



## Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0: College Sustainability Plan Sinclair Community College

### I. Best/promising practice(s) identified during the project.

- A. Intra-College Systems and Process Improvement: Established a new sustainable, scalable process change between the Workforce Development Division, which primarily serves non-credit and industry clients, and the Center for Student Success, which primarily has offered credit seeking students wraparound services to enhance their likelihood of success. Students served through this grant can readily access those expanded services including a holistic case management approach, specialists in developing and linking community support services for students, and an ombudsman to provide advocacy and mediation as needed. This grant provided the catalyst to implement this intra-college system improvement and will now be expanded to other Workforce Development programs.
- B. Community Partnership Expansion: Expanded an already robust college external partnership portfolio of programs to include Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley, an off-site community service organization, to deliver specific classes in their newly constructed community resource campus, a comprehensive facility that mixes social services, health services, and education. Sinclair partnered with Goodwill to have a dedicated classroom and health sciences lab at their site for the sole purpose of providing expanded access to Sinclair education programs to a segment of the population that would otherwise have limited access to education services.
- C. Education Partner Collaboration: Refined and established procedures for sharing best practices, communication, data, and records between the Miami Valley Career Technology Center and Sinclair, including sharing student referral forms and records between institutions. This is a significant collaboration between two institutions that often share the same students. The result is a more student-centered approach by bringing the best of both institutions to serve the students. This also opens the door for expanded collaborations of this type between the two institutions.
- D. Industry-Credentialed Program Development: Developed, through the support of an advisory group of subject matter experts within the call center industry, two certificate programs, a Call Center and a nationally recognized Customer Service certificate, designed for both credit and non-credit delivery.

### II. Rationale for institutionalizing the best/promising practice(s) identified above.

- A. Prior to the enhanced relationship between the Workforce Development Division and the Sinclair Center for Student Success, the Center had three options when serving low-skill, low-wage individuals: (1) referral to credit classes (often knowing this path might be unsuccessful); (2) referral to an external partner for middle-skill job training; or (3) no referral. After implementing this systemic, institutional change, students are referred either to credit programs when appropriate or to a vast array of middle-skill job training through Sinclair's Workforce Development Division. This approach ensures Sinclair's wraparound services can be deployed maximizing the opportunity for skill gain and job placement or promotion.

- B. To maximize serving low-skill, low-wage individuals in the Greater Miami Valley, it is imperative to form value-added relationships with community service organizations. Sinclair's creative relationship with Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley, through the use of a dedicated classroom and health science lab within their comprehensive community resource campus, has allowed the college to assist their students with completion of certificates while fostering their interest in pursuit of further development into credit based college degree programs. By combining efforts and resources, the grant has provided larger connectivity with our training partners; expanded each organization's network; and allowed for greater access to more training, development, and employability for our prospective student.
- C. Sinclair often seeks to implement a partnership model. If effective programs already exist with our partners, Sinclair pursues business models that will support a referral pathway to ensure that the needs of low-skill, low-wage individuals are being met. Sinclair and the Miami Valley Career Development Center collaborated on developing a referral pathway expanding the array of services that can be provided to the WBF 2.0 targeted population by leveraging the programmatic strengths of both organizations.
- D. Through a close working relationship with the Contact Center Alliance, a large regional employer group, a need for increasing the pipeline of viable entry-level employees in the high demand occupation of call centers was identified. Inherent with the two certificates associated with this program is the ability for completers to clearly communicate verbally, together with their printed certificate, the competencies related to this customized program that they've acquired. Successful completers are guaranteed interviews with industry members of the Contact Center Alliance. In addition, the best practice of adding competencies gained to the back of certificates and credentials earned has been shared with other programs, such as the Criminal Justice Program in various prisons.

### **III. Fiscal implication(s) for institutionalizing the best/promising practice(s) identified above.**

- A. No costs are anticipated to implement and sustain the systemic change noted above. Regularly scheduled meetings between the Workforce Development Division and the Center for Student Success had been established ensuring open dialogue about middle-skill training opportunities that will further arm our student success support team with the multiple services that can positively impact the life and career path of low-skill, low-wage individuals.
- B. Sinclair provided all the on-site classroom and lab equipment at Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley. Equipped with hospital beds, walkers, lift belts, etc., the lab supports the Nurse Aid Training Certificate program. Additionally, miscellaneous pieces of hospitality management equipment are installed to support Serve Safe and Introduction to Hospitality credentials. To ensure the equipment is maintained, Sinclair must budget for repair and replacement as needed.
- C. No costs are anticipated to implement and sustain the value-added partnership noted above. Admissions and placement personnel from Sinclair and MVCTC meet to share program schedules to ensure the targeted population is referred into the appropriate program aligned with their interests and providing a career pathway and/or skill enhancement.

- D. Due to the importance of this regional need, funding assistance has come from the Contact Center Alliance and Sinclair Community College to subsidize program training costs. Ensuring continued support is an important element with regard to the sustainability of this effective program.

#### **IV. Partnerships/sponsorships established during the project that should be continued.**

Conversations with Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley are underway to explore new ways to expand collaborative offerings to low-skill, low-wage individuals. New programs and delivery models are being evaluated that will continue to meet the needs of industry and the target population.

Sinclair Community College and the Miami Valley Career Technology Center continue to be strong forces serving adult training needs in the Miami Valley. Dialogue with regard to cross-referral opportunities will continue as each organization has many unduplicated programs that, through partnership, will more broadly yet strategically serve the training and educational needs of the community.

Sinclair's Call Center Certification Program, in collaboration with the Contact Center Alliance, has been highly successful. Offering an industry source for entry-level workers, along with the demonstrated competencies necessary to have an immediate impact in this challenging career field, the program is recognized as a model certificate to employment program. Sinclair and the Call Center Alliance are exploring opportunities to expand this program due to the high volume of call center operations in the region.

#### **V. Internal institutional collaboration during the project that should be continued.**

Many have heard the saying "can't see the forest for the trees." When you do, you notice there is a whole forest you couldn't see before because you were too close to the trees and only focusing on a few trees. Being part of the Walmart Brighter Futures 2.0 Grant presented Sinclair with the opportunity to step back, view the entire forest, and create a portfolio of better solutions.

Sinclair's Workforce Development Division has been named the Dayton Region's #1 workforce development program for three consecutive years (2012-2013-2014). Sinclair's Center for Student Success has had a measurable impact on the success of students with its comprehensive wraparound services to address the challenges that often accompany students as they seek to expand their educational portfolio. Prior to the Walmart Brighter Future 2.0 Grant, these impactful internal organizations had not collaborated in meaningful, systemic ways.

As a result of this new level of collaboration, the breadth of conversation has been expanded between students and the Center for Student Success. The enrollment funnel into the Call Center program increased enrollment by 50%. Additionally, other students who were funneled into non-credit programs have returned to a credit pathway to continue their educational goals bolstered by the confidence they have gained through their increased competencies delivered through non-credit programs.

Due to the success of this new internal partnership made possible through the WBF 2.0 Grant, Sinclair intends to expand this systemic change to other non-credit/credit partnerships institutionalizing this approach as a routine way of doing business.

## **VI. Integration timeline for identified activities.**

Further integration of the enhanced internal relationship between the Workforce Development Division and the Center for Student Success is presently underway. Over the next three months, all counselors in the Center will be briefed on non-credit programs to expand referral opportunities for students. Further collaboration has been planned with Sinclair's Community and Student Engagement office to enhance the employment and placement opportunities for the graduates and completers of workforce credentials.

Over the next three months, additional programs with Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley will be explored. An expansion of healthcare and hospitality programs will be reviewed.

As a result of focused work during WBF 2.0, the streamlined relationship between Sinclair and the Miami Valley Career Technology Center is presently integrated and actionable. Further cross referral opportunities are being implemented.

Due to the business model associated with the Call Center Certificate Program, conversations are scheduled with the Contact Center Alliance to increase program funding from this industry group. In addition, Sinclair will seek to expand the geographical reach of this program over the next six months.