthly workplace visits. Participants receive some job search assistance and receive support services for up to 60 days after obtaining unsubsidized employment.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.3  
Employment-Based Experience: Temporary Employment Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>FirstSource Staffing</b> Brooklyn, NY</p> <p>Two local nonprofits founded FirstSource Staffing, a for-profit social venture, in 1999 as a means of reinvesting in the community and bringing jobs to community residents. FirstSource functions much like a privately-owned staffing company, but focuses on providing temporary jobs to disadvantaged individuals with low-skills and other barriers to employment.</p>	<p>Two community development nonprofits, the Fifth Avenue Committee and Good Shepherd Services, founded FirstSource with the help of the ICA Group, a national nonprofit that does consulting with social purpose businesses.</p>	<p>More than 90 percent of FirstSource’s revenue comes from employer fees. FirstSource charges an hourly rate equal to the hourly wage plus fringe costs and a market rate mark-up (approximately 50 to 80 percent of the hourly wage).</p>	<p>FirstSource works with a diverse array of job seekers, including a number of current and former TANF recipients and other low-income individuals who face barriers to employment.</p> <p>In FY 2005, FirstSource placed 202 workers in temporary jobs at 93 different companies.</p>	<p>FirstSource receives referrals from a network of over 500 organizations, including job training programs, community colleges, shelters, drug treatment programs, and workforce development agencies. In addition, they receive resumes from job seekers who have seen their advertisements in the phone book as well as walk-ins. FirstSource staff screen resumes and interview job seekers to match them with the appropriate type of position. FirstSource works with a wide range of employers, including law firms, light manufacturing companies, schools, pharmaceutical companies, and accounting firms, on the condition that they pay fair wages. Employers contact FirstSource with their temporary employment needs and FirstSource provides them with several candidates to choose from. Placements vary from one day to permanent, though the vast majority are short term. FirstSource’s Retention Specialist focuses on helping people succeed and garner “temp to perm” positions. This may entail providing transportation subsidies, child care referrals, or other supportive services, as well as conducting visits to the workplace.</p>
<p><b>Harborquest Staffing Services</b> Chicago, IL</p> <p>Harborquest, a nonprofit staffing agency, has been providing temporary placement services to disadvantaged individuals in the Chicago area since 1970.</p>	<p>Harborquest and STRIVE Chicago, a nationally recognized, classroom-based work readiness training program, merged in 2003. Harborquest is now licensed to provide STRIVE training to its participants.</p>	<p>Harborquest is supported by employer fees, foundation support, and private donations.</p>	<p>While Harborquest does not have any eligibility requirements, most of their clients are low-income. Many are on TANF and have criminal backgrounds, low literacy levels, and/or other barriers to employment.</p> <p>In 2005, Harborquest placed about 1,000 people in temporary jobs with approximately 60 different employers.</p>	<p>Participants first attend an orientation, which provides an overview of Harborquest’s services and expectations of its clients. Those who are still interested are interviewed by a Harborquest staff member and undergo math and reading assessments as well as drug testing. Next, participants attend a structured job readiness and job search workshop operated by STRIVE for two weeks. This is followed by two months of paid work experience coupled with onsite job coaching. These jobs are generally in light manufacturing, hospitality, or the service sector and pay an average hourly wage of \$6.50 to \$8. During this time, Harborquest expects participants to work at least 200 hours over the two-month period without any undocumented absences. Participants then return to Harborquest classrooms to work on their job application and interviewing skills for approximately one week. Harborquest job developers set up interviews and help participants find a placement. Alternatively, Harborquest’s “20/20 View” Service allows companies to preview employees for up to 90 days. During this time, participants work fulltime at the company but remain on Harborquest’s payroll. After the trial period, the company decides whether or not to permanently hire the participant.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.



**Table A.4**  
**Skill Development: Instructional and Curricula Reforms**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Essential Skills Program</b> <b>Denver Community College</b></p> <p>Denver, CO</p> <p>The Essential Skills Program (ESP) is multi-occupational certificate program that prepares individuals with low-skills for entry-level jobs and also articulates to the next educational level. Training varies with labor market demand. Current tracks include: Information Technology, Early Childhood Education, Financial Services and Accounting, Community Health Worker, and Medical Clerk.</p>	<p>The Community College of Denver is the lead agency. Key partners include the Denver Office of Economic Development, the Denver Department of Human Services (DHS), a range of employers, and community-based organizations. Employers offer expertise on workplace competencies, consult on curriculum design, and provide internships and job opportunities.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars. The college contributes for the general operations of the program, and some employer partners contribute by conducting some of the program's classes. Students are also eligible for Pell Grants while in the program.</p>	<p>The program enrolls about 200 students each year, and has served over 1,000 since its inception in 1997. Participants are low-income unemployed, underemployed or dislocated workers with children. About two-thirds receive TANF.</p> <p>Students are recruited from the Denver Department of Human Services, community-based organizations, and the housing authority.</p>	<p>ESP offers bridge classes covering work readiness preparation followed by short-term basic skills and occupation-specific training combined with job experience in a career pathway. The program takes five months to complete, and results in approximately 16 community college credits and an Essential Skills Certificate in the chosen field. In the first month, students are required to take a full-time course, which combines work-readiness activities and vocational training specific to each track. GED preparation is also provided if needed. This is followed by a three-month internship that counts toward a degree if the student stays in the same vocational area (wages are set at the entry-level wage for the employer). During these three months, students are simultaneously taking about 15 hours of contextualized classroom instruction that also teaches competencies for the intended job. Staff provide academic and career counseling, referrals to financial benefits they may be eligible for, and job placement services throughout the program. Retention services, job coaching, and referral to support services are provided for one-year after placement in unsubsidized employment. Employer connections for internships and job placements are facilitated by a full-time specialist to help students identify job openings and to establish new partnerships with businesses. ESP has a full-time recruiter at the DHS office that provides initial assessment and guidance to clients referred by DHS.</p>
<p><b>Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST)</b></p> <p>Washington (statewide)</p> <p>I-BEST is a multi-occupation program that targets people with limited English skills or basic skills. I-BEST pairs basic skills/ESL and occupational instructors in the classroom to concurrently advance student gains in basic and occupational skills. Classes are in programs that build toward degrees and/or certificates and prepare students for employment. The program began as a demonstration program in ten community and technical colleges in 2004 and expanded statewide in 2006.</p>	<p>The Offices for Adult Basic Education at the Workforce Education State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) oversees the program. Ten colleges in the state's Community and Technical College System participated in the demonstration stage. As of 2006, all two-year colleges can apply for enhanced funding. Twenty of the 34 colleges have I-BEST approved programs.</p>	<p>Funding was provided by a combination of Washington state revenue and Carl Perkins Leadership funds. The program also received funding from the Ford Foundation's <i>Bridges to Opportunity</i> initiative. For the new statewide initiative, a college's tuition reimbursement rate is increased to 1.75 FTE (Full-Time-Equivalent) from 1 FTE to cover the cost of joint instruction time, curriculum development, and coordination and support services.</p>	<p>I-BEST targets low-income individuals with limited English skills and/or needing Adult Basic Education.</p> <p>The demonstration program served 268 students over the one to two year demonstration. Each college served approximately 20 to 40 students.</p>	<p>I-BEST pairs basic skills and ESL instructors with professional technical instructors in the classroom to teach literacy and work skills concurrently. The ESL curriculum is tailored to language skills for on-the-job application; the professional skills curriculum teaches skills for the specific job track and reinforces the language training. Instructors from both tracks jointly lead classes for at least half of the class time over a quarter. The demonstration programs prepared students for additional training and jobs primarily in nursing and allied health care, but also in industrial maintenance, computers automotive, and early childhood education. The new approved programs cover a broader range of programs in demand occupations. I-BEST provides credits and prerequisite requirements, with most programs providing 12 to 15 credits in a specific occupational field. Colleges provide higher levels of support and student services to students in this program than other community college programs. Three of the colleges in the demonstration program developed more formal extended career ladders beyond I-BEST.</p>

**Table A.4**  
**Skill Development: Instructional and Curricula Reforms (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>On-Ramp to Biotech/Bridge to Biotech</b></p> <p>San Francisco, CA</p> <p>SF Works serves as an intermediary for a two-step bridge program in biotech for low-income individuals, featuring contextualized instruction and a paid internship. Initiated in 2003, the program allows low-skilled individuals (6th grade and above) to obtain employment in the biotech field, enter a one- or two-year certificate program in biotech, or obtain entry-level employment in the biotech field. Individuals are trained for relatively high quality jobs, paying \$26,000 to \$30,000 per year.</p>	<p>SF Works, a nonprofit community-based organization, is the lead agency. Key partners include the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, San Francisco City College, and Urban University. The program works closely with employers such as the University of California at San Francisco, Genentech, and Chiron, who have direct input to the curriculum and hire graduates. (The program is being replicated at Santa Ana College and Austin Community College.)</p>	<p>Half of the funding is provided through WIA. Funding also comes from the Bay Area Workforce Funders Collaborative, National Science Foundation Grants, and private foundation grants.</p>	<p>Although the program was initiated to serve TANF clients, it has broadened its target population to include other low-income and unemployed individuals. The program serves approximately 50 to 60 students per year over two semesters.</p> <p>To be eligible for the program, students must have a GED, must not have a criminal record, and be able to work in the United States.</p>	<p>The bridge program consists of two components. Participants who have math and English skills at a 6<sup>th</sup> to 9th grade level first enroll in the “On Ramp to Biotech” program at City College of San Francisco. This 10-week program provides noncredit classes in basic biology, chemistry, and math as well as tutoring and career coaching (the latter provided by Urban University). On Ramp graduates, as well as other participants who test out of the lower-level program, enroll in the 16-week Bridge to Biotech semester. Students take credit classes in the sciences and noncredit classes in math and English; courses are offered both during the day and at night to accommodate those who are working. During the Bridge semester, On Ramp graduates are placed in a paid, part-time internship. These individuals work 10 to 15 hours per week, for a total of 180 hours, at \$10 per hour (employers pay a quarter of the wage and the rest is subsidized by SF Works). The program also offers resume development, career counseling, job placement services, and assistance with childcare and transportation. SF Works covers the tuition and other costs of the training.</p>
<p><b>Portland Career Pathways</b></p> <p>Portland, OR</p> <p>This partnership program between Portland Community College and Mt Hood Community College began in 1998 and offers short-term training in programs that are designed to be flexible for working students and to increase access to mainstream academic programs. The success of this program sparked interest at the state level. Oregon is now developing a more comprehensive career pathway program that includes the development of 29 career pathways and the participation of all 17 state community colleges in the initiative.</p>	<p>The lead partners are Portland Community College and Mt Hood Community College in conjunction with Workforcesystems, Inc. Employers are also involved to help identify entry-level requirements for jobs and skills requirements for curriculum development and to offer internships and subsequent jobs. Other partners including the local One-Stop Career Centers, TANF agency, and Vocational Rehabilitation Office who provide most of the referrals to the Career Pathways program.</p>	<p>Workforcesystems, Inc., the local Workforce Investment Board, provides funding through WIA. Tuition and costs for wrap-around services for students referred by either TANF, WIA, or Vocational Rehabilitation programs will generally be paid by those programs.</p>	<p>The program targets unemployed or dislocated workers, part-time workers, and those who receive some public assistance.</p> <p>The program serves about 220 students annually.</p>	<p>Key components include a “chunked” curriculum (offering courses in one or two terms to build skills of entry level job), cohort learning, 33 hours on job readiness instruction focused on job requirements and advancement options in their specific industry, 3 to 12 week internships, and job placement services. Most programs are between 14 and 18 college-level credits and last either one or two semesters. Students can enter at four different points of the year. Students earn an Employment Skills Training Certificate for 12 to 44 credits. Career Pathways coordinators work with clients directly to provide support services and career counseling but are also responsible for developing new trainings, developing curricula, coordinating internships and providing job development and placement services. Students are assigned a case manager that provides support services and career counseling. Skill areas include accounting/bookkeeping, criminal justice, phlebotomy, medical coding, medical customer service, and HVAC Specialist.</p>

**Table A.4**  
**Skill Development: Instructional and Curricula Reforms (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Ready-to-Work (RTW)</b>  Kentucky (statewide)</p> <p>Initiated in 1999 and operated by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), Ready-to-Work is designed to provide certificate, diploma and associate degree training, a work study component, and case management to TANF recipients with the goal of promoting the success of these individuals in community and technical colleges.</p>	<p>RTW is a partnership between the Kentucky Community and Technical College System and the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services.</p>	<p>RTW, including the wages paid during the work-study component, is funded by federal TANF dollars</p>	<p>The program targets TANF recipients who are interested in attending community and technical colleges and could benefit from a certificate, diploma, Associate degree, or other short-term training opportunity.</p> <p>In fiscal year 2005, RTW served 2,500 TANF recipients, with 1,200 enrolled in the work-study component.</p>	<p>Participants enroll in existing certificate, diploma and Associate degree programs offered through KCTCS. The Ready to Work program assists these individuals by providing job skills and life skills training, academic success training, counseling, mentoring, service referrals, and assistance securing and retaining employment. There are approximately 20 full-time RTW coordinators and two assistants serving 16 college districts providing these services. The program also provides participants with work-study opportunities in both private and nonprofit settings which are relevant to their fields of study. Students may earn up to \$2,500 each year in TANF funded work study. Participants generally work 15 to 20 hours per week, and wages do not count against TANF benefits. Both part-time and full-time students qualify for the work-study award, which at some colleges may be contingent upon a minimum grade point average. Work-study jobs have helped increase the state's TANF work participation rate. In 2004, RTW was expanded to include TANF recipients who do not have a high school diploma but wished to earn a GED or who lack the basic skills to qualify for post secondary admission in order to transition into college.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.5**  
**Skill Development: Financial Aid Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Arkansas Workforce Improvement Grant Program (AWIGP)</b></p> <p>Arkansas (statewide)</p> <p>Enacted in 2003, the Workforce Improvement Grant program is a need-based financial aid program for nontraditional adult students. This grant program targets adults who make too much money to qualify for federal Pell Grants but not enough to pay for a college education. It also targets working adults who have few financial assistance programs available to them.</p>	<p>The program is administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.</p>	<p>This program is Arkansas's participation in the federal Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership (LEAP) program. The Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) receives LEAP funds from the US Department of Education and matches them with state funds.</p>	<p>To be eligible, student must be a resident of Arkansas, at least 24 years old, accepted into a college degree or certificate program, have a high school diploma or GED, be enrolled for at least three credit hours, determined to be in need of financial aid, not have a bachelor's degree, and not in default on any prior financial aid received.</p> <p>In fiscal year 2005, the program provided financial assistance to approximately 750 individuals.</p>	<p>The annual award is a maximum of \$2,000 for tuition and mandatory fees for a student enrolled full time (12 semester hours), but may be less. Students enrolled part-time will have their grants prorated based on the number of hours enrolled. Because the grants are not renewable, students must apply each year. Grants are not contingent on high school performance or GPA. ADHE distributes Workforce Improvement Grant funds to participating institutions based on the number of nontraditional students enrolled at each institution as a percentage of the total number of nontraditional students enrolled at participating institutions. The institutions then make awards to students based on procedures established for the program.</p>
<p><b>Hope Grants</b></p> <p>Georgia (statewide)</p> <p>Enacted in 1993, the HOPE grant provides financial assistance to Georgia residents attending one of the 33 public technical colleges. It is designed to serve students who are pursuing technical diplomas or certificates on a full-time or part-time basis. The HOPE Grants program complements the HOPE Scholarship program, which provides merit-based financial assistance to attend four-year colleges.</p>	<p>The Georgia Student Finance Commission operates the program.</p>	<p>Hope Grants are funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education.</p>	<p>To qualify for a Hope Grant, one must have been a resident of Georgia for 12 months, not have a bachelor's degree, and not have prior drug charges or defaults on student loans. A high school diploma or GED are required only if required for course enrollment. This is not a need-based program, and there are no income requirements.</p> <p>Approximately 112,000 individuals received a HOPE Grant in 2005; approximately 40,000 of these individuals also received a Pell Grant (indicating they are low-income).</p>	<p>The Georgia Hope Grant covers full tuition, books, and fees for individuals enrolled in the Georgia public technical and community colleges. Grants are not contingent on high school performance or GPA. Students enrolled less than half time can receive Hope Grants. There is no limit on the number of HOPE grants an individual can receive. Tuition for Georgia's Certified Specialist Programs (described elsewhere in this report) is covered by the HOPE Grant program. Some employers encourage their staff to use HOPE Grants to upgrade specific technical skills.</p>

**Table A.5**  
**Skill Development: Financial Aid Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Minnesota Low-Income Worker Training Grants</b></p> <p>Minnesota (statewide)</p> <p>This program was initiated in 2001 as a pilot program. It builds on the Families Forward Initiative funded by the McKnight foundation, which provided training grants for low-income incumbent workers. The Low-Income Worker Training Grants are provided to partnerships between educational institutions (primarily community colleges) and nonprofit community-based organizations, who award the funds to individuals to cover their training costs.</p>	<p>The program is overseen by the Minnesota Job Skills Board within the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The program is a component of the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program, the state's incumbent worker training program.</p>	<p>The program is funded by a set-aside from a surcharge added to the Unemployment Insurance tax.</p>	<p>The grants are used to pay for training for under- and unemployed Minnesotans with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line. Participants must also meet the prerequisites for the specified training track, have dependent children, and not be eligible for training under the Minnesota Family Investment Program.</p> <p>In 2006, the state awarded grants to serve approximately 1,200 individuals.</p>	<p>The program covers training costs through partnerships that provide Board-certified short-term training in growth sectors of the economy that allow individuals to move up the career ladder. Training is available for many occupations depending on the grantee, including health care, welding, manufacturing, medical administration, building maintenance, and banking. Some of the grantees offer customized fast-track programs that give participants certification and meet requirements that can be helpful for moving on to college level courses. Grants typically last between 18 months and two years.</p>
<p><b>Opportunity Grants Pilot Program</b></p> <p>Washington (statewide)</p> <p>Starting in the fall of 2006, this program will provide grants to ten pilot community and technical colleges to offer financial assistance to low-income students for tuition, books, fees, childcare, transportation, etc. Grants will be provided to students to support them while participating in a career pathway program designed to help them secure employment within a specific industry.</p>	<p>The program is administered by the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). Grants will be made to ten two-year colleges to administer the program.</p>	<p>State funds were appropriated to SBCTC to operate the program. Pilot colleges will receive allocations ranging from \$300,000 to \$430,000.</p>	<p>The program targets low-income students, with incomes below 200 percent of poverty. Eligible students must have less than an Associate degree (and may be in need of basic skills or ESL services).</p>	<p>This project is designed to link financial assistance with participation in a career pathway program in order to increase post-secondary attainment and employment outcomes. Its goals are to deliver aid in innovative ways that suit the needs of individuals who typically cannot access and/or do not benefit from traditional aid and to package this aid with participation in a career pathway program with direct connections to employment in a particular sector. Each college will be given discretion to develop their own system for determining financial assistance packages and structuring linkages with career pathways. Grants can be used for tuition, books, fees, childcare, transportation, and potentially other expenses. Opportunity Grants are intended to go directly to low-income students, with funding for instructional design and staff support services coming from existing or leveraged sources.</p>

*Source:* Information on the Georgia and Washington programs were obtained through interviews with program managers and a review of program documents. The summary of the Minnesota program is based on an interview with staff at the JOBS Now Coalition and program documents. Information on the Arkansas program is drawn a range of program reports and documents.

**Table A.6**  
**Skill Development: Sectoral Training Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Boston SkillWorks</b></p> <p>Boston, MA</p> <p>Initiated in 2003, SkillWorks is a five-year initiative that provides funding to partnerships in Boston that bring together employers and community based organizations with the goal of providing career advancement opportunities for low-income workers. The focus is on systemic change and institutionalizing and bringing to scale various approaches that expand education, training and career coaching for low-income workers. The partnerships themselves develop service provider networks that implement pre-employment and incumbent worker training, career coaching, and career ladder programs designed to build the skills of this population. There are currently six funded partnerships: two in health, one in automotive, one in hospitality, one in custodial services industries, and one in community health work.</p>	<p>The SkillWorks Director oversees the partnerships, coordinates the grants selection, and provides technical assistance. The partnerships act as intermediaries that convene community-based organizations, employers, community colleges, four-year colleges, community development corporations, and unions. The funded partnerships include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute (HCRTI), a partnership of eleven health care employers, one union, and several community colleges and community organizations;</li> <li>• Building Services Career Path, a partnership among the Voice and Future Fund, the nonprofit arm of Service Employees International Union Local 615, and several building management companies and a number of community-based organizations;</li> <li>• The Hotel Career Center (HCC) a partnership between the International Institute of Boston , the Vietnamese American Civic Association, and the Hilton Hotel Corporation;</li> <li>• Partners in Automotive Career Education (PACE), a partnership of four automotive repair firms with the Asian American Civic Association, La Alianza Hispana, and the Urban League of Eastern MA , Franklin Institute, and Boston Adult Education Services; and</li> <li>• Partners in Careers and Workforce Development (PCWD), a partnership among Partners HealthCare, two community colleges and several community-based organizations.</li> </ul>	<p>SkillWorks pools philanthropic and public funds from ten foundations, the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts into a single fund managed by the Boston Foundation and overseen by the SkillWorks Funders Group.</p>	<p>The program targets low- and moderate-income individuals with low work skill levels, unemployed or under-employed individuals, and entry-level workers. The majority of participants are residents of the city of Boston. Participants can enter into the programs from multiple points of entry that can include any of the community-based organizations, employers, or unions involved with the partnership.</p> <p>Each of the partnerships serves approximately 200-400 individuals per year.</p>	<p>Services vary across the partnerships, but include assessment, basic education combined with vocational skills targeted toward the selected jobs or industries, career ladders for incumbent workers, and career coaching, and financial literacy. An essential element of SkillWorks partnerships is working with employers to map career ladders and implement policies and practices that facilitate career advancement for low income individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HCRTI focuses on building an employment pipeline from four Boston neighborhoods into health care and research jobs and providing multiple levels of training, education, and support to career advancement for front-line workers.</li> <li>• The Building Services Career Path focuses on improving English language skills for a large immigrant workforce and providing them with more advanced training. Training is provided at the workplace at times that accommodate the working schedules, and employers are developing promotional systems to help part-time, entry-level workers progress.</li> <li>• HCC provides pre-employment training, as well as career coaching, and ESL and computer skills to entry-level hotel employees who do not have the skills needed to participate in in-house staff advancement programs.</li> <li>• PACE offers new employees and current entry-level workers automotive technology training with college credit, vocational English and math customized for the automotive industry, career coaching, financial literacy, and ASE Test Prep for incumbent workers.</li> <li>• PCWD brings diverse pre-employment and career development efforts offered at various hospitals in the Partners network under one umbrella, making them more accessible to entry-level workers and their supervisors. The program provides academic preparation and career coaching to help entry-level workers develop the skills and credentials needed to fill health care skills shortages.</li> </ul>

**Table A.6**  
**Skill Development: Sectoral Training Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Capital Idea</b></p> <p>Austin, TX</p> <p>Initiated in 1999, Capital Idea, a nonprofit community-based organization, operates several training programs to provide low-income individuals who traditionally have not had access to college level careers with pre-college and college level training in growth occupations. The program focuses on providing training in jobs that pay at least \$13 per hour and provide benefits and opportunities for advancement in the health, technology, and accounting fields. Capital Idea works with area businesses to develop the programs and training components according to employer specifications and then outsources the training to community colleges and private vendors.</p>	<p>To help guide the structure and content of the training programs and ensure the hiring of graduates, the project relies on partnerships with over 100 businesses, including about 40 core employer partners across various industries. The program works closely with several training providers, particularly Austin Community College. The project grew out of Austin Interfaith, a congregation and school-based public interest advocacy group that now serves as one of several referral sources.</p>	<p>Funding is provided by a combination of public and private funds. Public funds include those from the City of Austin, Travis County (Texas), the Texas Workforce Commission, and grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Labor. The program also receives funding from foundations and individuals and businesses.</p>	<p>The program targets unemployed and underemployed adults 18 and over, with incomes up to 200 percent of federal poverty level. Program participants are overwhelmingly women—about two-thirds are parents and one-quarter are single parents.</p> <p>The program enrolls about 100 new participants per year.</p>	<p>Capital Idea holds orientation sessions three times a year to recruit new students. Programs generally require a full-time commitment, with at least 20 hours per week of class time. Most of the training programs are long-term and most students complete the requirements in three to four years. The program pays for all training costs including tuition and fees and also provides child care, transportation and emergency assistance. The program offers several on-site programs, including a College Prep Academy that provides intensive (25 hours per week for 12 weeks) preparation in reading, writing and math to pass the Texas Higher Education Assessment (required to take college level courses); a GED prep program (four hours per day, five days a week); and an ESL program (2.5 hours per evening, four days per week). Another key element is the services provided by career counselors, including career advice and counseling and peer group meetings. Placement coordinators help connect students to jobs during the classroom phase and after they finish the program.</p>
<p><b>Cooperate Home Care Associates (CHCA)</b></p> <p>Bronx, NY</p> <p>Launched in 1985, CHCA is a worker-owned home health care cooperative that trains and employs home health care aides. Founded on the belief that higher quality jobs will lead to higher quality care, CHCA aims to restructure the long-term care industry by serving as a model employer that offers higher wages and benefits, supportive services, fulltime work, opportunities for career growth, and reduced turnover.</p>	<p>Paraprofessional Health Institute, CHCA's nonprofit affiliate, addresses policy and regulatory issues related to improving jobs in the long-term care industry. A replication program is operating in Philadelphia.</p>	<p>Private foundations provide most of funding. In addition, because CHCA is worker-owned, each employee must invest \$1,000 in the company to become a worker-owner. Most pay an initial \$50 and then borrow the remainder from the cooperative, repaying the loan over five years. CHCA returns a greater than usual portion of its revenues to employees, allowing workers to earn wages 10 to 20 percent higher than their competitors.</p>	<p>The program targets low-income women, primarily from the South Bronx and upper Manhattan (Harlem, Washington Heights)</p> <p>Approximately 200 to 250 people go through the CHCA program each year. CHCA employs over 900 home health aides.</p>	<p>Individuals undergo four weeks of classroom training followed by 90 days of on-the-job training. Training is conducted in Spanish for about half of CHCA's enrollees with limited English (these participants are later assigned to Spanish-speaking clients). CHCA hires everyone who successfully completes the training program. Every participant is matched with a peer mentor who makes regular contact with the participant during classroom training and intensively during their initial employment period (90 days). After three weeks of work, employees return to the classroom for further training. As employees of CHCA, individuals are paid an average wage of \$7 to \$8 an hour, are guaranteed a paid wage for a minimum of 30 hours per week, and receive free health insurance. Internal career ladders offer employees the opportunity to move into higher-paying administrative positions—at least one-half of CHCA's administrative staff are former home health aides. As a worker-owned cooperative, employees of CHCA take part in major decisions and help control the structure of the organization. Workers earn dividends based on the number of hours worked during the year (averaging between \$250 to \$600 annually).</p>

**Table A.6**  
**Skill Development: Sectoral Training Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Culinary Training Academy (CTA)</b> Las Vegas, NV</p> <p>Jobs on the Las Vegas strip pay higher-than-average wages and are highly organized, but also require a unique set of skills. The Culinary Training Academy is a labor-management organization that provides entry-level training, as well as ladder training designed for incumbent workers to upgrade their skills and advance to specific occupations within Las Vegas’s hospitality industry.</p>	<p>The Culinary Training Academy is a partnership between 24 Las Vegas hotel-casinos and the Culinary union. CTA also manages Nevada Partners, a nonprofit organization dedicated to moving people with barriers into jobs in the Las Vegas service industry.</p>	<p>As part of the collective bargaining agreement, each member employer must pay 3.5 cents per hour worked, part of which goes to the program. Tuition costs for entry-level workers are sometimes covered by WIA funds. For an upcoming expansion of their training facilities, CTA has received funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Economic Development Administration, and the state of Nevada (Community Development Block Grant and TANF dollars). The Department of Labor provided funding for a vocational ESL project.</p>	<p>Anyone who is interested in working in the industry is eligible for CTA training, though CTA does target lower-income populations. CTA has a contract with Nevada’s Department of Welfare, who refers TANF recipients to CTA’s training programs.</p> <p>CTA provides training to 2,500 individuals per year.</p>	<p>Entry-level participants undergo a one-week employability class. A three-week vocational ESL class helps prepare participants with limited English in completing job applications and interviews in English. Participants then enroll in customized, certificate-bearing training for a variety of food service and hospitality positions, including guest room attendant, house person, steward, bus person, food server, wine serve, sommelier, kitchen worker, cook’s helper, bar porter, and bar back. The length of training depends on the position, ranging from two weeks for a house person to three semesters for a sommelier. To encourage advancement within the industry, CTA provides free upgrade training in higher-paying classifications for incumbent workers after six months on the job. Training is designed to be flexible and meet the needs of current employees—participants can arrange to take classes on their days off. CTA’s state-of-the-art training facility includes a full service kitchen and guest suite replicas where students gain hands-on experience.</p>
<p><b>District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund</b> Philadelphia, PA and Cherry Hill, NJ</p> <p>District 1199C, Philadelphia’s largest healthcare worker union, founded its Training and Upgrading Fund in 1974 with the goal of promoting entry into the health care field and providing healthcare employees the training necessary to advance on a career ladder. The Fund operates the Thomas Breslin Learning Center, housed in center-city Philadelphia, which provides courses from basic skills for entry-level jobs to college degree programs in the health field.</p>	<p>The National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees District 1199C is the lead agency. The union represents employees from 55 employers across the state. The board of directors is composed of both employer and union representatives. While much of the training is provided in-house, the program also connects to programs offered by other training providers, particularly community colleges.</p>	<p>Fifty-five member employers contribute 1.5 percent of their gross payroll to the 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund. The Fund has also received funding from a diverse range of public and private sources, including the Pennsylvania Departments of Welfare, Education, Labor and Industry; the U.S. Department of Labor; and private foundations.</p>	<p>Although the employer contributions can only be used for union members, public and private grants allow 1199C to expand its services to the community at-large. The Fund primarily targets low-income incumbent health care workers to assist them in upgrading their skills but also receives referrals from TANF, WIA, community-based organizations, as well as walk-ins who hear of the program through word of mouth.</p> <p>In 2005, approximately 4,000 people received training at the Learning Center and an additional 1,000 took classes offered by other institutions using benefits provided by the Fund.</p>	<p>After enrollment, students are placed based on an academic assessment and a career counseling session that outlines an educational plan. Four levels of remedial programs (including ESL) and a high school diploma program are available, with instruction contextualized for the health care field. Training programs include pre-nursing bridge programs (including one specifically for TANF recipients), nursing assistant programs, an 18-month part-time practical nursing program, and a program to help practical nurses receive credits toward and link with a RN degree program. The Center offers career counseling, placement services, and GED and certification testing. Each student is placed with a case manager to provide ongoing career and personal counseling. Basic skills offerings at the Center are available free to all students and some employers cover tuition costs for upper level classes; 1199C members are eligible for up to \$5,000 a year in tuition reimbursement. The Learning Center has 40 fulltime staff plus 70 part-time faculty members and is open 14 hours per day, seven days per week.</p>



**Table A.6**  
**Skill Development: Sectoral Training Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Institute del Progreso Latino</b> Chicago, IL</p> <p>The Instituto del Progreso Latino (Institute for Latino Progress), a community based organization located in the Latino neighborhood of Pilsen in Chicago, operates two relatively large-scale programs: Careers in Health and Manufacturing Works. Both programs train low-income, low-skilled Latino residents for careers in high-growth sectors where they are significantly under-represented. The population they serve is of limited literacy and limited English proficiency and thus not likely to meet even entry-level requirements for such jobs or for college-level courses in either career track.</p>	<p>The Instituto runs the two programs under its Workforce Development Department. Both programs have several industry partners that advise about labor market needs and the training curricula and refer or hire program participants, including the Tooling and Manufacturing Association. The Careers in Health program maintains close partnership Wilbur Wright College, which offers the classes for the LPN program. Staff from the Richard J. Daley College West Side Technical Institute advise the manufacturing program on job qualifications and prerequisites for college level courses that students can enter post-certification.</p>	<p>Most of the funding for Carreras en Salud comes from a grant from the National Council of La Raza. The rest is from a combination of foundations and state WIA funds. The Manufacturing program also combines several sources, including NCLR, the State of Illinois through its Critical Skills Initiative Program (CCSI) and through its Illinois Community College Board. Participants in both programs are almost fully subsidized for the duration of the program, including tuition costs and related expenses (books, fees). The program may draw from foundation funds or help eligible students access WIA Individual Training Account vouchers or other sources of financial aid and grants.</p>	<p>The programs are both directed to low-income Latino families in and around Chicago, including unemployed, underemployed and some incumbent workers.</p> <p>The Careers in Health program has served about 290 participants at different levels along the career pathway. So far most graduates are from the lower rung of the career ladder (Certified Nursing Assistant). Manufacturing Works has graduated over 600 students over the past 10 years.</p>	<p>The Careers in Health program offers three levels of programs with various points of entry depending on skills assessment and current employment. The first is a 16-week bridge program that allows those with limited English and basic skills to train to become Certified Nursing Assistants. The second 16-week program provides training to become a certified Patient Care Technician (PCT), with course provided in the evening to accommodate working individuals. The final is a program to become a certified Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), a more demanding credit-bearing program where fewer students combine work and school. Instruction is contextualized with an emphasis on the English, math, and computer skills required for specific jobs. The manufacturing program focuses entirely on training for entry-level jobs that pay between \$9 and \$12 plus benefits. The curricula is taught over 16 weeks in the daytime or 20 weeks of evening classes that trains participants in basic skills and work preparation and communication, alongside technical specialty courses for work in manufacturing. Students with limited English proficiency may first need to pass a 14-week pre-bridge ESL starter course that also covers computer training and math skills. Participants are also assigned a case manager to follow their progress and help students access necessary support at each level, including preparing them for interviews, test-taking, resume writing, or child care or transportation assistance.</p>

**Table A.6**  
**Skill Development: Sectoral Training Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Project QUEST, Inc.</b></p> <p>San Antonio, TX</p> <p>Project QUEST partners with community colleges and employers to provide San Antonio residents with training in healthcare, maintenance repair and overhaul, and business services. In operation since 1993, QUEST targets demand occupations that pay at least \$13 an hour and monitors labor market trends to ensure training programs are tailored to existing opportunities.</p>	<p>Project QUEST works closely with four community colleges and a core base of about 25 employers, though they have worked with over 600 employers over time.</p>	<p>Approximately two-thirds of Project's Quest funding is from San Antonio's General Fund. Other resources are provided by WIA and TANF as well as national and state foundations.</p>	<p>Project Quest targets their services to low-income and unemployed individuals. Participants are required to have a high school diploma or GED and be able to read at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Income eligibility requirements depend on the funding source. San Antonio's general fund has no income eligibility requirement for training, but to receive support services an individual must be at 200 percent of the poverty level.</p> <p>Last year, QUEST trained 400 individuals. This year they expect to serve 800 due to increased funding.</p>	<p>QUEST offers approximately 20 specialized training programs varying in length from three months to two years that culminate in job placement. Counselors meet with participants on a weekly basis to explore further opportunities for training, scholarships, and support services, including rent and utilities assistance, transportation, and access to child care. Employers play an active role in designing the curriculum and visit trainings once a month. Training programs include traditional community college tracks as well as those developed exclusively for Project QUEST participants in health care and technical aviation. QUEST's aviation technician training program prepares participants to work for Standard Aero, who pays participants \$6.50 an hour for the five-month course. QUEST will refer those who do not qualify because they do not have a high school diploma into "pipeline" basic skills programs provided at local GED Centers in San Antonio.</p>
<p><b>Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)</b></p> <p>Milwaukee, WI</p> <p>WRTP is a nonprofit association of businesses and unions that has served employers, employees, job seekers, and unions in the Milwaukee area since 1996. WRTP works in targeted industries: it started in manufacturing and subsequently expanded to other fields, including health care, construction, and hospitality. Firms that join WRTP agree to develop education and training programs on-site or at community colleges and provide a payroll contribution. In return, they receive technical assistance to strengthen technology and workplace practices, improve the skills of incumbent workers, and recruit and train new workers.</p>	<p>WRTP is a membership organization consisting of unions, employers, and community organizations. The Partnership works closely with the local Workforce Investment Boards, the Milwaukee Area Technical College, and the Waukesha County Technical College. WRTP consists of over 100 member organizations that employ approximately 60,000 workers. In any given year, WRTP works with approximately 50 employers. WRTP recently partnered with the YWCA to create a workforce training center in central Milwaukee for the workforce development and TANF system.</p>	<p>WRTP is funded by a wide array of public and private funding sources, including WIA and TANF funds; a U.S. Department of Labor grant; city CDBG dollars; grants from the Annie E. Casey, Mott, and Ford foundations; and support from the Wisconsin Departments of Corrections and Commerce.</p>	<p>WRTP provides technical assistance to member employers and training to low-income workers and unemployed community residents in the Milwaukee area.</p> <p>In 2005, approximately 750 individuals went through the program's initial assessment and 400 individuals were placed in jobs.</p>	<p>To serve member employers, WRTP organizes labor-management teams that work to link employers with public funding for improvements in workplace practices and technology. In turn, member firms must commit to developing the skills of their incumbent workers, either through on-site training, apprenticeships, or tuition reimbursement for those attending community colleges. Applicants are assessed and then placed directly into a job or referred to an appropriate training program. These programs include basic skills training or GED preparation; the "Big Step" program, an academic tutoring program to prepare for apprenticeship exams; or a four-week, sectoral-specific occupational skills course (which provide an array of basic skills certificates and qualifies workers for entry-level jobs or credit toward certificate or degree programs). WRTP subcontracts with the local community colleges to deliver training that is agreed upon by sector employers and also recently opened the Center of Excellence to directly provide training.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.7**  
**Skill Development: Career Ladders and Credentialing Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Arkansas Career Pathways Program</b> Arkansas (selected sites)</p> <p>This initiative, started in 2005, provides funding for the development and implementation of career pathway programs at 11 of the 22 two-year colleges in the state. The initiative was developed based on the successful experience of Southeast Arkansas College (SEARK) in developing career pathways in machine operation, welding, nursing and allied health, child care, and office administration.</p>	<p>The Arkansas Department of Higher Education is the lead agency. Key partners include the Arkansas Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA Board), the Southern Good Faith Fund, the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC) and the Office of the Governor.</p>	<p>The program is funded with TANF dollars.</p>	<p>Targeted at low-skilled, low-income individuals, participants are required to have income levels under 200 percent of the federal poverty level.</p> <p>The initiative has enrolled about 2,000 students across the state.</p>	<p>Because this is a relatively new initiative, many of the pathway programs are still being developed. The more mature program at SEARK College combines several components that aim to facilitate completion of career-track training for nontraditional adult students. This includes: (1) training programs that are clearly and closely linked to real local job opportunities upon graduation; (2) remedial, or “bridge,” classes providing basic skills and workplace competencies that bring students to skill levels required for college entry; (3) “fast track” two semester developmental education programs that provide contextualized instruction to reach skill level required for advanced college courses; and (4) intensive support services offered by a case manager that provides academic advising and access to other supports, including child care and transportation.</p>
<p><b>Kentucky Community and Technical College (KCTCS) Career Pathways Initiative</b> Kentucky (statewide)</p> <p>The KCTCS Career Pathways initiative gives grants to local partnerships of community colleges and businesses to develop and implement career maps that focus on job and educational advancement for low-income individuals and meet business needs. Based on employer input, these career pathways lay out a sequence of connected skill upgrading and job opportunities, with each education step on the ladder leading to a job or further training.</p>	<p>KCTCS is the lead agency with implementation by the 16 community and technical colleges, in partnership with businesses. Business partners provide a variety of supports including curriculum development, referrals for training, employment opportunities, paid release time and tuition assistance. Other partners may include adult education providers, local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), local One-Stop centers, economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, welfare agencies, high schools, and four-year colleges.</p>	<p>The funding comes primarily from the Kentucky Workforce Investment Network System (WINS), the state’s incumbent worker training fund. KCTCS does not require business partners in the career pathways project to provide a cash match, though several business partners are offering financial support and make substantial in-kind donations. Additional technical assistance and support comes from the Ford Foundation’s Bridges to Opportunity Initiative.</p>	<p>The program targets low-skilled, low-income individuals, both employed and unemployed. The state hopes that employers will fill jobs vacated by incumbent workers who move up the career ladder with newly trained unemployed individuals.</p> <p>All 16 colleges have received and implemented their career pathways grants. The projects initially targeted services to over 1,100 new and incumbent workers in the first two years of implementation.</p>	<p>Each college received a grant to design a career pathway in partnership with employers and other stakeholders (all 16 are developing health career pathways; three are also including manufacturing pathways; one in construction; and one in transportation). Colleges are encouraged to develop bridge programs that teach basic skills in the context of training for jobs. The career pathways are primarily credit-based training that may be augmented with noncredit customized training as necessary. Pathways at the two-year institutions articulate with certificates, diplomas, associate and bachelor degrees for those students who wish to pursue additional education. KCTCS institutions are encouraged to offer curriculums in modularized formats, at alternative times (such as evening and weekends), and at alternative sites, such as at the workplace. Colleges are also encouraged to integrate intensive student support systems including improved advising, mentoring and career counseling strategies.</p>

**Table A.7**  
**Skill Development: Career Ladders and Credentialing Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Certified Specialist Programs (CSP)</b>            Georgia (statewide)</p> <p>This program is designed to assist businesses in finding skilled workers by developing standardized, statewide, credit-bearing curricula and credentials provided by the state's technical colleges in key occupational sectors: manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, construction, customer service, and life and health insurance.</p>	<p>CSPs are developed by the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) in partnership with groups of businesses. The Georgia Department of Economic Development markets the training and credentials to other businesses. These programs are delivered by the state's 34 technical colleges and four university colleges with technical divisions.</p>	<p>Funding for development of the curricula and credentials for three of the statewide Certified Specialist Programs came from Quickstart, the state's customized training program. Hope Grants, Georgia's financial aid program for public postsecondary programs at the Associate degree level or less, covers the tuition and fees and provides a book allowance.</p>	<p>Generally the target population is high school graduates or GED holders, regardless of their age or employment status. The five statewide certifications are aimed at those with lower skills. College economic development staff work with employers to market the Certified Specialist Programs to incumbent workers and other potential employees.</p> <p>As of 2005, over 20,000 certificates have been issued. The customer service certificate is the credential most in demand (over 9,600 awarded) followed by manufacturing (over 7,100 awarded), then construction, and then warehousing.</p>	<p>Employer-created, standardized statewide credentials and curricula are offered for college credit, in five high demand occupational areas. While over 500 for-credit technical certificate programs are offered in the state, only five are part of the Certified Specialist Program. Students can enroll each quarter, and colleges can offer them more often if a business-or a group of small businesses-has enough workers to train to create a class. The CSPs are 15 to 16 credit hours (about 160 hours of class time), with tuition costs usually covered by the Hope grant (see description elsewhere in this paper). The CSPs, as well as the other technical certificates offered by the technical colleges, are for-credit so that students can build toward diplomas or associate and bachelors degrees. CSPs are marketed to potential students as a way to advance in their careers, and branded with the logos of businesses that helped to create the credential. DTAE makes an effort to schedule classes at times when workers can attend them.</p>

**Table A.7**  
**Skill Development: Career Ladders and Credentialing Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI)</b></p> <p>Massachusetts (statewide)</p> <p>Enacted in 2000, the Massachusetts Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative aims to improve the quality of nursing home care through instituting career ladders and promoting skill development and other supportive practices among nursing home staff. The program provides grants to nursing homes and home health agencies who may partner with other long-term care facilities, community colleges, community based organizations, regional Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs), and others to create new career ladders for direct care staff and to address staff training, work environment, and quality of care issues.</p>	<p>The program is operated by the Commonwealth Corporation, a quasi-public state agency in Massachusetts responsible for the development and oversight of many education and training initiatives for adults and youth. The ECCLI State Advisory Committee plays an important role in providing overall guidance on the project and is composed of representatives of key partners in the program, including the Massachusetts Departments of Labor and Workforce Development, Education, and Public Health; the Massachusetts Executive Office of Community Colleges; the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and other unions; the Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board Association; and others. The lead agency for individual projects is generally a nursing home or occasionally a home health care organization, which partners with other organizations to provide training and other services. Key training partners in the individual projects vary but include community colleges, community-based organizations, and for-profit organizations. Regional Workforce Investment Boards are a required partner in the initiatives.</p>	<p>ECCLI is funded by state revenues.</p>	<p>The target population for ECCLI is entry-level CNAs in nursing homes or other long-term care facilities.</p> <p>Over 6,500 entry-level workers have participated in the ECCLI project since 2000. About 20 percent of the nursing homes in Massachusetts participate in the project.</p>	<p>ECCLI focuses primarily on CNAs who are generally responsible for all aspects of direct resident care in nursing homes. Some of the career ladders focus on lower level jobs, such as food service and patient care assistant up through various levels of CNAs. Workers are required to receive a wage increase when they progress a step on the career ladder. The services provided under the grants vary across the projects but generally consist of technical training (about 25 hours); “soft skills” such as mentoring, leadership, communication skills, time management, self-esteem, and team-building (about 12 hours); case management and career counseling; basic skills (including ESL); “culture change” training; and supervisory and management training. These initiatives were implemented by sites who had already successfully implemented the initial CNA career ladder. Workers must receive at least 50 percent of their hourly wages for time spent in ECCLI training, although sites were encouraged to pay 100 percent of wages and also make in-kind contributions when possible. Some of the grantees that had already successfully implemented CNA ladders have participated in later grant rounds to develop ladders, including bridge programs (consisting of pre-college reading, math, and science) for CNAs who wish to become Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs).</p>

**Table A.7**  
**Skill Development: Career Ladders and Credentialing Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Ohio Bridges to Opportunity Initiative</b></p> <p>Ohio (selected sites)</p> <p>A project of the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, the Ohio Bridges to Opportunity Initiative funds six partnerships of community colleges or career centers and business partners across the state to develop career pathways focused on local or regional growth sectors. The initiative seeks to promote the job and educational advancement of low-income adults, while also meeting employer needs. In 2004, KnowledgeWorks provided funds and technical assistance to 12 sites to develop career ladder plans, and in 2005 selected six sites to operational their plans.</p>	<p>The KnowledgeWorks Foundation spearheaded and continues to oversee the Bridges to Opportunity Initiative. The projects involve a wide range of partners, but the key linkages are with education and training providers, employers, and the workforce development system. Other partners include vocational schools, adult education programs, TANF, community-based organizations, and labor unions. The six sites receiving grants are located in Cincinnati, Kirtland, Chilicothe, Lima, Marietta and Youngstown.</p>	<p>Three of the sites are funded directly by KnowledgeWorks; the other three are funded using the Governor’s WIA Discretionary Funds. The KnowledgeWorks Foundation funded the planning phase, with support from the Ford Foundation, and TANF funds.</p>	<p>The project aims to assist low-income, unemployed residents of Ohio who are interested in attaining job skills that lead to better employment prospects within a defined career track, as well as incumbent workers in certain industries that seek job advancement through additional certification.</p> <p>The six project sites each have served between about 50 and 100 students.</p>	<p>Five of the six sites have ladder programs for jobs in health care; one is in manufacturing. This project is still in its developmental phases, with some of the projects still establishing elements of their programs. Three of the sites have developed employer-specific ladder programs. The business partners for these were closely involved in specifying job levels for the pathway and developing the training classes, requirements, and assessments. In the other three sites, employers played an advising role in developing the programs and courses that would meet their needs more generally. Participants are recruited mainly from community-based organizations and public agencies, but may also come from among low-wage employees in a specific sector. All of the sites provide support services to program participants, which could include financial support to enter and/or stay in the program, career counseling, and referrals to assistance with child care, transportation or other barriers. Some programs had specific case management staff to provide and oversee support services, while others had a less formal arrangement with various staff from partner groups. Graduates receive a certificate or credential upon completion that will help them move into entry-level work or advance to a higher-level job</p>

*Source:* The Georgia Certified Specialist Program, the Kentucky Career Pathways Initiative and the Massachusetts ECCLI profiles are based on summaries in Duke, Martinson, and Strawn (2006). The remainder of the profiles on this table are based on Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.8  
Skill Development: Incumbent Worker Training Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>New Jersey Workforce Development Partnership Program and Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills</b></p> <p>The New Jersey Workforce Development Program provides grants to partnerships of employers and training providers for technical training to incumbent workers at businesses across the state. It is complemented by the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills, which provides similar grants for “literacy” training (basic reading and math and ESL). The program pays for the cost of the training, while employers pay workers wages while they attend classes (usually at the worksite).</p>	<p>The programs are operated by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce. The state’s 19 community colleges, who provide much of the training, are key partners in the program. Community and faith-based organizations also play a role in providing some literacy training.</p>	<p>These programs are funded by worker and employer payroll taxes on wages subject to Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes. While the state covers the cost of the training, employers are required to contribute an equivalent amount, with their funds going toward employee wages while they attend training.</p>	<p>The programs serve incumbent workers at businesses across the state. Because of its basic skills component, the program reaches a range of low-skilled workers, including immigrants and TANF recipients. The program requires that 15 percent of participants be former cash assistance recipients.</p> <p>In fiscal year 2006, over 14,000 individuals received instruction under the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills.</p>	<p>Employers apply to receive customized training grants, literacy grants, or a combination of the two to provide services to their employees. The program also provides grants directly to community-based organizations and community colleges to deliver basic skills training to unemployed and underemployed individuals in the community. This feature is designed to meet the needs of small businesses that may not be able to meet the employer match because of the small number of workers they employ. Workers in these firms can attend basic skill courses offered in the community.</p>
<p><b>Pennsylvania Incumbent Worker Training Fund</b></p> <p>The Incumbent Worker Training Fund is a large-scale statewide initiative to enhance the skills and earnings of incumbent workers in key targeted industries. The Fund, part of a broader Governor’s initiative called Job Ready Pennsylvania, provides grants to regional partnerships throughout the state between multiple employers, workforce development systems and educational institutions. Begun in 2005, the program is complemented by the Workforce and Economic Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA), which provides grants to 28 community colleges to deliver basic skills to workers at their employer.</p>	<p>The program is overseen by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. The local/regional partnerships require the participation of a Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and business representatives from multiple employers within targeted local industries. The initiative has 70 active collaborative programs throughout the state, and is working with over 800 employers.</p>	<p>The program is funded by state revenues. Employers must provide an equal match that is provided in the form of paid release time.</p>	<p>The program targets workers or prospective workers for whom a training program would lead to increased wages or work/career advancement. The initiative is not limited to serving low-wage workers, but many workers in targeted entry-level occupations are low-wage and preference is given to partnerships that target this group.</p> <p>Since it started in 2005, Incumbent Worker Training Fund has trained over 4,400 individuals.</p>	<p>The grant program requires the partnerships to focus on one of Pennsylvania’s seven critical manufacturing clusters: biomedical, pharmaceutical and medical equipment; chemical, rubber and plastics; electronics; metal and metal fabrication; printing; food processing; and lumber, wood and paper. The partnerships market the initiative and recruit participants from participating employers or public agency programs. Training is provided by a range of local institutions as determined by the partnerships. The local partnerships emphasize aligning training with career steps and creating career ladders that offer workers opportunities for advancement. Up to 25 percent of the requested funds may be used to fund the training of new hires rather than existing workers.</p>

**Table A.8**  
**Skill Development: Incumbent Worker Training Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>WorkSource Employed Worker Training</b></p> <p>Florida’s “First Coast” (Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, St. Johns and Putnam Counties)</p> <p>WorkSource, Florida’s largest local Workforce Investment Board, began providing incumbent worker training in 2002 to employees of 34 businesses in a six county area surrounding Jacksonville, Florida. Priority is given to employers that offer higher quality jobs, including career advancement opportunities and benefits. Nearly all training occurs at the workplace, with workers being paid for the hours they receive training.</p>	<p>WorkSource partners with Cornerstone (a regional economic development agency), Local Chambers of Commerce, and Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ).</p>	<p>The program is funded by a range of sources, including TANF, WIA, Wagner-Peyser, Food Stamp, and Dislocated Worker funds. In addition, employers are required to provide an equal match that is generally provided in the form of paid release time.</p>	<p>The program targets incumbent workers.</p> <p>In 2005, WorkSource trained 2,138 workers at 34 companies. They are on track to train 3,000 workers in 2006.</p>	<p>Companies go through an application process to receive training grants. WorkSource awards applicants points based on several factors, including growth in targeted occupations; the existence of career paths that provide income and skill advancement; the availability of tuition reimbursement, structured skill training, or outside training subsidies; and company benefits and flexible scheduling. WorkSource contracts with FCCJ instructors to provide onsite work skills training as part of the paid workday. If an employee consequently moves up to a better job within the company, WorkSource backfills entry-level candidates from their public programs (WIA, TANF) into the vacancy.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.



**Table A.9  
Income and Work Supports: Post-Employment Assistance Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>The Advancement Project/Self-Sufficiency Online Calculator</b></p> <p>Renton, WA</p> <p>The Advancement Project, implemented in January 2006, is designed to enhance the capacity of a One-Stop Career Center to reach low wage workers and help them access a range of income and work supports by pairing a designated one-stop case manager with an outstationed caseworker from DSHS in Seattle/King County’s largest One-Stop Career Center. This approach is integrated with a larger King County Workforce Development Council effort to provide advancement services within the WIA One-Stop Career Center through an on-line Self-Sufficiency calculator, long-term vocational counseling, and financial planning services.</p>	<p>King County Workforce Development Council</p>	<p>WIA funds covers the costs of the designated one-stop staff person and other project costs. DSHS covers the costs of the outstationed DSHS caseworker.</p>	<p>TAP serves low-wage workers who are already receiving either WIA services <i>or</i> DSHS services (mainly childcare or Food Stamp only cases), as well as low-wage workers who are not connected to either system.</p> <p>As of June 2006, 20 people were enrolled in TAP. Current plans are to operate the program for 18 months with an enrollment goal of 160.</p>	<p>Participants are referred to TAP staff by WIA providers and TANF Work First staff. To engage those not involved in either system, TAP staff conducted outreach in the community at large, including Head Start resource fairs, United Way’s EITC campaign sites, and other events that attract low-wage workers. The package of services that TAP participants receive is similar to general WIA services, but with additional emphasis on advancement and work supports. An important tool utilized by TAP is the Self-Sufficiency Calculator, which allows participants to test the impact of various scenarios on their economic well-being and compare this to the local cost of living. The Calculator includes built-in eligibility requirements for work support programs as well as links to applications, so individuals can more easily access these supports.</p>
<p><b>Centers for Working Families, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)/Chicago</b></p> <p>Chicago, IL</p> <p>Centers for Working Families (CWF) is a service delivery model developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as part of its Building Family Economic Success approach. While each CWF varies depending on the community it serves, all provide at least three integrated core services—workforce services, income supports, and financial and asset building services—in one convenient, neighborhood-based location. The Chicago CWF initiative, administered by LISC/Chicago, is profiled here. Currently, there are eight Centers for Working Families in the Chicago area. LISC plans to open five more Centers by the end of 2007, for a total of 13 Centers. There are also CWF initiatives in New York City (through the Seedco/Earnfair Alliance), Baltimore, and Albuquerque.</p>	<p>LISC, an intermediary organization, is the lead agency. The first eight CWF Centers are operated by Abraham Lincoln Centre, Bethel New Life, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Jane Addams Resource Corporation, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Near West Side CDC, North Lawndale Employment Network, and Southeast Chicago Development Commission. Other partners include Project Match, the Center for Economic Progress, and Community Catalyst.</p>	<p>Centers for Working Families are funded by foundations, including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the John D, and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Chase Foundation, the Partnership for New Communities, Searle Funds at the Chicago Community Trust, Living Cities, and HUD.</p>	<p>Centers for Working Families are located in low-income neighborhoods and are open to all community residents.</p> <p>Currently, financial coaches at each LISC/Chicago CWF site assist about 200 people per year. Across the network of CWFs, approximately 420,000 people receive employment services each year, and 7,200 receive free tax preparation assistance.</p>	<p>In Chicago, Centers for Working Families have been implemented in existing employment and social service organizations by bringing workforce services, financial counseling, and work supports under one roof. LISC funds a fulltime, onsite financial counselor at each Center, as well as an employment specialist in organizations that did not already have one on staff. While Centers are designed to be flexible enough to meet the specific needs of neighborhood residents, they have several components in common. Each Center offers employment services and assistance accessing public benefits and other work supports. A growing number offer free tax preparation services on site (7 out of 13). In addition, all Centers emphasize the importance of financial literacy. Onsite financial coaches—considered a critical element of the model—offer one-on-one counseling as well as group workshops and referrals to bank or credit union services. Many Centers are working with local banks to develop fairly priced financial products for those receiving financial counseling. All Centers track participants longitudinally using tracking methods developed by Project Match.</p>

**Table A.9  
Income and Work Supports: Post-Employment Assistance Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Connectinc.'s Work Central Call Center</b> Battleboro, North Carolina</p> <p>Connectinc. operates Work Central, a telephone-based case management and referral system to connect low income workers with work supports and provide assistance with job retention, career advancement, reemployment, financial planning, and asset building. Work Central primarily serves former TANF recipients, referred to the call center through partnerships with county Department of Social Services in 18 rural counties across the state.</p>	<p>Connectinc. operates the Work Central Call Center. Key partners include County Department of Social Services, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, the Rocky Mount/Edgecombe Community Development Corporation, Sprint, Nortel, Community Colleges, the Department of Commerce, the Employment Security Commission, and the Division of Information Resources Management.</p>	<p>Connectinc. receives funding from TANF, foundations, and various corporations.</p>	<p>The program targets TANF recipients who are transitioning off of welfare and, to a lesser extent, dislocated workers from the tobacco industry, low-income families.</p> <p>14 Connectinc. representatives provided 93,000 units of service to over 9,000 people in 2005.</p>	<p>The Department of Human Services routinely provides Connectinc. names and contact information of TANF recipients who are transitioning off of welfare in the 18 rural counties served by Connectinc. The call center operates during convenient hours for workers, including evenings and Saturdays. Work Central call center representative initiate contact with these former recipients to gauge interest in their services (participation is entirely voluntary) and conduct an initial needs assessment. Based on this assessment, Work Central call center representatives connect participants with a variety services designed to help them find and maintain employment, including assistance with child care subsidy application, child support, health care, transportation assistance, referrals to low cost GED and skills training, workplace problem-solving skills, and assistance in accessing aid and Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), and helping participants open bank accounts, referrals for credit repair and financial literacy counseling. Connectinc. representatives make regular follow-up calls to monitor participants' progress and provide additional services and referrals as needed. All interaction occurs over the phone, supported by case management software that allows any representative to track and follow individuals' call histories, import customer information from the state welfare system, verify service program information such as eligibility requirements and benefits, and obtain linked information about hours, location, and services of other providers.</p>

**Table A.9**  
**Income and Work Supports: Post-Employment Assistance Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Seedco/EarnBenefits</b></p> <p>New York City, NY</p> <p>Founded in 1987, Seedco is a national nonprofit intermediary that creates opportunities for low-wage workers and their families by developing and implementing programs in partnership with community organizations to: 1) provide a range of employment and supportive services to connect individuals to the labor force; and 2) help low-income and disadvantaged populations maintain long-term employment, advance along a career ladder, and build savings and assets to attain economic self-sufficiency.</p> <p>Seedco’s EarnBenefits initiative uses a web-based technology tool and application assistance services to connect low-income individuals to asset-building mechanisms, including income-enhancing benefits and work supports. The technology tool streamlines eligibility screening, application submission and application tracking on behalf of applicants. Seedco introduced EarnBenefits in New York City in 2004. Over the past two years, Seedco has replicated the initiative in Memphis, TN; Atlanta, GA; and Baltimore, MD.</p>	<p>Across each site, Seedco implements EarnBenefits in collaboration with community partners, including community-based organizations, employers, public agencies, community colleges, and childcare service providers. EarnBenefits sites also work closely with government agencies to streamline benefit application processes.</p>	<p>EarnBenefits is supported by a cadre of public and private support. Current funders include the:</p> <p>Abell Foundation (MD); Annie E. Casey Foundation; Arthur M. Blank Foundation (GA); Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Citigroup Foundation; Community Foundation of Greater Memphis; Fan Fox Samuels Foundation (NY); Ford Foundation; New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance; Robin Hood Foundation (NY); Strauss Foundation (MD); Thalheimer Foundation (MD); United States Department of Agriculture; United Way of New York City; United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta; Verizon Foundation; and the Wachovia Foundation.</p>	<p>EarnBenefits is targeted to low-wage workers.</p> <p>To date, Seedco has provided over 50,000 individuals with information on available income-enhancing products and services, assisted over 14,000 individuals in applying for benefits and work supports, and connected more than 6,400 workers to benefits and work supports that, on average, increased recipients’ household income by over \$2,000.</p>	<p>EarnBenefits is comprised of three major service components: 1) user-friendly marketing and outreach materials -- including a public access website, <a href="http://www.earnbenefits.org">www.earnbenefits.org</a> -- that provide information, eligibility guidelines, application forms, and submission requirements for public and private benefits and work supports (e.g. Food Stamps, child care subsidies and tax credits); 2) eligibility screening and facilitated access services through EarnBenefits Online (EBO), a web-based technology tool that enables service providers to perform eligibility screenings and generate benefits applications on behalf of applicants for more than 25 different public and private benefits; and 3) on-going benefits management services to ensure that recipients recertify for benefits, and to re-engage individuals and facilitate access to other asset-building products and services that best meet their needs as their household income increases.</p>

**Table A.9**  
**Income and Work Supports: Post-Employment Assistance Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Marriott International’s My Assistance and Resources for Life (myARL)</b></p> <p>Nationwide</p> <p>As part of its work-life initiatives, Marriott International offers a 24-hour, toll-free resource and referral hotline for all its employees. Over the phone, caseworkers help employees, particularly low-wage workers, with a range of issues, including personal, family, work, and legal problems, in addition to assisting employees access work supports such as subsidized child care or the EITC.</p>	<p>Marriott International sponsors the myARL for its employees, and contracts the operation of the hotline to Ceridian Work-Life Services.</p>	<p>Marriott International funds the myARL.</p>	<p>The myARL is open to all Marriott employees, but was designed specifically for its lower-income associates.</p>	<p>MyARL was implemented in 1994 as part of Marriott’s work-life initiatives, a company-wide effort to make it easier for associates to pursue a career while maintaining their personal and family lives. The myARL is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week in over 150 languages to all Marriott employees. The hotline is staffed by social workers who are knowledgeable about the services, programs, and supports available to low-wage workers. Employees can call for assistance with a range of issues, including personal well-being, health conditions or disabilities, parenting skills, child care, elder care, retirement planning, budgeting and financial issues, applying for the EITC, legal problems, or professional development. Using a case management approach, hotline staff provide callers with information and referrals to organizations or programs in their community that can provide further support. All counseling is confidential.</p>
<p><b>Southwest Organizations Unifying Resources for Community and Employees (The SOURCE)</b></p> <p>Grand Rapids, MI</p> <p>The SOURCE is a nonprofit organization serving eight member companies that provides a range of work supports and retention and advancement services to the employees and families of its member companies. This multiple employer collaborative model enables small to medium size employers to function as a large firm in terms of capacity and leveraged resources to provide a wide range of employee supports, training, and important programming.</p>	<p>Key partners include Butterball Farms, Inc., DECC Company, Hekman Furniture, Pridgeon and Clay, Richwood Industries, Spectrum Industries, Vi-Chem Corporation, TAS Solutions, the Michigan Department of Human Services, Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids Community College, Michigan Regional Skills Alliance, Kent Regional 4C, Home Repair Services, and the Inner City Christian Federation.</p>	<p>The eight partner employers pay for the SOURCE’s facility, caseworkers’ salaries, and administrative support. Grants from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation periodically pay for vocational training at the local community college. Other various state grants and local foundations have provided additional funding in the past, however, financial sustainability through business supports is the primary funding..</p>	<p>The SOURCE’s eight employer partner companies have an average of 200 employees each—the smallest employs about 60 and the largest employs about 800 individuals—with a total employee base of 1,600 people, 140 of whom are on public assistance. All employees and employee family members may utilize the SOURCE.</p> <p>To date in 2006, the SOURCE provided 293 barrier resolutions and hosted 588 employees for training. In February through April, 2006, the SOURCE provided free tax assistance to 284 people for a total of \$504,763 in total refunds.</p>	<p>The SOURCE employs two on-site DHS caseworkers, one that works with all employees with an active family case receiving some kind of public assistance (usually food stamps) and one that works with all non-public assistance employees. Caseworkers are available to help employees manage any employment or family-related problems. These include helping employees resolve transportation and child care issues by connecting them with community resources, referring individuals who need counseling to providers that offer a sliding pay scale, and helping individuals develop a career plan and to enroll in continuing education, GED courses, or community college classes. The SOURCE offers on-site training classes (including literacy, technical work-based training, computer training) GED tutoring, ESL and Spanish classes, financial management classes, free tax preparation and EITC assistance in the evenings and other convenient times. Employers may refer employees to a caseworker if his or her job is in jeopardy for ongoing and intensive job retention services or employees may self-refer themselves at any point in their employment with a member business. .</p>

**Table A.9**  
**Income and Work Supports: Post-Employment Assistance Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>TJXtra!</b></p> <p>Headquartered in Framingham, MA</p> <p>Through its TJXtra! Initiative, TJX Companies, Inc. attempts to increase its employees awareness of and access to available public and private benefits.</p>	<p>TJX Companies, Inc. has partnered with Goodwill Industries to provide English classes for its employees. Other companies, such as Fannie Mae and CitiBank, help TJX in its mission to increase employee awareness of and access to public benefits.</p>	<p>The initiative is funded by contributions from TJX Companies.</p>	<p>All TJX employees are eligible to receive information through TJXtra! Eligibility requirements for benefits and programs vary by program.</p>	<p>New TJX employees receive an overview of public benefits for which they may be eligible at orientation, including the EITC and Advanced EITC, fuel assistance, SCHIP, and Food Stamps. In addition, employees have access to Fannie Mae financial literacy classes and a free \$50,000 life insurance policy from Mass Mutual (about 200 people have received this policy). Information on these programs and where to access them is posted on bulletin boards in every lounge and included in TJX's quarterly associate newsletter. The information is intended to be used by family and friends as well as employees. TJX has partnered with Goodwill in the Boston area to provide English for Employment classes to all interested employees. Employees are paid for the two-hour class, which is offered in the morning and at night in two different locations in Boston. In addition to basic English, the class emphasizes retail and customer service vocabulary. In other areas of the country, TJX stores have been able to offer ESL classes onsite in order to keep costs down.</p>
<p><b>Welfare to Career (W2C) at Cascade Engineering</b></p> <p>Grand Rapids, MI</p> <p>The program provides education and training with a focus on behavior and diversity at the worksite as well as numerous support services to employees of Cascade Engineering, an injection molding firm in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Two onsite caseworkers are available to provide individual counseling and referrals to W2C employees.</p>	<p>Cascade Engineering has partnered with the Michigan Department of Human Services, Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, MichiganWorks!, and the Grand Rapids Urban League to operate W2C.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF and contributions from Cascade Engineering.</p>	<p>The program targets current and former welfare recipients.</p> <p>Since its inception in 1998, the program has served 437 individuals. At its peak in 2003-2004, 130 employees were enrolled in the program. Currently, there are 67 participants.</p>	<p>Participants can move up a four-level career ladder as they complete educational requirements, with increasing pay and responsibilities as they advance. W2C employees have access to a number of support services, including transportation and child care assistance, educational reimbursement, and a computer purchase program. Onsite TANF caseworkers help participants access these services, immediately deal with worksite problems, and counsel participants on workplace culture and family issues. Participants undergo onsite behavioral and vocational training, including money management, conflict resolution, and the company-wide "Hidden Rules" seminar, which educates participants on the middle-class workplace and helps management understand the barriers faced by W2C employees.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.10**  
**Income and Work Supports: Financial Incentives Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Arkansas Work Pays</b></p> <p>Arkansas (statewide)</p> <p>The program, implemented in July 2006, offers former TANF recipients who are employed a monthly payment as well as retention bonuses to provide incentives for individuals find and keep their jobs and to supplement their earnings.</p>	<p>The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services operates the program in partnership with the Arkansas Department of Human Services.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>To be eligible, applicants must have been on TANF for at least three months, and their case must have closed within the past six months. Participants must also currently be working in paid employment for a minimum of 24 hours per week, meet the federal work requirement by participating an additional six hours in a countable work activity, and have an income below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. If a participants fail to meet this work requirement for three consecutive months, their Work Pays case will be closed and they may reapply for TANF.</p> <p>This program has just been implemented, but resources are available for up to 3,000 families to be enrolled in the Work Pays program.</p>	<p>This program started in recently in July 2006, and plans call for the Work Pays application to be mailed to all TANF clients whose case closed in the prior month due to employment. Families who then enroll in the program receive \$204 a month (the maximum TANF benefit for a family of 3) for up to 24 months. While these 24 months count towards a family's 60-month federal time limit, they do not count towards Arkansas's 24-month time limit. Families continue to work with a case manager and are eligible for the same support services as TANF recipients, including child care. In addition, the program plans to provide post-employment services such as career counseling and the development of job advancement plans designed to promote retention and advancement. The program includes a series of bonuses to encourage retention: after three months of continuous earnings, participants receive \$400, after an additional six months they receive \$600, and those who meet Work Pays participation requirement for 21 out of the 24 months receive an exit bonus of \$800. Participants who exit the program at any time with earnings above 100 percent of the federal poverty level receive an additional bonus of \$1,200. Individuals who receive a monthly payment under Work Pays count toward the state's TANF participation requirement.</p>
<p><b>Passport to Economic Progress</b></p> <p>Hillsborough, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties, FL</p> <p>Passport to Economic Progress is a performance-based post-employment program for former TANF recipients and TANF eligible clients that offers financial incentives for achieving specified benchmarks towards self-sufficiency.</p>	<p>Workforce Florida, Inc. oversees the Passport to Economic Progress demonstration in conjunction with the Department of Children and Family Services and the Agency for Workforce Innovation.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>Passport participants must be working at least 32 hours a week, have an income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and have received TANF cash assistance in the past two years or be eligible for TANF services.</p> <p>There were 362 enrollees in the three county Passport program for FY 2005.</p>	<p>TANF staff begin marketing the program when individuals exit cash assistance, and the program is also advertised throughout the community (on mass transit, in community centers, at public housing developments, etc.) and to employers as a way to provide resources for skills upgrade training for entry-level employees. After enrolling in the program, participants meet with a program staff member to develop an individually tailored self-sufficiency plan, which includes specified benchmarks. Benchmarks could include applying for the EITC; attaining a GED or high school diploma; attaining a vocational education certificate or a job skills training certificate; getting a promotion or a better job; increasing earned income; retaining full-time employment for 30, 90, and 180 days; or attending a parenting class. Specific financial incentives, generally in the form of gift certificates or vouchers, are tied to the achievement of each benchmark. Program staff have the discretion to determine what benchmarks are included in the plan and the payment level for each. Participants can receive up to \$1,500 to \$2,000 in incentives per program year.</p>

**Table A.10**  
**Income and Work Supports: Financial Incentives Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Reward Work Initiative</b></p> <p>Hawaii (statewide)</p> <p>The Reward Work Initiative is a new program implemented in August, 2006 that offers TANF recipients financial incentives to exit welfare and remain employed. The state plans to implement the financial incentive payments retroactively to January 2006.</p>	<p>Hawaii's Department of Human Services administers the Reward Work Initiative.</p>	<p>The program is funded by TANF dollars.</p>	<p>TANF recipients who have been receiving welfare for 26 months or less, are employed, and leave TANF are eligible for the Reward Work Initiative.</p>	<p>Employed TANF recipients who leave welfare after 26 months or less receive an initial exit bonus ranging from \$500 for those working 20 hours per week to \$1,000 for those working 40 hours per week (individuals must be working at least 20 hours per week). As an incentive to both find and keep jobs, the program offers participants retention bonuses after three months, six months, one year, and two years after leaving TANF. These bonuses range from \$700 to \$2,500, depending on how many hours a participant is working and increasing in amount as time goes on. Participants also receive two months of financial housing support when they leave TANF, which can be used towards a security deposit or monthly rent, to help stabilize housing and employment.</p>

Source: Urban Institute interviews with program managers and review of program documents.

**Table A.11  
Income and Work Supports: Asset Building Programs**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Earned Assets Resource Network (EARN)</b></p> <p>San Francisco, Alameda, Marin, and Napa Counties, CA</p> <p>EARN is a nonprofit organization, founded in 2001, that is dedicated to helping low-income individuals accumulate and increase their assets. EARN offers financial education, access to mainstream financial services, and matched savings accounts.</p>	<p>Citibank provides the infrastructure for EARN's IDA accounts. EARN also manages the Asset Policy Initiative of California (APIC), a statewide network of asset-building organizations that serves as an information clearinghouse and policy advocate.</p>	<p>EARN receives federal, state, and city funds, including an Assets for Independence grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In addition, EARN receives funding from numerous foundations and private corporations.</p>	<p>EARN savings accounts are targeted at low-income, working Bay Area residents.</p>	<p>EARN participants must first take a required money-management training course. The class includes eight hours of basic financial literacy training and six hours of training specific to the savings goal. Two different types of savings accounts are available. Their traditional Individual Development Account (IDA) has a 2:1 match rate and allows participants to save up to \$2,000 towards higher education, a first home, or a small business. Participants also have the option of opening a Savings Account for Education (SAVE), which allows parents and their children ages 10 to 16 to save together for the children's education-related costs, including college tuition, vocational training programs, SAT prep classes, tutoring programs, or summer school. Both accounts require that participants save a minimum of \$20 per month. While saving in an EARN account, participants must attend at least two EARN workshops on money management per year. EARN alumni have access to free financial planning with a Certified Financial Planner and retirement savings accounts for small business owners.</p>



**Table A.11**  
**Income and Work Supports: Asset Building Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI)</b></p> <p>Franklin and Mahoning Counties, OH</p> <p>ECDI, a nonprofit organization that spun off of Jewish Family Services of Columbus, Ohio in 2004, offers numerous financial services targeted at low- to moderate-income individuals (Jewish Family Services began offering similar asset building programming in 1997). Services include financial literacy classes, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), microenterprise training, consulting services, and microloans.</p>	<p>ECDI partners with Franklin and Mahoning Counties in addition to local faith- and community-based organizations, corporations, and financial institutions to provide its programs and services.</p>	<p>Public funding sources include TANF and Community Development Block Grant funds, Assets for Independence and Compassion Capital grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and a Community Development Financial Institutions grant from the U.S. Department of the Treasury. ECDI also receives funding from private corporations, including Fifth Third Bank, Key Bank, Chase Bank, and National City Bank.</p>	<p>ECDI serves mainly low- to moderate-income individuals. The organization initially targeted immigrants and refugees. While services are now open to everyone, the majority of ECDI participants continues to be refugees. To be eligible for most ECDI services and products, participants must have incomes at or below 200 percent of the poverty level; however, those with higher incomes may enroll in ECDI training for a fee.</p> <p>Since 1998, ECDI (or Jewish Family Services prior to 2004) has served nearly 2,000 individuals—or about 250 participants per year. 1,104 have opened IDA accounts, and 590 have started a business.</p>	<p>Participants are referred to ECDI by One-Stop Centers, local community- and faith-based organizations, and through word of mouth. Before receiving any of ECDI's services, all participants must complete economic literacy training. This four-session class teaches individuals the importance of saving and budgeting their money. Participants then choose which asset goal they want to concentrate on (microenterprise, homeownership, or secondary education) and begin saving money towards their goal in a matched savings account, or IDA. Match rates range from 2:1 to 4:1, depending on the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of ECDI participants enroll in the microenterprise program. These individuals undergo a 10-session training workshop, where they learn the skills necessary to start their own business. Upon completion, all participants have developed a business plan, which ECDI staff help them to implement. At this point, many participants receive an ECDI microloan for business start-up or expansion. ECDI staff continue to work with business owners, providing technical assistance and conducting on-site visits. Some microenterprise graduates participate in the ECDI-sponsored outdoor market in Columbus. In addition, ECDI has a contract with the state of Ohio to match participants in the trade industries with elderly and disabled homeowners in need of minor home repairs.</li> <li>• Participants who enroll in the homeownership program enroll in the 10-session Homebuyer Education and Counseling Program designed to prepare them to be a homebuyer and homeowner. Their IDA savings can be used towards a down payment, home inspection, house closing, or any other cost associated with purchasing a home.</li> <li>• ECDI caseworkers work one-on-one with those interested in saving towards secondary education. Savings can be used towards books, tuition fees, or transportation.</li> </ul>

**Table A.11**  
**Income and Work Supports: Asset Building Programs (continued)**

Program Name/Overview	Lead Agency/ Key Partners	Funding Sources	Target Population/ Enrollment Level	Program Design and Services
<p><b>Women’s Initiative for Self-Employment (WISE)</b></p> <p>San Francisco, CA</p> <p>Initiated in 1988, WISE, the largest microenterprise training program in the country, offers a range of services to women interested in starting their own business. Upon completion of a 10-week business management course, women are eligible for small business loans, one-on-one consultations, networking events and business success seminars, ongoing training, and Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).</p>	<p>The program is delivered by the Women’s Initiative, a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco.</p>	<p>WISE receives funding from foundations, banks and corporations, individual donors, and a mix of public funds (federal and city).</p>	<p>WISE focuses on serving low-income individuals, including welfare recipients and those living in poverty. WISE served 1,075 women in fiscal year 2005, 297 of which were enrolled in their training program.</p>	<p>The program offers a range of comprehensive services along the business continuum. The core service is the Simple Steps business management course, a 10-week or accelerated 5-week class that meets twice a week for a total of 70 hours. The course provides training for starting, improving, or growing a small business, including information on marketing, pricing strategies, record keeping, and cash flow, as well as issues regarding personal empowerment and goal setting. At the end of the class, about 70 percent of graduates have a business plan in place and start their own business. After completing Simple Steps, participants may apply for a seed, startup, or operating capital loan for \$500 to \$10,000 and subsequently a second capital loan for \$2,000 to \$25,000. About one-quarter of graduates apply for capital loans and about 80 percent are approved. Graduates also have access to ongoing training through WISE’s SuccessLink program, which provides one-on-one consultation and coaching sessions with trainers, monthly networking opportunities, and other courses.</p>

*Source:* The WISE program profile is drawn from a summary in Salzman et al. (2006). The ECDI profile is based on Urban Institute interviews with program staff and a review of program documents. The EARN summary is based on a review of program documents.

## APPENDIX B

### PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION



## Appendix B Program Contact Information

### **Service-Focused Employment Preparation**

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Anoka County Job Training Center  
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#### **Ramsey County Integrated Services Project (ISP)**

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Ramsey County Workforce Solutions

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#### **The Substance Abuse Case Management Program**

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### **Employment-Based Experience**

#### ***Subsidized Employment***

#### **Community Jobs Program**

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#### **Georgia GoodWorks!**

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#### **Philadelphia@Work**

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## Appendix B Program Contact Information (continued)

### *Subsidized Employment (continued)*

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### *Temporary Employment*

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#### **Harborquest Staffing Services**

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### **Skill Development**

### *Instructional and Curricular Reforms*

#### **Essential Skills Program at Denver Community College**

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#### **I-BEST**

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#### **On-Ramp to Biotech/Bridge to Biotech**

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#### **Portland Career Pathways**

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#### **Kentucky Ready-to-Work (RTW)**

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**Appendix B**  
**Program Contact Information (continued)**

***Financial Aid Programs***

**Arkansas Workforce Improvement Grant**

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**Hope Grants**

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**Opportunity Grants Pilot Program**

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***Sectoral Training Programs***

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**Appendix B**  
**Program Contact Information (continued)**

***Sectoral Training Programs***  
***(continued)***

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***Career Ladders and Credentialing***  
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**Appendix B**  
**Program Contact Information (continued)**

***Incumbent Worker Training Programs***

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**Income and Work Supports**

***Post-Employment Assistance Programs***

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**Appendix B**  
**Program Contact Information (continued)**

***Post-Employment Assistance Programs***  
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***Asset Building Strategies***

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## APPENDIX C

### CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND PROGRAMS



## APPENDIX C

### CRITERIA FOR SELECTING INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND PROGRAMS

The primary goal of this project is to identify innovative approaches and programmatic examples of these approaches that warrant further research. HHS has expressed interest that this study effort is not overly rigid in the types of approaches that are considered, but that a determination of what should be included or excluded is still guided by established criteria. For this study, the approaches identified met more than one of the criteria described below, but were not required to meet all of them. Given the range of outcomes this project is seeking to influence, this ensures that approaches that are particularly strong based on a more limited set of criteria are not excluded. Specifically, we included approaches that

- *Address at least one (and preferably more than one) of the causes of low earnings among low-wage workers.* A number of factors appear to contribute to this outcome, including low basic skills and educational attainment, employment in low-wage jobs with limited potential for advancement, problems with work supports, and personal issues such as mental health or substance abuse issues (see discussion above). An innovative approach addresses at least one of these issues that may be preventing long-term employment stability.
- *Provide an untested intervention, but one that is grounded in research to date.* As discussed above, a significant knowledge base on the effectiveness of a range of employment approaches has been developed. For some approaches, the body of evidence is fairly consistent; for others, the research suggests that further program development, redesign, or demonstrations might be warranted before conclusions about effectiveness can be drawn. It is important that potentially innovative approaches identified through this project build on the knowledge base about “what works” and are not duplicative of past efforts. However, the approaches identified should also be consistent with our understanding of what is effective, given the research evidence accumulated to date.
- *Address specific policy interests of federal or state policymakers and/or program operators.* Some approaches are considered because of a strong interest by policymakers in understanding the effectiveness of the particular approach. We consider approaches that are of particular interest to federal and state policymakers and administrators as well as to local program operators who are often at the forefront of developing innovative program models.
- *Show generalizability of setting.* Since the focus of this project is on identifying approaches that may improve outcomes for low-income families generally, it is important that the models considered have some potential for being adapted in other states and localities. While this project seeks to be inclusive in identifying approaches, the approach should have at least some promise of being implemented by others.

Once innovative approaches are identified, a more operational set of criteria are used to identify strong programs within each of the approaches. By programs, we mean specific interventions, initiatives, or even program components that operationalize a particular approach identified

above. Again, because HHS is interested in being relatively inclusive when identifying these innovative programs, we proposed that the programs identified should meet more than one, but not necessarily all, of the proposed criteria. Specifically, we used the following criteria to identify innovative programs:

- *Program design and strength.* The identification of innovative programs includes an assessment of the strength of the design and services. Is the program well thought out and is there reason to expect it could improve individuals' employment outcomes? Do participants typically receive a relatively strong "dosage" of the intervention? To the extent possible, we gauge the overall strength of the services provided along these dimensions.
- *Operational maturity.* This project will consider new as well as mature programs for inclusion. However, we recognize that programs that are operating at "steady state" implementation or for relatively long periods of time will be more appropriate for this project because they are more likely have established operational procedures. It is important, for example, to consider programs or initiatives that have operated for at least one year, and have strong management information and data capability, stable funding, capable staff, and an established reputation in their service community. At the same time, we realize that there are likely to be innovative efforts that have been implemented relatively recently. For more recent efforts, we considered the level of program maturity and stability achieved within a relatively short operational period.
- *Scale.* While both small and large programs would be considered for this effort, there is a federal policy interest in identifying programs that could eventually be operated on at least a moderate scale. In addition, because of the potential for reaching relatively large numbers of individuals, there is an interest in identify strategies that can be implemented on a systemwide basis. We consider local programs that serve at least 100 persons annually, and state initiatives that serve 500 annually to be of moderate scale.
- *Evidence of positive outcomes, particularly economic outcomes.* If available, we examine research or program data on the effects of the intervention, and particularly the employment outcomes for program participants. Although not definitive, this information provides some information on program effects.

## APPENDIX D

### ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED FOR THE INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES PROJECT





## APPENDIX D

### ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED FOR THE INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES PROJECT

AFL-CIO Working for America Institute  
American Public Human Services Association (APHSA)  
The Aspen Institute  
The Brookings Institution  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Community College Research Center (CCRC)  
U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)  
U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)  
Finance Project  
Institute for Research on Poverty  
Jobs for the Future  
Lewin Group  
MDRC  
The Mott Foundation  
Mathematica Policy Research (MPR)  
National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA)  
National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)  
National Council for Workforce Education  
National Governors Association (NGA)  
National League of Cities  
National Poverty Center  
Public/Private Ventures  
Rockefeller Institute  
The Upjohn Institute  
Women Employed  
Workforce Alliance  
Workforce Strategy Center



## APPENDIX E

### STUDY CRITERIA MET BY PROGRAMS IN THE INNOVATIVE EMPLOYMENT STRATEGIES PROJECT



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Approach/Program	Program Design and Strength	Operational Maturity	Scale	Evidence of Positive Outcomes
<b>Service-Focused Employment</b>				
Anoka County Partnerships for Family Success	X	X	X	
Ramsey County Integrated Services Project	X		X	
The Substance Abuse Case Management Program	X	X	X	
WeCARE	X		X	
<b>Employment-Based Experience</b>				
<b>Subsidized Employment Programs</b>				
Community Jobs Program	X	X		X
The Enterprising Kitchen	X	X		X
Georgia GoodWorks!	X	X	X	X
Philadelphia@Work	X	X	X	X
Rubicon Programs, Inc.	X	X	X	X
Washington Community Jobs	X	X	X	X
<b>Temporary Employment Programs</b>				
FirstSource	X	X	X	X
Harborquest	X	X	X	
<b>Skill Development</b>				
<b>Instructional and Curricula Reforms</b>				
Essential Skills Program Denver Community College	X	X	X	X
Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training	X	X		X
On-Ramp to Biotech/ Bridge to Biotech	X	X		X
Portland Career Pathways	X	X	X	
Ready-to-Work	X	X	X	X
<b>Financial Aid Programs</b>				
Arkansas Workforce Improvement Grant Program	X	X	X	
Hope Grants	X	X	X	
Minnesota Low-Income Worker Training Grants	X	X	X	
Opportunity Grants Pilot Program	X			
<b>Sectoral Training Programs</b>				
Boston SkillWorks	X	X	X	
Capital Idea	X	X	X	X
Cooperate Home Care Associates	X	X	X	X
Culinary Training Academy	X	X	X	X
District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund	X	X	X	X

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Approach/Program	Program Design and Strength	Operational Maturity	Scale	Evidence of Positive Outcomes
<b>Sectoral Training Programs (continued)</b>				
Project QUEST, Inc.	X	X	X	X
Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership	X	X	X	X
<b>Career Ladders and Credentialing Programs</b>				
Arkansas Career Pathways Program	X			
Career Pathways Initiative (KY)	X	X	X	
Certified Specialist Programs	X	X	X	
Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (MA)	X	X	X	X
Ohio Bridges to Opportunity Initiative	X			
<b>Incumbent Worker Training Programs</b>				
New Jersey Workforce Development Partnership Program	X	X	X	
Pennsylvania Incumbent Worker Training Fund	X	X	X	
WorkSource Employed Worker Training	X	X	X	
<b>Income and Work Supports</b>				
<b>Post-Employment Assistance Programs</b>				
The Advancement Project	X			
Centers for Working Families, LISC/Chicago	X		X	X
Connectinc.'s Work Central Call Center	X	X	X	X
EarnBenefits	X	X	X	X
Marriott International's Associate Resource Line	X	X	X	
The SOURCE	X	X	X	X
TJXtra!	X	X	X	
Welfare to Career at Cascade Engineering	X	X		X
<b>Financial Incentives</b>				
Arkansas Work Pays	X		X	
Passport to Economic Progress	X	X	X	
Reward Work Initiative	X		X	
<b>Asset-Building Programs</b>				
Earned Assets Resource Network	X	X		X
Economic and Community Development Institute	X	X	X	X
Women's Initiative for Self-Employment	X	X	X	