



# MANUFACTURING

## CAREER PATHWAYS NETWORK

SYNC OUR SIGNALS<sup>SM</sup>

### PROJECT PROFILE

## Connectivity Event in St. Louis

The **Manufacturing Career Pathways Network (MCPN)** is a nationwide initiative designed to optimize the manufacturing jobs and workforce system. Built to more effectively and efficiently serve the needs of leading employers, the network offers workshops and connectivity events aimed to advance demand-driven, competency-based career pathways in manufacturing.



### THE MCPN CONNECTIVITY EVENT

In October 2017, Hope Street Group held a MCPN Connectivity Event in St. Louis, Missouri, in conjunction with the National Career Pathways Network Conference. We invited key stakeholders in the manufacturing and workforce space to connect and share best practices with fellow employers, educators and workforce professionals who share a desire to build effective talent supply chains in manufacturing. The objectives of the event were:

- To strengthen the network of professionals working to improve the manufacturing workforce; and
- To deepen the network's knowledge base to effectively implement a competency-based approach to sourcing and hiring talent.

The following is a summary of the challenges and opportunities identified, as well as a framework for thinking through how to develop an evidence-based talent supply chain in each region.

### CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The feedback reported by the attendees of the Connectivity Event can be categorized according to stakeholder group, with some additional general concerns.

#### EMPLOYERS

- Employers often appear to themselves and to their partners to be working in silos.
- Partners are looking for more transparency in partnerships with the community and a more active role in collaboration.
- Partners are looking for active employer leadership.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING PARTNERS

- Education and training partners report that they are ready to focus on employer needs, but they need clear communication and understanding of needs. For example, what exactly is meant by "employability skills" and how to clearly define behavioral competencies that are measurably related to job success.
- Employers are looking for education and training partners to be more flexible and adaptive.
- There is a need to continue finding qualified instructors, and to identify quality credentials.

**WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

- Workforce partners are seeking ways to align around an accurate understanding of regional needs from employers.
- There is a need to develop outreach to additional employer partners, economic development and other community partners.
- These partners are looking for an ideal advisory board structure.

**INDIVIDUAL JOB SEEKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES**

- Individual job seekers could benefit from aligned support services, access to mentors, and labor market Information data about local opportunities.
- Individual job seekers could greatly benefit from apprenticeship, work-based learning, and job shadowing opportunities.
- Community partners need to be involved in deepening outreach and awareness efforts, as well as optimizing eligibility requirements.

**GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- In general, there are a number of overlapping concerns reported by multiple stakeholders. These include:
  - Need for common alignment on a vision for career pathways to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts, including a precise understanding of "The Ask" from each stakeholder.
  - Defining relationships between partners, establishing roles, and finding a place for smaller partners.
  - Establishing channels for continuous communication.
  - A common approach to outreach and awareness.

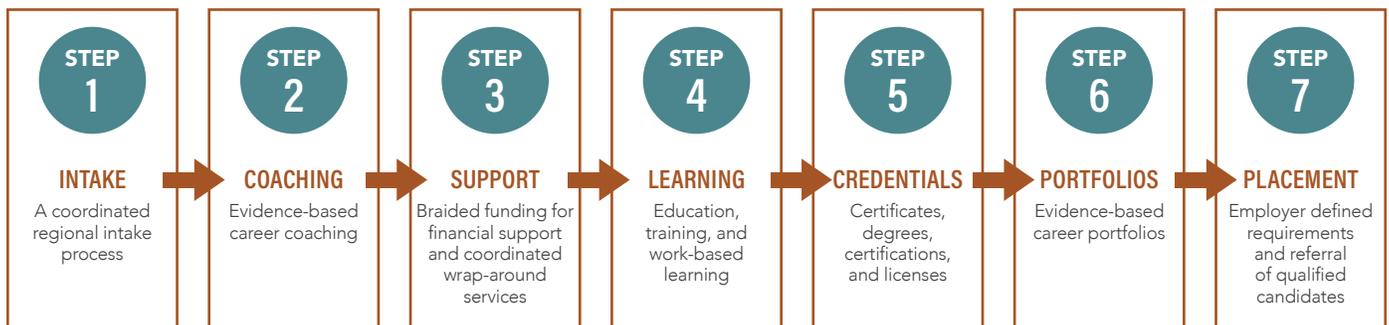
**DEVELOPING EVIDENCE-BASED CAREER PATHWAYS**

One way to address the challenges and opportunities identified by stakeholders at the Connectivity Event is to utilize the evidence-based approach and methodology Hope Street Group has successfully utilized in healthcare.

Our general strategy focuses on the concept of *collective impact* which pursues the identification of a common vision across stakeholders, mutually reinforcing activities (e.g., outreach efforts, apprenticeship development, and labor market data collection), shared measures to track progress, strategies to facilitate continuous communication among partners, and the identification of an agency to provide "backbone" support.

MCPN is committed to building *evidence-based career pathways*. Our evidence-based approach follows a seven-step Career Pathways Model to ensure all critical steps of the career pathways process are addressed:

**CAREER PATHWAY PROCESS MODEL**



Source: Career Navigation System Guidebook 2017 Edition, National Career Pathways Technical Assistance Center.

MCPN has also set the following core principles to guide our work:

- Use, adopt and implement evidence-based career pathways tools and resources and integrate them into the sourcing and hiring processes.
- Integrate the use of career portfolios as a means of cementing regional partnerships to provide employment opportunities and expanded labor pools within the community.
- Work collaboratively with key stakeholders in a region to advance on a stage-by-stage basis toward the ideal stage (See Figure 1).

## DEMAND-DRIVEN EVIDENCE-BASED CAREER PATHWAYS: THE FIVE STAGES OF REGIONAL PROGRESS

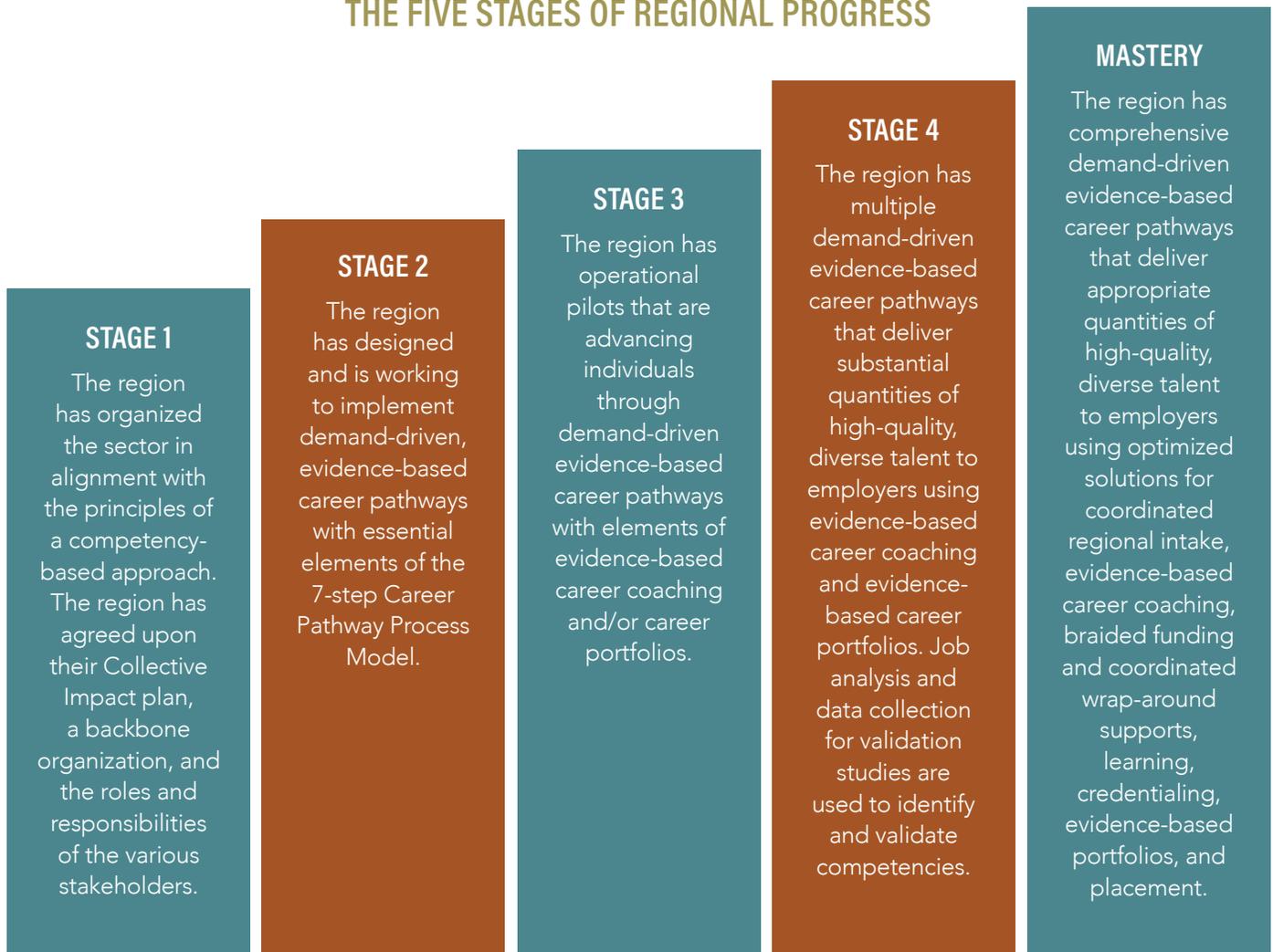


Figure 1. Source: Stakeholder Guidebook 2018 Edition, National Career Pathways Technical Assistance Center.

### NEXT STEPS

We are working with regions across the country to implement this evidence-based approach to strengthen the local manufacturing workforce. If you or your organization are interested in learning more about getting involved with the MCPN, please visit us at [www.mfgcareerpathwaysnetwork.org](http://www.mfgcareerpathwaysnetwork.org) or contact Chelsey Crim, Project Manager, at [http://chelsey@hopestreetgroup.org](mailto:chelsey@hopestreetgroup.org).



### About SYNC OUR SIGNALS<sup>SM</sup>

The **Manufacturing Career Pathways Network** is an industry program under Hope Street Group's flagship initiative, Sync Our Signals, which works to strengthen America's workforce by improving the signaling between employers, training providers, educators and individuals on the competencies and skills required for success in a given career path.

To learn more, visit [hopestreetgroup.org](http://hopestreetgroup.org) and follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter @HopeStreetGroup.