



Engaging Employers: A Sector-Based Approach to Employment for People with Criminal Records

June 29, 2017

Brought to you by the National Reentry Resource Center and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance



Speakers

Sherri Moses, Reentry and Employment Policy Analyst

The Council of State Governments Justice Center

Jack Mills, Chief Workforce Strategy Officer

Insight Center for Community Economic Development

Amy McNicholas Kroll, Director of Reentry Services

Allegheny County Jail

Anthony Adkisson, Senior Manager of Program Services

Towards Employment

OVERVIEW

01 Introduction

02 What are sector-based partnerships?

03 Examples of sector-based partnerships that include people with criminal records

04 Q & A

OVERVIEW

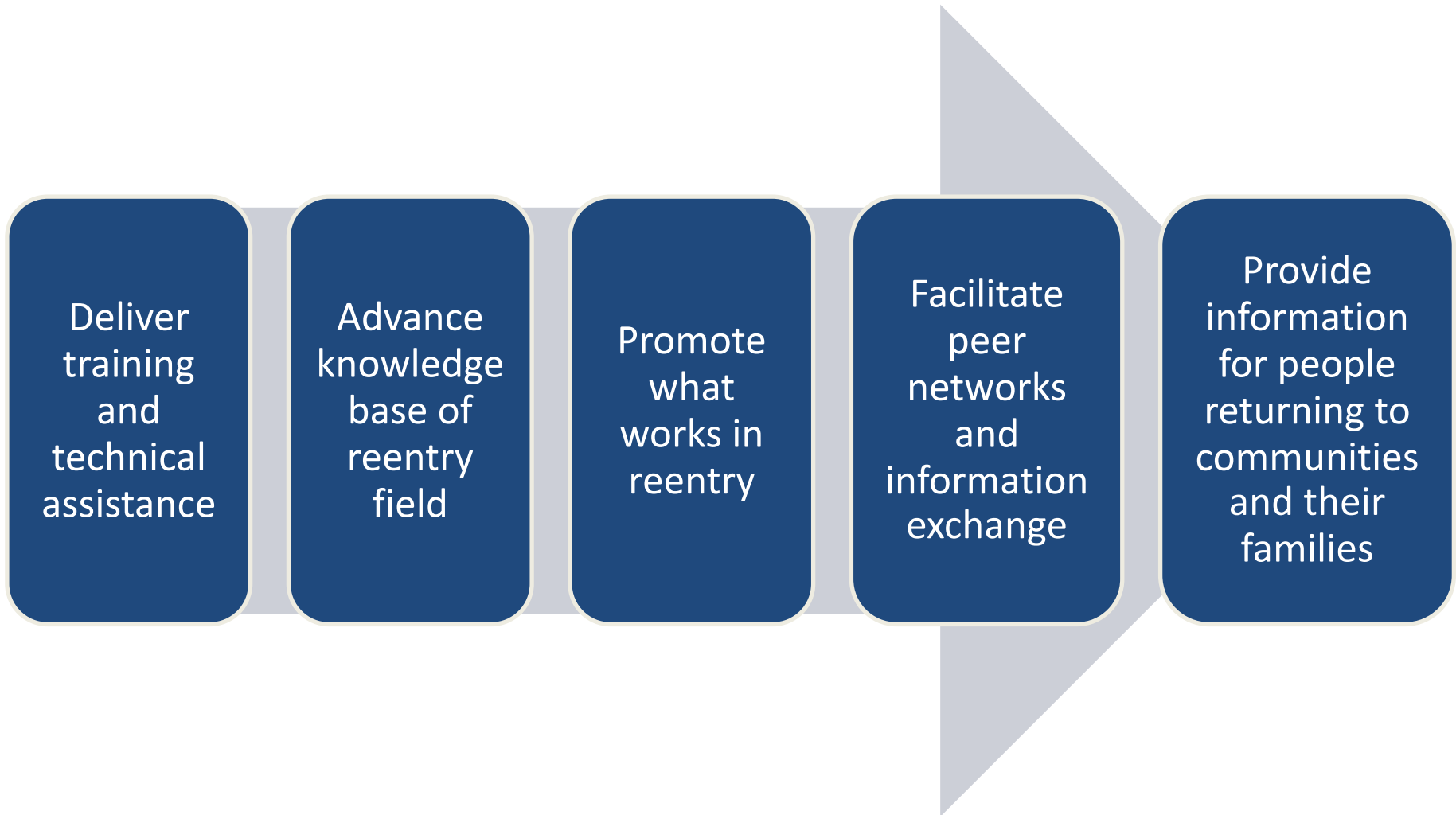
01 Introduction

02 What are sector-based partnerships?

03 Examples of sector-based partnerships that include people with criminal records

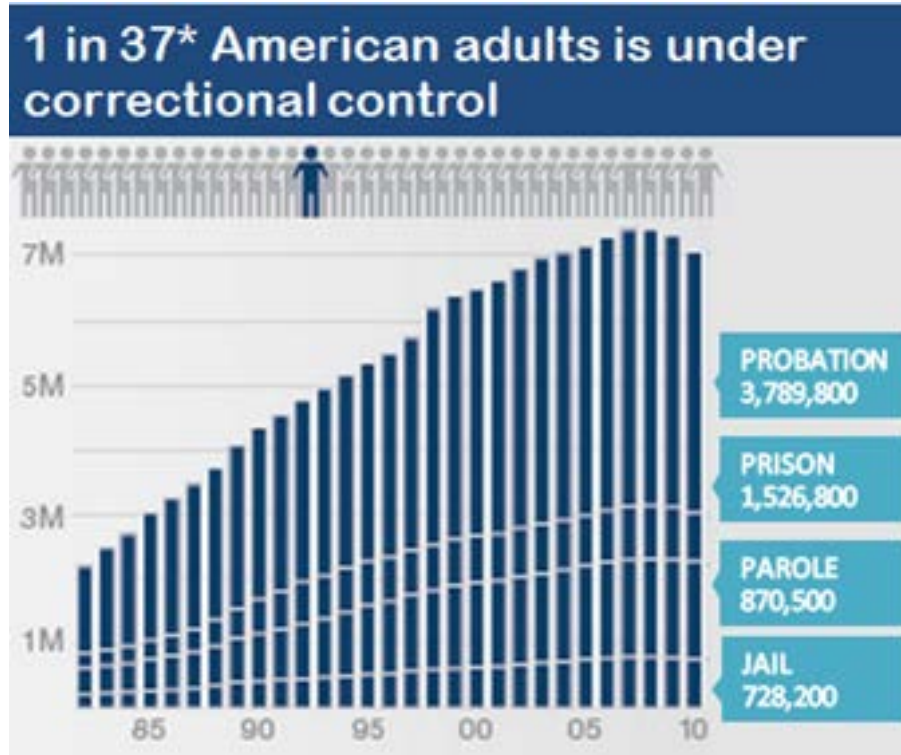
04 Q & A

The National Reentry Resource Center



nationalreentryresourcecenter.org

The scope of reentry is too big to ignore



10 million adults in the U.S. are returning from incarceration each year*

70 million adults nationwide have an arrest or conviction record

* 600,000 people released from state and federal prisons, plus 9 million people released from jails

SOURCES: National Employment Law Project (2013) *"The Business Case – Minimizing Risk, Maximizing Talent: Hiring People with Records,"* The Pew Charitable Trust (2010) *"Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility,"* Bureau of Justice Statistics (2016), *"Annual Probation Survey, Annual Parole Survey, Annual Survey of Jails, Census of Jail Inmates, and National Prisoner Statistics Program, 2000, and 2005–2015,"*; The Council of State Governments Justice Center (2015) *"Reentry Facts & Trends."*

Impact of incarceration on people and communities

FIGURE 4

INCARCERATION REDUCES EARNINGS POWER

Estimated effect of incarceration on male wages, weeks worked, and annual earnings, predicted at age 45



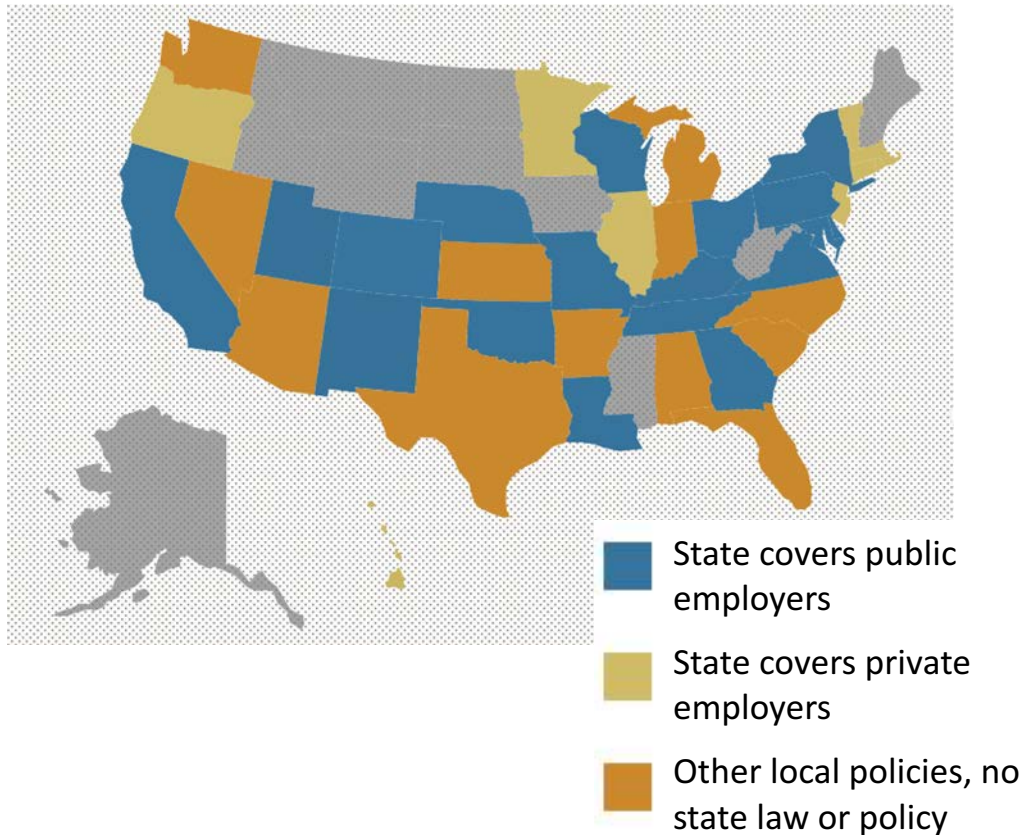
2.7 million children (1 in 28) have a parent behind bars.

Family income is reduced **22 percent** while a father is incarcerated.

SOURCE: The Pew Charitable Trusts (2010) "Collateral Costs: Incarceration's Effect on Economic Mobility"

Local and state fair chance hiring policies (known as “ban the box” policies)

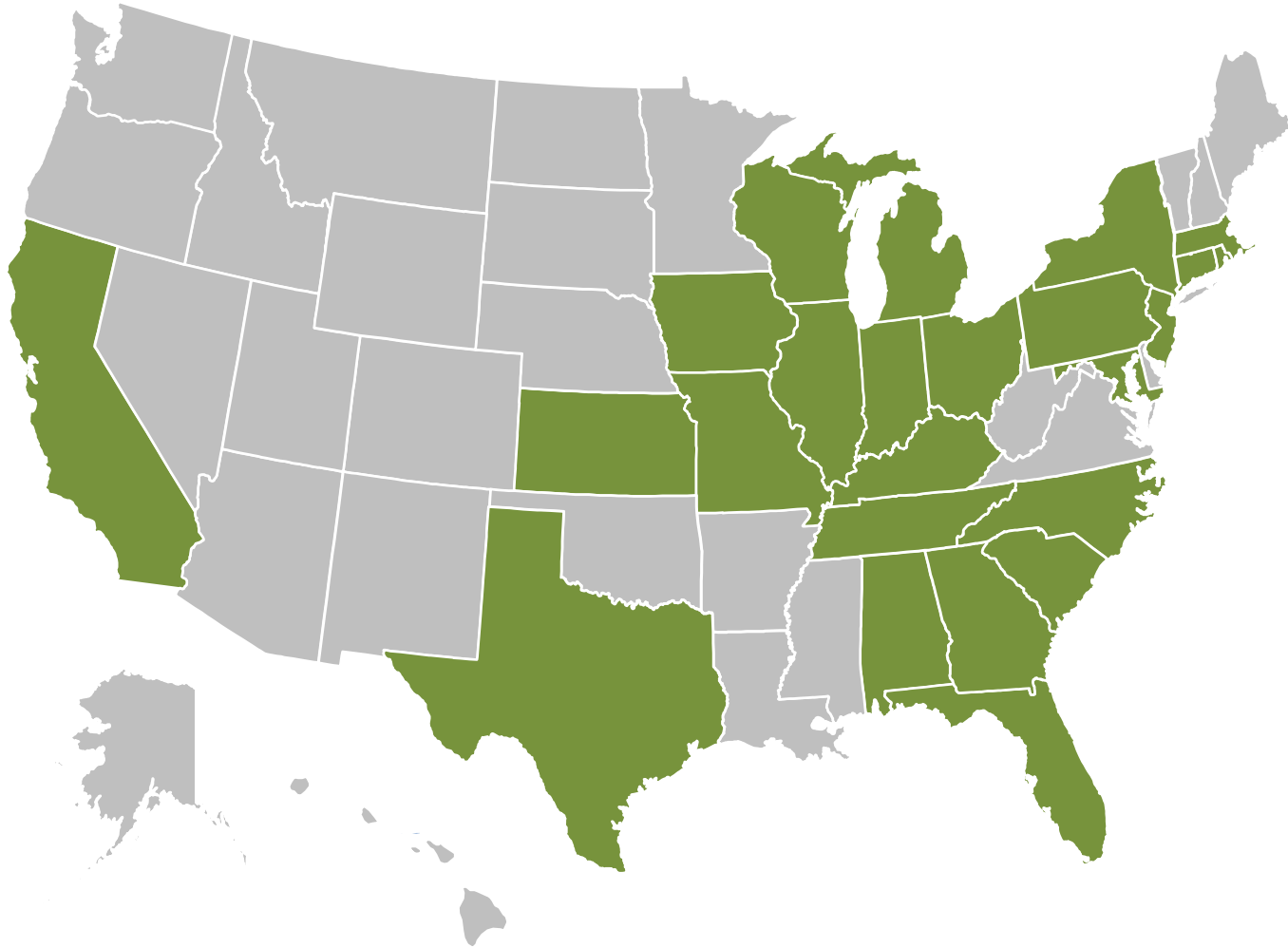
**28 states and more than 150 cities and counties
have adopted fair chance hiring policies**



**“Ban the box” policies
provide guidance on the
consideration of a criminal
record in hiring decisions,
including:**

- Prohibiting certain criminal record information from consideration;
- Considering only specific job-related offenses; and
- Providing job applicants an opportunity to explain their criminal record.

The CSG Justice Center has helped convene 35 public-private dialogues across 23 states



OVERVIEW

01 Introduction

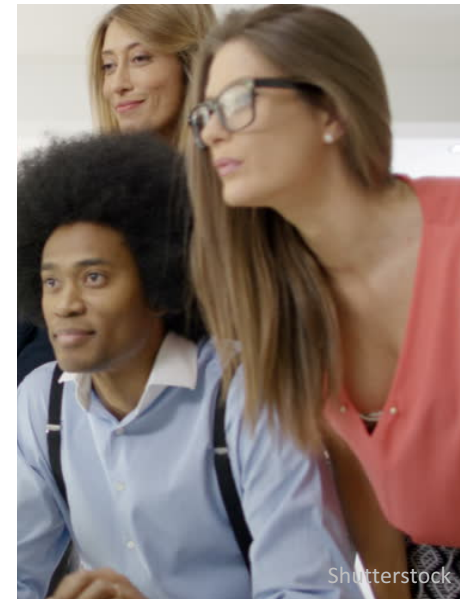
02 **What are sector-based partnerships?**

03 Examples of sector-based partnerships that include people with criminal records

04 Q & A



National Network of Sector Partners



Sector-based partnership definition

Industry-specific, regional partnership that addresses employers' human resource needs and workers' needs for good jobs, as well as pathways to them

What is the National Network of Sector Partners (NNSP)?

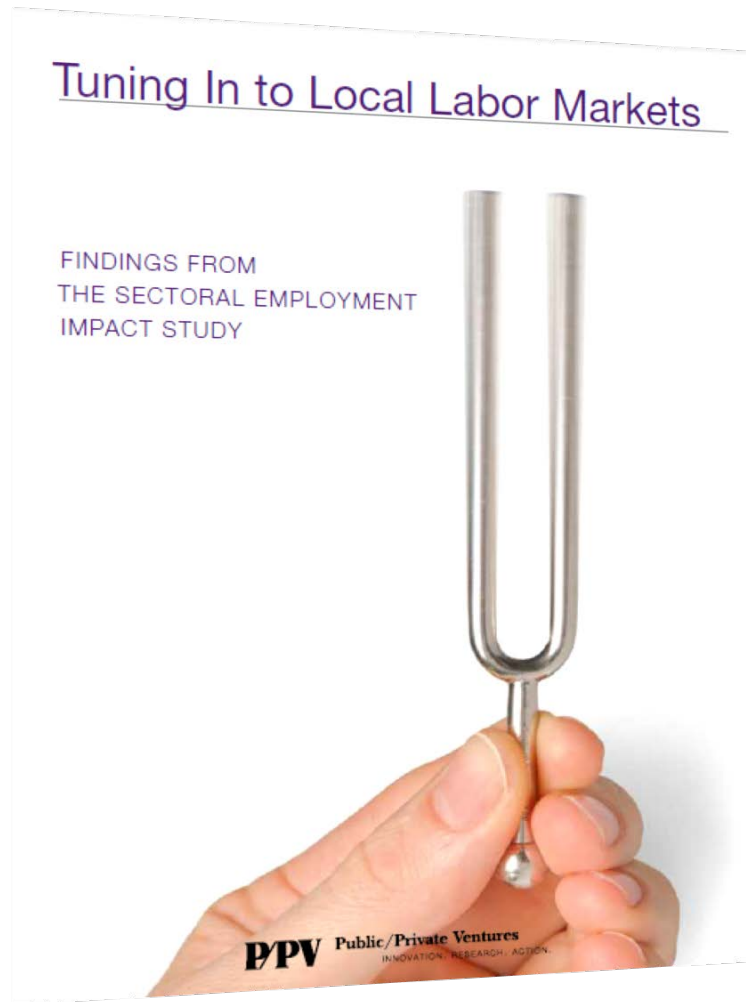
- Created as an initiative of the Insight Center for Community Economic Development in 1999
- National association for sector-based partnerships and their supporters
- Advocates for and works with sector-based partnerships to:
 1. Increase economic security, focusing on low-income individuals, their families, and their communities;
 2. Meet the workforce-related needs of industry sectors that are important to regional labor markets;
 3. Strengthen employment equity; and
 4. Improve regional economic vitality.

What results do sector-based partnerships achieve for people who have been incarcerated?



- Programmatic results and systemic changes attained
- Workforce development, economic development, education, human services, etc. connected and aligned
- Public resources targeted effectively

Participants experience increased earnings by participating in sector-based partnerships



- Sector-based partnership participants earned **\$4,011—almost 30%—more** than members of the control group in the second year (after the end of training).
- 15% of sector-based partnership participants were formerly incarcerated. They earned **\$4,769 more** than formerly incarcerated control group members.
- *38% of WRTP-BIG STEP participants were formerly incarcerated. They earned **\$4,780 more** than formerly incarcerated control group members.*

Random assignment evaluation of 1,014 individuals.
529 in three sector partnerships; 485 in the control group.

Sector-based partnerships provide great return on investment for employers



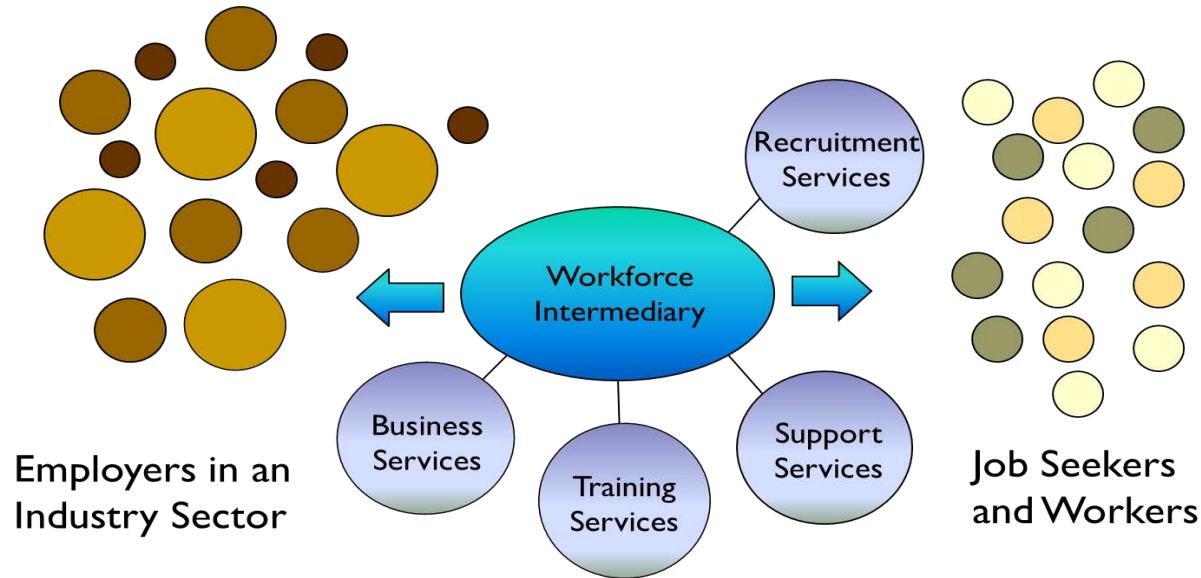
ManufacturingWorks, Chicago:
1.87:1 candidate to hire ratio,
saving time and money for 44
employers, while bringing about
187 diverse hires



JOIN, Philadelphia:
ROI for businesses was 407-469%

The results: what does it take?

Sector-Based Partnership Model



Characteristics of Sector-Based Partnerships

1. Intensive focus on an industry within a regional labor market, and **multiple employers in the industry**, over a sustained period of time
2. Leadership by a workforce intermediary with **credibility in the industry**
3. Creates new **pathways into the industry for low-wage workers**, and pathways up to good jobs and careers
4. Achievement of **systemic changes** that are “win-wins” for employers, workers, and the community

Why employers in one industry?

- Trying to know about every industry ensures that you'll be a mile wide and an inch deep.
- Businesses in an industry sector have similar workforce needs.
- Business leaders in an industry sector know each other and often work together.
- Each industry sector in your area is different: quality of jobs, number of openings, skill development needs, etc.

Which employers in the industry?

Set criteria for which employers you work with

- Work as much as possible with Employers of Choice and employers that want to become Employers of Choice
- Don't work with employers that have low-pay and/or high turnover

What is an “Employer of Choice?”

- Offers high-quality jobs, provides career paths, is committed to inclusion and diversity, has a great reputation among potential employees, and has the potential to grow/create jobs



Types of employer engagement

As a customer

Planning, governing, and oversight

Involvement in programmatic service delivery

Involvement in systemic change

Supporting the sector-based partnership

Examples:

- Hold mock interviews at the program site
- Provide paid work-based learning (e.g., apprenticeships, internships)

Examples:

- Push for support services and coaching that workers need to keep jobs
- Change hiring policies/practices
- Advocate for policy changes to increase access to employment

Policy support

One Hundred Thirteenth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Friday,
the third day of January, two thousand and fourteen*

An Act

To amend the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to strengthen the United States workforce development system through innovation in, and alignment and improvement of, employment, training, and education programs in the United States, and to promote individual and national economic growth, and for other purposes.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act”.

**The Workforce
Innovation and
Opportunity Act
(WIOA) requires
support for sector-
based partnerships**

OVERVIEW

01 Introduction

02 What are sector-based partnerships?

03 **Examples of sector-based partnerships that include people with criminal records**

04 Q & A



Review of year 1 and goals for year 2

About the Jail Collaborative

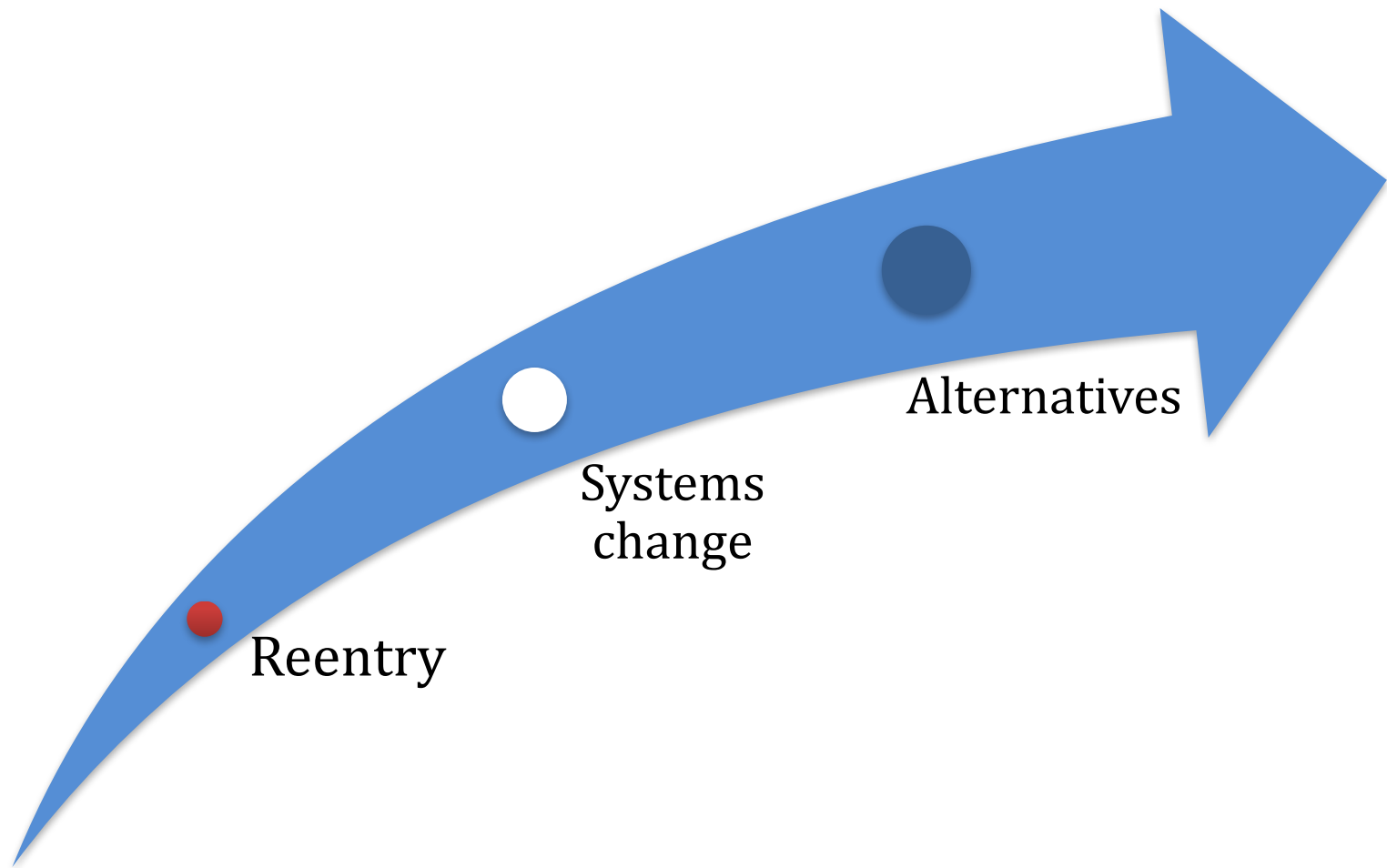
- Formed in 2000, it aims to improve public safety, restrain jail costs, and prevent the disintegration of communities and families impacted by crime and incarceration.
- Led by a cabinet composed of leaders: County Executive, Court of Common Pleas, Allegheny County Jail, Allegheny County Department of Human Services, and the Allegheny County Department of Health.
- Engages an operations committee, civic advisory committee, and other workgroups as needed.

Goal: reduce recidivism

Reducing
recidivism
will:

- Improve public safety
- Reduce costs to communities
- Recapture potential of thousands of men and women
- Reduce harm to children and families

Jail Collaborative's 3 strategies



Jail Collaborative Reentry Program

Target population:

- Inmates serving an Allegheny County Court sentence or detained in the jail with no open charges
- Medium or high risk to recidivate
- Have an Allegheny County term of parole or probation following their sentence

Phase one

Includes an assessment, the development of a service plan, and referral for reentry services

Eligible participants will participate in services offered by a variety of providers

- Education: including adult basic education/literacy/GED and computer literacy
- Employment training and pre-apprenticeship
- Creative writing
- Family relations, parenting, and family reunification
- Cognitive Behavioral Intervention (Thinking for a Change)
- Drug and alcohol treatment
- Batterers' Intervention (BIP)

The Reentry Center



Focus on employment and training

- **New Century Careers (machining program):** Located in our newly built machine shop inside the jail. Upon release, participants complete their certification requirements at the NCC training facility.
- **Pittsburgh Community Kitchens:** A culinary arts training program available only in the community.
- **Pittsburgh Trade Institute:** A masonry training program available only in the community.
- **A. Phillip Randolph Institute:** A program offering life skills and technical training for the trades.

NCC in-jail machine shop



Phase two

Wraparound services are provided by community support specialists and reentry probation officers for up to six months after release. These services include:

- Housing location assistance
- Rent, food, and clothing assistance
- Probation incentives
- Photo ID
- Linkage to Medicaid and public assistance
- Transportation
- Referral to community services including aftercare
- Job training and job placement services

Towards Employment



History and Overview

Mission: empowering individuals to achieve and maintain self sufficiency through employment

- Since 1976, Towards Employment (TE) has assisted more than 124,000 disadvantaged adults to transition off of welfare, out of prison, or off of the streets and into employment. In 2016, TE placed 560 people with an average wage of \$10.40.
- Implemented a Sector-Based Career Pathway Approach that helps participants:
 - Prepare for a job** – job-readiness training for job seekers
 - Get a job** – job search and placement services put people to work
 - Keep a job** – coaching and support are crucial to long term success
 - Advance in a career** – ongoing coaching and credentialed training prepares workers for career growth

Background

- Participated in a national, five-year workforce development demonstration designed by MDRC, in partnership with the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity and supported by the White House Social Innovation Fund, The Fund For Our Economic Future, and other local funders.
- Four test sites: NYC (two sites); Tulsa, OK; and Northeast OH.
- Tested whether a **career pathways approach**—offering a comprehensive provision of services and focused on targeted sectors and emphasizing advancement—could lead to better outcomes for individuals and employers.
- Eligible participants had earnings under 200% percent of the poverty level and, if employed, made less than \$15/hour at the point of enrollment.

Key Components of the Model

Intake and Screening

- Ensure participants can benefit from training and meet sector requirements

Pre-Employment and Career-Readiness Services

- Sector-appropriate career planning and soft skills; connection with career coach; WorkKeys assessment

Occupational Skills Training

- Sector specific

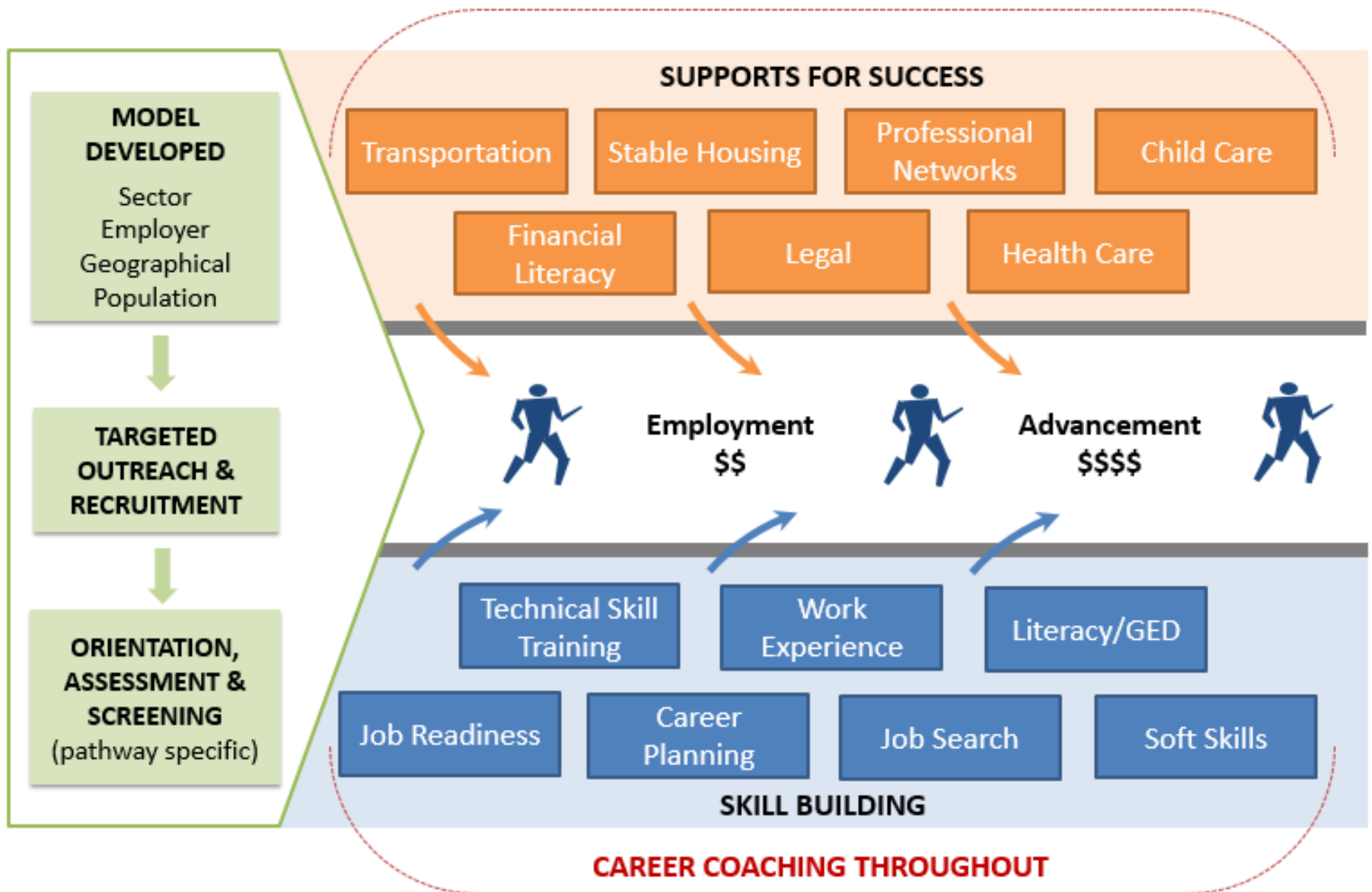
Job Development and Placement Services

- Sector specific

Retention and Advancement Services

- Post-employment, career coaching and wraparound supports continue

Career Pathway Model



The results

Accessed more services

- 1.5x more career readiness
- ~4x more skills training and >4x likely to complete
- 2x more job search support
- ~3x more post employment coaching

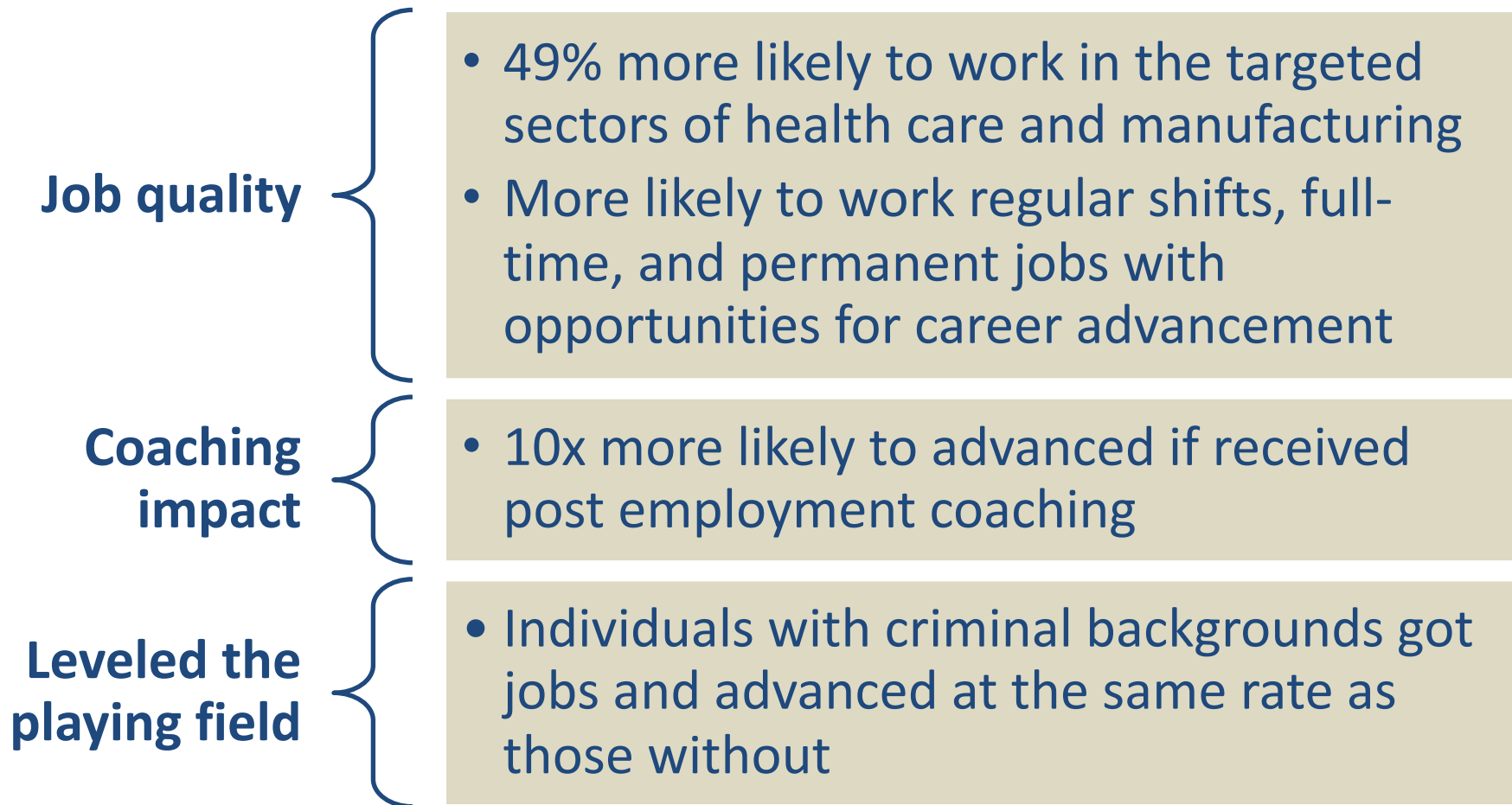
Positive employment results

- 450 people placed to date
- 220 people advanced to date
- 25% average wage Increase, among those who advanced

Increased earnings

- 14% increase overall; Later enrollees achieved 22% increase or \$3,000/year

The results



Lessons learned

Cross-systems collaboration is key

- Led a 10+ member collaborative (social service agencies, industry associations, and training providers)
- Successful implementation hinged on ability to set up and manage multiagency partnership and leverage partner expertise

Coaching matters

- 90% of participants who advanced received post-employment coaching
- Addition of a career coach is significant difference from traditional workforce services

Sector-based programming delivers

- Contextualized curriculum, soft skills and career coaching by industry
- Employers engaged in multiple ways (identified in-demand occupations, reviewed curricula, conducted mock interviews, and partnered for learn and earn opportunities for advancement and mentoring)

Be patient

- Takes time to complete training and advancement services and for services to translate into job placements and advancements
- On average, first advancement was at six months after placement, but a living wage required multiple advancements
- WA project had a two- year service window

Sector-based paths for returning citizens

- About 3,500 people return to Cuyahoga County from state prisons each year (not including those who are serving time in county jail or on probation).
- Serving time can reduce earnings by up to 52% through age 48.
- Since 2004, TE has placed more than 2,500 people with criminal records in full-time employment with strong job retention and less than 5% recidivism of our graduates.
- In 2016, using a sector-based approach, TE placed 320 reentry individuals into fulltime employment; 107 participated in skills training (*Construction, Manufacturing, Culinary*); avg. starting wage of \$10.04 and advancement wage of \$12.60/hour.



OVERVIEW

01 Introduction

02 What are sector-based partnerships?

03 Examples of sector-based partnerships that include people with criminal records

04 **Q & A**



the NATIONAL REENTRY RESOURCE CENTER

Thank You

Sherri Moses, smoses@csg.org

Jack Mills, jmills@insightcced.org

Amy McNicholas Kroll, Amy.Kroll@AlleghenyCounty.US

Anthony Adkisson, aadkisson@towardsemployment.org

Register for the NRRC newsletter
csgjusticecenter.org/subscribe