This is the second edition of the PACE Partners Newsletter. In this issue, we highlight significant accomplishments, recent activities, and future plans of various PACE partner sites. As you’ll read, some programs have been working on expansion plans, while others have been launching new training courses and classes, improving marketing strategies, or redesigning and enhancing program components with newly-awarded funding. We hope you find these updates interesting and useful.

We also provide a few evaluation-related updates, including: recently published and soon-to-be released papers, the status of the follow-up surveys and other data collection activities, and a list of recent and upcoming PACE-related conference presentations. As the project turns the corner from data collection to analysis and reporting, we look forward to continued engagement and sharing our findings.

Enjoy issue #2!

**Community Updates: News from PACE Partner Sites**

**Year Up is expanding operations and refining their marketing strategy.**
Since recruitment and intake for PACE ended in September 2014, Year Up staff have focused on strategies for organizational growth and marketing. Year Up is piloting and testing a new model that is more cost-effective and has the ability to scale. The Professional Training Corps (PTC) adapts the traditional “Core” program (the model tested under PACE) by co-locating the program with a local college partner that allows for sharing of space and instructors. Between 2012 and 2014, PTC was implemented in Baltimore, Miami, and Philadelphia. Since completing PACE study enrollment, Year Up launched new PTC sites in Jacksonville, Phoenix, Puget Sound, the National Capital Region, and New York City, and will open in Los Angeles and Dallas later this year. (Abt has two non-PACE random assignment studies underway—one sponsored by the Institute for Education Sciences and one by the Social Innovation Fund.)

Year Up is also applying what it learned conducting recruitment for PACE to its marketing strategy for both core and PTC program sites. Year Up mapped the process applicants undertake from showing their first sign of interest, through completing applications and interviews, and culminating in enrollment. Staff interviewed students and admissions staff to identify the positive experiences with the current process as well as barriers. Staff learned that the first step, filling out an interest form on the Year Up website, was time consuming and discouraged completion of the form and thus movement to the next step in the process. In response, Year Up rolled out a new interest form that takes one-quarter of the time to complete and subsequently saw increased interest form submissions. Year Up also explored use of tools to test new marketing and admissions strategies and customize experiences. The Marketo software allows Year Up to customize automated responses and outreach to applicants through users’ preferred modes of communication (e.g., phone, email, text, social media). Additionally, staff are able to link specific digital (e.g., Google, online job posting), social, and traditional media formats by which
prospective students are first connected to the program to subsequent applications and enrollments. Year Up staff note this will help gauge which formats provide the greatest return on investment in building a pipeline of applicants.

The Workforce Development Council is building on success to create a health workforce for the future. The Workforce Development Council (WDC) was awarded funding under the second round of the HHS Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG) initiative to implement the Health Workforce for the Future (HWF) project. HWF is focused on building the healthcare workforce the program anticipates will be needed in King County as their population continues to age and becomes increasingly more diverse.

HWF will use lessons learned from WDC’s first HPOG-funded program (Health Careers for All, evaluated as part of PACE) and research findings to redesign and enhance existing training and program strategies to reach three populations: (1) individuals who remain unemployed, or have tenuous connections to the workforce, despite the improving economy; (2) incumbent workers in need of support for wage and career progression; and (3) low-income youth who are critical to the future workforce but many of whom remain disconnected from the labor force. Over five years, HWF will serve approximately 625 individuals and will emphasize three occupational pathways – nursing, medical assistant/office, and diagnostic/therapeutic.

Expansion for Instituto del Progreso Latino.
In April 2015, Instituto del Progreso Latino was approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education to launch the Instituto College, which will offer degree programs in six areas: Health Studies, Manufacturing Supervision and Operations, Networking Technology, Hospitality Management and Entrepreneurship, and General Education Requirements. The mission of Instituto College is “to provide an enriched learning environment where students have the opportunity to earn practical credentials based on industry standards that enable them to develop their skills, become lifelong learners and contribute to the overall vitality of their communities.” The college is expected to launch in Fall 2016.

The Carreras en Salud program that is being evaluated as part of PACE is a career pathway that starts with a Basic Nursing Assistant (BNA) bridge to prepare individuals for the BNA level, which then moves to a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) level and potentially to an advanced nursing degree. To date, Instituto has delivered the lower bridge programs and city colleges provided the certificate and degree programs. With Instituto College, Carreras will offer most programs along the pathway in-house. In the healthcare field, Instituto College will offer Carreras en Salud, including a BNA program, as well as an A.A.S. degree program designed to prepare participants for supervisory or management roles in hospitals, clinics and other healthcare facilities. Participants in all of the college’s programs will have access to the same set of Instituto services including academic advising, case management, tutoring, and employment services as well as the Center for Working Families.

News!

**PACE at RECS.** On June 2, Kristin Seefeldt gave a presentation at the Administration for Children and Families’ Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) titled: What Do Participants Bring to Career Pathways Programs? Understanding Motivations, Supports, and Perceived Challenges. The presentation described early lessons from the first of two rounds of in-depth interviews with a sub-sample of PACE study participants (see below). Specifically, the
presentation focused on study participants’ motivation for wanting to enroll in a career pathways program, their perceptions of their likelihood of success, their experiences with program services, challenges they experienced to completing programs and supports that they believe helped them succeed. For further analysis of observations coming out of the first round of in-depth interviews, please see a series of recently published briefs written by Kristin (see below). Kristin Seefeldt is Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at The University of Michigan and lead investigator for the in-depth interviews component of the PACE evaluation.

**Series of Qualitative Briefs Published.** PACE released a series of briefs based on analysis of the first round of in-depth interviews with PACE study participants. The three briefs focus on motivations for enrolling in PACE programs, perceived challenges to completing the program, and supports used. Each helps to paint a portrait of individuals’ experiences in trying to complete their program. The briefs can be found on both the project website and on ACF’s website.

Click to view:
- *Nothing Can Stop Me: Career Pathways Participants’ Motivations and Thoughts on Success*
- *Finances, Family, Materials, and Time Career Pathways Participants’ Perceived Challenges*
- *Programmatic and Other Supports Accessed by Career Pathways Participants*

**More Dissemination.** David Fein, co-Principal Investigator for PACE, has two new papers. *Risk Factors for College Success: Insights from Adults in Nine Career Pathways Programs* provides a statistical portrait of low-income adults recruited by the nine programs in PACE. It then explores the relationship between these characteristics and subsequent college outcomes for participants randomly assigned to control groups. The control groups afford a valuable opportunity to look at the role of potential risk factors in the absence of services from PACE programs—and thereby to assess the premises that program services should address such factors. This brief can be found [here](http://example.com) on the project website and also on ACF’s website.

*Scaling Up to Close the Opportunity Divide for Low-Income Youth: A Case Study of the Year Up Program* examines initial efforts to scale up the Year Up program. From its inception in 2000, Year Up expanded its original “core” model—a stand-alone program—from one office in Boston to sites in nine cities serving 2,000 youth annually by 2015. In 2012, Year Up began piloting an adaptation for community college settings designed to improve scalability: the Professional Training Corps (PTC). Program data show that Year Up maintained a high level of performance while expanding services from 2010-15. During this period, the program’s completion rate increased from 70 to nearly 80 percent, while the number of participants roughly doubled. Similarly, Year Up increased recruitment by 50 percent to generate the PACE control group sample, while maintaining applicant quality. Drawing mainly on interviews with Year Up leaders, this paper distills lessons from three aspects of experiences with growth: expanding recruitment, scaling signature program services, and addressing cross-cutting challenges in scaling. The paper can be found [here](http://example.com) on ACF’s website and also on the career-pathways.org website.

**Evaluation Updates**

- **Follow-Up Surveys.** Abt SRBI is administering two PACE follow-up surveys, one starting at 15-months post random assignment and one at 36-months (the latter is being conducted under the
Career Pathways Intermediate Outcomes (CPIO) study. As part of the survey effort, study participants receive quarterly tracking letters from Abt SRBI. This is an opportunity to remind participants about the study and collect updated contact information from them. As of June 2016, the 15-month survey is complete and the 36-month survey is underway.

- **15-month survey:** After roughly 2 ½ years, the 15-month survey administration is complete in all programs. Abt SRBI completed interviews with just over 77 percent of the total sample (nearly 80 percent of all treatment group members and just over 74 percent of all control group members). Percentages varied by site.

- **36-month survey:** The 36-month survey has launched in VIDA, San Diego Workforce Partnership, Pima Community College, Madison College, Instituto del Progreso Latino, Des Moines Area Community College, Bellingham Technical College, Everett Community College, Whatcom Community College, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County, and two of eight Year Up sites (National Capital Region and Puget Sound). Abt SRBI will start administering the survey to participants at the other Year Up sites as those cohorts reach the 36-month mark.

- **Cost Data Collection.** The PACE team completed cost data collection from each program for a future cost-benefit study that will be produced as part of CPIO. We may need to follow-up with program staff to confirm information, so please stay tuned!

- **Second Round of In-Depth Interviews with a Sub-Sample of Study Participants.** PACE team members continued the second round of in-depth interviews with a sample of treatment and control group members from each program. The first round of interviews was conducted between March and November 2014. For treatment group members who persisted in their programs, interviewers are probing factors associated with persistence, including personal/family factors and aspects of programs that may have been especially helpful. Interviewers are also exploring plans for employment and future training. With regard to treatment group members who did not persist, the interviews are focusing on reasons for dropping out. Interviews with control group members focus on options for occupational training and supports and employment experiences. The second round of interviews is expected to be completed by the end of July 2016.

- **Implementation and Early Impact Reports Being Drafted.** The PACE team is beginning to draft the early impact/implementation reports. The first three reports for the program that ended random assignment first (Pima Community College, Madison Area Technical College, and San Diego Workforce Partnership) are underway. The schedule for producing reports was determined by the timing of random assignment conclusion. We will be sharing the draft reports with programs to review for accuracy. Site teams will be in touch to provide details on timing and to discuss how to help with dissemination as reports are released.

- **Registering PACE Outcomes.** The PACE evaluation is now registered on the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) and the Open Science Framework (OSF) registries. The primary and secondary outcomes for the first three reports to be released—Pima Community College, Madison Area Technical College, and San Diego Workforce Partnership—are pre-specified on these sites. The team will register outcomes for other PACE sites in advance of conducting the analyses. To view content on these sites, go to: https://osf.io/ and http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ and search “Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education.”
Other News and Reminders

- **Career Pathways Joint Letter 2016.** Twelve Federal agencies signed a Joint Letter promoting the use of career pathways. The letter also provides updated information and resources to help interested parties in States, regions, localities, and tribal communities integrate service delivery across Federal and State funding streams. The letter can be found here on the ACF website.

- **Follow PACE on social media.** The PACE evaluation team will soon be active on Twitter and LinkedIn with engaging tweets/posts about upcoming and recently released reports. Please stay tuned for details.

- **Contacting the PACE team.** If you have any questions about the study, please contact the project director or the federal project officers.

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