Career Pathways Strategies: 

PACE’s Early Effects on Education & Training

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Abt Associates | May 1, 2019
Abt-APPAM Forum on Career Pathways
What is PACE?

- Separate implementation and impact evaluations of 9 promising employment and training approaches, within a common conceptual framework: career pathways
  - Postsecondary education and training organized as a series of manageable steps leading to successively higher credentials
  - To engage and retain participants, programs integrate four components
    - Academic and non-academic assessment
    - Innovative basic skills and occupational training instruction
    - Academic and non-academic supports
    - Connections to employment

- Led by Abt Associates, sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families, with support from foundations and Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) funds
Where Were PACE Programs?

- Bellingham Technical College (I-BEST)
- Everett Community College (I-BEST)
- Whatcom Community College (I-BEST)
- Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County (I-BEST)
- Madison Area Technical College (Patient Care Pathways)
- Instituto del Progreso Latino (Carreras en Salud)
- Des Moines Area Community College (WTA Connect)
- San Diego Workforce Partnership (Bridge to Employment Program)
- Pima Community College (Pathways to Healthcare Program)
- Valley Initiative for Development and Advancement (VIDA)
- Year Up Puget Sound
- Year Up San Francisco Bay Area
- Year Up Chicago
- Year Up Atlanta
- Year Up Boston
- Year Up Providence
- Year Up New York City
- Year Up National Capital Region

Legend:
- Multi-step college-based pathways
- Community-based organizations that provide intensive supports
- Single-step workforce training program
- WIB-based programs/ITAs
- Short-term education programs focused on accelerated basic skills and occupational training preparation
Impact Evaluation Overview

- Separate analysis and reporting on each program
  - Based on samples of 500-2,400 adults, randomly assigned to treatment (PACE programs) or control (business as usual) groups

- Theory of change underlies program-specific impact studies
  - Identifies which outcomes program is expected to affect within specific time frame (18-24 months)
  - Main (confirmatory) and secondary outcomes vary by program
Impact Study Outcomes

- One confirmatory outcome selected for each program indicates whether the program is on track towards its long-term goals (blue bars)
  - Education-related for 8 programs (any credential, training hours, college credits)
  - Earnings-related for one program (quarterly wages)
Impact Study Outcomes

- Secondary outcomes are additional outcomes predicted by the theory of change as indicators of program success (education and self-assessed career progress) (orange bars).

- Each outcome had a hypothesized direction of change; therefore the study team applied one-tailed tests of statistical significance.

- Data sources varied by program and outcome:
  - College records, 18-month follow-up survey, wage records.
## Program Variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONFIRMATORY OUTCOME</th>
<th>HOURS OF EDUCATION</th>
<th>CREDITS EARNED</th>
<th>CREDENTIALS EARNED</th>
<th>QUARTERLY WAGES</th>
<th>Year up</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component</td>
<td>Pathways to Healthcare PCC</td>
<td>Carreras En Salud IDPL</td>
<td>I-BEST</td>
<td>VIDA</td>
<td>Patient Care Pathways Program MATC</td>
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<td>Post-training services</td>
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</table>

○ Component included

● Major emphasis
Impacts on Amount (Hours) of Education and Training

![Bar chart showing the impacts on amount (hours) of education and training for different programs](chart.png)

**Level of Statistical Significance:** ***significant at 1% **significant at 5% *significant at 10%
Impacts on Credits Earned

![Bar chart showing the impacts on credits earned for different programs and groups.](chart.png)

*Level of Statistical Significance:* ***significant at 1%*** **significant at 5%** *significant at 10%*
Impacts on Credential Receipt

Level of Statistical Significance: ***significant at 1% **significant at 5% *significant at 10%
Impact on Average Quarterly Earnings (Q6-Q7)
Impact on Perceived Career Progress

Level of Statistical Significance:
***significant at 1%  **significant at 5%  *significant at 10%
Conclusions

- Of 8 programs where the primary criterion for success was an education outcome, 6 had positive impacts
  - General support for improved approaches w/in career pathways framework
  - Too early to know if/where education impacts will boost earnings

- A 9th program aimed at early career-track employment (Year Up) produced the largest earnings impacts measured in random assignment studies of workforce programs to date

- Time (and future PACE reports) will tell whether these generally encouraging first steps lead to longer-term progress in career pathways
What is Next for PACE?

- PACE three-year and six-year reports will examine
  - Employment outcomes for all programs
    - Average rate of employment, average earnings, job characteristics, career progress
    - Cost-benefit analyses for some programs
  - Educational outcomes
    - Next steps on the pathway
    - Receipt of longer-term credentials
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