

# **Lessons from the first year of the Adult Promise Evaluation**

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**Presentation at the Adult Promise Cohort 2 Kickoff  
Meeting  
Denver, CO**

**November 8, 2018**

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# Objective 1: Share overview of evaluation

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1. Who are we, and why are we here?
2. What is the purpose of the evaluation?
3. What will we examine, and how?
4. What will be your role in the evaluation?
5. What are the next steps?

# **Objective 2: Discuss findings and implications**

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- 1. How were the cohort 1 Adult Promise programs designed and implemented in the first year?**
- 2. What factors appeared to support successful start up?**
- 3. How are states approaching marketing, outreach, and enrollment?**
- 4. What lessons and reflections can cohort 1 states share with cohort 2 states?**

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# Overview of the evaluation

# Who are we, and why are we here?

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- The Mathematica Policy Research team includes:
  - Julie Bruch, project director
  - Ann Person, principal investigator
  - Lisbeth Goble, task leader
  - Erin Dillon, task leader
  - Lindsay Ochoa, analyst
- Mathematica is a nonpartisan research organization dedicated to improving public well-being through high-quality, objective data collection, analysis, and decision support

# What is the purpose of the evaluation?

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- **Provide real-time feedback** to help guide decisions on program implementation during the pilot period
- **Identify and share lessons** on program design, implementation, and student outcomes across states to support replication, scaling, and sustainability of these and similar postsecondary aid programs

# What will we examine and how?

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- Program design and implementation
- Describe grantee activities, progress, and challenges on key issues
- Collect and analyze data:
  - (1) grantee meetings,
  - (2) phone interviews with program staff,
  - (3) brief web-based staff surveys,
  - (4) partner institution surveys,
  - (5) “deep dive” visits to select sites

# What is your role in the evaluation?

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- Engage with evaluation team at meetings
- Participate in phone interviews 3-4 times a year
- Respond to occasional brief web-based surveys
- Facilitate communication with partner institutions about surveys



# Evaluation Timeline

	2019				2020				2021			
	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
<b>Data collection</b>												
Phone interviews		X	X	X	X							
Surveys with partner institutions		X*		X*								
Site visits				X*	X*							
<b>Reporting of findings</b>												
Memos to Lumina on implementation findings	X	X	X	X	X							
Implementation report						X						
Summative outcomes report**												X

\* Cohort 2 only activity, timing tentative

\*\* Primarily focused on student outcomes in cohort 1 states

# Key Upcoming Activities and Dates for Cohort 2

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Month	Activity
January 2019	Adult Promise meeting – we will collect data on program design and upcoming plans
Spring 2019	Conduct the first round of implementation phone interviews
Spring 2019	Communicate with partner institutions about survey and administer survey
Summer 2019	Conduct the second round of implementation phone interviews

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# **Evaluation findings and implications for implementation**

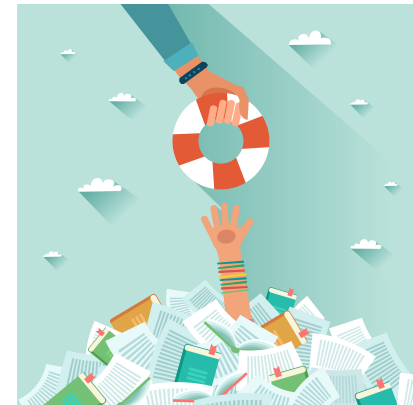
# How were programs designed and implemented in the first year?

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- Pilot programs are embedded in much **broader state initiatives**.
- Early work of states was focused on **tailoring outreach and support** activities to meet adult learners' needs.
- States are incorporating **diversity and inclusiveness** in hiring, partnering, and marketing. But we have yet to observe systemic ways of addressing inequitable outcomes.

# How were programs designed and implemented in the first year?

- **Developing supports for adult student success**
  - Online resource hubs or portals
  - Campus-based navigators for one-on-one support
  - Professional development and networking for navigators and other service providers



- **Retention and completion plans**

- **Funding from state legislatures and private foundations**

- Last dollar scholarships; \$500-1000/term scholarships
    - Flexible funds for housing, transportation, child care
    - Emergency aid

- **Debt forgiveness**

- **Support accessing public benefits**



# What factors support successful start up?

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## Clear leadership

- A well-defined coordinating team with clear roles and responsibilities

## Dedicated staff

- Staff members in place at the beginning of the grant who have substantial time allotted to the pilot

## Existing partnerships

- Trusting relationships and alignment of mission/vision across partners

## Secure resources

- Ownership of or authority over necessary resources

# How are states approaching marketing, outreach, and enrollment?

## Marketing Activities

- ✓ Online resource hubs or portals
- ✓ Targeted mailings
- ✓ Community events
- ✓ Social media, television, and billboard advertising
- ✓ Partnerships with:
  - Workforce boards
  - Tribal groups
  - High schools or scholarship programs to reach parents of high school students

State models vary in terms of **ownership of marketing and outreach**, and **definition of their target population**.

	Broad target population	Narrow target population
Centralized outreach	Washington	Minnesota
Institution-led Recruitment	Indiana Oklahoma	Maine

# Marketing messages tailored to adults

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- **Career benefits**, particularly long term wages and career options
- **Overcoming relevant barriers** to enrollment and completion:
  - Childcare
  - Transportation
  - Timing of courses
  - Prior debt
  - Prior negative experiences in college
  - Prior credits that do not relate to a single degree
- **Emotional appeals** about reinvention and motivation for returning



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# Reflections from cohort 1 grantees

# Reflections from cohort 1: Maine

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## **Rosa Redonnett**

Chief Student Affairs Officer,  
University of Maine System



- 1. What has been your greatest challenge so far and what strategies have you used to address it?**
- 2. What are the most important lessons you have learned so far?**
- 3. What advice would you share with the new grantees?**

# Reflections from cohort 1: Minnesota

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## Meredith Fergus

Manager Financial Aid  
Research, Minnesota Office  
of Higher Education



- 1. What has been your greatest challenge so far and what strategies have you used to address it?**
- 2. What are the most important lessons you have learned so far?**
- 3. What advice would you share with the new grantees?**

# Reflections from cohort 1: Oklahoma

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## Angie Willits

Lumina Degree Completion  
Manager



1. What has been your greatest challenge so far and what strategies have you used to address it?
2. What are the most important lessons you have learned so far?
3. What advice would you share with the new grantees?

# Reflections from cohort 1: Oklahoma

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## Gray Sterling

Assistant Director,  
Washington Student  
Achievement Council



1. What has been your greatest challenge so far and what strategies have you used to address it?
2. What are the most important lessons you have learned so far?
3. What advice would you share with the new grantees?



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# Additional slides

# How are Round 1 states' programs designed?

	Outreach, marketing, enrollment	Supports for adult student success	Retention and completion
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online information portal</li> <li>• Social media, television, and billboard advertising</li> <li>• Outreach at community events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess existing services</li> <li>• Institutional grants to enhance services</li> <li>• Employer engagement</li> <li>• Institutional convenings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency aid</li> </ul>
Maine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide marketing and outreach campaign</li> <li>• Meetings to connect stakeholders throughout state</li> <li>• Adult Promise highlighted on broader MaineSpark website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online information portal</li> <li>• Professional development for providers</li> <li>• Sub-grants to pilot sites to develop supports at local colleges and community-based organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augment/target existing aid options for adult students</li> <li>• Last dollar scholarships at four colleges</li> <li>• Building an Adult Promise scholarship fund for colleges in pilot communities</li> <li>• One site will use fund for living expense assistance for students</li> </ul>
Minnesota	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Automated, targeted email outreach to students previously enrolled at participating colleges</li> <li>• Pre-enrollment grants for financial holds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigators using Check and Connect model</li> <li>• Online navigation resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% tuition coverage for small group with children</li> <li>• \$1000/year scholarships</li> <li>• Emergency aid</li> </ul>
Oklahoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online information portal</li> <li>• In-person enrollment events</li> <li>• Partner with workforce boards, tribal groups, and high schools for outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional development for navigators and service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last-dollar tuition waivers</li> <li>• Up to \$1000/year scholarships</li> <li>• Emergency aid</li> <li>• Recognition events for participants</li> </ul>
Washington	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide digital and print marketing campaign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online information portal</li> <li>• Convene institutions to discuss best practices</li> <li>• Technical assistance to support colleges</li> <li>• Enrollment navigators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency aid</li> <li>• Funding for child care assistance</li> </ul>



# Evaluation research questions

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## **Design / Implementation**

- How are Adult Promise programs designed?
- How are they implemented? What factors support successful implementation?
- How do they align with local context, needs, and resources?
- How will they be sustained?

## **Outcomes**

- What are the characteristics of Adult Promise program participants?
- What are their intermediate and outcomes? What are their attainment outcomes?
- How do outcomes vary among different types of students, especially by student race, ethnicity, or household income?

# How will we examine implementation?

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- Collect information from program staff about ongoing program development and activities
  - Attend grantee convenings
  - Conduct phone interviews with program staff 3-4 times per year
  - Conduct brief web-based surveys at other intervals throughout the year
  - Conduct surveys with partner institutions
  - Conduct 2 site visits to do “deep dives”
- Analyze progress, successes, and challenges at each time point

# How will we examine student outcomes?

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- Collect student-level postsecondary data from each state
  - Academic, financial aid, and demographic data
  - Once per year
  - We will work with you to identify Adult Promise participants, or those who are targeted or supported by Adult Promise initiatives
- Analyze enrollment and outcomes across states
  - Trends by state and over time
  - Differences by student characteristics or institution type
  - Comparisons before and after program implementation