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Opening Doors of Opportunity:

*California's Immigrant English
Language Learner Workforce
Navigator Pilot Program*

**Promising Practices and Lessons from
the Pilot Project Evaluation**

*Ursula M. Bischoff, JD, MSW, PhD
Ratna Noteman, MS, MPA*



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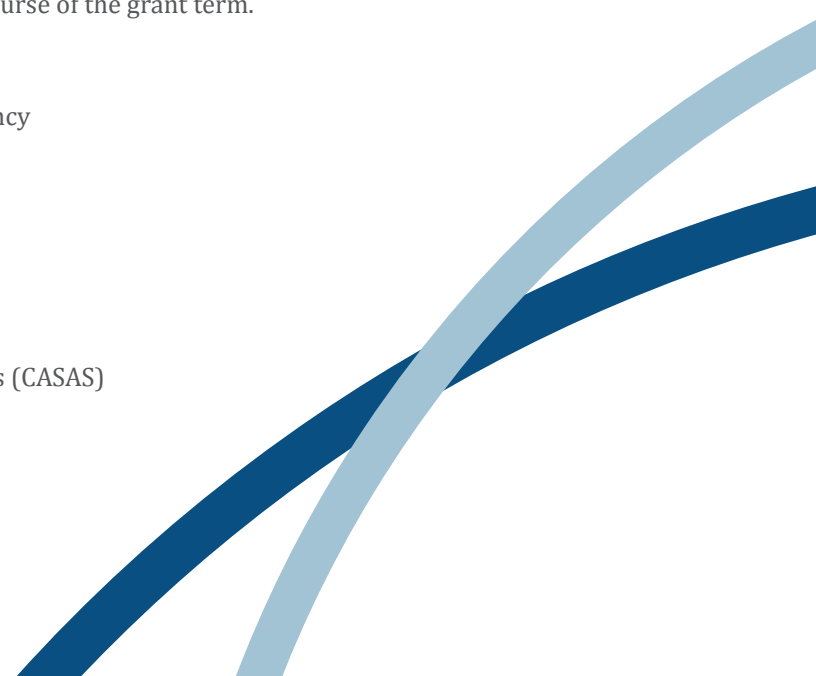
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Executive Summary

In May 2017, the English Language Learner (ELL) Workforce Navigator Pilot Program funded projects to increase access, create/enhance program structure, and provide supportive services within the workforce system for ELL populations. Pilot teams included Workforce Development Boards, community-based organizations (CBOs) and adult education programs (California Adult Education Program (CAEP) consortia that receive supplemental WIOA Title II funding). Pilots implemented strategies to build capacity in the following areas:

- Collaboration with CBOs and other partners to provide supportive wrap around services.
- Collaboration and infrastructure to support co-enrollment in Title I and adult education programs.
- Systems change that begins to adapt the workforce system and make it more accessible, with no wrong door to access services for ELL individuals.
- Implementing a navigator model that can help recruit, enroll, and effectively support participants through program completion, and refer and connect customers to support services.

Key findings from the evaluation of this 18-month pilot include the following:

Pilots effectively implemented ELL workforce navigator models. Pilots enrolled ELLs in WIOA programs and wraparound services, creating infrastructure and stronger collaboration between navigators, program staff and other partners to support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and Title II programs and no wrong door access to services.

Pilot customers were among the hardest to serve. Pilots enrolled ELLs with education at or lower than high school levels and cultural barriers to participation in services. Customers' varied educational functioning and basic skill levels helped determine the supports they needed to succeed in services and their outcomes. Pilots serving those testing at lower entry levels invested greater hours of instruction per customer, with higher numbers of customers showing skills progression and lower numbers achieving occupational certifications.

Pilot customers achieved strong positive WIOA outcomes.

As a share of the populations served, pilot customers achieved more positive results than state and local WDB populations on these measurable skill gains: educational functioning levels, secondary transcripts/report cards and skills progression. They were also more successful in achieving high school diploma/equivalency and occupational certification credentials. Pilot customers performed as well as local WDB populations on employment at exit.

Navigators performed a wide range of functions that led to program and customer success.

Navigators provided outreach, assessment, referral, service planning, coordinated case management, mentoring, coaching, job readiness and job search activities, and served as a resource to staff in their own and partnering agencies and their larger communities. Almost all navigators were immigrants and drew on personal, education and work experiences to effectively conduct program activities and partner with other navigators and case managers within and across agencies.

Navigation support, warm hand-offs, shared case management, and co-located staff helped support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and II programs and no wrong door access to services. Through co-located, shared case management, CBO and other service partnerships, they were able to offer customers on-site support services that helped create a more welcoming environment for ELLs, facilitated more rapid engagement in program activities and, through navigators, provided ongoing support that helped clients progress in services across systems.

Deepening partnerships to create customized education and employment opportunities for ELLs was critical to success.

Providing in-language navigation and support services through partnerships with CBOs and ESL instruction through partnership with adult education while simultaneously searching for training programs available in the AJCC helped to retain customers and accelerate their progress. Expanding programs that accelerate progress toward educational and career goals such as dual enrollment in high school and college, bridge programs, integrated education and training, and career pathways programs for ELLs is critical to achieving sustainable change in the workforce system.

Professional development is needed for WIOA and CBO staff to support stronger partnerships focused on strategies to serve immigrant ELLs.

Staff across WIOA programs and CBOs requested training to better understand program eligibility, service and outcome requirements. Pilots reported a need for training and support to understand programmatic and accountability intersections across WIOA programs to address persistent disconnects between adult education and workforce development services. Training on policy, program strategies and data entry in both systems is critical.

Continuing state investments in cross-agency collaboration, policy development and training are needed to seed and sustain progress in serving ELLs.

Ongoing state level collaboration across agencies is needed to promote regional partnerships that effectively leverage the capacity of WIOA programs and CBOs.

Training should address strategies that help immigrants and ELLs to transition across program services and into educational and employment opportunities supported by wraparound services.

Recommendations

- Encourage the new Governor's administration to continue to support collaboration across state agencies to advance economic and social mobility of immigrants and refugees.
- Consider how future navigator pilots and other discretionary programs can be leveraged to incentivize improvements in the workforce development system.
- Strengthen and support collaboration between the LWDA, CWDB, CCCC, CDE, CDSS to provide training on education and workforce strategies through the resettlement agency infrastructure.
- Continue to pursue opportunities to coordinate policies, co-enrollment, data development, professional development and sustainability plans across state agencies by focusing on AB1111, AB 705, AB 2098 and the soon to be released policy guidance on Pathways to Services/Co-Enrollment.
- Continue to adapt adult education practices and delivery structures with a focus on promoting economic stability and improved alignment with workforce services to better meet the specific needs of immigrant and refugee English learners.
- Promote local solutions that employ shared case management tools and data development, and leverage CAEP resources to support collaboration across WIOA programs and between WIOA programs, other public programs, and CBOs.

I. Why this Pilot Matters

California is home to about a quarter of the nation's foreign-born residents and has the largest and one of the most diverse immigrant populations in the country. In 2016, approximately 10.5 million immigrants lived in California, comprising 27% of its total population.¹ About half of the state's immigrants are naturalized U.S. citizens,² about 26% have another legal status (e.g., green cards or visas), while just under 25% lack legal permission to be or remain in the U.S. (a/k/a undocumented status).³ California consistently ranks as one of the top states for refugee resettlement in the U.S. In 2016, California welcomed a greater proportion of refugees

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than any other state.^{4,5} During the first seven months of 2017, California accepted 10 percent (4,183 people) of all refugees in the U.S., followed by Texas at 9 percent, and New York at 6 percent.⁶ Similarly, California tops the list of states to welcome Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders. SIVs are granted to Iraqi and Afghan citizens who worked with the U.S. government and experienced a serious threat in consequence of that employment. Between September 2007 and September 2017, the state welcomed 17,416 SIVs.⁷ San Diego has welcomed more refugees than any other county in CA, most of

whom are SIVs; Los Angeles and Sacramento are the next top receiving counties for refugees in the state.^{8,9}

Not surprisingly, approximately 6.2 million residents in California aged 16 and older are considered English Language Learners (ELLs).¹⁰ English Language Learner (ELL) is defined by the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration as a person who has limited ability in speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language and also meets at least one of the following two conditions: (a) his or her native language is a language other than English, or (b) he or she lives in a family or community environment where a language other than English is the dominant language.¹¹ Foreign-born individuals account for 92% of California's ELL population, while the remaining eight percent of the state's ELL population are native-born individuals who are largely Spanish-speaking.¹² Furthermore, ELL individuals comprise the largest group of adults with low levels of educational attainment in the state (62%).¹³

Despite high rates of employment, CA immigrants and refugees are more likely to live in poverty than U.S. born residents. Of those who are employed, foreign-born workers are overrepresented in either high-skilled or labor-intensive positions. Moreover, many immigrants holding foreign degrees are unemployed or under-employed, often due to lack of proficiency in English language skills and/or their status as immigrants, coupled with a lack of capacity to translate foreign degrees and work experience to U.S. equivalents.^{16, 17}

¹ https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

² <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

³ <http://data.cmsny.org/>

⁴ Migration Policy Institute, "Refugees and Asylees in the U.S." (June 2017): <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states>

⁵ Pew Research Center, "Just 10 states resettled more than half percent of refugees," (Dec. 2016): <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/12/06/just-10-states-resettled-more-than-half-of-recent-refugees-to-u-s/>

⁶ Migration Policy Institute <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/refugees-and-asylees-united-states>

⁷ Pew Research Center, "Afghans who worked for U.S. government make up growing share of special immigrant visa recipients," (Dec. 2017): <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/11/afghans-who-worked-for-u-s-government-make-up-growing-share-of-special-immigrant-visa-recipients/>

⁸ California Department of Social Services: http://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Refugee/Arrivals/2012-2016_Arrivals_by_Region_and_County.pdf?ver=2017-08-18-104902-680

⁹ California Department of Social Services.

¹⁰ McHugh, Margie and Morawski, Madeleine. "Immigrants and WIOA Services: Comparison of Sociodemographic Characteristics of Native- and Foreign-Born Adults in California." Migration Policy Institute. December 2015, Page 4.

¹¹ https://www.doleta.gov/performance/pfdocs/ETA_9170_WIOA_PIRL_Final.pdf. (ELL replaces the term "Limited English Proficient previously used under the Workforce Investment Act).

¹² McHugh, Margie and Morawski, Madeleine (Dec. 2015), page 4.

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ <https://www.gcir.org/resources/california-immigration-snapshot>

¹⁵ New American Economy

¹⁶ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/billions-dollars-tax-receipts-forgone-annually-nearly-2-million-highly-skilled-immigrants-u.s.>

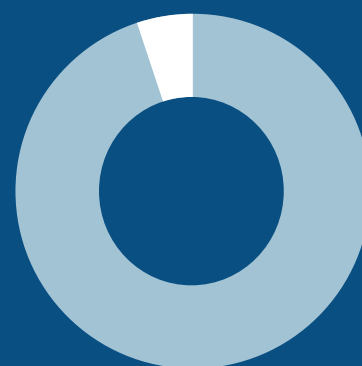
¹⁷ Akbari, A. A. (2011). Labour market performance of immigrants in smaller regions of western countries: Some evidence of Atlantic Canada. *International Migration and Integration*, 12, 133-154.

California's English Language Learner Workforce Navigator Pilot Program

The potential of immigrants, particularly ELLs, to contribute to CA's economic and civic life has sparked growing efforts to contextualize and customize education and employment services for immigrants and refugees.¹⁸ State data for 2015 on adult education and workforce development programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)¹⁹ showed that ELLs were sorely underutilizing existing Title I services: only 11.6 percent of those who exited all Title I adult services had less than a high school diploma or equivalent, and only 4.4% of exiters in Title I adult intensive and training services were ELLs. Recognizing the need to improve access to services available through the workforce system to the state's immigrant ELLs, Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. authorized \$2.5 million to fund pilot projects to increase enrollment of ELLs and immigrants into employment and training services.

In May 2017, five Immigrant ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Projects were funded to implement strategies to increase access, create/enhance program structure and availability, and provide supportive services within the workforce system for ELL populations. The pilot sites and lead grantee Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) were Sacramento County, Sacramento Employment and Training Agency; Madera and Fresno Counties, Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation; Orange County, County of Orange Workforce Development Board; Long Beach, Pacific Gateway; and San Diego, San Diego Workforce Partnership.

Over the 18-month grant term, lead grantees were required to collaborate with community-based organizations and California Adult Education Program (CAEP)²⁰ agencies that receive



California's ELL Population

- 92% Foreign-born individuals
- 8% Native-born individuals

supplemental funding from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II grants. The Pilot Program set goals for local pilots to build workforce system capacity in the following areas:

- Enhancing or establishing collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) and other partners that can help provide supportive wraparound services for targeted English learner populations, specifically those who are among the hardest to serve.
- Creating stronger collaboration and infrastructure to support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and adult education programs.”
- Initiating systems change that begins to adapt the workforce system and make it more accessible, with no wrong door²¹ access to services for ELL individuals.
- Implementing a navigator model that can help recruit, enroll, and effectively support participants through program completion, serving as a liaison in referring and connecting participants to support services.

¹⁸ Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. State of the State Address, 2017.

¹⁹ The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the federal legislation that funds states to strengthen and improve public workforce systems; help job seekers, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, into high-quality jobs and careers; and help employers hire and retain skilled workers. WIOA authorizes services under four Titles: I – services for job seekers; Title II – adult education and family literacy; Title III – dislocated workers; Title IV – vocational rehabilitation services. <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/>

²⁰ Formerly Adult Education Block Grant

²¹ No wrong door access means a universal gateway to services. Customers can seek help for the problem they need to address, rather than a preconceived idea of the programs or services they think that they should receive.

Characteristics of Navigator Program Models

Over the past few decades, navigator programs have emerged as a strategy to help people access services across complex systems, minimize fragmentation and gaps in service delivery, and reduce barriers to success. The U.S. Department of Labor promoted the use of navigators in 2002 by partnering with the Social Security Administration to fund Disability Program Navigator positions within One-Stop Career Centers. An evaluation showed employment outcomes improved significantly when navigators conducted outreach to disability communities and organizations, provided expertise on program services and supports, helped individuals to understand and access resources to help them achieve employment goals, and served as a resource to other One-Stop staff.²²

Since then, navigator models have taken hold within the workforce development community as a strategy to help people with barriers to employment to reach their goals. Models focus on helping customers achieve their education, career and employment goals by providing job coaching and connecting them to a wide range of workforce services as information, assessment, counseling, education, training and job readiness. Navigator models also emphasize building strategic partnerships across programs and sectors, assisting customers in making transitions between services in complex systems, and building or enhancing an integrated service delivery structure to meet multiple program goals and provide quality wraparound services.

Navigator models are also used in education settings. A growing body of research on successful practices suggests that navigation service programs are drivers of employment advancement for nontraditional students.²³ Typical outcomes of past and existing navigator programs have increased program enrollment/service rates, demonstrated

The funding announcement for the ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Project described an

ELL Workforce Navigator

as an individual that helps to conduct an assessment of a program participant's needs, helps enroll the individual in the proper programs and helps to identify and address barriers that may prevent the individual from successfully meeting agreed upon benchmarks and ultimately completing training and educational goals. This includes case management and connecting individuals to wraparound services.

a reduction in barriers to co-enrollment across agencies, helped leverage resources, braided training supports and services offered by different agencies, and ultimately increased student/client retention and success through enhanced and ongoing wraparound services and supports.

However, navigator programs serving ELLs, immigrants, and refugees are still few and far between and very little research exists on the effectiveness of programs that do exist. As a result, the California ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Program will make an important contribution to the field. As states with large populations of immigrants continue to realize that foreign-born residents are an important and under-served demographic, the ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot will provide helpful lessons on strategies to effectively serve this population in the workforce development system and share important insights into how multi-sector collaboration can help set ELLs on a path toward educational and employment success.

²² Work World, *Disability Navigator Program*, (Feb. 2019): http://help.workworldapp.com/wwwwebhelp/disability_program_navigator_dpn_html#Disability_Program_Navigator_DPN_General; Marc Bolan Consulting, *Housing and Employment Navigator Program Evaluation* (June 2017) <http://www.marcbolanconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/WIF-Navigator-FULL-REPORT-6-29-17.pdf>

²³ Workforce Strategies Institute at the Aspen Institute, "A Resource Guide for College/Career Navigators or Those Interested in Starting a Navigator Program" (Nov. 2014): https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/2017/05/Annotated-Bibliography-Of-Resources-For-Navigators.pdf?_ga=2.254529800.1235777795.1548976375-226083542.1548976375

WIOA: Strengthening Access and Alignment

WIOA mandates the publicly-funded workforce system to provide high quality service to all customers and address how individuals with significant barriers to employment can be served more effectively. WIOA requires Title I adult career and training services to give priority of service to individuals who receive public assistance, are low-income, or who are basic skills deficient, including individuals who are ELL. Workforce Development Boards and community-based organizations (CBOs) typically provide career and training services.

WIOA Title II seeks to support state and local providers of adult education and skills development programs in helping all those who wish to work to earn diplomas and credentials required for employment. Title II funds can be used to support acquisition of English literacy and basic skills, post-secondary education, training or employment, and programs are intended to serve people with barriers to employment, including ELLs, immigrants, and low-income individuals. Community colleges and K12 adult schools are the main providers of adult education, but community-based organizations, libraries, and jails also provide adult education services.

A goal of the pilot was to learn how navigator models could strengthen connections between WIOA Title II adult education and Title I job seeker services through co-enrollment strategies. Co-enrollment is defined as enrollment in two or more of the four WIOA programs. WIOA requires joint and collaborative planning and implementation strategies across partners at both state and local levels to promote alignment of service delivery. It mandates and recommends partnerships within and across WIOA programs (or Titles) and with other partners, including community-based organizations, to provide needed wrap-around services. WIOA also mandates that states outline their plans to serve individuals with barriers to employment. States are encouraged to co-enroll customers in WIOA programs to streamline services, promote efficiency, and optimize performance.²⁴

The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA), Employment Development Department (EDD), California Community College's Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), California Department of Education (CDE) and other state workforce partners are developing strategies to better coordinate policies and resources affecting people with barriers to employment to help increase access to education, and workforce programs. A new statewide structure organizing local WDBs into 14 Regional Planning Units was implemented in 2014 to guide workforce development program planning under WIOA. At the same time, California restructured program planning and funding for adult education. Due to longstanding concerns of lack of coordination among adult education providers, 71 CAEP-funded local consortia were created to develop regional delivery plans to develop more effective bridges to post-secondary employment training.

The ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Program is an important step toward testing approaches to providing ELLs with better access to services across WIOA programs and connecting these services to community-based wraparound supports. It seeks to build on WIOA mandates by seeding systems change and navigation strategies that strengthen partnerships within and across sectors and improve alignment. These approaches are important for improving assessment, referral, case planning, transitions, and wraparound services that can help immigrant ELLs facing barriers to employment to achieve their goals.

What this Evaluation Covers

The purpose of this evaluation is to study how ELL Workforce Navigator pilots were implemented and the workforce services system changed over the course of the grant term. This report relays lessons the pilot sites learned in the process of implementing a workforce navigator model to serve immigrant ELLs. Its goal is to highlight successful practices and strategies so they can be spread rapidly across the state.

²⁴ WIOA Overview <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/Overview.cfm>

This formative study was guided by five evaluation questions:

1. How did the pilot sites implement the navigator model?
2. What practices/strategies did pilot partners find effective in meeting key pilot project goals?
3. What barriers or challenges did pilots experience?
4. How did local workforce systems adapt and change as a result of the pilot?
5. What lessons from the pilots can help improve existing programs and/or inform the design of workforce programs to serve English learners in the future?

The purpose of this evaluation is to study how ELL Workforce Navigator pilots were implemented and how the workforce service system changed over the course of the grant term.

Each pilot site provided valuable input through site visits, self-assessments and group discussions. Representatives from state agencies partnering on this project also provided input through group discussions. The State Leadership Group was comprised of staff from the CWDB, LWDA, EDD, CCCC, CDE, Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS), Employment and Training Panel (ETP), and California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Three questions guided an analysis of administrative program data in CalJOBS and TopsPro Enterprise (TE), the state systems that capture workforce and adult education participant data, respectively.

1. Who was enrolled in the pilot?
2. How did those enrolled in the pilot differ from those who were not?
3. Were there observable differences between pilot participants and non-participants on key WIOA performance metrics?

The state provided reports from CalJOBS and TE for this study. Data for all pilot sites were missing and/or incomplete at the time this report was written due to a number of factors, including: 1) new reporting requirements that resulted in inconsistent data entry practices within and across pilot sites; 2) data had not yet been entered for customers still receiving services at the time the grant term ended; and, 3) data from the base wage file was not yet available on outcomes for employed customers. These limitations mean results from the pilot included in this report are only partial and preliminary indicators of outcomes customers achieved.

Subsequent sections of this report address:

- How the pilots implemented the navigator model
- The populations enrolled in the pilot and the outcomes they achieved
- How the pilots expanded and enhanced partnerships across workforce, education and support service providers
- How the pilots increased enrollments in programs/services
- How the pilots increased access to workforce services

The report concludes with a discussion of key findings, lessons from the pilots and the state, and recommendations for the future.



II. The ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Models

Grant funds were awarded to five local area WDBs on behalf of a partnership that also included an adult education and community-based service partner. The partnerships represented differences in the organizational structures of lead WDBs, partnership configurations and target populations. A case study that provides a detailed description of each pilot site, its project goals, program design, navigator model, partners and notable practices is included following the main body of the report.

Grantee Partnerships and Populations

Madera and Fresno Counties

Partners: Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation (MCWIC) is a public benefit nonprofit providing administrative and fiscal oversight for county workforce funds and is the America's Job Center of California (AJCC) operator implementing services on behalf of the local WIB. Madera Adult School is co-located at the AJCC. Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) was a named grant partner and is part of a county structure providing administrative and fiscal oversight for workforce services. State Center Adult Education Consortium (SCAEC) was the named adult education partner.

Customers: The target population was predominantly Hispanic/Latino, with a large population of workers in agricultural and service industries.

Navigators: Navigators were hired by MCWIC and FRWDB and collaborated with SCAEC transition specialists who were co-located at each AJCC at least one day a week.

Orange County

Partners: County of Orange/ Orange County Development Board, the lead grantee, oversees the County's workforce development activities, establishes programs to respond to local workforce needs, and operates a network of One-Stop Centers (AJCCs). The Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA), the largest immigrant and ELL social service organization in the county, and North Orange Continuing Education (NOCE), a member of the North Orange County Regional Consortium for Adult Education (NOCRC) were named grant partners.

Customers: The pilot program targeted a diverse mix of refugees and immigrants, primarily speakers of Spanish and Asian languages.

Navigators: Navigators were employed by OCAPICA and co-located in the AJCC, as were NOCE staff.

City of Long Beach²⁵

Partners: Pacific Gateway is the Workforce Development Board and AJCC operator and runs programs and services in the city of Long Beach. Named partners included the Long Beach Adult School, Long Beach City College Adult Education Programs, Centro Community Hispanic Association (Centro CHA), and United Cambodian Community (UCC).

Customers: The target populations were Hispanic, Latino and Cambodian communities, with a mix of longer-term and recent arrivals in both communities.

Navigators: Navigators were hired by and located at Centro CHA and UCC.

²⁵ The Pacific Gateway team did not fully implement a navigator model. Due to significant delays in program implementation and missing data, this report does not include customer performance data for this pilot. Named grant partners were interviewed for the evaluation and high-level lessons from the pilot appear on page XX.

Navigators' understanding of each customer's motivation to participate in services is critical to success. Motivation varies depending on customers' unique circumstances. Pilots tailored services to individuals' goals and needs through in-depth assessment, referrals and coordinated case management.

Common customer motivations include:

- Immediate need for a supportive service (e.g., housing, transportation)
- Immediate need for employment (particularly among refugees/SIVs)
- Desire to obtain better job, including earning a credential required for career goal
- Improving ability to support children in school, at school site and financially
- Improving ability to manage demands of daily life, including access to healthcare and navigating other responsibilities
- Increase comfort participating in social and civic society
- Personal growth and development

Keys to customer success include:

- A dedicated contact (e.g., navigator) to support their acculturation
- A support system at home
- Feeling they are in a safe environment in which to access services
- A warm handoff – a personal introduction to another provider to help them access services available through mandated and other key partners (e.g., CalWORKs) either co located at AJCC and/or coordinated by navigator

City and County of Sacramento

Partners: Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) is a city and county Joint Powers Agency that provides administrative oversight and is responsible for workforce services and a host of other related services, including refugee resettlement grants available through the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). Named grant partners were Sacramento City Unified School District, Elk Grove Unified School District, Folsom Cordova Unified School District, San Juan Unified School District.

Customers: The target population was recently arrived refugees and SIVs.

Navigators: Navigators were hired by each school district and co-located at AJCCs.

ELL Workforce Navigator Characteristics and Competencies

Navigators performed a wide range of functions and filled roles critical to engaging and supporting target populations. They were pivotal to the success of every phase of program implementation. One WDB referred to navigators as “the glue” that kept all program elements working together to support customer success. The following summarizes key characteristics and competencies navigators across pilot sites possessed.

Almost all navigators are immigrants and **members of the customer communities** targeted for service. They are members of the same cultural, racial and ethnic groups as the target populations; are multi-lingual; have often received services from one or more grant partners; and understand community needs generally and with respect to certain individuals/families. They are cultural mediators and service brokers who develop strategies, practices and services based on their first-hand experiences as immigrants and informed by their relevant education and work experience.

Navigators **provide individualized connections to services through warm hand-offs**. Navigators described an approach to serving customers by “doing whatever it takes” to secure services and



Navigators Provide Individualized Case Management Support

- Conduct ongoing research and detailed assessments
- Ongoing research to find resources that are a good match to customer needs
- Develop individualized plans linking customers to available services
- Ensure there is a warm handoff to other providers and follow up on referrals
- Provide dedicated case management support for customers
- Track their progress and connect customers with additional supports as they complete steps in their plan
- Help customers resolve issues and challenges.

supports needed to help them succeed. They prepare by learning as much about customers as possible during assessments and from discussions with other partners before each meeting. They conduct ongoing and detailed assessments, ongoing research to find resources that are a good match to customer needs, develop individualized plans linking customers to available services, ensure there is a warm handoff to other providers and follow up on referrals. They provide dedicated case management support for customers, track their progress and connect customers with additional supports as they complete steps in their plan, and help customers resolve issues and challenges.

Navigators are ***coaches and mentors***, actively working to help customers learn how to understand their new surroundings and set those who may be hesitant to seek services at ease. English learner customers who are immigrants, refugees and SIVs may have concerns for their safety, and need to feel understood and supported before they can begin to make progress on a service plan. Navigators understand cultural differences can contribute to customer frustration and tense interactions, but don't take things personally; they understand the

importance of keeping lines of communication open and that this affects client motivation and commitment. They make themselves available, provide emotional support and build trust with customers through deep listening and by sharing stories from their own personal experience. Customers who trust providers not only make progress on their plans but spread word to members of their families and communities about the services available through the workforce system.

Navigators are also ***advocates***. Navigators help customers to understand service systems, programs, and requirements, clarify details about their responsibilities and help them to prepare for success by providing opportunities to practice English through every step of the process. Strategies to access services and find and land a job in America are often very different from those in other countries. Many English learners don't have experience searching for a job, sending email, preparing a resume, or interviewing. Navigators devise strategies to support customers' empowerment and independence and help them to change perceptions of their own ability and feel more confident.

Almost all navigators are immigrants and members of the customer communities targeted for service.

They are from the same cultural, racial and ethnic groups as the target populations. They are cultural mediators and service brokers who develop strategies, practices and services based on their first-hand experiences as immigrants and informed by their relevant education and work experience.

Navigators ***are team leaders and boundary spanners who share knowledge and resources*** with other staff. They work closely with peers - e.g., other navigators, instructors, job developers, transition specialists or case managers who also work with customers. They help facilitate proactive joint case management and partnerships through integrated resource team meetings, and make sure to communicate regularly with partners to share needed information (outreach materials, updates on customer progress, resources). Navigators may perform duties that create synergy with their role - i.e., serve as the case manager and job developer. They contribute valuable information on program design and policy to help managers improve program plans and delivery systems.

Navigators are ***active and visible in local communities***. They are a point of contact for others working with English learners; follow up with clients who may become disconnected from services; conduct ongoing client outreach presentations; invite partners to participate in training and events and provide education and training at partners' events; and participate in partner services.

Supports Navigators Need

Many navigators were new employees, whether located at an AJCC, adult school or CBO. Whether new or seasoned employees, all were new to this role in the workforce development system and reported a need for the following supports.

Training: Navigators wanted more comprehensive training on WIOA Title I and Title II policies and program requirements, as well as on partner programs (e.g., Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), CalWORKs), with a focus on services that can be offered concurrently and supported by joint case management practices. They also requested training on immigration services, citizenship, and immigrant rights. All wanted better information on community resources available through CBOs, including trauma-informed services. They requested training on coaching and mentoring practices that promote customer empowerment and accountability, including job coaching skills. Finally, they requested training on self-care practices to better manage the demands of supporting those in crisis and stressful life situations.

Supportive Supervision and Collaborative

Teams: Navigators cited trusting relationships with colleagues and supervisors as extremely important to their success. Navigators had great flexibility and support from their colleagues to define their positions, develop methods to establish plans with participants and convene partners to support customers' individual plans. They all worked in highly collaborative team environments, sharing responsibilities and matching customers with the staff best suited to assist. For example, it can be helpful to match staff and some customers in immigrant populations by gender. They see a need for increased collaboration and peer mentorship between ELL Navigators and the staff of adult education providers to help staff in both systems establish closer connections, learn more about existing programs and explore new opportunities.

Tools and Resources: Navigators reported the following needs: reliable transcript/credential evaluation services; technology for customer use, including computers, mobile devices, digital literacy curricula, and translation software (e.g., What's App, Signal Vine, Google Translate); support to integrate technology into service delivery processes (e.g., text messaging to promote team/shared responsibility for responding to/tracking clients); and access to CalJOBS and TE data systems to view and update client files so all navigators and staff can work together to support the customer as a team.

III. Pilot Customer Demographics and Outcomes

Title I Demographics

Pilot sites successfully enrolled targeted populations. Demographics for pilot participants differed from those in the general populations lead grantee WDBs served and from the state population. Table 1 reports data on customers enrolled in Title I services across

the state, in grantees local workforce development boards, and in the pilot program during the grant term. A total of 543 customers were served by four pilots in Madera/Fresno, Orange, Sacramento, and San Diego Counties.

Table 1: Pilot Demographic Data

Title I Demographics	Statewide Title I Adult	Title I Adult (ELL Navigator) WDBs)	ELL Navigator Pilot Total
Total I Active Adult	94,675	9,014	N/A
Total Active ELL Navigator Enrollments	N/A	N/A	543
Gender			
Male	47.1%	47.0%	41.8%
Female	52.8%	52.9%	58.2%
Highest Year of School at Entry			
No Educational Achievement (Below HS)	11.4%	8.8%	36.8%
High School Diploma/Equivalent	50.4%	42.7%	37.4%
Completed one or more years postsecondary	11.4%	12.4%	2.9%
Attained Postsecondary Credential (non-degree)	5.2%	7.5%	2.0%
Associate's Degree	6.3%	7.7%	2.6%
Bachelor's Degree	11.2%	15.7%	13.1%
Degree beyond a Bachelor's Degree	4.1%	5.3%	5.2%
Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino	40.1%	35.0%	35.2%
Not Hispanic	51.2%	57.2%	58.0%
Unknown	8.7%	7.7%	6.8%
Race			
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2.5%	2.5%	***
Asian	7.4%	10.2%	23.0%
African American/Black	24.9%	17.6%	2.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.0%	1.3%	***
White	33.1%	46.3%	63.0%
Unknown	34.3%	26.0%	12.9%
Cultural Barriers			
Total	1.0%	2.2%	29.7%
English Language Learner			
Total	7.1%	8.6%	90.8%
Basic Skills Deficient			
Total	12.4%	2.2%	56.7%

Source: CalJOBS 6/1/17-3/31/19

Gender: The pilot also served more women than men, and a larger share of women compared to the local and statewide populations. While not reported in Table I, differences along gender and race/ethnicity were also evident across pilots that served different populations:

- Madera and Fresno counties served a population of immigrants that was primarily Hispanic (92% and 84% respectively) and female (78% and 63% respectively).
- Sacramento and San Diego served a population of refugees that was primarily non-Hispanic (81% and 96%) and about an equal number of women (51% each) and men.
- Orange County served a diverse refugee and immigrant population; 70% identified as non-Hispanic and 57% were female.

Education and Skills: The pilots enrolled customers who were among the hardest-to-serve populations. Nearly 37% entered the pilot at an education level below high school proficiency compared to 8.8% in the pilots' general Title I population and 11.4% statewide. The share with postsecondary education and credentials was much lower than the general populations served by lead WDBs and the state. While the share of pilot participants who had earned a bachelor's degree at entry was lower than the population served by the lead WDBs, it was higher than for the state. A comparison of data across pilot sites revealed this statistic is due almost entirely to Sacramento County, which served refugees who arrived with degrees and credentials and contracted a provider to translate these to U.S. equivalents.

Multiple Barriers: Ninety-one percent (91%) of pilot customers were ELLs; that not all were ELLs may indicate data entry errors. Similarly, while nearly 30% had cultural barriers,²⁶ this statistic should more closely correspond to the share of ELLs enrolled in the pilot and may reflect under-reporting and/or inconsistent reporting. Nearly 57% of pilot customers were basic skills deficient compared to 2.2% of the population served by pilot WDBs and 12.4% statewide. Low basic skills attainment is consistent with the low levels of

education recorded at program entry. These statistics confirm the customers served by the pilot sites were demonstrably different from both the local WDB and state populations and that pilots successfully enrolled English learners who were among a hardest-to-serve population.

Title I Outcomes

As table 2 (Pg 14) shows, grantees successfully helped immigrant and refugee customers to achieve strong positive outcomes on WIOA performance metrics. The pilot provided services that helped ELL customers achieve measurable skill gains and credentials. Pilot customers' gains in educational functioning levels and secondary education exceeded those of local and state populations. Pilot customer outcomes far exceeded those for local WDB and state populations on skills progression, which indicates successful passage of a required occupational exam or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks, such as knowledge-based exams. Customers served in Sacramento (54%), San Diego (21%) and Fresno (17%) account for this result.

Similarly, pilot customers fared much better than local WDB and state populations on credential attainment. A higher proportion of pilot customers achieved a high school diploma or equivalent, which is consistent with the lower share entering the program with this credential. A higher share also achieved an occupational certification. Customers in San Diego County accounted almost entirely for this result, with 12% of pilot customers there earning an occupational certification.

Fewer pilot customers exited services compared to the local WDB and state populations; this may be because they experienced multiple barriers to employment and were carried forward in services after the term of the grant ended and/or they were awaiting exit at the time the data was reported. Nevertheless, of those who exited, 66% of pilot customers were employed at case closure,²⁷ a result comparable to the general population served by pilot WDBs, despite the pilot population having

²⁶ Cultural barriers should be recorded if, at program entry, a customer perceives him or herself as possessing attitudes, beliefs, customs or practices that influence a way of thinking, acting or working that may serve as a hindrance to employment.

Table 2: Title I Outcomes

Title I Demographics	Statewide Title I Adult	Title I Adult ELL Navigator WDBs	ELL Navigator Pilot Total
Measurable Skill Gains			
Educational Functioning Level	0.3%	0.8%	3.7%
Secondary Transcript/Report Card	0.2%	0.3%	5.0%
Postsecondary Transcript/Report Card	1.0%	0.2%	***
Skills Progression	6.9%	11.6%	28.7%
Training Milestone	4.3%	6.5%	2.8%
Credential Attainment			
High School Diploma/Equivalent	0.1%	0.4%	3.5%
Occupational Certification	0.7%	0.6%	2.6%
Occupational Skills Certificate or Credential	6.8%	3.3%	2.2%
Occupational Skills License	1.2%	0.5%	***
Associate's Degree	0.1%	***	***
Bachelor's Degree	0.0%	0.0%	***
Other Recognized Diploma, Degree, or Certificate	0.2%	0.2%	***
Employment			
Number Exited Program	70.2%	61.4%	55.4%
Employed at Closure (awaiting exit and exited cases)	N/A	64.7%	65.9%

Source: CalJOBS 6/1/17-3/31/19

multiple barriers to employment and being among the hardest to serve. Because about 45% of pilot customers are still awaiting at this writing, this statistic should improve when additional data are entered after customers who are still being served complete the program.

Co-Enrollment

The pilot program sought to test strategies to increase co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and Title II. Table 3 shows co-enrollment data that grantees reported to the EDD in final program narrative reports. Data are reported from this source because data from the adult education system and CalJOBS could not be matched for this study.

Variation in results across pilot sites may be due to differences in:

- Populations served:
 - » Madera and Fresno Counties served an immigrant population that had lower levels of English proficiency and educational achievement, greater numbers who lacked work authorization and may have been enrolled only in Title II and CAEP services, and greater numbers with interruptions to participation due to seasonal employment opportunities.
 - » Sacramento, San Diego and Orange Counties served a refugee population with comparatively higher levels of English proficiency and educational achievement among both men and

Table 3: Pilot Co-enrollment in Title I and Title II Supported CAEP Programs

Metric	Orange ✧	Madera/Fresno	Sacramento	San Diego
Enrollments*	83	187	149	118
Co-enrollments	83	123	110	101
Percentage	100%	66%	73%	85.6%

* All pilot sites exceeded original enrollment goals and served a larger number of customers than planned.

✧ Orange County obtained a no-cost extension of its grant term from 12/31/18 to 3/31/19.

²⁷ Employment at case closure means a case manager has certified the customer completed services, verified employment, and entered detailed employment information in CalJOBS).

women and/or higher rates of authorization to work.

- Program design:
 - » Madera and Fresno experienced limitations on access to adult education programming options in the first year of the pilot and challenges to engaging partners and employers due to concerns about lack of work authorization.
 - » Other counties were able to develop new or deepen relationships with employers and/or leverage existing training and career pathways opportunities to move participants into and through Title II and Title I services.

Title II Demographics and Outcomes

Title II adult education data for co-enrolled participants confirmed demographic and outcome information entered in CalJOBS. While data across all pilot sites was missing from TE, available data on customers co-enrolled in adult education programs suggest the following.

Language, Race/Ethnicity: Pilot customers differed from the state adult education population on native language and race and ethnicity in ways that were consistent with differences reported in CalJOBS.

- The pilots served a larger share of non-Hispanic customers than typically served in the adult education system and fewer Spanish language speakers.
- Each pilot served different populations. Sacramento served mostly Farsi speaking students; in San Diego, most customers' native language was Arabic; Orange County served Farsi and Spanish speakers; and Madera/Fresno served Spanish speakers.

Education: A majority of pilot students were enrolled in ESL. However, pilot customers in Sacramento and San Diego on average had more years of schooling

than the statewide adult education population.

Table 4 shows how students' average reading ESL pre-test scores and average National Reporting System (NRS) Educational Functioning Level (EFL) varied across pilot sites. Differences in students' entry level scores corresponded to variation in hours of instruction.

- Sacramento's customers initially tested at lower levels of proficiency and received more hours of ESL instruction. San Diego's data corresponds to its program design, which enrolled students with more years of education at entry in vocational ESL and occupational certification classes.
- In Madera and Fresno, pilot students were also enrolled in High School Equivalency (HSE) programs. This is consistent with the majority of students in these counties having 12 years or less of education.

Cultural Barriers and EL Civics: Since a majority of pilot customers were enrolled in ESL, a majority was recorded as having cultural and English language barriers. Pilot data were similar to data for the state.

- In Sacramento, most students who indicated a cultural barrier focused on Community Resources in Diversity and DMV for their EL Civics outcomes.
- In San Diego, all students' EL Civics outcomes focused on Employment – Soft skills.

Services and Skill Gains: A majority of students in San Diego received career services, and skill gain outcomes reflected attainment of occupational certifications. Students in Madera and Fresno received transition services, which help students move from secondary to postsecondary education. In Madera, Fresno, Orange and Sacramento, outcomes related to acquiring workforce readiness skills, skills progression and meeting personal goals.

Table 4: Pilot Title II Average EFLs and Hours of Instruction

Metric	Orange	Madera/Fresno	Sacramento	San Diego
Average ESL Reading Pre-Test Score	202	211	214	221
Average NRS Level	ESL EFL4	ESL EFL5	ESL EFL5	ESL EFL6
Average Hours of Instruction Between Pre/Post	254	177	173	29

Source: TE PY 2017-2019 Results based on available data.

IV. How the Pilots Increased Collaboration with CBOs and Other Partners

Local WDBs had strong existing relationships with CBOs, adult schools and community colleges, but not all partners had previously worked together or focused on serving adult ELLs. Further, pilot teams recognized the critical importance of expanding their existing partnerships and building relationships with additional CBOs and other partners to support the hardest to serve ELLs. For most pilots, this goal involved two steps – 1) building the partnerships and 2) developing collaborative strategies to provide needed wraparound services.

What Worked

Focus on the Customer and Build on Partners' Expertise

Pilots employed human-centered and universal design approaches and relied on navigators and CBOs to deepen their understanding of targeted populations and services required to support their success. Because they understand English learners' motivation, needs and challenges, building on the expertise of navigators, CBOs and other community resources that work with the customers pilots planned to serve were key components of pilots' success. Establishing buy-in and shared goals for working with ELLs, and an understanding of how services offered through each organization could help customers achieve outcomes across organizations was an important step in successful partnership development.

Even when prospective partners expressed interest, gaining traction and follow-through often required pilot staff, including navigators, to make multiple efforts to renew discussions. Pilots reported it can take several meetings to increase prospective partners' awareness of services available to ELLs,

Importance of Partnerships

Local WDBs had strong existing relationships with CBOs, adult schools and community colleges, but not all partners had previously worked together or focused on serving adult ELLs. Pilot teams recognized the critical importance of expanding their existing partnerships and building relationships with additional CBOs and other partners to support the hardest to serve ELLs.

immigrants and refugees through the workforce system coupled with specific suggestions on ways resources can be leveraged to help shared customers succeed across programs. Specific strategies that established and enhanced partnerships included:

- Clearly identifying the target population and eligibility requirements for services
- Participating in community events to promote available services
- Holding partner orientation events
- Networking with existing partner contacts to educate on services and establish shared interests
- Engaging line staff directly to discuss shared clients' needs and strategies to collaborate or divide responsibilities on a service plan

Pilots successfully engaged organizations that had not previously or traditionally partnered with workforce services. New partnerships included relationships with immigration service agencies funded by the CDSS, family resource agencies, and organizations on the ETPL. Pilots reported that stronger partnerships helped them build capacity to streamline and coordinate services. Several reported that convening Integrated Resource Teams (IRT) helped to create, and benefitted from strong networks of partners.

Challenges and Suggestions

It Takes Time to Develop and Deepen Partnerships

Making a commitment to adapt and design new services for ELLs, many of whom experience multiple barriers to employment, is a significant undertaking. Grantee teams needed time to plan, test and refine pilot practices and were challenged to work through and improve new processes within the 18-month grant term. This challenge was compounded by efforts to engage new partners. Some grantees found it helpful to work with organizations that are already familiar with workforce services and/or CBOs that provide services to target populations that can be leveraged – for example, CalWORKs services.

Making a commitment to adapt and design new services for ELLs, many of whom experience multiple barriers to employment, is a significant undertaking.

Educate on Roles and Be Flexible

Grantees experienced challenges related to learning how WIOA Title I and WIOA Title II partners could work together to coordinate services around customer needs, goals and outcomes. Challenges involved understanding roles of staff within both WIOA programs as well as the roles of other partners in serving ELLs and maintaining open communication about customers' services, progress

and needs. This challenge affected all project staff working in different roles across partnering organizations. For example, because workforce development boards, adult schools and CBOs that offer wraparound services have different administrative, service and performance responsibilities, communicating and clarifying expectations at direct service, management, and executive levels is critical to supporting partnerships. Pilots suggested it is important to educate partners and plan up front, to avoid difficulties post-launch.

As partnerships between members of the grantee teams and other organizations deepened, grantees moved from a need to educate about roles each organization could play to adapting roles to facilitate collaboration. Aspects of working successfully with other partners to serve English learners included:

- Making time to learn more about one another's work, services, policies and systems
- Clarifying roles and engaging partners in program design decisions at the beginning and in discussions about improvements on an ongoing basis
- Being transparent and committed to communicate up front about expectations, processes and then trusting others to deliver
- An understanding of what is required to close equity gaps, how to be culturally competent
- Actively working to foster a team and strengths-based approach to service planning and collaborative case management
- Flexibility and willingness to think outside the box to tailor training to customer needs

V. How the Pilots Supported Co-Enrollment

Pilot teams created stronger collaborative relationships and program infrastructure to support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and adult education programs. They adapted and developed new strategies to increase access to workforce services across adult education and workforce development services by establishing outreach, assessment, and referral practices that supported a no wrong door approach to customer engagement and enrollment. Through co-located and other service partnerships, they were able to offer participants on-site support services that helped create a more welcoming environment for English learners, facilitated more rapid engagement in program activities and, through navigators, provided ongoing support that helped clients progress in services across systems.

What Worked

Outreach and Inreach

Immigrant and refugee ELLs are unlikely to access services through a traditional service flow. Grantees implemented targeted outreach to prospective customers at locations where English learners shop, socialize, and receive other services; for example, at swap meets, health care centers, migrant Head Start centers, family resource centers, convenience and grocery stores, laundromats, churches, and other neighborhood locations. Navigators were critical to successful outreach efforts, as they were able to engage potential customers in natural settings, provide them with information about services available through the workforce development system, and welcome them with personalized attention at their work locations. Navigators also conducted outreach in adult education classes and schools. Pilot sites that served a large refugee population and/or partnered with a strong CBO with established relationships to the target population also had success conducting in-reach to identify potentially eligible program participants from within existing client populations.

Updated Materials and Forms

Pilots invested in creating outreach and program materials in multiple languages and in translating

existing program materials for use by and with ELL customers. They also created or revised existing forms to develop common intake and cross referral forms for use with partners to share information more effectively and streamline the customer experience. Navigators were instrumental in helping customers to gather all documentation needed to help them move seamlessly across program services. Most pilots revised their assessment tools to ask questions of immigrants and refugees differently, in order to accurately capture information about their education, skills, and experience in their native countries and to address a wider range of circumstances that might present barriers to program participation. Finally, pilots also established case management and client tracking tools to more easily follow clients' progress in programs receiving WIOA Title I or Title II funding.

Innovative and Shared Assessment Practices

Title I and Title II partners on pilot teams began using the same language and literacy assessment tools, most often Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) in place of Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE), thereby eliminating duplicative assessment practices. They used differentiated skills assessments (language, literacy, academic), and CBO and AJCC staff began using informal practices to assess customers' own perceptions of language ability to help determine when it might be appropriate to refer a customer to ESL or other adult education services. Navigators found conducting comprehensive joint needs assessments with other navigators and staff providing customers case management or service support a highly successful practice. They often conducted assessment and case planning in IRTs or similar collaborative case management meetings.

Co-location and Warm Hand-offs

Partners on pilot teams reported that co-location helped facilitate changes to program delivery and ease in working together. They stressed that referrals alone do not work for ELLs and the pivotal role navigators played in managing communications across multiple partners and with customers helped

ensure customers' ongoing engagement and success in services. Pilots with partners co-located in the AJCC and/or navigators stationed at adult schools and CBOs reported such a high degree of customer-centric delivery and seamless access and transitions through services that customers did not necessarily know which organization employed the navigator or staff they were working with.

In addition to making warm hand-offs, pilots described a high degree of collaborative teamwork among all partners. Workforce staff appreciated the ability to conduct outreach in adult education classes and opportunities to enter classes to meet with shared customers. Adult education and CBO staff reported co-location increased their awareness of workforce services in general, helped them to identify gaps in their own knowledge and become more open to considering new ideas, and seek professional development to become better equipped to serve ELL populations.

Integrated Case Planning Teams and Co-case Management

In each pilot, navigators assembled a multi-disciplinary team around every customer, pulling resources into the AJCC and facilitating collaboration among WIOA mandated and other external partners to help customers identify barriers and develop a service plan coordinating resources to support their success. Navigators collaborated with other staff within and across partner organizations to provide joint case management support. Navigators and case managers met frequently, often weekly and as needed, to track customer progress, and collaborate to resolve individual client challenges, share experiences, resources and tips, and brainstorm ways to improve program services for all customers.

Building Program Connections Over Time

Pilots worked with existing partners to identify areas where alignment across programs and services organically existed, such as client referral, eligibility/intake processes, and assessments. Pilots then began to work with those same partners on areas where

alignment didn't exist but appeared feasible, such as inviting partners to participate in coordinated case planning or IRT meetings. In Madera and Fresno counties, collaboration between navigators and the adult education Transition Specialists over time resulted in higher rates of eligibility for clients referred from adult education providers and support for pilot customers to make transitions to advanced levels of education.

In general, the pilot sites progressed through phases of deepening partnerships over the course of the grant term as customers progressed through program services. Early in the grant term, pilots focused partnership strategies on program design, outreach, CBO referrals and launching program services. As relationships with partners involved in these activities began to solidify, partners focused more closely on establishing co-enrollment between Title I and II, creating transition supports for clients making skills gains, building on-ramps into career pathways programs, maximizing work experience opportunities, and offering on-the-job training (OJT) and recruitment events. For example, partners in Orange County reported they developed career pathway opportunities for pilot customers by connecting employers and vocational training providers they partner with in CalWORKs programs.



Accelerating Progress Through Leveraged Resources

Deepening partnerships to create customized education and employment opportunities for ELLs helped to shift the pilots' approach to service delivery. Other strategies pilots pursued to build on partnership opportunities to co-enroll clients focused on accelerating customer progress.

Examples include:

- Funding translation and evaluation of foreign degrees and credentials to mitigate the burden of out-of-pocket expense and delay in repayment that can accompany a supportive service. Sacramento County implemented this practice to support participants, who did not feel compelled to choose between purchasing groceries or paying rent or utilities and paying for the cost of degree/credential evaluation.
- Identifying Integrated Education and Training (IET) opportunities offered by WIOA Title II providers that integrate and embed ABE, ESL and ASE with vocational skills training to accelerate participant success.
- Offering bridge programing in which ELLs began by enrolling in a WIOA II Integrated English Learner Civics program where they were concurrently enrolled in occupational skills training with real-time weekly contextualized support. This design, implemented in San Diego County, allowed clients to ease into occupational skills training by learning prerequisite foundational and training skills. Customers also received holistic wraparound support,

including financial coaching, support services, mental and behavioral health, job training, and immigration services.

- In addition to co-enrolling clients in WIOA Title I and II and partnering with CalWORKs providers, pilots also leveraged opportunities to co-enroll customers in other federal, state, and locally-funded programs to maximize service dollars and program reach, such as ORR programs.

Challenges and Suggestions

Despite success in forming partnerships and building capacity to engage in collaborative co-enrollment strategies, pilots experienced challenges.

Awareness and Eligibility Barriers

Grantees report a need for extensive community outreach and education to help English learners develop a basic awareness of what a career center is, the services available to them, how the services can be helpful, and how they can access services. While navigators report that news of successful and satisfied customers spreads quickly by word of mouth, family, friends and others from target communities who may seek services based on news through community networks often arrive at the AJCC with expectations for access to services and benefits that can be inaccurate. Customers can become frustrated when they learn eligibility and access are unique to each person, and they may not receive the same services or supports others have. They also noted that most customers who express interest in obtaining skills training and employment services aren't ready to participate in Title I programs due to their limited literacy, skills and other barriers.

In several pilot sites, people referred by partners were not eligible for WIOA Title I services because they lacked work authorization. Working with undocumented individuals who could not immediately enroll in WIOA Title I while still meeting performance outcomes within the relatively short term of the grant presented a significant challenge. Further, fear of government agencies, misinformation, and misunderstanding among target populations about services that are available from

Community outreach and education is needed to increase ELL's awareness and readiness to participate in workforce services.

the public workforce system may have deterred many potentially eligible immigrants from seeking services.

Long-term Literacy and Support Needs of Hard-to-Serve ELLs

Grantees relied on CASAS and TABE scores to assess customers' readiness to participate in Title I services and make appropriate referrals to available services. Almost all pilots reported they were able to refer customers with higher levels of English language proficiency to the ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot Program, and that many still required longer periods of participation in services than English speakers to realize measurable skill gains at a level to prepare them to enter Title I services. Some pilot customers who tested at advanced educational functioning levels (EFLs) are still under-prepared to succeed in workforce readiness and training programs.

Pilots also reported that even better educated and skilled ELL customers often lacked digital literacy and test-taking skills needed to demonstrate eligibility or readiness for education courses, training or employment. Through the navigators' ability to identify gaps in knowledge and experience and follow up with coaching and advocacy, participants were provided with opportunities to practice, additional tutoring, digital literacy curricula, or accommodations that helped remove potential barriers to success.

Siloed Programs

Pilots reported that developing strategies to achieve service coordination and streamline access to a comprehensive array of wraparound services among a variety of partners presented significant challenges. Navigation models offer highly customized services to every individual. Every employer, every CBO partner, every WIOA Title I and Title II provider are also unique. Grantees noted that with so many different partners contributing to a customized service delivery model, it can be difficult to coordinate services and create career pathway opportunities. Despite targeted outreach efforts, some pilots also reported CBOs serving English learners lacked follow-through and commitment to collaborate, provide referrals and co-case manage shared customers.

One pilot described a need to develop a single AJCC-based provider model for English learner programs across an entire region. Many cited barriers to customers' ability to access adult education, workforce development and other public services as related to these factors: office closures during evening and weekend hours; needs for support services, such as child care, that are not usually funded for English learners enrolled only in adult education services; and high costs of transportation, which is one of the most common barriers to participation for ELL populations.

Employer Engagement

Pilots cited a lack of employer engagement, buy-in and willingness to hire ELLs and those enrolled in programs to build basic skills as a persistent challenge. They reported employers are often unwilling to provide earn and learn, OJT or employment opportunities to people without work experience in the US. They noted some employers are more welcoming and open to working with ELLs, especially if they are from a community of immigrants, located in these communities, are small business owners or have a need for bilingual staff. They also reported that success placing one person can lead employers to become more receptive. Pilots found it helpful to engage employers by marketing customer successes and leveraging trusted relationships with program staff who have referred strong candidates in the past.

Siloed Data Systems and Need for Training

The absence of or limitations on mechanisms to share data across CalJOBS and TE to correctly track co-enrollments between WIOA Title I and Title II, and the lack of access to CalJOBS by adult education and CBO staff to enter data on co-enrolled customers challenged navigators and collaboration across staff of all pilot teams. Different eligibility requirements for participation as well as lack of clarity on how to code and enter new WIOA metrics and information pertaining to ELLs also presented challenges for staff in Title I and II programs. Finally, concern and mis-information over which WIOA Title would receive credit for helping co-enrolled customers achieve shared WIOA performance metrics such as measurable skill gains and credentials created challenges to collaboration and co-enrollment.

VI. Initiating Systems Change to Improve Accessibility and Alignment

The pilot program sought to initiate systems change to make the workforce system more accessible with no wrong door to access services for English learners. Pilots implemented many new practices to implement navigator models and support co-enrollment across WIOA programs to serve ELLs. They supported efforts to adapt the workforce system through additional strategies to build infrastructure, capacity for new ways of doing business, and sustainability.

What Worked

Leadership

The pilots were successful in large measure because the lead grantee WDBs functioned as high-performing workforce intermediaries, convening multiple partners and leveraging funding streams around common goals, modeling and supporting innovation, and designing new ways to improve workforce services to increase economic mobility for English learners. They fostered opportunities to deepen existing partnerships to learn how to adapt service delivery processes within and across organizations for targeted populations. For example, because WIOA Title II supported adult education and CBO partners were closely involved in program development and participated in regular partner meetings, pilot teams reported they learned how to work more collaboratively and include one another in work processes and communications to ensure the success of the pilot.

Successful practices implemented by the lead grantee WDB included:

- Holding the vision for seamless access to services, from a customer-centered perspective
- Taking a proactive role as an intermediary to provide support to build alignment by:
 - » Holding regular partner meetings
 - » Facilitating collaborative program planning with and across partners to:
 - ♦ Help them learn about one another's systems and services, and how to work together

- ♦ Adapt the project work plan and work flows, to ensure delivery strategies were user-focused and met identified needs
- » Providing TA on policies, training, orientations, support for data management
- » Identifying and acting on needs for course correction and opportunities to improve

Planning

In addition to collaborative program planning involving all grant partners, pilots shared information with staff in their organizations not participating in the pilot and in their communities to inform larger strategic and program planning processes, including development of regional WIOA plans. They began to think more systemically about ways to identify needs within English learner communities. One pilot described a need to conduct an extensive needs assessment and resource mapping process focused on English learners that includes information on their educational levels, career pathways of interest, and whether/ from where they are accessing workforce and/ or supportive services. Results could inform a crosswalk of services identifying redundancies and gaps between WIOA Title I, WIOA Title II, contracted providers, regional partners and other CBOs that serve English learners. Some noted a need for an ad-hoc committee to carry this type of work forward into regional WIOA and CAEP planning processes.

Adapting Business Processes to Share Responsibilities

Pilots noted collaborative work to adapt service delivery processes within and across organizations required working collectively across departments/ functions within their own agencies. For example, a CBO with several service departments began to do collective training and outreach across departments to ensure all staff are knowledgeable about all programs and services and share information on behalf of the entire organization when they engage with partners. Other suggestions to successfully adapt and reorganize business processes included:

Share contacts and resources across existing partnership networks

- Create forms and establish protocols to support reciprocal referral processes, warm hand-offs
- Establish service flows that create seamless service contacts for participants (co-location, collaborative case management, warm hand-offs, active “hand-holding” and follow-up)
- Anticipate and resolve questions that might create barriers experienced by ELLs with different levels of English language ability and varying support needs
- Adapt forms, data collection tools and processes and create data sharing agreements to support accurate reporting and joint decision-making

Training

All pilots offered new training for staff within their agencies and cross-training for staff and partners. New training included instruction on WIOA, conducting IRT meetings, and on the navigator model, strategies to serve ELLs, and data collection. Grantees invited partners into AJCCs to provide training on services available through their programs, trauma-informed care, immigrant legal services, immigrant rights and other topics. Pilots in Madera, Fresno and Orange county reported increasing staff understanding of immigration policy helped to increase awareness and understanding among all agency staff of community fears and barriers to accessing and participating in services. Participating in staff development provided by another organization was a new practice for some AJCCs. Some pilots reported using a train the trainer approach helped to both build capacity and support sustainability.

The OCAPICA, a CBO partnering in the Orange County pilot, developed cultural competency and acculturation workshops for staff and clients, and shared these with other pilot sites.

- A cultural competency workshop for service providers focused on considerations to be aware of when working with immigrants and refugees. It is based on a cultural competency continuum modeled after mental health services cultural competency training and adapted to issues affecting customers in the workforce system.

- Acculturation workshops for customers focused on what acculturation means, how to adjust to a new life and opportunities in the U.S., available programs and services and how to access them, and basics important to workplace success like hygiene and behavior.

Creating an Inclusive Culture and Environment

Pilots reported that all pilot staff, particularly English learner and bilingual/bi-cultural staff, understand, communicate and interact with people from different cultures in a thoughtful and effective manner. They reported that conducting culturally competent outreach helped to develop staff self-awareness, a better understanding of English learners’ unique needs and barriers, and skill in supporting no wrong door access to services. When immigrant customers now come in to the AJCC, staff are better able to help them access supports and information they really need rather than focusing on requirements.

Pilots reported navigation, co-case management and co-enrollment practices are supporting a no wrong door approach to serving ELLs, including people who may lack work authorization. Building staff capacity, partnerships that support referrals to valuable, trustworthy community resources, and case management approaches to ensure customers receive and complete services is helping to foster a welcoming, respectful and inclusive organizational culture within the AJCCs. Co-locating CBO staff and offering ESL courses at AJCCs not only directly improved access to WIOA services for ELLs but helped to create a welcoming organizational culture. Providing services to ELLs through resource centers, including opportunities to practice English, digital literacy, resume development and soft skills, and attend acculturation workshops, helps to create systems change by increasing receptivity of immigrant communities to seek support from workforce services and receptivity of staff to serving new people.

Pilots reported a need to adapt practices and environments to welcome new ELL populations at adult schools and CBOS as well. Collaboration across systems requires organizations that may already serve target populations to re-think what might be



Lessons from the Pacific Gateway Pilot

The Pacific Gateway pilot did not fully implement a navigator model. The program design and implementation strategy did not support collaboration among partners or navigators and did not result in effective practices outlined in this report. The pilot's program design positioned the WDB and adult education partners as institutional actors responsible for achieving change at a systems level and the CBO partners as responsible for providing navigation services to their separate constituencies. Early collaborative work involved developing personas for potentially eligible customers to guide pilot planning. However, difficulties surfaced as partners reported contracting delays, failures to convene or attend regular project meetings and a lack of transparency and guidance to CBO partners regarding grant requirements. Progress on the pilot stalled.

Following several meetings with state leaders, the partners began meeting regularly and engaged in candid discussions on challenges to establishing trust and changes required to deliver culturally competent services to meet needs of immigrant ELLs, and established clarity on resolving barriers to collaboration. Pilot successes included creating shared intake and referral forms, collaboration between CBOs and the adult school to support enrollment, ESL classes offered onsite at CBOs, co-location of a Khmer-speaking CBO staff at the AJCC, and career fairs providing ELLs opportunities to practice interviewing and networking. 39 people were served.

Lessons from this pilot point to the important role workforce boards play as conveners in establishing collaborative leadership, partnership development and clear communication strategies, and arranging and providing training to help partners work together effectively.

necessary to serve them in new ways. Providing translation services and in-language materials for a wider range of populations, creating opportunities for new populations to learn about programs and services, inviting other partners onsite to provide services, and cross training staff are steps adult education providers and CBOS should also prepare to take.

Challenges and Suggestions

Policy and Performance Requirements

Pilots suggested additional state-level action to support co-enrollment and service alignment to meet the needs of immigrant English learners is needed. Their ability to access and leverage training

dollars at the AJCC for special populations was limited, as performance goals had been set against a baseline of English-speaking adults prior to the grant awards. This presented constraints on creativity with respect to program design supporting a hard to serve population with the lowest levels of English proficiency. As current performance targets drive funding allocations and are based on historical data that doesn't include hard-to-serve populations like English learners, this will affect funding allocations well into the future. To interrupt a cycle of services driven by performance targets based on historically inequitable resource allocations, the state must invest additional resources, like the ELL Workforce Navigator Pilot project, to help local boards test new

practice models and pave the way for sustainable, systemic change. This limitation should begin to shift as local areas become more adept at identifying community needs and planning to serve ELLs through improved data, navigation and co-enrollment strategies.

Grantees reported training is needed to increase clarity around performance reporting across Title II and Title I programs. Partners' lack of understanding on how to record and report shared WIOA metrics and of data captured in the CalJOBS and TE systems, data system limitations - for example, the lack of an individual customer identifier to ensure seamless reporting across funding streams and service systems - and ongoing changes in the functionality of the CalJOBS and TE data systems complicated accurate reporting, data use, and data sharing. In addition to providing training and support to staff working in these systems, they identified a need to provide cross-training to all partner staff. Measures of success, and accountability and funding models are different for WIOA Title II and WIOA Title I, and key project staff would benefit from such training to better align systems and achieve success on shared performance indicators.

Lessons from the State

The state leadership group (see p. 9) met regularly to learn about and support the work of this pilot project. They noted it served as a focal point for collaboration across state agencies that represented a new approach to linking related work. The pilot project created an opportunity for multiple state agencies to focus on a shared population, articulate a set of goals and identify specific, tangible outcomes they all have a stake in affecting. In so doing, the pilot opened many doors for them to connect and work with new partners to craft policy, work on program and funding strategy on issues affecting immigrants, and plan opportunities to scale successful practices. They view shared objectives, metrics and professional development as three levers that will facilitate coordinated, systemic change at the state level.

Shared Objectives

The state infrastructure supporting cross-agency collaboration to improve economic and social mobility outcomes for immigrant English learners is new and still being built. New positions in Governor Brown's office and LWDA established a charge to improve outcomes for immigrants and refugees, while newly funded legal services programs administered by the CDSS created incentives to partner across policy sectors. These new opportunities carried with them a learning curve regarding policy and program strategies for staff at both state and local levels that coincided with significant changes related to WIOA implementation.

It is clear to the state leaders that no single program or system can successfully serve populations like English learners who are eligible to receive priority of service under WIOA. Building a navigation model into business as usual will require state agencies to collaborate on messaging that highlights the value and importance of reaching this population, as well as policy, practice and funding strategies that support improved access to services for immigrant and refugee ELLs. Success within and across systems will depend on building and leveraging communication and training channels through newly organized regional planning and delivery structures such as WIOA Regional Planning Units and CAEP Consortia.

The WIOA Title I program is structuring opportunities to further this discussion at state and local levels. Through efforts of staff in Governor Brown's office and LWDA, the CWDB issued a new requirement for local areas in which more than 15% of the population is designated as limited English proficient to address programming to meet this need in their local plans. State reforms across CDE and CCCCCO in Title II are encouraging adult education providers to be more attuned to

workforce outcomes. State partners recognize that other WIOA Titles and public programs will need to focus specifically on outcomes for immigrants and ELLs, mirror the same messages and adopt aligned and coordinated practice strategies focused on the specific needs of adult ELLs for this work to have optimal impact.

The state infrastructure supporting cross-agency collaboration to improve economic and social mobility outcomes for immigrant English learners is new and still being built.

Metrics

Performance metrics for the grant included traditional labor market (i.e., Title 1) performance metrics supplemented by measures of co-enrollment in Title II programs. They recognized the challenges and limitations associated with entering and reporting data in separate systems to track shared participant outcomes and that pilot partners working in different systems need a better understanding of one another's metrics and accountability requirements. They agree providing cross-training across Title I and II on data entry and ways to share data will be an important component of scaling this work.

State partners view reliance on data as critical to creating opportunities for collaboration and plans for sustainable, effective programs for ELLs. They are concerned that, although CalJOBS is the primary case management tool used by most pilot sites, much information on service activity is still documented in case notes or paper files. State partners agree using data to increase the visibility of locations making progress in serving this population and creating reports that highlight regions moving the needle on outcomes for ELLs will be helpful to identifying, scaling and spreading effective practices.

Professional Development

The pilot was launched prior to and helped to inform development of draft policy guidance on Pathways to Services (released August 2018) regarding verifying authorization to work and making services accessible to all populations. State partners identified training on this policy, collaborative case management practices and strategic co-enrollment as priorities to advance goals outlined for the pilot project. They also identified the following areas as ripe for coordinated state action to develop training and TA for the field.

- Navigation skills, competencies and strategies
- Strategies to improve engaging immigrant populations eligible for services across WIOA programs (e.g., dislocated workers)
- Strategies to move people who enter the system at lower levels of education and English language proficiency more quickly to training and IET supported by wraparound services
- Strategies that allow people at different levels of skill and language proficiency, particularly for those who are least skilled and proficient, to move in and out of services based on educational and employment needs and opportunities
- Partnership strategies that effectively leverage the capacity of WIOA programs and CBOs
- Data entry to ensure accurate capture of demographic information and reporting on WIOA and AEP metrics
- Data sharing and data use to guide regional planning and program improvement
- Sustainable funding strategies

VII. Conclusions and Recommendations

Pilots continued to serve ELLs after the end of the grant term. They would like to create additional career pathway opportunities for ELLs through strengthened relationships with employers, WIOA Title II providers and CBOs in their regions. Some planned to launch sector-based meetings or roundtable discussions with employers, WIOA Title II providers, and vocational training providers, to increase understanding of skills employers are seeking and the talents English learners offer. These important discussions can help partners to create a cohesive plan to ensure the services available to English learners will result in successful outcomes.

Key Findings

Pilots implemented ELL workforce navigator models that tested and achieved grant program goals. Pilots effectively enrolled ELLs in WIOA programs and wraparound services. Pilots effectively created infrastructure and stronger collaboration between navigators, program staff and other partners to support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and adult education programs and no wrong door access to services.

Pilot customers were among the hardest to serve. Pilot customers were demonstrably different from local and state populations. Pilots enrolled ELLs with education at or lower than high school levels and cultural barriers to participation in services. Customers' varied educational functioning and basic skill levels helped determine the supports they needed to succeed in services and their outcomes. Hours of instruction, measurable skill gains and other outcomes varied by entry skill levels. Pilots serving those testing at lower entry levels invested greater hours of instruction per customer, with higher numbers of customers showing skills progression and lower numbers achieving occupational certifications. These outcomes are related to workforce readiness skills which are the focus of instruction at lower skill levels.

Pilot customers achieved strong positive WIOA outcomes. As a share of the populations

served, pilot customers achieved more positive results than state and local WDB populations on these measurable skill gains: educational functioning levels, secondary transcripts/report cards and skills progression. They were also more successful in achieving high school diploma/equivalency and occupational certification credentials. Pilot customers performed as well as local WDB populations on employment at exit.

Navigators performed a wide range of functions that led to program and customer success. Navigators filled many roles, providing outreach, assessment, referral, service planning, coordinated case management, mentoring, coaching, job readiness and job search activities, and served as a resource to staff in their own and partnering agencies and their larger communities. Almost all navigators were immigrants and drew on personal, education and work experiences to effectively conduct program activities and partner with other navigators and case managers within and across agencies.

Navigation support, warm hand-offs, shared case management, and co-located staff helped support co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and II programs and no wrong door access to services. Pilots adapted and developed new strategies to increase access to workforce services across Title I and adult education programs by establishing outreach, assessment, and referral practices that supported a no wrong door approach to customer engagement and enrollment. Through co-located, shared case management, CBO and other service partnerships, they were able to offer customers on-site support services that helped create a more welcoming environment for ELLs, facilitated more rapid engagement in program activities and, through navigators, provided ongoing support that helped clients progress in services across systems.

Deepening partnerships to create customized education and employment opportunities for ELLs was critical to

success. Providing in-language navigation and support services through partnerships with CBOs and ESL instruction through partnership with adult education while simultaneously searching for training programs available in the AJCC helped to retain customers and accelerate their progress. Expanding programs that accelerate progress toward educational and career goals such as dual enrollment in high school and college, bridge programs, integrated education and training, and career pathways programs for ELLs is critical to achieving sustainable change in the workforce system.

Professional development is needed for WIOA and CBO staff to support stronger partnerships focused on strategies to serve immigrant ELLs. Staff across WIOA Titles and CBOs requested training to better understand program eligibility, service and outcome requirements. Pilots reported a need for training and support to understand programmatic and accountability intersections across WIOA Titles to address persistent disconnects between adult education and workforce development services. Training on policy, program strategies and data entry in both systems is critical.

Continuing state investments in cross-agency collaboration, policy development and training are needed to seed and sustain progress in serving ELLs. Ongoing state level collaboration across agencies is needed to promote regional partnerships that effectively leverage the capacity of WIOA programs and CBOs. Training should address strategies that help immigrants and ELLs to transition across program services and into educational and employment opportunities supported by wraparound services.

Recommendations

- Encourage the new Governor’s administration to continue to support collaboration across state agencies to advance economic and social mobility of immigrants and refugees by:
 - » Designating responsibility for carrying forward this charge,
 - » Facilitating opportunities for state agencies to share information and leverage resources to achieve shared goals, and
 - » Identifying and eliminating state level barriers to coordination among state agencies.
- Consider how future navigator pilots and other discretionary programs can be leveraged to incentivize improvements in the workforce development system.
- Strengthen and support collaboration between the LWDA, CWDB, CCCCCO, CDE, CDSS to provide TA on education and workforce strategies through the resettlement agency infrastructure that:
 - » Builds capacity in the CDSS refugee program to leverage synergies and intersections between adult education, workforce development and the CalWORKs system.
 - » Builds capacity of CDSS immigration legal services providers by providing TA on the intersection between immigrant legal rights and policies relevant to a broader framework for immigrant integration, including resources available through adult education and workforce development services.
- Continue to pursue opportunities to coordinate policies, data development, professional development and sustainability plans across state agencies by focusing on AB1111, AB 705, AB 2098 and the soon to be released policy guidance on Pathways to Services/Co-Enrollment.
- Provide training focused on Integrated Education and Training models and career pathways for English learners. Continue work in the adult education delivery system to adapt practices and delivery structures with a focus on promoting economic stability and improved alignment with workforce services to better meet the specific needs of immigrant and refugee English learners.
- Guide regional consortia to consider demographic data and build local plans that reflect needs of immigrant and all English learners who could benefit from a no wrong door navigation function.
- Observe and promote local solutions that employ shared case management tools and data development (e.g., aligning data definitions, creating single identifier for those who do not have or share SSNs) to support collaboration across WIOA programs and between WIOA programs, other public programs and community organizations. Invest in approaches that remove institutional barriers to data sharing and reduce requirements and restrictions.

Appendix

Collaborative for Effective Services to English Language Learners

Lead Grantee

Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation
<http://www.maderaworkforce.org/>

Grant Partners

State Center Adult Education Consortium
<http://statecenteraec.org/>
Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board
<http://www.workforce-connection.com/>

Project Overview

In neighboring Madera and Fresno Counties, in the heart of the San Joaquin Valley, a high proportion of the population are English learners who struggle with both low educational attainment and poverty. According to the 2015 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 29.8% of Madera County residents and 33.3% of Fresno County residents 18 years or older speak a language other than English and of those individuals, 20.8% in Madera County and 29.8% in Fresno County speak English less than “very well”. Challenges related to limited English proficiency are compounded by the fact that over 25% of individuals age 25 and older in Madera and Fresno counties do not have a high school credential and between 32% and 36% of these individuals live in families with incomes below the poverty level. Many English learner immigrants in this region are employed in seasonal agricultural and service industries.

The Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation (MCWIC) and Fresno Regional Workforce Development Board (FRWDB) partnered on this effort to better serve individuals who often seek services from both agencies and leverage regional, community-based resources. MCWIC drew on previous experience implementing a navigator model through the Disability Employment Initiative, while FRWDB drew on a Welcome Center service model for immigrants and English learners implemented in Fresno adult schools. Both had previous relationships with organizations serving the target population; however, the connections between these organizations and the AJCCs were typically

informal. Further, people in the target population are often not aware of their legal rights or resources available to help them improve their language proficiency, educational attainment or employment opportunities leading to higher wage occupations.

Project Goals

The Collaborative for Effective Services to English Language Learners (CESELL) sought to establish no-wrong-door, accessible services for ELL workforce clients by deepening partnerships between Title I providers, Title II providers, and immigrant-serving CBOs. The pilot sought to strengthen existing partnerships between the named grant partners while enhancing program offerings and increasing opportunities to co-enroll more individuals through a navigator-led integrated services approach. Potential partners targeted for inclusion in the pilot included libraries, adult schools, non-profit community-based organizations, unions, attorneys/legal services, a credit union, voter registration organizations, faith-based organizations, and immigrant rights organizations.

Program Design

MCWIC, a 501(c)3 nonprofit and the lead grantee, runs the AJCC and WIOA programs for the Workforce Development Board of Madera County. In Madera County, workforce services and the Madera Adult School are co-located in the AJCC, along with other non-traditional partners, including EDD and the Central Valley Opportunity Center (CVOC), which runs the WIOA Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program. MCWIC, FRWDB and the State Center Adult Education Consortium (SCAEC) also initiated a partnership to use the software platform CommunityPro to improve data sharing during the grant term.

Education services, including ESL, VESL, adult basic education, high school equivalency preparation, career-technical education, and citizenship classes, were provided by adult schools within the SCAEC. Employment preparation, job placement, On-the-Job Training, Individual Training Accounts, and supportive services were provided through the AJCCs in Madera and Fresno County through WIOA funding and other grants. Wrap-around supportive services were provided through referrals between the partners and local Madera and Fresno community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and county agencies.

MCWIC and FRWDB each hired navigator positions; both coordinated with a SCAE transition specialist to facilitate referrals and track client progress. In Madera, the navigator did not carry a caseload until several months into the project, instead focusing exclusively on translating outreach materials, conducting community outreach and developing partnerships.

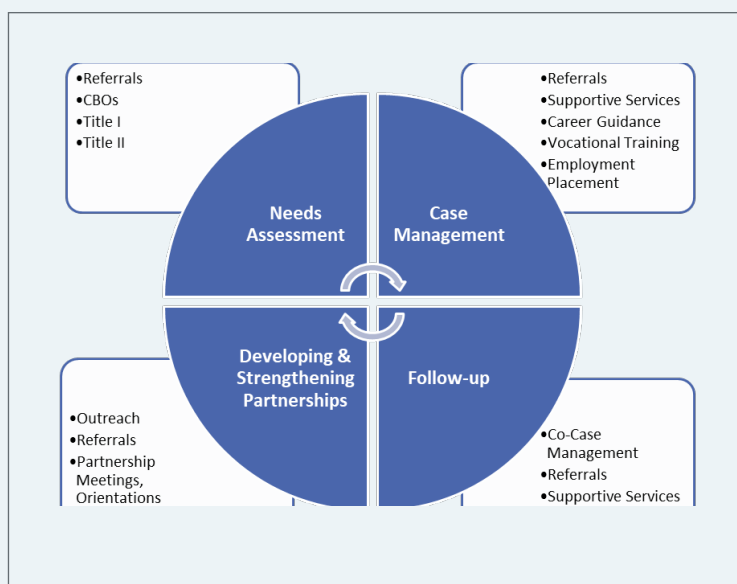
The navigator collaborated to conduct assessments with a MCWIC career specialist case manager who had primary responsibility for providing direct services and support to clients. The navigator was also available to clients as a mentor and coach and tracked their progress, and close collaboration between the navigator and case manager continued after the navigator began carrying a caseload. In Fresno, the navigator was hired several months after MCWIC had launched the pilot and began with caseload. In both locations, navigators and staff were supported by a program manager who helped facilitate connections to prospective partners, supported work to translate agency materials into Spanish, which had not previously been done, and ensure staff in the AJCC were aware of and ready to support the new service delivery model being piloted.

Flow of Services

In Madera County, prospective clients learned about the program during outreach events conducted by the navigator, were referred to the AJCC by the adult school, SCAEC Transition Specialist and CBOs, including International Rescue Committee, New American Legal Clinic, Madera Unified School District Parent Resource Centers (PRCs), CVOC, and Community Action Partnership of Madera County, or the Specialist of the Day at the AJCC.

Once referred, clients met with the navigator and a career specialist, who both worked with clients to provide a wide range of services, make referrals, and conduct follow-up activities to ensure they were on the right track.

Clients were connected to the following services during their participation in the EL Navigator Program.



- Assessments: Interest inventory, TABE, CASAS, Work Keys
- Job readiness skills: applications, career planning, business/employer research, workshops, resume, cover letters, networking, interviewing, out of area job search, soft skills, financial literacy, digital literacy.
- Education: ESL, HiSET, HS Diploma, Adult Basic Education
- Training Services: Industry recognized credential; post-secondary certificate/degree; registered apprenticeships; support services; mentorships; internships; paid/unpaid work experience; ETPL; incumbent worker training; transitional jobs; LMI/O*NET; on the job training; occupational skills training; entrepreneurial training.
- Job placement and job retention follow-up services

In Fresno, clients sought services and/or were referred through four main avenues: the AJCC Centers, SCAEC Transition Specialists, the Dream Resource Center, and CBOs and partner agencies, which included Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM), New American Legal Clinic, Proteus and In Services.

The navigator conducted a needs assessment to determine the level of support clients required and the type of programs for which they were eligible. The navigator then provided services

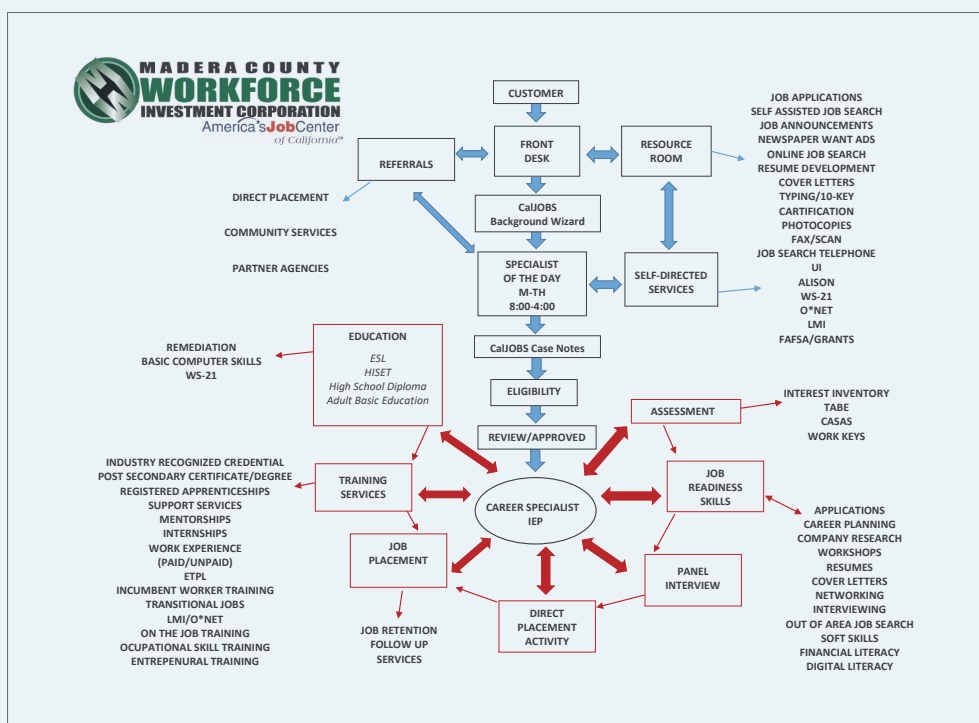
or made referrals to help customers reach their educational and career goals. Services the Navigator provided included: case management; supportive services (transportation passes, car repairs, first aid certificate, shoes, translation/evaluation of foreign education credentials); education support (free summer classes and books); training; job preparation, and referrals.

If clients needed additional support, or did not qualify for WIOA Title I services, they were referred to partner agencies and organizations. Approximately 40 percent of referrals/applicants were not eligible for WIOA Title I services due to no work authorization. Navigators made a warm handoff to adult school Transition Specialists, who helped clients enroll in a program appropriate to their educational level and goals. Adult education programs that were offered included: ESL, ABE, GED, Citizenship, VESL and Voc Ed. If the customer qualified for WIOA Title I services, they were assigned to a WIOA case manager who worked with the Navigator to create an individualized plan. Title I services included: case management, vocational training, supportive services, job preparation, and job placement assistance. Finally, the client could be referred to CBOs for support services.

Navigators' Roles

In both Madera and Fresno, navigators:

- Developed and delivered presentations to community and partner organizations and served as a resource regarding the issues facing the target population, resources available, and opportunities for strengthening the collaborative delivery of services.
- Develop linkages and collaborate with workforce, adult education systems and community agencies, particularly immigration service agencies to facilitate access to services for ELLs, including



Know Your Rights and Citizenship workshops.

- Conducted targeted outreach of program participants with community and faith-based organizations who serve ELL/immigrants. Fosters linkages between these organizations operating through the Adult Education and workforce development system
- Planned and delivered collaborative meetings
- Developed Individual Employment Plans
- Provided case management to customers, including identification of services, referrals to other agencies, tracking participation and outcomes, and facilitating placement in employment.

Key Qualifications for the position in both MCWIC and Fresno included:

- Bachelor of Arts Degree in social work, psychology, sociology, education, or other related field required (Fresno accepted six years of directly related work experience in an administrative capacity in the private or public sector).
- A minimum of two years' experience working with programs which required extensive coordination between agencies, employers, or other community resources including experience working with persons who are ELL/immigrants and experience in coordinating and facilitating group interactions, meetings, and/or training.

Skills:

- Knowledge of unique challenges faced by ELL/immigrants.
- Knowledge of human centered design
- Time management
- Knowledge of needs assessment techniques
- Planning and coordination of staff development/training programs
- Knowledge of program evaluation
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to speak, read and write fluently in Spanish
- Cultural sensitivity
- Goal and result oriented
- Strong advocate for customers
- Work flexible hours
- Apply program rules, policies, and regulations

Collaboration with Partners

National immigration policy shifts created a high degree of fear and concern among the target population, even among people with work authorization. Accordingly, navigators invested considerable effort to educate and cultivate relationships with nontraditional partners serving people with low levels of English language proficiency, education and job skills. Both FRWDB and MCWIC navigators held multiple meetings with prospective partners to follow up on initial outreach efforts. These meetings were typically held with supervisory or direct line staff to explore program services and eligibility requirements in detail, establish a clear understanding of the shared value of collaboration (i.e., sharing responsibility for clients based on unique areas of expertise in each organization), and to build referral processes. These individualized conversations were necessary to gain buy-in and commitment from partners new to collaborating with workforce services.

In Madera, the navigator conducted partner orientations and invited prospective partners into the AJCC to provide training – for example, on citizenship and naturalization – to increase mutual understanding of services/programs, solidify referral practices, and build trust within local communities. The navigator in Madera also went on “ride-alongs” with staff of programs targeting migrant and seasonal farmworkers to conduct outreach and education in field settings and packing houses. The

Coordinated Case Management Activities

Madera and Fresno coordinated services through monthly ELL project team meetings, monthly AJCC partner meetings, and marketing and outreach activities, including 1-1 partner meetings.

In both Madera and Fresno, navigators used a variety of tools to assess client needs, which enabled them to design a tailored and holistic service plan. Assessments were conducted for several purposes:

- ☑ Initial intake
- ☑ Needs assessment
- ☑ Career counseling
- ☑ Participant service plan (monitored by case manager and entered in CalJOBS)

In addition, Madera implemented Integrated Resource Teams (IRT). The IRT pulled in partners to provide wrap-around services based on a client’s specific needs. Key features included:

- ☑ Client was the main “driver” of their employment goal and responsible for identifying their role on the team.
- ☑ Convening a team of diversified service providers who together strategized how services could be coordinated to support the client to reach an employment goal.
- ☑ Promoted great systems collaboration and increased cross-agency education and accountability.
- ☑ Increased co-enrollment and shared responsibility for case management, resulting in leveraging and braiding of funds.

strategy of working directly with front line staff to establish mutual value and referral processes also worked well with adult schools.

The personal lines of communication navigators established with and between key staff at AJCCs, CBOs and adult schools helped make client success in the program possible. It also opened opportunities to collaborate with new CBOs, including IRC, and with existing partners, such as EDD, in new ways. Madera and Fresno also established a valuable partnership with the State Center Adult Education Consortium; in addition to obtaining ESL and HiSET

classes from the Consortium for their EL customers, they worked with the Consortium's Transition Specialists to promote successful transition to post-secondary education, training, or employment.

Featured Successful Practices

Collaboration with Community Based Organizations

As a result of the strong collaborations that Madera and Fresno built with CBOs, the grantees were able to expand the number of services offered to clients that increased their access to education, employment, and training opportunities. In many cases, the grantees were able to “pull in” services by offering workshops at the AJCC; this strategy enabled potential clients—particularly those that were undocumented—to develop trust in the workforce boards and improve their skill sets while they were not yet eligible or ready to take advantage of Title I services. Furthermore, by offering services that directly responded to the needs and experiences of ELLs and immigrants, the grantees fostered a culture that made it possible for newcomers of all backgrounds to feel valued, respected, and included; this, in turn, made it easier for new clients to feel comfortable to inquire about WIOA services and, for undocumented clients in particular, to take advantage of self-directed services. Workshops offered to ELL clients included: Financial orientation, Citizenship, Digital Literacy, Welcoming America Resource Fair, Basic Immigration Training, and Know Your Know Rights.

Collaboration between Title I & Title II Programs

The State Center Adult Education Consortium hired three Transitions Specialists to assist the Navigators in Fresno and Madera in identifying client goals and promoting career pathways that would help them successfully transition to post-secondary education, training, and/or employment. By working with the Transition Specialists, the Navigators became more effective in referring students to adult education programs and were better able to provide resources for ELLs in citizenship, ESL, ABE, HiSET and workforce preparation.

In addition, the Madera County Investment Corporation, in collaboration with the Madera Adult School, procured two open-entry/open-exit ESL courses—one in the day and one at night—as well as a summer ESL/HiSET class. Prior to this, many

of the adult schools in the area only offered day time programs during the fall and spring semester; not only were the day time classes inconvenient for many working students, the lack of summer classes contributed to a loss in skills over the break. The purchase of the new courses, however, helped establish a “no wrong door” service model that provided clients of diverse needs and circumstances with greater access to ESL classes, as students had more flexibility to study English on their own schedule and at their own pace,

Customer Success Stories

Fresno:

A participant employed for 26 years with the same employer was laid off due to plant closure. The participant had significant barriers that made it challenging to find a new job, including low level English skills, limited education, and customary earning wages. The participant enrolled with the ELL program and was referred to an adult school for GED, ESL, and training for solar installation and HAZWOPER. The participant received his certificate in Solar Installations Basic, OSHA- 10, and CPR and was promised to receive a job offer after completing his HAZWOPER training.

Madera

Gloria: “I’m happy that I applied for services at the Workforce Assistance Center. I have successfully completed my HiSet Certificate and received my Food Service Worker certificate. I am currently enrolled in the ESL class and learning more English. They have guided me and provided me support, because of that, I’m a more confident person and have made my family proud.”

Jacqueline: “With the support of my career specialist, I earned my High School Equivalency certificate in approximately six months. I completed a Paid Work Experience (PWEX) at the Workforce Assistance Center. I got the opportunity to learn more about clerical work and how to assist customers. On November 01, 2018, I was offered a permanent position with the Madera County Workforce Investment Corporation as a Workforce Technician I. I am thinking about starting college in August. I am happy because I am achieving all of my goals. I feel so happy to be in this country full of opportunities.”

San Diego ELL Workforce Navigator Project

Lead Grantee

San Diego Workforce Partnership
<https://workforce.org/>

Grant Partners

International Rescue Committee
<https://www.rescue.org/united-states/san-diego-ca>
KRA Corporation
<https://www.kra.com/>
Grossmont Unified High School District
<https://www.guhd.net/>
Grossmont Adult Education
<https://adultschool.guhd.net/>

Project Overview

San Diego is a border community in which one in four residents is foreign-born and more than 50,000 adults speak English “less than well.” SDWP’s pilot initiative serves the city of El Cajon, one of the region’s largest immigrant communities. Since 2007, there has been a huge influx of more than 20,000 refugees and immigrant families to this area, particularly from Iraq and Mexico. More than 43% of residents speak a language other than English at home and one in three are foreign-born. Furthermore, El Cajon is the poorest city in the County; nearly 25% of families live in poverty.

There is a critical need for effective workforce services that meet the needs of this community. Adult English learners are less likely to walk into an AJCC due to language and cultural barriers, and instead seek services from adult education or CBO providers. Even when they do seek services in the AJCC, they struggle - in part, because they require a more intensive level of support and preparation to navigate the range of services available through the AJCC. At the same time, the local AJCCs have lacked connections to local providers that can offer culturally and linguistically accessible supportive services.

Project Goals

The San Diego ELL Workforce Navigator Project sought to provide responsive, culturally and linguistically accessible services to English learners by deepening partnerships between Title I and

Title II providers, and immigrant-serving CBOs. The project targeted adult immigrants and refugees unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in both English language and academic courses. The pilot aimed to serve 100 adults over the 18-month grant term.

Program Design

The San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP), the lead grantee, is the local Workforce Development Board and funds job training programs and business services in San Diego County. It procures providers to run six AJCCs and generates research on regional labor market needs. As lead grantee, SDWP brought together three key stakeholders in El Cajon: International Rescue Committee (IRC), Grossmont Adult School, and the local AJCC – East County Career Center (ECCC) operated by Grossmont Unified School District – with the aim of streamlining processes and creating best practices to better serve English learners in the workforce system. During the grant term, IRC became a Title II adult education provider and the AJCC provider was re-procured and shifted from Grossmont Unified to KRA Corporation.

The pilot model is rooted in a community-based approach led by IRC that connects clients served by a provider they trust (CBO and/or adult school) to dedicated ECCC staff. This structure provided clients access to an integrated array of supportive services delivered in culturally and linguistically accessible formats and ensured they received high quality services as they transitioned to and continued services in the AJCC.

Two navigator positions provided recruitment, enrollment and ongoing support for ELL clients: the ELL Preparation Coordinator based at IRC and the ELL Workforce Specialist based at the ECCC. The navigators collaborated to conduct eligibility and needs assessments, develop individualized plans, and to connect clients to internal and external services while in the program. The IRC ELL Preparation Coordinator was also particularly focused on the phase of services prior to co-enrollment in Title I and II, helping clients address any barriers that would preclude them from accessing ECCC services, while the AJC ELL Workforce

Specialist was also focused on helping clients to transition from the program to employment and training opportunities. By strengthening partnerships between IRC and the ECCC, the navigators created culturally-responsive bridges between ELL clients and the AJCC and offered seamless access to a broader variety of short-term vocational training, contextualized remedial skill development, and career pathway bridge programs than are traditionally accessed only through the AJCC system.

Flow of Services

The IRC ELL Preparation Coordinator was responsible for the following: conducting outreach to both prospective and existing Title II clients; providing in-language case management to help the client understand Title I services; preparing needed documents; and enrolling the client in Title I services. To further facilitate enrollment in Title I services, the IRC ELL Workforce Preparation Coordinator connected with the ECCC ELL Workforce Specialist in a team meeting that allowed planning for a seamless and supportive transition to Title I services. The ECCC ELL Workforce Specialist then took the lead in helping the client access ECCC services and training resources, while continuing to coordinate with the IRC navigator on supportive services.

Navigators' Roles

IRC's ELL Workforce Preparation Coordinator position and role included:

- Outreach to the community, including in-reach to English learners accessing services at IRC and students in Title II classes;
- In-language pre-AJCC case management to prepare clients for the AJCC experience;
- Supporting the client in gathering requisite documents such as work authorizations, transcripts, test scores, diplomas, certificates, and short-term training funds;
- Screening for and enrollment in Title I services;
- Assessing and connecting the client to supportive services; and
- Job placement assistance.

Qualifications/Credentials included:

- Bachelor's degree in a related field or equivalent of related professional experience
- At least two years of related professional experience

- Experience in a non-profit setting and prior experience working in employment services
- Experience working in a diverse and non-traditional setting with diverse client base

Demonstrated Skills and Competencies included:

- Grant-writing, program coordination and record-keeping experience
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to make presentations
- Computer literacy required, particularly knowledge of MS Office applications
- Strong written, verbal, computer and interpersonal communication skills are essential
- Arabic language skills required –Spanish or Farsi language skills a plus
- Knowledge of local workforce system
- Job coaching
- Case management

The ECC ELL Workforce Specialist position and role includes:

- High-touch navigation support to ensure clients access to needed AJCC services;
- Focus on connecting English learner adults to training resources, including training funds;
- Coordination with IRC Workforce Preparation Coordinator to ensure that supportive services continue to meet the needs of the client; and
- Job placement assistance.

Qualifications/Credentials:

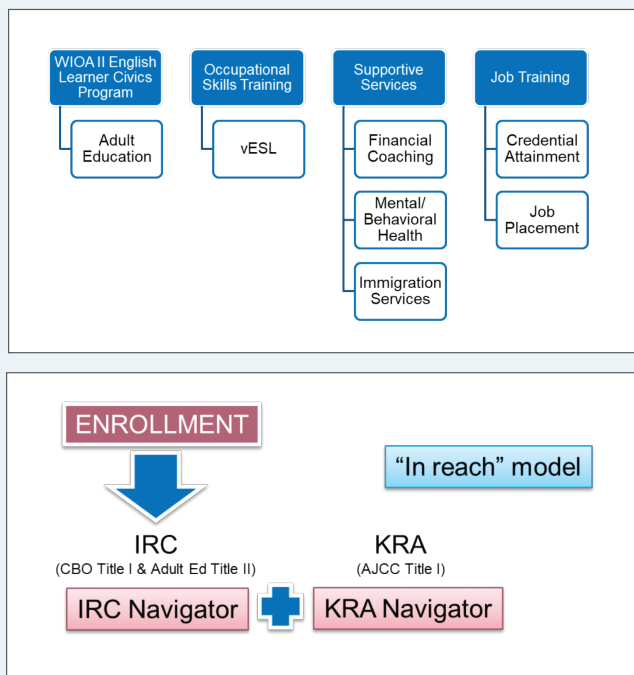
- Experience and education related to employment services with increasing levels of responsibility.

Demonstrated Skills and Competencies:

- Ability to work with a diverse group of people from different backgrounds
- Knowledge of workforce system
- Job coaching (including career planning, job search, resume writing, and interview preparation)
- Case management
- Knowledge of local employment market trends and needs, as well as wrap-around services.

Collaboration with Partners

The IRC was the provider of supportive wraparound services for all pilot clients. IRC follows the Annie E. Casey Center for Working Families model of integrated



economic empowerment services, whereby job-seeking clients are provided with a “bundle” of services that comprehensively responds to their needs. IRC’s programming includes:

- Screening and enrollment in public services
- In-house, bilingual vocational ESL program (VESL Plus) with integrated, one-on-one employment counseling that prepares adult English learners for entry-level employment in 8-12 weeks (a key referral option for those adults that are not yet ready for engagement with AJCC services but need support in finding work quickly)
- Access to funding for short-term work supports, including transportation subsidies and funds for clothes
- Access to sector-specific bridge programs in healthcare, telecommunications, hospitality, and building trades that offer short-term, contextualized learning to support language and basic skills development
- Financial education and coaching
- Access to financial products that support self-sufficiency and economic stability, including low-interest auto loans, low-interest emergency loans, and credit-building loans
- Free tax preparation services
- Bureau of Immigration Affairs (BIA) Accredited immigration legal services
- Referrals to accredited, culturally appropriate childcare
- Health and wellness programming

In addition to named grant partners, the ELL Navigator team worked closely with training providers and employers. Staffmark, an employment agency, placed qualified candidates into jobs and organized a job fair for students. The IRC also partnered with the Foothills Adult School to offer a Class B Commercial Drivers Program and CompTIA Program. The East Regional Adult Education Consortium offered ESL classes to refugee/newcomer clients at IRC. Partnerships were also being developed with Western Medical Center, San Diego State University College of Extended Studies, CVS Pharmacy, and Marriott Hotels.

Featured Successful Practices

Career Pathway

CompTIA Certification

The CompTIA Certification program prepared students to pass the CompTIA certification (an industry-recognized IT credential) and supported them to find jobs in the IT sector. The course offered a model of blended English language instruction with technical skills training. The first cohort represented a mix of English learners (many of whom had advanced IT skills) and Title I customers, which created positive dynamics among students, who were able to support one another. In the morning before each class, EL students received additional language support to help them progress through the curriculum and pass their certification test. In the last two weeks of the course, industry experts visited the class to share career advice, while students worked on their resumes and interview skills. In total, 16 people enrolled in the program and 14 students completed the course. All students received vouchers to take the certification exam; as of October 2018, 10 students had passed the first of the three exams.

VESL Plus Hospitality Link

The VESL Plus Hospitality Link Program was developed by the IRC in San Diego to help refugees with limited English proficiency to secure entry-level housekeeping jobs that have the potential for long-term employment in the hospitality field. This 10-week program included half-day vocational ESL (VESL) instruction, followed by half-day classes in work readiness training (WRT). These classes laid the foundation for helping clients assume a housekeeper’s role and responsibilities.

Bridge Programming

A bridge program model was successfully applied in the ELL Navigator Program. ELL clients began by enrolling into a Title II Integrated English Learner Civics program where they were concurrently enrolled in occupational skills training with real-time weekly contextualized support. This design allowed clients to ease into occupational skills training by learning the prerequisite foundational and training skills they needed to be successful. The bridge program model of integrated service delivery also included employment and financial coaching, benefits screening and access to income supports, and connection to additional services. ELL clients participated in the following bridge programs during the duration of the ELL Navigator Pilot:

- Pharmacy Tech Bridge Program – Cohorts of ELL clients attended Pharmacy Technician Training. Those who successfully completed were able to enroll in externship opportunities with CVS and other pharmacies where, at completion, they earned their Pharmacy Technician Certificate. Once they earned a certificate, IRC and KRA worked together to place them in employment.
- Customer Service Bridge Program – This was a sector-specific career pathway program providing contextualized foundational skills, curriculum-based classroom training for the service industry, and occupational skills training and certification from SDSU's College of Extended Studies.
- Healthcare Bridge Program – This sector-specific career pathway program offered contextualized foundational skills and the medical terminology necessary to meet all prerequisites for entry into occupational skills training. At the completion of the training, participants had the opportunity to enroll in the Healthcare Interpreting Training course at the Grossmont Health Occupation Center and to prepare for the national interpreter training exam.

Customer Success Story

Mr. M. arrived in the US as a refugee from Afghanistan in February 2016. With experience in interpretation and logistics support for the US Army in Afghanistan, he wanted to gain employment and stability by applying his skills in the US workforce as quickly as possible. He joined the ELL Navigator Program in March 2018 and enrolled in East County Career Center, the local AJCC, as well as IRC's

Coordinated Case Management Activities

Upon enrollment, clients participated in multiple assessments to determine skills, experience, goals, and barriers. Assessments included:

- * CASAS
- * Individual Employment Plan
- * Career Cluster Survey
- * Non-Verbal Aptitude Assessment

Based on the results, the client was referred and enrolled in the appropriate IRC, ECC or partner services.

IRC and ECC share the client's case file containing all pertinent documentation and Individual Employment Plans. The file travels with the client. IRC controls the file until the client is referred to ECC for enrollment. Documentation of IRC services following file transfer is provided to the ECC navigator to include in file.

Ongoing client tracking is provided by both IRC and ECC and recorded in CalJOBS. E.g.:

- * Supportive Services
- * Assessments
- * Updates to IEP
- * Non-WIOA Services

Management in Customer Service Bridge Program – a sector-specific career pathway program providing contextualized foundational skills, curriculum-based classroom training for the service industry, and occupational skills training and certification from SDSU's College of Extended Studies. WIOA Title I funded supportive services were used to support Mr. M. in pursuit of his goals, and upon completion of his training he was hired by the IRC for a part-time temporary position in the Employment Department. Within three months, he earned a full-time position with benefits and a wage increase. In order to further expand his opportunities, and through support from the AJCC, Mr. M. accessed ITA/WIOA-funded training dollars to begin a 12-month certificate program in Accounting from UCSD Extension which he looks forward to completing in 2019.

Sacramento Works ELL Navigator Pilot Program

Lead Grantee

Sacramento Employment and Training Agency
<http://seta.net/>

Grant Partners

Sacramento City Unified School District
<https://www.scusd.edu/>
Elk Grove Unified School District
<http://www.egusd.net/>
Folsom Cordova Unified School District
<https://www.fcusd.org/>
San Juan Unified School District
<https://www.sanjuan.edu/>

Project Overview

Sacramento is one of the most diverse cities in the United States and has long been a destination for immigrants who are typically also English learners. In addition, Sacramento County is home to immigrants from around the world, as well as a high number of refugees, asylees, Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) holders, and foreign-born victims of human trafficking. According to the 2017 American Community Survey, Sacramento County is home to 327,990 foreign born residents, 52.2% of whom report that they “speak English less than very well”. An additional 2.1% of native-born Sacramento County residents also report speaking English “less than very well.” 26.8% of foreign-born Sacramento County residents 25 years of age or older lack a high school diploma or equivalent. Nearly 17% of foreign-born Sacramento County residents live at or below 100% of the poverty level compared to 13.4% for native-born residents.

Additionally, according to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Refugee Programs Bureau (RPB), between October 1994 and September 2015, Sacramento became home to over 30,151 refugees. Since 2015, Sacramento has experienced an unprecedented spike in SIV arrivals as a result of the withdrawing of U.S. troops from Iraq and Afghanistan. Due to this spike, refugee/SIV arrivals over that period total approximately 7,000, the largest county resettlement numbers in California. This number doubles over the same period when

including the secondary migrants that move to Sacramento following their initial resettlement in another county or state.

Despite hiring instructors and adding classes, English as a Second Language (ESL) and Vocational ESL (VESL) providers have struggled to keep pace with demand for services for the County’s large and growing immigrant population. VESL classes in particular have been oversubscribed. While the workforce development system has always provided universal access to available workforce services, without dedicated funding, there is a lack of specialized programming that would accelerate the success of ELLs. For example, language instruction and vocational skills training are often offered separately; there can sometimes be a perception among service providers that WIOA outcomes will be negatively impacted by enrolling adult ELLs, and they may choose to refer ELLs to adult education to improve language skills before addressing workforce needs; and existing services for ELLs can be very fragmented and require multiple steps to access. For these and other reasons, ELLs have been primarily provided services through adult education or targeted programs like Refugee Support Services (RSS) for refugees, SIVs, Asylees, and federally certified, foreign born, victims of human trafficking.

Project Goals

The pilot targeted all English learners, with a focus on Special Immigrant Visa holders (SIVs) and refugee populations due to the high number of arrivals in Sacramento County. Priority was given to those who were Limited English Proficient (LEP), basic skills deficient, lacked a high school diploma and/or work history. Specific pilot goals included conducting culturally and linguistically relevant outreach and increasing co-enrollment of English learners in WIOA Title I & Title II; leveraging local partnerships to build and/or expand a network to provide wrap-around services; increasing partnerships/collaboration with CBOs; and improving labor market outcomes for ELLs. The pilot planned to serve 120 clients.

Program Design

The Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA), the lead grantee, is a joint powers agency of

the City and County of Sacramento. SETA operates Sacramento Works, the local Workforce Development Board, as well as Head Start and programs funded by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). SETA procures providers to operate the local AJCC network (12 Job Centers) and a Refugee Program that provides Vocational English as a Second Language combined with Employment Services (VESL/ES), employment services, and social adjustment and cultural orientation for older refugees.

San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD), Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD), Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD), and Folsom Cordova Community Partnership, Inc. (FCCP) in collaboration with Folsom Cordova Unified School District (FCUSD) were named partners in this pilot due to growing populations of ELLs in communities they serve. Three operate local Job Centers: SCUSD, EGUSD, and FCUSD and administer WIOA Title I and Title II programs. Each school district hired their own ELL Navigator and worked in co-located service environments (the SJUSD navigator spent time at both the AJCC and adult school). In addition to being co-enrolled in Title I and II services, some ELL refugees and SIVs were co-enrolled with refugee resettlement and employment services providers through funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement and administered by SETA in partnership with the County of Sacramento's Human Assistance (DHA). Many participants were also co-enrolled in the CalWORKs Welfare to Work program through DHA.

SETA facilitated closer collaboration between the four school district partners, refugee resettlement, refugee employment service providers, and DHA staff through training and quarterly project meetings, while navigators facilitated collaboration through outreach, referrals, Multi-Disciplinary Integrated Resource Team (IRT) meetings, and coordinated case management.

Flow of Services

The navigators conducted outreach at adult education ESL orientations, job fairs, community centers, schools, stores, and places of worship, and enrolled eligible clients. Navigators conducted assessments of language and basic skills proficiency,

Key Features of Program Design

- ✓ Established 4 ELL Navigators throughout Workforce Area
- ✓ Adult Education is also provider for Sacramento Works America's Job Centers where Title I and II services were co-located
- ✓ Refugee Employment Services programs also co-located at Adult Ed-hosted SWAJCCs
- ✓ Long-term case management from ABE/ESL through VESL/job readiness/vocational training/CTE all the way to job placement and retention provided by navigators

educational levels, and work experience/history. In addition, navigators conducted a Full Life Domain assessment to document the client's overall health, stability, and support systems in areas of need that often present barriers to participation for immigrants and refugees. Navigators used these assessments to inform the development of the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and identify which partners to bring in to the IRT. The IRT members, including the client, identify and coordinate services and supports, for the client through a variety of convening and communication means, typically coordinated by the ELL Navigator who oftentimes takes on the role of the IRT lead. Navigators also served as the primary case manager, coaching clients and providing any assistance needed to access or participate in services, and tracked their progress.

Navigators' Roles

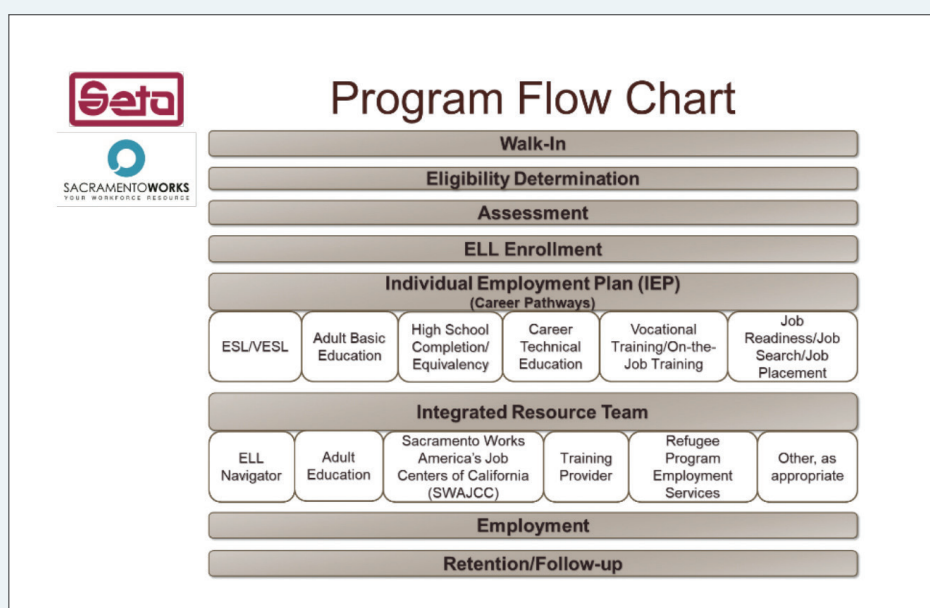
Navigators performed many duties. Key roles and responsibilities included:

- Outreach to prospective clients
- Individualized assessment and case planning
- Helping newly arrived individuals and their families to understand requirements in multiple service systems
- Completing documentation and forms
- Supporting participation in adult education and employment services, and tracking progress
- Planning and coordinating resource and job fairs
- Supporting acculturation by coaching and advising on communication and behavior in a variety of contexts

- Helping clients as they move through every step of adjusting to life in the United States
- Being available as a mentor and guide, including sharing stories based on personal experience
- Providing pre-employment skills/job readiness training
- Providing job search assistance and conducting job development
- Resource management/assistance with locating necessary support services and resources

Qualifications and experience varied across the four school districts that employed navigators. All required a mix of education and experience working with unemployed or under employed adult populations and requirements including:

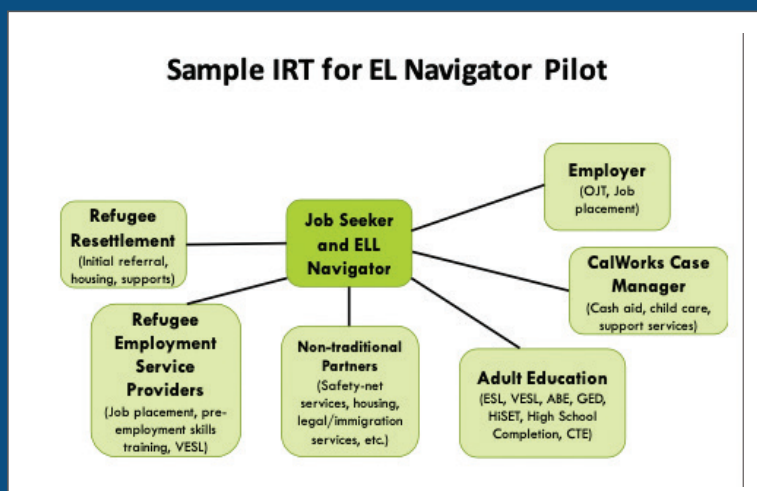
- Cultural competency
- Job development, placement and follow-up procedures
- Labor market and post-secondary education; applicable laws, codes, rules and regulations.
- Case management techniques. Basic public relations techniques
- Meeting facilitation and strong interpersonal communication skills
- Partnership development
- Data entry, records maintenance



Coordinated Case Management: Integrated Resource Team (IRT)

Key elements of the IRT strategy included:

- ☑ Human-centered design approach
- ☑ Getting to know the client
- ☑ Pulling in services and resources instead of pushing out referrals
- ☑ Creating a team to make sure client is always supported
- ☑ Strategic use of available resources
- ☑ Working smarter, not harder



Program meetings. SETA also tracked co-enrollments with the RSS program to coordinate services through IRTs led by the navigators.

SETA procured Educational Evaluation Records Service (ERES) to conduct evaluation of foreign credentials and degrees. SETA's agreement with ERES expedites services and prevents clients from having to pay out of pocket for the service and wait for reimbursement.

Navigators coordinated directly with DHA CalWORKs and Refugee Cash Assistance case workers to access additional services, including transportation assistance, child care assistance, and access to additional funds for vocational training. In addition, the DHA case workers participated in IRTs. Additional partners participating in IRTs and supporting the pilot included:

- Refugee Resettlement
- Refugee Support Services (RSS) providers
- SETA's Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) case managers
- Cosumnes River College (CRC)
- Sacramento City College (SCC)
- California State University, Sacramento (CSUS)
- Northern California Construction Training (NCCT) for construction apprenticeships
- Sacramento Chinese Community Center
- AARP Back to Work 50+ at Hillsdale Job Center
- Twin Rivers Unified School District (TRUSD)
- Immigration and Legal Services

Featured Successful Practices

Integrated Education and Training (IET)

ESL Paraeducator Training Program

Elk Grove USD launched an Integrated Education and Training (IET) for its Paraeducator Training Program, which prepares students to become Paraeducators working in schools. The 96-hour course combined ESL and the paraeducator instruction to accelerate success for ELLs. Topics of instruction included: Roles and Responsibilities of a Paraeducator; Special Education; Cornell Note-Taking; Paraeducator Training; Mandated Reported; and NCLB Paraeducator Study Guides.

Business Essentials Training Program

The Sacramento City USD, Charles A Jones Career & Education Center (CAJ) implemented the Business Essential IET Program in June 2018. The course combined ESL and business instruction to accelerate success for ELLs. Topics of instruction included: keyboarding, Microsoft Word and Excel, customer service, memo and letter writing, lists, flyers, resume development, how to self-market for employment, mock interview skills, actual employer interviews (practice), digital literacy, and career pathway development. Credentials received include: Business Essential IET Certificate of Completion, Customer Service Certificate, Typing Certificate, and 10-Key certificate and Data Entry & Accuracy.

Career Pathway Program

EGACE Training Institute – Medical Technician, Medical Office Assistant

Through its Career Training Institute, EGACE offers career training programs in the Allied Health Care field that lead to industry-recognized certificates. Each program includes multiple courses which can be taken separately or as a part of a comprehensive training program. Some programs include required or optional externships or clinical experiences. The programs, which can be completed under six months, offer small class sizes and are taught by teachers who have worked in the career pathway. In addition, students have access to a Job Developer for employment resources, such as job placement assistance. Programs offered include: Medical Assistant, Medical Office Specialist, Medical Administrative Assistant with Billing & Coding; and Billing and Coding Specialist.

Customer Success Stories

Wei quan – China

Prior to the ELL Workforce Navigator pilot project, Wei quan worked 80-hour weeks providing elder care for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). Despite the long hours, Wei quan struggled to support himself and his spouse on his earnings. Before immigrating to the United States 30 years ago, Wei quan worked as an Electronics Design Engineer. Wanting to return to the mechanical and electrical repair industry, Wei quan chose to pursue training to become an HVAC Technician. Wei quan enrolled in the Heating,

Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) training program at Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center on August 25, 2017, and successfully completed the program on May 17, 2018. Weiquan has since obtained full-time employment as an HVAC Installer with Beutler Air Conditioning & Plumbing for which he receives health benefits and a starting hourly wage of \$16.00. This is his first stop on his career path, with the next stop possibly as an HVAC Technician.

Sahar – Afghanistan

A Special Immigrant VISA holder from Afghanistan, Sahar was previously employed by the United States Embassy in Kabul as an IT Information Technician. Despite her experience and skills, Sahar was unable to secure employment upon emigrating to the United States. Sahar enrolled in the A+/CISCO (CCENT) Network + Preparation (Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications) at Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center on August 4, 2017, and successfully completed the program on May 17, 2018. Sahar has since obtained full-time employment as a Computer PC Technician for Volt where she receives fringe and health benefits and a starting hourly wage of \$20.00.

Mohammad – Afghanistan

Mohammad, a Special Immigrant VISA holder from Afghanistan, previously worked for the U.S. Army Corps as a Quality Assurance Monitor. Unable to find work in the United States and with a family of six to support, Mohammad enrolled in the Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning (HVAC) training program at Charles A. Jones Career & Education Center on August 25, 2017, and successfully completed the program on May 17, 2018. Mohammad has since obtained full-time employment as an HVAC Technician with Sears for which he receives health benefits and a starting hourly wage of \$20.00.

Abdul – Iraq

Abdul is a refugee with a developmental disability that was working with one of SETA's partners in the Disability Employment Accelerator (DEA) grant, In- Alliance. The ELL was experiencing both cultural barriers and disability related barriers to obtaining employment. SETA determined that the

best possible outcomes for this client would come from a co-enrollment in SETA's DEA program as well as the ELL program, in order to meet all of the needs of the client and his family. SETA pulled in an ELL Navigator and the DEA job developer to work together to address the needs of the client. The client was placed into a DEA subsidized On-the-Job Training, which he successfully completed, and is now continuing his employment unsubsidized. Without the engagement of both programs, it is unlikely that there would have been such a positive outcome so quickly.

Gabriella – Mexico

Gabriella was able to obtain employment as an Accounts Payable Supervisor, making \$27 an hour after enrolling in the ELL Navigator Pilot, and the ELL Navigator assisting her in getting her education credentials evaluated.

Orange County ELL Workforce Navigator Program

Lead Grantee

County of Orange / Orange County Development Board
<http://www.ocboard.org/>

Grant Partners

North Orange County Regional Consortium for Adult Education
<http://nocrc.org/>
Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance
<https://www.ocapica.org/>

Project Overview

Orange County is home to diverse groups of English learners representing Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino, Middle Eastern, and African immigrants and refugees. Almost half the County population speaks a language other than English (46%), and among this population, 45% speak English less than “very well.” Though the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) decreased from a peak of almost 160,000 in 2003 to just over 120,000 in 2016, data shows that there is much more to be done to support their educational attainment and career development.

Improving English language acquisition has been a long-standing priority for Orange County’s education and workforce system. Over 23% of Orange County workers aged 25 and older speak Spanish as a first language, while over 16% speak an Asian language as their first language. The ability to communicate verbally and in writing is one of the most important skills to ensure workforce success. Many employers in the region have cited communication skills as an issue in finding qualified workers. Increasing access to and retention in programs that build English fluency will pay dividends and is vital to help individuals improve educational performance, progress through higher education programs, and gain access to future employment opportunities.

Project Goals

The Orange County (OC) ELL Navigator pilot program targeted refugees and immigrants,

primarily speakers of Spanish and Asian languages. The pilot program established the following goals:

1. Develop new partnerships and strengthen alliances with a wide range of partners to achieve seamless, comprehensive and integrated services.
2. Promote the OC AJCC system to increase opportunities and choices for the target population in obtaining employment and other services.
3. Enroll 50 participants from the targeted population and provide training in high demand occupations, leveraging Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds.
4. Increase the blending and braiding of resources with partners to leverage funding for individual job seekers.
5. Create systemic change within the WIOA system to ensure open access and implement a “no wrong door” policy for all job seekers and employers.

Program Design

The County of Orange / Orange County Development Board (OCDB), the lead grantee, oversees the County’s workforce development activities and establishes programs to respond to local workforce needs, including labor market information, employment and training services, and business assistance. It operates a network of One-Stop Centers (AJCCs) and works in close collaboration with education, business, labor, economic development and other organizations with a stake in preparing the County’s workforce. OCDB leveraged existing partnerships with Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA), the largest immigrant and ELL social service organization in the County, and North Orange Continuing Education (NOCE), a member of the North Orange County Regional Consortium for Adult Education (NOCRC), to work with AJCC staff, identify complementary roles and collaborate to support service delivery for English learners.

OCDB drew from prior experience implementing navigator programs for people with disabilities and on probation. Like its Disability Program Navigator

Initiative, the ELL Navigator model co-located navigators in a AJCCs, specifically at the Garden Grove One-Stop. Navigators were hired by OCAPICA, a procured provider of Title I services co-located at the Garden Grove AJCC.

Core components of the model included:

Outreach and Marketing to increase the region’s understanding of resources available for the targeted population. Recruitment was expanded through partnering with WIOA Title II and community-based organizations that serve ELLs and immigrants.

Building and Sustaining Partnerships, and tapping into the knowledge, resources, and support of partners to expand AJCC capacity to serve and accommodate clients.

Connecting with Other Initiatives within and across grant partners, especially with adult education providers, to ensure that clients access all available resources to complete the program.

Leveraging Funds and Resources through co-locating navigators within the OC AJCCs. Navigators, in turn, brought together multiple partners to foster collaboration and teamwork in serving ELLs with different support needs.

Increasing Knowledge in the workforce system by developing training to educate AJCC staff, partners, and employers on ELL and immigration topics.

Meeting Business Needs by equipping navigators to serve as a resource to the business community. They responded to employers’ needs by providing information such as English as a Second Language (ESL) training and immigration services.

Flow of Services

Navigators were responsible for conducting targeted outreach to potential clients, determining eligibility, and increasing access to workforce services in the AJCC and community. Once a client was connected to the program, navigators worked with them to complete an initial assessment to determine their ESL skill level, education and employment needs, and barriers to employment. The assessment was

Key Features of Program Design

Centralized Service Delivery

- ☑ Colocation of service delivery providers in AJCC/Adult School

Individualized Case Management

- ☑ Focus on specialized skills and specific barriers
- ☑ Tailoring services to meet the unique navigational needs of each client

Leveraging Resources

- ☑ Focus on co-enrollment
- ☑ Utilization of training opportunities to develop career pathway projects

Strengthening Partnerships

- ☑ Expanding links to community-based organizations and employers willing to work with ELL populations and develop career pathway opportunities

used to inform the Individual Service Plan – an informal contract outlining services to be offered.

Navigators provided individualized case management to clients from the time of intake until program completion. They coordinated ESL services directly with local adult education providers through each provider’s preferred channels. Navigators coordinated other services, including mental health services, housing assistance, and citizenship assistance through referrals and follow-up.

Navigators’ Roles

The ELL Workforce Navigator position and role included:

- Conducting community outreach and recruitment events;
- Conducting needs assessments of program clients and businesses;
- Building relationships with CBOs and businesses to find employment and/or training opportunities for ELLs;

- Developing ideas for new programs and services that benefit adult learners in the transition phase;
- Providing appropriate referrals for participants in need of employment and vocational training services;
- Case management
- Linking clients to local community resources and employment opportunities that will develop pathways to a self-sustaining lifestyle;
- Documenting client participation and progress;
- Job coaching (resume development, job search and applications, etc.)

Qualifications – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Required:

- Fluent in one of the following languages: Farsi, Arabic, Korean, Vietnamese or Spanish.
- Bachelor's Degree or equivalent experience
- Ability to work in multidisciplinary team of peers, employers, and families
- Ability to provide case management services for different levels of support
- Demonstrated knowledge and sensitivity to various cultures and underserved populations
- Familiarity in job/career development, as well as with service providers.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Collaboration with Partners

The pilot created opportunities for increased collaboration among named grant partners and between them and an expanded network of partners. OCDB partnered with NOCE to provide ESL courses onsite at the Garden Grove AJCC. OCAPICA was able to leverage grant resources against services provided at the AJCC to expand clients' access to vocational training. Colocation at the AJCC helped NOCE and OCAPICA learn a lot about one another's services. OCAPICA also partnered with Huntington Beach Adult School (HBAS) to provide services to their ESL students. OCAPICA leveraged additional resources to provide outreach and host office hours for navigators at NOCE and at the Huntington Beach Adult School. Finally, OCAPICA opened a satellite location in a mall, across from Huntington Beach Adult School, to provide wraparound services to clients, especially those referred from HBAS.

OCAPICA offers a wide range of services in-house that meet the needs of immigrant communities and has the benefit of 20 years of partnership with Orange County's leading community-based organizations. Navigators coordinate with staff at OCAPICA and in the community to connect clients to mental health services, housing assistance, citizenship assistance, and CalWORKs services through in-house and community referrals and follow-up. During the grant term, OCAPICA built stronger partnerships with organizations providing immigration legal services.

In addition to named grant partners, the ELL Workforce Navigator program focused on developing partnerships that could assist in the delivery of services in the following key areas: education/vocational training, legal assistance/civic engagement, supportive services (housing, food, transportation), mental health services, and citizenship/naturalization. Most of these partners came from the local community and included religious centers, Family Resource Centers, school districts, adult education providers (Huntington Beach Adult school, Coastline Community College, Golden West College, Orange Coast College), resettlement agencies, and regional CBOs. In addition, the EL Navigator Program sought to build partnerships with local employers, including restaurants, car dealerships, shops, and banks.

Featured Successful Practices

Career Pathway

The ELL Navigators successfully launched a pilot career pathway project with QBICS, a vocational training school. The goal of the program was to obtain a certificate in Medical Assisting, followed by on-the-job training (OJT) with a local laboratory with potential for future employment. QBICS had a full-time staff member that spoke both Arabic and Spanish and was able to provide language support for participants.

Cultural Competency Training and Acculturation Workshops

OCAPICA developed acculturation workshops geared toward clients. Workshops covered what acculturation means, strategies to adjust to a new life and opportunities in the U.S., explained programs



and services and how to access them either through OCAPICA or other providers, policies and strategies to empower the immigrant community. Workshops also covered basics like hygiene, common sense behavior when going to doctor appointment and other activities of daily living. OCAPICA also added a workshop on citizenship preparation on tablets since citizenship exams will now take place on tablets. OCAPICA also developed cultural competency training for service providers. Topics included things that are important to be aware of when working with others. The training is based on a cultural competency continuum modeled after mental health training materials and modified for AJCC staff and CBOs providing wraparound services to English Learner Workforce Navigator program clients. Feedback on the training indicated it increased staff awareness of fears and barriers immigrant English learners experience. This awareness is benefitting clients, in that staff are now better able

OC ELL Workforce Navigator CBO Partners

- * OCCORD
- * OC Food Bank
- * Advancement Project
- * Los Amigos of Orange County
- * FACT
- * Anaheim Union High School District
- * Healthy Marriage and Families
- * Casa Teresa
- * Refugee Forum of Orange County
- * Delhi Center
- * Giving Children Hope
- * Asian Americans Advancing Justice
- * World Relief Garden Grove
- * Project Motivate
- * Tiyya
- * Miry's List
- * Pars Equality Center
- * Uplift Charity

Coordinated Case Management Activities

After completing the intake orientation and enrollment in the EL Navigator program, clients completed an Individual Initial Assessment to determine their educational level, work experience, goals, and barriers. They also met with an adult education partner to complete a NOCE English Assessment and Performance Evaluation.

Information from these assessments was used to help the navigator and client together draft the Individual Employment Assessment Plan, that outlined the client's needs, service plan and training service plan. The plan was used by all partners who received referrals for the client.

Navigators referred clients to the appropriate services. Navigators coordinated ESL services directly with local adult education providers; they also coordinated support services, including mental health, housing assistance, job search, and legal aid.

Client referrals and outcomes were tracked in the Participant Tracking Spreadsheet and CalJOBS.

to help clients access support and information they really need – rather than just meet typical program requirements.

Customer Success Stories

OCAPIA enrolled a male customer who was an operation and maintenance Engineer at Akkaz Power Station in Iraq. He was the head of the operation department and was responsible for predictive and annual maintenance for all power plant equipment such as pumps, fans, turbines, motors, and pipes. In addition to his degree in Mechanical Engineering, he has many advanced certifications in Exciter, Seal Oil Systems and Hydrogen Systems.

In 2017, the customer and his family were granted a Special Immigrant Visa to the United States. He was referred to OCAPIA by Social Services (Welfare-to Work program). Through OCAPIA programs (Employment Preparation Program and English language Learner Workforce Navigator), he was enrolled in a job training program and placed at Facilities Maintenance and CUF department at OC Public Work as an Engineering Tech Trainee. After 7 months, he was offered by OCPW the permanent position of Assistant Plant Operating Engineer with an annual salary of \$79k.

