

Year of the Credential

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

HireAbility is designating 2024 “the Year of the Credential”

- We are recognizing that we have implemented or will be implementing several overlapping efforts to increase the number of participants enrolled in credentialed programs
- These efforts are aligned to help us meet and exceed our targets under the Common Performance Measures
- However, more importantly credential attainment is one of the few reliable ways to support participants achieve higher wage and high quality careers
- We also see it as a social justice and equity initiative to ensure all Hireability participants have the opportunity to have a meaningful and rewarding career.

The Trend Line

- 2018: 244 participants enrolled in credentialed programs 48 achieved a credential
- 2019: 566 participants enrolled in credentialed programs 148 achieved a credential
- 2020: 506 participants enrolled in credentialed programs 111 achieved a credential
- 2021: 559 participants enrolled in credentialed programs 121 achieved a credential
- 2022: 626 participants enrolled in credentialed programs 156 achieved a credential

Our Strategies to Move the Credential Needle

Implementation of an Enhanced Dashboard

- Last year HA enhanced the dashboard. One of the major improvements was to track credential attainment as well as participation in credentialed programs.
- The new dashboard is clearer and easier to understand for field staff and managers to understand and incorporate into their work.
- In the coming year HA:
 - Normalize use of dashboard in regular supervision
 - Have managers set incremental office targets
 - Looking at whole district strategies
 - Create office credential thermometers

Using WorkVT2.0 and Vermont Career Advancement Project (VCAP) Grants as Catalysts for Change

- WorkVT2.0 was designed to promote self sustaining employment for SSI/SSDI beneficiaries including credential attainment. Grant ended 12/23 but lessons learned are being carried forward
- VCAP was launched in 2022 and is totally focused on credential attainment
- Both projects have involved both practice change and change of mind set around what participants can achieve
- Over the next 2 years HA will be incorporating these practice changes and mind set to all staff

Case Practice Changes

- HA has and will continue to implement case practice changes to promote credential attainment. These practices will be informed by the experience of WorkVT2.0 and VCAP. This will include:
 - Continued and expanded use of career assessments ensure participants can see the full scope of what is possible for them
 - Maintaining smaller caseloads
 - Intensive teaming with the Employment Consultant, Certified Work Incentive Counselor, Career Coach and partner providers
 - Keeping cases open longer to support credential attainment
 - Unitization of Motivational Interviewing to help participants overcome barriers
 - Better and more targeted use of financial supports to help participants engage in and succeed in credentialed programs

Use of the Career Training Offset (CTO) and Paid Work Experiences

- Many participants cannot participate in credentialed programs because they need a right now job to pay the bills
- The CTO pays minimum wage for participant time in credential training programs. The purpose is to provide participants an income while they complete a credentialed program.
- PWE provide participants to go through short term work experiences to try out potential career options.
- PWE are great options for participants with little or no work experience to take a first step into the world of work. However, PWEs can also be used by participants interested in career development to try out new fields before committing to a credential.

VCAP CCV and VSU Student Support Positions

- Through the VCAP grant, HA has funded student support positions at CCV and VSU
- CCV and VSU positions team with VCAP Career Pathway Navigators to support participants enroll and succeed in credentialed programs. They act as on ramps for participants with little or no experience of post secondary education and training
- Approach is proving very promising. Very high rates of participation especially at CCV

Partnerships with Other Workforce Training and Education Providers

- Contracts with Resource and Vermont Adult Learning for construction, HVAC and weatherization training for HA participants
- Contracting with Advance Vermont for the My Future VT web resource providing detailed and accessible information and resources on career pathways
- Exploring opportunities to Partner with local Career and Technical Education (CTE) centers

Deployment of Training and Education Coaches will provide direct one on one support for participants in credentialed programs

- Starting in 2024 we have upgraded the old job coach positions to Training and Education Coaches
- These positions will have new expectations to provide academic and practical support for HA participants enrolled in credentialed programs
- 12 positions statewide to start

Expanding Options for HA Participants to Enroll in Registered Apprenticeships

- VCAP project is developing “how to guidance” for HA staff to the use of registered apprenticeships
- VCAP Governance Board is working with our partners at DOL, CCV, VSU, Resource and others to address systems opportunities and challenges.
- HA is borrowing from California VR and looking to contract with a national organization to act as a Registered Apprentice Intermediary to engage employers and take care of the administrative components for businesses (which would otherwise put them off).