IHD 2026
Evidence for Success

Pre-Apprenticeships: Individualized, Creative Workforce Development for Tribal and Rural Communities

PRESENTERS:

- **Wayne Dagel:** wayne.dagel@nau.edu
- **Mary DiBiase**: mary.dibiase@umb.edu

INTRODUCTIONS

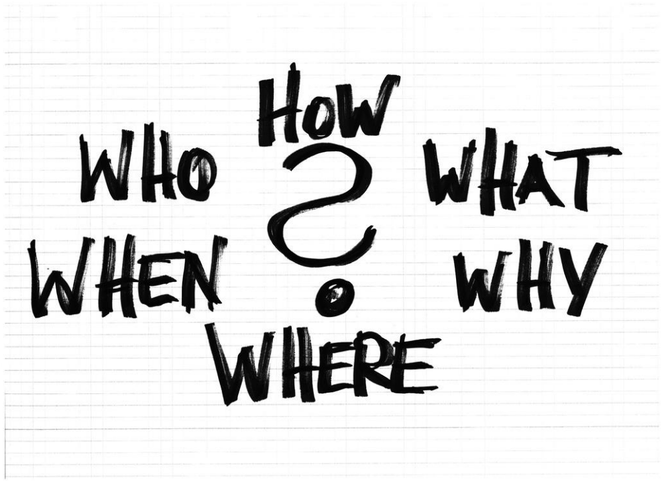
Partnerships are a key aspect of apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship, so let’s see who is represented here today.

- Name, agency, role, location

DEFINING OUR TOPIC

REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Structured training program that combines paid on-the-job work experience with classroom instruction.
Validated/approved by the U.S. Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency. Credentials are transferable.



NON-REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP

Informal or employer-specific training program that combines paid on-the-job work experience with some type of instruction. Not recognized b the U.S. Department of Labor or a state apprenticeship agency. Can include traditional skills (arts, trades, healing practices, etc.)

PRE-APPRENTICESHIP

A program designed to prepare individuals for entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) or other job opportunities. No standardized approach, but recommended components include classroom instruction and hands-on learning opportunities.

DISTINGUISHING PRE-APPRENTICEHIP FROM APPRENTICESHIP

CUSTOMIZABLE FOR THE INTENDED PURPOSE

- ❑ Appropriate for adults and youth
- ❑ May be a direct path to an apprenticeship or a soft path to a field of careers
- ❑ Has flexibility of design and focus (outside of including instruction, mentorship, and hands-on experience
- ❑ Includes opportunities for including community and cultural aspects in program design
- ❑ Strong inclusion of soft skills in addition to job skills
- ❑ Wraparound support services are integral to success

Benefits of Pre-Apprenticeship

- Early career exploration
- Confidence and self-advocacy
- Reduced barriers to employment
- Better long-term outcomes
- Expands career pathways
- Supports School-to-Work Transition

EXAMPLES: RURAL YOUTH PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS

IMPORTANCE OF

PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS

- preparation for the apprenticeship requirements (math skills, soft skills, etc.)
- what to expect
- initial certifications to prepare (OSHA, first-aid, food safety, etc.)

WHO BENEFITS?

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

- youth and young adults
- long-term unemployed who need work reintroduction
- exposure without commitment
- support completion rate for apprenticeship

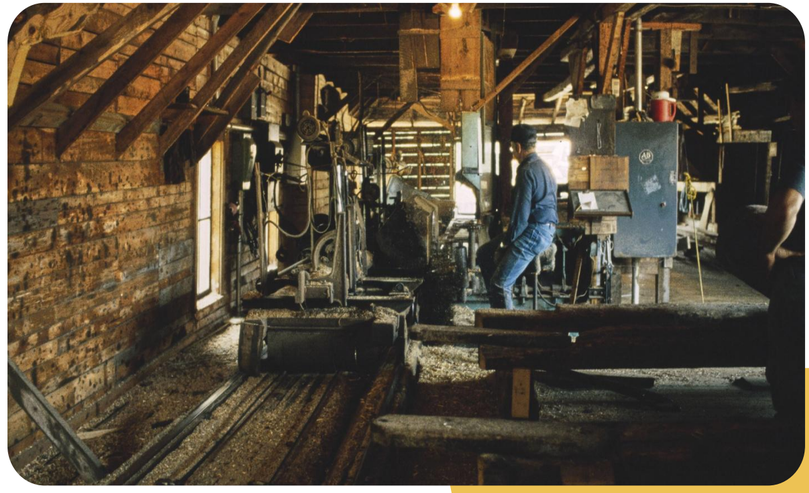
FORESTRY EXAMPLE

Industry Focus: Timber Industry

Industry expressed need for trained workers and interested in providing support for pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

PARTNERS

- **Local high school** (forestry class and Pre-ETS instruction of soft skills; bus transportation)
- **State VR:** business engagement and Pre-ETS instruction/guidance
- **State Forestry Group:** hands-on simulators, internships, classroom instructors, connection to businesses
- **Special Education Director:** provides educational leadership support and advocacy



CONSTRUCTION EXAMPLE

TARGETED INDUSTRIES:
Construction, Manufacturing, and Medical Fields

PARTNERS:

- State VR (Pre-ETS instruction and tracking maker space badges); business engagement
- University (maker space)
- State Apprenticeship Office

Apprenticeship Partners (required)

STATE or US APPRENTICESHIP AGENCIES

Provide TA and support in registering & managing programs.

EMPLOYERS & SPONSORS

Employers and sponsors are required; other partners support the employer and apprentice(ship)

EDUCATION PARTNERS

Provide the classroom-based instruction and assessment

Not required, but helpful

WORKFORCE AGENCIES

VR, Tribal VR, WIOA, etc. that support workforce development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Partners who focus on in-demand industry initiatives and development

INTERMEDIARY

Experts in arranging and operating an apprenticeship program for a business

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Any additional entities that support workforce development

EMPHASIS ON

PARTNERSHIP!

Inclusion of Core Components

- instruction (classroom) & mentorship
- hands-on learning
- work experience
- apprentice support (vocational and wrap-around services)

1 **Business Engagement**

2 **School or other Educational Institution**

3 **Vocational Rehabilitation: Tribal and State**

4 **Industry Connections & Buy-In**

Q&A

THOUGHTS?

- What potential is there for Pre-Apprenticeships in your community?
- Who can you partner with?
- Who has a pulse on the business community (local, regional, state)?
- What types of careers are growing, available, possible in your communities?

SOME HELPFUL

RESOURCES

Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Self-Employment Guide (AIVRTTAC & Rural Institute)

Explore VR Rural Youth Apprenticeship Toolkit (ICI)

ICI (UMass, Boston) iGREET Employer Engagement Curriculum

THANK YOU

Stay tuned for more information on the American Indian Rural Youth Apprenticeship Development (AI RYAD) Project. This is a three-year project funded to support Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation programs in developing and implementing pre-apprenticeship programs in their communities.

Through the work with these agencies, their partners, and communities, a AI RYAD toolkit will be developed and made available on the ExploreVR website.

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