

Project Abstract

Lead applicant: Workforce Development Board of Herkimer, Madison & Oneida Counties.

Lead applicant entity type: Workforce Development Board

Lead applicant city and state: Utica, NY

Selected grant category: Category 3: Ensuring Equitable RAP Pathways Through Pre-apprenticeship Leading to RAP Enrollment and Equity Partnerships

Set-aside: This project wishes to be considered for the set-aside for equity.

Equity focus: This project is designed to serve individuals with disabilities in a ground-breaking set of pre-apprenticeship programs leading to high-growth sectors as selected by local employers.

Project title/name: Regional Apprenticeship Development and Readiness (RADAR)

Funding amount requested: \$2,999,993

Geographic scope: Local / regional (11 counties of upstate NY)

Number of apprentices enrolled in RAPs during the life of the grant: 200 (300 enrolled in pre-apprenticeship) The WDB projects 260 will enter RAPs, but not all by the end of the project.

Population(s) to be served (if applying in categories 1-3): Individuals with disabilities

Organization name and entity type of required partner: Resource Center for Independent Living, 131 Genesee Street, Utica, NY 13501 (disability-serving agency).

Other Partners: NYS Dept. of Labor (State Apprenticeship Agency); Access-VR (state vocational rehab agency); Mohawk Valley Community College (lead of State Univ. of NY apprenticeship project); Central NY Labor Council, employers, agencies in 25-member partnership. **Employer partners project 293 openings that could be filled by this project.**

Project purpose; Connect people with disabilities with pre-apprenticeship training and RAPs.

Subrecipient activities: RCIL (above) will be the lead agency to bring localized agencies serving

people with disabilities into the project to foster outreach and recruitment in a rural area.

List of credential(s) to be awarded: Pending. All training will lead to a credential from a state-certified training provider, but partners will select sectors as part of project.

Summary of program activities: The project will create, operate and then sustain regional pre-apprenticeship programs in 5 sectors that can offer employment (manufacturing, IT, health care, social assistance, finance, as examples) through apprenticeships for people with disabilities. Participants will enter at a variety of levels, and have basic skills addressed before entering a program to provide sector-specific skills in pre-apprenticeship programs that blend classroom and hands-on skills. The pre-apprenticeship training can lead to short-term postsecondary training if essential to connect with employment. Pre-apprenticeship programs will be designed to be less than 180 days in length. To address potential COVID-19 issues and issues of rural participants, programs will be designed with an extensive remote learning component that can be expanded or minimized based on circumstances. The project provides support to become an apprentice and remain on the job. Significant participant outreach will develop a pool of participants – a necessary step to rebound from COVID-linked isolation and low numbers of apprenticeships held by people with disabilities. Employer outreach will seek an increase in employers using apprenticeships blended with an effort to increase employer hiring of with disabilities. The project will use incentive payments to target employers who have never implemented apprenticeships or hired people with disabilities. The project will fund On the Job Learning for those who are hired as apprentices. Grant funding will be blended with other funding streams to address essential support services and workplace accommodations.

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