

## Collaborative Partnerships: Kirkwood Community College

United Way of East Central Iowa, in partnership with the community, set a goal to increase the number of financially stable households by 15 percent. This equates to helping 1,430 families achieve long-term financial stability by 2020. This community initiative is a partnership between United Way of East Central Iowa, Kirkwood Community College, local businesses, and community-based organizations. Kirkwood's Career Pathway system is the primary strategy to achieve this goal. The initiative launched in the fall of 2011, guided by the vision that:

- Low-income adults would obtain more advanced skills and better jobs through more accessible and navigable training and career advancement systems.
- Local employers would have access to a reliable supply of workers whose skills align with industry needs.

The initiative continues to build strong relationships across the community to increase awareness and referral pipelines. The results of the Walmart Brighter Futures Project will be reported to United Way of East Central Iowa and document our community's progress on helping low-income households achieve long-term financial stability.

The business sector is an important partner in confirming middle-skill needs; assessing the training pathways available; providing input into the competencies required; offering tours, job shadows, and internships; and interviewing program graduates. Sector boards are a useful conduit for these activities. Kirkwood is leading five sector boards. They include: Advanced Manufacturing; Health Care; Information Technology; Transportation and Logistics; and Financial Services, Insurance, and Customer Service.

Community-based organizations are equally important to supporting student success. Kirkwood has formed service agreements with three community-based organizations based on the most predominant needs of students in the program. These service agreements allow Pathway Navigators to remain focused on their role and allow service providers to exercise their expertise. Helping students connect to community resources also fosters autonomy of students to access needed community resources well beyond their time in the career pathway training program. Navigating community resources is a valuable life skill. The following table summarizes the service agreements with three primary community-based organizations.

<b>Horizons</b>	Provide financial counsel and budgeting assistance to students.
<b>Partnership for Safe Families</b>	Provide family team meetings for students experiencing multiple barriers that need immediate attention. A facilitator utilizes a strengths-based approach to convene the student and representatives from community-based organizations to assist with students' identified barriers/issues. A plan is developed and implemented with clear student and provider ownership.
<b>Waypoint</b>	Assesses housing stability and provides rent and utility assistance along with case management services to support the housing stability of students.