

Adult Career Pathways

Adult career pathways aim to serve the unique needs of adult learners as well as local employers.

A career pathway is a comprehensive set of programs and services designed to help working learners earn postsecondary credentials that lead to well-paying jobs in high-demand fields. They are the result of collaborations among local educators, workforce development professionals, and employers. Being attuned to the needs of local industries, career pathways help supply local businesses with skilled labor—while helping students find jobs that pay well and offer room for advancement.

Career pathways are tailored to adult learners with significant work and family responsibilities.

A career pathway includes an integrated series of connected educational and training programs that helps students to advance over time to successively higher levels of education and employment in a given sector. Working learners move through training programs at their own pace, while reaping on-the-job benefits at each step. Academic skills education and career training are integrated, allowing students to gain foundational academic skills while preparing for a career. Courses are often offered on evenings and weekends and incorporate on-line learning.

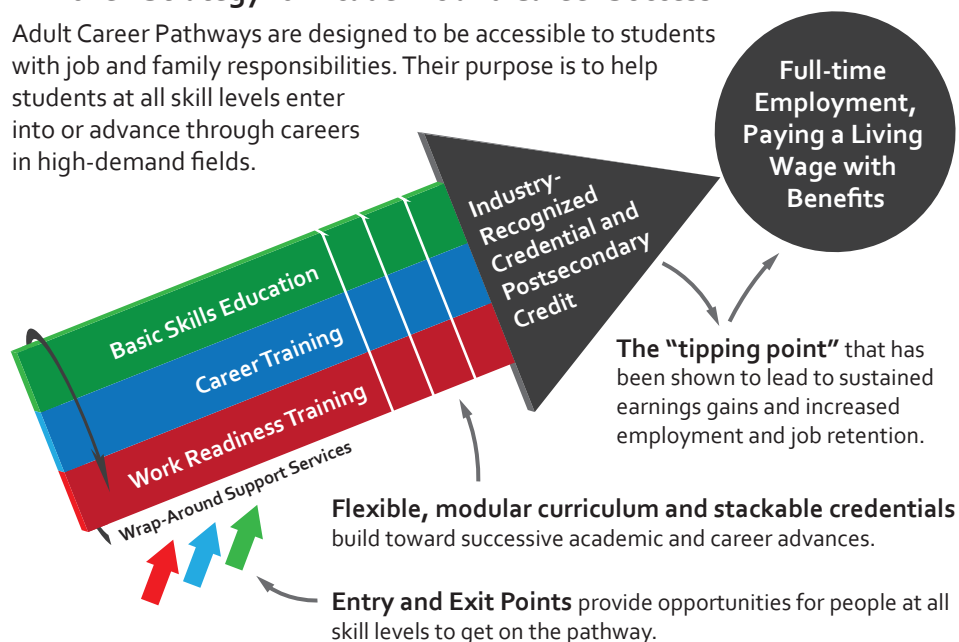
Support services are key components of adult career pathways.

Support services help remove barriers to program completion as an individual moves through education into employment. Services can include:

- » Academic and career counseling, assessment, and planning
- » Academic support
- » Social support, including referrals to resources and services
- » Transition planning to employment or postsecondary education
- » Ongoing assessment of an individual's need for assistance in a variety of areas such as childcare, transportation, and financial aid

A Proven Strategy for Academic and Career Success

Adult Career Pathways are designed to be accessible to students with job and family responsibilities. Their purpose is to help students at all skill levels enter into or advance through careers in high-demand fields.



Federal Definition: Career Pathway

The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that—

- (A) aligns with the skill needs of industries in the economy of the State or regional economy involved;
- (B) prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships...;
- (C) includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;
- (D) includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- (E) organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- (F) enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least 1 recognized postsecondary credential;
- (G) helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 U.S.C. § 3102 (2020)

Proven Results

Research demonstrates that career pathway outcomes exceed those of others programs:

- » Larger foundational skills gains
- » More college credits completed
- » More entry-level credentials earned
- » More likely to earn a training-related credential
- » More likely to be employed and retained in a training-related job
- » Higher earnings, with impacts growing over time

(Bragg et al. 2019)

Bridges to Careers in Healthcare

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, INC. + HAWTHORNE EDUCATION CENTER / ROCHESTER ADULT EDUCATION + ROCHESTER COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE (RCTC) + LOCAL EMPLOYERS

Bridges to Careers is a nationally-recognized partnership that recruits, trains, and supports diverse students for in-demand healthcare careers across the region. Partners work together to provide **an integrated collection of education and training services** that build academic skills, knowledge, and confidence—empowering students to succeed.

Services include:

- » Skills assessment and career planning
- » Skills training and preparation for further training and education
- » Job search guidance and resources
- » Academic and financial support at local higher education institutions
- » Individualized supports to help balance life, work, and school
- » A Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) advisor to help students successfully transition from Hawthorne Adult Basic Education Program to RCTC, with ongoing support while they complete their educational goal
- » A career navigator to help remove barriers, connecting students to community resources and—most importantly—helping them transition into employment

Bridges to Careers participants have earned industry-recognized credentials in a number of healthcare careers:

- » Certified Nursing Assistant
- » Home Health Aide
- » Nursing (RN and LPN)
- » Phlebotomist
- » Patient Care Associate
- » Pharmacy Technician



“Without [Bridges to Careers]’ help, I might not have been able to complete my diploma or be prepared to apply for a job. I’m so happy that I achieved my goal and found the position I was looking for.” — Mae Saeed

“This partnership has been a valuable investment... Not only are we generating a diverse, qualified pool of candidates for county employment, we may also be supporting people on a path out of poverty. It’s a win-win for us, every way we look at it.”
— Corrine Erickson, Olmsted County
Director of Family Support and Assistance

“Once we got the job they made sure that we had everything essential – work uniforms, bus passes... anything we possibly could need.”
— Kimberly Hernandez

“We’ve actually hired many of the students into our organization after they have done their clinical rotation... everyone is competing to find employees; this has been a great avenue for us to hire people... it has greatly benefited our residents.”
— Christine Bakee, CEO, Madonna Towers



Impact Since 2013

Educational Success

- » 947 people enrolled
- » 660+ industry-recognized credentials earned
- » 228 students persisted to RCTC
- » 8.6 credits earned per semester on average

Employment and Self-Sufficiency

- » 658 employed at 150+ area employers
- » Average wage of \$16.50, wages as high as \$19.07
- » 122 students co-enrolled in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
- » 80% of students co-enrolled in MFIP who closed their cases had found employment

Meeting Workforce Needs

- » 247 individuals have been hired at the Mayo Clinic
- » 100% hired in departments experiencing workforce gaps
- » Diverse graduates have made the Mayo workforce more representative of the community it serves
- » An additional 160 individuals hired at regional long-term care facilities

Return on Investment

- » 135% ROI back to the community

Innovative Features

- » Learners earn short-term, industry-recognized certificates while enrolled in an adult education bridge program that prepares them for college courses.
- » Learners who complete Bridges to Careers courses can receive up to seven college credits at RCTC, and may be able to waive the ACCUPLACER® placement exam.
- » Partners meet monthly to coordinate services.
- » Employer partners recognize Program Completion Certificates and agree to interview and consider hiring program completers.

To
Learn
More



bridgestocareers.org
www.rochesterce.org/hawthorne

Integrated Education and Training

Integrated Education and Training (IET) blends career training, basic skills education, and work readiness preparation to get the most out of each. Combining these offerings better meets the multi-faceted needs of adult learners, building academic skills and improving work readiness in the context of a career—saving students time and money while boosting the practical relevance of their study.

IET programs must fit into broader adult career pathways, per federal guidance on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). IET can involve co-teaching, with ABE/English as a Second Language (ESL) and career and technical instructors working together in the same classroom.

“A service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.”

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 29 U.S.C. § 3272 (2020)

Proven Impact

IET participants have better outcomes than other basic skills students, including those also enrolled in separate workforce training. They were more likely to:

- » Continue into credit-bearing coursework
- » Earn credits that count toward a college credential
- » Earn occupational certificates
- » Make point gains on basic skills tests

How I-BEST Works (Jenkins et al. 2010)

Workforce Training (WIOA DEFINITION)

“may include:

- (i) occupational skill training...;
- (ii) on-the-job training;
- (iii) incumbent worker training...;
- (iv) programs that combine workplace training with related instruction...;
- (v) training programs operated by the private sector;
- (vi) skill upgrading and retraining;
- (vii) entrepreneurial training;
- (viii) transitional jobs...;
- (ix) job readiness training...;
- (x) adult education and literacy activities... provided concurrently with (i)-(vii);
- (xi) customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion.”

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (WIOA DEFINITION)

“programs, activities, and services that include adult education, literacy, workplace adult education and literacy activities, family literacy activities, English language acquisition activities, integrated English literacy and civics education, workforce preparation activities, or integrated education and training.”

Workforce Preparation Activities (WIOA DEFINITION)

“activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.”

“Concurrently and Contextually”

... and “for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement”
for example:

English language acquisition, math/reading/writing focused on use in transportation field	+	BUS DRIVER PATHWAY Employability skills, communications skills, interviews and resume skills	+	Commercial Drivers License Class A permit with endorsements
English language learning, civic participation, rights and responsibilities of citizenship	+	HOTEL HOUSEKEEPING/ HOSPITALITY Digital literacy, American work culture, employability skills, communication skills	+	Work skills for hotel housekeepers
ESL/ELL/ELA in a healthcare context, IED training, math for healthcare careers	+	ENGLISH FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS Cultural Awareness, Effective Communication, Patient Rights/Responsibilities	+	Skill upgrading/retraining to prepare students to work in health care settings in the US

Workforce Development Hospitality Careers Pathway – Dietary Aide

SAINT PAUL COMMUNITY LITERACY CONSORTIUM + INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA

Dietary Aide Training is an integrated education and training (IET) curriculum that prepares students for an entry-level position in the dietary aide/nutrition services field. It leads into broader career pathways programs in hospitality food services and healthcare.



The program started as a one-week course and has expanded to a four-week, 60-hour training that includes:

- » hands-on practical skills training
- » digital skills training
- » work readiness
- » financial coaching



Partner organizations work with a local nursing homes and hospitals, who provide access to supplies and training materials relevant to in-demand skills. Students also visit the facilities to receive hands-on training.

The program also includes work readiness modules that help students prepare for searching, applying, interviewing for jobs, as well as know their rights and responsibilities as an employee in the US. Financial coaches teach financial literacy and provide one-on-one financial coaching to all participants.

After training concludes, the Institute employment specialists provide employment assistance, placement and ongoing employment support.

Rose's Story

"I started my current job as a chef with Presbyterian Home Services... This career was appealing to me because I have always loved cooking, and I was a prep cook and restaurant operator in my home country of Ghana.



*"I love my job as a chef because I enjoy serving food to people and putting a smile on their faces. **Without the necessary training that was provided for me through the dietary aide program, I would not have been able to find this job.** Everything I learned from safe food handling, cooking temperatures, food storage, kitchen hygiene to utensil usage are all applied to my job every day. Also, understanding dietary restrictions, intolerances and allergies as well as health conditions of residents is an important part of my daily work.*

"The training and help I received from my teachers changed my life. I was able to get a stable job and support my family."

Program Impact

- » 125 students trained
- » 50% hire rate after graduation
- » Hourly wages increased from \$12.50 to \$15-17 over the 5 years since program began
- » Many graduates have gone on to additional training to become Nursing Assistants

Population Served

- All students are foreign-born immigrants and refugees:
- » 80% of our students are women
 - » 80% are dependent on public transportation
 - » Most have been in the country less than 5 years
 - » Average age of 42

To
Learn
More



www.iimn.org/programs/workforce-development/hospitality-careers/dietary-aide-training/

Workplace Literacy

Employer-educator partnerships don't only take place in the classroom. They can also extend into the workplace, with a goal of boosting workplace preparedness and productivity. Work-based learning opportunities can increase **workplace literacy** while building **English proficiency** and **academic skills**.

Working together, educators and employers can ensure that adult education programs are relevant to current workforce needs—helping students to build skills that lead to employment and advancement while nurturing a skilled workforce central to the success of local and regional industries.

“...critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills...”

Employer-educator partnerships can:

- » Increase foundational skills within the context of a workplace
- » Build job skills that lead to employment and/or internal job promotion
- » Teach the work-readiness “soft skills” critical to job success while providing opportunities to build professional relationships
- » Provide stepping stones for low-wage, entry-level workers to more productive employment
- » Ensure career pathways and integrated education and training programs are responsive to current and future workforce needs

Partner Roles

Educator Roles

- » Work to foster alignment in the goals of education and employers in high-demand sectors
- » Promote the value of adult education to employers and employees
- » Facilitate the meaningful participation of employers with the education and training ecosystem
- » Organize groups of employers with similar workforce needs to multiply the impact of new education and training offerings
- » Help individuals develop foundational skills for current and future jobs
- » Build flexible programs that accommodate regular work hours

Employer Roles

- » Identify training needs and gaps in workforce skills
- » Work with education and training organizations to build career pathways and talent pipelines
- » Collaborate with peer companies to improve existing education and training offerings
- » Partner with training programs to integrate hands-on work experience with classroom learning
- » Providing resources and opportunities for work-based learning, mentoring, apprenticeships, internships, and tuition assistance
- » Make commitments to hire or promote program graduates
- » Offer externships, i.e. teacher training opportunities

Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities

*The term “workplace adult education and literacy activities” means adult education and literacy activities offered by an eligible provider **in collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an offsite location** that is designed to improve the productivity of the workforce.*

Workforce Preparation Activities

*The term “workforce preparation activities” means activities, programs, or services designed to help an individual acquire **a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills**, including competencies in*

- utilizing resources,*
- using information,*
- working with others,*
- understanding systems, and*
- obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education or training, or employment.*

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. 29 U.S.C. § 3272 (2020)

“...collaboration with an employer or employee organization at a workplace or an offsite location...”

English @ Work // Language for Leaders (L4L)

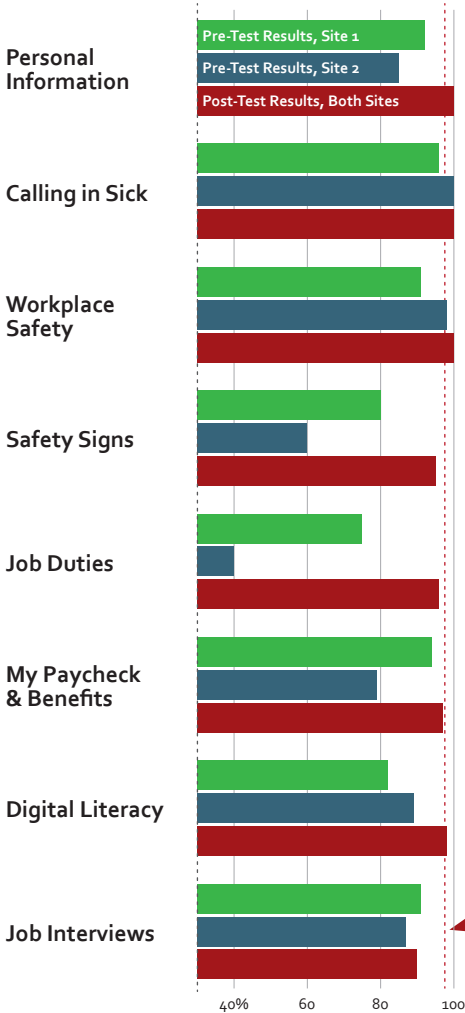
GREAT RIVERS ADULT EDUCATION + ANDERSEN WINDOWS AND DOORS + RENEWAL BY ANDERSEN

Great Rivers Adult Education, Andersen Windows and Doors, and Renewal by Andersen worked hand-in-hand to create two programs serving adult education participants working in entry-level and intermediate positions:

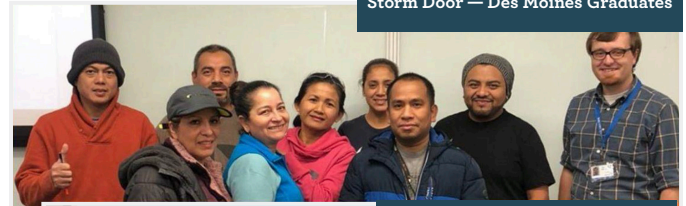
- » **English @ Work** is designed for beginning and intermediate-level positions at Andersen Windows & Doors and Renewal by Andersen.
- » **Language for Leaders (L4L)** is geared towards intermediate-to-advanced employees interested in pursuing an opportunity in shift leadership and beyond. L4L serves as a bridge between English @ Work and the Team Lead Development Program at Andersen Corp.

Working with the companies' Training and Human Resource departments, curricula for the two programs was developed to boost workplace literacy and preparation while building academic skills.

English @ Work Pre- and Post-Test Results



Bayport 100series Graduation



Storm Door — Des Moines Graduates



RbA - Cottage Grove Graduation

Classroom Topics

- » **Benefits Literacy:** Annual Open Enrollment
- » **Digital Literacy:** Email, Intro to Word Processing, Presentations, Spreadsheets
- » **Skill Building:** Sending Professional Emails
- » **Let's Practice:** NorthStar Digital Literacy Platform
- » **Advancing Careers:** Understanding the roles of a Value Stream Team Lead and a Value Stream Supervisor
- » **Role Play:** Common Interview Questions
- » **Discussion:** Drafting a Resumé, Navigating a Job Application

Program Impact

Post-Test Average: **97%**

To Learn More



commed.sowashco.org/adults/great-rivers-adult-education
www.hastingscommunityed.com/adults/adult-basic-education
www.facebook.com/GreatRiversAEC