Opportunities in WIOA and Solutions on the Ground
JDAI Inter-Site Conference

Thomas Showalter, Executive Director, NYEC
▪ Builds capacity on professional and organizational levels
▪ Collects and shares best practices
▪ A unique line of communication between the field and policymakers
▪ Aggregator and curator of proven, emerging, and promising practices
▪ Learn more at www.nyec.org
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): Overview

- Main federal authorizing legislation for workforce development and job training, passed in 2014
- Relevant programs/services:
  - WIOA Youth Services
  - YouthBuild
  - Job Corps
  - Reentry Employment Opportunity
  - Adult education
  - One-stop centers (American Job Centers)
- Administered by state and local workforce development boards
- Approximately $3 billion in relevant annual funding
WIOA: Opportunities

- Priority for hardest-to-serve young people
- Most Youth Services funding → OSY
- Justice-involved young people are automatically eligible
- 14 required elements including:
  - Paid and unpaid work experience and occupational skills training
  - Supportive services such as transportation, child care, mentoring, and counseling
- See CSG *On Track* report for Best practices checklist
WIOA performance measures can encourage “creaming”

- Funding too low to provide needed supports
- Lack of agency connections
- NYEC partnered with Youth Advocacy Programs, Inc. to take a deeper look at barriers and opportunities in Camden Co., a JDAI Deep End Site, including federal, state, and local leaders from juvenile justice and workforce systems
Camden County: What We’ve Heard
Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI)

- New Jersey is the national model for state-scale implementation of JDAI.
- By 2017, all 21 counties had adopted JDAI, making New Jersey the first large, locally-administered state to reach this milestone.
- Since adopting JDAI, New Jersey counties have reduced juvenile detention by 70%, with youth of color accounting for 90% of the drop.
Strengths

▪ Core of good providers
▪ Smaller case loads for POs
▪ One-Stop staff now at JPO every two weeks for three hours
▪ Key non-workforce programs identified that could support workforce participation:
  ▪ that help families: MST
  ▪ that help kids: Mentors
Challenges
- Limited staff dedicated to youth at the One Stop (2 youth case workers)
- Lack of consistent referral system

Opportunities
- JDMT Meetings: Opportunity for CCWDB to attend and connect youth to resources, facilitate access
- Encourage workforce providers to send liaisons to attend sentencing hearings
- Need for better tracking system
Nonstructural Challenges: Complex and Simple

- Transportation
- Awareness of existing programs
- Issues related to young people: readiness for work, literacy, remedial, motivation
- Issues related to young people and their families: survival
- Confidentiality: revealing probation status to employers
- Accessing documentation needed for work
- Youth obligations to the courts, court hearings, and PO meetings that disrupt programming
- Youth not admitted back to school upon adjudication or confinement
- Obtaining identification
Thank you!