

- 1) applicant's name:** Workforce Investment Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties,
- 2) applicant/lead applicant city/state;** Utica, NY
- 3) areas served by the grant;** Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego, Broome Tioga and Tompkins Counties across Central Upstate NY State.
- 4) project name;** Career Opportunity Center Network
- 5) funding level requested, broken out by project costs and evaluation cost;** \$3 million for the total project; \$450,000 for the evaluation and \$2,550,000 for the project.
- 6) the project type (A, B, or C);** A
- 7) description of the proposed project:** Across Central Upstate New York, a serious lack of alignment between the needs of employers and the skills of the workforce must be resolved to allow high-growth sectors to fully develop. Further, as college dropout rates skyrocket, reconnecting young people with postsecondary education and training in high-growth careers is a workforce imperative as well as a community priority. This project bridges the gap between workforce and education, using sophisticated online tools and old-fashioned community outreach to help young economically disadvantaged adults achieve success. Through this project, the Workforce Investment Board of Herkimer, Madison and Oneida Counties, supported by the power of the State University of New York and its community college, will enroll 1,800 college dropouts in postsecondary training and education that leads to high-growth jobs, while creating a regional on-line tutoring and outreach project that will help the workforce system and the region's community colleges connect with college dropouts and help them succeed in college as a first step to finding good-paying jobs. As a Type A project, this project fills a void. It is axiomatic in 2014 that many students who graduate from high school and ill-prepared for college, but the workforce system and education system have not battled this problem jointly.

This project, by working with employers across the region, breaks silos and creates a new partnership that can lead to thousands of young people getting the postsecondary training and education employers require for the high-growth jobs begin created in the current economy. Our hypothesis is that increased cooperation among local WIBs and community colleges, coupled with high-energy outreach and intensive social media presence, will lead to a greater number of low-skilled individuals who have dropped out of college re-enrolling with a clear career direction, leading to strong program retention and completion rates, and accelerated job placements in targeted occupations. An area of particular innovation will be the piloting of new on-line resources to be shared at all regional colleges. These on-line resources will provide high-quality content to help students access the information they need to succeed in developmental courses. The project will employ 1500 people at a cost per person employed of \$2,000.

**8) description of the proposed evaluation strategy;** The evaluator will engage in a mixed methods approach to evaluating the HMO WIB intervention. This analysis will include an implementation study with monthly/quarterly calls, on-site interviews and focus groups, and output data verification and review; an impact study using a Randomized Control Trial (RCT); and a cost allocation analysis. HMO WIB has identified Thomas P. Miller and Associates, LLC (TPMA), to conduct the third-party evaluation of the program. TPMA brings extensive experience with US DOL evaluations, serving as the third party evaluator.

Having already identified the third party evaluator, HMO WIB will initiate execution of the evaluation contract with TPMA within the first month following award of the grant.

**9) public contact information for the grant, which may be an email or website.** Alice J. Savino, Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board, [asavino@working-solutions.org](mailto:asavino@working-solutions.org); [www.working-solutions.org](http://www.working-solutions.org).