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INDIVIDUALIZED PLANNING & CAREER DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES
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>> ERIC CLINE: Hello, everyone. This is Eric Cline with
the Institute for Educational Leadership and the National
Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for youth. I would
like to welcome you to this webinar. I am going to give you a
quick orientation to the webinar platform and then pass it off
to my colleague, Mindy.

Up front in the middle of the screen, you will see there
are two polls up. If you have not entered your information into
the poll, please go ahead and do so. This just gives us a sense
of who is on this session and how we can tailor the information
for everyone.

Underneath those two polls is the main slide window.
That's where you will see the PowerPoint presentation. Below
that slide window is the CaptionStream pod. You can see we are
live captioning this webinar for use now and also for use in the
recording later.

In the top right corner, there is a Files pod. That holds
the file for the PowerPoint. If you would like to download it,
click on that.

Below that is the question-and-answer pod. You can use
that to ask questions about the webinar, which I will probably

respond to, or questions of the presenter, which will the presenters will be able to respond to either at the moment or in the Q&A at the end, whatever seems appropriate at the time.

Then the bottom box underneath that is the Chat window, and a bunch of people are using that.

So with that being said, I am going to pass it off to Mindy.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. Thank you, Eric.

I want to welcome everybody and ask those who joined to be sure to answer the two polling questions we have up here. I am going to move those in a minute. It's great to be able to get a sense of who is with us, what types of organizations you represent, and what type of role you have within your organization.

So I am with the Institute for Educational Leadership, and IEL is a national nonprofit organization that equips leaders to work together across boundaries to build effective systems that prepare children and youth for postsecondary education, careers, and citizenship. And IEL houses a National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth, which is a National Technical Assistance Center funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy.

Since 2001, the National Collaborative has been providing TA and creating resources aimed at assisting state and local workforce development systems to better serve youth, including youth with disabilities and other disconnected youth populations.

Over the past year, we have been focusing on assisting postsecondary education institutions with building capacity and strengthening practices to increase student retention and success. This includes raising awareness about strategies to better support students with disabilities in postsecondary education, given that they are a growing segment of the population in higher education.

So today's webinar is a part of a series targeted to postsecondary institutions, and this is the fifth of the series.

I am going to go ahead and move the polls over so that you can see the slides.

And today's webinar, I will be presenting along with Dr. Scott Solberg from Boston University School of Education. And I just wanted to point out that we do have a link here that you can follow to the archive of other webinars in this series.

I am just checking to see if Dr. Solberg has joined us. He was coming from another presentation immediately -- that ended just immediately before this one. And so as soon as he joins us, I will be introducing him. But in the meantime, I wanted to let you know a little bit about the basis of the National

Collaborative's work. So everything that we do is based upon a national transition framework called the Guideposts for Success, and this framework identifies what all youth need for successful transition to adulthood. And it's organized into five areas: School-based preparatory experiences; career preparation & work-based learning; youth development & leadership; connecting activities; family involvement & supports.

And the Guideposts also provide additional guidance on what youth with disabilities need in addition to the basics that all youth need. This framework was developed through an extensive review of research evidence and practical knowledge from demonstration projects and decades of experience in workforce development, youth development, education, and disability services.

One of the five guidepost areas, as I mentioned, is career placement and workforce learning, all about making sure youth have quality opportunities for career development, which brings us to today's webinar topic.

It looks like the slides have disappeared. Eric, are you there?

>> ERIC CLINE: Yeah, I am trying to figure out what just happened. Hang on.

>> MINDY LARSON: I am just wondering if Scott possibly was trying to join by Web com.

Okay. Sorry for that, folks, we had a little technical glitch. I will continue on.

The content of today's webinar is focused on career development. As we know, in order to be successful in college and careers, students need to have an understanding of themselves and various career options so that they can make informed decisions about their goals for careers and college and the pathways to achieving those goals.

Ideally, this process should start early, as early as middle school. In some school systems, they start even in elementary years. So that students are already -- have a strong sense of themselves and their direction before they enter college. But as we know, many students do enter college still lacking a clear sense of direction. And in other cases, students change their minds once they start college. So career development continues to be important in the college years, which is why today's webinar we have planned to provide an overview on what career development is and how individualized planning fits into a quality career development strategy, sharing some of the research, and also emerging practices from around the country, and also some resources you can use in your work.

So the reason that we are so concerned about career

development in the college years is that postsecondary completion rates are too low. Too many students who are starting college unfortunately are not completing a degree or credential. So in order to help them complete and succeed in college, we really want to help them be clear about what they want to accomplish while they are in college and what they are trying to achieve a degree or credential to do after college.

Research tells us the majority of students are not ready to make career and program decisions when they enter college. This is partly because this is -- they are still in the middle of developmental process that involves different stages of maturation and really figuring out your identity. And so often they lack the knowledge and experience that they need to make an informed decision.

Studies have also shown that when students come into college undecided and they don't select a program in their first year, they are less likely to receive a credential or transfer successfully from one institution to another to complete the degree.

Students have a lot of pressure on them, understandably, to choose a major as soon as possible or before they start college. The rising costs of postsecondary education make it so important to make a decision as early as possible so that students aren't using their time and money during college to take courses that aren't going to help them achieve a degree or credential that they ultimately want and that is relevant to the career that they want to pursue.

But in this atmosphere of pressure to make a decision as early as possible, a lot of students are basing their decisions on what they are familiar with, which is oftentimes the experiences of family and friends or things that they see in the media. And sometimes they are really overwhelmed by all the program options that postsecondary institutions offer. Which makes them more likely to pick something that they've heard about in their daily life. So it's not always about choosing something that really fits who they are and what they like to do, but more so choosing something that seems familiar based on the experience that they've had so far or the people that they know.

Another part of the context that's important to acknowledge is that there are often optional career-related services in college that are being underutilized by students. The 2014 Community College Survey of Student Engagement indicates this. 50% of the students surveyed said they rarely or never used career counseling services that were available at their school. And 70% said they rarely or never discuss career plans with faculty or staff, which is particularly disconcerting.

In terms of other career development opportunities, this survey result from the Gallup-Purdue index in 2014 indicates that very few students are taking advantage of career development opportunities related to internships and employment that could be helping them prepare for pursuing careers after college. Fewer than three in ten graduates who are surveyed indicated that they've had internships or jobs while they were in college.

Scott?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Yes.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. Thanks for joining us.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Thank you. Sorry for being a little bit late.

>> MINDY LARSON: That's okay. I did mention that you were coming directly from another presentation just before this, so we really appreciate you being with us. And you are just in time because I just got to an introduction about quality career development.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Great. All right. So let me take it from there for a little bit, then.

So yeah, and I have been listening to the talk. I was just trying to get a phone number to get in. So I was able to hear some of the great stuff that you were presenting, Mindy. From the perspective of the work we've been doing nationally in this area, we really do feel that quality career development opportunities is one of the critical pieces that we want to unpack, and we unpack it into three different elements. And the other key is, is that we are unpacking it as a concept of skill development, not just access to activities. And so we're looking at how do we help all youth as well as emerging adults and then even older adults as they are in the postsecondary system, how do they build the self-explorations needed to really understand their values, their interests, and their skills? And not just understanding, then, who they are, but where they can apply those skills. And what career exploration skills does it really help to say there's a range of occupational opportunities that are out here. We can look at the different kinds of experiences we might need, what have we had in the past, what new work-based learning experiences we might need, and also -- and this is why postsecondary becomes such a key piece -- what are the education pathways that are necessary for me to achieve these goals that are emerging?

And by having these goals emerge through this active self-exploration, skill development, and career exploration through skills development, once they have that solidified, the next step becomes what skills do I need to be successful if I want to pursue those goals?

So the education pathway is part one, but under career planning and management, we get into all the other skills, also employability skills, what are the leadership development I might need, what are the kinds of workplace development skills I need not to only know the nature of my work but also build capacity for my skill sets.

These three domains have been something that we call the process that really underlies the career development process.

I said process twice, but that's what happens sometimes.

Do you want to go to the next slide? So some of the ways, then, to kind of support this process. And certainly, especially in the postsecondary settings, there's a great opportunity around providing career centers that can provide advising. We have great professions that are working with academic advisors that are starting to incorporate this into their work. And one on one is certainly one of the ways, but it's also quite expensive. There's also things that we can do within classes. We can have leading classroom discussions or facilitating educators to engage in these conversations in classrooms, providing the workshops for resume writing or for how to think about one's career. These become not only cost-efficient, but also great ways to build a community of people around these conversations.

So really, really like the group aspect as both a cost-effective vehicle but also a powerful method for getting youth and adults engaged in this process.

And then we've mentioned work-based learning a little bit, but certainly work-based learning is a real critical aspect. What work-based learning does is by doing internships, volunteer experiences, by doing civic engagement -- we can put that on the work-based learning spectrum as well -- what it does is it enables the individual to not only say at the end of the day are my interests, skills, and values really aligns with this career pathway, but what have I really learned about this, and do I have a more deeper sense of understanding about the career?

So on the one hand, I am getting skills, but I am also getting a richer understanding of self and a deeper understanding of where I might fit in the world. So we really like work-based learning as a career development tool as well.

And then individualized or personalized kinds of education and career planning is really one of the areas where we think it ties it all together, that if the individual was able to take all these experiences that they may have within the high school, within college, and as they are going through the life span, and maintain a personalized career and academic plan that identifies what they see themselves being able to do, the different occupations that they can align with, and then what are those

additional lifelong learnings that they are going to be looking at? What are the education pathways, training pathways they might need?

What we are building, then, is an individual who is going to be quite adaptive, that if they lose out on a job or lose out on a prospect, they can go back to a full plan and look at their backup strategies or they can reevaluate their strategies based on changes in labor market conditions.

Next slide.

So I'll talk a little bit about the nature of this individualized learning plan or individualized planning. We've been studying this now with the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth through funding of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. We have been studying this for a long time. And what we are finding is that states have really grabbed on to this concept. We've got 37 now and the District of Columbia, and more even since we did our last national look at policies, that are really encouraging or mandating that every youth -- and it started in high school, but now more and more are looking at middle school -- are saying that at the end of the day, every child needs to have this personalized individualized learning plan, which is really laid out to say what are the things I've learned about myself, my interest, skills, and values; what are the places in the world of work where I can apply those; what are the education pathways I need to get there? And then really looking at themselves from where they are at right now as far as what the academic as well as work-based and other kinds of learning opportunities they need to pursue those career goals.

States are going to use different names at the precollege level, so we are going to have the ECAP, the ICAP, the Peach State Plan -- you can guess Georgia. I will just give it out. But they are all basically the same kind of structure which we just described. It's about a process that allows for those development of self-exploration, career exploration, career planning management skills, and it's about aligning the kinds of academic and out-of-school learning opportunities that I need to pursue in order to achieve career goals that I, as the individual, have self-defined based on that exploration.

What we are finding is, is that it's been a great way of helping individuals look at whether the graduation requirements that they need to look at are aligned with the postsecondary goals that they may want to achieve. We've seen that students with disabilities who may have an alternative certification process to get out of high school are choosing the regular diploma in many of those states because they see that their career goals deplanned that particular diploma.

Certainly youth who are at risk when they go through the process are finding school more relevant and meaningful, and we are finding them talk in focus groups about reengaging in school now that they see that it's important to achieve their life goals.

So it's a very powerful process. It has great promise. It needs to be implemented well. Part of the program is to showcase how it can be used for individuals with disabilities, the individualized education plan. When they move into adolescence, they need to have a transition plan, and the transition plans carries a lot of what's going on in this IEP. The difference is you get many more educators working with the students to build that plan so by the time the IEP meeting, which is a more formalized and federally directed process, when that occurs, the student and their family have been engaged in thinking about in more deep ways the Kuntz of opportunities they want to pursue. So we're finding in many states a team effort and a building capacity among families to really lead this transition process.

So a lot of great opportunities for youth with disabilities.

Next slide.

Here is a map that kind of showcases, you can go online -- it's nice and interactive -- to see whether and how your state is engaged in ILPs. You can see that some states, the pink ones particularly, do not have ILPs in use, at least at the time we did this, and other states will have it mandated, that's the green. And then the blue, they may not be mandated, but they're in use. In other words, they are being really strongly encouraged from the State Department. They are also being strongly encouraged from the American School Counseling Association, so a lot of school counselors are already engaged in it, whether or not there is a state context for it. It's nice to see when states are saying we can't really do a mandate yet, but we really encourage this as a promising or best practice strategy.

Next slide.

Just a little bit on some of the data. One of the key things is when we did our research, one of the pieces that came out was that when you asked students what they wanted to be, almost everybody could tell you something. They could give you some kind of a I want to be a veterinarian. But there were distinctions between those students who were able to describe in detail what it meant to be a veterinarian and what it meant to pursue a degree that would lead to them becoming a veterinarian. And those students who would say I'm just going to college. Okay?

And so what we found was this becoming career ready group, they were really forming a goal, a purpose that was forged out of an engagement with their own understanding of interest, skills, and values and really having examined the world of work. And it came off of what -- these are all qualitative narratives we looked at. They could tell you everything down to what their next steps were, what kinds of things they were doing for volunteer activities, what kinds of things they were doing next semester to get ready with their course planning. It was clear that they had a plan that was articulated from a thorough examination of self and the world.

The other group, which unfortunately was the majority of those that we did this qualitative study with, they could -- many of them, the not engaged group, they could tell you what their title was, but they really couldn't go into details. What's a veterinarian? Well, there's animals involved, and you know, doctors. But they couldn't tell you really the core details or even some of the details of what a veterinarian did or how a veterinarian became a veterinarian.

And so this is kind of the issue of what we are trying to help, that if youth are entering the postsecondary arena with a college major but not understanding how that major ties to a self-defined career goal or a real sense and understanding of the relevance of the coursework they are taking to help lead towards that goal, we are feeling that what we have is a bunch of students entering in thinking that they will figure it out in college. And I guess our data is pretty clear that they are not figuring it out in college, and we need to really help that.

But we also have to help them kind of renavigate. We can't expect a 17-year-old to have their life plan figured out. What we are engaging them in is the planning, learning how to engage in the planning. And we need the postsecondary setting to really facilitate and continue that process so that what they are able to do, then, is continue the self-examination, the examination of the world of work, and now all the different college majors and opportunities, internships that are available that they never had when they were in high school, and to continue that re-examination as they go through the process. And as they do, we think that they are going to be seeing not only the relevance, but they are going to be seeing the value that this postsecondary degree is going to provide for them, and as a result, we believe we are going to see more students graduating from college.

A simple theory of change on that.

>> MINDY LARSON: And Scott, this is Mindy. Can you say a little bit about what we learned about this experience for students with disabilities versus students without?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Yeah. So one of the challenges we have with students with disabilities is the same process, so the college career readiness, you see the data is the same. So the process issue is the same. So in other words, they need the opportunity to build these self-exploration and career exploration skills. They need all of that. But what we also found was even though they were feeling more competent, it wasn't translating directly into the world of work. Instead, we found that students, for example, who were engaged in work-based learning, if they were students with disabilities, they were reporting that they felt more connected to their teachers, they felt more connected to -- motivated to go to school; whereas, in the general population, they were using work-based learning to say, you know, I am really now interested more in this career. So there was something that wasn't translating from the competency development and the exploration to thinking and actually believing that there was a world of work component that they wanted to subscribe for. We are not really sure why exactly that is. Is it a lack of encouragement? Is it a lack of understanding? We know that youth with significant difficulties, this is going to be a big challenge and we all need to be working together, but we also have to have a sense of vision and hope for ways that the individual can move into those different careers.

Our study was done with students, was really pretty much your common disabilities around academic disabilities, we had some behavioral, but not a lot on the cognitive or the spectrum. It was really students who may have some issues with reading or math. And to see that this, just having that IEP was somehow changing whether or not they felt competent to look at the world of work was something that we really -- it took our breath away, that we need to be thinking how we can engineer that better.

We think that the college campus is a core place for that, the caring adult, access to people believing, providing them with more of the work-based learning. But we need to not assume that it's a natural and easy transition. We are really going to have to be focused on how to support and encourage and bring the family into this as well throughout the whole process.

Mindy, did I miss something on that, or was there somewhere you wanted to bring it?

>> MINDY LARSON: That was great. Thanks. I wanted to be sure we touched upon some of those lessons.

At this point, we actually want to take a pause and ask if there are any questions from attendees before we move ahead. And we are actually going to have a couple polling questions for you. But at this point, if you have a question of what you've heard so far, please use the Chat box or the Q&A box to share

your question.

I am going to go ahead and move the polling question up.

Our first question for you, now that we've talked a little bit about individualized plans in the context of career development, we just wanted to find out what are current practices of your own institution? And so there's a poll here. Bear with me while I expand it.

It's asking you to pick -- you can pick more than one response here because we are actually asking about two things. One, are students developing individualized plans? Yes, but they are only targeted to certain groups of students; or yes, all students are developing them; or no, we don't use student plans at all.

But then also, for those that are using student plans, please indicate whether the plans focus only on academic goals and courses, whether they include career goals and preparation, and whether they include other personal goals and support needs.

This gives us a sense of the characteristics of plans that are being used if you are using them at your institution.

So we are seeing that the majority of those who have responded say that there are some plans being used, but about half of those are saying that they are targeted to specific groups of students. While the other half is saying that all students are developing plans.

And then in terms of the time of focus of those plans, it's interesting to see -- it's great to see, actually -- that a majority are saying that the plans do include career goals and preparation. And a good proportion also have a focus on other personal goals and support needs.

All right. The second question to follow up on that, if all students don't have individualized plans, what are some of the barriers that prevent that? And again, you can select more than one response here, but these are some of the things that we anticipated might be barriers, including limited staff time, such as high advisor to student caseloads or ratios; limited time with the students, meaning the advisor meetings or interactions between advisors or staff and students is very brief; lack of institutional buy-in; lack of student participation; cost concerns could be a variety of factors there; or something else.

So we see a lot are indicating limited staff time and limited time with the students, and also lack of student participation. Institutional buy-in is another common response.

All right. I am just checking to see -- I don't see any questions, but I do see a couple of responses with more details, so the type -- Kathy says the type and degree of individual plans varies from school district to school district in our

region.

Amy says I will be working with students who have IEPs or 504, and we will include all of the above types of goals mentioned.

Christy is a transition coordinator working with 18- to 21-year-olds in Colorado.

So I just do want to acknowledge, we actually have a lot of folks who joined us today who are working at the secondary level, and so it's great to hear about the use of individualized plans and career development strategies at your level as well, so please chime in at any point.

Scott, any other reflections before I move the polls?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: No. I'm really -- this is great, looking at the polls and how it's going. I am really curious to see, as we talk about limited staff, one of the challenges we've talked about at the high school, the pre-college level, is not having something that our special ed administrators and school counselors are doing but how we get a whole community buy-in to engaging in it.

I know as we look at the postsecondary, it becomes the same question. How can we expand this process to be something that is happening with a wider community, not just a few individuals.

So if people have comments on some of those, it would be great to hear.

And then anything that, as people are thinking about the workforce investment opportunity or the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act, how that may -- how they are shifting about that shifting or changing or providing opportunity for the staff roles.

But just a few of those on there.

>> MINDY LARSON: Okay. A couple people did put questions into the Q&A. Karen says in the map, Virginia had a different color from all the other states. Why?

Do you recall that by any chance, Scott, that Virginia --

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Say that again? I was looking to see if I could find the Q&A. What was the request he?

>> MINDY LARSON: In the map of ILPs, Virginia has a different color.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Oh, yeah. The reason for that was when the person was -- the person clicked on Virginia, and when you do, you are going to get access to all that information, and then they took the snapshot. So it makes Virginia look special, but actually, they are just clicking on Virginia to see what's up.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. And I believe Virginia is one that only just recently adopted it as a state policy. It's been in

practice, I believe, in Virginia in certain school districts, but I think that it has just recently become -- yeah, in 2013 they adopted a state policy.

And then another question about do you have any data or findings specific to students who experience a mental illness in terms of career exploration or planning?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Yeah, this is a really good area. I am actually working with a colleague across campus who is very focused on individuals, you know, youth as well as early adulthood, around the transition to the world of work that are really grappling with mental illness. And I think that this is one of those areas -- we also have other populations where I know that the National Collaborative is focused on youth that are in prisons and how to help support their transitions.

I think that what we need to do is we need to really study how this individualized learning plan can engage a student or a young adult to really think about mental illness as one of their challenges and how the medication, the treatment planning is really strategies that they need to help them achieve some future goal. And what we would like to look at is whether or not by them coming up with a goal in life that they want to pursue, does this actually change how they perceive the mental illness, and does it change and motivate and see the relevance of engaging in the treatment process?

So there's a lot of things that I think we can leverage from the mental health issues, but we haven't really studied it directly. We started the conversations to see how we might, but it's a very good area that we need to do some more work in.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. There's a question from Robin. Will you be discussing federal requirements in WIOA to provide PETS? I am not -- that's preemployment transition services.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: So I actually talked to Mindy about that this week, that we actually need to have a webinar that will specifically look at the new requirements in WIOA, specifically to this personalized education treatment, all this stuff that you have to do to see what the student's about. The idea here is that before we do job kinds of placement or job counseling, we also need to know what the individual's interested in, what are their skills and their interests, and there's a pretty nice set of planning that's involved in it.

The new language for WIOA is using the words "personalized career and education plan," and if you look at what's underneath that, it's very, very similar and complementary to the individualized learning plan. And so what we want to do is really work to help see that there are career development processes we've described that may facilitate a very -- the PETS to make sure that that process can be done for youth with

disabilities as they are getting ready to transition, as well as for, as we are talking about working with disconnected youth populations or the -- that certainly is a big part of the funding for the youth funds that are going to be coming out of there.

And then when we talk about postsecondary, we are also talking about our literacy and the whole getting the high school -- getting some kind of high school equivalency completed, that for those individuals, ELL students, that the same type of expectations are there, and how could this personalized career and education planning really be done in a way to help them establish a clear career goal and looking now at education as being the pathway.

Unlike the other -- unlike WIOA, where we really needed employment to be the outcome, the beauty is our postsecondary accomplishments are now path of the accountability. And so we really can be focused on helping individuals get into a postsecondary degree and complete it and, in doing so, we've met some really core indicators.

We need to do more on that. We won't have enough time to go into it today. But definitely a good crosswalk to show what's possible is in the future.

>> MINDY LARSON: Great. I just wanted to share Sarah made the comment or shared a little bit of information. They said they have a very successful supported education program at Genesis, where they've implemented many supports, such as on-campus visits, connecting students to on-campus supports, including disability services, tutoring, and other offices. And they have recently begun to incorporate career development and planning. Their goal is to connect with the career centers on campus.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: That's great. You know, Mindy, at the beginning of the webinar you talked about connecting activities as one of those core Guideposts for Success. In our research what we found was, especially for youth with disabilities, involving them in these kind of connecting activities had a tremendous effect on helping them really look and focus on doing well academically, doing well in terms of managing stress and health, as well as getting ready for the career -- you know, looking at future careers.

So there's something about helping them learn who the people are in their community they are going to look to, how these systems work. I think all youth need that, but I think with youth with disabilities and their families, they really need those connections. So I think it's a very powerful activity you are doing.

>> MINDY LARSON: All right. So we are going to move on,

and we will come to more questions. Feel free to share more questions in the Chat box as we continue.

So there's a few things as we were turning our attention to career development and individualized planning in the postsecondary education institution setting that we wanted to emphasize. There's actually a really good review by the Community College Research Center that looks at this issue of students needing support to make career and academic decisions as they are entering college or while they are in college. And it emphasizes the need for advising to focus not just on helping students select academic courses, which sometimes is the primary focus, but instead, focusing on life and career goals and then think about the academic and career planning that goes along or aligns with those life and career goals.

She also talks in that review about the importance of the advisor's role becoming one that's much more developmentally focused and viewing the relationship between the advisor and student as a partnership and a process that includes exploring the self, investigating various career options, and beginning to understand how interests, goals, and strengths can be formulated into a plan for academic and career progress.

This same sentiment is reflected in an advising model by Terry O'Banion, which has five advising steps, and this really aligns well with the three domains of career development that we talk about.

So the three steps are exploring life goals, which are broader goals, where you want to be and where you want to go and what you want to be doing; exploring vocational goals or career goals; and then making an academic program choice; and then getting more specific around course choices and scheduling those courses. So this is a model that's been around actually since the '70s and is well regarded in the postsecondary career advising field.

And in the review, Melinda Karp also talks about some common pitfalls of the common or typical advising experience in colleges right now. And here I wanted to emphasize a couple of ways to avoid these pitfalls.

So if we really think about how to integrate the academic and career planning process as well as integrating it with other support services, then we can hopefully avoid the fragmentation of services, which is very common. Unfortunately, students can be very confused or frustrated whenever they are pointed in a lot of different directions to obtain different support and services. When academic course planning or registration is being handled in one office and career services is being handled in another office and other sorts of counseling or support services are all being handled in a way that isn't more

coordinated or streamlined, then students can get discouraged very easily or are less likely to follow through and receive the support and the guidance that they need. So it's important to look at how we can integrate academic and career planning and the other support services when we are designing strategies for supporting students in postsecondary education.

It's also really valuable to have a consistent point of contact. Students that are frequently seeing different advisors when they are going in for advising appointments, depending on how advising the staffing structure is set up, and what can occur here that can be problematic for the student is that they may get different information from different staff. Each time they need a different staff person or advisor, they are sort of starting from scratch in terms of getting to know that advisor and building a rapport and helping them understand them and their goals and their needs. So when possible, when there are ways to provide one advisor who continues with the student throughout their college years, that could be a much more effective way, and we actually see this happening more frequently for targeted groups of students or more specialized programs. Unfortunately, with high staff to student caseloads, it can be hard to make this possible, but it's something to look at how we can provide that consistent point of contact and personal relationships.

Having a focus on skill building rather than just information provision because giving students information, unfortunately, just isn't enough in most cases. Students also need the assistance to learn how to use that information, and we are talking about how to use it to make decisions, to understand themselves, to develop plans, and to take action to follow through with those plans. So switching the focus to skill building is really important in thinking about how we can improve student success.

Also, we want to make sure we are continuing throughout the college experience, not just providing advising and support during the very first year or -- and also not starting career planning processes too late in the student's time in college. So a continuous year-to-year, semester-to-semester sequence of advising and support is really important.

The review also looked at the research evidence and three common practices that have some promising evidence of success include using career and self-assessment inventories, different tools for students to identify their interests, their strengths, and their values. And this is consistent with what they've seen and find people at the secondary level as well.

Having students involved or participate in career development courses. They could be credit or noncredit, but

basically more than just a one-time meeting. Having a course that meets throughout a semester, having a small group setting where you can be working on the tasks of career development skill building has been shown to be an effective strategy in some studies.

Also, e-advising tools. Online tools that include assessments, career exploration resources, and career development activities, as long as they are a complement to in-person advising or staff-to-student interactions, they have been found to be another effective tool.

But the review emphasizes that these are most effective when they are used as components of a more comprehensive, integrated career and academic advising strategy, not just stand-alone strategies.

Looking around, we wanted to find some practical examples of what different postsecondary institutions are doing, focused around career development and individualized planning. We found several good examples, some that have been in practice for a while, some schools that have been using these practices for a while and have some evidence to show that they have really been making a difference with their student success rates, and others that are sort of more emerging practices that colleges are trying out.

So at Northern Virginia Community College, the career development course is used for all first-time students who are between the ages of 17 and 24, and it's a one-credit course that they must complete within their first 15 credits. So it's something they need to do early, and it emphasizes while they are in that course that they are going through career decision-making process. They are also learning a variety of skills for student success, but they complete steps of self-exploration and career exploration, and they develop an education plan. They have an online career and education planning system that students are learning how to use, and they also use more intensive advising for students in select programs, like certain career pathway programs or programs for more nontraditional students or students who are in a first generation in students program. So they are combining a variety of career development strategies that include individualized planning and finding a lot of success with it.

At Tallahassee Community College, they are also using some similar strategies. They have a College 101 orientation that's required for all new students, and also a first-term advising workshop. And their online planning tool, the students get oriented to it as they are starting college, and they are required to complete certain online activities prior to going to their in-person advising meeting.

Here is an example from Sinclair Community College. They are actually -- what I have learned about what they are doing is primarily focused on an effort targeted to students who are considered at risk, and that includes students who start college undecided.

And so what they call their Individualized Learning Program engages the students in more intensive advising support, which includes using the Student Success Plan Web-based advising software, and that tool has a variety of career development components, including assessments and developing career goals and career plans and aligning that with their academic plans.

And one of the tools in that system is called MyGPS, which is My Guide for Planning and Success, and it encourages the students to complete certain career development-related tasks using available resources. So for example, it might link over to nor webpage of tools or resources that the school is providing, and it puts it in a two to-do list task that the student can keep track of their progress on, and then another reason why the school really has chosen this tool is because it has a way to track whether students are making progress on their academic plans, and they can communicate between the advisors and the professors and other staff about that student's progress and communicate warnings or alerts for the need for more intensive advising appointments to be set up if the student's experiencing certain challenges.

At Valencia College, they use a New Student Experience model, which is during the first year. The student is required to complete, actually, an online orientation course that involves self-reflection around their life and career goals and academic plans, defining their goals, and creating a plan that's individualized. And they use a model called LifeMap, which is another e-advising tool, that focused on both the career and academic goals and includes portfolio development. And I just included a link here to their student handbook, which really describes to the student the LifeMap process and principles that the school is really strongly communicating a focus of the student developing their achievement goals.

Finally, I just wanted to highlight a couple of four-year public and private institution practices that we came across. What you find, of course, is that the four-year institutions and particularly the private institutions have more robust, more comprehensive career development program models that go beyond having a career services office and more so to a four-year sequence of activities that students are required to participate in.

So there's a few here. The University of Massachusetts, local, has an optional program called ProPath Career Development

Plan, and the students that opt into this are engaged in a series of activities that include workshops and seminars and developing their career development plan, and every year there are certain activities to be completed.

Similarly, these other colleges here have sequences. So Stevenson University has what they call a Career Management Plan, and it has three components, which is personal direction, expertise, and personal know-how. Each year there are specific tasks in each of those three components that the student will complete as a part of a career management process.

Augustana College actually has an interesting approach to communicating the importance of career development. They have what they call a Viking Scorecard, and this encourages students to track their own progress on completing certain career development tasks. So they have these services and opportunities available to students. It's not required, but what they are basically saying is the more points you score on your scorecard, the more prepared you are to succeed in a career after college.

And they are promoting that score to employer partners as well, and so thereby trying to create buy-in among employers to value the Viking Scorecard and basically the demonstration by students that they have really worked on preparing for careers, not just completing their education.

And then the Connecticut College and Champlain College both have, again, four-year sequences. Champlain College is focused on what they refer to as lifelong learning skills through four years of workshops, seminars, and activities for all undergraduates to participate in. And there are choices. There are choices of activities in each year, depending on the student's goals.

And then the Connecticut College model is four years of comprehensive career planning, and they use a paid internship opportunity that's funded by the College as an incentive for participating in all of the activities.

So this gives you a picture of some of the practices that are being tried, some having really shown a lot of success and others new. But things that we can hopefully learn from and think about emulating where it makes sense.

We actually have our own Individualized Career Development Plan, which is another model I wanted to let you know about. We developed an individualized planning tool, the Individualized Career Development Plan, or ICDP, with a focus on the whole person. And it's based on the positive youth development approach, which means that we are really emphasizing helping staff develop a supportive relationship with a young person or student by discussing their strengths, needs, and goals in all

five areas of development, and these five areas are based on Positive Youth Development model first described by the Forum for Youth Investment. And that model includes development areas of learning, working, connecting, leading, and thriving.

And the planning tool facilitates skill building in the three career development skill domains, self-exploration, career exploration, and career planning and management. And we have a link here to the planning tool so you can take a look at it and see if that's something you might want to use or adapt where you think it might be useful in your work.

Okay. Now that we've reviewed some examples, we want to stop and get some reactions and questions from you. So one of my questions for you is what are any takeaways from the examples we shared and the research we reviewed that could strengthen your own practices? What are they questions you have?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: There were a couple, Mindy, that came up. One was on the peer-to-peer -- thinking about creating peer-to-peer type groups, maybe based on career interests as a way of supporting youth with disabilities. I wasn't sure if you had any ideas on that. It sounded like an interesting thought.

>> MINDY LARSON: Yes. So we actually have a program that IEL facilitates called the Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program, and we use a peer-to-peer model of setting and reviewing progress on individualized goals. So the students meet -- this is in secondary school, at the secondary school level, ranging from middle school through high school that we currently use, but it could be used in other settings as well. But the students meet on a weekly basis, and every week they set a weekly goal or more than one weekly goal, but usually one, that's related to a longer-term goal that they have set.

I'll step back just to mention that there's an individual mentoring plan that the students develop with their goals in each of the five youth development areas. So you've got your longer-term goals and your shorter-term goals in your individualized mentoring plan. So then the weekly goals are a way to break it into even smaller short-term action steps. So each week when the students come together, they review what progress they made on the goals that they set the week before.

We find that that peer-to-peer support is really, really powerful. Students sometimes will be more motivated and more encouraged to take action around achieving their goals whenever they get ideas and encouragement from other peers or even a little positive peer pressure.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: No, that's great. That's great.

There was another question that came up -- or actually a comment -- that I thought was good, and it was, you know, talking about the need to have some kind of technology involved

in this and using the career information systems that many states are making available, but certainly most college campuses as well as the districts have some kind of connection to a career information system. Because in that houses a lot of the personalized planning, but it also provides great access to a lot of the career exploration activities. So just wanted to point out and agree that a lot of the stuff we are describing gets facilitated and is certainly managed more effectively with a career information system.

You know, Mindy, I forgot to mention -- it was kind of like it was thrown up and totally forgot -- we do have a state career guide coming out pretty soon, and in that does have the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act. A lot of the language, guidelines, and opportunities are defined in that guide. And I don't know the timeline exactly, but I think we're looking at sometime by December maybe having that out; is that right?

>> MINDY LARSON: I believe it's going to be coming out in October.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Great. So look for that on the National Collaborative website. But you look through the legislative language, and there are so many words. But we've had a lot of help in pulling out the key components that relate to the career development process, and I think it will be interesting. It's at least there in one place. We haven't deciphered it completely, but at least we have a lot of the language.

And then also something, Mindy, I just wanted to point out while people are also -- there may be some other questions that come in as we pause. But one of the things to think about as we are talking about career development with youth with disabilities specifically is we've got to change what we mean by career away from the idea that we are trying to help every student find the right career as much as we think of career as kind of the place. It's like the neat thing that our voc tech people have done and the career clusters has identified all of these different occupations that evolve around different places and different types. So when we see an individual who is really interested in the medical field or wants to be a doctor, that may be the point of talking about the medical field and really looking at different occupational opportunities that are in there that may match more effectively with the interests, skills, and values.

But what we are doing is letting the individual have a degree of self-determination -- and talking about youth with significant disabilities now -- have some self-determination to say but this is where I want to be. And then within that, we find ways to support them around the different occupations that

might be there.

I think we often think of career as being that four-year degree and that we've got to somehow leverage that, but that's really not the discussion we are having at the postsecondary level. It's really the two-year, the four-year credentials, and thinking of, again, more -- as we think about significant disabilities, where's the place? Where do they want to be working and the kinds of life they want to have within that experience?

So I don't know, Mindy, if you had more comments on that or adding into that?

>> MINDY LARSON: No, but I am looking at some of the other questions we got, and we did have a question about favorite activities or curricula for working with students with intellectual disabilities, and I was going to mention that there's a free curriculum I am aware of used in Arizona called Merging Two Worlds, so I will put a link to that in. But it was initially was created for students with disabilities who were in the correctional education system in Arizona, but it's been expanded to be used for other settings as well. And it's just a whole bunch of free student-friendly activities. So I am going to put that link in, and if others have -- I see people shared some comments in response that question, but in the Chat box, if people have other things to share, please add them to the Chat box.

And I appreciate that Robert shared the recommendation of the Floridasunshine.org Career Exploration System. Actually, I was just recently looking at that and saw that they are in the process of expanding that into a postsecondary ed and adult ed versions, so taking what they've already created for the high school level and expanding it beyond that or adapting it in whatever ways to be a good fit for the postsecondary level as well. That's another one to take a look at as a state example of a career information system.

And Sarah asked do we know of any advising sites that are accessible to blind students.

This brings up a really good point about accessibility of online tools. I don't know, Scott, if you might have already addressed that. Do you have any feedback around accessibility of the e-advising tools?

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: You know, these systems -- and you can go to -- there is a national association that is specific to I can making sure that they meet certain standards, and these systems should be accessible for different disabilities. So I think it's a matter of if you are working with a vendor and you are not sure or if you are not clear if it's there, find out because it's my understanding that they should, for students who

are blind, there should be technology support systems that should make this stuff accessible. But we've got to find out from the vendors. And they have a responsibility to make this stuff accessibility.

Now, where we get into challenges around accessibility is sometimes some of the literacy levels or the concepts that are there are sometimes a little bit too high, and we need multiple materials and multiple ways in which this stuff is written. Again, we've got to push on the vendors to make sure that happens. And so it's sort of -- it's a dialogue, and it's also we have to differentiate our own way by either reading the assessments, helping students understand what the material means, but especially I saw the comment specifically for students with visual disabilities, there ought to be systems in place to support that.

>> MINDY LARSON: All right. And we had a question. Kathy asked will it be a national WIOA guide or will it have the individual state regs?

And I think that maybe she was referring to the state career development guide, Scott, that you mentioned, which will talk about WIOA in terms of the federal policies but will not be specific to any state-specific regulations.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Right. Right. Yeah, it was more trying to provide you with ideas around materials very similar to what's happening in the Chat box, and I hope we get that continued where people are sharing resources with regard to the different things you've become aware of.

What we tried to do was gather some resources around some of the key areas so that you didn't have to go searching for all of those.

>> MINDY LARSON: Jarrell Harrison is recommending mynextmove.org as a user-friendly site for career exploration. This is a tool we are a big fan of and definitely encourage folks to check that one out.

If others have other strategies that are working for you around career development and individualized planning, please do share those.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: I would like to call out my colleagues in Massachusetts, so Amanda Greene, if you could put a link to the self-determination piece that you shared recently.

I think that as we are working with youth with disabilities, we need to think also career development within this idea of self-determination. I mentioned it a little bit on rethinking of the concept of career. But I think self-determination is really a core piece that has to be front and center. Especially as we look at the postsecondary, how do we continue that self-determination focus? It's not just about

building the life skills and building confidence; it's really about that -- for the career piece, it's really about enabling them to navigate into the work setting the quality of relationships they want to have. And of course, at the end of the day, employment provides that quality of life as well, so it's all interconnected.

Membership I was going to go back quickly to the peer question. I did see some suggestion of the use of college students as peer advisors to other college students, and I didn't come up with a very clear case example to share, but there was definitely some indication that some schools are looking at doing that.

And on a secondary level, there's a good example that I know of -- actually going to be co-presenting with folks in Nevada at one of the high schools where they are developing students in special ed as peer leaders around transition planning, and those students are going in and talking to other students, other special ed students, about leading your IEP and career preparation and career exploration resources and really being proactive and thinking about what you want to do after high school and setting goals and being a part of the planning process.

So I think that there's so much more that could be done with peer-to-peer mentoring and peer leadership that we definitely want to keep that in mind. And it becomes especially important whenever we think about some of the staffing challenges and limitations. We can't necessarily have staff to do it all, but if we can employ other individuals who have lived experience that they can share, that can be a really good support for students.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Yeah. Agree.

>> MINDY LARSON: I see Karen shared something in the Chat box. It's great to have so many examples from those of you on the call, on the webinar today.

All right. Well, let's see. I have a few resources here I want to make sure that we mention. As Scott mentioned, we have a Career Development State Implementation Guide coming out very soon, so stay tuned. If you are not already on our email, monthly email list, send me an email. I will make sure you get added. But you can also keep an eye out on our website at NCWD-youth.info. And then here links to a couple of publications that are focused on career development and individualized planning that have a variety of links to curricula, activities, lesson plans, tools, and example strategies from programs around the country. So the Promoting Quality Individualized Learning Plans how-to guide. The Career Exploration in Action practice brief. And the Engaging Youth in Work Experiences practice

brief all have examples from successful programs, state and national-level resources that are free for you to use, so check those out.

And we've got our contact information. We want to hear from you at any time about what question do you have, what resources you are looking for. As a National Technical Assistance Center, we are here to assist you, so I just want to remind everyone to feel free to reach out to us by email or phone at any time, and we hope you will join us for more webinars. We don't have a next one planned yet, but we will definitely be posting those announcements on our website and disseminating future announcements through our email listserv as well. So if you are not already connected, please do sign up.

And I want to thank everyone. Scott, thank you so much for making time to be with us today.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: It was wonderful. Thank you.

>> MINDY LARSON: And thank you, everyone who attended. And you can download the PowerPoint presentation from the Files box, which is on the upper right-hand corner. You will see the file Webinar Career Development is there for you to download the PowerPoint slides. And this has been recorded, and we will post the recording in about a week on our website as well.

So feel free to share the link to the recording with anyone who may have missed it who you think could benefit from the information.

Thanks again, everyone. Have a great afternoon.

>> V. SCOTT SOLBERG: Take care. Bye-bye.

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