

Fall 2019 LAC Meeting
September 26, 2019
Woodstock Inn | Woodstock, VT

Discussion Notes:

Adult Learner, National Perspective
Goldie Blumenstyk

- Age is NOT the best way to define the adult learner.
- More accurate definition: an individual who is not predominantly anchored in the role of student.
- Issues for policymakers to consider:
 - State financial aid deadlines – adults enroll in different patterns
 - Debt forgiveness – many can't re-enroll or get transcripts due to debt
 - Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) – incentivize institutions to develop systems and accept credits
 - Data – need to disaggregate the data to understand who the true adult population is
 - E.g., Nudge for Success Lab, Virginia
 - Academic forgiveness
 - Work-based learning
 - Dual enrollment programs can detract from adult students' efforts
 - Colleges no longer enjoy a monopoly in the higher education space – several alternate providers exist and are challenging the dominance of traditional institutions of higher education.

Indiana, Next Level Jobs
Joshua Garrison

- Website needs to be easy enough for grandma to navigate
- State held focus groups with people who had failed higher ed and for whom higher ed had failed them.
 - Biggest motivator for returning adults in the focus groups: proving to their children that they could do it.
 - Marketing was critical
 - Very simple delivery model
 - De-coupled adult grants from “Satisfactory Academic Progress” (SAP)
 - Childcare is a major barrier
 - Need to rethink licensing

Tennessee, Tennessee Reconnect
Dr. Emily House

- Education treated as public AND private good
- Leaned heavily on community stakeholders
- Institution neutrality was important – no school logos. Many individuals who dropped out had bad taste in their mouths re: their former institution
- Rethought who the adult learner is: Workers who learn, not learners who work
- Had a call center – people need to connect with another human
- TN Reconnect Ambassadors:
 - Volunteers – minimal cost. Only cost is staff time to train.
 - Low-touch, community-oriented
 - Not experts, just guide individuals
 - Also offer help with other state programs, such as SNAP
- TN is the only state in the U.S. that is funded entirely on outcomes, not on enrollment. Institutions only get funding for people they walk across the stage, not for bottoms in seats.