

**LEARN Community of Practice Kick-Off**  
*Local Education Adult Resource Network*

December 10, 2024  
12:00 – 1:30 PM

**Agenda**

1. Welcome
2. Sharing: Funding Opportunities
3. Engaging: Small Group Networking
4. Learning: Guest Presenter – Angela Pierce-Ngo
5. Wrap Up

**Meeting Schedule**

Monthly, 90 minutes from 12:00 – 1:30 PM

- January 14, 2025
- February 11, 2025
- *March 11, 2025 in person*
- April 8, 2025
- May 13, 2025
- June 10, 2025

Information: <https://wsac.wa.gov/LEARN>  
Contact: [AdultPathways@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:AdultPathways@wsac.wa.gov)

## LEARN Session #5 – December 10 Session Themes

### Funding Opportunities

- [Jobs for the Future \(JFF\): Project ACCESS](#) – Accelerating Career Connections and Employment Success Strategies
- [WSAC: Native American Apprenticeship Assistance Program \(NAAAP\)](#)

### Northwest Education Access Presentation: The Power of Community Partnerships

- **Value of Community Connections:**
  - Leveraging local resources to support learners.
- Creating networking opportunities to enhance persistence and completion.
- Centering the people with whom you partner to bolster working relationships and trust.
- **Sustainability of Partnerships:**
  - Establishing a referral system for resource access.
  - Providing dedicated spaces (on-campus and off-campus) for resource connection.
  - Maintaining ongoing communication and collaboration.
  - Developing effective communication plans to reduce future student stop-outs.

### Sound Reengagement Collaborative:

- A regional network in Pierce and King Counties involving community and higher education partners.
- Focus areas:
  - Raising awareness of partner initiatives.
  - Enhancing collaboration to address regional needs.
  - Sharing best practices across organizations.
  - Using local data and trends to inform strategies.



# Local Education Adult Resource Network (LEARN) Community of Practice

December 10, 2024





# Agenda

- Funding Opportunities
- Small Group Networking
- Guest Presenter: Northwest Education Access
- Wrap Up





## Funding Opportunity: JFF - Project ACCESS

- Jobs for the Future (JFF): Project ACCESS – Accelerating Career Connections and Employment Success Strategies
  - 10 Community and Technical Colleges
  - \$300,000 over a 2-year period
  - Funding to strengthen, expand, and scale effective programming that connects community and technical college learners facing systemic barriers to economic advancement to paid work-based learning experiences and/or quality jobs
  - Proposal due: January 17, 2025
  - Project period: April 2025 – June 2027



## Funding Opportunity: WSAC – NAAAP

- WSAC – Native American Apprenticeship Assistance Program (NAAAP)
  - Block grants for Federal Recognized Tribes in WA State
  - Average award per awardee: \$50,000-\$150,000
    - Award value per apprentice: \$10,000 (max award)
  - Funds must be expended by June 30, 2025



## Small Group Networking, 15 minutes

- You will select the breakout room you want to attend.
- This is *networking*. You will not have a dedicated facilitator.
- You can move to different rooms at any time, as many times as you want.
- Use the first few minutes for introductions, or be sure to introduce yourself as you participate.
  - Who are you? What type of work do you do?

### **Breakout Room Topics**

- Creating a culture of care for adult learners
- Labor market demands
- “Value” of postsecondary
- “Untopic”



# Guest Presenter: Northwest Education Access



Jeff Corey – Deputy Director



Angela Pierce-Ngo – Program Director



Cooper Metz – Program Director



## Wrap Up

- Next session – January 14
  - Education Strategy Group Presentation

Contact email: [adultpathways@wsac.wa.gov](mailto:adultpathways@wsac.wa.gov)

Website: [www.wsac.wa.gov/LEARN](http://www.wsac.wa.gov/LEARN)





# THE POWER OF COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



**NORTHWEST  
EDUCATION  
ACCESS**



# MEET THE PRESENTERS



**JEFF COREY**

Deputy Director  
*he/him*

**COOPER METZ**

Program Director  
*she/her*

**ANGELA PIERCE-NGO**

Program Director  
*she/her*



# TODAY'S AGENDA

- Brief intro to **Northwest Education Access**
- The Power of **Community Partnerships**
- **Regional Collective Impact: Sound**  
Reengagement Collaborative
- Regional Breakout Conversations
- Share-Out







**Mission:** Provide comprehensive and individualized support to help low-income young people, ages 16–29, build their own path to higher education and beyond

- **Who we serve:** Young people disconnected from education and/or employment from nontraditional education pathways
- **Where we serve:** King, Pierce, and South Snohomish Counties
- **Who we partner with:** GED and High School Reengagement Programs, Community–Technical Colleges, Community Based Organizations



# OUR MODEL

## Enrollment

- Applications
- Test Prep
- Transfers
- Registration

## Academic Planning

- Education Plan
- Self-Advocacy Skills
- Re-entering School
- Ongoing Support & Guidance

## Education Advocate

**long-term, flexible,  
one-on-one support with  
academic and career goals**

## Funding

- Grants & Loans
- FAFSA & WASFA
- Scholarships & Tuition Waivers
- Reinstatement & Renewal

## Program & Career

- Apprenticeships
- Associate & Bachelors Degrees
- Interest Assessments
- Career Training Certificates
- Networking Events
- Occupation Databases

STUDENT-CENTERED



## NW Education Access Network

Access to our network of contract tutors, volunteers, alumni, and staff

- Academic Tutoring
- Career Exploration
- Informational Interviews
- Job Shadowing

## Campus & Community Networks

Partnerships on campus and in community ensures students are never without resources.

- Community-Based Organizations
- On-Campus Support Services

## Student & Alumni Network

Community building and leadership & advocacy skill development

- Student & Alumni Events
- Alumni & Student Advisory Board



# THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIPS

- Support with postsecondary enrollment in the community and at the CTC
- Wraparound support for students
- CBOs specialize in services that colleges don't have resources or capacity to assist
- CBO's services are not contingent on credit enrollment
- Grow a student's network of supportive relationships





"Colleges can't fully support students on their own or in a vacuum. **So many of the challenges that students are facing are not purely academic.** We've found that partnering with Northwest Education Access has been invaluable for students getting personalized attention from an education advocate that can't really be replicated inside the college. Having an advocate in their corner throughout their educational journey, even across different educational institutions, has been the most successful way I have seen students getting uninterrupted and seamless support toward meeting their educational goals."

**-Bradley Lane, President at Seattle Central College**





# CULTIVATE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Look for opportunities to **build connections** between colleges CBOs
  - workshops
  - information sessions
  - community events
  - resource fairs
  - campus tours
- Create or identify **point of contacts** for CBOs to connect with
- **Join community** network spaces







“For students without family or other support to guide them, the enrollment process and college going skills can be incredibly daunting. **When CBO staff have established relationships with college departments, they become an important extension of service;** providing advocacy, encouragement, and support.”

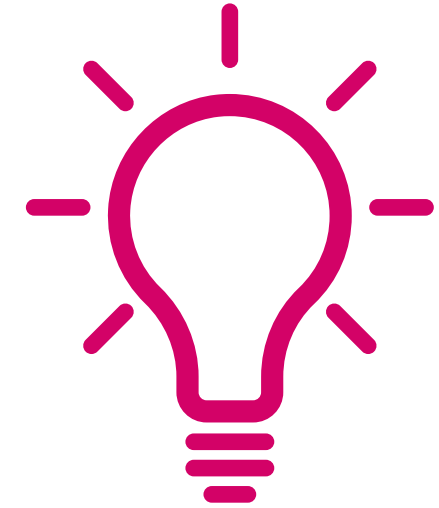
**Claire Makins**, former Transitions Center Manager at **Seattle Central College**, Basic & Transitional Studies Department

## Tacoma Community College Annual Partners Breakfast



# SUSTAIN COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

- Establish a **referral system**
  - email introduction
  - warm hand off
- Have **dedicated space and time** on-campus and at CBOs
- Have **ongoing communication & collaboration**
  - shared space between college and CBO staff
  - regular check-ins scheduled
  - shared progress trackers
  - database sharing agreement
- Connect students at risk of disconnection to appropriate CBO for **more comprehensive support**
- Effectively **message resources available** to students on-campus and in their community



“The CBO and college collaboration is a crucial piece of student support. It creates a seamless way to extend the services offered by the college in a more targeted, relationship-based way. Having a space on campus for CBO staff, as well as college administrative support in maintaining established relationships is vital for the collaboration to work. ...staff can refer students needing more support, freeing them up to serve more students overall. Perhaps most importantly, CBO staff provide a connection to services like housing and childcare that may not be offered through the college but have a direct effect on a student’s ability to continue. **This off campus support can help address needs as they arise rather than after it’s too late.**”

-**Claire Makins**, former Transitions Center Manager  
at **Seattle Central College**- Basic & Transitional Studies







# Sound Reengagement Collaborative

**A network of 50+ service providers from community based organizations, community technical colleges, and open doors reengagement programs across Pierce & King counties**

# Combining forces for greater collective impact

## Reengaged Learners Group in Pierce County

Began in 2019

Centered around reengagement for Opportunity Youth and adult learners

Grew from the Tacoma College and Career Network (TCSN)

## King County Reengagement Network (KCRN)

Began in 2015

Centered around Opportunity Youth and reengagement programs

Grew from National Opportunity Youth Network & The Road Map Project



# HARNESSING THE POWER OF A REGIONAL NETWORK

**Goal:** Increase reengagement and retention for adult learners

- This is How We Do It:
  - Build Community Networks & Partnerships
  - Highlight Programs & Share Resources
  - Provide Professional Development
  - Share Best Practices
  - Explore Local Data & Trends
  - Make Meetings Accessible
  - Provide regular communications
  - Create an Advisory Committee
  - Incorporate Student Representation & Input



# SRC Advisory Committee



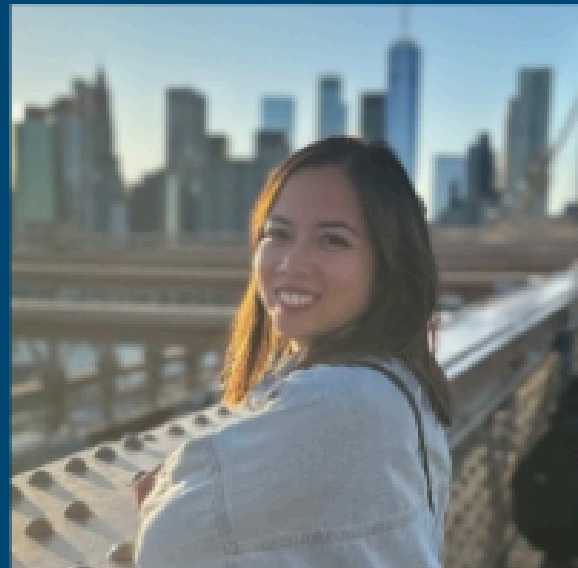
**Dimitri Groce**  
*Director of Practice  
Innovation*  
**Building Changes**



**Juan Esparza**  
*Program  
Specialist/Case  
Manager*  
**Bellevue College**



**Gina Irvin**  
*Program Coordinator*  
**Goodwill of the  
Olympics and Rainier  
Region**



**Nesley Bravo**  
*Senior Manager of  
Education Strategy*  
**Community Center for  
Education Results**



**Rodney Wolfenbarger**  
*Director of Pierce  
County Pathways  
Foundation for  
Tacoma Students*



**Alissa Tagoai**  
*Alumni & Student  
Advisory Board  
Member*  
**NW Education Access**



# Greater Collective Impact

Holistic data  
& research

Youth & adult  
participants

Pierce County  
providers &  
advocates

King County  
providers &  
advocates

Best practices  
& professional  
development

Community  
building &  
shared goals

(Re)Connecting  
more young people  
& adult learners to  
opportunities  
(decreasing  
disconnection)



2016

**Reconnect to Opportunity (ReOpp)** Following youth-led design, ReOpp continues to refer young people to education and employment programs throughout King County, with near peer Reengagement Specialists

2019

**National Evaluation Results** - Northwest Education Access/Open Doors programs Urban Institute's evaluation revealed that participants in South King County were 3 times as likely to enroll in postsecondary education when working with NW Education Access, compared to control sites. Participants who were men of color were 7 times as likely to enroll.

2020

**Creating Paths for Change: Understanding Youth Disengagement and Reengagement**

This report by Road Map Project partners at the UW School of Social Work and Northwest Education Access aims to drive change by amplifying the experiences of students who have been failed by the systems created to serve them. Students share what led them to disengage and recommendations on how to help them succeed.

2021

**Latinx Youth Reengagement Insights** - Latinx young people are disproportionately represented in reengagement programs and the number of young people who disengage. This report provides insight and recommendations directly from Latinx youth in our region about how we can better serve them, including career-focused and culturally relevant curriculum.

**Youth Healing Project**

As a direct response to the In Their Own Words report, our region has implemented two cycles of Youth Healing Project programming, where young people are granted funds to implement community projects focused on healing and wellness,



How might you **cultivate**  
**community connections** in  
your region to **increase**  
**reengagement and retention**  
of adult learners?

# LET'S TAKE TIME FOR INQUIRY!

- What are the current barriers to adult learner success?
- How are you already collaborating across systems to support adult learners?
- Where are there additional opportunities to collaborate in your region?







# TAKEAWAYS & REFLECTIONS

# LEARN MORE ABOUT NW EDUCATION ACCESS



**206-523-6200**



**info@nweducationaccess.org**



**nweducationaccess.org**

# & THE SOUND REENGAGEMENT COLLABORATIVE



**src@nweducationaccess.org**



**nweducationaccess.org/src**



**NORTHWEST  
EDUCATION  
ACCESS**

# THANK YOU!

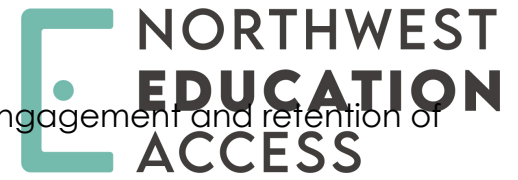


bitly



## Student-Centered Support & Partnership Inventory

How might you cultivate community connections in your region to increase reengagement and retention of adult learners?



<b>What are the current barriers to adult learner success?</b>	<b>How are you already collaborating across systems to support adult learners?</b>	<b>Where are there additional opportunities to collaborate in your region?</b>
<b>What takeaways or wonderings are coming up?</b>		

## **December LEARN Presentation: Northwest Education Access**

### **Presenter Bios**

#### **Angela Pierce-Ngo**

Angela Pierce-Ngo currently serves as a Program Director at Northwest Education Access. She has been with the organization since 2012 and began her career in direct service, supporting young adults reengaging with education while navigating systematic barriers. Angela is from Tacoma, Washington, and attributes her passion for education justice to her experiences navigating the complexities of postsecondary as a low-income student.

#### **Cooper Metz**

Cooper has worked in the education nonprofit sector for over a decade. In her role as Program Director at NW Education Access, she leads the Student & Community Engagement Team and collaborates with Program Directors and Managers to enhance training and support for staff and improve services provided to students. She also co-facilitates capacity-building trainings given to service providers in the community. Cooper holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and Sociology and a Nonprofit Management Certificate from the University of Washington.