

Wor-Wic Community College Disability Innovation Fund: Creating a 21st Century Workforce of
Youth and Adults with Disabilities
(ALN 84.421F)

Project Abstract

1. Name of Applicant: Wor-Wic Community College
2. Eligible Entity Identification: Institution of Higher Education
3. City and State: Salisbury, Maryland
4. Congressional District: MD-001
5. Name of Project Director: Brian Bergen-Aurand, Director of Learning Services
 - a. Percentage of time or level of effort (LOE): 15%
6. Topic Area: (3) Justice-Involved Youth with Disabilities--Early Intervention (as defined in this notice) and Reintegration (as defined in this notice) from the Juvenile Justice System to the Community, Leading to CIE.
7. Geographical location(s) covered by project: Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland (Wicomico County, Worcester County, Somerset County); Wor-Wic Community College's service area.

Wor-Wic Community College's proposed project represents a substantial opportunity to identify and provide early intervention services aimed at reducing the justice-system involvement of students with disabilities, coordinating for the provision of pre-release services for students already involved in the justice system, and promoting education and employment to justice-impacted students with disabilities upon release to prevent vulnerable students from potentially reentering the juvenile justice system. The college will accomplish this through comprehensive professional development of educators and law enforcement personnel, including the School Resource Officers (SROs) within the local school system; coordination with community agencies and organizations for education/training and wrap-around supports; targeted advising for participants enrolling in post-secondary education and training at Wor-Wic; expansion of counseling and disabilities services at the college to accommodate additional students transitioning to college; and collaborations with local industry and labor market partners to establish career pathways/opportunities and track employment outcomes for project participants.

Wor-Wic's project is proposed in four stages to ensure successful, incremental growth and development of the project. Phase 1 includes an environmental survey to identify the regional resources necessary to establish the college as a hub of services and supports for disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities and to identify and enhance the skills and tools available to improve CIE opportunities. Phase 2 launches professional development and training to develop the campus community and resources and to improve interactions with vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities. Phase 3 is a one-year pilot program with Wicomico County Public Schools, one of highest justice-impacted systems in the state. Phase 4 includes revisions to improve and enhance the program based on pilot outcomes and culminates with full implementation throughout Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore.

Ultimately, Wor-Wic's proposed project takes a holistic, collaborative approach to identify the necessary resource to best serve youth with disabilities who are justice-impacted, or are vulnerable to entering the justice system, provides pre-release support services to youth in the justice system to enter CIE or postsecondary education, and significantly builds upon Wor-Wic's staffing resources to foster the enrollment, success, and goal completion for those who enroll in its credit and non-credit programs and courses to enter in-demand, living wage, stable employment.

Table of Contents

Significance of the Project	1
Project Design	6
Literature Review and Methodological Tools	6
Project Implementation Plan and Tools	9
Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes	14
Potential for Replication	15
Collaboration with Relevant Agencies and Organizations	16
Feedback and Continuous Improvement	16
Project Services	17
Services Provided	17
Strategies to Ensure Equal Access and Treatment for Underrepresented Participants	18
Collaboration with Partners for Provision of Services	20
Training and Professional Development Opportunities	21
Project Personnel	22
Key Personnel Qualifications	24
Adequacy of Resources	33
Management Plan	34
Procedures for Feedback and Continuous Improvement of Management Operations	34
Management Mechanisms to Ensure High-Quality Products and Services	35

Project Evaluation	37
Use of Results of Evaluation to Make Programmatic Changes	44

Significance of the Project

Wor-Wic Community College, founded in 1975, serves Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties, collectively known as Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore. The college's mission is to empower "a diverse population of students to achieve success by delivering high-quality, affordable education, professional training, workforce development opportunities, and comprehensive student services that strengthen economic growth and improve the quality of life on the Lower Eastern Shore." Wor-Wic's proposed Disabilities Innovation Fund project targeting justice-involved youth with disabilities aligns directly with the college's 2022 – 2027 Strategic Priorities:

- Develop and implement enrollment, retention and completion strategies to support student and community needs.
- Nurture and actively promote diversity, equity and inclusion among students and employees.
- Increase student success by expanding support services, delivering relevant courses and programs, and providing flexible scheduling.
- Improve institutional effectiveness through a high-quality workforce and appropriate facilities, technology and financial resources.

Wor-Wic welcomes more than 7,000 students annually in its credit and non-credit programs and courses, and collaborates with local school systems, industry partners, and government agencies to implement programs and services to meet the education and workforce needs of the Lower Eastern Shore. The college values ongoing assessment of its programs and services to ensure continuous improvement. Just this year, Wor-Wic joined the Achieving the Dream (ATD) partnership, focusing on accelerating equitable outcomes for all students. Through

ATD, as well as a new Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) effort, Wor-Wic is utilizing new methods to collect and analyze data that will be used to drive changes in current services and operations, as well as new initiatives, to bolster postsecondary education and career outcomes through the Lower Eastern Shore.

According to the *Maryland Public Schools Student Arrest Data Annual Report* published by the Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy in April 2024, Wicomico County Public Schools (WCPS) had 204 arrests during the 2022-2023 school year, the most among all 24 of Maryland's jurisdictions—despite having significantly fewer students enrolled in public schools than other counties across the state¹. According to Maryland Public Schools, WCPS had <15,000 students enrolled in public school in 2022-2023, or 1.36 arrests per 100 students. Baltimore County had a total enrollment of 111,085, with 116 arrests (0.104 arrests per 100 students). Montgomery County, Maryland's largest public school system, enrolled 160,554 students and reported 56 school arrests (0.35 arrests per 100 students). The WCPS arrest ratio is almost 39 times higher than that of the largest jurisdiction in Maryland.

Of the 204 students arrested in WCPS, 56 (27.5%) were special education students and one had a 504 “reasonable accommodation plan” to allow them to participate in school and school-related activities. While the overall arrest ratios are lower in Wor-Wic's other service area counties, Somerset and Worcester, data regarding the confluence of arrests and disabilities appears consistent. During the 2022-2023 school year, Worcester County Public Schools recorded 19 arrests. Five (26.3%) of those students were special education students and one had a 504 plan.

¹ Maryland State Department of Education (2024) Maryland Public Schools Student Arrest Data School Year 2022 – 2023, Annual Report.
<https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DSFSS/SSSP/StudentArrest/MarylandPublicSchoolsArrestDataSY20222023-A.pdf>

Somerset County Public Schools recorded 40 students arrested that same year. Nine (22.5%) were enrolled in special education and *all 40* had 504 plans.

In their 2022 article, “The Links Between Disability, Incarceration, and Social Exclusion,” Laurin Bixby, Stacey Bevan, and Courtney Boen describe how “Disabled people are disproportionately incarcerated and segregated from society through a variety of institutions” and call for “policy interventions redressing the mechanisms contributing to the high incarceration risks of disabled people.”² According to the National Center on Education, Disability, and Juvenile Justice (2021), more than one in three youths entering juvenile justice or young adult corrections facilities have previously received special education services. According to a 2017 report from the Department of Education, it is estimated that the percentage of incarcerated youth with disabilities residing in juvenile corrections facilities ranges from 30-60%, with some estimates as high as 85%. Overall, the research shows that youth with disabilities are disproportionately represented in juvenile justice populations. Taylor (2011) argues that across the United States, compared to youth without disabilities, youth with disabilities encounter the juvenile justice system at an earlier age, stay for a longer period, and experience additional challenges as they reintegrate into the community. What is seen in Wicomico County, across the Lower Eastern Shore, and across the entire Eastern Shore of Maryland, is consistent with these national disproportions.

In addition to concerning arrest and incarceration rates, there are significant disproportionalities and concerns with secondary and postsecondary outcomes among youth with disabilities. According to *Deep Dive: Students with Disabilities, Part 2*³, for school year 2021-

² Bixby, L., Bevan, S., and Boen, C. (2022) The links between disability, incarceration, and social exclusion. *Health Affairs*, 41(10).

³ Maryland State Department of Education. (2023) Data Deep Dive: Students with Disabilities. <https://www.marylandpublicschools.org/stateboard/Documents/2023/0228/DeepDiveStudentsWithDisabilitiesPart2.pdf>

2022, WCPS enrolled 1,516 students with disabilities, which accounted for 10.3% of the school system's student population. Worcester County Public Schools enrolled 730 students with disabilities, equating to 10.7% of the student population, and Somerset County Public Schools enrolled 411 students with disabilities, equating to 15.1% of the student population. Across Maryland, the rate of students identified as students with disabilities is 12%. From 2016-2022, the rate has been consistently between 11%-12% annually.

At the statewide level, 69.3% of students with disabilities graduated within four years, versus 86.3% of all students. Seventy-three percent of students graduated within five years, versus 89.0% of all students. Although the four- and five-year cohort graduation rates have trended up from 66.8% and 71.3% in 2018, there continues to be a gap in comparison to the overall graduation rate. The discrepancy continues regarding postsecondary enrollment, with 35% of Class of 2020 graduates with disabilities enrolling in college within 12 months, versus 65% of graduates without disabilities.

In his 2024 State of the Schools address, the Wicomico County Public Schools' superintendent, Dr. Micah Stauffer noted a significant rise in the number of students with disabilities across kindergarten through twelfth grade, as well as the priority of school climate and safety. In the 2023-24 school year, WCPS provided mental and behavioral health resources in efforts to curb disciplinary referrals and incidents of violence within schools. They were able to achieve a 10.48% decrease in incidents. To continue the effort, WCPS will increase staff training for trauma-informed care, restorative practices, youth mental health first aid and school safety. Wor-Wic's proposed Disabilities Innovation Fund initiative directly augments these efforts to increase resources and supports for students with disabilities and their families, with the ultimate goal of successful completion and employment.

According to the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability's (2022) comparisons of associate degree attainment among individuals over the age of 15 years with and without disabilities, 47.5% of people without disabilities hold associate degrees, versus 32.2% of people with disabilities. Hence, in the state of Maryland, individuals over the age of 15 years with disabilities are 0.3 times less likely to have an associate degree. Nationally, individuals with disabilities are 0.64 times less likely to have earned an associate degree. According to the same report, in 2022, Maryland's population consisted of 711,700 individuals over the age of 15 years with disabilities and 4,340,200 over the age of 15 years without disabilities. Of those 711,700 people with disabilities, 229,000 had earned associate degrees, while 482,700 had not.

In light of these data, Wor-Wic's proposed project addresses three student/youth populations in order to address the three key disproportions raised by Taylor. It seeks to:

1. Address prevention and early interventions for project *participants vulnerable to entering or reentering the juvenile justice system*;
2. Focus on the transition of *pre-release participants who are currently in juvenile justice facilities*; and to
3. Develop channels of reintegration and paths toward competitive integrated employment (CIE) for *post-release participants reentering the community*.

By working with local school systems and law enforcement agencies, Wor-Wic's project aims to interrupt the encounter between the juvenile justice system and disciplinary-referral-and-arrest vulnerable youth with disabilities. By partnering with local juvenile services facilities and corrections agencies, the project will provide skills, training, and trauma-informed transition support for detained youth with disabilities. Lastly, by developing fuller relationships with local

agencies, employers, organizations, and support providers this project will expand reintegration and CIE opportunities for released youth with disabilities.

Currently, Wor-Wic Community College serves 158 students who are registered with the institution's office of disability services. With full implementation, the project is expected to result in up to a ten-fold increase in students with disabilities pursuing a post-secondary degree or credential at the college. Ultimately, Wor-Wic's project will create a model of service and practices spanning prevention and intervention, transition, and reintegration. The model will be piloted, modified as needed for regional expansion, and then disseminated for potential expansion at the broader level.

Project Design

Literature Review and Methodological Tools

Multiple studies and surveys have found a significant correlation between disability and involvement in the criminal justice system. Research also indicates that educational institutions can help address the barriers faced by people with disabilities, especially disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities, and interrupt their justice-system involvement by mitigating these barriers through early intervention.

From the 2016 Survey of Prison Inmates⁴

- Nearly 2 in 5 (38%) state and federal prisoners reported having at least one disability.

This rate is about two and a half times higher than the 15% of adults in the general U.S. population who report having a disability.

⁴ Maruschak, L.M. and Bronson, J., Ph.D. (2021). Disabilities Reported by Prisoners: Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/disabilities-reported-prisoners-survey-prison-inmates-2016>.

- The most common type of disability reported among prisoners was cognitive disability (23%), followed by ambulatory (12%) and vision (11%) disabilities.
- A significant proportion of prisoners (24%) reported being told at some point in their life by a doctor, psychologist, or teacher that they had an attention deficit disorder.
- Nearly a quarter of all prisoners (24%) reported participating in special education classes.

Furthermore, research has shown that disabled people are disproportionately incarcerated and segregated from society through various institutions, and that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) face particular challenges in the criminal justice system because they may be at higher risk of having their disability misidentified, making false confessions, and experiencing other issues due to a lack of understanding among justice professionals.

These statistics highlight the overrepresentation of individuals with disabilities in the criminal justice system and underscore the need for more research, awareness, and targeted interventions to address this disparity, especially with regard to educational support and services in light of the prevalence of cognitive disabilities, attention deficit disorder, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Several initiatives and studies highlight the role of education in mitigating these challenges that may increase the jeopardy of disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities:

- Rutgers-Newark's Disability Studies Program: Experts at Rutgers-Newark are raising awareness about the "special ed to prison pipeline," which links educational disability classifications to higher rates of incarceration⁵. They emphasize that many students classified as disabled, particularly in urban communities of color, are funneled into the criminal justice system due to misclassification and lack of appropriate support. This

⁵ Stetler, C. (2023). Disability Studies Faculty Focus on 'Special Ed to Prison Pipeline.' Rutgers University. <https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/news/disability-studies-faculty-focus-special-ed-prison-pipeline>

misclassification often leads to negative educational experiences and increased interactions with law enforcement.

- Temple University's Institute on Disabilities: This institute provides customized training on criminal justice topics for people with developmental disabilities. Their programs aim to improve the understanding and treatment of individuals with disabilities within the criminal justice system by offering tailored training to various stakeholders, including law enforcement and legal professionals.
- The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability (NCCJD): The Arc works to increase training, knowledge, and awareness among criminal justice professionals about people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Their initiatives include advocacy, training programs like Pathways to Justice, and efforts to ensure that people with disabilities lead policy reform efforts. These programs aim to promote safety, fairness, and justice for individuals with IDD throughout the criminal justice process.
- Prison Policy Initiative: This organization curates research on disability issues within the criminal justice system, highlighting the overrepresentation of people with disabilities at all stages, from arrest to incarceration. Their research underscores the need for systemic changes and better support for individuals with disabilities to prevent their disproportionate involvement in the criminal justice system.
- University of Cincinnati's IDD Education Center: The University of Cincinnati's IDD Education Center offers life-changing programs for teens and adults with IDD. These programs focus on providing education and support that can help individuals with IDD navigate societal challenges more effectively, including those encountered in the criminal justice system.

- Other universities have developed credential programs specifically for students with intellectual disabilities. These programs not only help students secure higher-earning jobs, but also teach them self-advocacy skills and provide opportunities for independent living and social integration. For example, Kent State University’s career and community studies program has enabled students to engage in university activities develop the skills that are crucial for navigating various societal systems, including the criminal justice system.

These educational and advocacy efforts demonstrate that educational institutions and related organizations can play a crucial role in addressing the unique barriers faced by disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities. By providing targeted education, training, and support, these institutions help to create a more equitable and just system for individuals with disabilities. These institutions and their education-centered programs and support provide antecedents for Wor-Wic’s project, focused on the predominantly rural Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, where self-advocacy, social integration, and CIE preparedness can collectively contribute to better outcomes when disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities interact with the criminal justice system, potentially reducing the likelihood of negative encounters and improving their overall relation with and avoidance of the system.

Project Implementation Plan and Tools

This project positions Wor-Wic Community College as a hub of services and supports for disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities, while also bolstering the college’s accessible educational services and support for everyone throughout its rural service area. The project aligns with the college’s mission to empower “a diverse population of students to achieve success by delivering high-quality, affordable education, professional training, workforce development opportunities, and comprehensive student services that strengthen

economic growth and improve the quality of life on the Lower Eastern Shore.” It aligns with Wor-Wic’s Achieving the Dream partnership as a member of the Accelerating Equitable Outcomes cohort, through which the college is focusing on the unique needs of its largely rural population to identify resource gaps and programming that will transform students’ experiences. Furthermore, the project establishes new and leverages existing relationships, including:

- Local Educational Agencies (LEAs): Wicomico, Worcester and Somerset County Public Schools, including special education personnel
- Eastern Shore Criminal Justice Academy (ESCJA): located at and administered by Wor-Wic, the ESCJA trains law enforcement and correctional officers from more than 60 agencies and facilities on Maryland’s Eastern Shore (Lower and Upper), including new recruits and in-service officers
 - Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, conducted by the ESCJA in collaboration with all three Lower Eastern Shore counties
- Maryland Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP): Wor-Wic provides educational services to students in Maryland Department of Juvenile Services local detention and/or residential facilities
- Lower Eastern Shore disability services and advocacy agencies and organizations

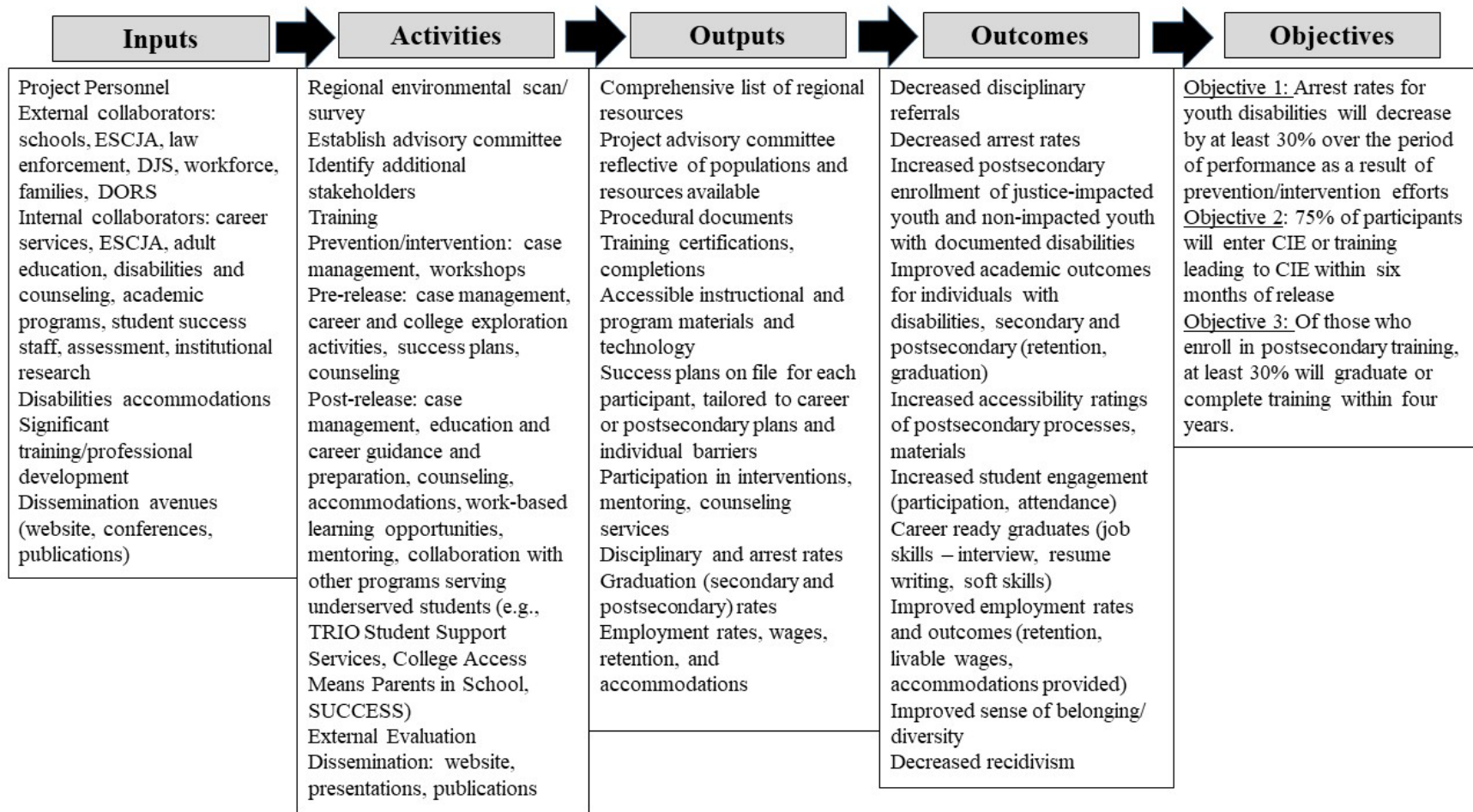
Together, this partnership will directly address the barriers that keep disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities from accessing high quality education and vocational training programs to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to secure CIE, including opportunities in advanced technology careers. This project draws on these relationships among (higher) education, law enforcement/corrections, and disability services to support participants in achieving their educational goals and training benchmarks, assist them with job

placement and job coaching, and connect them with mentors and peers who have similar experiences for guidance, support, and a sense of belonging, the lack of which can be a barrier to obtaining or maintaining CIE for disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities.

This project will be implemented in four phases over the course of the grant period:

- Phase 1: Environmental Survey – Fall 2024
 - To identify the resources necessary to position Wor-Wic as a hub of services and supports for disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities while also bolstering its culture of systemic accessibility and universal design for all members of the community.
 - To identify and further enhance the skills and tools necessary and available to improve opportunities for CIE and reduce recidivism once project participants return to the community.
 - To identify, assess, and address general risk and need factors involved in prevention and early intervention for project participants vulnerable to entering or reentering the juvenile justice system.
- Phase 2: Professional Development / Disability-Diversity Development – Spring 2025
 - CAST Training to develop campus community and resources.
 - IPICD Public Safety Disability Specialist Training to develop strategies and protocols to improve interactions between CIE team members and disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities.
- Phase 3: Pilot Program (Wicomico County Focus)—Fall 2025-Spring 2026
- Phase 4: Full Implementation (Lower Eastern Shore Service Area) – Fall 2026-2029

- Wicomico County, Worcester County, Somerset County
- The Eastern Shore (through training of CIS teams from ESCJA service area)



*Inputs, including training and case management are informed by literature, including Temple University's Institute on Disabilities and the Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice and Disability.

Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

Wor-Wic Community College's overarching goal is to create a regional, holistic program to reduce instances of justice system involvement for youth with disabilities, while providing clear, supported pathways to postsecondary education and training leading to CIE, or directly to CIE, for justice impacted youth with disabilities.

Primary objectives and outcomes that will indicate the project's movement toward achievement are noted in the logic model on the previous page.

- Objective 1: Reduce public school system arrest rates among youth with disabilities by at least 30%.
 - Baseline varies by county: 22.5% to 27.5% by September 2029; Benchmark less than 10%)
 - Outcomes: Decreased disciplinary rates; Decreased arrest rates; Increased engagement in intervention/prevention activities, including workshops and family engagement activities, by students and families
- Objective 2: 75% of participants will enter CIE or training leading to CIE within six months of release
 - Baseline: No baseline; target set based on service intensity
 - Outcomes: Increased postsecondary enrollment and academic/training outcomes (retention, graduation); increased access to learning materials and accommodations; increased student and family engagement in project (counseling, mentoring) and college or workplace-offered activities; engagement in career readiness activities; increased employment rates and wages.

- Objective 3: Of those who enroll in postsecondary training, at least 30% will graduate or complete training within four years.
 - Baseline for Wor-Wic's credit students with disabilities: 24%
 - Outcomes: Increased postsecondary persistence rates; increased accessibility ratings, accommodations; Engagement and sense of belonging; Engagement in mentoring, academic success and counseling activities

Potential for Replication

Wor-Wic has developed the proposed project in four phases to allow time to adequately assess the results from a robust environmental survey and input from a diversity of stakeholder partners; to include rigorous training and professional development among multitude of stakeholders and groups that serve justice-involved youth, including college staff who will serve the population upon their transition to postsecondary education or training programs; to first pilot the program within one committed public school system; and then to allow for continuous assessment and improvement as the program expands within the tri-county region.

By implementing the project in four carefully-designed phases, the director will compile best practices, successes, and lessons learned to establish the program as a model for replication within other jurisdictions and to a more broad audience. The project will be integrated into Wor-Wic's annual assessment cycle that utilizes the Nuventive platform to organize goals, utilized direct means of assessment in the analyses of benchmarks, and create/update action plans to drive continuous improvement.

Products and results derived from the grant will be shared with other institutions of higher education, both locally and more broadly, through conferences, peer networking events and

publications, to include project design and promising practices. Those practices will be supported through a robust external evaluation to assess impact by strategy.

Collaboration with Relevant Agencies and Organizations

Wor-Wic's project establishes linkages with public schools for prevention and intervention efforts; with the ESCJA for prevention/intervention, pre-release and post-release transition services, including Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) and IPICD Public Safety Disability Specialist (PSDS) Training; the Department of Juvenile Services to provide pre-release academic preparation, career readiness, and life skills training for incarcerated youth with disabilities; the Wicomico County adult education program, which is administered through Wor-Wic Community College for post-release individuals who have not earned a GED and are of age to do enroll in the adult education program; other departments and offices within the college, including the Counseling and Disabilities Office, Career Services Office, credit and non-credit programs and departments at the college, depending on student needs; local and state service agencies and organizations, such as the Division of Rehabilitative Services, ShoreUp, and others, depending on the results of Phase 1 and the individual needs of the youth served. Additional description is found in Project Services: Collaboration with Partners for the Provision of Services.

Feedback and Continuous Improvement

Wor-Wic's project incorporates feedback from multiple sources:

- Project Advisory Committee: Membership includes secondary and postsecondary stakeholders, law enforcement/justice system, workforce partners, social services and wrap-around agencies, justice-impacted or vulnerable youth with disabilities representative, parent, disabilities specialist and others, as identified. Quarterly meetings

include data review; discussion of project successes and challenges; outcomes; future directions.

- College Council: Membership includes academic divisions, service departments and the Executive Leadership Team. Updates and outcomes will be shared by the project director and any feedback from impacted divisions and departments will be discussed during Project Advisory Committee meetings.
- Institutional Assessment: Incorporating the project into Wor-Wic's institutional assessment process places it in the institution's established cycle and ensures communication and feedback from the vice president level. The vice president reviews assessment for the director of learning services position.
- External Evaluation: External evaluation allows for an independent, third-party assessment of the program without influence of position within the college. The inclusion of all phases/partners/services within the assessment increases its reach and allows for ongoing feedback to the team, as well as reports that can be shared with the Department of Education.

Project Services

Services Provided

Wor-Wic's project serves youth with disabilities through three broad strategies: early intervention/prevention services for youth with disabilities who are in the public school system and have not been justice-impacted; pre-release youth with disabilities currently in the justice system; and post-release justice-impacted youth with disabilities entering the workforce or pursuing postsecondary credentials through credit or non-credit workforce training programs (including adult education/GED).

Early Intervention/Prevention: Include considerations related to CIE in IEPs and parent meetings for students with disabilities, in partnership with schools; Training for School Resource Officers, Counselors, Community-School Liaisons, and other school staff; career counseling for youth with disabilities in public schools; job readiness training; mentoring/coaching

Pre-Release: Career assessment, counseling and coaching; Development of individual career and education plans to be integrated into re-entry plans; identification and liaison with community transition resources (wrap-around supports – child care, transportation, housing), also to be integrated into re-entry plans; job readiness skills (for those entering CIE and not pursuing postsecondary education/training; peer support/mentoring; case management and employment/educational outcomes tracking; youth and family workshops with topics such as re-integration, transitional/wrap-around services, employment and career opportunities, life skills and social-emotional skills.

Post-Release: Educational and workforce development support (see key personnel); development/updating of individual career and education plans (e.g., “Success Plans”) to guide case management, wrap-around service needs and counseling interactions, and to serve as a roadmap to CIE; Career Services Office services (e.g., interview skills, resume-writing, job searches); campus-based mentoring/peer support group; academic and student support services; one-on-one case management/employment/placement assistance services.

Strategies to Ensure Equal Access and Treatment for Underrepresented Participants

Wor-Wic Community College will implement the following strategies to work toward ensuring more equitable access and treatment for underrepresented participants in an effort to create a more generalizable model outcome.

- Wor-Wic will implement flexible recruitment and data collection approaches, such as:

- Adapting recruitment strategies based on community needs and feedback from stakeholders and the project advisory committee; and
 - Offering remote options whenever possible to overcome physical access barriers and accommodating participants with limited resources or time constraints.
- The college will address systemic and sociocultural barriers through measures to:
 - Simplify consent language;
 - Reduce the burden of project activities;
 - Provide transportation assistance/options;
 - Collaborate with interpreters to support non-English speakers; and
 - Individualize approaches that acknowledges cultural differences while maintaining project rigor.
- Project staff will engage in community outreach and partnerships:
 - Collaborate with community organizations, faith institutions, and local stakeholders and the project advisory committee to build trust, raise awareness, and potentially co-locate services in community venues—as we do with our education programs offered at various Wicomico County Library branches.
- Wor-Wic will efficiently utilize grant funding and recruitment resources:
 - Allocate sufficient funding for enhanced recruitment efforts, including higher staffing levels to accommodate and address the comprehensive support needs of a greater number of students with disabilities
 - Budget flexible funds to support participants' needs (e.g., scholarships, transportation, childcare).
- The college will prioritize diversity in trial design and reporting:

- Integrate diversity considerations into the development strategy from the outset.
- Broaden eligibility criteria, enrich for select populations, and implement decentralized trial aspects to improve inclusivity.
- Consistently report demographic characteristics of study populations to promote transparency.

Collaboration with Partners for Provision of Services

1. Wicomico County, Worcester County, Somerset County School Systems: Wor-Wic will collaborate with local school systems, starting with Wicomico County Public Schools to develop and implement the proposed pilot program. School representatives, including special education, counselors, and/or community liaisons will be invited to participate in the project advisory committee to determine barriers to services for students with disabilities (including justice-involved youth), leverage resources for service provision, identify training opportunities, and create a comprehensive pilot plan.
2. Juvenile Services Education Program (JSEP). The JSEP is an independent education program housed in Maryland's Department of Juvenile Services (DJS). JSEP provides educational services to all students in DJS detention and/or residential facilities, including individualized education plans (IEP). Wor-Wic's project team will engage with JSEP, also through the advisory committee, to create a path to employment or higher education (credit or noncredit programming) based on students' individualized needs, interests and capabilities.
3. Eastern Shore Criminal Justice Academy (ESCJA): Wor-Wic's ESCJA conducts entry-level police certification courses, mandated professional development courses, technical training courses, and supervisory training courses for the local law enforcement community in eight counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore. In addition, the ESCJA provides training courses,

including Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) and School Resource Officer (SRO) training, for approximately 80 agencies from jurisdictions, hospitals and universities throughout Maryland. The ESCJA has committed to working with the project team to implement training for officers serving youth with disabilities, including the School Resource Officers who are frequently a student's first encounter with law enforcement. The SROs may significantly impact the prevention phase of the project.

4. Local disabilities resource agencies: Wor-Wic partners with numerous agencies supporting individuals with disabilities throughout the tri-county region. Each agency is unique in the services provided and, therefore, role in the project. Phase 1 (environmental scan) will result in the identification of the key agencies, based on resources identified. However, preliminary collaborations identified include, for example, ShoreUp, Tri-Community Mediation, Parents Place of Maryland, Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (developmental and intellectual disabilities) and others.

Training and Professional Development Opportunities

- CAST: Wor-Wic Community College's Disability-Diversity / Accessibility training and professional development will be developed in consultation with CAST. CAST is a nonprofit education research and development organization that created the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and guidelines that ensure inclusivity in learning. CAST's work includes efforts in areas such as accessibility and inclusive technology; career exploration and development for workforce and career education; and postsecondary education, including assistive technology, accessible material and the diverse abilities and backgrounds that impact learning. Wor-Wic's project director has achieved CAST

certification but aims to provide extensive professional development through the campus and stakeholder group to include all who work with targeted population.

- The Institute for the Prevention of In-Custody Deaths, Inc. (IPICD): Wor-Wic, through the ESCJA, will partner with IPICD to train ESCJA instructors to become certified IPICD Public Safety Disability Specialists (PSDS). The IPICD PSDS program focuses on educating and training public safety employees to legally and safely contact disabled individuals. PSDS training includes content such as “Engaging Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in Custody,” “Americans with Disability Act: The Basics,” and other content specific to various disabilities. The training of ESCJA instructors supports the sustainability of programming and allows for train-the-trainer created courses for juvenile services personnel, School Resource Officers, and other pertinent stakeholders.

Project Personnel

One of Wor-Wic Community College’s 2022-2027 Strategic Plan priorities is to “improve institutional effectiveness through a high-quality workforce and appropriate facilities, technology, and financial resources.” In developing its workforce, Wor-Wic ensures the application and potential employment of persons from underrepresented populations by utilizing the diversity email groups through Gannett and HigherEdJob.com. These groups reach people from all backgrounds who opt-in to the diversity mailings. The college has also established inclusive hiring processes, including blind resume screening and diverse interview panels, alongside transparent application procedures. Wor-Wic cultivates an inclusive workplace culture through diversity training, mentorship programs, employee resource groups that foster a sense of community and support, and regular assessment of pay equity.

Leadership at Wor-Wic is committed to diversity goals with accountability measures in place, such as setting clear diversity goals and metrics for recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups and regularly reporting on progress toward diversity goals to ensure transparency and accountability. The college has also developed outreach to create pipelines for underrepresented talent. Continuous improvement through regular feedback and data analysis—surveys and focus groups—helps identify areas for improvement, refine these strategies, and ensure long-term success in diversity and inclusion efforts in line with best practices in diversity and inclusion, including disability-diversity.

To further ensure the application and potential employment of a diverse and disability-diverse workforce for this project, Wor-Wic's Human Resources office will:

- Conduct skills and diversity/disability-diversity surveys of current employees to better assess the current diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging (DEIB) culture on campus.
- Include DEIB questions in exit and stay interviews to identify areas of improvement.
- Develop information packets for applicants that highlight DEIB events and activities in the area.
- Develop tools and strategies to improve internal communication, cooperation, and business processes, including regularly highlighting DEIB activities infographics.

Furthermore, for this project, the Director of Learning Services and interview committees will seek applicants who mirror the population of the project, specifically, those with experience as/with disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities. They will target job advertisements and evaluate applicants' success in light of barriers similar to those experienced by disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities, in addition to other minimum qualifications. According to its strategic plan, Wor-Wic Community

College aspires to increase the diversity and disability-diversity of its administrative, support, and instructional personnel overall, and the specific parameters of this project reinforce and expand that commitment. For all searches, the college adheres to all affirmative action and equal opportunity guidelines in hiring personnel. For this project, the college will extend these efforts by using the following tools to recruit disability-diverse applicants:

- National and state listings (e.g., HigherEdJobs.com, Gannett), through organizations such as Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD), Maryland Association on Higher Education and Disability (MD-AHEAD), and Ability Jobs.
- Distribution to community organizations that work with individuals from underrepresented backgrounds and specific community agencies: One Stop Job Market, social services, boards of education, and others serving disciplinary-referral vulnerable and justice-involved youth with disabilities.
- College Website for internal and external constituents and other channels for internal distribution (email, job boards, flyers, etc.)

Key Personnel Qualifications

Brian Bergen-Aurand, Ph.D., will serve as the project director for Wor-Wic's proposed project. Dr. Bergen-Aurand is Wor-Wic's director of learning services, with more than 30 years of experience teaching in higher education. He specializes in quality standards, digital cultures and curriculums, screen studies, and disability matters. Dr. Bergen-Aurand is a Certified Instructional Designer. is a member of the Maryland Association on Higher Education and Disability (MD-AHEAD), and is a fellow with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE): Fostering a Culture of Belonging Program.

Additional staff necessary to implement the project are described in the following tables.

Position Description: Project Coordinator	
Division	Academic Affairs
Supervisor	Director of Learning Services
Duration	Full-time
Responsibilities	Develop project plans, schedules, and budget Coordinate project activities, resources, equipment, and information Monitor project progress and status reports Manage daily project activities, assign necessary tasks, and schedule collaborative meetings of project personnel. Act as the point of contact and communicate project status to participants. Manage project documentation and work closely with data analyst to prepare reports and presentations Liaise among all team members and stakeholders across the institution to ensure effective communication Identify and resolve issues and risks that may impact project success Track expenses and budgets Ensure standards and requirements are met through conducting quality assurance tests
Minimum Qualifications	Master's Degree (Bachelor's Degree and three or more years of demonstrated successful experience in program project coordination can be used in lieu of education requirement.) Two years of higher education experience.

	Demonstrate strong organizational and time management skills, excellent written and verbal communication, problem-solving and critical thinking skills
Preferred Qualifications	Community college experience Grants and budget management experience Demonstrate proficiency in project management platforms

Position Description: Data Analyst	
Division	Academic Affairs
Supervisor	Project Coordinator
Duration	Part-Time
Responsibilities	Track, organize, and analyze data to provide actionable insights regarding the grant's strategic goals Work closely with various departments to understand their data needs and deliver accurate and timely reports Maintain data integrity and data visualization tools to aid in decision-making Collect and analyze data and databases Conduct research relevant to the grant Clean and preprocess data to ensure accuracy and relevance Identify trends and patterns Create visualizations and reports Ensure data privacy and security compliance

Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree in mathematics, computer science, economics, statistics, or a related field (associate degree with significant experience acceptable) Experience with data analysis tools and software such as SQL, Excel, SPSS, or SAS Two years of experience in data analysis, data mining, or a related role Technical writing experience in relevant areas, including queries, reports, and presentations
Preferred Qualifications	Possesses excellent written and verbal communication skills and robust problem-solving skills Work independently and manage multiple tasks simultaneously with an attention to detail

Position Description: Instructional Designer/Accessibility Specialist	
Division	Academic Affairs
Supervisor	Director of Learning Services
Duration	Full-time
Responsibilities	Design, create, and revise learning experiences and courses for online, hybrid and in person learning, ensuring that materials are accessible to the targeted population Provide faculty professional development, training, and support with an emphasis on digital accessibility

	Partner with faculty and subject matter experts (SMEs), using core instructional design principles and theories, to design and develop accessible learning materials and courses Conduct continuous course review and facilitate improvement based on feedback and data Develop accessible digital and electronic learning materials Evaluate and recommend tools and platforms that enhance learning, accessibility, and usability Maintain up to date knowledge of accessibility standards, and state and federal laws.
Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree (Six years of relevant work experience and/or other specialized training can be used in lieu of education requirement.) Accessibility Core Competency Certification (CPACC) or equivalent Two years instructional design experience Two years of experience creating accessible instructional content in education or related setting
Preferred Qualifications	Possesses excellent written and verbal communication skills and robust problem-solving skills Work independently and manage multiple tasks simultaneously with an attention to detail

Position Description: Educational Support Professional

Division	Student Success
----------	-----------------

Supervisor	Academic and Disabilities Counselor
Duration	Full-time
Responsibilities	Provide essential (non-teaching) services and assistance to students with disabilities, faculty, and the institution as a whole Provide direct support to students with disabilities, including locating resources on campus, coaching, navigating college, and some tutoring Work directly with the academic and disabilities counselor to identify and assist students receiving accommodations from the Disability Services Office
Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree in counseling, rehabilitation services, special education, or other related field (associate degree and significant years of experience in a related field may be substituted)
Preferred Qualifications	Community college experience

Position Description: Learning Specialist	
Division	Academic Affairs
Supervisor	Director of Learning Services
Duration	Full-time
Responsibilities	Support students with disabilities by developing and implementing effective learning strategies Work closely with students, teachers, and instructional designers to ensure that educational needs are met Provide one-on-one and small-group instruction to students

	Develop and implement individualized learning plans (ILPs) based on students' specific needs and assist teachers in developing lesson plans and gathering reference materials Conduct regular assessments to monitor student progress and adjust learning plans accordingly Offer moral support and build long-lasting relationships with students Stay up to date with the latest developments in teaching methodologies and educational regulations Provide training and resources to teaching staff to help them better support students with learning disabilities.
Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree in special education, education, or a related field At least 2-3 years of work experience as a Learning Specialist, Training Specialist, or a similar position in the education sector
Preferred Qualifications	Master's degree in special education, education, or a related field Experience working with assistive technology is advantageous

Position Description: Workforce Development Specialist	
Division	Academic Affairs (and Student Success)
Supervisor	Project Coordinator
Duration	Full-time
Responsibilities	Assess client needs through interviews and vocational assessments, develop individual service strategies and assist clients in establishing self-sufficiency goals

	Coordinate and facilitate job readiness workshops, including resume building and job search assistance Provide case management activities and one-on-one assistance to clients Develop community partnerships with employers and local agencies Maintain accurate records and documentation in client management systems Coordinate eligibility and intake processes Arrange rehabilitation materials Assisting with promoting workforce development programs to local residents and organizations Stay informed about labor market trends and employment opportunities
Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree in human resources, business administration, social work, or a related field Three years of experience in workforce development, training and development, or a similar field
Preferred Qualifications	Experience working with justice-involved youth with disabilities

Position Description: Public Safety Disability Specialist	
Division	Academic Affairs and Student Success
Supervisor	Project Coordinator
Duration	Part-Time (up to 1,250 hours annually)

Responsibilities	Educate and train public safety employees to legally and safely interact with individuals with disabilities, ensuring compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and minimizing liability for public safety agencies Develop and deliver training programs focused on ADA compliance, including Title II of the ADA, and its impact on public safety operations Assist in the creation and implementation of policies and procedures that ensure ADA compliance within the agency Provide guidance on integrating ADA requirements into existing training programs and operational protocols Work with community organizations and advocacy groups to promote understanding and cooperation between public safety agencies and individuals with disabilities Participate in community outreach programs to educate the public on ADA rights and public safety procedures Stay updated on the latest legal, scientific, and psychological research related to disabilities and public safety Incorporate new findings into training programs and policy recommendations Take a proactive approach to identifying and resolving issues related to ADA compliance and public safety interactions
Minimum Qualifications	Bachelor's degree in public safety, criminal justice, social work, psychology, or a related field At least 2 years of experience in public safety, law enforcement, or a related field, with a focus on interactions with individuals with disabilities.

	Certification as a Public Safety Disability Specialist (PSDS) from a recognized program, such as the IPICD PSDS program, is required Possesses excellent verbal and written communication skills, with the ability to effectively train and educate diverse audiences as well as the ability to build relationships with public safety personnel, community organizations, and individuals with disabilities
Preferred Qualifications	Experience in training and educating public safety personnel on ADA compliance Community college experience

Adequacy of Resources

Based on the fact that Wor-Wic's proposed project starts with prevention/intervention services for students with disabilities in local school systems, the resources requested are derived from the latest school system enrollment data on pages 4-5. Wor-Wic anticipates coordinating prevention/intervention services to at least 500 students during the pilot and up to 1,000 during full project roll-out. As arrest figures are much lower, pre- and post-release services are anticipated for up to 100 youth with disabilities annually, some with entering the workforce and others enrolling in short-term non-credit programs, one-year credit-based certificate programs, or two-year associate degree programs.

The provision of intervention/prevention activities is a new endeavor at Wor-Wic, as are pre-release activities associated with the project. Wor-Wic currently serves 158 students who have disclosed documented disabilities. The magnitude of the proposed project will more than triple this figure, considering that it takes students multiple years to achieve their postsecondary goals.

In addition to direct services to youth with disabilities, the college's proposed project provides extensive training and professional development to law enforcement personnel, college staff, and educators. Sound training fosters program success and sustainable practices beyond the period of the grant.

At a total cost of \$5,732,501 for approximately 1,500 youth served over five years, the cost equates to about \$3,822 per project participant. Materials developed will be updated regularly for stakeholders and the publicly available website, adding to sustainability and broad impact of the project over time.

Management Plan

Procedures for Feedback and Continuous Improvement of Management Operations

Brian Bergen-Aurand, Ph.D., will serve as the project director for Wor-Wic's proposed project. As such, he is responsible for project management, staffing, and deliverables. Dr. Bergen-Aurand will incorporate the Disability Innovation Fund project into the college's institutional assessment operations to ensure feedback and continuous improvement. Through the assessment cycle, program goals and benchmarks are entered into Wor-Wic's Nuventive assessment platform, along with means of assessment, related action plans, and budget implications. Action plans inclusive of direct services and management operations will foster communication with Wor-Wic's Executive Leadership Team, specifically the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Services, whose departments play key roles in the project. Updates will also be shared at College Council meetings, which include members from academic divisions and service departments throughout campus, to solicit feedback and varying perspectives for continuous improvement.

Management Mechanisms to Ensure High-Quality Products and Services

Wor-Wic's management plan includes the active participation of the project director in all aspects of the project, with day-to-day activity overseen by a full-time project coordinator. The management plan will be updated based on changing needs, partners, and directions within the program, as warranted by assessment and evaluation results.

Management Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Create job postings, advertise, interview, fill requested positions	Oct. 2024 – Jan. 2025	Project Director; Project Coordinator (once hired); HR
Issue RFP, review bids, contract with external evaluator	Oct. 2024 – Dec. 2024	Project Director, in consultation with Director of Purchasing and Auxiliary Services
Project advisory committee development and start-up	March 2025	Project Director; Project Coordinator
Project advisory committee meetings	March 2025 – quarterly	Project Director; Project Coordinator
Data compilation, analysis, liaison with external evaluator	Quarterly	Project Coordinator; Data Analyst
Coordinate training/PD needs	Bi-annually	Project Coordinator (consult advisory committee, law enforcement/ESCJA, schools, workforce, DORS)
Development of procedures, policies, dissemination materials	Ongoing	Project Director; Project Coordinator
Program assessment and supervisory updates	Annual	Project Director
Program reports (performance, fiscal)	Annual	Project Director; Project Coordinator
Management and Budgetary oversight	Ongoing	Project Director

Project Evaluation

Program evaluation will assess the project's processes and outcomes, using both qualitative and quantitative measures, and will be aligned with Wor-Wic's institutional assessment process. The college uses Nuventive Solutions software to manage the program and service department assessment processes, which ensures a consistent, systematic evaluation process, allows storage of evaluation results and documentation to assess effectiveness over the history of the project, facilitates the creation of custom assessment reports, and allows for the development and updating of action plans designed to address potential problems.

Collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the project advisory committee, college personnel, workforce agencies, support agencies, all three school systems, law enforcement personnel, and other stakeholders will enable an analysis of the program's accomplishments and challenges from multiple points of view. Quantitative data will be extracted from the Colleague student information database, Wor-Wic's Institutional Research Office, IPEDS, school systems and justice system records. Examples of quantitative data to be examined include service usage rates, training completions, student contract frequency/content, graduation rates, college and career progression outcomes, and recidivism rates. Qualitative data will be assembled from surveys, focus groups and interviews and will assess the content of training and services, frequency of delivery, sufficiency of services, and participant self-efficacy measures.

Formative evaluation will enable the project advisory committee to assess their processes and to analyze effectiveness at each phase of the project and to drive mid-program modifications. Summative assessment will assess the project's overall outcomes to determine if benchmarks are achieved for the stated objectives.

Proposed questions to guide evaluation include the following, and for each measure, data will be disaggregated by gender, race/ethnicity, disability, and other means identified by the group to assess the effectiveness of strategies on different subpopulation:

Prevention/Intervention:

1. What is the status and availability of local resources supporting prevention and intervention efforts for youth with disabilities who are vulnerable to justice system involvement?
2. Is the capacity of local resources to support prevention and intervention efforts sufficient at the county and regional levels?
3. What are the supports that schools need, and how can the college and local agencies/organizations play a role in securing those resources?
4. What training is provided and how effective is it, as it relates to law enforcement interactions with youth with disabilities?
5. How well does the project engage staff and parents in prevention/intervention activities?
6. Assessed as a comprehensive program, how effective are intervention/prevention activities at decreasing office referrals, arrests, justice system involvement of youth with disabilities?

Pre-Release:

7. What supports and accommodations are available regionally, and which are lacking, in current efforts to prepare pre-release youth with disabilities from entering CIE or from enrolling in postsecondary education and training leading to CIE?
8. Is the process effective and efficient for providing pre-release services to youth with disabilities, or are there policies in place that may be modified to improve access to services?
9. How effectively does the project provide career readiness and college preparation, or even pre-release training programs, within the justice system?

10. Are accommodations and accessibility tools routinely available within juvenile facilities and are there ways they can be improved?

Post-Release:

11. What proportion of youth with disabilities exiting the justice system have career and/or training plans in place?
12. What is the extent of holistic, wrap-around support included in youth release plans?
13. How effectively are wrap-around supports engaged in success plans?
14. At what level (hours, pay rate) do individuals served through the project transition to postsecondary education/training and then CI, or directly to CIE?
15. What are the postsecondary outcomes for individuals served, including obtainment of industry-recognized credentials, certificates and degrees.
16. What are the retention rates of individuals obtaining CIE (longer-term measure)?

Wor-Wic will contract with an external evaluator to enable a full, independent process and outcomes evaluation of the project. Institutional policies and state and federal regulations do not allow the identification of an external evaluator (contractor) outside of a formal procurement process, which includes the issuance of a Request for Proposals and assessment of responses/bids based on a consistent rubric. Although the evaluator cannot be named at the time of submission, the college will utilize the American Evaluation Association, similar projects implemented by other institutions and organizations, and general searches to design evaluation requirements specific to the proposed project that will enable a comprehensive assessment of each strategy and of the full project, as well as to distribute the RFP to evaluators with sufficient experience evaluating projects aimed at early intervention and prevention of justice system involvement, service delivery pre-release leading to educational and career opportunities, and post-release

supports that result in degree/credential attainment and/or gainful employment to reduce recidivism rates, particularly as related to youth with disabilities.

The successfully-contracted external evaluator will be tasked with drafting a full evaluation plan for approval by project staff. However, preliminary measures identified by the team for evaluation include both quantitative and qualitative measures. Those measures include secondary school system county-level data for students with disabilities (graduation rates, college entrance rates, arrest rates); postsecondary enrollment, retention, graduation and transfer rates for Wor-Wic students with disabilities (the college does not track outcomes specific to justice-involved students); and state- or national-level trend data. Qualitative feedback may be measured against the full campus population, including credit and non-credit student surveys, since these data cannot always be disaggregated by disability status and never by justice-impacted status.

Evaluation data will be available semi-annually for performance reports and included in end-of-year performance reports. Evaluation reports and other publications of results will be made available to evidence building support contractor; technical assistance providers from the Department working with the college for the project; the Division of Rehabilitative Services and other vocational rehabilitation-related agencies; and housed on a website linked to Wor-Wic's website (www.worwic.edu). Wor-Wic's project website, in alignment with grant requirements, will be developed in coordination with the college's IT department in Year 1 to include the program design, objectives and partners, and refined in Years 2-5 to house participant resource materials and documentation for service professionals to include project design, results, promising practices, training materials, accessibility resources, and related publications.

Eval. Quest.	Measure	Tool	Analysis	Timeline	Source/ Responsibility
Objective 1: Reduce public school system arrest rates among youth with disabilities by at least 30%.					
1, 2, 3	Services available, capacity	Environmental survey	Pre- and post- comparison Post-survey v. best pract.	Year 1 & semi-annually	Adv. Committee/ Partners
4	Training availability, responsiveness to needs, capacity	LEA surveys, SRO focus group, interviews	Review of service gaps vs. best practices	Years 1 & 2	Project director, School partners, ESCJA, LEAs
5	Engagement of family, school staff	Activity attendance, focus groups, survey feedback	Attendance rates (disagg.), feedback re: usefulness, scheduling, needs	Per event	Coordinator
6	Behavioral outcomes for youth served through the program	Office referrals, SRO interventions, Arrests Arrest outcomes	Historical data comparisons, trends, disagg.	Semi-annual, starting with pilot	Coordinator, Schools, SROs, LEAs
Objective 2: 75% of participants will enter CIE or training leading to CIE within six months of release					
7, 8,10	Services available, capacity	Environmental survey	Pre- and post-project comparison; Post-survey vs. best practices/ literature	Year 1 & semi-annually	Advisory Committee/ Partners

9	Efficacy: career and college prep services	Individual Success Plans Career services provided in facilities College prep and training provided in facilities (workshops, non-credit, credit, devel. courses) Mentoring, counseling and related services provided in facilities	Success Plans in place to include college and/or career intentions, pathways, holistic/wrap-around supports, and timeline; Service records; Attendance and training completions; Alignment of post-release activity to Plans created pre-release	Semi-annually	Coordinator
Objective 3: Of those who enroll in postsecondary training, at least 30% will graduate or complete training within four years					
11, 12, 13	Well-defined and documented post-release plans	Individual Success Plans	Individual Success Plans, inclusive of wrap-around supports	Semi-annually	Coordinator, Wrap-around support partners

14, 15	Follow-through to education or CIE in alignment with plans	Credit, non-credit enroll. data (IR Offc.) Labor market data (case manager or student feedback, workforce system data)	% follow-through in alignment with Plans % enrolling or entering CIE (disaggregated)	Semi-annually	Coordinator, Data analyst, workforce development specialist
16	Retention and success	Postsecondary retention, persistence, graduation, credential attainment rates Job retention, promotion, wage rates	Participants' rates vs. college students with disabilities and without; disaggregated For CIE – historical data from local partners, comparison vs. local wage trends; disaggregated	Semi-annual	Coordinator, data analyst, workforce development specialist

Use of Results of Evaluation to Make Programmatic Changes

Wor-Wic's Assessment Plan outlines the assessment cycle, timeline, responsibilities and procedures. By following the Plan, data from the project will be entered into Nuventive, evaluated in comparison to historical trends, control group data, or benchmarks by using multiple measures of assessment, and used to create action plans (for areas not meeting benchmarks). Wor-Wic's director of institutional assessment and effectiveness reviews assessment data for all divisions and shares feedback with college administration. The utilization of action plans and early feedback from supervisors and administrators allows for timely action to remedy problems.

Evaluation of activities is on per event, monthly, semester, or annual bases, depending on the activity/outcome. Formative evaluation results will be shared with the project advisory committee at bi-annual meetings to discuss concerns and solicit suggestions for improvement that can be implemented mid-project in order to ensure that the program stays on course to excel. Summative evaluation will assess the overall effectiveness of the project in meeting its objectives. Results from formative and summative assessment will drive future planning and sustainability efforts.



Micah C. Stauffer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Wicomico County Public Schools

2424 Northgate Drive, Salisbury • P.O. Box 1538, Salisbury, MD 21802-1538 • 410-677-4400

Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

June 27, 2024

Deborah Casey, Ph.D.
Wor-Wic Community College
32000 Campus Drive
Salisbury, MD 21804

Dear Dr. Casey:

On behalf of Wicomico County Public Schools, I fully support Wor-Wic Community College's proposed efforts under the "Disability Innovation Fund—Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project Program."

The safety and ultimate success of Wicomico County students is a priority within our school system. As a school system with one of the highest student arrest rates in the state, we strive to build programs and partnerships to provide students with the wrap-around supports necessary to thrive. Our students with disabilities represent a significant percentage of the disciplinary referrals within Wicomico County Public Schools and are, thus, vulnerable to entering the juvenile justice system. Our students with disabilities are represented in our disciplinary referrals including those referrals associated with violations of law. We continue to strive to identify resources and partnerships to address the behaviors associated with these violations and to reduce the vulnerability of these students to have involvement with the juvenile justice system.

Wor-Wic Community College's proposed project represents a substantial opportunity to identify and provide early intervention services aimed at reducing the justice-system involvement of students with disabilities, coordinating for the provision of pre-release services for students already involved in the justice system, and promoting education and employment to justice-impacted students with disabilities upon release to prevent vulnerable students from potentially reentering the juvenile justice system. The college will accomplish this through professional development of educators and law enforcement personnel, including the School Resource Officers (SROs) within the local school system; coordination with community agencies and organizations for education/training and wrap-around supports; targeted advising for participants enrolling in post-secondary education and training at Wor-Wic; and collaborations with local industry and labor market partners to establish career pathways/opportunities and track employment outcomes for project participants.

www.wicomicoschools.org

Deborah Casey, Ph.D.
June 27, 2024
Page 2

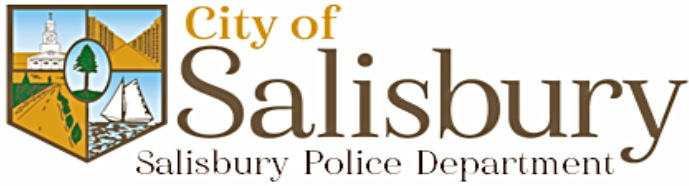
Wicomico County Public Schools and Wor-Wic Community College have a strong history of collaborating to meet the diverse needs of the local community. This project is an opportunity to amplify the magnitude of collaboration and comprehensive support services available to students with disabilities throughout Wicomico County and, more broadly, Maryland's Lower Eastern Shore. We are excited to be involved in this effort.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Micah C. Stauffer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'S'.

Micah C. Stauffer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

CC: Kimberly Miles, Assistant Superintendent



June 27, 2024

Deborah Casey, Ph.D.
Wor-Wic Community College
32000 Campus Drive
Salisbury, MD 21804

Dear Dr. Casey:

On behalf of The Salisbury Police Department, we fully support Wor-Wic Community College's proposed efforts under the "Disability Innovation Fund—Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project Program."

Any training opportunity offered for our police officers regarding the aspects of justice-involved youth with disabilities is an endeavor that will significantly benefit our work would greatly enhance the services that we can provide to our youth and citizens of Wicomico County.

The Salisbury Police Department and Wor-Wic Community College's Eastern Shore Criminal Justice Academy have a strong history of collaboration through Eastern Shore Criminal Justice Academy. This project is an opportunity to expand collaboration and training in a new way to serve the needs of youth. We are excited to be involved in this effort.

Thank you,

David T. Meienschein
Chief of Police



699 W. Salisbury Parkway
Salisbury, MD 21801
410-548-3165
www.salisburypd.com

