I acknowledge through signature that I received a copy of the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Handbook. As a recipient of the Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative Grant, I acknowledge my responsibility to maintain the requirements of the program.
FY20 Handbook

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY-NEWPORT (ASUN)
CAREER PATHWAYS INITIATIVE
SITE LOCATIONS

ASUN Newport Career Pathways Initiative
Walton Hall, Room 119
7648 Victory Blvd. Newport, AR 72112
870.512.7856

ASUN Jonesboro Career Pathways Initiative
Adult Education Center
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Jonesboro, AR 72401
870.512.7882

ASUN Marked Tree Career Pathways Initiative
33500 Hwy 63 East
Marked Tree, AR 72365
870.358.8615
FY 20
Career Pathways Staff
Contact Information

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Mission

The mission of the Career Pathways Initiative at Arkansas State University - Newport is to assist eligible parents in completing an educational degree and enter a high wage, high demand career.

Program Description

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) is a federally grant funded program started in 2005 which is administered by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) in association with several other state agencies and institutions. Career Pathways provides funding for participating public two-year colleges to offer educational and support services for Transitional Employment Assistance (TEA) recipients and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible students to earn high demand educational credentials for immediate entry into high wage occupations and/or further educational attainment.

Expectations of Career Pathways Participants:

- Gain education and employability skills
- Find a career pathway and ultimately a career job
- Set and reach educational and personal goals
- Utilize support services that will help lead to personal and professional success
- Have good class attendance and attitude
- Keep in close contact with Career Pathways Case Manager and Career Pathways staff
- Gain employment and stay employed
- After gaining employment, use the Career Pathways program as a way to gain support, problem solve, stay employed and complete further steps on the Career Pathways plan

Career Pathways Goal: Improve educational and employment outcomes for TANF-eligible adults.

Key individual goals include:

- Improve work participation
- Enhanced basic skills
- Wage progression
- Reduced welfare recidivism
- Increased self-sufficiency
- Increased employability
Program Eligibility

Student Eligibility Criteria
Student must be:

- An Arkansas resident
- Have dependent child(ren), under 21 years of old, living in the home and not out of the household more than 45 calendar days
- Enrolled at or in a program administered at a two-year public college
- Current TEA, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid recipients (and former TEA recipients) whose income is less than or equal to 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPL) guidelines (see chart below).

Worksheet on Family Income
Eligibility for TANF-Funded Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>2020 Federal Poverty (100%)</th>
<th>2020 Federal Poverty (250%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Less than $12,760</td>
<td>$12,760 - $31,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Less than $17,240</td>
<td>$17,240 - $43,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Less than $21,720</td>
<td>$21,720 - $54,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Less than $26,200</td>
<td>$26,200 - $65,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Less than $30,680</td>
<td>$30,680 - $76,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Less than $35,160</td>
<td>$35,160 - $87,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Less than $39,640</td>
<td>$39,640 - $99,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Less than $44,120</td>
<td>$44,120 - $110,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Documentation to Prove Eligibility

- Copy of applicant’s Driver’s License or State Issued ID
- Social Security Cards (Applicant and child(ren)
- Signed copy of most recent Federal Tax Return (Forms 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ, tax transcript, etc.), tax transcript, or pay slips/check stubs
- Copy of child(ren) Birth Certificate or proof of hospital birth or adoption papers, if applicable

Disclaimer: All documentation and requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Career Pathways Program, Arkansas Department of Higher Education, Department of Workforce Services and/or Department of Human Services.
Program Guidelines

Enrollment Process

Attending Career Pathways Orientation is required for all program participants. Any applicant who fails to submit the required eligibility documents and or complete Orientation in a timely manner will have to reapply to the program. Applicants will receive written notification regarding the status of their application.

The Career Pathways Case Manager, or other available staff, will walk each student through the necessary steps needed to enroll into the Career Pathways program. ASUN’s Career Pathways staff will make sure students understand that CPI funding is contingent upon availability and appropriation of TANF funds. CPI staff will work hard to make the student’s educational journey enjoyable and rewarding.

In order for current students to receive funding, they will have to be re-certified annually. The re-certification process begins in July and returning students must provide their previous year tax forms and must submit a new application packet. Upon review of requested documents, applicants will receive written notification of their eligibility. Students will not be enrolled in the Career Pathways Program until all eligibility documents are submitted, are deemed eligible, and all requirements of the program are met.

Intake Process

During this step, the student completes an application and submits all documents requested for verification. During the process, students will establish a connection with the CPI staff while setting goals and learning more about the rules of the Career Pathways program. When the student’s file is complete and deemed eligible for the CPI program, an eligibility letter is sent to the student. At this point, the student begins working on the employability process, which involves learning workplace skills, career assessment, real life scenarios, and interview skills along with resume building. Upon completion of their employability the student will be approved for CPI benefits.

Denial of Admission into the Career Pathways Program

Career Pathways reserves the right to deny admission to the program even if the student meets the criteria for admission. Reasons for possible denial may include, but are not limited to:

- Student has a history of very poor academic performance
- Alteration or falsification of documents
- Violated ASU-Newport’s Code of Conduct
- Student does not attend class regularly
- Student does not provide information and documents to the Career Pathways Staff in a timely manner
- Student has previous training/certification and/or degree(s) that will allow for employment in a high-demand/high-wage job
• Student is not an active job seeker
• Student failed school background check
• Student has sufficient funding

Probation/Suspension from Career Pathways
Students not complying with the provisions of the Student Handbook will be placed on probation and will not receive CPI funds and services for the remainder of the enrolled semester as well as the following semester. Services may be discontinued at the Career Pathways Director’s discretion based on the area(s) of noncompliance. The student will receive notification containing the following information:

• Placement on probationary status,
• Area(s) of noncompliance, and
• Corrective action(s) required
• Excessive noncompliance (will result in immediate suspension from the CPI program)

Students should maintain a 2.0 GPA each semester. Students who receive less than a 2.0 may be placed on suspension. Students who have less than a 2.0 for the semester, but have a cumulative GPA above 2.0 will be required to meet with a case manager to determine if they will be allowed a probationary semester. Students who are in the CPI program and withdraw from credit courses may be placed on probation. Alteration and/or falsification of documents will result in immediate suspension.

Students who are placed on suspension will be notified in writing of their status and will not be eligible for continued assistance through the Career Pathways program. Students who wish to be readmitted to the program must meet with the CPI Director to determine eligibility.

Counseling & Academic Advisement Process
Participants are required to meet with the Career Pathways Case Manager before enrolling for college each semester and on a monthly basis thereafter. The Career Pathways Case Manager reviews student schedules, discuss degree plans and refer students for academic advising and/or financial assistance. Students must also meet with their CPI Case Manager to discuss any academic changes, difficulties or barriers encountered, and graduation plans.

The advisement process includes:
Assessments, Remediation programs, financial literacy, and the CPI funding process.

Our main goal is to help establish a clear picture of each student’s skill level to ensure success in the program. The student will be asked if he/she has taken any of the following assessments: ACT or ACCUPLACER. If the student has not taken a recent assessment, he/she may be asked to take an assessment for staff to determine skill levels.
To achieve the best view of each student’s skill level, student’s scores should be taken within the last year. Depending upon the score, students may be placed in the College Prep course through ASUN Adult Education Center to help improve skill levels so that the student can enroll in college level courses.

Students will receive continuous advisement during their time in the program. The program works to ensure that students have support while seeking an education.

The staff of Career Pathways asks that each student follow the program guidelines:

- All students enrolled in college credit courses should maintain a 2.0 GPA or risk suspension.
- A student who earns less than a 2.0 may be allowed one semester of probation at the director’s judgement. The student will be required to meet with a case manager at least once a month during the probationary semester.
- Students who have tuition or courses paid by Career Pathways must see a Career Pathways Case Manager or staff member before dropping or adding a course.

**Career Pathways Services**

Students need to be aware that funds are limited and Pathways services are not entitlements. Services available to Pathways students may include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childcare Assistance</th>
<th>Individualized Counseling</th>
<th>Workshops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring services</td>
<td>Fuel assistance</td>
<td>Job placement assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab/clinical/technical supplies</td>
<td>Employability skills</td>
<td>Tuition, Books and Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Counseling</td>
<td>Case Management</td>
<td>Referrals for additional aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>Resume writing workshops</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tuition & Fees**

The Arkansas Career Pathways Initiative is a federally funded program and all students must complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Eligible students who receive Pell or scholarships will not receive any Career Pathways funds until the funds from their Pell and Scholarships are exhausted. If a student is denied a Pell award, students must submit a denial letter from financial aid designating the reason for the denial.

Students who do not completed a FAFSA are not eligible for any CPI funding. Applications for funding, including tuition/fees, books, fuel, childcare must be submitted each semester.

The following guidelines have been established to help determine how funding will be administered:

- The student must be enrolled at any of the ASU- Newport campuses (Newport, Jonesboro and Marked Tree)
The student must have and maintain a 2.0 GPA.
The student must attend class on a regular basis
The student successfully completes the Employability process.

Career Pathways understands there are external factors that may have had a negative effect on a person’s success while attending school. In the event of this misfortune, CPI may be able to assist with funding to give students a second chance at obtaining an education and will be handled on a case-by-case basis. In the event, Career Pathways is unable to assist with funding; it is our goal to help the student find some type of assistance through various partnerships in place with other agencies in referring students for tuition assistance. **Note: Funding is contingent on TANF fund availability.**

**Books & Supplies**
To relieve the financial burden of buying textbooks, students who complete the Employability process and have been deemed eligible for funding, will be allowed assistance with textbooks in the event that they do not receive enough funds from either Pell or scholarships. A benefits worksheet must be submitted requesting the need for assistance with books. Career Pathways will make every attempt to have funding for textbooks and supplies available. **Note: Funding is contingent on TANF fund availability.**

**Fuel Assistance**
TANF funding allows Career Pathways to assist with students with transportation through the issuance of fuel cards. The fuel cards will be used for the purpose of assisting students to drive back and forth to class to ASUN’s various campus locations.

Eligible students must submit a work verification form and provide attendance based on the fuel disbursement schedule to receive fuel assistance. All CPI students will receive a fuel schedule at the beginning of each semester. Prior to any fuel disbursement, a work verification form must be submitted. Class attendance will be verified with the instructor of the class. The dollar amount of $5.00 or $10.00 per day for fuel cards is contingent on the availability of TANF funds. Students must apply for assistance each semester. **Note: Funding is contingent on TANF fund availability.**

**Transportation Assistance Guidelines are as follows:**

- Student must have a valid driver’s license.
- **Fuel is the only allowable purchase on the CITGO card**
  - 1st offense, Student will be issued a verbal warning
- 2nd offense, student will be issued a written notice that their funding has been terminated. At this point, the CPI Director will make the determination to suspend all Student Support services.

- Students enrolled in online courses are not eligible for fuel assistance, only under the following circumstances:
  - The class is a hybrid course (requires class attendance for testing or lab usage)
  - The student home internet service has crashed (Will need to provide proof)
  - Student must provide signature from instructor or computer lab personnel verifying their attendance to campus.

**Childcare Assistance**
Childcare assistance is offered to students with children under the age of thirteen. Student must first apply for childcare with their local DHS office. If denied, a denial letter must be submitted to CPI before the childcare request will be considered. Once approved for childcare through CPI, class attendance must be verified by the CPI Case Manager for the week(s) the student is requesting for childcare to be paid. Career Pathways will pay $20.00/day for one (1) child per family for class attendance. Once class attendance is verified, payment will be issued to the childcare center. **Note: Funding is contingent on TANF fund availability.**

**Employability**
The overall goal of Career Pathways is to use education as a tool to help train students to be prepared to apply for and get hired in high demand, high wage jobs. The Employability Certificate will be the first step in helping students become more than ready to excel and accelerate their goals with confidence.

The certificate helps student access career options, develop workplace skill, improve interviewing skills, and create a professional and marketable resume. Eligible Career Pathways students are required to earn an Employability Certificate prior to completion of a certificate of proficiency, technical certificate or a degree. Students must meet basic academic requirements, demonstrate proficiency with computers, learn workplace skills, and job search strategies. Students can work at their own pace to complete the certificate. The Employability Certificate requires coursework in the Pathways lab on the below skills.

The following requirements for this certificate are:

a) Complete career assessment
b) Complete ARJobLink through Department of Workforce Services
c) Complete keyboard timing-goal of 20 WPM* (Depending on program track)
d) Submit an updated resume and cover letter.
e) Complete Computer GCF Literacy training
f) OR score a “B” or higher on approved computer literacy course
g) Complete Job Readiness Training (Employability Certificate)
Skills to be covered, but not limited to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewing Skills</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Time Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Dress for Success</td>
<td>Workplace Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Safety</td>
<td>Follow Directions</td>
<td>Work Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Filling out Forms</td>
<td>Skill in helping to apply for jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Career Assessments**
Part of the CPI enrollment process is to assist students with their career interest. All participants will be required to take a career assessment. All adult education students will also be required to take the TABE or other equivalent basic skills assessment, the results of which will be used to identify academic basic skills needs.

**College Prep Program**
The General Adult Education College Prep Program is designed to assist students who are interested in going to college; however, they may not have the necessary skills to attend. The College Prep Program is designed to help students achieve the academic skills level that ASU-Newport requires to be successful in college courses. The program offers one-on-one teacher interaction to help students in areas they have been deemed inefficient according to their test scores. The core emphasis areas are reading, math and language. Computer literacy and employability skills are offered as an integrated part of the curriculum. All of the classes are free and open to adults aged 18 or older. The main goal is to help the student go directly into college credit courses.

**Change of information**
All eligible student receiving CPI funds must provide current and correct student contact information to the Career Pathways staff. If there is ever a change in their mailing addresses, phone numbers, etc., it is required they inform the office of this change as soon as possible so that necessary corrections can be made in the database.

**Withdrawal/Completion**
Students who do not participate in any Career Pathways related activities or maintain contact with their Counselor/Student Advisor for one quarter of the fiscal year may be withdrawn from the program.

If a student drops out of the program or is administratively withdrawn before completing a degree or certificate, they can reapply for the program one more time. Re-enrollment after withdrawal is at the discretion of the Career Pathways' Director and on a case-by-case basis. No student will be allowed to “enroll in” the program more than twice.
A student who earns a certificate or degree while in Career Pathways and subsequently withdraws from the program becomes a “Completer.” The Case Manager will continue to offer employment related support services for one year from degree completion. This allows contact to determine if the student has found employment in a high wage, high demand field.