



**Advance
Central PA**
Linking People & Business

EARN Committee Meeting

December 17, 2024

Virtual Meeting TEAMS Webinar/Conference Call

Equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Program funded with federal dollars. For more information, visit:
<https://advancecentralpa.org/about-us/public-notices/>

EARN Committee Meeting

Agenda

Microsoft Teams/Teleconference
Tuesday, December 17, 2024 1:00 p.m.

Welcome & Call to Order	K. Chappell
Review & Approval of Meeting Minutes	K. Chappell
Advance Central PA EARN Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrollments, Referral Rejections, Performance• Coaching Collaborative Overview<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Social Impact Poster• DHS Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP) Monitoring Update• EARN Fiscal Status Update	P. O'Connor & E. Mulberger
CAO Updates	K. Chappell
EARN Provider Updates	A. Dale & J. Walter
PA CareerLink® Updates	B. Jones
Customer Service/DST Issues	K. Chappell
Open Discussion	K. Chappell
Adjournment	K. Chappell

EARN Committee

Meeting Notes

February 20, 2024

The EARN Committee of Advance Central PA's Workforce Development Board held a meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024 via virtual TEAMS Meeting.

Committee Members Attending

Kenneth Chappell – Lycoming CAO
Patricia Cox – Northumberland CAO
Bruce Jones – BWPO
Mike Lisnock – Columbia CAO/Montour CAO
Crystal Montgomery – Centre CAO/Mifflin CAO
Erica Mulberger – Advance Central PA
Wendy Townsend – Columbia CAO

Committee Members Excused

Julie Eister – Snyder CAO/Union CAO
Tara Hough – Clinton CAO

WDB Staff Attending

Allison Grose
Patrick O'Connor
Kelly Walter

Guests Attending

Jill Walter – CSO
Kate Sivers – CSO
Julie Tkachenko – DHS Advisor

Call to Order and Welcome

Ken Chappell, EARN Committee Chair, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. A quorum was confirmed. Ken welcomed Julie Tkachenko, PA Dept. of Human Services (DHS) Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP) Advisor, to the meeting.

Review & Approval of Meeting Notes

Ken recalled the last EARN Committee meeting was held September 12, 2023, and called for a motion to approve the notes which were sent in advance.



Patty Cox made a motion to approve the September 12, 2023 EARN Committee meeting notes. Erica Mulberger seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Advance Central PA EARN Contract Update

Patrick O'Connor, Advance Central PA Adult Programs Coordinator, provided updates.

Enrollments and Performance Updates

Patrick presented new program enrollments from July 2023 through January 2024. There were 229 new enrollments (216 TANF and 13 SNAP Only) in addition to 292 participants with cases that carried over from the prior program year. Overall, enrollments track similarly to the same timeframe in the prior program year.

The Referral rejection report showed 125 referral rejections, equating to an enrollment rate of 63%. In alignment with BEP expectations, referrals are now accepted only after the individual has attended orientation rather than before. Additionally, participants are given the flexibility to reschedule their orientation if needed.

Patrick presented a performance update for July 2022 through June 2023 noting 61 placements, 34 retentions, and 19 credentials. This is a slight increase in placements and a slight dip in retention and credentialing compared to the same time last year. In discussing credentialing, Patrick explained that the provider, Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. (CSO) worked with a subcontractor from July to October of 2023 to access in-house credentialing programs to benefit participants and the performance metric. However, it was later discovered that the subcontractor's training was not approved by DHS as was presented. Advance Central PA asked CSO to end their agreement with that subcontractor and that relationship has ended. DHS is aware of the issue and provided assistance.

Patrick explained other important metrics tracked and monitored by DHS including: Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) completion, licensed counselor visits, and assessment. PY22 performance for IEP completion appears

significantly off track; this is the first year that DHS implemented a requirement that participant signatures be present in order for an IEP to be considered complete. Overall, IEPs included meaningful goals and barrier remediation, but signatures have been challenging to obtain. Marked improvement should be made with intentional focus on obtaining signatures going forward. Actual performance for licensed counselor visit exceeded the target, evidence that the Wellness Coach position is working. The metric related to the required assessment process was near target. Advance Central PA uses a Family and Household Needs Assessment (FNA) which according to guidelines must be administered within 14 days of enrollment. Barriers such as childcare, transportation, and medical appointments are an underlying cause of the FNA being completed late.

Erica Mulberger, Advance Central PA Executive Director commented that with 88% of participants attending their Wellness Coach visit there is a clear need for the services EARN is providing.

Bruce Jones, Assistant Regional Director for the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO), suggested the difficulty in obtaining signatures from participants is not unique to Central PA. Julie Tkachenko, DHS BEP Advisor, affirmed that the signature is difficult to gather across the state. She noted the best way to gather the signature might be for a participant to update their IEP in person with staff. Meanwhile, participants with many barriers find it hard to complete the assessment within the 14 days, regardless of virtual or in person service delivery.

Julie shared that she would be sending the finalized monitoring report soon, as she recently finished compiling the data.

Coaching Collaborative Update

Since June 2023, Advance Central PA and EARN staff have met with Adjacent Possible to implement an evidence-driven approach to move participants towards self-sufficiency. The recent theme has been building relationships and goal setting with individuals, moving them to a place of family stability. Recognizing the importance of addressing program requirements in a customer-centric manner, the team have developed a revised FNA that is more concise and emphasizes conversation and rapport building between the participant and staff. Patrick presented the assessment in detail. Members discussed and noted support for the shortened version, color coding, and built-in ability to revisit goals. In order to implement the new FNA, Patrick will need to submit it to DHS for approval.



Erica Mulberger made a motion to pilot the Family Needs Assessment which was developed as part of the deliverables of the Coaching Collaborative project, contingent on approval from the PA Dept. of Human Services, Bureau of Employment Programs. Bruce Jones seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no abstentions.

EARN Fiscal Status Update

Erica Mulberger, Advance Central PA Executive Director, presented an update on the EARN budget and expenditures through December 31, 2023 explaining line items and totals. Expenditures are 44.27% at the halfway mark of the year. There are no concerns at that time.

County Assistance Office (CAO) Updates

Ken Chappell shared an update on the winding down of benefits and provided an update that the CAOs have started processing medical renewals.

LIHEAP was opened early this year and is scheduled to close April 5th.

Ken also shared a reminder that county coalitions meet each month. Advance Central PA leverages these groups as the Local Management Committee for EARN. He suggested that members contact Patrick for more information or a schedule.

EARN Provider Updates

Katherine Sivers, CSO EARN supervisor, reported fall 2023 activities and continuing strategies to deliver services to participants in person and virtually, depending on individual needs. She shared how EARN is helping participants to overcome challenges related to car seats, childcare, clothing, and Christmas trees in addition to other barriers.

Katherine concluded her report by sharing success stories. Madeline's EARN story was one of perseverance and showcases not only her persistence and mental strength, but the power of the EARN program and the positive impact it can have when someone utilizes the services. Advance Central PA nominated Madeline for the Governor's Achievement Award; she will be celebrated as a winner at a conference in Hershey later this spring.

Additionally, CSO has awarded their Difference Maker Award to EARN van driver John Kuzmick for his vital role in helping participants access the transportation they need while providing outstanding customer service.

PA CareerLink® Updates

Bruce Jones, Assistant Regional Director for the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations (BWPO), gave a report of the PA CareerLink® activities in the region. He highlighted Advance Central PA's "Match Meetings" as a best practice that bring together PA CareerLink® program staff, including EARN, with the Business Solutions Team to match job seekers to job openings. A proponent of the process, Bruce played a significant role in a state-wide presentation by the local staff.

In Lycoming County, EARN participants have been utilizing the clothing closet to obtain no-cost interview/job ready attire; Bruce gave kudos to the Site Administrator and staff in that site for implementation of this resource.

Customer Service/DST Issues

None to report.

Executive Session

Ken called for an Executive Session to discuss the renewal of the EARN subcontract at 2:06 p.m. Non-members were moved from the meeting. At 2:11 p.m. Ken announced the Executive Session as complete and reconvened the public portion of the meeting.

EARN Contract

With no other comments a motion was made.



Patty Cox made a motion to extend the current contract for EARN Services with Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. for the period July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025 with funding to be negotiated. Mike Lisnock seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved with no abstentions.

Erica reminded everyone that this will go before the full Workforce Development Board in March to finalize.

Open Discussion

Patrick invited members to provide feedback on the data and information they would like to review at upcoming meetings; members are welcome to contact him at any time.

Date of Next Meeting

The EARN Committee will meet as needed; the next meeting is to be determined.

Adjournment

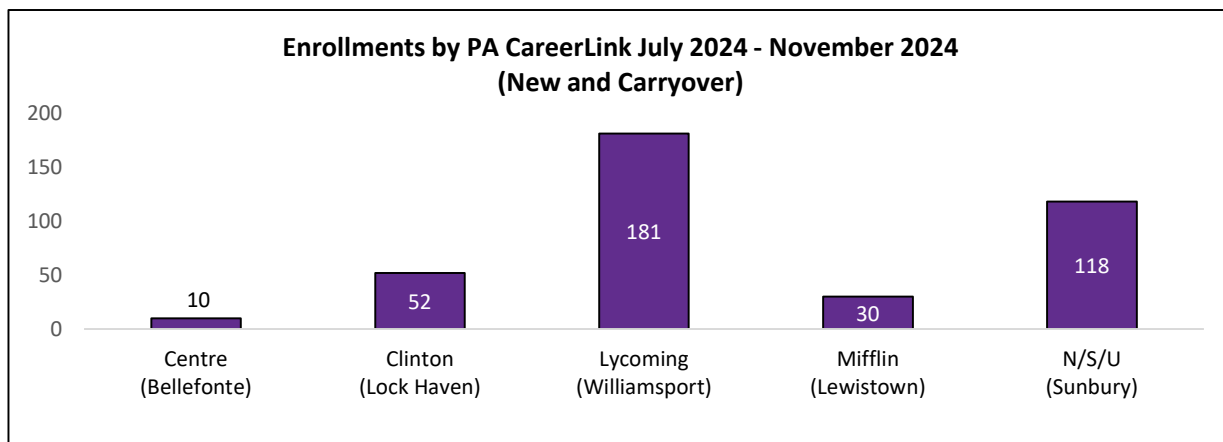
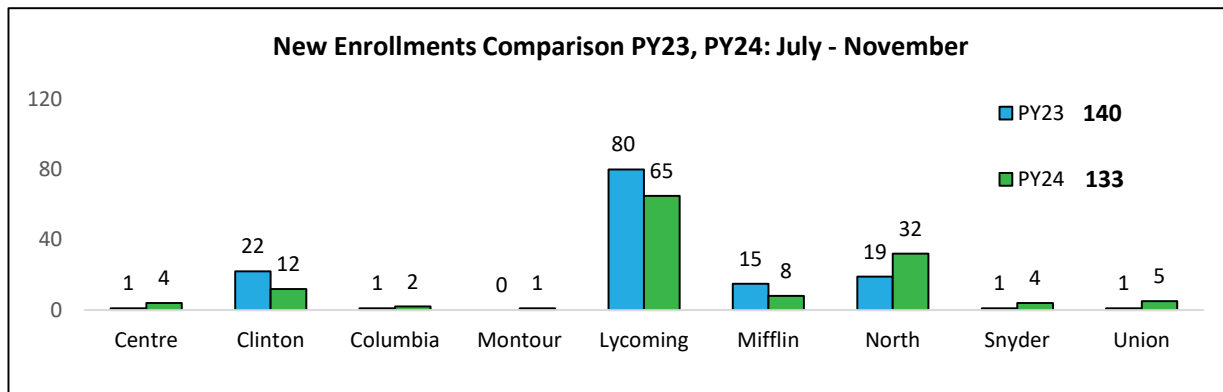
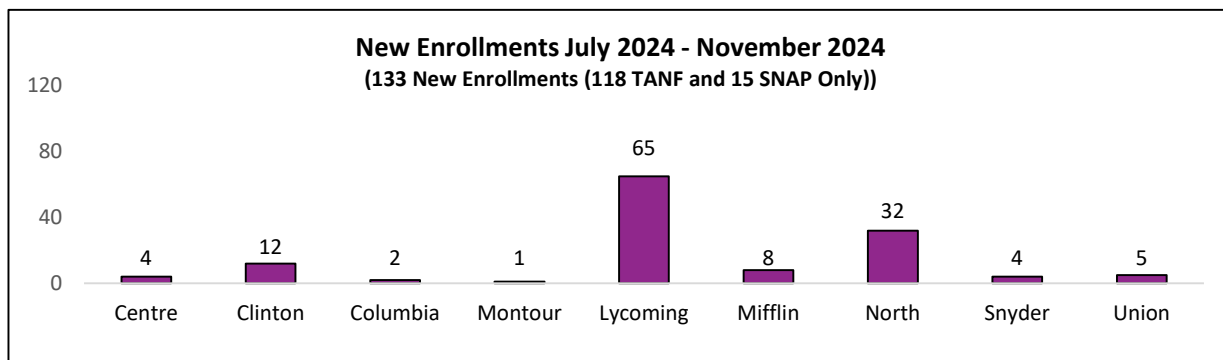
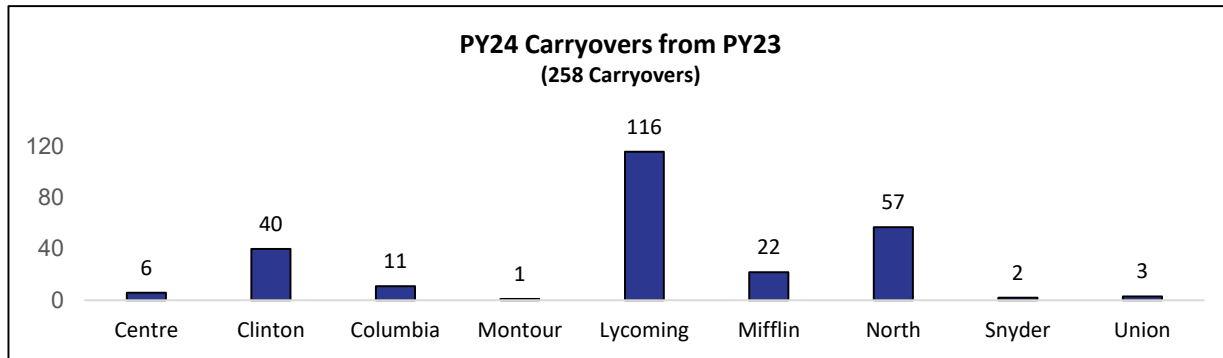
With no further business to discuss, Ken adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kelly Walter,
Office/Board Coordinator

EARN Program Year 2024-2025 Enrollment Report



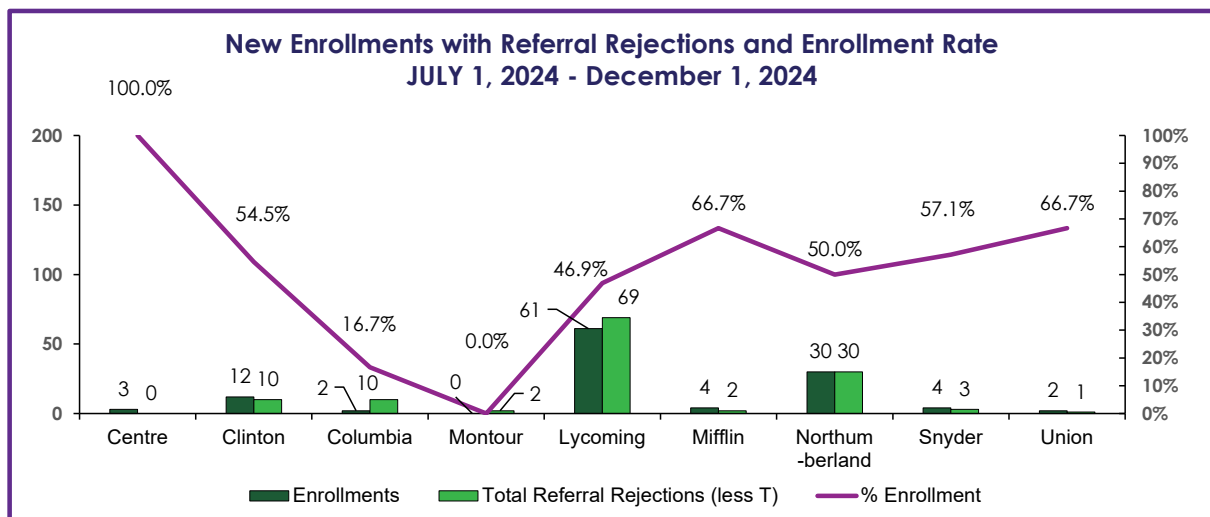
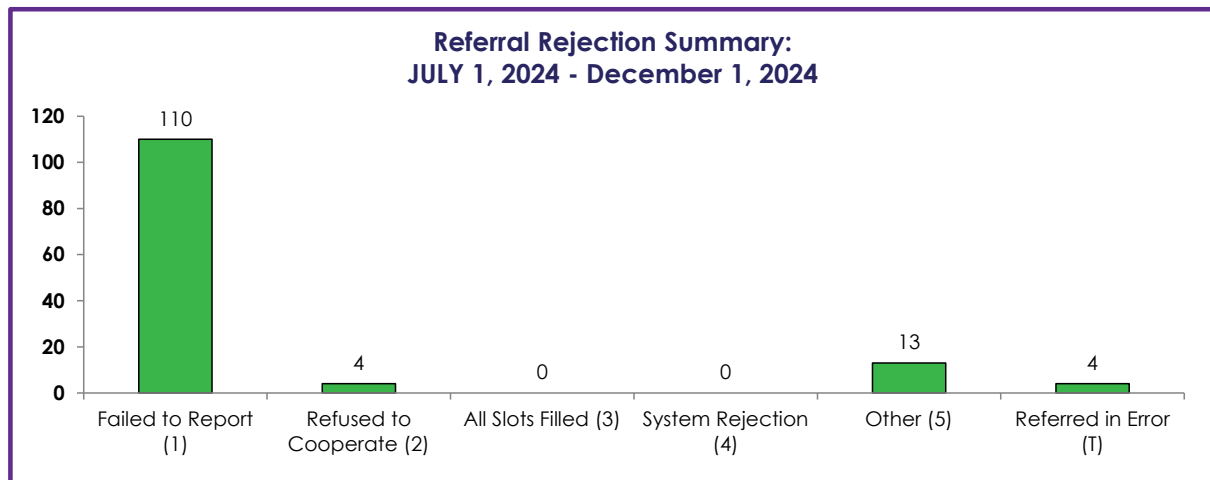
EARN PY24 Referral Rejections Summary July 1, 2024 - December 1, 2024

118 New TANF Enrollments

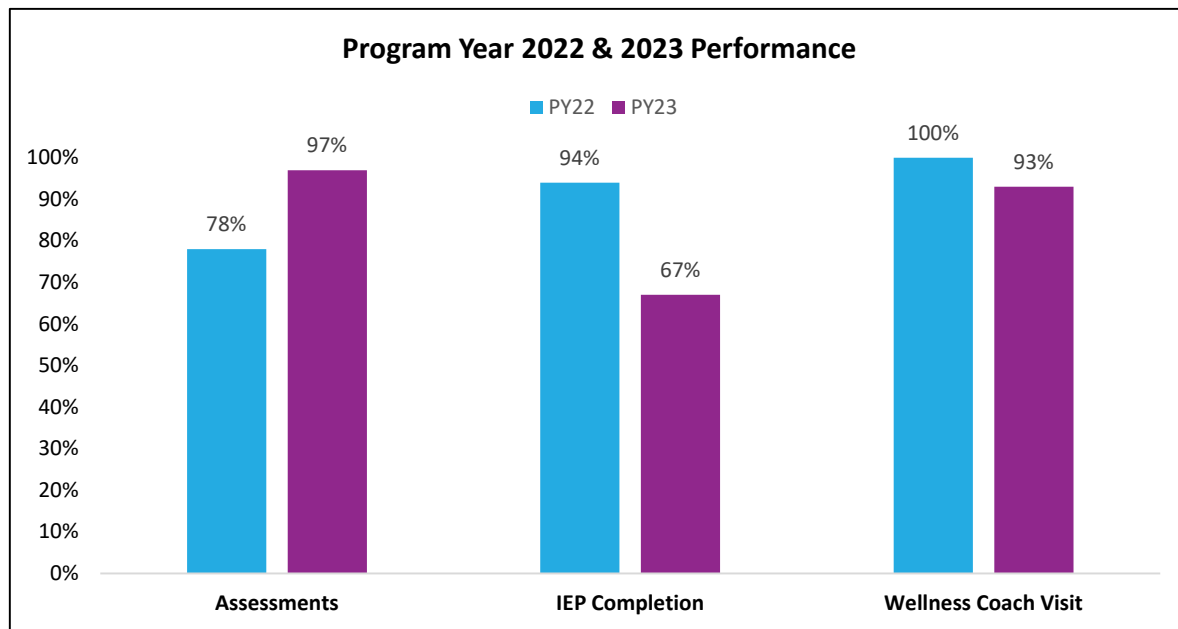
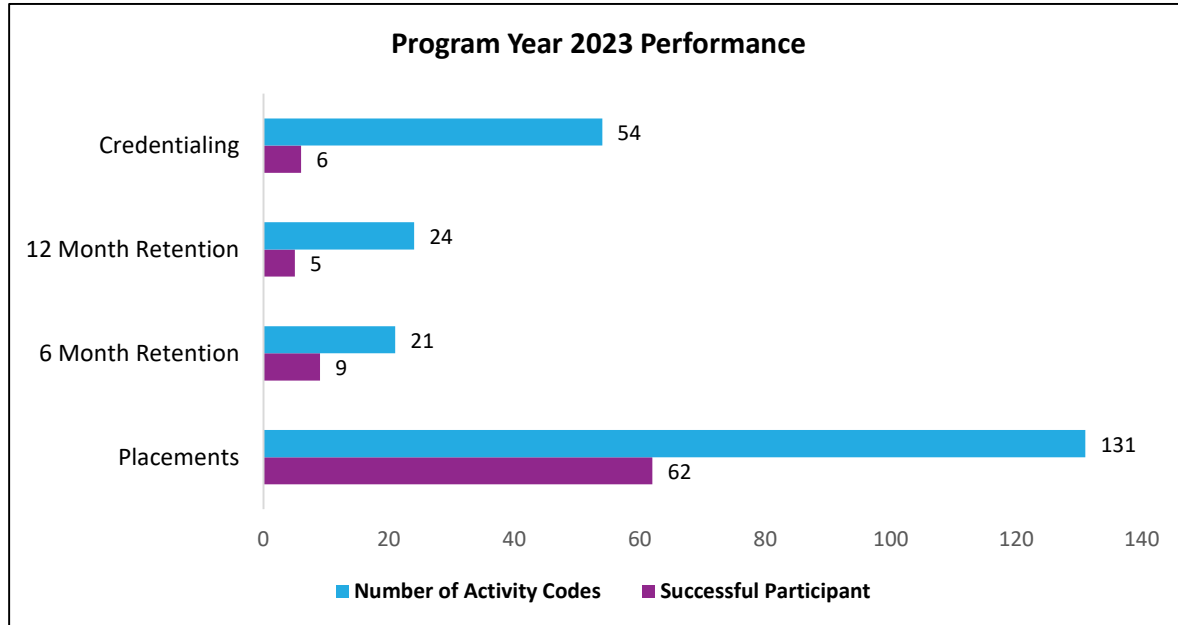
127 Referral Rejections (Excluding T) for 84 Unique Individuals

48.2% Enrollment Rate (Goal = 60%)

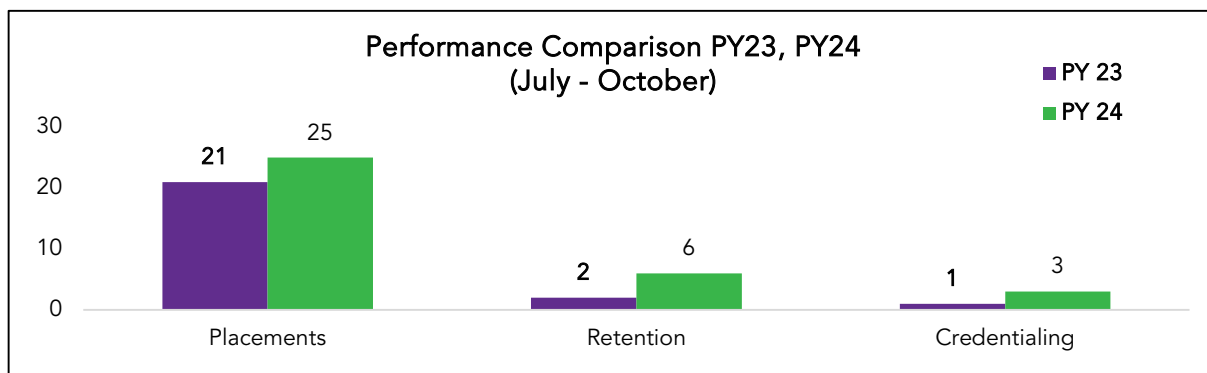
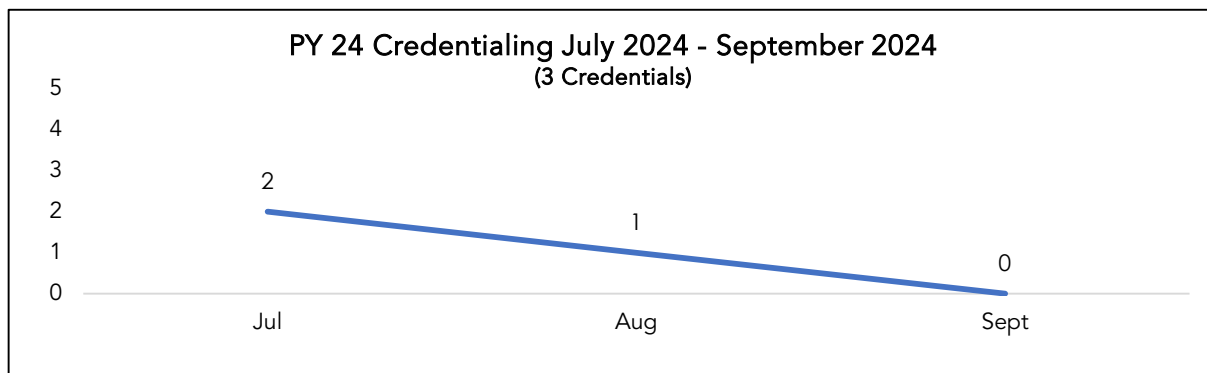
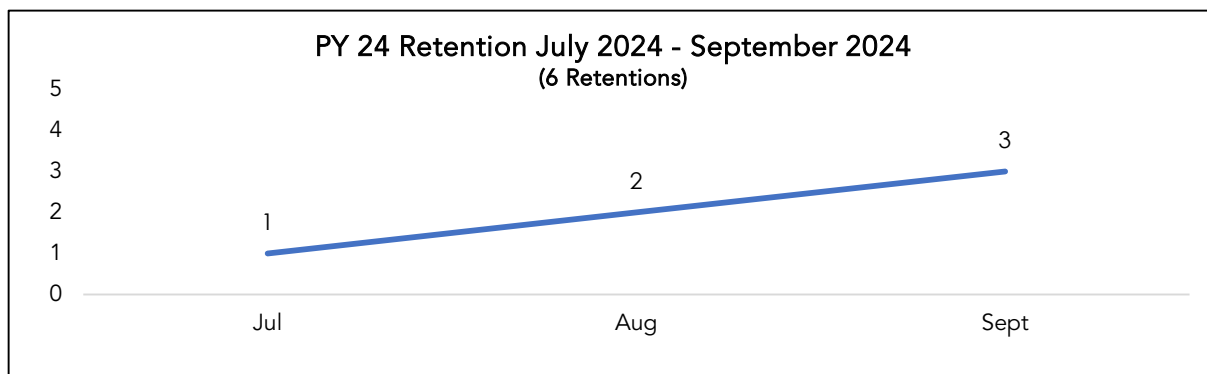
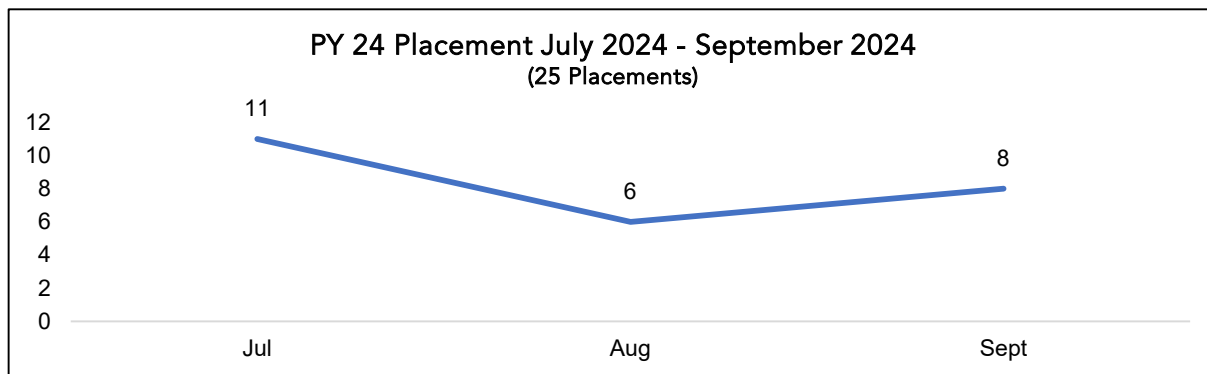
Referral Rejection Detail	Centre	Clinton	Columbia	Montour	Lycoming	Mifflin	Northum-berland	Snyder	Union	Total Per Code
Failed to Report (1)	0	8	10	1	59	1	28	2	1	110
Refused to Cooperate (2)	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	4
All Slots Filled (3)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
System Rejection (4)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (5)	0	1	0	1	8	0	2	1	0	13
Referred in Error (T)	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	4
Total Per County (excluding T)	0	10	10	2	69	2	30	3	1	127
Total Per County	0	10	11	2	70	2	32	3	1	131



Program Year 2023-2024 Initial BEP Monitoring Findings



EARN Program Year 2024-2025 Performance Report



Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN)

We identified this need...

Individuals--economically disadvantaged parents in central Pennsylvania who are receiving TANF and considered work-eligible--need to be able to meet their and their family's basic needs; build the necessary life skills within the context of trusting relationships; and access employment, education, and training opportunities in order to gain economic mobility.



...and are addressing it by:

The County Assistance Office (CAO) provides cash, food, medical, and other assistance while the EARN program helps with connecting individuals to community resources to meet their basic needs; providing individualized employment and wellness coaching; and helping individuals prepare for and obtain employment.



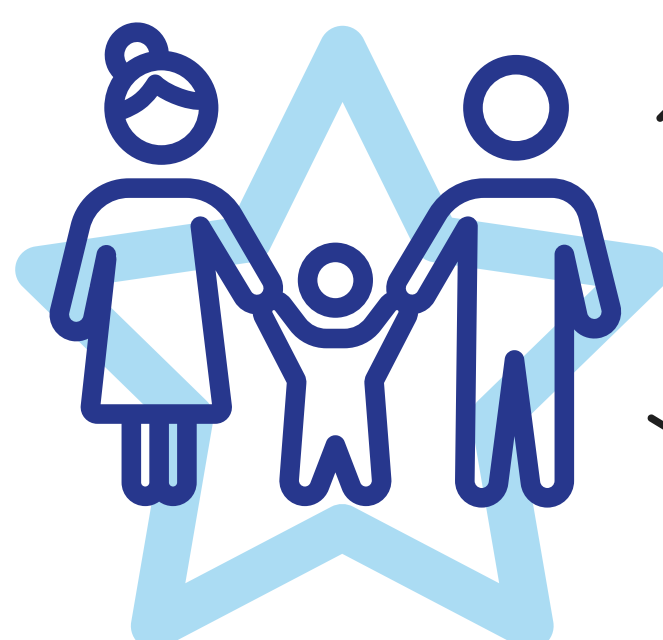
Our program helps participants achieve:



Improved ability to form healthy and supportive long-term relationships



Increased individual and family well-being



Improved educational outcomes



Improved work outcomes



Improved ability to independently meet their families' basic needs



This is what success would look like in the short-run:

PARTICIPANTS WILL...



have an increased sense of hope and possibility



stay engaged with their Workforce Specialist



be able to meet their families' basic needs



experience improvements in their mental health

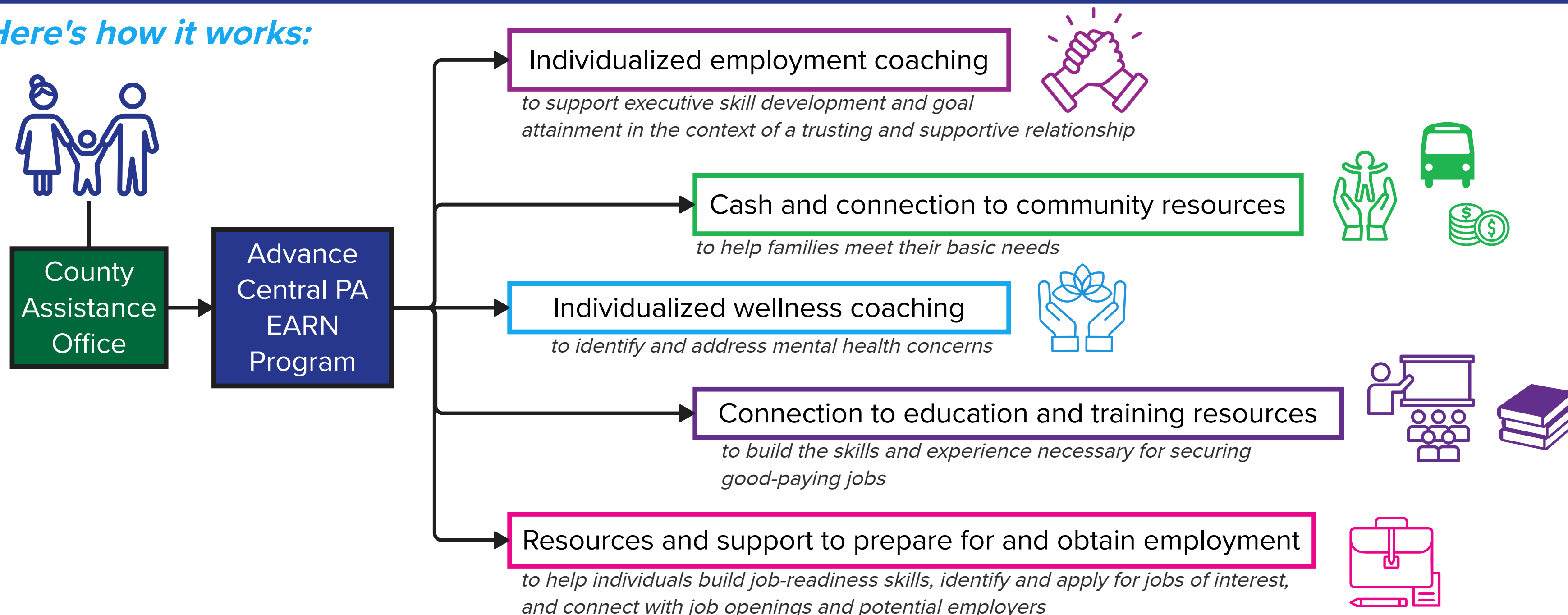


increase their skills and employability



engage in job search activities

Here's how it works:



These are the resources that support these activities:



CAO, Advance Central PA, and CSO leaders/staff



Passion for the work and improving lives of families



Cash and material resources for families



Partnerships with local agencies and employers



Data collection systems

BUDGET FOR EARN GRANT AGREEMENT

Grantee: Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation

TANF Portion of Grant = \$ 2,010,846.00

Grant: # 4100077209

SNAP Portion of Grant = \$ 51,904.00

Period: July 1, 2024 through October 31, 2024

Total Grant = \$ 2,062,750.00

*Administrative costs are to be included in this amount, but may not exceed 10% of the total grant.

EARN Expenditures as of 10/31/24

COST REIMBURSEMENT

	TANF Portion Total Grant	TANF Amount Expended	SNAP Portion Total Grant	SNAP Amount Expended	Total Grant	Total Expenditures	TANF Balance Remaining	TANF % Expended	SNAP Balance Remaining	SNAP % Expended
Administration										
Personnel										
Salaries										
<i>Total Salaries</i>	\$ 125,742.60	\$ 38,241.11	\$ 3,443.00	\$ 923.53	\$ 129,185.60	\$ 39,164.64	\$ 87,501.49	30.41%	\$ 2,519.47	26.82%
Fringe Benefits										
<i>Total Fringe Benefits</i>	\$ 42,119.31	\$ 10,956.85	\$ 1,094.39	\$ 302.74	\$ 43,213.70	\$ 11,259.59	\$ 31,162.46	26.01%	\$ 791.65	27.66%
Total Personnel	\$ 167,861.91	\$ 49,197.96	\$ 4,537.39	\$ 1,226.27	\$ 172,399.30	\$ 50,424.23	\$ 118,663.95	29.31%	\$ 3,311.12	27.03%
Equipment & Supplies										
Consumable Supplies	\$ 778.00	\$ 165.04	\$ 16.00	\$ 8.48	\$ 794.00	\$ 173.52	\$ 612.96	21.21%	\$ 7.52	53.00%
Equipment Purchases	\$ 116.00	\$ 277.32	\$ 4.00	\$ 3.51	\$ 120.00	\$ 280.83	\$ (161.32)	239.07%	\$ 0.49	87.75%
Total Equipment & Supplies	\$ 894.00	\$ 442.36	\$ 20.00	\$ 11.99	\$ 914.00	\$ 454.35	\$ 451.64	49.48%	\$ 8.01	59.95%
Operating										
Audit	\$ 1,530.69	\$ -	\$ 3.01	\$ -	\$ 1,533.70	\$ -	\$ 1,530.69	0.00%	\$ 3.01	0.00%
Insurance	\$ 405.00	\$ 313.15	\$ 5.00	\$ 3.20	\$ 410.00	\$ 316.35	\$ 91.85	77.32%	\$ 1.80	64.00%
Postage	\$ 166.00	\$ 71.72	\$ 4.00	\$ 0.37	\$ 170.00	\$ 72.09	\$ 94.28	43.20%	\$ 3.63	9.25%
Telephone	\$ 1,420.00	\$ 355.66	\$ 32.00	\$ 7.80	\$ 1,452.00	\$ 363.46	\$ 1,064.34	25.05%	\$ 24.20	24.38%
Rent	\$ 14,558.00	\$ 3,622.34	\$ 322.00	\$ 78.19	\$ 14,880.00	\$ 3,700.53	\$ 10,935.66	24.88%	\$ 243.81	24.28%
Bus Services	\$ 11,051.00	\$ 5,461.82	\$ 150.00	\$ 58.81	\$ 11,201.00	\$ 5,520.63	\$ 5,589.18	49.42%	\$ 91.19	39.21%
Travel	\$ 3,198.00	\$ 69.22	\$ 117.00	\$ 2.67	\$ 3,315.00	\$ 71.89	\$ 3,128.78	2.16%	\$ 114.33	2.28%
Total Operating	\$ 32,328.69	\$ 9,893.91	\$ 633.01	\$ 151.04	\$ 32,961.70	\$ 10,044.95	\$ 22,434.78	30.60%	\$ 481.97	23.86%
Total Administration	\$ 201,084.60	\$ 59,534.23	\$ 5,190.40	\$ 1,389.30	\$ 206,275.00	\$ 60,923.53	\$ 141,550.37	29.61%	\$ 3,801.10	26.77%
Program Activities										
Other Program Expenses										
Incentives (TANF)	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 6,185.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 6,185.00	\$ 18,815.00	24.74%	\$ -	0.00%
Regional Technology (Zoom, WIN, Wifi)	\$ 3,238.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,238.00	\$ -	\$ 3,238.00	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
PA CareerLink® Operating Budget/RSAB	\$ 254,904.00	\$ 70,560.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 254,904.00	\$ 70,560.00	\$ 184,344.00	27.68%	\$ -	0.00%
Training & Credentials	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 432.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 432.00	\$ 568.00	43.20%	\$ -	0.00%
PWE/Subsidized Wage Contracts	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	0.00%	\$ -	0.00%
Total Other Program Expenses	\$ 289,142.00	\$ 77,177.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 289,142.00	\$ 77,177.00	\$ 211,965.00	26.69%	\$ -	0.00%
Subcontractors										
CSO	\$ 1,420,619.40	\$ 408,551.00	\$ 46,713.60	\$ 12,669.00	\$ 1,467,333.00	\$ 421,220.00	\$ 1,012,068.40	28.76%	\$ 34,044.60	27.12%
TIU	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 31,603.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 31,603.00	\$ 68,397.00	31.60%	\$ -	0.00%
Total Subcontractors	\$ 1,520,619.40	\$ 440,154.00	\$ 46,713.60	\$ 12,669.00	\$ 1,567,333.00	\$ 452,823.00	\$ 1,080,465.40	28.95%	\$ 34,044.60	27.12%
Total Program Activities	\$ 1,809,761.40	\$ 517,331.00	\$ 46,713.60	\$ 12,669.00	\$ 1,856,475.00	\$ 530,000.00	\$ 1,292,430.40	28.59%	\$ 34,044.60	27.12%
TOTAL GRANT	\$ 2,010,846.00	\$ 576,865.23	\$ 51,904.00	\$ 14,058.30	\$ 2,062,750.00	\$ 590,923.53	\$ 1,433,980.77	28.69%	\$ 37,845.70	27.09%

Performance Funds Available: \$ 647,622.35

December 2024



EARN

CENTRAL PA ♦ GOOD THINGS AHEAD



Diaper Drive

The Mifflin County EARN program, in partnership with the rest of the PA CareerLink[®] team, are collecting diaper donations for its Holiday Diaper Drive. Diapers will be distributed at PA CareerLink[®] Mifflin County on December 18th 1pm–3pm. In addition to receiving diapers, customers will learn about services.

Interested in Donating?

Donations can be mailed or dropped off at PA CareerLink[®] Mifflin County, 6395 Route 103N, MCIDC Plaza Bldg 58, Lewistown, PA 17044.



Jillian Tate, EARN Workforce Specialist



Financial Literacy Workshop

M&T Bank

Last month, Merrill Smith from M&T Bank gave a presentation on budgeting. The topics covered included methods for dividing expenses, tips for reducing costs, and guidance on using a budgeting journal. He also provided guidance on using apps to save and manage money. He concluded the session by answering questions and working individually with participants on their specific concerns. Each participant received a resource packet.



Program Incentives

With the support of Advance Central PA, EARN has been issuing special incentives to help participants.

- State ID
- Restoration Fees
- Car Insurance
- Driving Lessons
- Birth Certificate

Special Grants

CSO received a grant to distribute personal hygiene products. Several EARN participants in Columbia, Montour, and Northumberland Counties received shampoo, conditioner, body wash, feminine hygiene products, and other items. CSO also has sleeping bags that can be distributed to those in need.



A limited number of Community Aid gift cards were also distributed to families who needed clothing for themselves and/or their children. The gift cards were especially helpful for back to school shopping.

CSO also has limited funding to support all EARN participants with needs not funded through EARN.



Wellness Services: Success Story

A Lycoming County participant with limited English proficiency came onsite in tears, reporting domestic violence. She stated that she had nowhere to go so turned to the EARN team for help. Arriving with a kitten in her arms, no money, no phone, and nowhere to live the team immediately went to action. They reached out to local shelters to find housing for the participant and her school-age daughter with no success. Unfortunately, all shelters were at full capacity. However, within a few hours, the team successfully arranged funding for a two-week stay at a hotel, obtained donations for cat essentials, secured food, and organized transportation for the participant to get to program and for her child to attend school.

This participant is now living in a local shelter and is receiving services from community agencies.

Wellness Coach Sessions

Wellness Group Sessions

- Self-Care for the Holidays- Tips on self-care for dealing with the stress and pressure of the holidays
- How to Handle a Narcissist- Wellness Coach defined narcissism and participants shared experiences
- Human Emotions- Types of emotions and how they have an influence on our life and how we interact with others



NutriEARN Group Sessions

- Food Allergies and Intolerances- Videos and discussion on the difference between food allergies and intolerances, how to tell if you have an allergy/intolerance, natural antihistamine food list
- Holiday Food on a Budget- Discussion on how to plan, prep, and cook a holiday meal on a budget, food safety, turning holiday leftovers into other meals, and a video on \$25 Thanksgiving Feast for 4 people
- What is Nutrition?- Learning about nutrition beyond food
- Food Addictions- Discussion signs of a food addiction, what causes food addiction, and how to break food addictions such as cravings

Program Highlights

- Workforce180 Training:
 - Case Management 1, 2, 3, 4
 - Motivational Interviewing
 - Leadership Development
 - Racial Equity
 - Reentry Services
 - Time Management
- Apprenticeship Conference
- PA CareerLink® Awareness
- Significant improvement on data entry
- Success utilizing orientation checklist
- In-person DST meetings
- Halloween and Summer events
- Holiday homemade gift workshop 12/13/24
- Tax prep workshop- 1/3/2025



EARN Staffing

All Sites

Jill Walter, Workforce Development Administrator
Abby Dale, EARN Program Supervisor
Jodi Fox, Wellness Coach

Centre/Canton Site

Austin Garlitz, Data Entry Specialist
TBD, Workforce Specialist

Lycoming Site

Alexis Yost, Data Entry Specialist
Sierra Fay, Wellness Coach/WFS
Robin Splain, Instructor
Erin Dooley, Workforce Specialist
Balinda Edmond, Workforce Specialist
Natalie Griffin, Workforce Specialist
Bob Borch, Job Developer

Mifflin Site

Meria Flecha, Instructor
Jillian Tate, Workforce Specialist

N/S/U Site

LaShawna Reid, Data Entry Specialist
Michele Brosius, Instructor
Kaylin Fetterolf, Workforce Specialist
Kendra Fry, Workforce Specialist
Elaine Kerr, Job Developer

Van Drivers

John Kuzmick
Paul Lee, Jr.
Blake McCoy
Craig Waltman