



August 25, 2016

Strategic Planning Session Notes Washington's Rural Workforce

On August 25, 2016, a strategic planning session was held to plan for the 2017 Rural Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) statewide conference. This discussion was held at two locations, Olympia and Davenport, connected by video, with several participants also calling in via phone (see P2P stakeholder list on page 5). The purpose of the meeting was to gather input regarding rural workforce development challenges and opportunities that can be addressed using the P2P conference delivery model.

Rural Pathways to Prosperity (P2P) General Information

Debra Hansen and Monica Babine, WSU Extension, provided background information about P2P using a PPT sent to stakeholders prior to the session. P2P is a conference model developed at WSU that is based on two core principles: 1) Connect multiple sites simultaneously with technology and, (2) engage local participants into action. Offered in 2013 and 2015 these conferences focused on improving the entrepreneurial ecosystem in rural communities. **In Spring 2017 (April or May), P2P will focus on strengthening the rural workforce development ecosystem.**

P2P is a way to bring folks together from different agencies to help us understand the systems/agencies involved, and how can work together and connect the dots. Debra and Monica emphasized that this first planning meeting will help inform plans and that P2P will grow from the ideas and conversations of the partners here.

Why is workforce the topic? Why focus on rural?

Eleni Papadakis and Eric Wolf, WTECB

Eleni reviewed challenges in workforce development, and highlighted the particular challenge of remote and rural areas. Challenges include: resources are distributed by federal funds based on population level; work in rural areas can be more costly, in part due to lack of connectivity (i.e., broadband). Currently working on plan to address these challenges (plans are located on the [Workforce Board website](#).)

Eric explained the purpose and work of the Workforce Board, and how the board formed a statewide plan:

[Talent and Prosperity for All](#) (TAP), main strategic priorities include:

- 1) *Business engagement*. How do we build increase and engage business partnerships?
- 2) *Integrated service delivery*. How do we facilitate better/more access to services? New federal policy helps with this to accommodate different types of access.
- 3) *Barrier removal and accessibility*. What are common barriers across state? How do we prioritize?
- 4) *Performance accountability*. Many more programs using a common set of performance measures.

The board is developing a one-page overview of TAP and it will be sent to P2P stakeholders when available.

Eleni explained that the state is divided into 12 workforce areas with their own workforce council. The board is working hand in hand with these councils to customized plan to meet local needs. This is a good fit with P2P as these councils are working through these plans. It gives the state as a whole and local level new ways to discuss this work.

Participants then identified challenges, successes and ideas as well as the target audience and next steps.

<p>Business – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succession planning for businesses – they would rather train local than bring outside talent in. • Rural businesses want to stay – often for the quality of life. 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it in America has positively impacted rural communities (Mike Brennan has great stories of connection to businesses) • Online classes in manufacturing • USDA-Ag industry survey coming to identify supply chain and purchasing • Ferry County – Jim Milner and Nathan Davis, Ferry County Sunrise, taking business ideas, experiences and challenges getting everyone working together. Uses Customer Relations Module, putting contacts and businesses into CRM, and tracks business activity, particularly online commerce. Can set up customized campaign for local businesses. Can also help integrate needs from business for workforce development.
<p>Apprenticeships/Internships – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do schools and industry talk to each other • How do you match employers to interns 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are partner/employers who provide customized OJT to employees (Hewes in Colville?) • Registered apprenticeships (Peter Guzman?) • Successful internship model from Spokane and Tacoma (Mike B)
<p>K-12 – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to hire teachers in rural communities (salary disparity – \$10-12K more in neighboring Spokane Co.) • Affordable housing is huge issue • Convincing kids that there are jobs in rural communities • Needs to understand increasing farming technology needs • Lack of career planning and career readiness – what state resources might be useful? • Dropout rates; lack of alternative schools 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrington started mini-skills center (need more resources and money) • Explore science equipment van idea from UEDA (Debra) • Roslyn has one of the highest dropout rate but teamed up with the SD and created the Swiftwater Alternative School (Patrick)
<p>Skill Centers – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skill/trade centers are difficult to put together in rural 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with employers to provide training customized to those sites. WDCs are creating on the job training opportunities. One example is a boat building company in Colville. All of their new hires come from workforce development system with support for on the job training.
<p>Community Colleges – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most community colleges don't teach adult basic ed 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty are integrating challenges and discovering careers – Make it in WA and incumbent workers; faculty and students are learning together (Meg) • Highline CC is exploring a Center of Excellence in adult basic ed and ESL (Meg)
<p>Health – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Communities of Health (ACH) say leading health indicator = jobs • Want an integrated system for all health • Eldercare is an issue in rural 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

<p>Basic education for adults – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High dropout rates, illiteracy • High tech companies locating in rural areas in gorge, but local adults need education to access those jobs • Get people the skills to read, write, basic math • Not always skill issue. There are other challenges, i.e. criminal record 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses building housing for employees • Tulalip tribe doing this (Craig Nolte)
<p>Housing – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus across many – affordable housing is an emerging major issue • USDA rural health – a place to live, housing 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commerce joined in planning process for a community development block grant (Eric?) • Businesses building housing for employees (Debra mentioned Montana example?) • Craig mentioned Tulalip tribe doing this (Craig Nolte) • USDA said that USDA Rural Development has a large housing assistance program (Paul) • HUD through WA Commerce CBDG is a resource (Terry)
<p>Broadband – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media as a major listing for job searches • Access is still a challenge in many communities • Finding different models for digital literacy, online classes • How to support rural distance learners • Increased opportunities for developing or improving telecommunications infrastructure • Trainings on how to leverage partnerships and use data to identify and understand the local workforce • Lack of telecommunications infrastructure and affordable service is also a high barrier to education and employment in some rural communities. 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Workforce System – Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding, workforce development resources located in more urban areas, eligibility limitations, lack of rural capacity to apply for programs, etc. • Small towns sometimes don't want to change. • Capacity issues in rural for applying for grants. • "Mainstream" economic dev. boards tend to focus more on increasing tax revenue than employing place-based strategies that target the existing workforce in their communities, and federal workforce dev. programs don't allow for the intensity and type of programming that is effective at getting the long-term unemployed and people with higher barriers to employment into jobs or retrained. These contribute to the creation and propagation of an underutilized, demoralized workforce in rural. • Workforce and Economic Development boards often operate without any input from other community providers who can speak to the kinds of barriers some members of the workforce can face. • There's little discussion or understanding in these fields about how issues like social and economic inequality impacts the economy and health of a community. 	<p>Successes and Ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivizing workforce and/or economic development boards to extend their activities to rural communities • Fund/mentor staff at local chambers of commerce to represent workforce development and economic development interests in their communities.

Who to invite to the table?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Industry/businesses/employers (public and private)• 12 Workforce Development Councils: most have rural areas; be sure the leadership is there• WorkSource Centers• County commissioners, local officials• Community College Systems• Centers of Excellence (10) at Community Colleges, particularly directors as they have those connections with industry• K-12 system• DSHS: Dept. of Social and Health Services• Vocational Rehab• Tribes• Libraries• Chambers of Commerce• Community Action Programs• Apprenticeships – trades• Veterans• AWC: Association of WA Cities• EDC: Economic Development Councils• WSAC: WA State Association of Counties• Immigrant organizations• Farm worker associations• Growers associations• Northwest Agricultural Business Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CTE Directors at school districts (principals & superintendents may be challenged to pull away)• Employers/industries, but consensus among several that need to be strategic about location• DSHS: Dept. of Social and Health Services - can talk about best practices in employment services like employment navigation and supported employment interventions always make a great contribution. (Building Changes)• Housing authority, or who manages housing assistance (varies across rural areas)• Transportation, transp. districts, transp. non-profits• Organizations who help with worker re-entry from prison system• Bankers associations do financial literacy• Government agencies who struggle with employment needs• Organizations who have a mission to connect industries to communities• Government/ health• Job Corps• Financial literacy programs• Health care• Organizations dealing with homeless issues• Non-profits Banks• (Community Reinvestment Act – CRA requirements) |
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How do we get them to come?

Focus on the employer / businesses!

How to outreach to the smaller employers?

- Ask the businesses and employers!
- Reach out to employers ahead of time and see what they need
- Review the WA Employer Survey?
- May need to narrow it down to communities beforehand on what the specific needs/biggest challenges for that community.
- Could we do a short survey of possible participants beforehand on major challenges? Then tailor conference in that area to those needs.
- Would need to be specific draws for many leaders, i.e. hospital directors.
- Could hone in on three top challenges:
 - Silver Tsunami
 - Work readiness skills
 - Youth workforce development
- It's about relationships. Success in some of her work comes with established relationships, and building from those relationships and continuing conversations. Need to use this to let them know we're there for the long haul – use this platform to build those relationships.

P2P Stakeholders in Workforce Development

Davenport	1	Lincoln County EDC	Margie Hall
	2	Lincoln County EDC	Joyce Ming
	3	Superintendent, Harrington	Justin Bradford
	4	WA Commerce	Terry Lawhead
Olympia	5	Workforce Board	Eleni Papadakis
	6	Workforce Board	Mike Brennan
	7	Workforce Board	Eric Wolf
	9	WSU Extension, Stevens County	Debra Hansen
	10	WSU Extension	Monica Babine
	11	WSU Extension, Wahkiakum County	Carrie Backman
	12	USDA-RD	Paul Johnson
	13	Community Colleges	Meg Ryan
	14	Community Colleges	Peter Guzman
	15	South Central WA Partnership-WDC	Patrick Baldoz (Yakima)
	16	WA State Library	Elizabeth Iaukea
	17	Federal Reserve Bank	Craig Nolte
	18	Federal Reserve Bank	David Erickson
	19	Yelm City Council	Joe DePinto
20	Thurston Regional Planning Council	Katrina Van Every	
Called in	21	Avista	Patty Shea
	22	Avista	Paul Kimmell
	23	Eastern WA Partnership-WDC	Rod Van Alyne (Colville)
	24	Eastern WA Partnership-WDC	Dana McDowell (Colville)
	25	WSU University Center for Innovation	Mike Ebinger
	26	WSU Extension – Ferry County	Trevor Lane
	27	WSU Extension – Seattle	Anthony Gromko
	28	WSU Extension – DGSS	Christina Sanders
	29	WSU Extension	Jordan Tampien
	30	Superintendent, Colville	Pete Lewis
	31	Ferry County	Commissioner Nathan Davis and Jim Millner
Staying informed and/or providing feedback	32	Workforce Board	Terri Colbert
	33	Workforce Board	Tiffany Scott / Jack Fitzgerald (Benton-Franklin)
	34	Workforce Board	Lindsey Woolsey
	35	USDA-RD	Mario Villanueva
	36	Association of WA Cities	Andy Meyer
	37	WA Economic Development Association	Robin Toth
	38	Commerce	Maury Forman
	39	Commerce	Stephen Dunk
	41	Commerce	Emily Grossman
	42	WSU Extension	Rob McDaniel
	43	WSU Extension	Rebecca Sero
	44	WSU Extension	Mike Gaffney
	45	WSU Extension, Thurston County	Stephen Bramwell
	46	Thurston Regional Planning Council	Karen Parkhurst
	47	Superintendent, Davenport	Jim Kowalkowski
	48	Assoc. WA Business	Amy Anderson
	49	Avista	Steve Trabun
	50	Cowlitz-Wahkiakum COG	Bill Fashing
	51	Oregon – Mid Columbia EDC	Amanda Hoey
	52	Partners for Rural WA	Kim Herman
	53	Kalispel Tribe of Indians	Colene Rubertt
	54	WA State Microenterprise Association	Juan Aguilar
	55	WA State Association of Counties	Derek Anderson