

# Training Webinar: Building and Sustaining Strategic Partnerships – Part 1

*National Community Action Partnership*

*June 18, 2025*

*2:00pm ET / 1:00pm CT / 12:00pm MT / 11:00am PT*

# Disclaimer

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This presentation is supported by Grant Number 90ET0502 from the ACF Office of Community Services, Community Services Block Grant within the Administration for Children and Families, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Neither the Administration for Children and Families nor any of its components operate, control, are responsible for, or necessarily endorse this presentation (including, without limitation, its content, technical infrastructure, and policies, and any services or tools provided). The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Administration for Children and Families and the ACF Office of Community Services, Community Services Block Grant.

# Agenda

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- Welcome
- CEM Project Overview
- Promising Practices
- Bucks County Opportunity Council– Coaches on Campus
- Upcoming Tools and Resources

# Project Overview

# Purpose

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*“The Collaborative on Economic Mobility is intended to highlight emerging and promising practices in economic mobility for low-income communities and to expand the capacity of the Community Action network to deliver services that promote economic mobility.”*

# Key Focus Areas

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Community  
Asset Building

Innovative  
Community  
Programs and  
Organizations

High-Quality  
Education

Two-Generation  
and Whole  
Family  
Approaches

Workforce  
Development

# Promising Practices

# Workforce Development

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- Sector-based approaches that align training programs with the specific needs of key industries experiencing growth
- Employer engagement and demand-driven strategies
- Hands-on experience and mentorship opportunities
- Integration of technology and digital literacy initiatives
- Entrepreneurship and small business development

# High Quality Education

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- Collaborations with educational institutions: strategic partnerships between local school districts, community colleges, and universities to broaden horizons and prepare the next generation for the workforce
- Supporting the transition from high school to college or the workforce: dual enrollment, work-based learning, and financial literacy
- Integration of technology and digital literacy initiatives with online learning platforms, AI, virtual reality simulations, and remote learning opens new learning opportunities for students
- High-Quality Education and economic mobility is a multifaceted approach:
  - Collaboration
  - Innovation
  - Advocacy

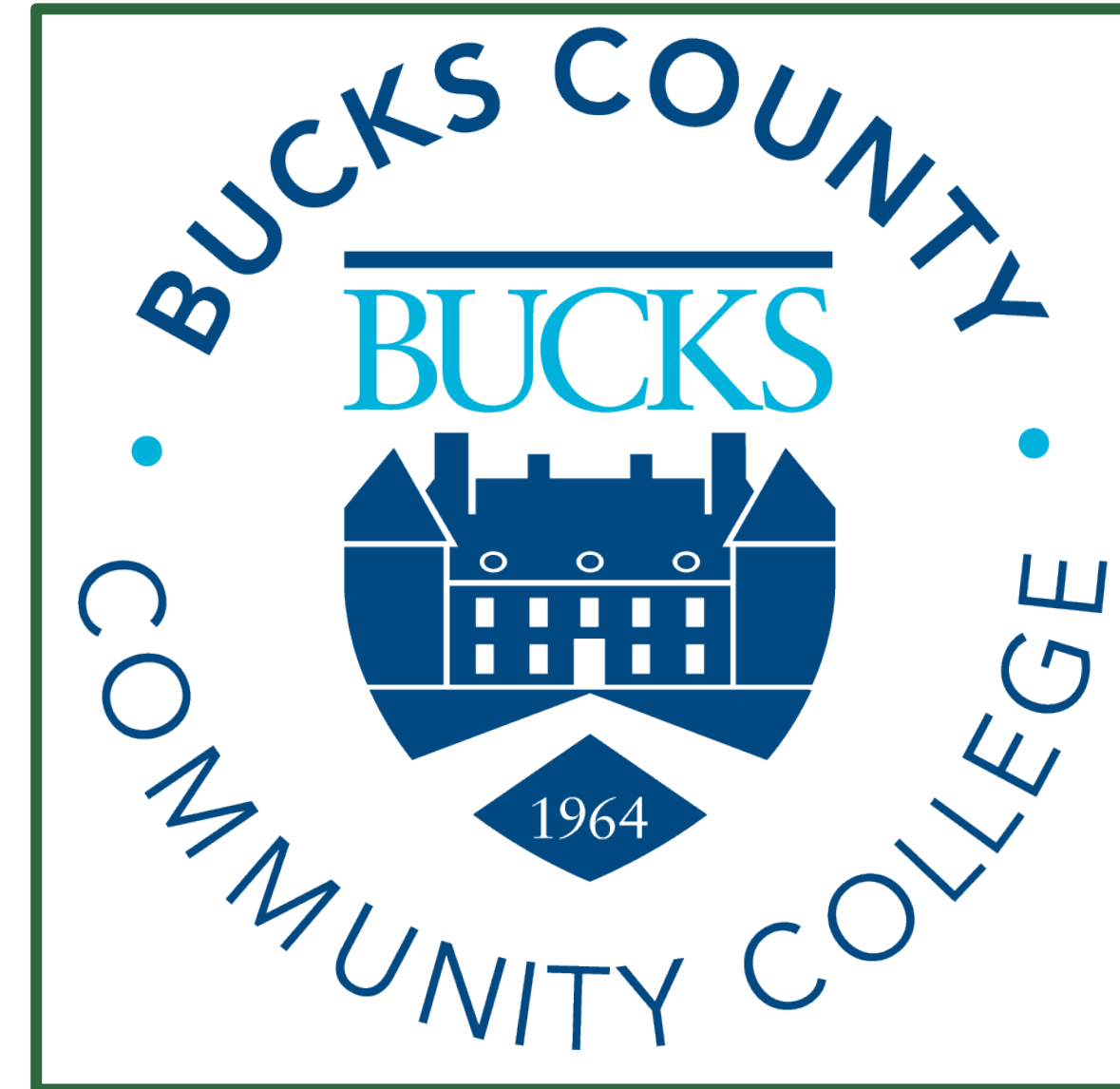
# Innovative Community Programs & Organizations

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- Opportunities in Housing
  - Community housing units
  - Emergency shelters
  - Increasing skills for living wage jobs
- Opportunities in Transportation
  - On-the-road services
  - Education through online platforms
- Opportunities in Health
  - Nutritious food
  - Mental health services
  - Transportation services



# **Bucks County Opportunity Council Presentation**



# Building and Sustaining Strategic Partnerships

Heather Foor, Director of Client Services, Bucks County Opportunity Council



# BCOC and BUCKS



- BCOC is the community action agency for Bucks County, established in 1965
  - 62 employees, 6 sites covering the entire county
  - Population of 650,000
  - Poverty rate is 5.7%
  - BCOC serves 56,000 people through 5 program areas including:
    - Housing
    - Weatherization
    - Food
    - Income Tax Preparation
    - Economic Self-Sufficiency
- BUCKS is the community college established in 1964
  - About 1,000 full and part-time faculty and staff
  - 4 campuses: Newtown, Bristol, Perkasie & Online
  - 6800 degree-seeking students
  - More than 80 programs – combination of for credit and workforce programs
  - Serving Bucks, Montgomery, Philadelphia, and New Jersey students
  - Half of students are first-generation
  - The Hope Center for College Community and Justice revealed that 52% of our student respondents are food and/or housing insecure
  - Based on survey data and the population of high school students who receive free/reduced lunch, at least 30% of Bucks students are basic needs insecure

# Why the need for Community Action on Campus?

Shift in higher ed to focus on student needs outside the classroom

Student retention

Graduation rates

Unmet basic needs of students

Additional support

Community connections to other resources

Additional scholarships



Economic Self-sufficiency program

# Economic Self-Sufficiency Program (ES)

Long-term strategy to move the household out of poverty permanently, includes employment and education planning and financial assistance to meet basic needs.

## Since 1997:

- 420 households have graduated, over 1000 people
- 80 have become homeowners

## Graduates no longer need:

- SNAP – food support
- TANF cash assistance
- Government subsidized housing

## Graduates achieve

- Employment at a family-sustaining wage
- Health insurance
- Safe, reliable transportation
- Affordable housing
- Balanced household budget



# COACHES ARE HERE TO HELP

## Coaches on Campus

- Partnership with Bucks County Community College
- ES Coaches are part of Student Affairs Division of the college and is embedded in Student Services
- *Goal: provide coaching, financial support and resources to students, so they can stay in school, graduate, and use their education to become economically self-sufficient*

### TRANSPORTATION



Support is available for students who need car repairs, gas, assistance with car insurance payments, and bus passes. Opportunities for clients to secure transportation through our donated car program.

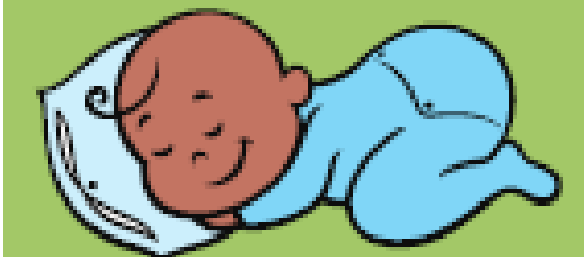
### ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY



Individualized coaching to help you build the resources necessary for economic stability.

### CHILD CARE

Financial support for childcare is available during work and school.



### FOOD SERVICES

Providing support to students with food insecurity through on-campus food pantries, gift cards to local grocery stores, and Fresh Connect, a free farmers market.



### SCHOLARSHIPS @ BUCKS

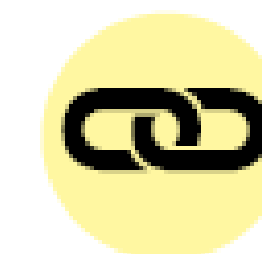


Low income students who are enrolled in a degree or certification program at BCCC could qualify for scholarships.

### HOUSING SERVICES



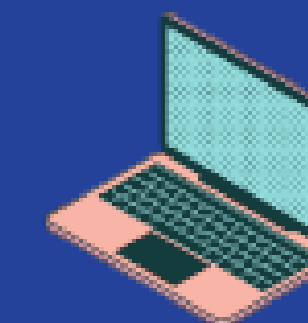
Assisting low-income families with utilities to prevent electric, water, or sewer shut off. Help with rental and move-in assistance.



### HOUSING LINK

Bucks County Housing Link  
Homeless? Experiencing a housing crisis? Need Code Blue information?  
Call now  
1-800-810-4434

### BOOKS AND TECHNOLOGY



Free support to get the tools needed to complete school work like WiFi, laptop, textbooks, and other materials

### How to Connect:

Newtown Campus BCCC Office  
Office 11 Student Services  
Rollins Center  
275 Swamp Rd  
Newtown, PA 18840  
Hours: TW 10am- 3pm



# What Can a Coach Help With?

The BCOC Coach and program participant agree to partner, working together to empower the participant to achieve economic stability. Specifically, the BCOC Coach:

## Functions:

- Provides coaching and focused, motivational case management services
- Assists in resolving crises
- Connects participants to community resources
- Works with community college to address gaps in education (remedial math and English)
- Assists in budgeting skills
- Provides financial support to achieve educational and employment goals

## Relationship:

- Assists participants in identifying the resources needed to achieve economic stability
- Assists in identifying the action steps necessary to achieve identified goals
- Provides time and space for participants to identify the goals necessary for economic stability
- Provides the support necessary to foster success through decision making, planning and education
- Insists on accountability for the identified goals
- Assists participants to build social capital through community connections

## Resources:

Average \$3,500 of support provided annually per HH (in addition to other available funding)

- Transportation – insurance, gas cards, repairs
- Food – gift cards
- Housing – security deposit, rental assistance
- Education – tuition, books, training fees, uniforms
- Utilities – electric, water, phone/internet
- Childcare – summer camp, daycare tuition, start up fees
- ES Matched Savings program
- Family support – Adopt A Family, Back to School, Household needs, Holiday assistance

# Specialized Resources

## Wheelz to Work Program

- BCOC accepts donated vehicles from donors. Donors receive a tax credit. BCOC will make minor repairs if needed.
- Vehicles are then donated to anyone in BCOC's long-term case management programs including ES.

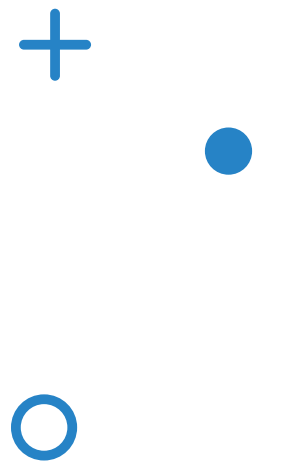
## Healthy Families Initiative

- BCOC believes in building social capital for program participants.
- This initiative will provide funds for youth sports, swimming lessons, pool passes, prom tickets, music lessons, etc.

## Family Support

- Private donors participate in our two largest family support programs each year.
- Back to School – donors adopt families in our ES program and provide gift cards or specific donations for the children in those families to have what they need to start school.
- Holiday assistance – donors adopt families in our ES program and provide gift cards or specific donations for the families to have a holiday celebration.

# Coaches on Campus Program goals



Help	Help meet basic needs of students
Increase	Increase enrollment in ES program
Improve	Improve completion rates/prevent students from dropping out due to lack of resources
Advance	Advance student engagement to increase social capital
Break	Break the cycle of generational poverty

# What are the needs?

## Tangible needs

- Transportation – gas, car payments, insurance, rides, bus fare, repairs
- Rent
- Housing location for homeless individuals
- Utility assistance
- Tuition and books
- Food
- Childcare – daycare, after school, and camp

## Social needs

- Connections on campus/belonging
- Building social capital
- Navigation – basic understanding of higher education
- Emotional support
- Accessing campus resources like tutoring, accessibility services, counseling & career, etc.

# Outcomes for Year 1: 2022-2023

## First year:

- Part-time Staff
- Total amount of referrals: 52
- Total students enrolled in the ES program: 23

## Successful outcomes from the College:

- Faculty and students are aware of the resource
- Coaches on campus staff invited to participate in College 101 class

# Outcomes for Year 2: 2023- 2024

## Second year:

- Full-time Coordinator
- Total amount of referrals: 80
- Total students enrolled in the ES program: 42

## Successful outcomes from the College:

- Faculty and students are aware of the resource
- Coaches on campus staff invited to participate in College 101 class
- High touch marketing of program and basic needs initiatives
- Poverty Simulation Event: April 2024

# Outcomes for Year 3: 2024-2025

## Third year:

- Expansion to Bristol Campus
- Increase referrals and enrollment
- Review retention data and trends for referrals and enrolled students

## Successful outcomes from the College:

- Increasing awareness of the program at our Bristol location which includes our Center for Advanced Technology building
- Coaches on campus staff continues to present in College 101 class

# How to build the relationship

Where to start to connect with the college?

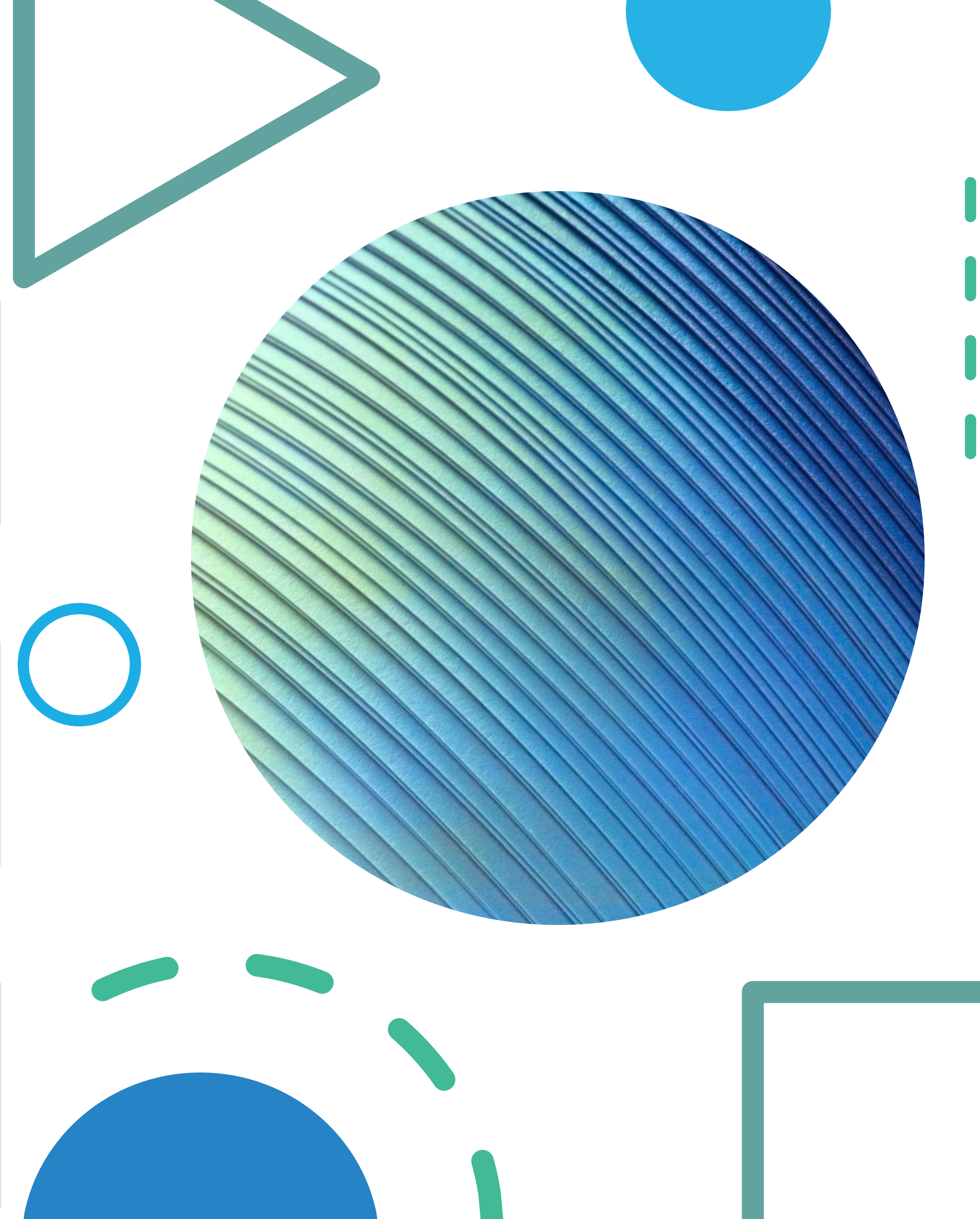
Connect with Student Affairs/Student Services  
Connect with the Foundation Office (scholarship people)

Having a program to share with the college

ES or another case management support program  
Share the value the CAA can bring to students

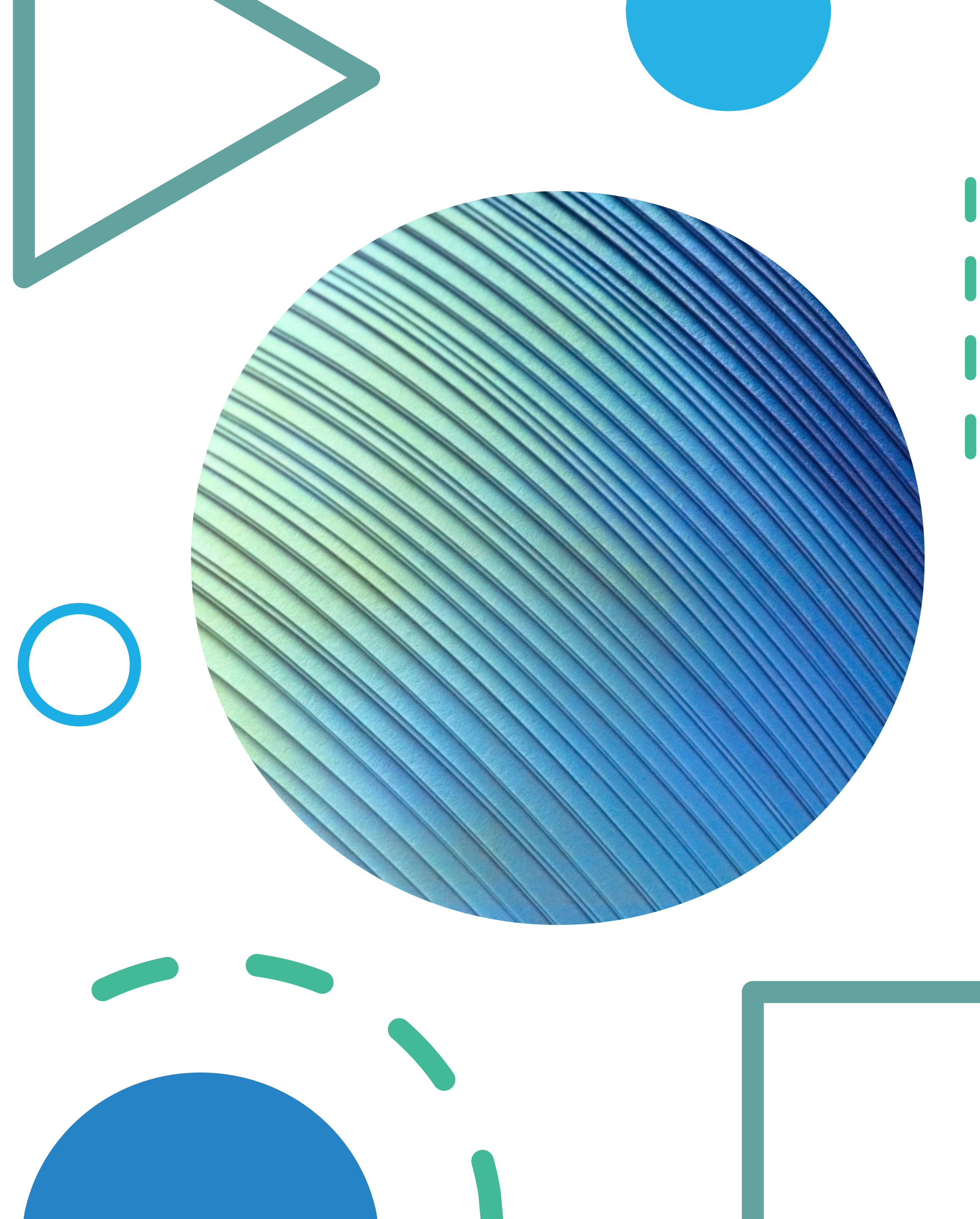
Embed the CAA on campus

This may be one of the most important pieces to success of the relationship  
Make your CAA program a part of the campus  
No need for students to go off campus for help – breakdown at that point if they have to go somewhere else for help, it may not happen  
***What's the Cost? An office***



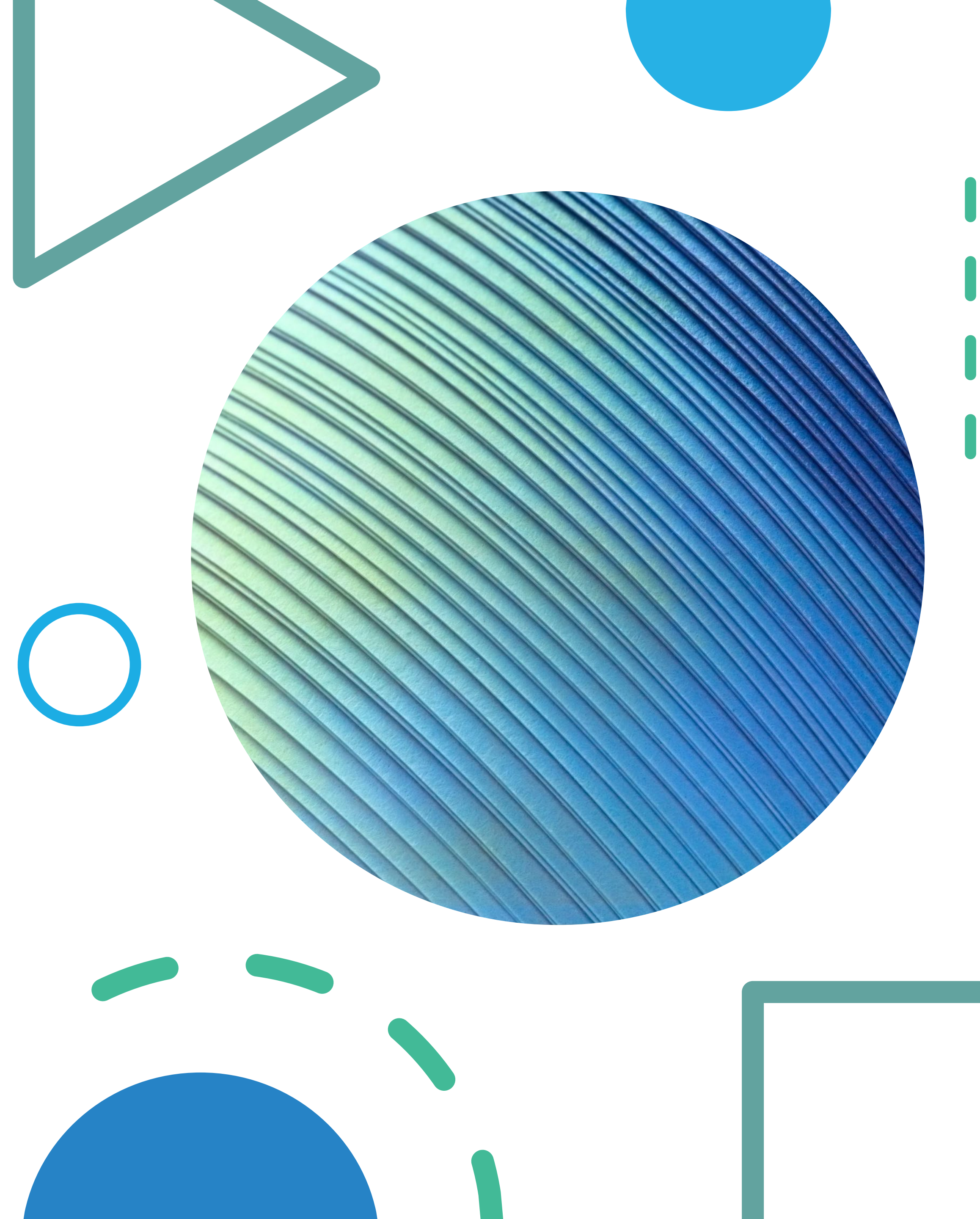
# Continuing to grow the relationship

- Offer resources, speak the same language, shared vision and goals
  - Community colleges and community action both measure success based on the health and well-being of the community they serve = shared vision
  - Align goals together
  - Identify continuous needs of students and share resources
- Funding
  - Gateway – scholarships & support
  - Fundraise for ES
  - Congressionally Directed Spending – 1 year
  - CSBG – for coaches



# Opportunities for funding

- Evidence-based programming + Data = Grant Dollars
- Appealing to donors
- Supports Foundation campaigns



# Coaches on Campus Success Stories

- When Azour first came to BCOC through the Coaches on Campus program, she and her mother were struggling to keep up with rent, and Azour's car needed repairs she couldn't afford. She was in her final term of the Pharmacy Tech program and at risk of dropping out due to financial constraints. With support from BCOC, including assistance with car insurance payments, rental aid, and access to food pantries, Azour was able to stay in school and successfully complete her program.

# Coaches on Campus Success Stories

- Kelly came to BCOC through the Coaches on Campus program as a student at BCCC in the Registered Nursing (RN) Program. Kelly was in the last 6 months of the program and was struggling to keep up with her rent and utilities because of reduced hours at work. The RN program at Bucks is a very rigorous program that includes classes, labs, and an internship that prevents students from working during the day. Kelly was worried that if she could not get help with her rent that she would be forced to withdraw from the RN program so that she could start working FT again and be able to pay her bills. Therefore, BCOC intervened to help Kelly with rent and utilities for that month so that Kelly could get back on her feet. Together, Kelly was able to maintain a balanced budget as she finished out her program, and graduated as an RN in June of 2024.
- After completing the RN program, Kelly got a FT job and is now making \$39/hr and it came with a great sign on bonus that allowed her to be able to save up and buy a brand new car.



# Questions

Heather Foor, BCOC

Director of Client Services

[hfoor@bcoc.org](mailto:hfoor@bcoc.org)



# Cross Cutting

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- **Strategic Partnerships**

- Cross sector partnerships: school districts, colleges, employers, and community-based organizations
- Leveraging and deepening relationships with public-private partnerships to expand reach and impact
- Providing a range of supportive services that assist students with completing their academic goals

- **Career Based Learning**

- Dual enrollment, Registered Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, and mentorship
- Pathways from high school to post-secondary education and the workforce

- **Technology Innovation**

- Digital literacy for learners to close the “digital divide”
- Flexible and remote learning opportunities

# Tools and Resources

# BUILDING AND SUSTAINING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE

This guide accompanies the webinar Building and Sustaining Strategic Partnerships: Part 1, which explores how strategic partnerships can serve as powerful pathways to economic mobility. Learn how Community Action Agencies can build, re-imagine, and strengthen both new and existing collaborations to better align and amplify shared community goals.

**[CHECK IT OUT HERE:](https://tinyurl.com/strategicpartner1)**  
**[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/STRATEGICPARTNER1](https://tinyurl.com/strategicpartner1)**



Promising Practices for  
Building & Sustaining  
Strategic Partnerships

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## BUILDING & REIMAGINING ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS

### Re-imagining What Partnerships Can Be

Partnerships can extend far beyond the familiar when we broaden the circle of who we consider as potential partners and reframe partnerships as relationships that contribute to building a connected community of support. This network can be fostered with diverse partnerships such as community colleges, hospitals, public health departments, small and large businesses, trade unions, cultural organizations, and alumni associations to actively support and amplify each other's shared community goals. These partnerships can bring valuable resources like funding, support, job training opportunities, and spark program innovation. Re-imagining your existing and future partnerships encourages both partners to think beyond their own scope and work towards change that will benefit the entire community.

### Building on Established Partnerships

Don't start from scratch! Your Community Action Agency (CAA) likely has a network of existing partnerships. The key is to strategically expand and deepen these connections to pursue innovative economic mobility initiatives.



# CHECK OUT THE ENTIRE SERIES: INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PART 2



## Registered Apprenticeships

- Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) are industry-vetted, approved and validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency.
- Registered Apprenticeships must fulfill these key elements:
  - Industry Led
  - Paid Job
  - Structured On-the-Job Learning/Mentorship
  - Supplemental Education
  - Portable Credentials

<https://tinyurl.com/RegApprenticeships>



Did you miss Part 2 of the Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development webinar? That's okay!

**ACCESS THE WEBINAR RECORDING HERE!**



**ACCESS WEBINAR SLIDES HERE!**



# INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE

This guide is designed to accompany the webinar Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development focusing on Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. This resource is designed to deepen your understanding of Registered Apprenticeships and provide you with additional resources to support your next steps, whether you're launching a program, expanding an existing program, or exploring how Registered Apprenticeships can strengthen your Workforce Development program goals.

**CHECK IT OUT HERE:**  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/REGAPPRENTICE](https://tinyurl.com/regapprentice)



## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PART 2 WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE



This guide is designed to accompany the webinar Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development focusing on Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. This resource is designed to deepen your understanding of Registered Apprenticeships and provide you with additional resources to support your next steps, whether you're launching a program, expanding an existing program, or exploring how Registered Apprenticeships can strengthen your Workforce Development program goals.

### What is a Registered Apprenticeship?

A Registered Apprenticeship is an industry vetted, structured, work-based learning model that combines on-the-job training (OJT) with related instruction (RI). These programs are registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) or a State Apprenticeship Agency, ensuring they meet specific quality standards.

Feature	Registered Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship	Pre-Apprenticeship
Registration	Registered with DOL or State Apprenticeship Agency and abides by 23 established standards.	Any apprenticeship that is not formally registered with DOL	Not necessarily registered
Wage	Paid employment	Can be paid or unpaid	May be paid a stipend, starting hourly wage, or unpaid
Credential	Nationally recognized credential upon completion	May or may not lead to credential but not always nationally recognized.	May lead to a credential, but not always nationally recognized.
Duration	Typically, 1-5 years depending on chosen industry	Typically, 1-5 years depending on chosen industry	Shorter term, often a few weeks to months
Purpose	Provides industry-vetted, paid job training that leads to full occupational proficiency, while earning a portable, nationally recognized credential.	Offers structured, paid or unpaid job training to prepare individuals for skilled careers, potentially leading to industry-recognized credentials.	Foundational program designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in Registered Apprenticeships.

# APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE

This guide is designed to accompany the webinar on Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development, exploring Pre-Apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. Dive deeper into Apprenticeship pathways, action steps, and resources to enhance your understanding and implementation of these workforce programs in your community.

**CHECK IT OUT HERE:**  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/WRKFRCGUIDE1](https://tinyurl.com/wrkfrcguide1)



## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE



This guide is designed to accompany the webinar on Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development focusing on Pre-Apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. These programs are key to shaping a brighter future not only for individuals but for the entire community.

In today's rapidly evolving job market, workforce development is key to building strong, resilient families and fostering long-term economic growth. It goes beyond simply filling job vacancies, it's about creating meaningful career pathways that drive long-term economic growth. By investing in education and training, we empower individuals to:

- **Increase Earning Potential:** Skilled workers command higher wages, improving financial stability.
- **Enhance Job Security:** In-demand skills provide resilience in an evolving changing job market.
- **Contribute to Community Prosperity:** A skilled workforce attracts businesses, driving growth and strengthening local economies.
- **Break Cycles of Poverty:** Access to quality training creates opportunities for upward mobility.

### WEBINAR HIGHLIGHT

Discover the latest trends and promising strategies for advancing economic mobility through innovative workforce development by watching the recording of **'Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development Pt. 1'**

**WATCH HERE**

To accompany the webinar recording, the slides are available below.

**VIEW HERE**

# BUILDING AND SUSTAINING STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

2:00pm ET/1:00pm CT/12:00pm

This webinar series will highlight Community Action Agencies who are leveraging strategic partnerships to advance innovative economic mobility initiatives. Participants will have the opportunity to gain insights from the experiences of other Community Action leaders who have built and sustained trusted working relationships with cross-sector partners in the areas of Workforce Development, and Community-Asset Building. Through intentionality and collaboration, Community Action Agencies can coordinate and enhance services to improve outcomes for individuals and families.

**REGISTER HERE TODAY!**

**<https://tinyurl.com/BuildandSustain2>**



# FRESH FINDS

**LEARN**

**EXPAND**

**IMPLEMENT**

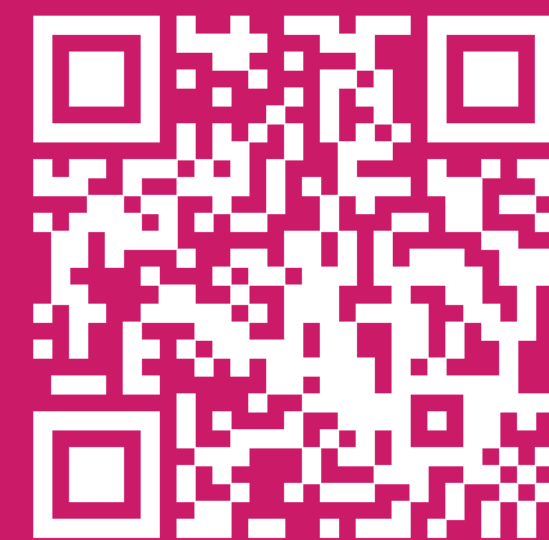
Are you interested in expanding the capacity of your organization to implement innovative programs and services?

Are you interested in improving outcomes for the individuals, families, and communities in your service area?

Are you interested in learning from the experiences of other community leaders across the country?

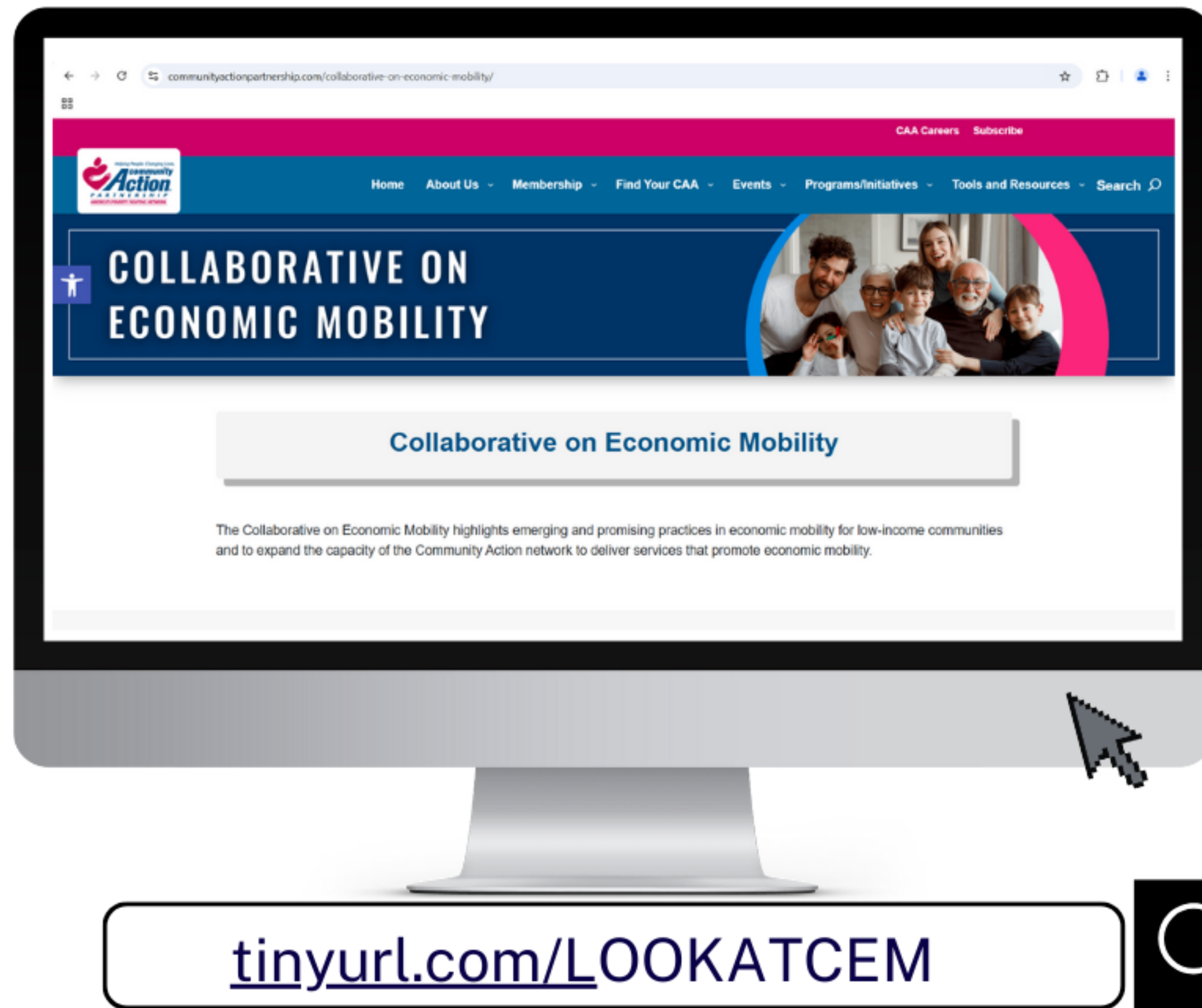


Sign up for the National Community Action Partnership's new "Fresh Finds" newsletter and be the first to know about new tools, resources, and training opportunities!



[tinyurl.com/FreshFinds25](https://tinyurl.com/FreshFinds25)

# NEW NCAP WEBPAGE: COLLABORATIVE ON ECONOMIC MOBILITY



Check out our dedicated webpage for the Collaborative on Economic Mobility (CEM) on the NCAP website!

You can find tools and resources related to CEM key focus areas and sign up for our Fresh Finds Newsletter here!

**EXPLORE  
HERE!**



# COLLABORATIVE ON ECONOMIC MOBILITY SESSIONS OFFERED AT ANNUAL CONVENTION 2025

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**Detroit, MI | August 27th – 29th**

- **Building Skilled Careers: Vocational Training for Enhanced Employability**
- **Building Tomorrow's Workforce: Implementing Innovative Pre-Apprenticeship Programs**
- **Pathways to Prosperity: Tools and Resources to Advance Economic Mobility**
- **Transforming Lives: Implementing a Whole Family Whole Home Approach to Innovation**



# We want to hear from you!

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We would love to hear about your experience in today's training webinar. Please take a moment to complete the webinar survey.



<https://tinyurl.com/BuildingSustaining1>