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Denise Felder / Eva Scates-Winston

Breaking Barriers:

Changing Perceptions About Adult Learners

Rochester Community & Technical College



Supportive Environments

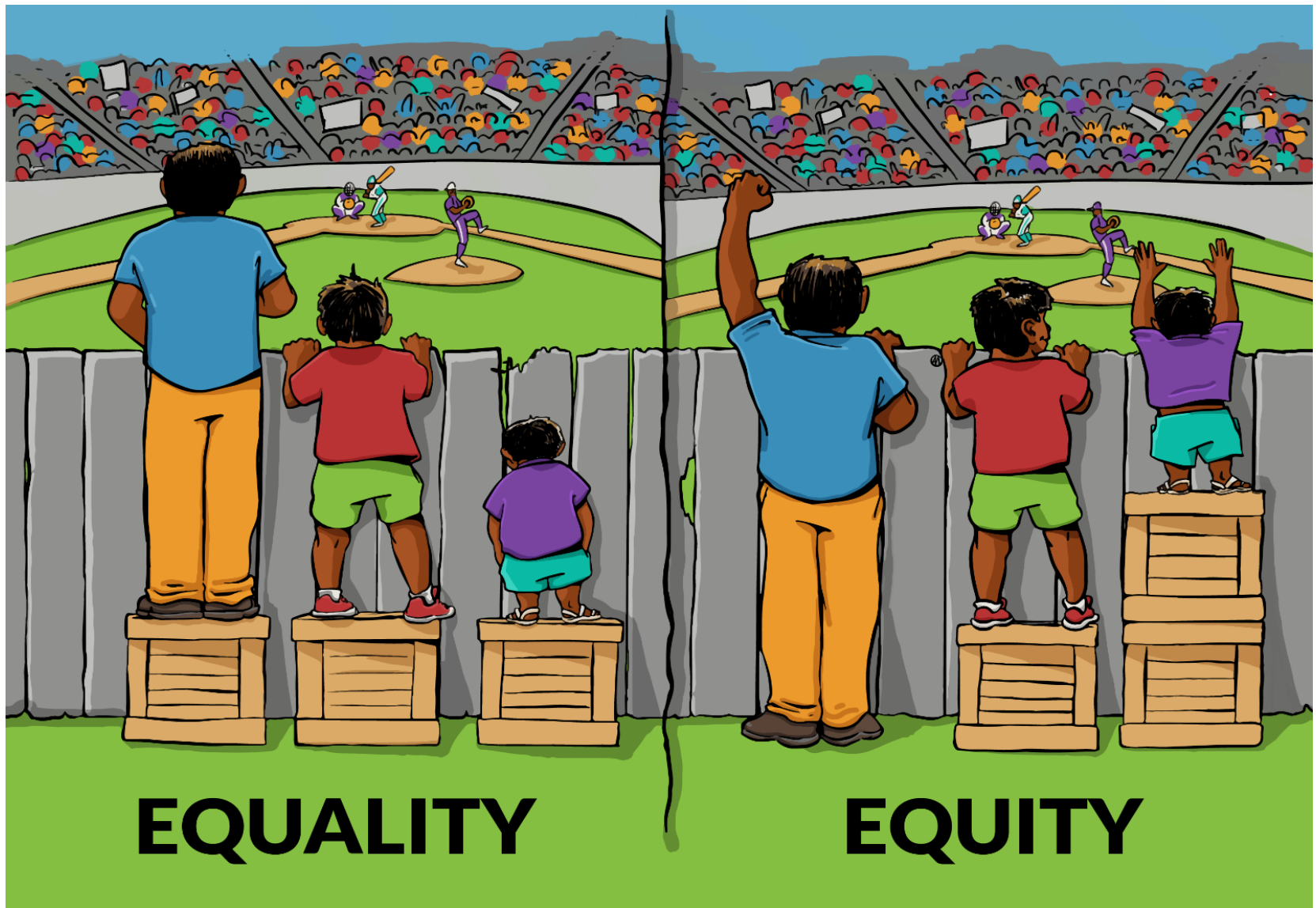
*What supports did you have –
or wish you had – to help you
become a successful student?*



Session Objective

To examine our role in creating
equitable and welcoming
environments for adult learners



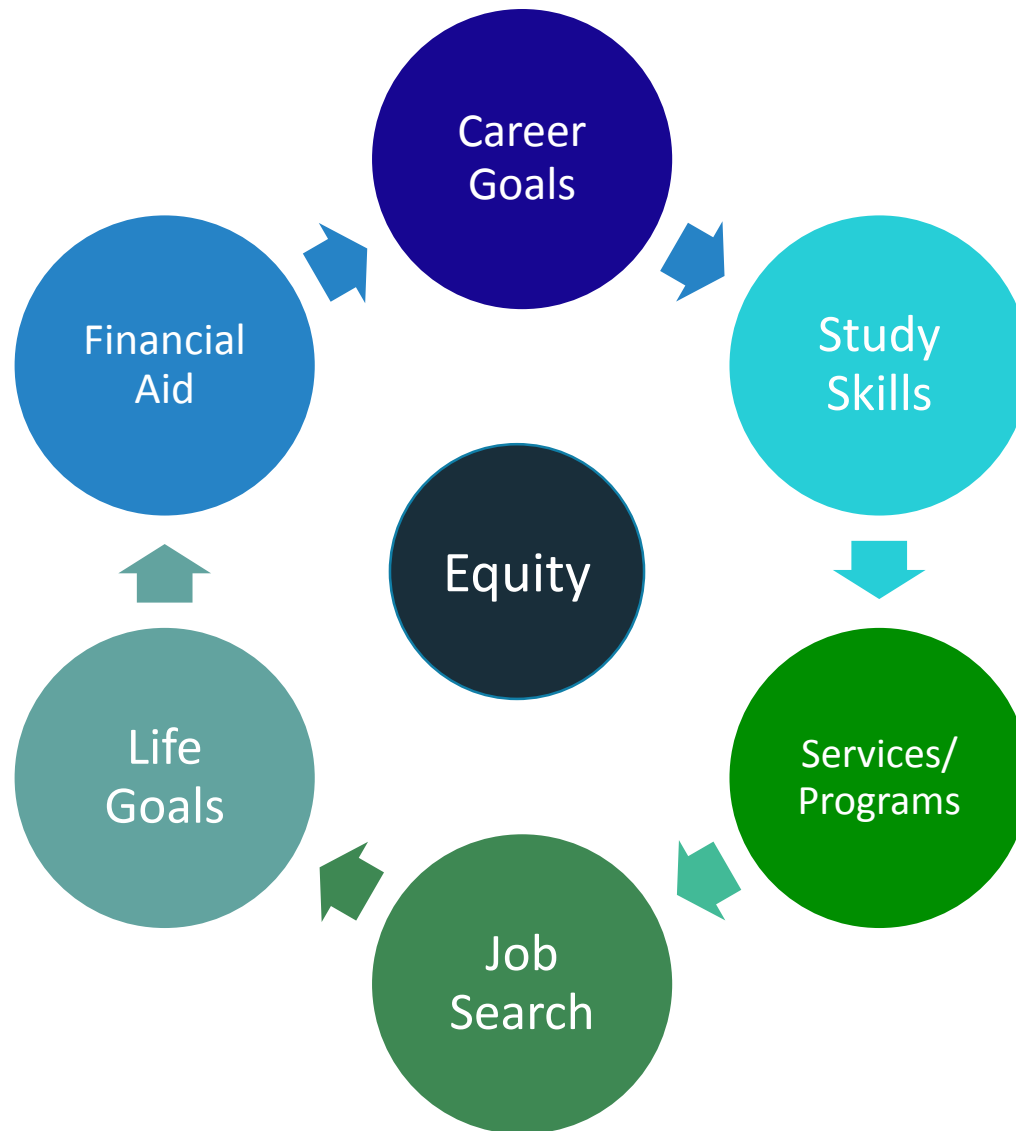


<http://www.anirudhsethireport.com/equality-equity-reality-must-see/>

Special Populations in CTE

- Nontraditional Learners (by gender)
- Economic Disadvantage Learners
(including foster care)
- Limited English Proficiency Learners (ELL)
- Learners with Disabilities
- Learners who are Single Parents and
Displaced Homemakers

Adult Learner Services





Why Do They Leave?

Faculty and Counselor Perspectives

Faculty/Counselor Responses

- *1. Lack of understanding of (program); Not what they expected.
- *2. Money/Finances
- *3. Under-prepared/Overwhelmed
- 4. Personal problems (health, stress, etc.)
- 5. Lack of connection
- 6. Lack of support
- 7. Lack of interaction with or discouraged by faculty
- 8. Lack of information about options/choices
- 9. Parental/family influence or crisis
- 10. Don't know own strengths and weaknesses

Student Responses

- Poor Instruction
- Inadequate Help with Academic Problems
- Lack of Interaction with Faculty, Counselors, Advisor
- Feelings of isolation
- Unwelcoming environment

Common Barriers ...

- Lack of Connection
- Lack of Support
- Lack of interaction with or discouraged by faculty
- Unwelcome Environment

Oral & Print Culture

Oral Culture

Devote attention to sensory information. Orality emphasizes interconnection with environment and the people in it.



Print Culture

Process and analyze information collected through senses according to categories and styles of reasoning developed by reading.



A Tale of Two Students

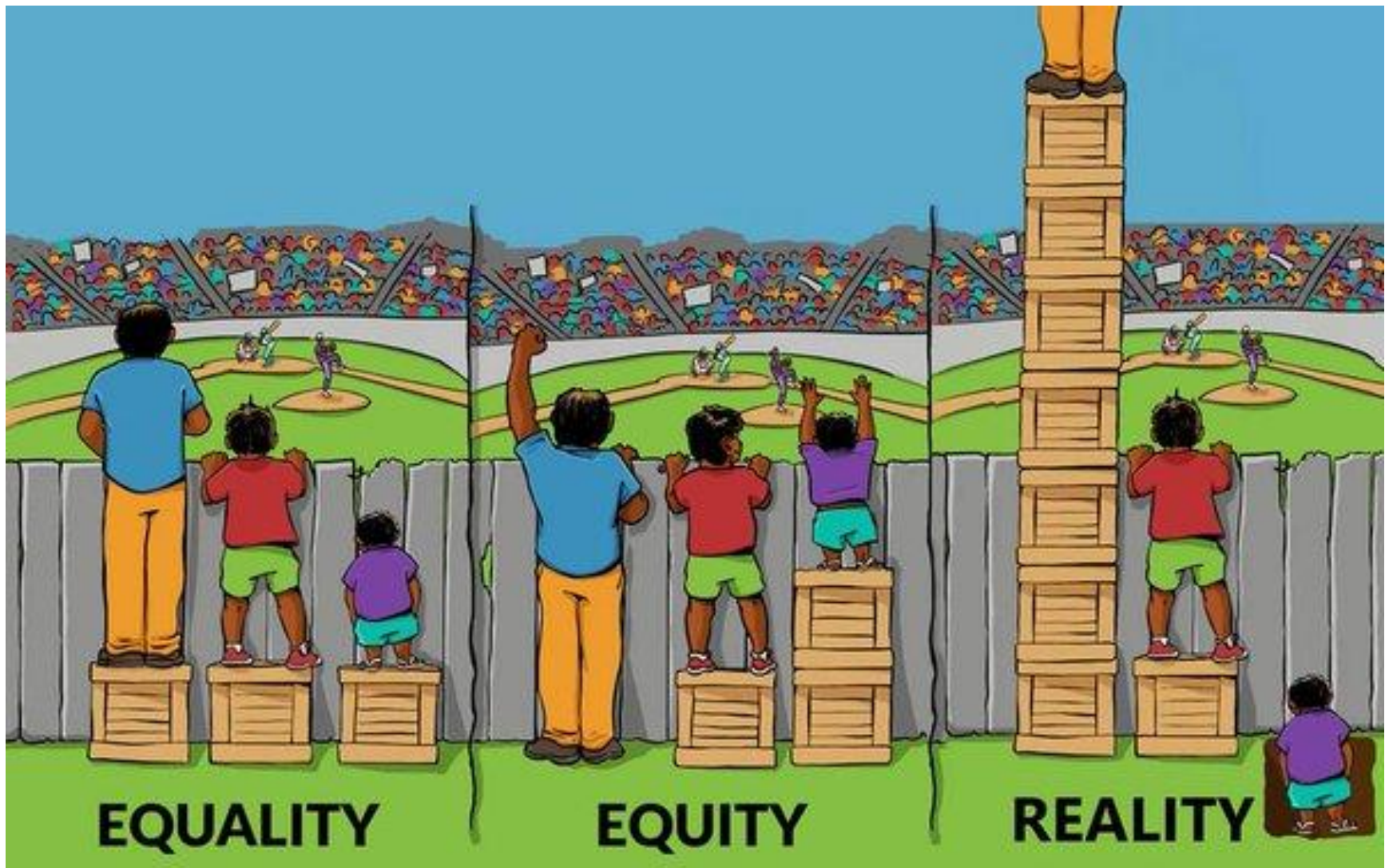
First Generation Student

- Uncertainty of process and support
- Less family awareness of nuances of processes; Less confident to ask for help
- College as means to earning a living
- Interdependence and relationships important in learning.

Continuing Generation Student

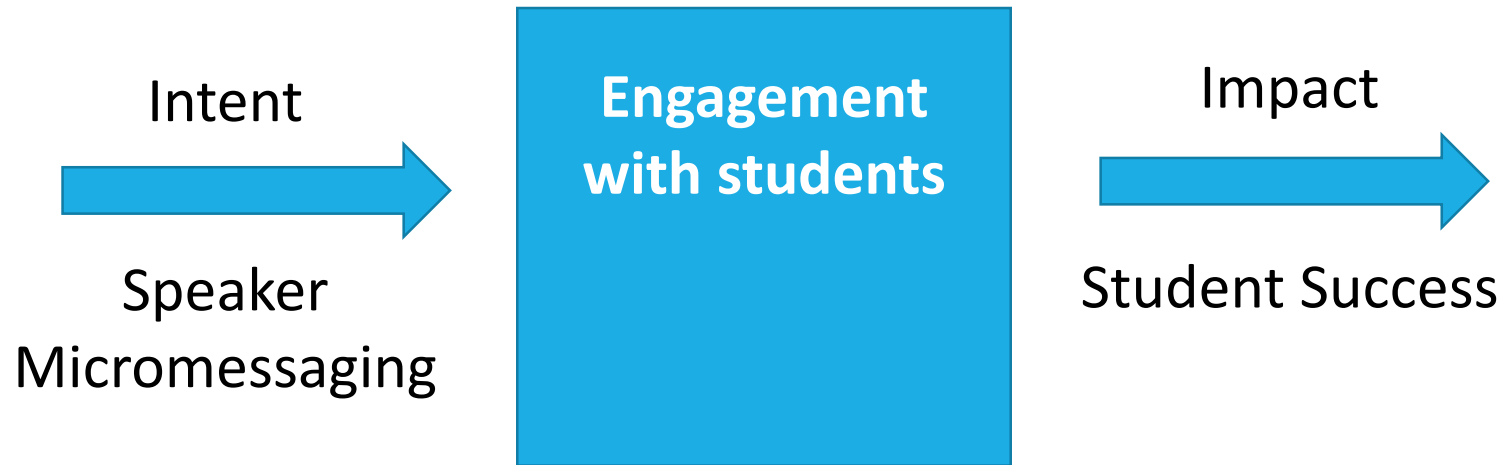
- Expectation and support to attend college
- More family aware of process and more likely to advocate if needed
- A liberal education is valued and goal of college
- Independence and self discovering drives learning





Source: www.anirudhsethireport.com/equality-equity-reality-must-see/

Intent vs. Impact



Small and seemingly insignificant behaviors may result in unintended work performance.

Impact is More Important Than Intent



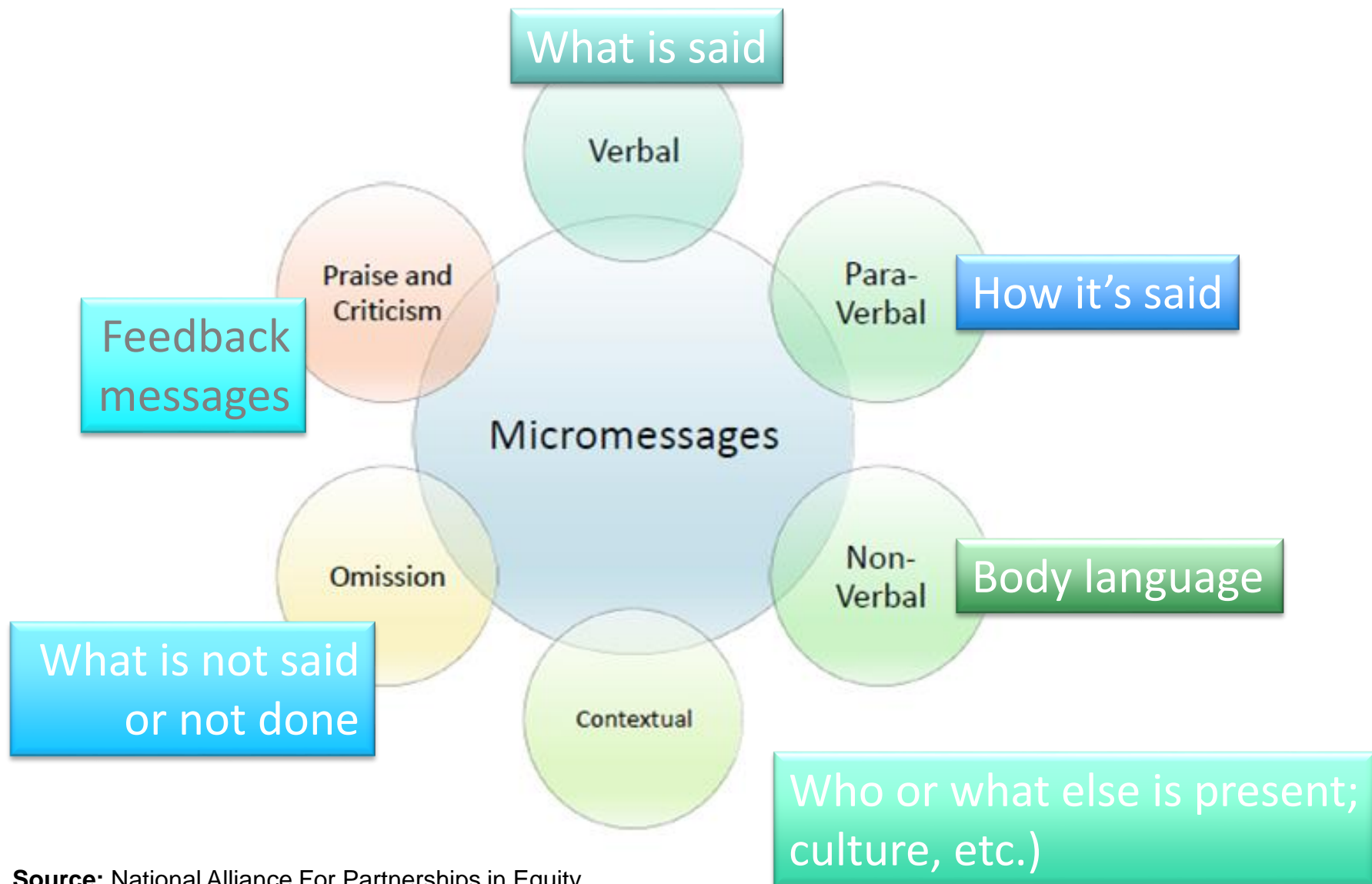
Examining the Small

Consider for a moment a specific incident when you were being...

- unintentionally discouraged or hurt by something **SMALL** someone said or did.
- deeply valued by your colleague or family member in a **SMALL** yet powerful way.

How did you know? What did that person do to communicate the value you bring?

How We Communicate



Source: National Alliance For Partnerships in Equity

Micromessaging

Micromessages

- Small, subtle, semiconscious messages we send and receive when we interact with others

Micro-inequities

- Negative micromessages we send other people that cause them to feel devalued, slighted, discouraged, or excluded

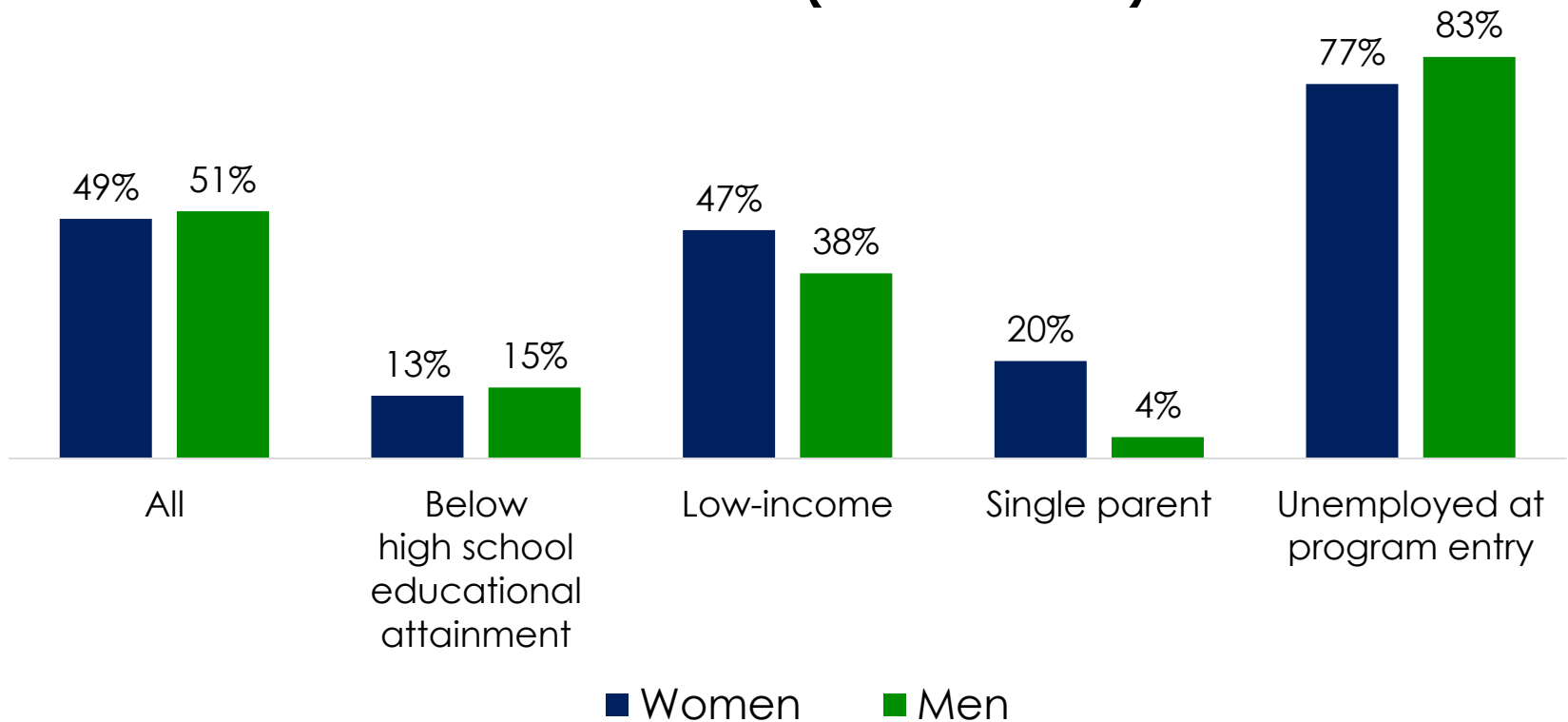
Micro-affirmations

- Positive micromessages for which people feel valued, included or encouraged.



Socioeconomic Challenges Hinder Program Completion and Point to Need for Supportive Services

WIA Adult Program Exiters by Gender & Selected Characteristics (CY 2009 Exits)



Source: Maxwell et al. 2012. *How Are Women Served by the WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs? Findings from Administrative Data*. Washington, DC: Mathematica. <<http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/~media/publications/pdfs/labor/womenservedwia.pdf>> (accessed June 24, 2015).

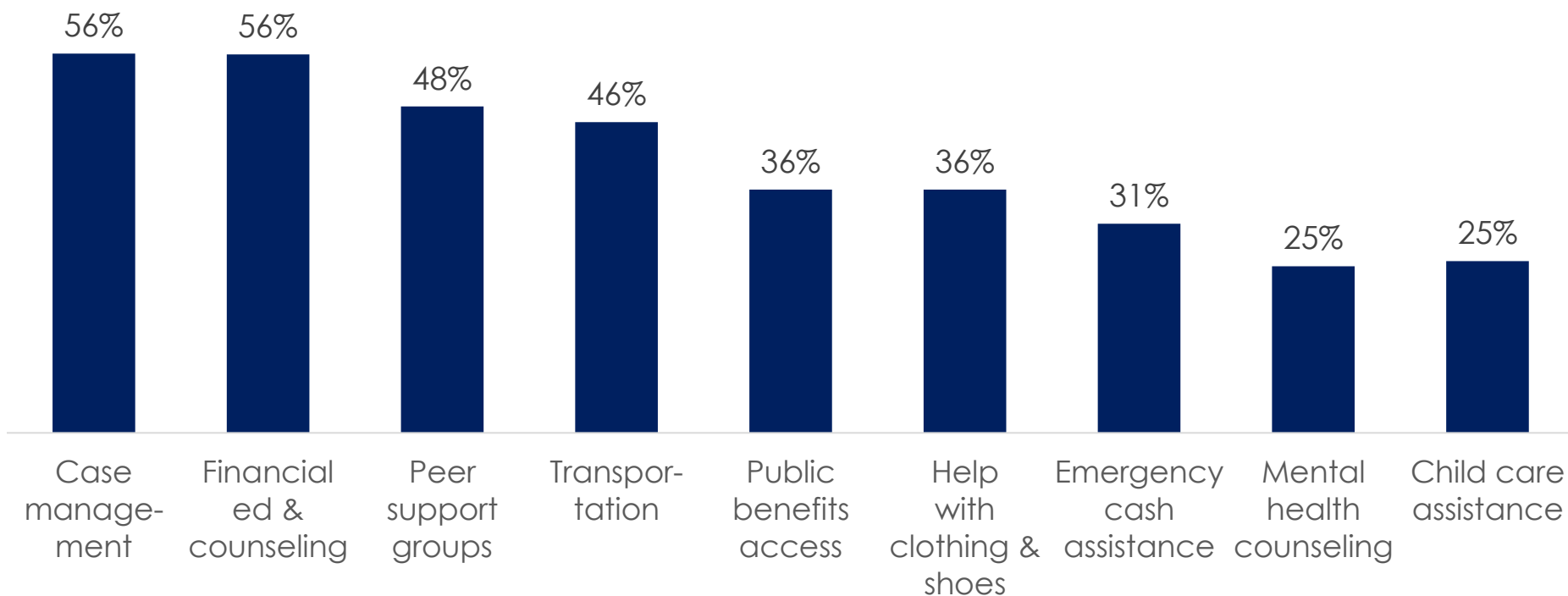
Class Types

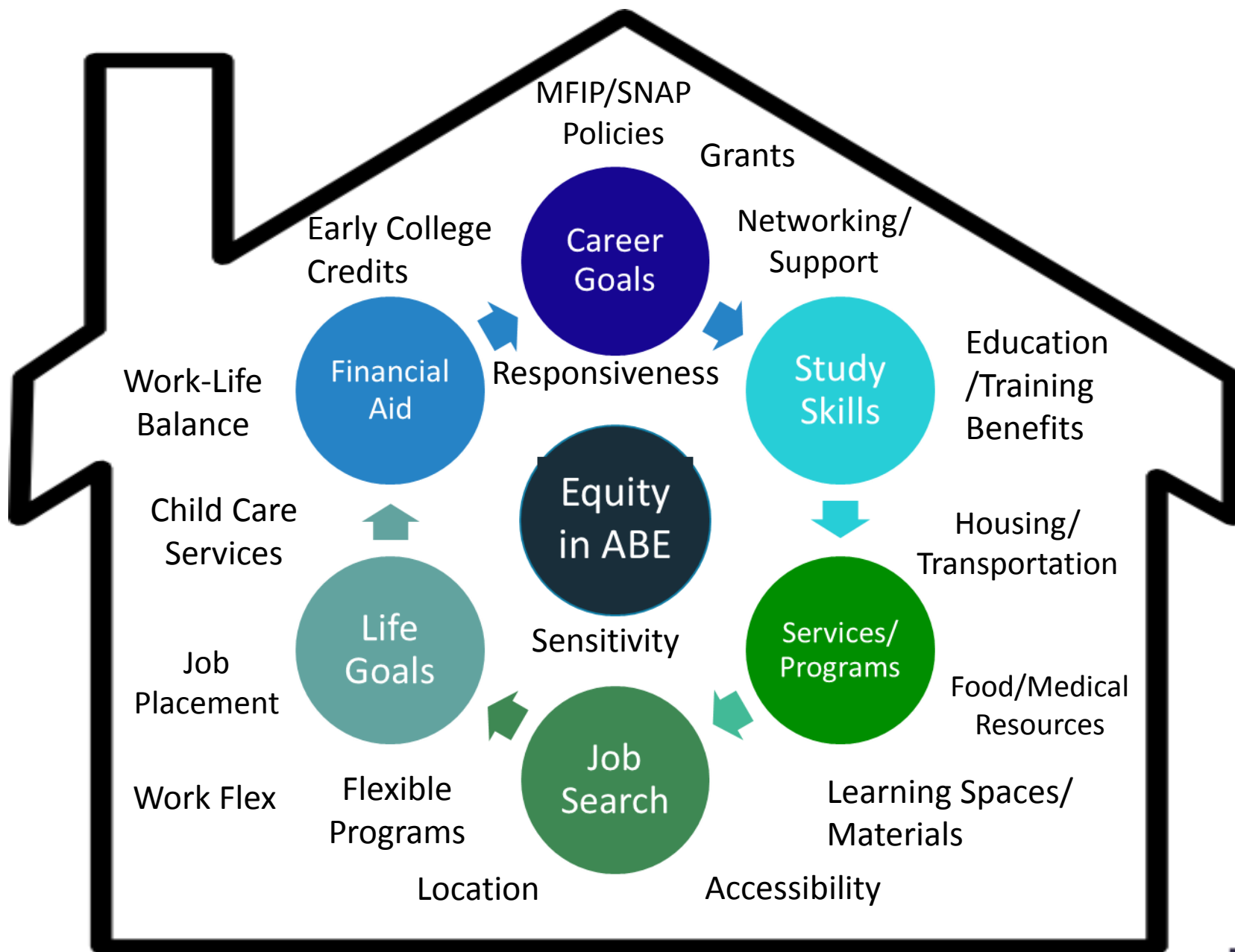
- Generational Poverty
- Immigrant Poverty
- Working-Class
- Situational Poverty
- Middle-Class(es)



Case Management & Financial Educ. Common Services in Job Training

Most Common Support Services Provided Directly by
Respondents' Organizations/Institutions (N=128)





Pathways Out Of Poverty

An individual's earning potential is closely related to their educational achievement. The reverse is also true: the lesser an individual's educational achievement, the less likely he/she is to acquire jobs with a livable wage and benefits. Long-term inability to find employment, *especially those providing a livable wage and benefits*, increases the trajectory to poverty.

Minnesota Career Fields, Clusters & Pathways

■ Marketing

- > Merchandising
- > Marketing Management
- > Marketing Communications
- > Marketing Research
- > Professional Sales

■ Business, Management, and Administration

- > Administrative Support
- > Operations Management
- > Business Information Management
- > Human Resources Management
- > General Management

■ Hospitality and Tourism

- > Lodging
- > Recreation, Amusements and Attractions
- > Restaurants and Food/Beverage Services
- > Travel and Tourism

■ Finance

- > Banking Services
- > Business Finance
- > Securities and Investment
- > Accounting
- > Insurance

■ Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources

- > Animal Systems
- > Agribusiness Systems
- > Environmental Service Systems
- > Food Products and Processing Systems
- > Natural Resources Systems
- > Plant Systems
- > Power, Structural, and Technical Systems

■ Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications

- > Audio/Video Technology and Film
- > Journalism and Broadcasting
- > Performing Arts
- > Printing Technology
- > Telecommunications
- > Visual Arts

■ Information Technology

- > Information Support and Services
- > Network Systems
- > Programming and Software Development
- > Web and Digital Communications



Minnesota
Department
of Education

**Foundation
Knowledge and Skills**
.....
Academic and Technical Literacy
.....
Employability • Ethics • Systems
Teamwork • Career Development
Problem Solving • Critical Thinking
Information Technology Application
Legal Responsibilities • Communication
Safety, Health and Environment
Social Studies • Math • Science
English • Personal Finance

■ Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security

- > Correction Services
- > Emergency and Fire Management Services
- > Law Enforcement Services
- > Legal Services
- > Security and Protective Services

■ Human Services

- > Consumer Services
- > Counseling and Mental Health Services
- > Early Childhood Development and Services
- > Family and Community Services
- > Personal Care Services

■ Government and Public Administration

- > Revenue and Taxation
- > Foreign Service
- > Governance
- > National Security
- > Planning
- > Public Management and Administration
- > Regulation

■ Education and Training

- > Administration and Administrative Support
- > Professional Support Services
- > Teaching/Training

Health Science Technology CAREER FIELD

■ Health Science

- > Biotechnology Research and Development
- > Diagnostic Services
- > Support Services
- > Health Informatics
- > Therapeutic Services

Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology CAREER FIELD

■ Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics

- > Facility and Mobile Equipment Maintenance
- > Health, Safety, and Environmental Management
- > Logistics Planning and Management Services
- > Sales and Services
- > Transportation Operations
- > Transportation Systems/Infrastructure Planning, Management, and Regulation
- > Warehousing and Distribution Center Operations

■ Architecture and Construction

- > Construction
- > Design/Pre-construction
- > Maintenance/Operations

■ Manufacturing

- > Production
- > Manufacturing Production
- > Process Development
- > Maintenance, Installation, and Repair
- > Quality Assurance
- > Logistics and Inventory Control
- > Health, Safety, and Environmental Assurance

■ Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- > Engineering and Technology
- > Science and Mathematics

Additional Resources

www.cte.mnscu.edu/programs/index.html
www.mnpos.com

Legend:

■ = Career Cluster
> = Career Pathway

Pathways Out Of Poverty



Skills Employers Want

- Foundational Skills (Arrive On Time, Personal Hygiene)
- Interpersonal Skills (Polite, Act Appropriately)
- Communication Skills (Written, Verbal, Technology)
- Problem Solving And Critical Thinking
(Flexible, Multitask)
- Teamwork (Diversity, Group Work)
- Ethics And Legal Responsibilities
(Trustworthy, Responsible)
- Professional Skills
(Career Development, Leadership)

Conversations that Count

A. LEARNER SPACES

- What do these look like and how can we make these spaces more inclusive and supportive?

B. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- What services are provided AND what's missing?

C. MENTORS AND NAVIGATORS

- How can mentoring/coaching be an integral part of services that you provide?

D. CAREER GUIDANCE

- How can we ensure that guidance is more relevant, inclusive and accessible?

When there is no equity ...

“... Traditionally, planners involve stakeholders by inviting them to public meetings and asking them to read and comment on plans. This can be a time-consuming process, and people who work multiple jobs and lack transportation and child-care options are unlikely to show up at the library for a three-hour meeting.”

Cynthia Parker, on Infusing Equity into the Urban Planning Process

Denise.Felder@so.mnscu.edu

Eva.Scates-Winston@so.mnscu.edu