Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Shifting Gears E-Newsletter, Transmissions!

The Joyce Foundation's Shifting Gears state policy initiative promotes regional economic growth by improving the education and skills training of the workforce in six Midwestern states. The initiative is helping these states implement systemic changes to institutionalize innovation in adult education, workforce development and postsecondary education programs. The states are strengthening connections between these programs to create pathways to college and career success for low-income working adults.

In addition to individual grants, states receive ongoing technical assistance from CLASP and partners including the Workforce Strategy Center, Brandon Roberts + Associates, DVP Praxis, Ltd., and Douglas Gould & Company.

Transmissions provides information on state accomplishments and best practices, up-to-date news, and policy insights to policy makers, researchers, advocates, program administrators and others outside the Shifting Gears network.

In the quarterly issues, you will find:

- **Upcoming Events**: Learn more about the policies and strategies behind Shifting Gears, directly from experts in the field;
- **Progress In Motion**: News and Updates on activity at the state and federal level that support improving the attainment of postsecondary credentials among low-skilled adults;
- **Talking Shop**: Shifting Gears policy experts answer readers’ questions;
- **Tools of the Trade**: Recently released reports and resources that you can use to create change where you are.

Visit the Shifting Gears Web site, [www.Shifting-Gears.org](http://www.Shifting-Gears.org), to find state progress updates, our Webinar series, and more information about the initiative. For states, the Web site features a resource center with tools and information to help states implement policies to ensure that every worker has the opportunity to acquire the skills and credentials to succeed in a challenging economy.

We hope you're inspired by the work Shifting Gears states are doing to drive economic competitiveness and help more low-skilled workers gain the education, skills and credentials needed to advance in the labor market.

**The Joyce Foundation & CLASP**

**Shifting Gears Partners**
UPCOMING EVENTS

November 3
National College Transition Network Policy Forum
Amy Ellen Duke Benfield, Senior Policy Analyst at CLASP, and Jennifer Foster, Senior Director for Adult Education and Family Literacy in Illinois, will discuss adult education policies that support postsecondary success in an interactive Webinar. Registration is open to the public.

November 10-12
Wisconsin Association for Career and Technical Education will host the GED-HSED and Adult Literacy Conferences, Achieving Credentials for Success in Appleton, WI.

November 17
Shifting Gears: Shifting State Adult Education Policies to Support Postsecondary Success
Amy Ellen Duke-Benfield, Senior Policy Analyst at CLASP, will present on Shifting Gears at the National College Transition Network Conference in Providence, RI.

Shifting Gears Lunch and Learn Webinar Series
Learn more about this series and view past Webinars, brought to you by the Workforce Strategy Center.

November 12
Harnessing the Power of Performance-Based Funding: State Models and Lessons Learned. 1:00 - 2:00pm ET. Registration is open to the public.

PROGRESS IN MOTION

Michigan’s No Worker Left Behind | The Governor's training initiative is meeting goals 10 months earlier than expected.
This past August marked the two-year anniversary for Michigan’s No Worker Left Behind Act (NWLB). The governor's initiative aims to get 100,000 people in training for high-demands jobs by 2010 by offering $10,000 for two years of education plus other supports for any unemployed or underemployed individual who wishes to pursue a degree or certificate in a high-demand occupation. According to a recent NWLB outcomes report (PDF), more than 102,000 people have already enrolled in training and of those who completed the program, 86% found a job related to their NWLB training. Read more about other complementary efforts in Michigan.

The New York Times profiles an Ohio community college that’s at the center of job retraining efforts in the Midwest. Sinclair Community College is working with state and local partners to identify high-demand industries and develop training programs for laid off workers. Read more about what Ohio is doing to support efforts like this statewide.

A 21st Century Workforce for America | Shifting Gears goals support the American Graduation Initiative.
The American Graduation Initiative encompasses a broad array of programs designed to increase the educational attainment of America’s growing workforce. The initiative will support state and local innovation to transform workforce education services to ensure that America can regain its position of having the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. Learn how Shifting Gears can serve as a model for other programs under this initiative.

Best Practices in Basic Skills Education | Promising state practices featured in the Huffington Post.
Shifting Gears partner Brandon Roberts and David Fischer discuss basic skills education and the importance of a postsecondary credential in the Huffington Post. State policy efforts in Illinois and Michigan are highlighted as promising practices that connect basic skills education with job training. Read more about Shifting Gears strategies in Midwestern states.

Ohio Holds First Shifting Gears Conference | University System of Ohio calls Statewide Leadership Conference to educate leaders on critical education and workforce issues.

Transmissions, Issue #1, Fall 2009
The Ohio Board of Regents project, Ohio Shifting Gears, is hosting the first state conference to increase knowledge of and engagement with Ohio’s Ten-Year Strategic Plan for Higher Education and other key workforce initiatives. This conference is not open to the public. Read more about Ohio Shifting Gears.

TALKING SHOP

Q: **How can states use Recovery Act funding to increase access to education and training for adults with low education and skill levels?**

A: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (the Recovery Act) provided $3.95 billion for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), nearly doubling the resources available for workforce services. States can ensure that most of the new funds are used for training and services that enable adults to succeed in training, including the use of discretionary funds under the Recovery Act to expand bridge programs that combine basic skills instruction with occupational skill training.

For example:

- Illinois encourages community colleges, community-based organizations and other providers to develop bridge programs for low-skilled working adults in four sectors: manufacturing, health care, transportation/distribution/logistics and alternative energy through a competitive grant program.

- Wisconsin has released Skills Jump grants to help individuals without a high school diploma improve their basic skills and complete occupational training in manufacturing and health care.

- Minnesota has issued a round of supplemental funding to local workforce boards to develop and expand their "stackable credentials" framework (also known as bridge programs) that link adult education with occupational education and lead to credentials valued by employers.

We want to hear from you! Submit your Talking Shop question for a chance to be featured in the next quarterly issue.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Charting a Path: An Exploration of the Statewide Career Pathway Efforts in Arkansas, Kentucky, Oregon, Washington and Wisconsin

A recent report by the Seattle Jobs Initiative and the Working Poor Families Project (PDF) explores state career pathway programs in various stages of development and offers detailed profiles of these efforts, which should serve as a useful resource for states that are trying to implement a career pathways framework of their own.

Leveraging Federal Funding for Longitudinal Data Systems: A Roadmap for States

The Data Quality Campaign has released this interactive, web-based "roadmap" to help states find their way through federal funding that can help them improve and align data systems for all Americans, from early childhood education through the labor force. Read CLASP's summary on the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program (PDF).

Madison Area Technical College’s Science/Math Bridge Program

As part of its career pathway efforts, Madison Area Technical College developed a bridge program to help students gain the knowledge and skills to succeed in science-based postsecondary programs. The Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) program evaluation (PDF) found it to be an innovative bridge program model that improves successful postsecondary transitions and outcomes for low-skilled adults.

The Ideal State Postsecondary Data System: 15 Essential Characteristics and Required Functionality

In this paper, Peter Ewell and Hans L'Orange discuss the importance of Student Unit Record Systems (SUR) that contain an individual electronic record for each student. The authors outline 15 essential elements (PDF) that a postsecondary...
data set should have to inform a complete analysis of educational pipeline issues and outcomes.

**Promising Practices for Transitioning Students from Adult Education to Postsecondary Education**

This extensive literature review of more than 40 references features 17 effective practices for improving students' transition from adult education to postsecondary education. The strategies are organized in four major categories, including Organizational and Administrative Practices, Program Component Practices, Staff Development Practices, and Instructional Practices. Primarily developed to assist practitioners by identifying effective strategies for community colleges in California, the report is an up-to-date and valuable resource featuring a rich array of local best practices.