

# Innovative Workforce Strategies for Older Adults



Presented by:

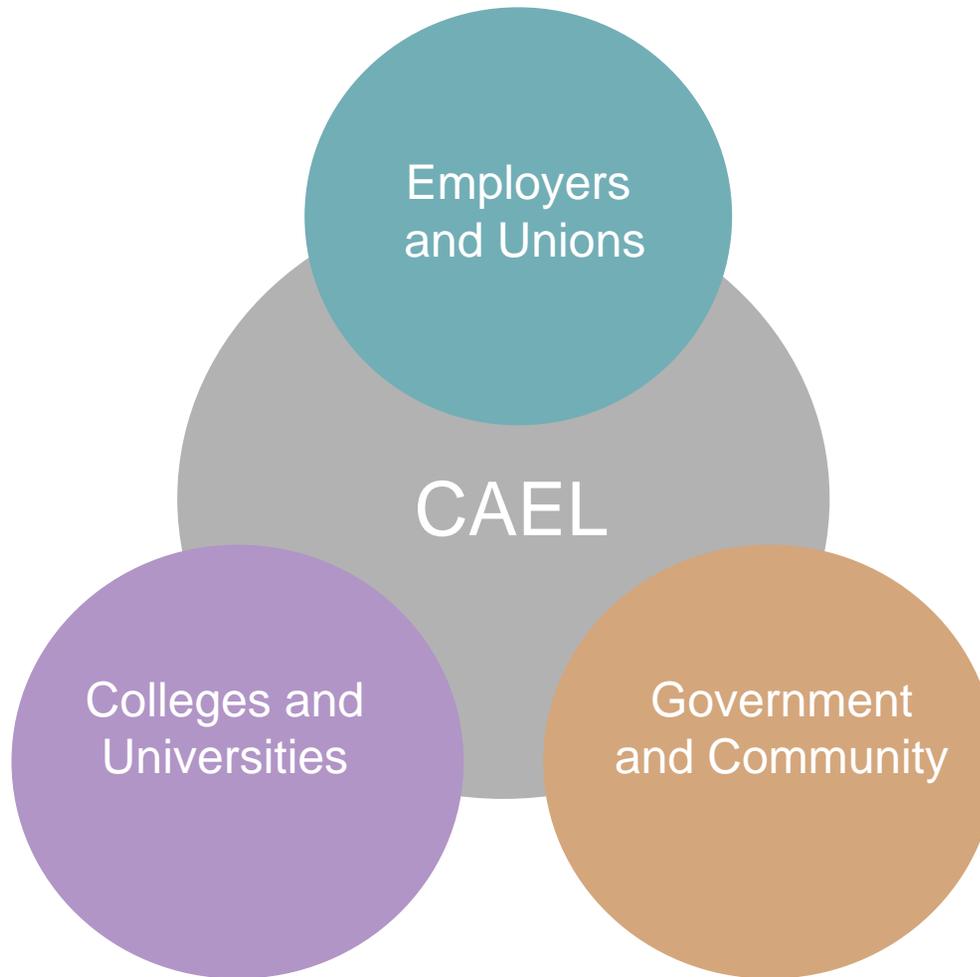
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# CAEL's Unique Integrator Role



# New Face of Maturity



# Aging Worker Initiative

- ▶ The Aging Worker Initiative (AWI) seeks to expand the workforce investment system's understanding about how to best serve the older worker population and develop models to share with all local workforce investment areas. Its ultimate goal is to provide better, more expansive services to older Americans for many years to come.

Source: <http://www.doleta.gov/brg/indprof/AWI/>

# Aging Worker Initiative

- ▶ July 2008, awarded three year, \$3.6 million grant from Atlantic Philanthropies for Aging Worker Initiative.
- ▶ First government/philanthropic partnership: Department of Labor issued SGA to states with award amounts up to 1 million for up to 13 states.
- ▶ Grants address workforce challenges facing older adults-developing models for talent development that recognize older workers as valuable labor pool.

# AWI Sites

Organization	State
Tecumseh Area Partnership, Inc.	Indiana
Quad Area Community Action Agency, Inc.	Louisiana
Coastal Counties Workforce, Inc.	Maine
Baltimore County Office of Workforce Development	Maryland
Macomb/St. Clair Workforce Development Board, Inc.	Michigan
South Central Workforce Investment Board	Pennsylvania
Goodwill Industries of Houston, Inc.	Texas
Vermont Associates for Training & Development, Inc.	Vermont
Seattle-King County Workforce Development Council	Washington
Fox Valley Workforce Development Board	Wisconsin

# Getting Older

- ▷ *In 2009, older workers (55+), comprised 19% of the American workforce, up from 12% in 1999.*
- ▷ *A decade from now, at the current rate of increase, older workers are expected to make up 25% of the workforce.*

**Source:** Heidkamp, Corre, and Van Horn (2010). *The “New Unemployables”: Older Job Seekers Struggle to Find Work During the Great Recession.* The Sloan Center on Aging and Retirement. Retrieved from [http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research\\_sites/agingandwork/pdf/publications/IB25\\_NewUnemployed.pdf](http://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/agingandwork/pdf/publications/IB25_NewUnemployed.pdf)

# Need for Longer Work Lives

- ▶ Between 2010 and 2030, labor force growth will slow to 10.5% while population will grow 17.5%
- ▶ Lead to slowdown in GDP without increase productivity, participation or immigration
- ▶ Ratio of nonworkers to workers will rise from 52% to 62%; participation older workers could bring to 53%

# Mature Workers

## Recent studies on mature adult workers show:

- ▷ 70% of baby boomers plan to work in their retirement years or never retire
- ▷ 30% want to pursue a degree/certificate to advance in career
- ▷ 55% want to learn to improve job skills
- ▷ They expect to 'retire' from current job career at age 64 and then launch an entirely new career\*

# Mature Workers

- ▷ Mature workers are interested in taking jobs, now and in retirement, that improve the quality of life in their communities.
  
- ▷ **Why do boomers want to keep working?**
  - Staying involved with other people.
  - Providing a sense of purpose.
  - Providing additional income.
  - Putting job skills and life experience to use.
  - Providing opportunity to help improve quality of life.
  - Trying something totally different.

# Mature Workers

## Key obstacles that hinder continued work at older ages:

- ▶ Employer perceptions about the cost of employing older workers.
- ▶ Employer concern that conflicts result when older workers managed by younger workers
- ▶ Changes in industry and job skill requirements may hinder older workers.

Source: United States Government Accountability Office. Testimony before the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. *Older Workers: Some Best Practices and Strategies for Engaging and Retaining Older Workers*. February 2007.

# Value of mature workers

- ▷ Help with knowledge transfer
- ▷ Solidify culture
- ▷ Share critical company information as mentor/coaches
- ▷ Serve as “just-in-time” workforce

# Successful Transition Strategies

- ▶ Using cohort classes as part of the training to prepare older adults for new roles
- ▶ Providing ongoing guidance and support by advisors who are trained to understand the challenges faced by other older adults
- ▶ Scheduling reverse job fairs that better showcase the skills and experience that older adults bring

# More Success Strategies

- ▷ Maintaining ongoing contact with employers and job sites after the older adults are placed
- ▷ Incorporating transition roles, like internships or co-op experiences, that allow both employers and potential employees to try out new sectors

# Interviewing Mature Workers

- ▷ Divide into triads and choose interviewer, mature worker and observer
- ▷ Using the information on the handouts, interview the mature worker for 5 to 8 minutes to elicit relevant transferable skills
- ▷ Guided by observer, debrief the effectiveness of interview

# Stay in touch

Contact me with questions and ideas

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