

# Evidence-Building Capacity in State Workforce Agencies

## Planning and Operationalizing Evaluation and Research

**Case Studies of Partnerships, and  
Independent Research**

# Pennsylvania Research and Evaluation

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# Program Impacts or Effectiveness

## **Study:** *Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS)*

**Question(s):** Is the workforce system effective in serving the needs of both employers and job seekers? Do all partners realize parity benefits through participation in the workforce system?

**Partners:** State-agency WIOA partners and Local Workforce Development Boards

**Research Org:** Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Data:** Administrative and program data merged with objective external data with a particular focus on feedback from the employer and job seeker communities.

**Findings:** No findings to report as we are in the planning stages of the project.

**Purpose:** Continuous improvements to CWDS to ensure maximum utility and benefit to employers and job seekers based on their diverse needs.

# Measuring Program Performance

## **Study:** *Unit-Record Data Access*

**Question(s):** In what ways or by what methods can unit-record data be effectively and efficiently shared among research and implementation partners while respecting the laws and regulations governing each partner?

**Partners:** State-agency WIOA partners, PA Workforce Development Board, and Local Workforce Development Boards

**Research Org:** Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Data:** Administrative and program data merged with objective external data. Seeking Commonwealth-wide agency-to-agency agreement to facilitate data sharing.

**Findings:** First quarter WIOA report was incomplete and therefore inconclusive; ongoing efforts to utilize available data for non-WIOA measures of impact and effectiveness.

**Purpose:** Inform WIOA partners of current performance and connections among the partners to better understand those served by the public workforce system.

# Utilizing Labor Market Information

## **Study:** *Local and Regional WIOA Planning*

**Question(s):** Of the available workforce and economic development information, how is it best utilized to address the needs of employers and job seekers?

**Partners:** Local Workforce Development Boards

**Research Org:** Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Data:** Various labor market and economic information; includes state and national data series.

**Findings:** Ongoing reviews of local and regional plans indicate the need for more extensive and intensive communication with partners to ensure the proper interpretation and application of the available data.

**Purpose:** Demonstrate the value of using objective data to set the context in which the public workforce system operates and to provide tools to better understand the relationship between workforce supply and workforce demand.

# Addressing Customer Barriers

## **Study:** *Identifying Target Population*

**Question(s):** Who is not served, but should be served, by the public workforce system?

**Partners:** PA Workforce Development Board and PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Research Org:** Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Data:** Primarily demographic data supplemented with field observations

**Findings:** No findings to report as we are in the preliminary stages of the project.

**Purpose:** To inform all WIOA partners

# Improving Program Administration or Operations

## **Study: Reducing Reporting Burdens**

**Question(s):** Where are the opportunities for operating and programmatic efficiencies?

**Partners:** Allegheny County Department of Human Services (ACDHS) and PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Research Org:** Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, PA Department of Labor & Industry

**Data:** Formal Data Sharing Agreement providing unit-record access to employer and wage and salary data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program as well as administrative wage records and benefits paid from the unemployment compensation system.

**Findings:** No findings to report as we are developing the necessary agreements to move into the implementation stage.

**Purpose:** Maximize the utility of available information in order to allow ACDHS to focus on serving their clients versus expending resources to complete paperwork.

# George Washington University: Research and Evaluation Partner

Burt Barnow, PhD.

Amsterdam Professor of Public Service & Economics

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# Program Impacts or Effectiveness

## Study Title: Young Parents Demonstration

- Research question(s): What is the impact of an employment and training intervention on the employment and earnings of young and expecting parents?
- Partners: 7 WDBs, 10 CBOs
- Research Organization: Capital Research Corporation, George Washington University, Westat, Urban Institute
- Data Agreements and sources: Participant Tracking System, National Directory of New Hires, Telephone survey
- Findings: After 8 quarters, \$677 increase in earnings, no effect on employment
- Purpose:

# Description of Young Parents Demonstration

- YPD is designed to provide educational and occupational skills training that fosters family economic self-sufficiency for young parents and expectant mothers, ages 16-24.
- Grantees serve young parents in high-risk categories: victims of child abuse, children of incarcerated parents, court-involved youth, youth at risk of court involvement, homeless and runaway youth, and others.
- YPD program consists of three rounds of grants totaling \$15.5 million – 17 grant recipients (7 WIBS; 10 CBOs).
- YPD enrollments occurred from November 2009 through June 2014.
- 3,600 + participants were randomly assigned to treatment (T) and control (C) groups, with nearly 2,000 in Rounds I and II.

# Program Impacts or Effectiveness

## Impact on Cumulative Earnings for 8 Quarters after Random Assignment

N	Sample Size	Treatment Group Observed Mean	Estimated Mean without YPD, Regression-Adjusted	Estimated Impact	P-Value
Quarter 2 after RA	1,851	\$836	\$730	\$106	.144
Quarter 4 after RA	1,908	3,346	2,962	384*	.071
Quarter 6 after RA	1,908	5,528	4,961	567*	.073
Quarter 8 after RA	1,886	7,750	7,073	677*	.100

# Program Impacts or Effectiveness

## **Study Title: National Evaluation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Program (TAACCCT)**

- Research question(s): How did TAACCCT grantees evaluate their demonstrations and what were the impact on participants?
- Partners: 256 grantees in 4 rounds of grants
- Research Organization: Urban Institute, George Washington University, Capital Research Corporation, Jobs for the Future, NORC
- Data Agreements and sources: Each grantee determines data
- Findings: Grantees used a variety of data sources and evaluation methods; few used RCTs, but many used quasi-experimental methods
- Purpose:

# Goals of the TAACCCT Grant Program

- 1) **Increase attainment** of degrees, certifications, certificates, diplomas, and other industry-recognized credentials that match the skills needed by employers to better prepare TAA-eligible workers and other adults for high-wage, high-skill employment or re-employment in growth industry sectors;
- 2) Introduce or replicate **innovative and effective methods for designing and delivering instruction** that address specific industry needs and lead to improved learning, completion, and other outcomes for TAA - eligible workers and other adults; and
- 3) Demonstrate **improved employment outcomes**.

# TAACCCT Third-Party Evaluators Quantitative Data Sources (Rounds 2-4)

	N	Percent	Not Reported
Application data	50	24%	40
Administrative employment data	147	71%	28
Student records	173	84	31
Participant survey of outcomes	106	51	35

# TAACCCT Third-Party Evaluators Quantitative Evaluation Methods (Rounds 2-4)

Method	N	Percent
Experimental design	6	2%
Regression discontinuity	5	2%
Propensity score matching	107	42%
Other quasi-experimental	65	25%
Pre-post analysis	28	11%
Correlational analysis	16	6%
Cost/economic analysis	14	5%

# Contact Information

For questions regarding the case studies, send an email to\*:

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\* Please use “WIOA Session: Evidence-Building Capacity for Research and Evaluation” in the subject line.