

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.

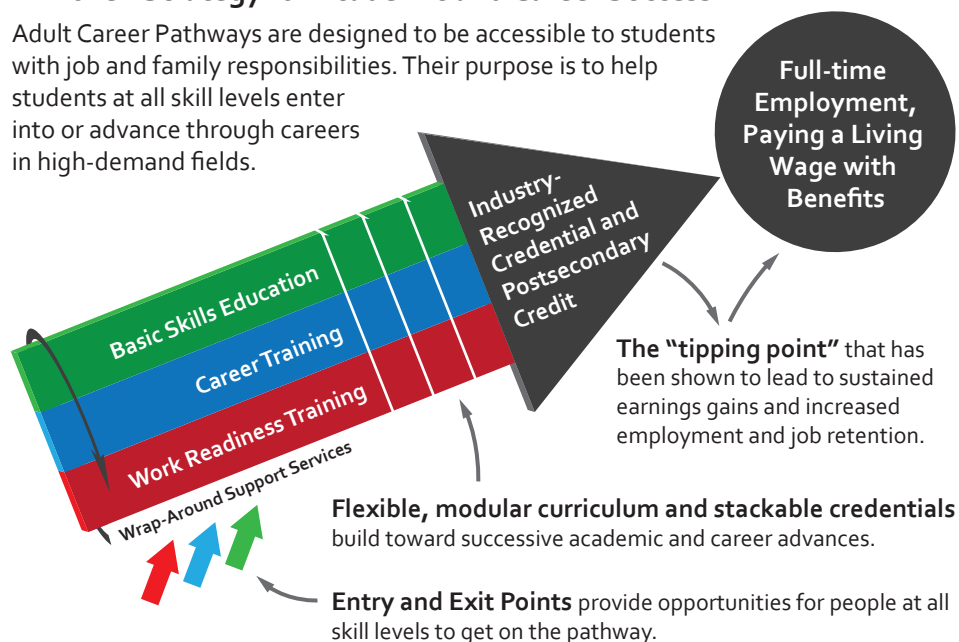
Support services are key components of adult career pathways.

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.

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bridgestocareers.org
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