College and Career Readiness
Financial Aid Resources (Braided Funding) and Ability to Benefit

Presenters

Cassandra Atkinson, Transitions Coordinator, NCCCS
Wanda White, Director of Student Services, NCCCS
Karen Yerby, Associate Director, Student Placement and Assessment
Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Types of Braided Funding Resources and Guide
  --Golden Leaf Scholars Program
- Ability to Benefit-Financial Aid
- Questions/Discussion
Objectives

- Build partnerships between student support and college and career readiness
- Braided funding resource guide for basic skills students
- Update on ability to benefit - financial aid eligibility
Funding necessary to support new and innovative adult education programs that are sourced from not one or two major sources, but from multiple smaller sources, each with specific goals, target populations and performance indicators.
Importance of Braiding Funding

- **Use of multiple sources of funding** to support and sustain integrated career pathways.

- **Braided funding leverages** federal, state, local, and private resources.

- **Provides funding and resources for students**: textbooks, equipment, examination registration fees, training opportunities not available through Basic Skills or Basic Skills PLUS.

- **Provides opportunities for Basic Skills staff** to develop an understanding of the specific goals, target populations, and performance indicators for multiple funding sources.

- **Provides opportunities** to establish new **partnerships** and renew existing partnerships that support student success.
Getting Started

Challenge to Basic Skills: Offer braided funding plans and maximize existing federal, state and local resources to meet student needs.

Two Key Braided Funding Strategies:

- Combine available funding streams.
- Adopt complementary funding strategies (local, regional, private, community-based sources)
Braided Funding Strategies:

1. Establish a Braided Funding Advisory Group (Adult Basic Education, Student Services, Financial Aid staff, and others).

2. Use Braided Funding Resource Guide and Worksheet to plan funding sources for students.
## Possible Funding Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Possible Funding Source</th>
<th>State and Federal Benefits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Investment Act Title I-Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth</td>
<td>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&amp;T)</td>
<td>State and Federal Benefits for Service Officers, Veterans, and Their Survivors and Dependents</td>
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<td>Workforce Innovations Opportunity Act (July 1, 2015)</td>
<td>Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)</td>
<td>NC Benefit Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wagner Peyser Act (Employment Services)</td>
<td>TRIO Student Support Services</td>
<td>State Employees Credit Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perkins-Vocational Education Basic Grants to States</td>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants</td>
<td>Golden Leaf Scholars Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary Assistance to Needy Families</td>
<td>Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT)</td>
<td>Scholarships from Local Employers</td>
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<td>Project Skill-UP</td>
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Braided Funding Practice—Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants

a. Use the questions on Slide #10 to engage your team in a strategic planning conversation around this funding stream.

b. Meet with and partner with Financial Aid staff at your college.

c. Use the Braided Funding Resource Guide to obtain information to obtain information about Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants.

d. Meet with the Vocational Rehabilitation staff assigned to your region.

Developing a Braided Funding Plan for Each Student

1. Identify the students who are eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Grants to support their education and training program in Basic Skills.

2. Develop a braided funding strategy plan for each student that is eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants.

3. What other funding sources are available for each student?
Braided Funding Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Questions and Steps</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is your college serving students with documented disabilities in Basic Skills pathways?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Does your college have a strong working relationship with your local Vocational Rehabilitation providers? Why or Why not?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Is there a strong referral process in place with your local Vocational Rehabilitation providers?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Use your responses and notes to identify potential barriers and challenges to successfully implementing and better utilizing this funding stream to support Basic Skills programs and students</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Develop a series of action steps for this funding stream for the next 12 months. Action steps may include determining the number of Basic Skills students currently using Vocational Rehabilitation services; making contact to your local Rehabilitation service to discuss Basic Skills pathways; work with your local Vocational Rehabilitation service providers to develop a standardized referral process for eligible students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Needed Assistance: Describe any guidance or assistance needed from NC Community Colleges System Office to better use this funding stream and implement your next steps.</td>
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9/22/2015
### Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants

**OVERVIEW:** This program provides grants to states to support a wide range of services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To be eligible to receive services, you must:
- You must have a physical or mental impairment or disability; and
- Your disability must result in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- You must require VR services to prepare for, secure, retain or regain employment.

Individuals who are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI) are presumed to be eligible for VR services.

It is possible that KRS will not have sufficient resources to serve all eligible persons who apply. If this situation occurs, an order of selection procedure will be used to determine priorities for access to services.

All eligible clients will be assigned to one of several service categories. The highest priority categories will be for persons with the most significant disabilities, in compliance with federal law.

For more information on eligibility, visit: [http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNDING SOURCE</th>
<th>SHORT DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NC Community Colleges</td>
<td>Creating Success</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OVERVIEW:</th>
<th>Relevant performance indicators include:</th>
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<tr>
<td>This program provides grants to states to support a wide range of services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.</td>
<td>Employment outcomes. (A designated state unit must assist an eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability, to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment. Equal access to services. (A designated state unit must ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.)</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>USE OF FUNDS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services provided include:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling and guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical and mental restoration services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work skills training and vocational training</td>
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<td>Job placement services</td>
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<td>Support employment</td>
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<tr>
<th>ACTION STEPS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Determine whether college have relationships with local Rehabilitation Services offices and whether Rehabilitation Services recipients are referred to AO programs for job training and development. For colleges that do not have relationship with local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services offices, suggest steps for forging relationships.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State site: <a href="http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/">http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dvrs/</a></td>
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## Worksheet: Braided Funding Plan for Each Student (Example)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Career Pathway</th>
<th>Educational Functional Level</th>
<th>Braided Funding Resources Available to Student</th>
<th>Status of Student Access to Resources</th>
<th>Barriers and Staff Notes</th>
<th>Action Steps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wonderful ONE</td>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>Adult Secondary Education Low</td>
<td>VR Grant, SNAP E&amp;T, Workforce Development Training, Basic Skills PLUS Waiver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready To Go</td>
<td>Physical Therapy</td>
<td>ELA 6</td>
<td>Apprenticeship, Golden Leaf Scholarship</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next President</td>
<td>Medical Assisting</td>
<td>ABE Intermediate High</td>
<td>State Employees, Credit Union Scholarship</td>
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The Golden LEAF program provides a maximum of $750 per semester for curriculum students and $250 for continuing education students.

Continuing education students must be enrolled in a program of at least 96 hours that leads to a state or national credential to be eligible.

Students must be a permanent resident of a qualifying county and demonstrate financial need. Other selection factors for applicants include financial need, the effect of the declining economy on his/her family, academic performance, community service, and campus involvement.
Dear Colleague Letter

Unchanged Student Eligibility Provisions

Statutory Changes to Ability to Benefit

Eligible Career Pathways Defined
  --Adult Education Connection Courses
  --Title IV Eligible Academic Programs

Developing Frequently Asked Questions

Questions and Answers
Dear Colleague Letter

- Publication Date: May 22, 2015 = DCL ID: GEN-15-09
- Focus – Title IV Eligibility for Students Without Valid High School Diploma-enrolled in eligible Career Pathway

- NEW LAW (Changed 484(d) of Higher Education Act of 1965)
  - Allows students without high school diploma or the recognized equivalent to be eligible for Title IV HEA student assistance
PUBLIC LAW 112 - 235 – No Changes

Allows otherwise eligible students to receive TITLE IV aid if they meet one of the following conditions:

1. Student has a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent to a high school diploma

2. State certificate or transcript received by a student after the student passed a state-authorized examination

3. Academic transcript showing completion of a two-year program acceptable for full credit toward bachelor's degree
UNCHANGED STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

State – Authorized Exams

- General Education Development Certificate (GED)

- High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)

- Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC)

- The California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE)

- Other State Authorized Examinations
Homeschool

Students who completed secondary education in homeschool setting

- Treated as a homeschool or private school under the state law.
- Student has a homeschool completion credential.
Students who are enrolled in an eligible career pathway program who are not high school graduates or do not meet one of the other eligibility conditions discussed:

- May be eligible for to receive Title IV Aid, and
- Must meet one of the following alternatives:
  - Pass an independently administered Department of Education (DOE) approved Ability to Benefit (ATB) Test.
  - Completes at least 6 credit hours or 225 clock hours applicable toward degree or certificate offered by the college.
  - Completes a State process approved by the DOE Secretary.
# Ability to Benefit Tests (ATB)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Publisher Name</th>
<th>Test Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT Inc.</td>
<td>ASSET, COMPASS, and COMPASS ESL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Classroom Teacher Testers (ACTT)</td>
<td>Combined English Skills Assessment (CELSA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The College Board</td>
<td>ACCUPLACER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderlic Inc.</td>
<td>Wonderlic Basic Skills Test</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Other Eligible Students
Without a Valid High School Diploma

Grandfathered Students - Students enrolled prior to July 1, 2012

- Students without a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

- Students who did not complete a secondary school education in a homeschool setting, and was enrolled in an eligible program at Title IV institutions.
Eligible Career Pathways

Definition

Career pathways refer to a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and support services that are aligned with the skill needs of industries in State or regional economies, preparing individuals to be successful in secondary or postsecondary education programs and the labor market.

- To become eligible for Title IV aid using one of the Ability To Benefit (ATB) alternatives.
- Any institution, whether public, nonprofit, or for-profit, may offer an eligible career pathway program.
Eligible Career Pathways

- **Concurrently enroll** students in connected adult education and eligible postsecondary programs;

- Provide students with **counseling and supportive services** to identify and attain academic and career goals;

- Provide **structured course sequences that are articulated and contextualized**; and allow students to advance to higher levels of education and employment;

- Provide **opportunities for acceleration** to obtain recognized postsecondary credentials;

- Be organized to **meet the needs of adults**;

- Be **aligned with education and skills needs of the regional economy**; and

- Developed and implemented **in collaboration with business, workforce and economic development partners**.
Eligible Career Pathways

Eligible pathways contain two components: both adult education connection courses and a Title IV eligible program.

1. **Adult Education Component**
   (academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that lead to high school diploma or its recognized equivalent, transition to postsecondary education and training, and obtain employment).

2. **Title IV Eligible Academic Programs**
   (certificate {depending on length of the program and number of hours}, diploma, and associate degree).
On, or after July 1, 2014

- Federal Pell Grant
- Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Federal College Work Study
- Federal Student Loan
Limited and Regular Pell Grant

Enrolled Before July 1, 2015 (Regular Pell Grant)

- Ability to Benefit-eligible career pathway programs
  - Students will be eligible for limited Pell Grant Awards under career pathway alternative schedule
  - Maximum award for (2015-16) is $5575.

Enrolled On or after July 1, 2015 (Limited Pell Grant)

- Ability to Benefit-eligible career pathway programs
  - Students will be eligible for limited Pell Grant Awards under career pathway alternative schedule
  - Maximum award for (2015-16) is $4860.
Resources

Braided Funding
- Braided Funding Resource Guide
- Braided Funding Plan for Students

Ability to Benefit - Financial Aid
- Dear Colleague Letter
  DCL ID: GEN-15-09
Developing Frequently Asked Questions

College and Career Readiness Financial Aid Resources (Braided Funding) & Ability to Benefit

Send Questions no later than August 20, 2015 to:

adultliteracy@nccommunitycolleges.edu

Subject: Ability to Benefit Questions
Contacts

Basic Skills staff should contact the Basic Skills Director or Coordinator or the Financial Aid Administrator at your college for specific questions.

- Cassandra Atkinson, Transitions Coordinator
  atkinsonc@nccommunitycolleges.edu   919-807-7144

- Wanda White, Director of Student Services
  whitew@nccommunitycolleges.edu   919-807-7104

- Karen Yerby, Associate Director of Student Life
  yerbyk@nccommunitycolleges.edu   919-807-7107