



Garrett County Opportunity Youth Strategic Plan

Submission to: **Garrett County Local Management Board**
Garrett County Local Health Department

Authors:

Jennifer Barnhart, MPH

President, LUMA Health Consulting

Sarah White

Research Assistant, LUMA Health Consulting

Alice Bauman, MSPH

Research Assistant, LUMA Health Consulting

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Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan is a follow-up to the Assessment Report presented to the Garrett County Local Management Board in late July 2019. LUMA Health Consulting has been contracted by Garrett County's Local Management Board to analyze the county's ability to incorporate and sustain a Strategic Workforce Initiative with an apprenticeship program through the identification of services and supports that already exist. Additionally, LUMA has explored the relationship between the prioritized Strategic Goal Population, Opportunity Youth, and Result Areas with indicators on health, education, and social well-being. The key findings from the Assessment Report identified the following indicators contributing to youth disconnection in Garrett County: child maltreatment, poverty, lack of educational attainment, poor access to healthcare, and high-risk youth behaviors, including tobacco and alcohol use, and heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine use. Transportation, generational poverty, and substance use were also barriers commonly identified for youth disconnection during qualitative interviews. These factors contribute to the rate of 16% youth disconnection, or about 450 youth ages 16-24 years old not working nor employed. These key indicators identified were used to recommend tailored interventions and strategies for Garrett County to address youth disconnection.

With much existing program infrastructure already in place, Garrett County is uniquely positioned to lead a national strategy using rural health interventions that improve outcomes for Opportunity Youth. This problem is not unique to Garrett County, with rural United States averaging a rate of 19% youth disconnection. Because of this, there are many national program models and intervention strategies that have been proposed for addressing this issue throughout rural and urban communities. There are also many frameworks that analyze youth disconnection, including public health models that outline protective and risk factors and view youth development as embedded within family, school, community, society, culture, and history. This framework leads into community solutions highlighted by the White House Council for Community Solutions, Maryland's Governor's Office for Children, and the Aspen Institute for Community Solutions. The White House Council did an in-depth report on Opportunity Youth, and from that, created the Aspen Institute for Community Solutions to ensure that the work done in their report was continued long-term. The Aspen Institute still operates an Opportunity Youth Forum where community-based organizations can become a part of this network for youth engagement strategies. These reports provide valuable information about the necessary "ingredients" for reconnecting youth at the community level, and while LUMA recommends that Garrett County should not incorporate every strategy outlined to ensure focus, these models provide a catalog of successful methods

that can be selected from. Additionally, the Governor's Office for Children released a report on Strategic Goal Populations, and for youth disconnection, they outlined barriers at the state level and individual agencies highlighted steps they are taking to reduce those barriers.

The last national report used is the Economic Value of Opportunity Youth, which reports in 2011 dollars what the taxpayer and social burden costs are for communities that do not successfully reconnect youth. The first immediate difference noted is that chronic Opportunity Youth, on average, have half the income of their non-disconnected peers between 25-28 (\$15,000 compared to over \$30,000) and under-attached youth are expected to have a slightly higher income to chronic Opportunity Youth (\$20,000).⁵ Under-attached youth graduate high school but have problems being matched to employment systems and chronic Opportunity Youth most likely did not finish high school or obtain their GED. Using these data as a framework, the 2019-dollar lifetime estimate for under-attached Opportunity Youth has an associated taxpayer burden of \$245,485, and a social burden of \$679,407.⁵ The Plan describes the methodology used to calculate the taxpayer and social burdens. Using these estimates with the 450 Opportunity Youth total, it is expected that under-attached Opportunity Youth in Garrett County pose a lifetime taxpayer burden of \$110,468,250 and a lifetime social burden of \$305,733,150.⁵

After these national strategies are outlined, the recommendations are broken down into two different categories: strategic and top-line recommendations. The latter section outlines the priority recommendations for the Local Management Board that LUMA believes will bring the most value to Opportunity Youth given the local landscape of resources, feasibility, impact, and timeline. These recommendations are targeted interventions which address the main drivers of youth disconnection in Garrett County: the lack of an established apprenticeship program, generational poverty, child maltreatment, and transportation. The first section is strategic strategies for youth reconnection that address the remaining indicators identified in the Assessment Report along with broader opportunities for the Local Management Board to engage with. strategic section starts by describing initiatives already being taken up in Garrett County that we recommend the Local Management Board be involved in supporting. This includes the **Transition Council** that is being created to provide seamless transition services for youth with disabilities, and the **Market-Rate Workforce Housing Development** project being pursued by the Chamber of Commerce to address the rising cost of rental properties within the community. Next, national programs that Garrett County Opportunity Youth can apply for are described. This includes the **eInternship** program through the federal government where students can intern virtually throughout the school year, and **Job Corps**, which is the largest residential education and job training program for young adults ages 16-24. The eInternship allows youth to gain

experience while still in high school, and while youth need to travel to Job Corps and live at a facility to become part of the program, transportation to and from the center is provided to eligible youth and numerous other reconnection services are available to them after enrolling.

After these existing and national programs are described, the recommendations progressively require more work by the Local Management Board for their implementation. The first two programs are **Youth Smoking Cessation**, and more broadly, **Youth Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Prevention** strategies. Youth smoking is addressed separately because it was such a significant indicator within Garrett County. This recommendation is for an enhancement of cessation programs currently offered, including a text-based reminder service, and a targeted youth resource section so that the website is more accessible for youth. More broadly, a LifeSkills Training program through middle school curriculum is recommended for preventing youth alcohol, drug, and tobacco use. This is an evidence-based prevention strategy and can help curb many more high-risk youth behaviors. The school system is the best medium for this prevention program because numerous youth can be systematically addressed every year. The next recommendation is a **Certificate of Employability**, which is an expansion to the currently existing Work Ethic Diploma. This certificate can be given to youth with a criminal history that may hinder their reconnection abilities, and even be expanded up to all adults with convictions throughout the county. For adults, this would need to go through the court system, but this provides an opportunity for those whom have had correction-system challenges demonstrate their willingness and dedication to improving outcomes for themselves. For the last two recommendations in strategic engagement, the Local Management Board has none to minimal existing infrastructure. The most significant of these recommendations is an established **Data Sharing** agreement with community organizations in Garrett County. This is critical because it can create an understanding of not only how many youths are being served, but what their source of disconnection is and how that barrier is being addressed through care coordination and social resources. Additionally, a local dataset could show youth experiencing multiple indicators for youth disconnection, because national and state-level datasets only indicate if youth are experiencing at least 1. Lastly, the **Performance Partnership Pilot** is described as a potential source of funds for new community initiatives. These are federal programs that have a low-likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations when funds are blended and can be used by Garrett County in the future when thinking of innovative ways to address indicators of youth disconnection.

The last section, priority recommendations, follows a similar outline to the long-term recommendations, with the most feasible programs highlighted first. This section starts with the **Maryland Apprenticeship Training Program (MATP)** and **Supplemental Nutrition**

Assistance Program (SNAP) Education and Training (E&T) funds. This begins with a state-level description of MATP and the required county-level engagement for program establishment. It is followed by a description of SNAP E&T, which is already operational in Garrett County. These descriptions lead into program alignment and planning that can be done to utilize SNAP E&T dollars for the establishment of MATP in Garrett County for youth and adults. Six steps are outlined to successfully achieve this. These include the establishment of a formalized Work Group, engagement with the Maryland Department of Labor and Licensing (DLLR), cost analysis for administering SNAP E&T for funding strategies, identifying employer sponsors through the Work Group, and then application submission for Youth and Adult MATP. After this, LUMA recommends establishing **Champions for Opportunity Youth** to be involved in continued engagement on this topic. They could receive Certificates of Service for their project engagement and be assigned to continued efforts based on their natural relationships and community service and engagement. The next two sections, addressing **Child Maltreatment** and **Generational Poverty**, recommend the same solution: an expansion to the currently accredited Early Care Healthy Families program. This program is similar to evidence-based programs addressing these issues, but the current restrictions on eligibility are based on meeting the Governor's Office for Children's Strategic Goal Populations. If additional funds were used for families that don't meet these definitions, but still are in need of services, major positive impacts on early childhood indicators throughout Garrett County could be achieved. Healthy Families turned away clients for the first time in the program's history this past month demonstrating a high need for funding expansion. Numerous possible funding sources are described in this Plan to expand the eligible population this program serves.

Next, possible **Garrett Transit Service (GTS)** modifications are described to aid Opportunity Youth. This includes recommendations from community forums, and from the Opportunity Youth and Key Informant Interviews. Transportation was continually cited as the largest barrier for youth sustaining employment in the county, so recommendations on possible efficiency improvements and expansions are outlined. Because Community Action may have limited resources to support changes to the GTS service, **Transportation Demand Software** are also recommended. The first is a free website that promotes carpooling through the community. The promotion of a single website for this service could establish a significant enough community base for the program to be effective. This allows people to show generally what trips they are making within the county, if they are a driver or a passenger seeking a driver, and the frequency of their trip. The other recommendation is a partnership with Agile Mile, which can develop a smart phone-based application for the community by providing the same services as the carpooling

website. While it would seem obvious to use the free, web-based service, this application could be developed with buy-in from local governments outside of Garrett County for commuting purposes. Pennsylvania has done this with counties that have high numbers of workers traveling between them and has been successful in improving employment opportunities for individuals with poor transportation access. LUMA's final priority recommendation is the establishment of **School Based Health Centers (SBHC)** within Garrett County. These require a sponsoring agency before they are established, which is commonly Local Health Departments and Federally Qualified Health Centers. SBHCs improve healthcare access by bringing services to where youth are, enabling parents to stay at work, identifying health issues early, decreasing the amount of class time missed, and reducing emergency department visits by managing chronic conditions, through care coordination with the child's primary care physician.³⁴ Additionally, SBHCs have been found to reduce illegal substance use, alcohol consumption, and increase contraceptive use and prenatal care for females. They have a return on investment of about \$3.18 for every \$1 spent. Establishing SBHCs in Garrett County would address upstream causes of youth disconnection, among other numerous community-wide concerns. These early care programs can save money on future interventions by reducing early risk factors that may be compounding for youth, in turn requiring less intensive reconnection services later.

The existing opportunistic economic landscape in Maryland provides a catalyst for activating strategic innovation and further investment to support improved Opportunity Youth outcomes. The most substantial progress made by LUMA this summer was the establishment of funds and next steps for developing an apprenticeship program to aid youth and adults throughout Garrett County. Past this, numerous opportunities to broaden already existing and successful programs addressing other known indicators of youth disconnection are highlighted. Existing programs were outlined with new potential funding sources wherever possible, in lieu of recommending new infrastructure, to increase feasibility and lower cost. It is important to note that the establishment of new programs or tools will not guarantee successful youth reconnection in Garrett County. Actualizing the opportunities that Opportunity Youth have to offer will require a concerted effort across multiple community-based organizations that are focused on long-term success for the youth they serve and programs that support them. LUMA has provided numerous program options, helpful tools, and funding strategies to aid Garrett County in youth reconnection strategies, but ultimately, it is the determination of the Local Management Board to decide which of these to pursue.

Introduction

This Strategic Plan is an extension of the Assessment Report provided by LUMA Health Consulting to the Garrett County Local Health Department's Local Management Board. The Report laid out the indicators for youth disconnection nationally, and the trends that have been seen throughout rural America. These trends were compared to quantitative data at the local, state, and national levels to identify outlying indicators of concern for the county. To confirm the quantitative findings, thorough qualitative data collection was performed using 30 key informant interviews with local/state officials and community members, 2 group meetings with local officials, 3 community forums, and 16 Opportunity Youth interviews (see Appendix A for Opportunity Youth Interview Addendum). The key findings from the Report identified the following indicators in Garrett County contributing to youth disconnection: child maltreatment, poverty, lack of educational attainment, poor access to healthcare, and health risks associated youth behaviors, including tobacco and alcohol use, and methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine use. Transportation, generational poverty, and substance use were also barriers commonly identified for youth disconnection during qualitative interviews. Community engagement revealed substantial support for developing focused apprenticeship programs and continued investment in workforce development in Garrett County.

The key indicators identified in the Report were used to recommend tailored interventions and strategies for Garrett County to address youth disconnection. With much existing program infrastructure already in place, Garrett County is uniquely positioned to lead a national strategy using rural health interventions that improve outcomes for Opportunity Youth. The existing opportunistic economic landscape in Maryland provides a catalyst for activating innovation and further investment to support improved outcomes for Opportunity Youth. This Strategic Plan begins by outlining national reports on successful Community Based Organizations (CBOs) that have improved or began reconnecting Opportunity Youth. In addition to describing successful CBOs addressing this issue, we include figures that breakdown the plurality of Opportunity Youth by the different levels of support they need. Not all youth experience the same level of disconnection, so not all youth need the same level of safety net systems to reconnect them. Using this understanding to tailor services means there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to reconnecting youth. This breakdown at the national level leads into program specifics recommended for Garrett County using two different categories of recommendations. The first section is strategic recommendations, which include programs that are either present and we suggest the Local Management Board become involved in, national programs that could be

promoted in the county, or new programs that would require significant work to be established in Garrett County. The last section is top-line recommendations, which are programs and initiatives that gained momentum through LUMA's engagement, are the most impactful in the short-term, and are mostly no- to low-cost steps to ensure continual discussion and improvement for Opportunity Youth within Garrett County.

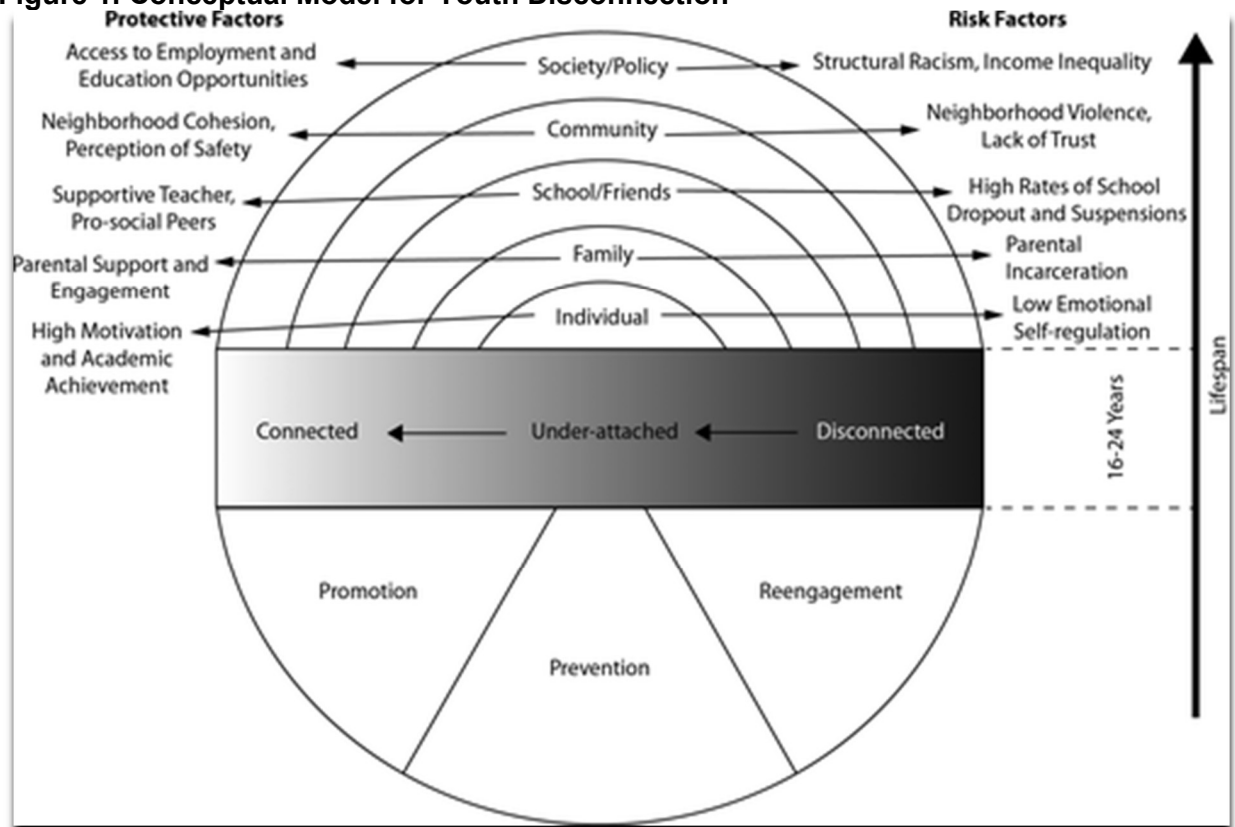
In addition to these recommendations, the Appendix includes many other resources for the Local Management Board. It includes a section on a model program in Maryland and tools for the Local Management Board to use for engaging in new initiatives, determining the level of support local businesses can provide, finding evidence-based social programs, or searching for youth-focused grant opportunities. These are not solutions in-and-of-themselves, but additional supports the county can use after the LUMA contract has ended. After these are described, the Opportunity Youth Addendum is attached. This Addendum summarizes the Opportunity Youth interviews that were left open until mid-August and includes an assessment of the interviews from 16 Opportunity Youth in Garrett County. Next, a contact directory is included for individuals who assisted LUMA this summer and are engaged with youth through their position within Garrett County. This is to aid the Local Management Board with continued project engagement. The last two items included in the Appendix are related to the establishment of a Maryland-registered apprenticeship program within Garrett County. The first section is the meeting minutes from a teleconference with representatives from key organizations that would be part of establishing the Maryland Apprenticeship Training Program (MATP) in the county, and the latter is the application for businesses to become a MATP partners.

National Strategies

The increased prevalence of Opportunity Youth is not an issue specific to Garrett County. This trend has been noticed nationally and has sparked many new initiatives and research over the past 10 years. To understand the spectrum of influences for youth disconnection, Figure 1 below shows a conceptual model for Opportunity Youth based on life course development, ecological theory, and public health principles.¹ This model is informed by the Positive Youth Development Framework, which views youth development as embedded within family, school, community, society, culture, and history.¹ This framework assumes youth have the capacity for adaptive change and promotes strategies that provide opportunities which build off young adult's strengths. This shows the developmental stages for Opportunity Youth, and the protective factors for connection and risk factors for disconnection. These factors can influence youth at multiple

ecological levels (individual, family, community, etc.) and these factors can increase, or decrease, as they are compounded. Youth that are facing risk factors at the societal level (income inequality) will be more likely to compound risk factors at other levels, such as limited options for housing and employment, which furthers their risk of disconnection. Conversely, access to educational opportunities and supportive adults can reduce the compounded likelihood for youth disconnection. The public health tenants at the bottom, promotion and prevention, as well as reengagement strategies can be envisioned to target youth depending on intervention goals.¹ The major recommendations from this public health approach are developing and investing in youth monitoring data systems coordinated across multiple sectors, consolidating both the delivery and funding services for Opportunity Youth, and fostering systematic approaches to the testing and scaling up of preventive and re-engagement interventions.¹

Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Youth Disconnection¹



In mid-2012, the White House Council for Community Solutions released their final report on “Community Solutions for Opportunity Youth” where they identified and raised awareness of effective community-led solutions to this serious problem.² Some of the universal characteristics of effective solutions were: the development of successful cross-sector community collaboratives,

engaging youth as leaders in the solution, and building more robust “on-ramps” to employment.² To develop successful cross-sector collaboratives, communities need to prioritize funding for best practices to effectively use limited resources, promote collaborative use of data across agency lines, and align policies to reduce fragmentation and improve efficiency.² Additionally, engaging youth as leaders in the solution, a process to formalize youth input, the creation of online, youth-rated delivery systems, and hiring opportunity youth into program roles were mentioned.² Lastly, to build more robust “on-ramps” to employment, all sectors need to increase job opportunities for Opportunity Youth, high-quality and relevant educational and service opportunities need to be present, as well as some type of mentorship program.² Not all effective community collaboratives had every one of these characteristics, but some combination of these that best fit their unique community needs. From this White House Council for Community Solutions initiative on Opportunity Youth, the Aspen Institute for Community Solutions was launched to promote collaborative, community-based efforts for those with the least access to opportunity. While they promote these solutions for all individuals needing opportunity, they also have a specific focus on young adults through the Opportunity Youth Forum for Community Solutions.

The aspects of effective community-based solutions noted in the White House Council for Community Solutions were continually noted through multiple other reports as well. In addition to cross-sector collaboration, engaging youth as leaders, and building more robust “on-ramps” to employment, the report “Opportunity Road” offers additional paths forward for communities focusing on improving outcomes for Opportunity Youth. This includes rewarding and scaling up already effective programs to increase capacity, and that has been a significant guiding factor for this Strategic Plan.³ Because Garrett County has a plethora of programs already, LUMA’s goal is to find ways to enhance and maximize these resources because they are established and known throughout the county. Another important task taken upon by many community based organizations was finding ways to better measure performance because “disconnected measurement systems lead to disconnected youth”.³ The White House Council stressed collaborative use of data across agency lines, and it is important to highlight that again, because when there are multiple organizations aiming to serve a similar population in a county as rural and resource constrained as Garrett County, sharing data is crucial. This promotes an interconnected safety net of community-based organizations that can ensure that two organizations are not pouring money into nearly identical initiatives, forcing them to split the population they are trying to serve, leading to both organizations not serving as many as they could and leaving some youth to fall through the cracks.

Disconnected measurement systems lead to disconnected youth.

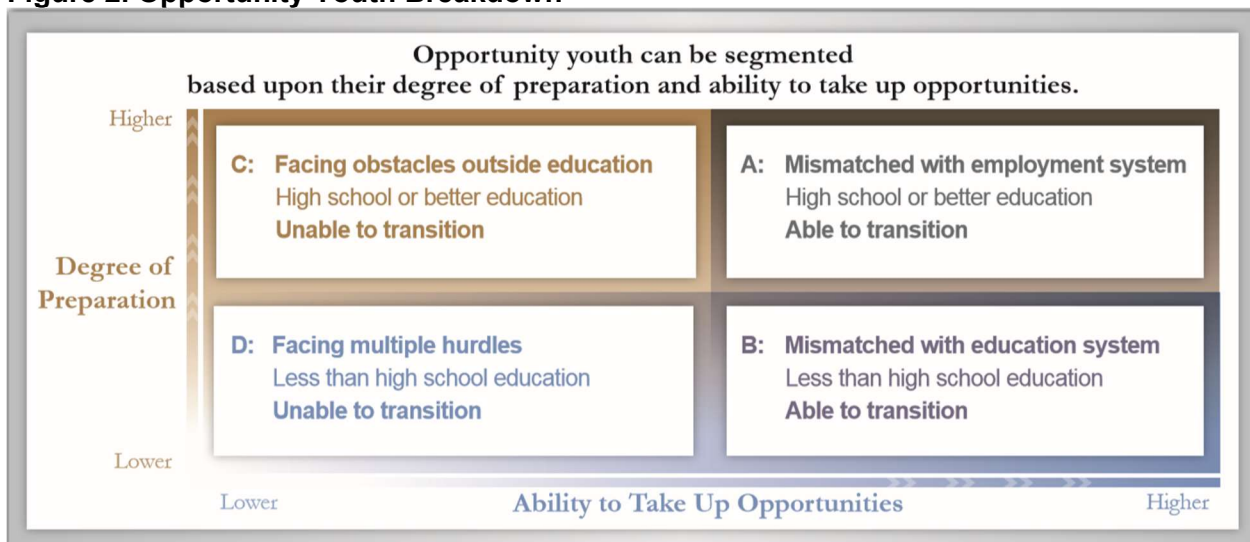
Opportunity Youth need multiple pathways that combine work experience, education, training, and other social supports to sustain long-term increases to overall well-being and work readiness.

Not only have these needs been recognized nationally, the Maryland Governor's Office for Children and Children's Cabinet produced a Strategic Plan for all of their Strategic Goal Populations in 2015, including Opportunity Youth.⁴ It highlighted that Opportunity Youth need multiple pathways that combine work experience, education, training, and other social supports to sustain long-term increases to overall well-being and work readiness.⁴ Among these recommendations, the following efforts were promoted: high school drop-out recovery programs, early college/dual-program tracks, non-traditional certificate or associate degree programs, leading edge internships and apprenticeships, training directly linked with job placement, two generation approaches, life skills training, and supported independent living opportunities.⁴ They also noted many gaps in service at the state-level when this report was written, including: subsidized childcare vouchers are only available once youth have obtained a job, not all community colleges accept tuition waivers for non-credit bearing courses, lack of clarity regarding organizational use of Chafee Funds which may have resulted in gaps/duplication, Medicaid-reimbursable services are not available to youth in State custody who need services but lack a formal diagnosis/treatment plan, and existing Independent Living Programs cannot provide childcare under the current State rate structure.⁴ Chafee Funds can be used by youth 14-20 years old who re in out-of-home placement and completed the Casey Life Skills Assessment. There are many items eligible to be funded through these funds, including but not limited to: class dues, college application fees, daycare, driver's education, furniture, senior portraits, and start-up/household supplies. Additionally, at the state-level Department of Human Services and Department of Juvenile Services note the gaps in resources for youth aging-out of foster care or re-entering the community.

Many of the initiatives listed by the Maryland Children's Cabinet are already in progress in Garrett County, including two generation approaches, early college/dual-program tracks, and the non-traditional certificate or associate degree program is growing with the Commissioner's Scholarship being expanded to include an Occupational Scholarship. The life skills training is being promoted through the Work Ethic Diploma, which promotes soft skill training for youth while in high school and allows them to use this diploma to jump-start their employment with a slightly higher wage than they would have otherwise. It was noted that this program, so far, has been aiding already high achieving youth, so there may need to be an equity-focused application moving forward to ensure those who would benefit most from soft skills training have access. The only areas of the Children's Cabinet's recommendations that Garrett County is not currently

addressing is the leading-edge internship/apprenticeship programs, and training directly linked with job placement, but this is not without effort. To achieve these efforts, there needs to be thoroughly engaged businesses from an array of fields that can provide the training, experience, and partnerships that are crucial for an apprenticeship or internships to thrive. Due to high turnover, youth behavioral problems, and an older, less risky, workforce available in the county, this often promotes businesses to engage in time and resources to appropriately engage Opportunity Youth. A better understanding of the different needs' youth disconnection encompasses, and additional tools for businesses to understand what they can provide to youth can help alleviate this issue.

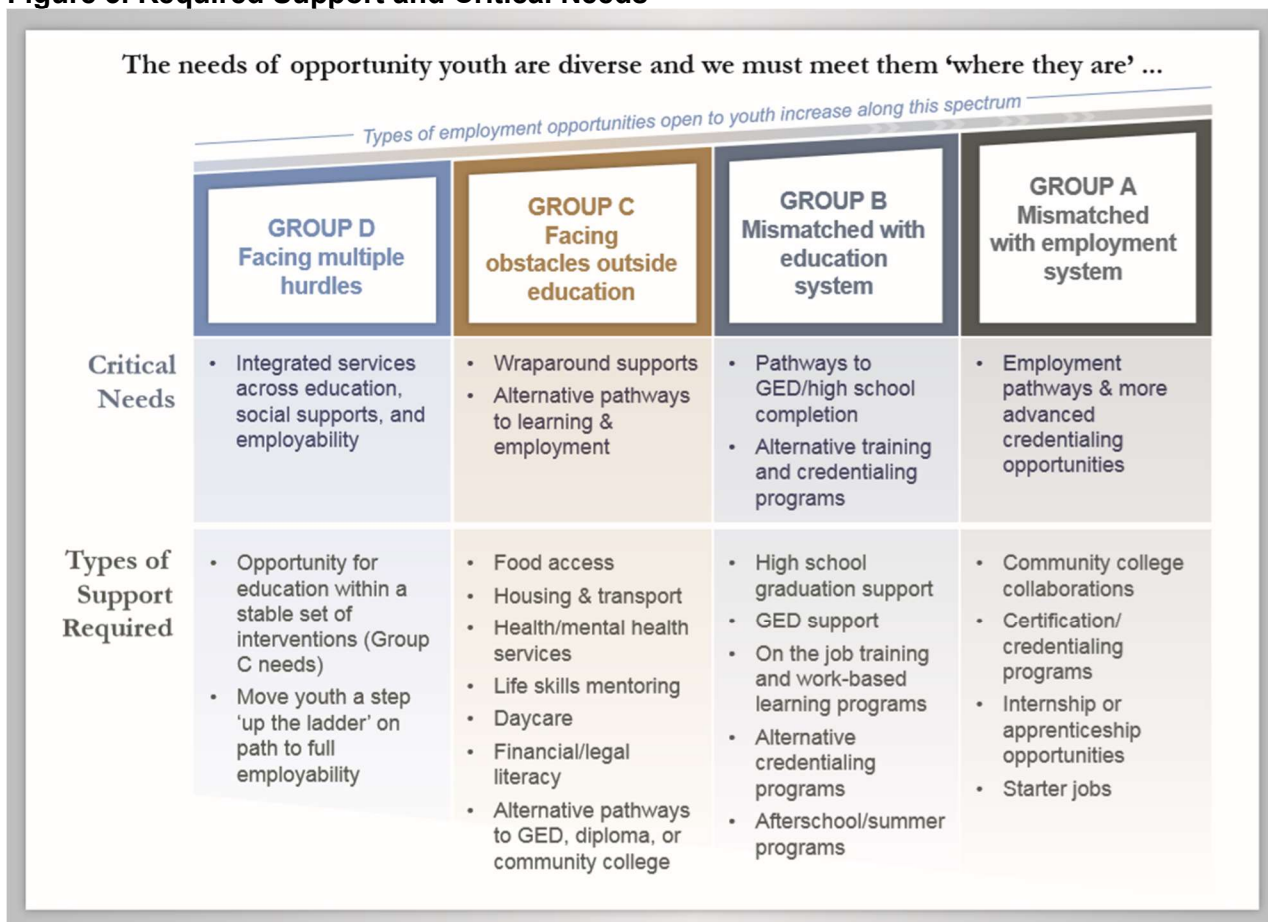
Figure 2. Opportunity Youth Breakdown²



An important realization to aid Opportunity Youth, and businesses trying to serve this population, is an understanding of the array of needs this population has. While many Opportunity Youth face similar barriers, there is still a wide diversity within this population in terms of their degree of preparation for, and ability to take up, opportunities. Figure 2 above shows a breakdown of Opportunity Youth into 4 different categories, based on their ability to take up opportunities to transition from high school, and their degree of preparation for those opportunities, based on educational attainment.² While all of these categories are applicable to Opportunity Youth, clearly different pathways of connection or reconnection are needed to ensure long-term success for each category. Based on this needs breakdown, Figure 3 below shows the diverse support systems needed to appropriately meet the needs of Opportunity Youth.² The youth in Group A, who have a high school degree or better and have skills that make them able to transition, may just be mismatched with the employment opportunities in the area, versus youth in Group D who

have less than a high school education and lack skills for employment and need a much more integrated service system to aid their success. When thinking of this application to Garrett County, there may be slight variations to this breakdown even further. For example, some youth may be educated and skilled, indicating they would be in Group A, but their major barrier is transportation, which is a type of support for a youth in Group C. This highlights that even this categorical breakdown, while helpful for understanding different support system needs, still requires nuances to be mindfully thought through for services to truly reconnect Garrett County Opportunity Youth.

Figure 3. Required Support and Critical Needs²



While finding ways to engage Opportunity Youth and help them thrive often requires dollars to go into starting or growing programs, it is important to consider the economic consequences of inaction. The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth looks at both the immediate taxpayer burden and social burden of Opportunity Youth, as well as long-term burdens for those that remain disconnected.⁵ The first burden they report is the near immediate incoming reduction that Opportunity Youth are expected to incur while they are aged 25-28. Someone in this age range that has not experienced disconnection is expected to have an income of over \$30,000.⁵

Youth that have experienced under-attachment between ages 16-24 are expected to have an income just over \$20,000 when they are 25-28.⁵ Individuals who have experienced chronic disconnection are expected to make just over \$15,000 a year, about half what their non-disconnected peers makes.⁵ This is just the short-term income earning potential burden that this population faces, but there is also a larger societal/taxpayer burden that is incurred when this population is not successfully reconnected. When looking at the calculations for the burden on taxpayers and the overall social burden, the taxpayer burden is composed of lost income taxes, additional health care costs for uncompensated care, criminal justice and corrections systems costs, and all welfare and social service payments that may be incurred, with savings counted through lower education spending.⁵ The social burden is similar, but more broad, including lost gross earnings, health expenditures, crime costs, welfare and social services that are not direct transfers from government to individuals, the public and private cost of education, lost productivity in the workforce, and the tax burden of governmental programs.⁵ From the White House Council's calculations, on average each opportunity youth imposes - compared to connected youth - an immediate taxpayer burden of \$13,900 per year and an immediate social burden of \$37,450 per year in 2011 dollars.⁵ If this calculation has grown with inflation, in 2019 this would mean a taxpayer burden of \$15,828 per year, and a social burden of \$42,645. With the estimate of 450 Opportunity Youth in Garrett County, this means the burden in 2019 dollars on taxpayers is \$7,112,600 a year, and a social burden of \$19,190,250 a year.⁵

It was also reported that Opportunity Youth only incur one-quarter of their lifetime burden while still categorized in this population (below age 24), and three-quarters of the burden is incurred between ages 25-65.⁵ The total lifetime burden of each 16 year old chronic Opportunity Youth in 2011 dollars is a \$258,240 on taxpayers, and a \$755,900 social burden.⁵ If this calculation has grown with inflation, this would be a lifetime taxpayer burden of \$294,063 per Opportunity Youth, and a lifetime social burden of \$860,760. Using the current estimate of 450 Opportunity Youth, LUMA estimates a lifetime burden in 2019-dollars of roughly \$132,328,350 on taxpayers, and a social burden of \$387,342,000.⁵ This is the highest estimate expected, because not all the 450 Opportunity Youth become disconnected at age 16 and stay chronically disconnected for the rest of their lives. The Economic Value of Opportunity Youth also provides calculation estimates for the lifetime burden of under-attached Opportunity Youth, which are youth who have schooling

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and work experience past age 16 but have not progressed through college or sustained stable employment. Under-attached Opportunity Youth are expected to pose a lifetime taxpayer burden of \$215,580, and a lifetime social burden of \$596,640 in 2011-dollars.⁵ If these estimates grew with inflation, the 2019-dollar lifetime estimate for under-attached Opportunity Youth is a taxpayer burden of \$245,485, and a social burden of \$679,407. Using these estimates with the 450 Opportunity Youth total, it is expected that under-attached Opportunity Youth in Garrett County pose a lifetime taxpayer burden of \$110,468,250 and a lifetime social burden of \$305,733,150.⁵

Recommendations Summary

LUMA has organized strategic planning activities for Opportunity Youth into (1) Strategic Recommendations, and (2) Top-Line Recommendations. Strategic recommendations are strategies for youth reconnection that address lower priority indicators found in the Assessment Report. The strategic recommendations are presented in order of feasibility of implementation, with the initiatives listed first requiring the least infrastructure, implementation plans, or additional work to be done. This section describes initiatives already being taken up in Garrett County that LUMA recommends the Local Management Board be involved in supporting. Next, national programs that Garrett County Opportunity Youth can apply for are described, before getting into recommendations that require additional work to be done for implementation. These recommendations start with expansions on existing infrastructure, making them more feasible in the shorter term, before outlining recommendations that require new programs or infrastructure.

Top-Line recommendations are key strategies that LUMA strongly endorses because they are specific to the main drivers of youth disconnection in Garrett County. LUMA's top-line recommendations address the lack of an established apprenticeship program, generational poverty, child maltreatment, access to healthcare, and transportation. Like the organization of strategic recommendations, the body of top-line recommendations are organized in terms of feasibility. Initiatives most feasible in the short term, requiring less infrastructure and costs, are described before those requiring more. Cost was considered in every recommendation described and where funding strategies could be found, they are described.

Finally, LUMA has included Model Programs and Tools in the Appendix. These resources are included to assess, plan, illustrate, and manage employer and community engagement. Additional resources are included in the Appendix to enable the Local Management Board to search for Opportunity Youth-related funding opportunities and evidence-based interventions.

Strategic Recommendations

Transition Council. The Assessment Report highlighted that Opportunity Youth are three times as likely to have a disability compared to non-Opportunity Youth peers. Garrett County has a higher portion of disabled individuals and higher portion of disabled individuals living in poverty compared to Maryland and the United States. A new coordination group for disability services that is being started in Garrett County is the Transition Council. This is spearheaded through the Department of Rehabilitation Services and the first meeting of the council is on September 26th at 10 A.M in the guidance office of the Southern High School. The individuals invited to this meeting are school staff from Garrett County Public Schools, the counties Certified Rehabilitation Provider (CRP), service coordinators, Western Maryland Consortium, and Western Maryland's Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) representative. The goal of this Council is to bring organizations together to work to provide seamless transition services for youth with disabilities in Garrett County. All the individuals invited offer some forms of secondary transition services, so by getting all these providers together on a council, it will ensure a greater coordination of services and a more informed process for youth with disabilities. This is because their providers will be confident in who is offering what benefits, and how they can be combined for the easiest transition. The adult coordinator from the Garrett County Local Behavioral Authority will be attending, so we recommend that the LMB stays updated about this Council to find ways that they can fill gaps in services for youth with disabilities as they transition out of high school and into postsecondary education or into the workforce. Additionally, efforts that are being taken up by the Local Management Board to support youth with disabilities can be vetted through this Council and ensure a more effective implementation because it is coordinated with nearly all the disability service providers within the county.

Market-Rate Workforce Housing Development. The Assessment Report showed that Opportunity Youth are nearly three times as likely to be living away from both parents, and twenty times as likely to be institutionalized in some way. The ability to afford rentals to live away from home was continually brought up in Opportunity Youth interviews, and the placement rate in foster care in Garrett County is higher than the rate in Baltimore City. Currently, Garrett County is facing a severe shortage of affordable workforce housing, especially in the area of long-term market-rate rental properties. High-priced housing is a deterrent for recruiting new residents, so this is both a community development issue,

The currently existing rental housing developments are often low-income or subsidized housing, which most of the workforce is not eligible for, leaving a gap in needed housing

and an economic one. This is because, while the Garrett County population is about 30,000 full-time residents, it attracts about 1.2 million visitors per year as a tourist destination. This drives up the costs of housing and property values, while the majority of the county's residential workforce cannot afford to pay these high prices.¹² The currently existing rental housing developments are often low-income or subsidized housing, which most of the workforce is not eligible for, leaving a gap in needed housing services. While this is not an issue specific to Garrett County, it is still growing as a significant burden for county residents. The County Commissioners have developed and financed an assistance program for new home buyers - "Pathway to Home Ownership" - and this has been extremely successful but it does not address the rental market issue.¹² The latest study done in Grantsville showed a shortage of more than 100 market-rate rentals, and a county-wide study has not been done since 2007 so the expected current county-wide shortage is an estimate, but it is estimated at a shortage of over 500 market-rate rental units.¹² The Garrett County Chamber of Commerce is advocating at the state and federal level to revise programs to assist rural communities because currently, the federal government only provides financial assistance for low-income, subsidized multi-family housing that has a very small percentage of market-rate rental units.¹² This change is crucial to rural communities trying to recruit and keep new residents, so the Local Management Board should be active in supporting and promoting this work to the general Garrett County community so they are informed and aware of the benefits that programs like this would provide.

elnternship. A skill-building opportunity available for youth in Garrett County is the federal government's elnternship program.¹³ Through the Virtual Student Federal Service program, students can work on projects that advance governmental work on a flexible schedule. Students can intern from anywhere with an Internet connection and set their own schedules to work on a project that fits their timetable. More than 40 federal agencies have positions that students can apply for, and they work for about 10 hours a week during the school year.¹³ Students apply to their top three projects during the month of July, and supervisors review applications and virtually interview candidates during the month of August. Students will know in early September if they have received the position and will work until May and can earn course credits if their academic institution accepts them. The downsides to this program are that this internship is unpaid, so this can be a barrier for lower income students who don't have the availability to give unpaid labor for the resume building this provides, and the application is through USAJobs. The application is short, only needing a resume, transcript, and a statement of interest,

Through the Virtual Student Federal Service program, students can work on projects that advance governmental work on a flexible schedule.

but federal resume building is a skill in-and-of its own, so for youth to be able to submit a quality resume would require some type of programming or engagement sessions to offer skill building in this area. Additionally, the promotion of this program may inadvertently help those students already well off, like the Work Ethic Diploma, if an equity-focused effort is not prioritized. Youth that have access to transportation will have no problem attending resume building workshops, and some may have social support networks at home that further enable their success. To ensure that youth who need this program are the ones applying, the resume-building needs to be incorporated in a way that gives access to those who wouldn't usually. This, in practice, can look like a workshop within the "Learning Beyond the Classroom" mobile classroom, within local libraries that have free computer access, and during possible breaks in the school day where youth can ask specific questions.

Job Corps. Part of the definition for Opportunity Youth is that they struggle to find or sustain employment, and this concern was brought up numerous times during interviews with Garrett County youth. Overall unemployment rates are higher in Garrett County than in Maryland of the United States, with generational poverty being a large concern for Opportunity Youth. A federal program that can be promoted within the county to address employment concerns is Job

Job Corps offers tuition-free housing, meals, basic healthcare, a living allowance, and career transition services. Additionally, once a student graduates from the program, they can get assistance with housing, transportation, and childcare for up to 21 months.

Corps.¹⁴ This is the largest residential education and job training program for young adults ages 16-24, and it is free for those who are eligible.¹⁴ While the maximum age limit for program participation is 24 years old, this is waived if the applicant has a documented disability. The eligibility requirements for program participation are an ability to legally work in the United States, the need for job skills training or education, and an income eligibility requirement.¹⁴ Any youth is income eligible if they meet

one or more of the following conditions: receives public assistance, earns a poverty-level income, is experiencing homelessness, living in foster care, or qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch.¹⁴ Additionally, students must have a childcare plan for any dependent children, no court dates or outstanding fines, no behavioral issues that would keep themselves or others from experiencing Job Corps' full benefits, and no illegal drug use.¹⁴ If someone is interested in Job Corps and they do have a child, there are some residential facilities that offer childcare so that being a young parent does not stop them from being able to benefit from this program. Even if an eligible student has not finished high school, they can be accepted to Job Corps. They can earn a high school diploma, or the equivalent, and college credit. Job Corps offers tuition-free housing, meals, basic

healthcare, a living allowance, and career transition services. Additionally, once a student graduates from the program, they can get assistance with housing, transportation, and childcare for up to 21 months.¹⁴ There are numerous different career training paths that students can engage in depending on their background, goals and interests. They offer training in, and not limited to: advanced manufacturing, automotive and machine repair, construction, finance and business, healthcare, homeland security, hospitality, information technology, renewable resources and energy, and transportation.

Not only does Job Corps have the ability to engage many Opportunity Youth in Garrett County, they also can engage local businesses.¹⁴ No matter the workforce size that a business needs, Job Corps can establish a partnership and because students create their own training timelines, candidates graduate throughout the entire year, not just during normal academic graduation cycles. This ensures that a business can get an employee they need, when they need them. Additionally, Job Corps provides more than just technical training to do the work required, they also work on social and soft skills, so students graduate with an appreciation for teamwork, promptness, accountability, and communication. Not only does Job Corps offer training in a plethora of fields, a business that establishes a work-based learning partnership with Job Corps can have training programs customized to suit the specific needs, industry standards, and certifications required for the company. This, in addition to the 21 months of transportation, housing, and childcare assistance a student can

Not only does Job Corps offer training in a plethora of fields, a business that establishes a work-based learning partnership with Job Corps can have training programs customized to suit the specific needs, industry standards, and certifications required for the company.

have after they graduate, ensures that youth are as prepared as they can be to successfully transition into a career. From the qualitative interviews conducted for the Assessment Report, it was continually noted that there is hesitation and a lack of buy-in from employers to seriously engage Opportunity Youth because of many of these soft skills and technical training barriers they face. Partnerships with Job Corps can help alleviate this concern because it stops employers from having to spend time searching for qualified employees, it saves money by not having to personally train new employees as thoroughly and allows them to make an impact on a young person's life who is ready to engage in this work. An important caveat to note, though, is that while Job Corps is an amazing partnership opportunity for businesses, it is still crucial for some businesses to only be focused within the county to ensure that Garrett County youth are benefitting from Garrett County businesses. Not all youth who fall into the definition of Opportunity Youth can be served by Job Corps, and youth engaged in the program may be sent to Garrett

County businesses who are originally from different cities, counties, or states. So, while Job Corps can provide many benefits for Garrett County businesses, an equal promotion needs to happen for businesses to provide those services within the county, which is why the business engagement tool is included as an attached PDF. This range of engagement opportunities for Garrett County businesses can help establish buy-in from skeptical employers who have possibly had negative experiences in the past or have lingering qualms about the efforts these initiatives would take.

Smoking Cessation. A large portion of chronic smokers begin before they are 18 years old. The current generation of youth was believed to be the first generation that “beat youth tobacco use” until the wide promotion of e-cigarettes and Juul pods, so new interventions are needed to address this new emerging problem. While high-risk youth behavior is of concern in Garrett County, broader than just tobacco use, it is worthwhile to discuss this individually. Garrett County had higher than state/national trends for youth: smokeless tobacco use, vaping, daily cigarette use, and use of any form of tobacco. Most of these indicators are twice as worse in Garrett County than in Maryland or the United States. In response, the Garrett County Health Department has launched a website, KickingTobacco.com, to provide information to county residents on free smoking cessation programs, and look up specifics of cost savings they could incur depending on what they use and their usage habits.¹⁵ There are two youth tobacco programs, Tobacco Awareness Program (TAP) for youth who are self-motivated to quit, and Tobacco Education Group (TEG) for a positive alternative to suspension, fines, or other penalties for violation of Minors’ Tobacco Laws or school policy.¹⁵ It is important to note that TEG is only formed as an educational program, not cessation program. The KickingTobacco.com website includes links to the state level tobacco program information: SmokingStopsHere.com.¹⁶ The state website includes a phone number for anyone over 13 years old to set up a quitting plan, and a text-based program for anyone over 18.¹⁶

Our recommendation to enhance these services includes closing gaps for youth that currently exist. The KickingTobacco.com site has a section specific to quitting services for Veterans, and then general tobacco use categories (cigarettes, Juuls/vapes, smokeless/chew,

Youth may face increased anxieties about phone-based or in-person cessation programs because they may be keeping this information away from their parents, family, or friends. Creating a text-based reminder system, or promoting a national one that already exists, can meet youth where they are in their quitting journey.

etc.), but no section specific for youth.¹⁵ This is very important to have because youth may assume that these services are only directed towards adults because they are legally not allowed to be using tobacco. Additionally, there is no text-based

program directed at youth, the group that would arguably benefit the most from this. The state-level programs require individuals to be 18 for the text-service but offers no text-based service for youth under 18, and Garrett County does not have any text-based programs. Youth may face increased anxieties about phone-based or in person cessation programs because they may be keeping this information away from their parents, family, or friends. Creating a text-based reminder system, or promoting a national one that already exists, can meet youth where they are in their quitting journey. The recommended national program to fill this gap is from teen.SmokeFree.gov, which offers a SmokefreeTXT program for youth ages 13-19 who want to quit using tobacco products.¹⁷ They also have a similar text-based program for youth who use smokeless tobacco, which could also be promoted throughout the county as a tool for youth.¹⁷

Preventing Youth Alcohol/Substance/Tobacco Use. While youth tobacco use is important to address, it is also important to address the broader risk behaviors taken up by youth in Garrett County. This is because youth binge drinking is 75% worse in the county than in the state and nation, and youth rates for methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin use are worse in Garrett County than nationally. There are already county-level action groups working on these issues operating through the Drug-Free Garrett County portal.¹⁸ This site provides links to community campaigns on different initiatives, including the previously discussed Kicking Tobacco campaign, but also including Addiction Happens, kNOw Drinking, Spread the Facts about Marijuana, Drug Free Community Coalition, Community Planning Groups, and Play Hard Live Clean.¹⁸ Additionally, there is a Garrett County Youth in Action team coming soon. LUMA is thinking of interventions through a youth-based framework, and we recommend these action groups come together to adopt a similar framework to target high risk youth behaviors. Because alcohol, tobacco, and drug use are all illegal for youth to engage in, if strategies are not tailored to them, youth will feel like the intervention is not accessible to them. Parents, and community-members at large, need to be informed on the benefits of prevention strategies, as well as warned about the risks of high-use behavior, but these messages need to include a tailored narrative for youth. The separate action groups currently addressing different risk behaviors can collaborate to create a general high-risk behavior prevention strategy for youth in Garrett County.

Tailored prevention programs need to be established within the school system, so the risks of alcohol and drugs are familiar to students before they are tempted with using. The school system is the best intervention medium for these initiatives because it ensures a large number of youths will be reached in a systematic manner. A model program for this prevention strategy is LifeSkills Training (LST).¹⁹ This is a 3-year classroom-based universal prevention program designed to prevent adolescent tobacco, alcohol, and marijuana use, with additional violence

prevention lessons.¹⁹ LST contains 30 sessions to be taught over 3 years, with an additional 7 on violence prevention. There are 3 major program components to teach students: (1) personal self-management skills, (2) social skills, and (3) information and resistance skills specifically related to drug use.¹⁹ These skills can aid youth past alcohol and drug use prevention, and while this program will not stop all youth from engaging in risky behaviors, empowering them with this knowledge early can help reduce the overall risks being taken by youth. Each session is approximately 45 minutes each, which means with an average of 10 a year, this is only an additional 450 minutes of lessons to include over a school year to prevent later-in-life high risk behaviors through an evidence-based program. A 1-day on-site training by a LST professional costs \$3,500, plus trainer expenses, but there is also an option off-site training at regional training events costing \$300 per attendee plus travel.¹⁹ Alternatively, online training is offered at a cost of \$235 per participant. While this is a high up-front cost, there is no need to repeat the training on a yearly basis, so after staff become trained, the only cost is the curriculum materials per student, which averages to be \$5 a student.¹⁹ Even if this specific prevention program is not taken up by Garrett Public Schools, using evidence-based programs and lesson plans to curb youth high-risk behaviors around alcohol and drugs will provide health and economic improvements throughout the county.

Certificate of Employability. This certificate would be a program that could potentially be expanded from the current Work Ethic Diploma to help those with previous criminal convictions.²⁰ In Garrett County, the juvenile arrest rate is 2.5 times higher than the national average, and the school-based arrest rate is 7 times higher than the national rate. Ensuring that early involvement with justice systems does not hinder youth into adulthood would be beneficial county-wide. Once an individual gets a criminal conviction, there are numerous barriers that arise from getting employed, to receiving housing, that lead to compounded barriers for this population. While this Certificate can serve more than just Opportunity Youth, certainly any youth that has a conviction before age 24 will continually face these barriers throughout their life. This certificate can be established for youth involved in DJS or those under 24 and expanded upon success. Some jurisdictions have used these certificates to relieve or mitigate some consequences of a conviction, including the restriction of occupational or business licensing for employment.²⁰ This certificate name varies by state, but includes certificates of: relief, re-entry, good conduct, rehabilitation, qualification for employment, or recovery.²⁰ These certificates can

[Certificates of Employability have] been suggested as an alternative to “Ban the Box” policies because it provides potential employers with more information about an applicant, rather than less.

vary depending on the needs of the community, and can be awarded to individuals convicted of felony-level offenses, but these do not remove the conviction for the person's record.²⁰ However, this certificate can be promoted to landlords and local businesses to highlight individuals who are reforming themselves and serious about improving outcomes for themselves. These can be administered through courts or parole boards and can be mirrored to the Work Ethic Diploma that currently promotes soft skills development for High School youth. This program has an optional drug testing option, and this could be made mandatory for the specific purpose of reconnecting those with a previous conviction. Additionally, this has been suggested as an alternative to "Ban the Box" policies because it provides potential employers with more information about an applicant, rather than less. Because Governor Hogan vetoed Maryland's Ban the Box bill, employers are still able to ask about an individual's previous conviction, but this Certificate would show employers who have gone above and beyond to reconnect and empower individuals in the county.²⁰

Data Sharing. One of the most crucial aspects to effectively reconnecting youth, not just in Garrett County, is cross-sector data collection that highlights the issues contributing to youth disconnection within the community. It is imperative for Garrett County to develop data sharing agreements between organizations serving Opportunity Youth so it can be understood not only how many youth are being served, but what their source of disconnection is and how that barrier is being addressed, including sources of care coordination and other health and social resources. LUMA recommends a shared resource tool for all partners providing services to Opportunity Youth, including Community Action, Garrett County Local Health Department, Western Maryland Consortium, Department of Social Services, and Department of Juvenile Services, among other critical partners discussed throughout LUMA's Opportunity Youth Assessment Report.

Appropriate service delivery and quality is best achieved when data systems and sharing are in place. Opportunity Youth encompass a plurality of youth that do not need the same level of services to become reconnected and ignoring this plurality will lead to a duplication of services with already limited resources, as well as youth that fall through gaps of care and never get the services they need. Additionally, concerns were raised about the validity of state and national level datasets, due to their reliance on the American Community Survey and state-level data that may not accurately capture statistics in rural areas, like Garrett County. The only way to address this concern is to find ways to validate data at the community level, and a way to achieve this is through robust coordination of data between community organizations. This data sharing can lead to improved care coordination and referral management for Garrett County Opportunity Youth through a portal where their care, school, and workforce coordination can be managed.

This data sharing cannot happen without appropriate technology. An example of this is Knack, which partnered with Michigan state health departments to share information on School Based Health Centers across the state.²¹ Michigan has been one of the leading states for SBHCs and they chose Knack because it is affordable, provides the database structure that they need, and produces reports quickly and thoroughly.²¹ They collect data on several standardized measures and publish an annual report card compared to desired performance thresholds to contextualize the findings.²¹ While the data sharing suggested for Garrett County is not based on SBHCs, this model can still serve as a point of reference for the county in managing Opportunity Youth care, social resource management, and outcomes. Creating a database with the number

This data sharing can lead to improved care coordination and referral management for Garrett County Opportunity Youth through a portal where their care, school, and workforce coordination can be managed.

of youths who are experiencing indicators of youth disconnection can lead to a more nuanced understanding of the county, and one of the most important sets of data that can be collected is on the numerous indicators that one youth is experiencing. Current state- and national-level databases on county indicators do not collect information about compounded indicators, so when looking at the percent of youth in poverty, we do not know how many are experiencing disconnection compounded by transportation barriers or lack of educational attainment. This is crucial when planning youth reconnection services, because youth who are only experiencing one source of disconnection do not need as robust of services as youth who are experiencing 3 or 4 indicators of disconnection. Moreover, a shared resource may have opportunity for use with all four strategic goal populations: youth experiencing hunger, homelessness, and parental / community incarceration.

In addition to data sharing, there are opportunities for consolidation of social resource identification. A critical barrier in the delivery of community-based care is timely identification of appropriate health and related social needs. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation Center (CMMI) released a funding opportunity in 2016, [Accountable Health Communities \(AHC\)](#), for a 5-year service delivery model to test how clinical-community partnerships can systematically identify and address an individual's health and social related needs. \$120M was funded through this opportunity across 31 awards. The core domains of health and related social needs address many of the Governor's Strategic Goal populations, including housing instability, food insecurity, utility assistance, interpersonal violence, transportation needs, and other locally identified needs. The funding period for awards is May 2017 through April 2022. While the funding for this award is no longer available, LUMA recommends that this model can provide substantial lessons learned

and best practices to support Opportunity Youth and other strategic goal populations. For example, screening tools for eligible recipients, community partner alliances, sustainable funding, and systems to support real-time community resources and data.

Another example of resource data sharing tool is [Healthify](#). Healthify is a software platform for addressing individuals' social determinants with care coordination between healthcare and community service delivery. For example, if an Opportunity Youth has a childcare need, a case manager would use their Healthify phone application to search related childcare resources. Healthify does not rely on community partner input for these resources; they independently keep the platform current. There are licensure costs to purchase this platform. A free, less robust platform often utilized by community-based organizations is [Aunt Bertha](#). Aunt Bertha connects people with programs. Taken together, robust data sharing is a critical component to achieve progress in effective Opportunity Youth social and health resource management.

Performance Partnership Pilots (P3). This is a program list from policy makers which promotes the blending of funds within jurisdictions for Opportunity Youth.²³ This was reauthorized in 2015 to provide jurisdictions with the opportunity to test innovative, cost-effective, and outcome-focused strategies to improve results for Opportunity Youth. This blending of existing federal discretionary funds across multiple eligible programs can help remove barriers to disconnected youth service delivery across communities.²³ However, it is important to recognize that to be successful, this pilot must protect vulnerable populations and individuals served by programs that are included in the pilot while funds are being blended. For a program to be blended as part of a pilot, the Federal agency must determine that doing so will: (1) not deny or restrict an individual's eligibility to services, and (2) not adversely affect vulnerable populations that receive services from that program.²³ To this end, some programs have a greater likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations if blended, and certain programs may be particularly well suited for blending if they have broad authority or a purpose well aligned with the P3 initiative.²³ To assist applicants pursuing pilot initiatives, Agencies have identified 3 categories of risk based on the likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations and the burden of proof that would be required to show that protections will not be violated.²³ This list is not comprehensive of all programs that can be blended, and the inclusion of competitive grants that have already been awarded will merit special considerations on a case-by-case basis, but this list can hopefully jumpstart ideas on funding initiatives that can be blended.

Table 1 below shows the category of programs that have a low likelihood of adversely affecting vulnerable populations, and therefore, are the programs most likely to be approved into a pilot using blended funds.²³ The next two categories of risk are programs with a high likelihood

of adverse effects, and programs that will adversely affect vulnerable populations, so those are not included here because they would require a significantly higher burden of proof to ensure that vulnerable populations are not denied services based on the new blending of funds. As an example, AmeriCorps positions are targeted at 17-25 year old's who need work and value service opportunities, so AmeriCorps positions could be added to various areas of need in Garrett County, such as childcare centers; or this could be piloted with a program like [Upward Bound](#) that gives high school students who are low-income or with parents who do not have a bachelor's degree opportunities to engage in pre-college preparation. This would offer positions to Garrett County Opportunity Youth who remain disconnected even though they have a high school degree, and these positions would aid less-prepared Opportunity Youth who are struggling with motivation to finish high school and pursue higher education. This can address barriers around generational poverty through enhanced educational attainment and work experience for numerous youth in the county, and the success of youth promotes them to come back and serve in an AmeriCorps position and help someone who is similarly situated to them before entering the program. Chances for Opportunity Youth to have leadership roles engaging youth experiencing similar barriers can have a positive cyclical effect on enrollment in leadership positions throughout the community.

Table 1. Programs with Low Likelihood of Adversely Affecting Vulnerable Populations²³

Agency	Program
Corporation for National and Community Service	AmeriCorps State Grants
Corporation for National and Community Service	Social Innovation Fund
Department of Education — Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
Department of Education — Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education	Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
Department of Education — Office of Elementary and Secondary Education	21st Century Community Learning Centers
Department of Education — Office of Elementary and Secondary Education	Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants
Department of Education — Office of Innovation and Improvement	Full Service Community Schools
Department of Education — Office of Innovation and Improvement	Promise Neighborhoods
Department of Education—Office of Postsecondary Education	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)

Department of Education — Office of Postsecondary Education	TRIO — Talent Search
Department of Education — Office of Postsecondary Education	TRIO — Upward Bound
Department of Justice — Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	Mentoring Opportunities for Youth Grants
Department of Labor—Employment and Training Administration	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act — Adult
Department of Labor—Employment and Training Administration	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act — Youth
Department of Labor—Employment and Training Administration	YouthBuild
Institute of Museum and Library Services	Library Services and Technology Act Grants to State Library Administrative Agencies
Institute of Museum and Library Services	Museums for America
Institute of Museum and Library Services	Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program
Institute of Museum and Library Services	National Leadership Grants for Museums/National Leadership Grants for Libraries

Top-Line Recommendations for Garrett County

The key findings from the Assessment Report identified the following quantitative indicators in Garrett County for youth disconnection: child maltreatment, poverty, lack of educational attainment, poor access to healthcare, and health risk associated behaviors, including tobacco use, methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine use. These indicators were validated qualitatively as well. Transportation, generational poverty, and substance use were barriers commonly identified for youth disconnection during qualitative data collection. As solutions to these urgent problems, community engagement revealed substantial support for developing focused apprenticeship programs and continued investment in workforce development in Garrett County to improve outcomes for Opportunity Youth. The following strategies have been developed as the primary interventions to improve Opportunity Youth outcomes using the key themes identified in the Assessment Report.

The United States Department of Labor reports that for every dollar spent on an apprenticeship, U.S. employers get \$1.47 back in increased productivity.

Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program. The United States Department of Labor reports that for every dollar spent on an apprenticeship, U.S. employers get \$1.47 back in increased productivity. To that end, the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP)

for Youth was established in 2018.²⁴ MATP is a state-registered and employer-subsidized program that gives businesses the opportunity to train, influence, and shape high school students and adults into top-performing employees by developing formalized Apprenticeship programs.²⁴ The MATP is administered by the Maryland Department of Labor and Licensing (DLLR). The MATP is currently available to high school students in twelve Maryland counties, including Allegany and Washington Counties.²⁴ These apprenticeships allow for “earn while you learn” experiences, focusing on high-growth, high-demand STEM industries. MATP students work a minimum of 450 hours with a certified employer, while receiving one-year of related educational training through their high school.²⁴ Participating students typically work during the summer after their junior year and during their senior year with a state-approved employer. They work with a mentor to learn valuable skills, earn industry credentials, and high school credit. Students also receive training in employability skills, interpersonal/social skills, and general knowledge of workplace expectations. Youth apprentice employers must apply to become certified. Successful applications must have strong partnerships enumerated, including with the local education system, and other community-based or social service organizations.²⁴

DLLR additionally has an established apprenticeship program geared towards adults, ages 18 and above.²⁴ The adult MATP is a state-registered employer-subsidized program that follows the same principles as the youth program, allowing workers to ‘earn and learn’ through formalized training as well as classroom instruction. These apprenticeships are similarly sponsored by employers. Adult apprenticeships require 2000 hours of On the Job Training (OJT). Hours earned during the youth apprenticeship can be applied towards the OJT requirements of adult apprenticeship program, facilitating entrance and retention of adult apprenticeship training.

The Opportunity Youth community engagement forums led by LUMA Health Consulting throughout Garrett County in June and July 2019 revealed robust community support of apprenticeship programs. Community members often cited lack of specialized training and professional workplace experience as a commonly identified factor contributing to youth disconnection. In addition, during LUMA’s participation in the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Taskforce in July 2019, key information was gathered regarding the local employers’ response to apprenticeship opportunities. Overall local employers are very enthusiastic about apprenticeship programs. However, several key themes emerged regarding the MATP through the Chamber’s Workforce Development Taskforce. These include concerns around (1) time-consuming reporting requirements and (2) retention of apprentices after capital investments made in apprentices. While the MATP requires that an entity, such as local public schools, employ a part-time Coordinator to do the hourly and instruction / classroom

curriculum reporting to DLLR, employers still need to provide the hours worked to the Coordinator. Most employers currently engaged with MATPs utilize their payroll systems to run separate reports for hours earned for their apprentices.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education & Training. The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), commonly known as “food stamps”, is administered through the State Department of Human Services to the local Garrett County Department of Social Services. Authorized through WIOA, an education and training component for SNAP eligible individuals was created. The Department of Social Services is the primary social service provider for Garrett County, assisting people in economic need, providing preventive services, and protecting vulnerable children and adults. Any customer who receives SNAP benefits can be eligible to receive resources to gain training and employment to start and/or advance their career. This SNAP Education & Training Program (SNAP E&T), provides pre-apprenticeship and soft skills to enrollees. A certificate of completion is provided at the end of the training and can be presented to the employer. The SNAP E&T program is a collaboration between Community Action, Garrett College, Department of Social Services, and the Local Health Department. Garrett College led the initial application four years ago, in partnership with Community Action. Community Action is a private, nonprofit who partners to build a stronger community and to provide “one-stop” social services that aim to improve the life for residents in Garrett County. Community Action is a key leader of social service delivery in Garrett County and is a natural lead recipient of these funds. To date, SNAP E&T programs have been under-utilized across Maryland. Given under-utilization, it is believed that E&T can be leveraged to cover more services than previously offered. In conversations with Maryland’s Department of Human Services, they are encouraging additional funding requests for expanded SNAP E&T funds as an opportunity to build capacity, and potentially supplement other state funded programs authorized under WIOA.

MATP and SNAP E&T Alignment and Planning. We recommend that a critical strategy

MATP Establishment Steps:

1. *Formalize an Apprenticeship Work Group and Identify Career Track Occupations*
2. *Department of Labor and Licensing (DLLR) Engagement*
3. *Application*
4. *Funding*
5. *Launch Youth MATP*
6. *Apply for and Launch Adult MATP*

to improve youth workforce and wellness outcomes is developing a Garrett County registered Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) for youth and adults. LUMA has convened a working group of key partners to plan for the implementation of this program (See Appendix C for meeting minutes and attendees from August 13, 2019). Key

stakeholders include Garrett College, Community Action, Garrett County Local Health Department and Local Management Board, Department of Social Services, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Labor and Licensing, and the Western Maryland Consortium. All members of this workgroup expressed keen enthusiasm for operationalizing an apprenticeship program tailored to identified Opportunity Youth professional needs. As noted above, a critical factor to successful implementation of a MATP is to ensure it's development is tailored to local business needs and addresses employer concerns. Employer concerns, as noted above, include resource intensive reporting and capital lost due to low retention of apprentices. The following outline includes methods to address those barriers and to inform the planning and implementation of a MATP.

MATP Step 1: *Formalize an Apprenticeship Work Group and Identify Career Track Occupations*

The first steps in planning a MATP would be specific engagement of employers. LUMA recommends that an Apprenticeship Work Group be formalized through the Local Management Board. LUMA recommends the Apprenticeship Work Group be comprised of the same stakeholders that have been participating in planning discussions to-date (Reference Appendix C). LUMA additionally recommends the Apprenticeship Work Group be comprised of key members from the Chamber of Commerce's Workforce Development Taskforce, through direct engagement of the Chamber's President. The Apprenticeship Work Group should formally invite key members of the Garrett County Public Schools, through the Superintendent. We additionally recommend leadership roles for the Local Management Board, Department of Social Services, Community Action, and Garrett College's Continuing Education & Workforce Development (CEWD) Office. The Work Group's initial objectives will identify employer sponsors and fields of apprenticeship. The Opportunity Youth Survey Addendum in Appendix A identified 11 professions of interest. In addition, Garrett College CEWD has been approached about interests in Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) apprenticeships.

MATP Step 2: *Department of Labor and Licensing (DLLR) Engagement*

Once the Work Group identifies employers and apprenticeships of interest, employers would be identified as potential sponsors. These employer sponsors would meet with the DLLR Western Maryland Apprenticeship Navigator, Ms. Jennifer Runkles (See Appendix B for contact information), in addition to the Garrett County Public Schools and Garrett College Continuing Education & Workforce Development representatives to discuss planning. We propose additional Apprenticeship Work Group leadership also attend to facilitate partnership, including the Local

Management Board. Ms. Runkles would orient the group on the simple 1-page on-line application that the sponsor must complete. The form includes occupation / apprenticeship trade, business location, and job description.

MATP Step 3: Application

After the employer sponsor and Apprenticeship Work Group meets with DLLR and is oriented on the application, the employer sponsor will submit the application (See Appendix D for a copy of the application).³⁹ After the application form is completed, Ms. Runkles contacts the sponsor / employer. They will discuss the occupation in depth and what the student would be doing. Ms. Runkles ensures that the sponsor understands that apprenticeship youth must receive a waiver through their health insurance company to participate in the apprenticeship. The sponsor must ensure youth can be there during working hours, to achieve the full benefit of OJT. This includes working with the sponsor and school system to potentially shift the youth / student schedule around.

After conversations between the employer sponsor and DLLR are completed, the DLLR Youth Apprenticeship Team submits the application to the Maryland Labor Secretary for review. If initially approved, the Secretary will forward the application to the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council (MATC) for consideration and approval. MATC will conduct an expedited review of the application, in consultation with the Department of Labor's Commissioner of Labor and Industry, who will notify the Secretary of its decision. The employer sponsor will be notified of the final determination of eligibility to participate in the program expeditiously upon approval. This entire process takes 90 days or less.

MATP Step 4: Funding

To address the chief concerns of local employers, including resource intensive reporting and capital lost due to low retention of apprentices, LUMA recommends identifying external resources to fund the costs of operating an Apprenticeship program. To address the funding gaps of the MATP, the Department of Social Services has strong willingness to apply existing SNAP E&T funds, as described above, to support the MATP. The Department of Social Services is committed to funding a public school-based Coordinator position for reporting of youth apprenticeship hours through their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education and Training monies for FY 2020. In FY20 (current fiscal year) the Maryland Department of Human Services will be giving an additional \$50,000 in SNAP E&T monies to all local DSSs to independently administer under their local authority for initiatives related to education and training

of SNAP recipients. Potentially Garrett County DSS can seek additional monies to fund a portion of apprenticeship salaries, transportation, uniforms, childcare, and other ancillary needs related to training and education. To solicit additional money beyond the FY20 appropriation, DSS, and their associated partner, Community Action, would need to perform (1) a rigorous cost analysis to determine the per client cost for administration of the SNAP E&T program, (2) meet with Department of Human Services to discuss their methodology for cost analysis, and (3) construct an application for expanded funds.

As noted above, DSS would provide the \$50,000 to fund the Public School System Apprenticeship Coordinator position. Once the money was transferred to the Public Schools, via Inter Entity Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or other mechanism, the Garrett County Public Schools could recruit and hire the Coordinator position. These are typically part-time positions.

Potential longer-term solutions for funding include using SNAP E&T funding to support apprentices (who are also SNAP recipients) for salary support. We recommend employers continue to fund a portion of apprentice salaries to ensure their commitment to training and associated recruitment, retention, and workforce development engagement. Additional funding sources for consideration that are not tied to SNAP eligibility requirements include the Garrett County Commissioner's Scholarship, which has historically been the source of SNAP E&T local funding match. Moreover, tax credits are available to participating employers. Participating employers may qualify for a \$1000 tax credit from the State of Maryland for each eligible Registered Apprentice. Finally, in 2016 Governor Hogan announced the return of [Maryland Business Works](#) program which may pay up to 50% of apprenticeship training costs up to \$4500 per apprentice and \$40,000 per company, per program year if eligible.³⁶ Depending on availability, the [Apprenticeship Innovation Fund](#) also offers businesses grants up to \$50,000 for innovative apprenticeship solutions.³⁷ Maryland Business Works and the Apprenticeship Innovation Fund programs do not have SNAP eligibility requirements.

Taken together, utilizing SNAP E&T funds to support related MATP costs would directly address employer capital concerns and serve as a method to ensure individuals of low-income and higher need are the primary beneficiaries accessing MATP. LUMA recommends that the Apprenticeship Work Group be the continued forum for making this programmatic recommendation to assess interest for specific apprenticeships. The Work Group should carefully consider the social benefits "cliff" when utilizing the SNAP E&T funds to support related apprenticeship costs. LUMA recommends the Apprenticeship Work Group undergo a careful analysis to ensure apprenticeship salaries do not cause apprentices to no longer be eligible for

SNAP. LUMA also recommends “blended” funded strategies; whereas a diversified funding portfolio for MATPs will decrease the risk and improve the likelihood of sustainability.

Step 5: Launch Youth MATP

DLLR provides robust technical assistance during the application, launch, and maintenance of an apprenticeship program. DLLR will orient the employers through the administrative process and the related instruction requirements. DLLR will work with employers, Public Schools Coordinator, and Garrett County Apprenticeship Work Group to identify outlets for advertising apprenticeship opportunities. DLLR has created a [Maryland Apprenticeship Locator](#) search platform, enabling both job seekers / students and employers become and/or hire an apprentice.³⁸

Figure 4. MATP Locator Search Platform³⁸

The screenshot displays the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) website. At the top, it reads "Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) - Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning". Below this is the logo for "MARYLAND APPRENTICESHIP 2.0 Training that Works." The main feature is the "APPRENTICESHIP LOCATOR" banner, which includes the text "Job seekers and employers! Click here to find an apprenticeship". On the left side, there are two columns of navigation links: "Most Popular" and "Resources".

Most Popular

- > [MATP Home Page](#)
- > [Be an Apprentice](#)
- > [Hire an Apprentice](#)
- > [What is an Apprenticeship?](#)
- > [Youth Apprenticeship](#)
- > [Apprenticeship Tax Credit](#)
- > [Apprenticeship Ambassador Program](#)
- > [Events & Opportunities](#)
- > [News and Press Releases](#)
- > [Apprenticeship Success Stories](#)
- > [Employer Success Stories](#)

Resources

- > [Vision Statement](#)
- > [Apprenticeship Tax Credit Application Form](#)
- > [Apply for an Innovation Fund Grant](#)
- > [Forms and Publications](#)
- > [State Apprenticeship and Training Fund](#)
- > [Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council](#)
- > [Regulations](#)
- > [Annual Report](#)

Be An Apprentice
Apprentice Success Stories

Hire An Apprentice
Employer Success Stories

Step 6: Apply for and Launch Adult MATP

The MATP for adults requires 2000 OJT hours and related instruction. Businesses have the flexibility to provide a scalable wage. Ms. Runkles works directly with businesses for adult programs for reporting. There is not a public schools Coordinator position required for reporting

because these apprentices are no longer in high school. DLLR serves are the primary contact in lieu of a Public Schools Coordinator. LUMA recommends that the development of an adult program be a robust collaboration with Garrett College's Continuing Education and Workforce Division. Ms. Runkles will orient the employers through the administrative process and the related instruction requirements. LUMA recommends the Youth MATP be established before applying for a related adult program so that activities initially stay focused on youth opportunities, consistent with the objectives of this Strategic Plan.

Opportunity Youth Champions. A crucial aspect of this work moving forward is the establishment of individuals who will champion this work. To ensure the community engagement is on-going and that there is a maintenance of effort after this report is submitted, there needs to be individuals who will serve as Opportunity Youth Champions. LUMA recommends that key stakeholders involved in this project be awarded Certificates of Service. The certificates will thank stakeholders for their commitment to Opportunity Youth but also serve as an invitation for continued engagement. LUMA recommends that these individuals be engaged in further planning and implementation of key strategies recommended, ensuring community input, buy-in, and real-time learning of supportive strategies, such as the MATP. The Champions can then serve as the medium to communicate back out to the community. Based on related planning as a function of LUMA's Strategic Plan, Champions could be assigned to different elements based on their natural relationships and community service and engagement. Utilizing the Apprenticeship Work Group to additionally serve as apprenticeship related Champions is an effective method of continued Opportunity Youth program advocacy.

Addressing Child Maltreatment. The indicator from the Assessment Report with the largest difference between the county and state/national rate was the child maltreatment rate. For Garrett County, this indicator was 3.5 times greater than the state's rate, and 2.5 times greater than the national rate. A current program that exists in the county addressing this issue is the Early Care Healthy Families voluntary home visitation program. The goal of this program is to

Currently, all the families reached by the Healthy Families program meet one of the Governor's Office for Children's Strategic Goal Populations because the GOC is the major source of funding for the program.

increase access to care for pregnant women and new mothers, but this at-home intervention has also been shown to reduce child maltreatment rates. Registered nurses and trained paraprofessionals visit low-income, at-risk mothers for an hour every week, or every other week, and give them the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy. These services can

continue until the child reaches 5 years old, or until they transfer into a new program. The program receives referrals from doctors' offices, hospitals, and WIC or other programs, and then an assessment work does further screening for Governor's Office for Children eligibility criteria. This is an accredited program according to the Healthy Families America Best Practice Standards, and last year they served 106 families. The county's Healthy Families program received the 2019 Maryland Department of Health Exceptional Team Performance Award because of the action plan that was developed and implemented in 2018 and is continuing to FY20.²⁵ The staff in this program are highly motivated to improve care access for the community and have the knowhow and determination to achieve these goals.

Currently, all the families reached by the program meet one of the Governor's Office for Children's Strategic Goal Populations because the GOC is the major source of funding for the program. The Maryland State Department of Education also provides funds, along with some county and SNAP E&T matching. Another source of funds is through a Home Visit Expansion initiative through a 1115 Medicaid Waiver. The county is matching for the funds billed to Medicaid and 14 families are served through this Waiver. Additionally, the program director is still in the screening process for a SAMSHA grant that can support a new Healthy Families model - Healthy Families Accelerated. We recommend that this program be expanded as much as possible through the county because they had to turn families away for the first-time last month. While these families were referred to other services, Healthy Families does not promote a waiting list, so when they are at capacity, they have no flexibility. The caseload limits of 12-20 families per case manager are set by the Best Practice Standards, so expansion would require additional staff hired to be case managers for families. The program director is confident that there are additional families that could be served through this program if additional funding sources allowed them to serve at-risk populations that do not meet technical definitions of Strategic Goal populations. The program already has assessment workers screening eligibility for participants, but currently they have to meet a certain "score" based on in-depth conversations over 10 areas of assessment, so they need a funding source for lower "scoring" clients. These assessment areas include childhood history, lifestyles, mental health, substance use history, coping mechanisms, safe living environment, discipline plans, bonding, and more. To serve these populations, additional funding is needed to come in that is not limited to families that meet the strict eligibility definitions.

The Healthy Families program is very similar to another evidence-based program "Nurse-Family Partnership," which is a home nurse visitation program for first-time low-income mothers, occurring every other week and lasting between 60-90 minutes.²⁶ This model does not need to be developed in Garrett County since the current Early Care Healthy Families program is an

already accredited, well-established program through the county, but it can still provide examples of possible funding strategies in Garrett County because of the immense similarities between programs. For example, NFP can be partially funded through a Medicaid funding stream aimed at promoting healthy development of young children, which should be applicable for Healthy Families as well.²⁶ This funding source is Medicaid, Title V, IDEA Part C, and Title IV-B Child Welfare Services. Another funding recommendation is foundation grants and public-private partnerships that have previously funded NFP programs.²⁶ These include: March of Dimes, United Way, The Duke Endowment, Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundations, Baptist Health Fund, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Robin Hood Foundation.²⁶ Further formula funds that could be used is Child Care Development Block Grants or the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Grants established by the ACA. Another federal funding source is a HRSA grant that is awarded annually called the Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program (HTPCP).²⁷ This grant is awarded to many Maryland counties, but Garrett County has not received funds from this source, and the county has also not received funds from the Maternal, Infant, and Early Child Care Development Block Grant.²⁷ Lastly, there are two initiatives being supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that addresses substance use during pregnancy and early childhood. The [Integrated Care for Kids Model](#) aims to support models that conduct early identification and treatment for children with health-related social needs through care coordination and case management to reduce avoidable inpatient stays and out of home placement.²⁸ The other initiative is the [Maternal Opioid Misuse \(MOM\) Model](#) which aims to improve quality and reduce costs of care for pregnant and postpartum women and their infants with opioid use disorder (OUD).²⁹ It addresses the fragmentation in care for Medicaid beneficiaries in these circumstances through a health delivery system transformation.²⁹ Both of these initiatives are currently closed to funding applications, but will open again next year and can serve as examples of funding programs that are being created to address specific issues that are being dealt with in Garrett County.

Addressing Generational Poverty. Understanding that generational poverty was brought up numerous times throughout qualitative interviews, and high poverty rates were seen throughout the county, some intervention needs to be discussed addressing this growing concern. Our recommendation is the same as was recommended for addressing child maltreatment rates: enhancing the Early Care Healthy Families program throughout the county. The success of this program as it exists currently was explained in the

Enhancing Health Families to cover holistic service needs for a wider range of families can only enhance the overall health and economic prosperity of the county.

last section, and LUMA's recommendation is to strengthen an existing program in lieu of recommending entirely new ones. Enhancing this program to cover holistic service needs for a wider range of families can only enhance the overall health and economic prosperity of the county. Additionally, early childhood development can have a large influence over an individual's lifetime achievement trajectory. While most negative early childhood developments (i.e. low kindergarten readiness) can be alleviated later in life with other interventions (improving third grade reading/math outcomes), it is better for the community's overall health and wellness to prevent the low kindergarten readiness. We commend the work and service that this program has already provided to community members for over twenty years and are confident that this framework is integral moving forward. Expansions such as widening the eligibility requirements through new funding streams or developing a survey to continually receive feedback on additional needs from those being served, can help promote the growth of this program in ways vetted by the community, for the community.

GTS Improvements. It was continually brought up in key informant interviews and Opportunity Youth interviews that transportation was a substantial barrier for engaging youth across the county. The current Garrett Transit Service runs from 7 AM to 6 PM, Monday through Friday, so any individual who works during the evening/weekends is unable to rely solely on public transit.³⁰ While the Local Management Board does not have control over the GTS hours of operation, there is currently a Garrett Transit Development plan occurring this summer, which is required every 5-6 years, so there is an opportunity now to have community voices heard. While improvements were suggested during the community forum, and outlined below, the most critical improvements the LMB needs to advocate for are an extension of hours into the evening, and the inclusion of weekend hours. The community members that rely on public transit for their method of transportation often do not have the ability to structure their hours solely 9-5, Monday through

“Sharing the routes that people have on a recurring basis would allow for other residents to join an already established route.... combining what might have been two separate shuttle trips into one efficient trip” says Community Member

Friday, but the service is designed for that exact schedule. An additional ride-matching software is discussed below and could be an alternative to the GTS if the service schedule remains unchanged, but this will involve convincing community members on the validity of an entirely new service, rather than

showing them an improvement to an existing one.

During the community forum discussions, Garrett County residents expressed concern with the transit service and some suggested improvements viable for the service. The major recommendation from residents was sharing route information to maximize transit usage trips.

The Garrett Transit Development plan showed that 43% of riders surveyed used the service for work, 73% used the service at least 2 times a week, and 45% had been using the service for over 5 years.³⁰ This shows the dependency that some residents have on this service, so sharing the routes that people have on a recurring basis would allow for other residents to join an already established route, in turn combining what might have been two separate shuttle trips into one efficient trip.³⁰ Additionally, acquiring software to better reduce travel for multiple pick-ups can help once the service starts streamlining trips through shared information. The final suggestion was around a possible subsidized worker identification that could be used for workers in Garrett County getting to and from work. The local government could subsidize the GTS fee for workers who are Garrett County citizens working within the county. Then, local businesses could employ more Garrett County citizens who are not burdened by transportation, and the government will get an increased stream of tax revenue for more citizens employed within the county.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Software. In lieu of being able to expand the GTS throughout the county, there are alternative TDM Software's that could be used by residents to increase ride sharing across Garrett County. There are numerous online ride-sharing services that promote the use of car-pooling through communities. One example of this is carpoolworld.com.³¹ This is a free service where individuals can report their daily commutes as either a driver or a passenger and share their trip to engage other drivers.³¹ It works by having a community member insert their trip origin and destination, then it verifies their email address, and you can search for your best rideshare matches.³¹ Then you can contact the traveler(s) that best

match what you need or are offering, and then work out your own cost-sharing agreement for the ride. When looking for rides, it does not share the exact address for trip origin and destination to protect user's privacy. It will show individuals looking for trips, the city origin and city destination, so community members do not have to be worried about entering their home address as their trip origin because other users

Promoting a single TDM software throughout the county can ensure that residents are not offering rides through numerous ride-sharing programs, and while this does not alleviate problems like having low amounts of Lyft/Uber drivers in the area, it can provide an alternative for individuals who need rides for work outside of the regular GTS schedule.

will not see that specific piece of information. When individuals put in a request, or list their trip as available for picking someone up, they can specify if they are a smoker, what their gender is, what the frequency of the schedule is, and if they are interested in carpooling, sharing a taxi, bicycling, telecommuting, or looking for mass transit. For the needs of Garrett County, it makes most sense to primarily think of this service for car- and vanpooling. Additionally, the cost sharing can be

decided between splitting the cost, taking turns, sharing coffee or food, or sharing music. This system keeps carpoolworld.com free because they do not, and cannot, take a percentage of the cost-agreement and they do not charge fees to any users. Promoting a single TDM software throughout the county can ensure that residents are not offering rides through numerous ride-sharing programs, and while this does not alleviate problems like having low amounts of Lyft/Uber drivers in the area, it can provide an alternative for individuals who need rides for work outside of the regular GTS schedule. The problem with this service is that it is only available online, not through a smart phone application, and requires a heavy amount of community buy-in to make it a usable community service. Any TDM software that is recommended will have to overcome the barrier for community buy-in.

A way to increase community buy-in for a program like this, while the regular GTS is operating within the county, is to promote this for rides that commonly occur outside of Garrett County. The Western Maryland Regional Coordinated Transportation Plan aims to promote public transit between Allegany, Washington, and Frederick counties, and the Garrett County Transit Development Plan revealed a need for services from Oakland to Cumberland or Morgantown.³⁰ The promotion of one ride-sharing software in coordination with various areas could mean workers from all of these communities lessen the cost of commuting to work through shared resources. A service similar to this exists in Pennsylvania, connecting Adams, Berks, Carbon, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Monroe, Perry, Pike, Schuylkill, and York counties.³² This program is run by regional chambers, transit agencies, and county planning organizations to promote employers and employees to use this ride-sharing service, which is done through Agile Mile and funded by federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds.³² It rewards residents who record a walk, bike, telecommute, car/vanpool, bus, or rail trip to get to work through the personalized community app "Commute PA."³² While this multi-county partnership has many counties that are less rural than Garrett County, there are two counties over 70% rural (one being more rural than Garrett County), and they are balanced by counties near 40% and 20% rural.³³ The partnership suggested for Garrett County has only one primarily rural county: Garrett County. Allegany, Washington, Frederick, Cumberland (Pennsylvania), and Monongalia (West Virginia, where Morgantown is located), are all in the range of 21-29% rural, meaning there would be a balance of commuter density similar to the balance seen in the Commute PA carpool system.³³ There is a website connected to this service, and it continually updates with the amount of rides shared through the phone application, along with a cost-saving and emission reduction estimate to show how the entire community is using the services. Residents can post their commutes or map out their trip and be told whether other riders live within 2 miles of their beginning and ending

locations to work out ride-sharing. A program like this could justify contracting with Agile Mile to provide these services because federal funds can be requested for assistance, the cost will be split up through multiple local governments, and the cost savings for county residents will likely be spent on other costs of living within the community.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs). SBHCs fill a critical role in health care systems by providing acute and ongoing physical, mental, and oral health services to youth in need.³⁴ They are staffed by a range of health care providers, such as pediatricians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, mental health providers, and/or many other types of providers.³⁴ The 2018-2019 report on these services, issued from Harbage Consulting to the Maryland Department of Health's Community Resource Commission and the Governor's Council on Advancement for School-Based Health Centers, indicated that only 12 of the 24 Maryland jurisdictions had SBHCs, and Garrett County is one of the jurisdictions without these services.³⁴ The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) oversees the administration of the SBHC program, including reviewing and approving new/ongoing SBHC applications, conducting site reviews, providing technical assistance, and providing state grant funding to support a portion of SBHCs overall budget. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) provides clinical and subject matter expertise on applications, approves SBHCs for the purpose of receiving Medicaid reimbursement, and receives health care encounter data for Medicaid enrollees.³⁴ All SBHCs must have a sponsoring agency, and these sponsors can be Local Health Departments, Federally Qualified Health Centers, or a General Clinic. Across the state, SBHC funding comes from MSDE contributions, Medicaid reimbursements, commercial plan reimbursement, county government, federal grants, private, and in-kind donations. The Report from the Harbage Consulting performed a cost saving analysis for school-based healthcare services.³⁴ This analysis found that the annual benefit of each SBHC ranges from \$15,028 - \$912,878.³⁴ They also lead to a positive net savings to Medicaid ranging from \$30 to \$969 per visit, and \$46 to \$1,166 per user.³⁴ The variation in the large ranges is attributed to different benefit components and assumptions about emergency department visits.

These all come together in SBHCs to improve healthcare access by bringing services to where youth are, enabling parents to stay at work, identifying health issues early, decreasing the amount of class time missed, and reducing emergency department visits by managing chronic conditions.³⁴ Additionally, SBHCs have been found to reduce illegal substance use, alcohol

SBHC services come with overall cost savings due to averted emergency department use, support for children with asthma, and increased contraceptive use, leading to a return on investment of \$3.18 for every \$1 invested in SBHCs.

consumption, and increase contraceptive use and prenatal care for females. These positive impacts have long-term effects, with SBHC clients reporting significantly better health outcomes and behaviors after 3 years compared to non-SBHC clients.³⁴ All of these benefits come with overall cost savings due to averted emergency department use, support for children with asthma, and increased contraceptive use, leading to a return on investment of \$3.18 for every \$1 invested in SBHCs.³⁴ While SBHCs are primarily set up

through elementary schools before expanding to older youth, this implementation would still lead to better outcomes for Opportunity Youth in the future. In addition to the already described benefits at the beginning of this paragraph, the child maltreatment rate could be reduced by getting children in front of a care provider earlier, and it would take the stress away from parents who are significantly burdened when they must leave work early and keep their child home sick.

The largest barrier to establishing a SBHC in many areas of Maryland is the infrastructure required to set up a clinic within an already crowded school. This would undoubtedly also be a concern for schools in Garrett County, but through State funds, reimbursable services, and oversight, this is a barrier that can be overcome. The Sponsoring Agency partnership enables billing infrastructure, which is a critical component of successful SBHCs. Agreements with Medicaid and private insurers also enable data sharing. The SBHC does not serve as a child's primary care physician, so electronic medical record sharing is critical to ensuring continuity of care. Additionally, SBHC connection to Chesapeake Regional Information System for Patients (CRISP, the Maryland State Health Information Exchange) can allow SBHCs to receive Emergency Department encounter notifications for acute services, allowing the SBHC to prompt further chronic care maintenance on the school premises. While no SBHCs in Maryland currently have the CRISP connectivity function established, there are substantial efforts underway at the State level to enable this. Moreover, Garrett County is uniquely positioned to coordinate care with hospitals because there is one hospital in Garrett County. This type of investment would give back multiple times over the investment put in, and could increase the counties ranking on categories of indicators compared at the state-level (SHIP) for Healthy Living, Healthy Communities, Access to Health Care, and Quality Preventative Care. LUMA recommends LMB leadership participate in a Maryland State Department of Education School-Based Health Center Administrator meeting to provide more insight into the scope of services offered. The Administrator meetings are held monthly and are a forum whereby local leadership could directly engage with MSDE leadership;

creating a natural starting point for further discussions and planning. LUMA also recommends local leadership attend a quarterly meeting of the Council on Advancement of School-Based Health Centers. These are public meetings that convene in Annapolis and Columbia, Maryland. Teleconference options are provided. Attendance at one of the Council meetings can serve as a conduit to engagement of school health champions across the State of Maryland. As the Garrett County Local Health Department is already engaged in planning for SBHC, LUMA recommends these efforts be bolstered through LUMA's top-line recommendation, as a mechanism to improve outcomes for Opportunity Youth.

In the short term for funding from the state, new legislation passed during 2019's legislative session, Senate Bill 1030 The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, can aid Garrett County in this regard.³⁵ In both fiscal year 2020 and 2021, each local school system will be provided with \$83,333 to fund a mental health services coordinator that the school system appoints.³⁵ Additionally, while this is not funding for SBHCs appropriated in the Blueprint legislation, there is a grant that county boards can apply for which increases the salaries for teachers in the community to aid the recruitment of high-quality teachers. The bill allocates to Garrett County, in addition to the over \$83,000 a year for the mental health coordinator; \$170,000 for improvements to special education services; \$85,000 for transitional supplemental instructions; \$268,000 for the teacher salary incentive increase (from a grant application); up to \$498,000 a year for the concentration of poverty grant; \$536,000 for supplemental pre-kindergarten in FY2021; and \$55,000 for declining enrollment funds.³⁵ While the majority of these funds are not allocated for school-based health centers, the maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements establish that each county government must provide on a per pupil basis at least as much funding from the local school board as was provided in the previous fiscal year. This means that the county could use the grants and special funds provided by this bill for the required improvements, and the county dollars that used to cover those services/improvements could be focused on the infrastructure for a SBHC. This would lead to a holistic growth of the school system, realizing that school improvements can only be so impactful if students are not living health-promoting lives.

Conclusion

The existing opportunistic economic landscape in Maryland provides a catalyst for activating strategic innovation and further investment to support improved Opportunity Youth outcomes. The key findings from the Assessment Report identified the following indicators in Garrett County contributing to youth disconnection: child maltreatment, poverty, lack of

educational attainment, poor access to healthcare, and health risks associated youth behaviors, including tobacco and alcohol use, and methamphetamine, heroin, and cocaine use. Transportation, generational poverty, and substance use were also barriers commonly identified for youth disconnection during qualitative interviews. The key indicators identified were used to recommend tailored interventions and strategies for Garrett County to address youth disconnection. The most substantial progress was made in establishing funds and next steps forward for developing an apprenticeship program to aid youth and adults throughout the county. Past this, the Plan outlines numerous strategic and top-line recommendations to broaden already existing programs addressing indicators of youth disconnection, and where new programs are proposed, additional funding is described. Additionally, tools are included in this Plan to aid the Local Management Board in further engagement and resource identification, and also provide local businesses with evidence-based practices to ensure sustainable employment of Opportunity Youth. While this Strategic Plan offers numerous solutions for the indicators that were highlighted in the Assessment Report, it is the determination of the Local Management Board on what initiatives to pursue. Further, the establishment of new programs or tools will not guarantee successful youth reconnection in Garrett County. Actualizing the opportunities that Opportunity Youth have to offer will require a concerted effort across multiple stakeholders that are focused on long-term success for the youth they serve and programs that support them.

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Appendix A: Model and Tools

Model Programs. There are model programs within the state of Maryland that can offer guidance to Garrett County on effective ways to engage youth in these rural communities. While Baltimore and close surrounding areas also have extensive youth reconnection services they are offering and developing, these are not included in the report because of the extreme difference in the settings in which they are implemented. Baltimore-based solutions are decided knowing that there is an intense concentration of youth in very urban areas, and while these youth are definitionally identical to Garrett County Opportunity Youth in many ways, the solutions to these problems will look vastly different in these different communities. LUMA would like to highlight a model program developed in Washington County. Washington County has a 28% rate of youth disconnection. In response to this urgent problem, the Western Maryland Consortium developed a Youth Reconnection Center in Hagerstown for Washington County residents. The Youth Reconnection Center launched on July 8, 2019. The Reconnection Center is receiving primarily Workforce Innovation and Opportunity (WIOA) funds, including Title I funds that support obtainment of GEDs. Unlike other services in the county, there is no eligibility barriers such as requiring youth to be in Medicaid or other social programs to be qualified for the center's services. The overall vision for these Centers is to provide Opportunity Youth a place to feel comfortable, talk, learn, and develop opportunities. Self-esteem building is a critical component in addition to highly engaged care management.

Additionally, Hagerstown developed a Youth Advisory Council to ensure systematic feedback from youth within the community. This was established to give youth the opportunity to provide recommendations and feedback on community policies and programs affecting their future. These youth work with the City's Mayor and the City's Council to discuss issues facing youth in Hagerstown and help develop strategies to address these issues. Students are eligible to participate on the Council once they enter high school, and there are 3 non-voting members that are between ages 18-21. Youth sign up for a two-year term and applications can be mailed in or completed online. There is a scoring rubric that is used to review applications, and this is published online along with the application so that there is transparency about the appointment process. This ensures that youth know exactly what is being looked for while submitting their application and can be more confident about the quality of their submission. This model could be reproduced within Garrett County, even without the establishment of a youth reconnection center. It is a low-cost engagement strategy to keep youth participating in county-wide youth initiatives.

Business Engagement Tools. This business engagement tool is being recommended in response to the continually discussed barrier of getting businesses on-board with youth reconnection efforts. This is an understandable concern from businesses who struggle with providing services and training to Opportunity Youth who may lack soft skills or transfer to another company for a higher salary after getting trained. This is compounded by the fact that there is an older, more skilled, workforce that is less of a risk to employ. A way to help address this problem within the community is to preemptively determine the level of engagement employers are prepared to give and meeting businesses where they are. Opportunity Nation created a Youth Business Toolkit that provides a guide for businesses on how to successfully engage with Opportunity Youth based on the company's needs and available resources.⁶ This tool breaks down youth needs into three different categories: soft skills, work ready skills development, and learn and earn programs.⁶ Soft skills development is for youth who need to gain additional life skills and adult mentoring, in addition to skills around work promptness and accountability. Work ready skills development is the development of job training skills and classes that teach what skills are needed to keep and advance in a certain field. Lastly, learn and earn programs are full-time training with pay, apprenticeships, or other programs that allow youth to be engaged in school and the workforce.

To engage youth at these different levels, a business needs to know what type of engagement they are prepared to give. The report lays out four key stages to developing a training or employment program for Opportunity Youth: assess/select, scope, plan/pilot, and refine/grow.⁶ In 'assess and select' stage, a business needs to assess the company's resources, culture, and readiness to engage with youth to ask: what does my company have to offer? That is when they choose which level of engagement they are prepared to provide youth. Next, the scope asks: what are my goals and program parameters? This allows businesses to understand how to apply company resources successfully and know the end goal that is being worked towards. Then, to plan and pilot, the company must ask: what are the key steps to launch a pilot program? This involves building a plan and creating goal metrics to measure incremental success, and this allows feedback to be received to understand the impact and potential business value this program provides. Lastly, to refine and grow, a business must ask: how will the program continue to develop? This is based on the feedback received from the pilot, and every year following, and ensures the program is being built for the long term.

This is a lot of work for a business to do, so the report includes assessment tools to help businesses do this successfully. These tools are included as a separate PDF file due to its length. It includes an assessment tool with a list of questions where businesses rank their readiness on a scale of 1-5, and based on the final score they receive, this will tell them what level of engagement they are prepared to provide youth.⁶ From this, there is a different guide for going through scoping, planning/piloting, and refining/growing for each of the different engagement levels (soft skills, work readiness, or learn and earn).⁶ Lastly, there are additional resources provided for businesses including a value calculator for offering basic skills training, a portal for companies to determine their average turnover cost per employee, and various return on investment case studies.⁶ Using these tools, businesses can be confident that they are providing youth in Garrett County with the level of engagement they are prepared to handle, and are setting themselves up for long-term success, rather than short term risks. This can help alleviate the hesitation that some businesses feel about engaging Opportunity Youth and may lead to a better use of resources for these businesses.

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Community Solutions Toolkit. Another tool that is included in this Strategic Plan is the Needle-Moving Community Collaborations Toolbox.⁷ This toolbox is the result of an extensive review of nearly 100 community-based collaborations and conversations with more than 50 experts and cross-sector leaders that demonstrated “needle-moving” (+10%) change on a community-wide metric (e.g., high school intervention that reduced suspension rates by over 10%).⁷ This toolbox is geared towards local officials, leaders and staff of community organizations, intermediaries shaping and supporting collaboratives, and/or partner organizations participating in collaboratives. The 4 primary tools in this toolbox are a guidance by life cycle stage of collaboratives, an assessment tool, examples on the four critical success factors (capacity, structure, data, and funding), and continual community participation.⁷ The first section, life cycle stages of collaboratives, lays out the critical steps that are taken (developing the idea, planning, aligning resources, reflecting and adapting, and deciding next steps) which are all given expected durations of time, key players to engage with, and key activities to be completed during each step. It continues to provide key questions and a checklist of tasks for each step. It provides resources on potential roadblocks that may arise during this process. This checklist and roadblock map are included as a separate PDF and can be utilized by the Local Management Board or community organization when thinking about long-term collaboratives to engage Opportunity Youth.⁷

After this step-by-step guide for the life cycle of collaborations, there is a diagnostic tool that can help the group fully understand the requirements and implications of forming a collaborative before the process starts.⁷ This diagnostic tool asks questions about how ready the community is for this collaborative work, if core principles are present for a successful collaboration, how aligned and organized the community is, and whether the capacity and resources are in place for success. These totals can then be combined in a final overall assessment of readiness. There is a large resource section at the end of the diagnostic tool that can be used for low readiness areas. This provides examples of community-based collaboratives experiencing similar barriers and how they overcame them to achieve a needle-moving collaboration. Lastly, before getting into the overall case studies that informed this work, examples are given around the 4 core areas all community-based collaboratives had to balance: capacity, structure, data, and funding. Along with the examples provided, there is a detailed list of resources for ways communities tackled each one of these issues, so when organizations in Garrett County can sit down and determine which of these issues are the largest barrier for more integrated community solutions, there are multiple resources available to show how those barriers can be removed. This tool can be used for issues much broader than reconnecting Opportunity Youth because of the nuanced breakdown of engagement that it details. Conversely, this tool can be used for each smaller initiative taken under the umbrella or reconnecting youth, such as school-based program interventions or the development of a youth reconnection center, so this tool can be an asset for the Local Management Board in various efforts moving forward.

Evidence-Based Program Tools. Because the needs of the county will be fluid over time

Because the needs of the county will be fluid over time – beginning to solve one issue will bring another one to light – there is a continual need to stay up-to-date on evidenced-based programs to address arising issues.

- beginning to solve one issue will bring another one to light - there is a continual need to stay up-to-date on evidence-based programs to address arising issues. There are resources online for evidence-based programs, with nuanced search tools to address the specific issues that are arising in the county. The two that we recommend are evidencebasedprograms.org and blueprintsprograms.org.^{8,9} When looking at the programs that are recommended per topic, there is much overlap in the recommendations between the two sites, but they offer slightly different information that is useful for the county. For evidencebasedprograms.org, the program categories

are: prenatal/early childhood, K-12 education, post-secondary education, unplanned pregnancy prevention, crime/violence prevention, housing/homelessness, employment and welfare, substance abuse prevention/treatment, chronic disease prevention, healthcare financing/delivery,

and international development.⁹ Not all of these are pertinent to Garrett County, and some may become pertinent over time, but this tool allows for a search to be focused on specific desired outcomes based on the county's needs. It ranks the programs by Tier, either Top Tier, Near Top Tier, or Suggestive Tier, based on the quality and quantity of studies that validate the findings.⁹ When you choose a certain program, it offers a PDF with a full evidence summary, detailing each study on the program, breaking down the results, and outlining the final costs and cost benefits. They also have a highlight summary if you do not want to go to the full evidence summary, which includes a program cost for each participant over the program duration.

Another website, blueprintsprograms.org, offers a slightly more nuanced search tool and description for the programs it recommends. Not only does it offer a more detailed program outcome search, it also offers search options based on the target population, program specifics, and specific risk/protective factors. The program outcomes are broad: problem behavior, education, emotional well-being, physical health, and positive relationships, but each of these outcomes have between 4 and 20 specifications that can be made within that outcome.⁸ For example, problem behaviors include interventions for illicit drug use, alcohol use, and high risk sexual behaviors, among other outcomes.⁸ Additionally, programs can be specified on age, gender, or race (target population), and by program type, the setting, or the continuum of intervention (program specifics).⁸ Lastly, the programs can be searched for by the specific risk factors it prevents, or protective factors that it promotes at the individual, peer, family, school, or community level.⁸ Examples of risk factors at the individual level are: anti-social/aggressive behavior, favorable attitudes towards drug use, or youth unemployment; and protective factors are: coping skills, exercise, and prosocial behavior. These factors go all the way up to the community level, with risk factors including: community disorganization, perceived availability of drugs or guns, or transitions/mobility levels; and protective factors being: social cohesion or opportunities for prosocial involvement. This means that programs can be searched for based on the exact risk factors that the community is interested in addressing. Past this, once you select a program, there are 4 categories of information: a quick fact sheet, program costs, funding strategies, and an evaluation abstract that details the indicators the program can be searched by.⁸ The program costs are often very detailed, including the costs for: the start-up, the curriculum/material specifics, licensing, implementation, ongoing training/technical assistance, and even lays out a "year one cost example" with the total year cost and breakdown of cost per service. After laying out these costs, it outlines the funding strategies that are used by programs currently, breaking it down by state/local funds, how to maximize federal funds, and foundation grants that often support that certain program or ones similar. This tool can be extremely beneficial

moving forward for Garrett County because it offers holistic implementation information on numerous different social programs.

Grant Finder Tools. In the literature reviews over best practices for reconnecting Opportunity Youth, funding was continually brought up as a barrier for community-based organizations. That concern was also brought up with LUMA because this problem similarly influences the available program decisions for Garrett County. For long-term sustainability and development, we are including two youth-focused grant searching tools, from Youth.gov and the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration.^{10,11} The youth.gov grant finding tool utilizes grants.gov, which provides information on more than 1,000 grant opportunities through 26 different federal agencies. This tool has been customized to find open grant announcements that are for programs which serve youth and their families.¹⁰ They have additional screening options that allow you to look for keywords, agencies, topics, or eligible applicants.¹⁰ The eligible applicant breakdown includes city or townships, counties, non-higher education non-profits, higher education non-profits, small businesses, state governments, and many others, so this tool can be used by more than the Local Management Board.¹⁰ This can allow for an extremely tailored search when organizations within Garrett County are interested in funding for specific initiatives, or conversely, initiatives can be brainstormed that fit with new grant announcements.

The other grant-searching tool that is included in this Report is the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration postings.¹¹ These grants are linked to grants.gov as well, and while they are not all youth focused, they all fund work initiatives that could be beneficial to the Local Management Board. Some of the grants posted during the writing of this Strategic Plan include a National Dislocated Workers Grant for states and other eligible applicants to respond to large, unexpected layoff events, a Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities Grant for applicants within the Appalachian and Delta regions, YouthBuild, for pre-apprenticeship services, and a State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant.¹¹ The issues that these grants address were all discussed during stakeholder engagement for the Assessment Report, and while not all of these grants are focused on aiding Opportunity Youth, they can improve overall employment opportunities in the county, and begin to impact generational poverty in Garrett County.

Some of the grants posted during the writing of this Strategic Plan include a National Dislocated Workers Grant... a Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities Grant ... YouthBuild ... and a State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant.

Appendix B: Opportunity Youth Interviews

Goals. The goal of Opportunity Youth Interviews was to hear from Opportunity Youth living in Garrett County about their lived experience as it relates to employment and education opportunities. Additionally, the interviews were an opportunity to hear about some of the risk factors associated with obtaining education and employment.

Recognition and Thanks. Completion of the Youth Opportunity Interviews would not have been possible without the partnership and referrals provided by the Local Management Board / Behavioral Health Authority, Garrett County Local Health Department Healthy Families Program, and the Garrett County Department of Juvenile Services. These partnerships were invaluable in organizing referrals and ensuring delivery of incentives.

Methods. Opportunity youth are defined as individual's ages 16-24 who are not engaged in school or in full time steady work. Several strategies were used to engage Opportunity Youth to partake in a phone interview to learn about their experiences with education, employment, and social and health resources. Opportunity Youth were recruited for interviews using a \$25 local business gift card incentive to either Walmart, Dairy Queen, Garrett 8 Cinemas, and/or UNO restaurant for completing the interview. Advertisement for participating in the interview were marketed through social media, MyGarrettCounty.com Opportunity Youth Action Group, key informant interviewees, The Republican local newspaper, and Garrett County Fair leaflet. Additional locations for advertising included the Local Health Department, Community Action, Garrett Regional Medical Center Emergency Department, Mountain Laurel Federally Qualified Health Center, YMCA, Garrett County Public Libraries, The Dove Center, The Judy Center, Garrett College, Department of Juvenile Services, Department of Social Services, Chamber of Commerce, and Garrett County Public Schools.

Youth were consented prior to the interview. The interview responses were collected using a survey monkey tool. Opportunity Youth interviewees were encouraged to make referrals to eligible peers. Upon completion of all the interviews in mid-August, a raffle for additional gift cards will be administered for Opportunity Youth referees. Additional strategies for youth engagement included collaboration with Engage Mountain Maryland due to the organization's generation of a youth engagement campaign last year. Further, direct engagement with employers participating in Garrett County workforce development programs was on-going to recruit Opportunity Youth. Referrals from the Local Health Department's Early Care Healthy Program were also coordinated. The consent and interview form can be found in the Appendix. Due to the low response rate, the

interview recruitment remained open through the middle of August. A total of sixteen (16) interviews were completed while the target was to complete 25 interviews.

Assumptions and Limitations. The processes guiding Opportunity Youth referral and recruitment as well as execution of the interview were designed and completed to mitigate selection bias and maximize generalizability. Given the intention behind the design and completion of the Opportunity Youth survey, it is important to note that the survey's findings should be interpreted with the following in mind:

- Most Opportunity Youth interviewed were referrals from the Healthy Families Program at the Garrett County Local Health Department. As such, the demographics of the population and some responses are in alignment with the eligibility criteria for the Healthy Families Program, such as having a child, receiving Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) benefits, or being a first-time mother. Because of this, generalizability of the conclusions from the Opportunity Youth interviews are limited and should not be generalized to all Opportunity Youth in Garrett County.
- Opportunity Youth self-selected to participate in the survey. The ability to contact Opportunity Youth was limited by accuracy of contact information and the working condition of cell phones. Because of this, there is a slight selection bias for Opportunity Youth who were available and able to be contacted.
- Finally, Opportunity Youth were mainly contacted through partnerships with local Garrett County agencies and thus are not representative of all definition and/or identities of Opportunity Youth in Garrett County.

Findings. The findings are reported in aggregate to provide the most comprehensive representation of the data. When appropriate, key elements are highlighted for consideration. The Findings are broken down into Demographics and Social Determinates of Health Analysis. Demographics describe the age and sex distribution of the population, self-defined race/ethnicity, and language. Social determinates of health analyses elaborate on housing, employment status and opportunity, education, transportation, food security, and childcare. The social determinates of health analyses additionally include mental health, substance abuse, and access to health care consideration. In general, the Opportunity Youth were between the ages of 18-24, female, and identified as white/Caucasian.

Table 1A. Demographics of Opportunity Youth Interviewed

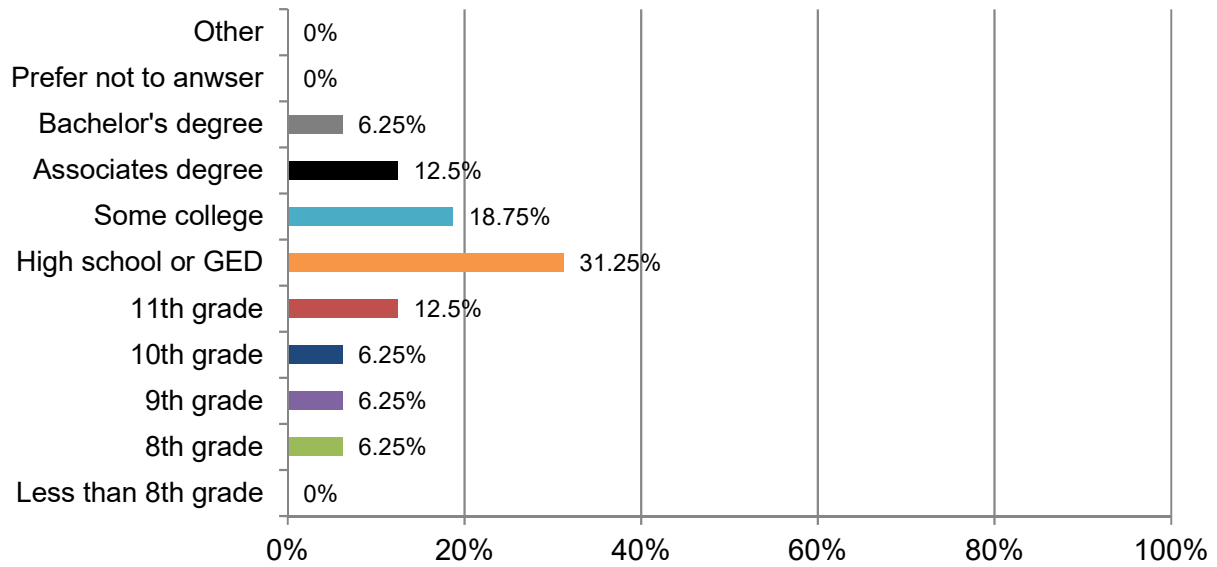
Total Number of Opportunity Youth Interviewed	16
Sex Distribution (% , #)	
Female	75% (12)
Male	25% (4)
Age Distribution (% , #)	
16-17	18.75% (3)
18-24	81.25% (13)
Race/Ethnicity Distribution (% , #)	
White/Caucasian	87.5% (14)
Asian	6.25% (1)
Prefer Not to Answer	6.25% (1)
Language (% , #)	
English As a Second Language	12.50% (2)

Social Determinates of Health Analysis

Education. Overall, 68.75% (11 responses) Opportunity Youth had a high school degree, GED, or higher education and 31.25% (5 responses) had lower than a high school degree. 31.25% (5 responses) of Opportunity Youth had attended more than one high school.

When asked to reflect on reasons that Opportunity Youth and/or their friends had problems completing high school or receiving a GED, Opportunity Youth reported that they or their friends had personal conflicts, were uninterested in the content of the education, felt the educators did not care about them, had family obligations, needed to work in order to generate income, and difficulty with the criminal justice system (3 Opportunity Youth reported involvement with the criminal justice system). The most referenced reason was not being interested or motivated by the content provided in school (5 responses). Additionally, noteworthy is that two (2) Opportunity Youth referenced having specific difficulty with the subject area of math and five (5) Opportunity Youth noted no issues with completing high school or their GED. One (1) Opportunity Youth indicated that college was a challenge due to the financial cost.

Figure 1A. Opportunity Youth Level of Education



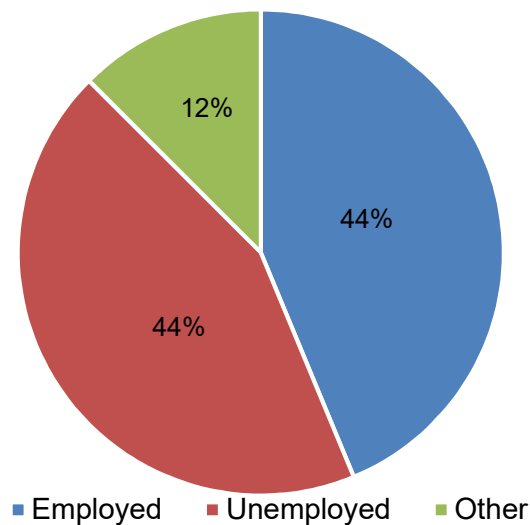
Employment. Opportunity Youth identified a variety of types of employment that they were interested in ranging from healthcare to government to construction. Unique employment interests included working as an art teacher, teaching cooking, and working in a childcare and early childhood development center. For this analysis Opportunity Youth were not limited to only selecting one area of interest.

Figure 2A. Opportunity Youth Areas of Interest Employment Type



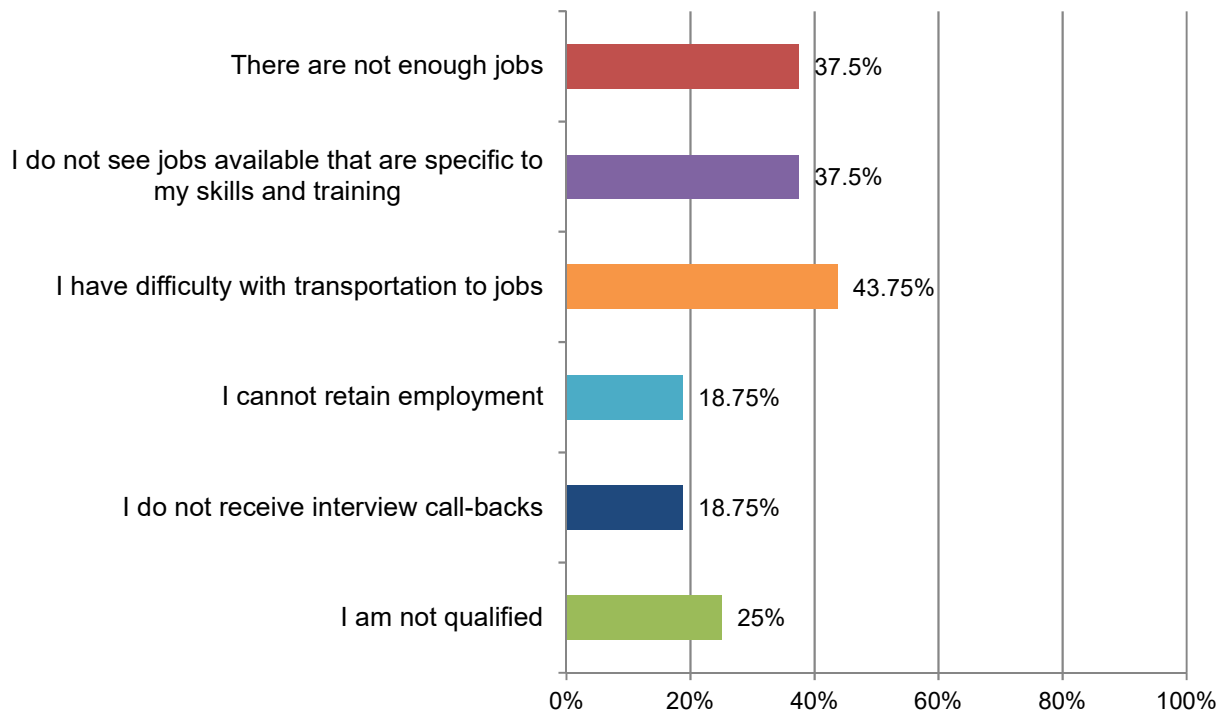
Opportunity Youth who identified as employed generally identified as seasonally employed or as employed part-time. Half (50%, 8 responses) of Opportunity Youth noted that they had been employed within the last 6 months and 62.5% (10 responses) noted being employed within the past 12 months. This suggests that Opportunity Youth on occasion can obtain employment, however, are not necessarily able to retain employment. 18.75% (3 respondents) corroborated that they have been unable to retain employment. This is perhaps due to the seasonal nature of employment, lack of qualifications for available jobs, difficulty with finding consistent transportation to jobs, not having jobs available that Opportunity Youth are qualified for, or their not being enough jobs or enough opportunities to interview due to lack of receiving a call back.

Figure 3A. Opportunity Youth Employment Status



In general, the ability to open a checking or savings account did not appear to be a barrier as 13 Opportunity Youth (81.25%) reported having a checking and/or a savings account. One Opportunity Youth noted that they would be interested in getting a second part-time job but that their current part-time job has them working slightly more than part-time and therefore it would be difficult to maintain two jobs and their other responsibilities. Of those who were unemployed, a majority were looking for work and a few were volunteering.

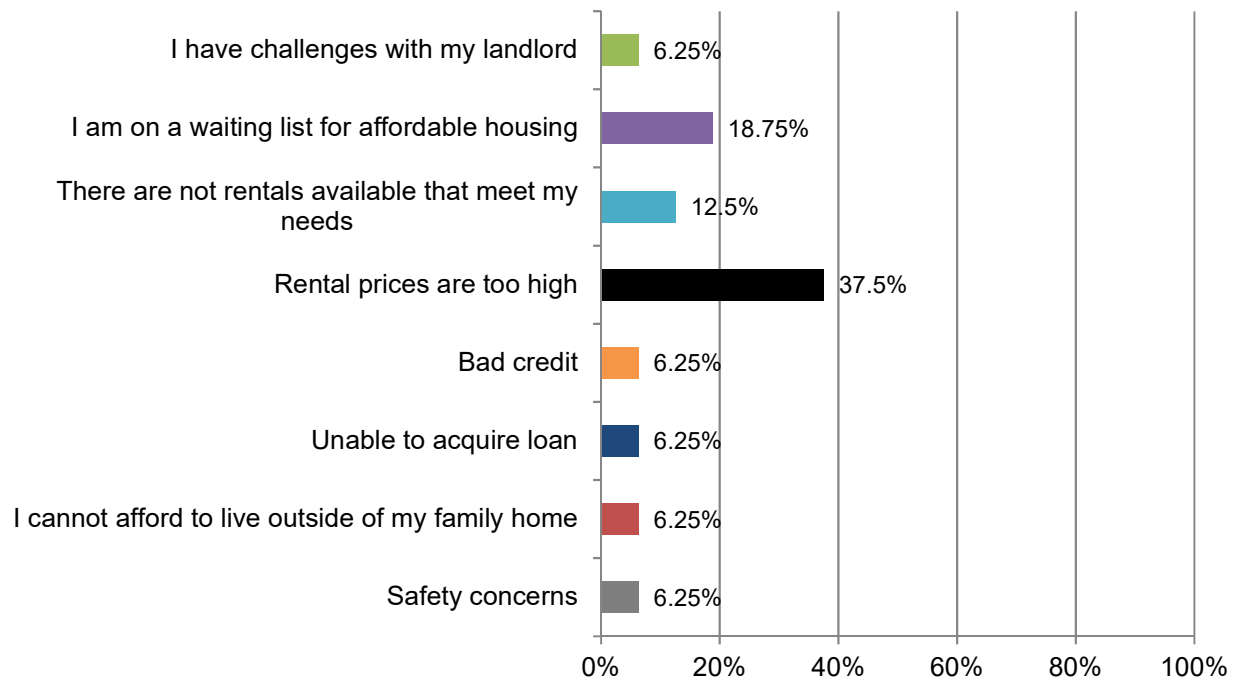
Figure 4A. Opportunity Youth Reasons for Difficulty Finding a Job



Housing. All but one Opportunity Youth identified having a permanent home; either their own home or their parents' home to stay in the previous night. The majority of the Opportunity Youth had lived in Garrett County within the last six months, only 12.5% (2 responses) of Opportunity Youth had lived outside of Garrett County. Three (18.75%) of Opportunity Youth at one time had been in either foster care, kinship care, or in a residential facility.

Four (25%) of Opportunity Youth noted no problem with finding safe and affordable housing. Among the remaining 75% (12 responses) problems finding safe and affordable housing ranged from rental prices being too high, to safety concerns with the available housing options, to housing loan discrimination due to age.

Figure 5A. Opportunity Youth Housing Issues



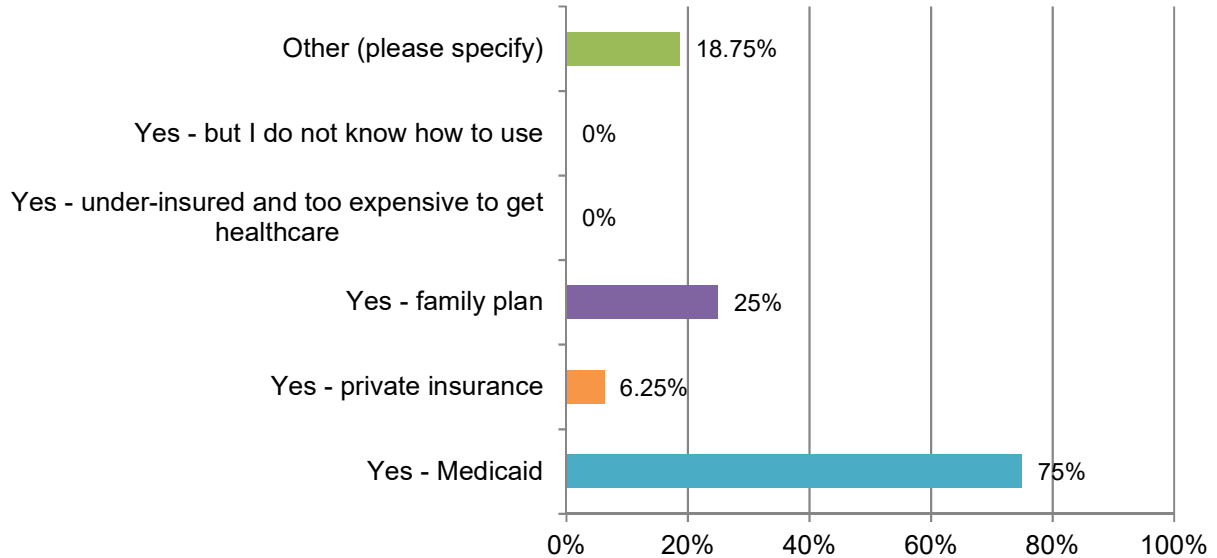
Food Security. Just over half (56.25%, 9 responses) of Opportunity Youth noted difficulty finding healthy and nutritious food, whereas 43.75% (7 responses) indicated having no problem with finding healthy and nutritious food consistently. Anecdotally, many respondents noted that receiving WIC benefits assisted greatly with their overall ability to afford healthier food options and for those with difficulty finding healthy and nutritious food the main reasons were that healthy food is more expensive (43.75%, 7 responses) and that healthy food is difficult to find in Garrett County (18.75%, 3 responses).

Transportation. Only three Opportunity Youth did not identify transportation as an issue. For the other Opportunity Youth, the majority identified an inability to get a driver's license as a challenging issue with transportation in Garrett County. Reasons for this ranged from the cost of obtaining a driver's license as well as not having a car to practice and accomplish the hours required before receiving a license. In general, the Garrett Transportation Service was thought to be difficult to use due to the limited hours and limited distance traveled via its established routes. One Opportunity Youth noted an unwillingness to take public transportation due to safety concerns. Two Opportunity Youth mentioned that having difficulty with transportation when there is weather in Garrett County.

Health Care: Primary Care & Behavioral Health. Most Opportunity Youth do receive health insurance. Medicaid was the primary carrier (75%, 12 responses) followed by family plans (25%, 4 responses). No respondents noted not having insurance. Given that most Opportunity

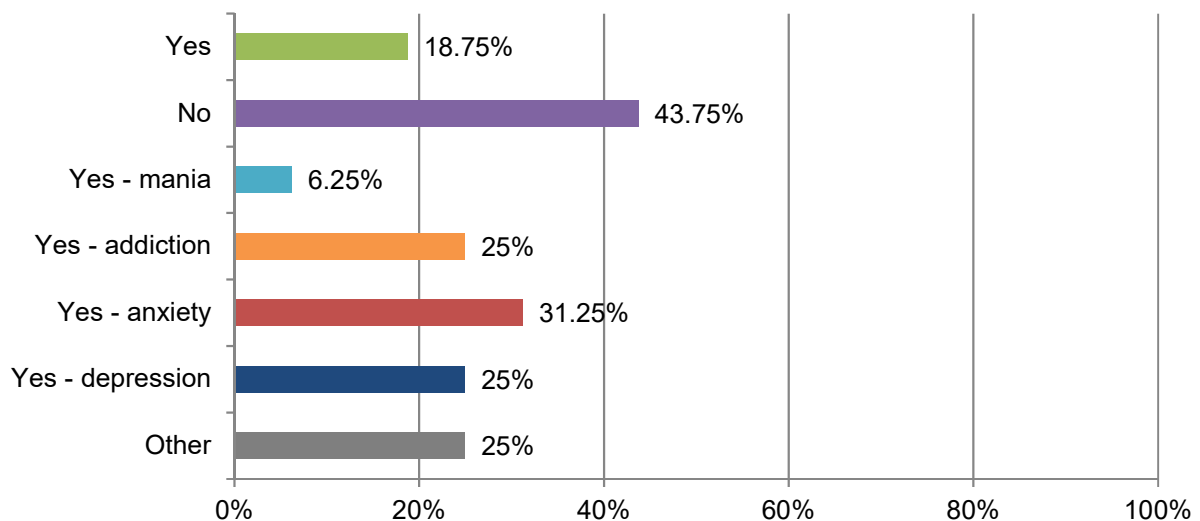
Youth had insurance, it is encouraging that 75% (12 responses) had a primary care provider. 25% (4 responses) did not report having a primary care provider.

Figure 6A. Opportunity Youth Health Insurance Status



When seeking mental health services, the majority noted not requiring such services. For those requiring services, the majority noted depression and anxiety as the reason. One Opportunity Youth identified seeking and acquiring mental health services through their church. The 'other' category identified additional diagnoses such as schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder. Additionally, one individual identified having sought services and not being able to obtain them.

Figure 7A. Seeking Mental Health Services among Opportunity Youth



Further inquiry into Opportunity Youth and their friends and family's experiences with drug and substance use and/or abuse identified that a little under half (43.75%, 7 responses) did not themselves nor did they know anyone who had used or abused drugs and/or substances. For those who had, it was noted that addiction affects whole families and not just individuals. Stigma and shame surrounding use of drugs and/or substances as well as peer pressure were noted by 4 Opportunity Youth (26.67%) and a lack of behavioral health services was noted by the same amount of Opportunity Youth (26.67%, 4 responses).

Other Risk Factors: Childcare. Given the unique demographics of the Opportunity Youth responding to the survey, 14 Opportunity Youth (87.50%) had a child. When examining the availability and accessibility of childcare 25% (4 responses) noted not being able to afford childcare, while the majority noted issues regarding negotiation of childcare with family members and coordination of finding childcare when needing to look for and/or retain a job or not being able to find an available spot at a daycare. Four Opportunity Youth (25%) noted not having an issue with childcare.

Insights. While the social determinates of health and demographic analyses provide insights into some of the common risk and protective factors associated with Opportunity Youth, asking Opportunity Youth about their predominate barrier to becoming a self-sufficient participant in the Garrett County community offers insight into Opportunity Youth's most pressing and preoccupying concerns. These are not presented in order of priority. Opportunity Youth responded with the following insights:

- Difficulty with stigma and shame in the community due to becoming pregnant at age 16
- Age discrimination when trying to find jobs, rent a home, get a home loan, etc.
- Finding employment that pays above minimum wage
- Finding childcare that is consistent so that can look for and retain a job
- Finding a consistent source of income
- Lack of transportation and housing opportunities
- Lack of availability of resources to complete hours to get driver's license
- Need more activities for youth
- Needing more primary care providers and assistance navigating the health care system
- Feeling isolated and not understanding what resources are available
- Family obligations limiting ability to find job
- Rural nature of the community; everything is far away
- Desire to move out of Garrett County

Conclusion. Overall, the responses from Opportunity Youth support the key findings from the Report and offer insights into the barriers and opportunities for Opportunity Youth to identify, engage, and remain in employment and/or education. Opportunity Youth interviews offered insights into the genres of positions and types of employment Opportunity Youth are interested in and seeking. Further, the responses offered guidance as to structural and supportive features that set Opportunity Youth up for success in both seeking and retaining interest and motivation in education and employment. Features such as full-time work, easily accessible via transportation, availability of affordable childcare, and having an interest in the area of work. Similarly, supportive features such as full-time employment, a salary that allows for affording healthy food, offering health insurance, and access to owning own housing are desired by Opportunity Youth. In tandem, the characteristics offered by the Opportunity Youth interviewed, taken with the data provided by the Report and underway efforts in Garrett County, offer an opportunity to inform strategic efforts to improve the overall social and health outcomes of Opportunity Youth.

Appendix C: Contact Directory

During the process of writing the assessment report and the strategic plan, numerous community members were brought in for conversations about the work that they do to serve Garrett County youth. A trend that was noticed, and is noticed nationally, is the effect of silo-ed work. Individuals serving the same population were not familiar with others who were doing similar work, while some connections were seen across population served and agency employment. This is a common problem nationally, because agencies are often stretched thin in the budget, staffing, or other various needs that inhibit the ability for effective cross-sector collaboration. To this end, we are providing in this Strategic Plan a directory of individuals who were contacted during our work to offer assistance and information about existing programs and connecting with you.

Name	Program	Email
Barbara Unger	The Judy Center	barbarau@garrettcac.org
Denise Hartman	GC Public City Schools	denise.hartman@garrettcountyschools.org
Susan Stewart	AHEC - West	susan.stewart@ahecwest.org
Duane Yoder	Community Action	dyoder@garrettcac.org
Nicole Christian	Chamber of Commerce	nicole@garrettchamber.com
Kim Durst	Department of Economic Development	kdurst@garrettcac.org
Bob Peters	Department of Juvenile Services	robert.peters@maryland.gov
Erin Roth	Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation	erin.roth@maryland.gov
Rick DeWitt	Department of Social Services - Director	rick.dewitt@maryland.gov
Emily Bauer	Department of Social Services - Family Investment	emily.bauer@maryland.gov
Jessica Savage	Department of Social Services - Family Preservation	jessica.savage@maryland.gov
Stacey Weimer	Department of Social Services - Independent Living	stacey.weimer@maryland.gov
Mark Stutzman	Engage Mountain Maryland	EngageMountainMaryland@gmail.com
Julie Yoder	Garrett College	julie.yoder@garrettcollege.edu
Paul Edwards	Garrett County Public Schools	paul.edwards@garrettcountyschools.org
Mark Boucot	Garrett Regional Medical Center	mboucot@gcmh.com
Christina Dushel	Governor's Office for Children	christina.drushel@maryland.gov
Shelley Argabrite	Local Health Department	shelley.argabrite@maryland.gov
John Corbin	Local Health Department	john.corbin@maryland.gov

James Michaels	LHD: After School Program	james.michaels@maryland.gov
Kendra McLaughlin	LHD: After School Program	kendra.mclaughlin@maryland.gov
Jennifer Runkles	Maryland Apprenticeship Training Program (DLLR)	jennifer.runkles@maryland.gov
Lara Willson	Maryland Rural Health Association	larawilson@mdruralhealth.org
Dr. Phil Lauver	Pupil Services, Garrett County Public Schools	phil.lauver@garrettcountyschools.org
Ann Sherrard	University of Maryland Extension	anns@umd.edu
Deb Gilbert	Western Maryland Consortium	dgilbert@westernmarylandconsortium.org
Mary Keller	Western Maryland Consortium	mkeller@westmdcon.org
Erin Shahan	Department of Rehabilitation Services	erin.shahan@maryland.gov

Appendix D: MATP/SNAP E&T Meeting Minutes

**Garrett County Opportunity Youth Project
Local Management Board, Local Health Department
Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Program (MATP) for Youth and Adults
MINUTES**

DATE: August 13, 2019 at 1:00PM-2:30PM

OBJECTIVE: Discuss opportunities to leverage federal and state programs to support costs of employer-based apprenticeships (i.e., MATP) in Garrett County

Attendees:

Fred Polce, Executive Director, Local Management Board / Behavioral Health Authority

Deb Gilbert, Western Maryland Consortium

Jennifer Runkles, Western Maryland Apprenticeship Navigator, Department of Labor & Licensing (DLLR)

Julie Yoder, Garrett College

Kaitlyn Glotfelty, Garrett College

Emily Bauer, Department of Social Services

Bob Peters, Department of Juvenile Services

Mary Keller, Western Maryland Consortium

Julie Sanders, Local Management Board / Behavioral Health Authority

Gillian Shreve, Local Management Board / Behavioral Health Authority

Angella Moon, DLLR

Charles (Charlie) Hunt, DLLR

Jen Barnhart, Opportunity Youth Project Senior Consultant (President, LUMA Health Consulting)

Sarah White, Opportunity Youth Project Research Assistant (LUMA Health Consulting)

1:00PM Garrett County Opportunity Youth Project Overview

Jen Barnhart called the meeting to order at 1:05PM. Jen provided an overview of the Opportunity Youth (OY) project and the scope of youth disconnection in Garret County. There are currently 450 OY in Garrett County (GC). The working definition of OY is youth currently not enrolled in school nor sufficiently employed in the workforce, ages 16-24. GC has seen a doubling of OY in the past five years. The rate of youth disconnection in GC is 16% and 7% statewide. Youth

disconnection represents an urgent problem for GC and a central focus of the Maryland Governor's Office for Children.

LUMA Health Consulting, a Baltimore-based public health management and consulting firm, was contracted by the GC Local Management Board in May 2019 to perform an assessment and develop a strategic plan to improve workforce, education, social, and health outcomes for OY. A critical piece of the strategic plan will include an outline of key activities to achieve a registered Maryland Apprenticeship & Training Program (MATP) in GC for high school youth and adults, ages 18 and older.

The timing for engaging in the MATP as a potential intervention to improve outcomes of OY is very much aligned to strategic initiatives of Governor Hogan. Specifically, the Governor's Child Well-being goals and the Governor's commitment to improving workforce opportunities.

During qualitative interviews, LUMA uncovered key concerns for GC employers about the state registered apprenticeship program. These concerns include (1) Administrative activities for MATP reporting, and (2) Funding salaries of apprentices who ultimately are not retained beyond their on the job training. To these ends, LUMA Health Consulting is reviewing potential opportunities to tie additional funding to support a registered MATP's administrative reporting requirements, partial support for apprenticeship salaries, and other indirect costs for apprentices, such as transportation.

1:15PM MATP Overview (Jennifer Runkles, MATP, Western Maryland)

Jennifer Runkles is the DLLR Western Maryland Navigator for MATP programs. Allegany County just launched their youth program, requiring 450 hours of on the job training (OJT). Allegany County has a commitment to pay apprentices \$10.10 / per hour (minimum wage). Employers need to then report back to the school system on how the apprentices are doing. The apprenticeship gives youth a chance to get their foot in the door with employers. To start a youth program in GC, there needs to be a partnership with the school system and County Government must likewise support an initiative like this.

The youth sponsor / employer would meet with Jennifer and members of school systems. There is a simple 1-page on-line application that the sponsor must complete, including occupation / apprenticeship trade, business location, and job description. After the application form is completed, Jennifer contacts the sponsor / employer. They discuss the occupation in depth and what the student would be doing. Jennifer ensures that the sponsor understands that

apprenticeship youth must receive a waiver through their health insurance company to participate in the apprenticeship. The sponsor must ensure youth can be there during working hours, to achieve the full benefit of OJT. This includes working with the sponsor and school system to potentially shift the youth / student schedule around. DLLR provides heavy technical assistance during the launch and maintenance of an apprenticeship program. Businesses need to check in with the local school system. For example, the employer / sponsor may contact the coordinator to report the youth did not come to work, and employer also provides hours worked. The hours worked is usually generated via an employer payroll report. After the youth completes 450 of the apprenticeship hours, they get a certificate. The 450 hours can be applied towards the adult apprenticeship requirements, effectively jump-starting them. Applying youth apprenticeship hours towards the 2000 hours of adult apprenticeship requirements, also provides an incentive to keep them going into the adult program.

The school system coordinator position is typically a part-time duty for a full-time equivalent school system position. Allegany has applied for a grant to cover this position. MSDE may have funds as well to cover a position like this.

The MATP for adults requires 2000 OJT hours and related instruction. Businesses have the flexibility to provide a scalable wage. Jennifer works directly with businesses for adult programs for reporting (i.e., there is not an administrator / coordinator who manages reporting because these apprentices are no longer in high school). Jennifer orients the employers through the administrative process and the related instruction requirements.

Some local success stories include a recent IT apprenticeship pilot in Frederick and Washington County. The IT firm had its first youth apprentice. This youth is now a MATP ambassador. He has continued on into the adult MATP.

Another youth did an apprenticeship with Frederick Memorial Hospital (FMH). This has resulted in a part time employment position and FMH is also paying for this youth's AA degree at Frederick Community College.

1:45PM Existing apprenticeship landscape (Julie Yoder & Kaitlyn Glotfelty, Garrett College)

Julie Yoder, Dean of Continuing Education and Workforce Development (CEWD) at Garrett College and Kaitlyn Glotfelty, Coordinator of Adult Education and Workforce Development, provided an update on behalf of Garrett College regarding the apprenticeship landscape and

opportunities they see. Garrett College is very interested in being a part of MATP next steps for Garrett County. Julie said they have worked closely with the National Restaurant Association (NRA) because there is a lot of related hospitality needs in GC, to develop a non-Maryland registered hospitality apprenticeship. Garrett College is delivering the instruction on behalf of NRA for hospitality. NRA is the recipient of federal funding from the Department of Labor and they are handling the reporting of this. NRA was however not successful in receiving state approval for this apprenticeship because of the funding relationship to the federal government.

Moreover, Julie said that all of their CEWD programs could serve as pre-apprenticeship or related instruction for the apprentice. Garrett College is very willing to work with employers to meet their needs and would design curriculum as needed. Moreover, Garrett College is very interested in being the education partner.

Julie said there have been additional conversations about developing an apprenticeship program for HVAC.

The global challenge Julie sees is getting a core number of people to commit to the apprenticeship programs; both employers and students/apprentices.

2:00PM Opportunities to leverage state funding to support MATP

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Education & Training (E&T). Emily Bauer, Assistant Director of the Family Investment Administration for GC Department of Social Services provided an overview of the SNAP E&T Program. All SNAP recipients are eligible to receive funding for training and education. Funding for SNAP E&T is provided by the United States Department of Agriculture. 100% funding can be given to local DSSs. Local DSS can then use that money as they choose for related education and training of SNAP recipients.

50/50 funding for SNAP E&T currently goes to Community Action. Community Action, the partner, needs to come in with 100% up-front and then they are reimbursed for 50%. The 50% funding match cannot be federal funds. In the past, the Commissioner's Scholarship money has been used locally to support the 50/50 match.

SNAP recipients gain additional education and training to gain, retain, advance employment – similar to apprenticeship programs. Emily's goal is to use some of the SNAP E&T funding to help develop the MATP, including administrative coordinator position, and salaries for apprentices. SNAP E&T can also be used to help with transportation, daycare, tools, uniforms, and soft skills.

In FY20 (current fiscal year) SNAP E&T will be giving \$50K to local DSS to do initially whatever they want to do with it related to education and training of SNAP recipients. Emily sees that this money could fund the coordinator in the school system. Potentially Emily can write a proposal to get a lot more money. This would include doing a cost analysis for education and training related needs for SNAP recipients in GC. Emily sees an unlimited opportunity.

Maryland BusinessWorks. This is a program developed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Maryland BusinessWorks is funding that can be used per year for the adult MATP program. Maryland BusinessWorks offers a \$40,000 cap to businesses every year to use for training. The money is limited to \$1000 per employee, up to 40 employees (i.e., \$40,000). After the employee receives a certificate of completion for MATP, the employer gets reimbursed for \$1000.

Western MD Consortium. There are program overlaps with the Consortium's Incumbent Worker Program. This program is similar to MD BusinessWorks. The Consortium funds a large part of the training costs. The smaller the company, the more the Consortium pays towards an employee's training costs. This program supports costs for gas, training, uniforms, union dues, and pre-apprenticeship funding.

Western Maryland Consortium also manages the ABC Apprenticeship program for carpentry and plumbing. The first year is course work and then the apprenticeship starts year 2. Each person has \$4500. The Consortium can offer OJT with left over money. Most of them have at least half of the money left that can be used towards OJT, after the course work has been completed.

Fred Polce asked how apprenticeships can be marketed better, especially when there are challenges with childcare and transportation. Duane Yoder of Community Action said there may be opportunity to support referrals for apprenticeships and financial support for transportation through GTS and gas cards.

Emily reported that MSDE has childcare scholarships. As the income guidelines have doubled, the majority of residents now qualify for vouchers of day care. DSS is currently doing a local analysis of voucher access and utilization, and day care availability to meet the needs of the community.

Bob Peters said there is opportunity for DJS clients. GC DJS probation officers would be able to probe further about client interests in apprenticeships.

Jennifer Runkles said that businesses can be looking at the [Apprenticeship Locator](#) to get a sense of what other employers are doing around them.

2:20PM Next Steps

Jen Barnhart concluded the meeting. Next steps include circulation of minutes. Jen explained that a synthesis of this discussion will be included in the Strategic Plan for Opportunity Youth that LUMA Health Consulting will deliver after Labor Day to the Local Management Board. Jen welcomes review and feedback about the circulated minutes.

Appendix E: Youth Apprenticeship Program Eligible Employer Application²²

Company Information

Employer Identification Number*

Company Name*

Street Address*

City*

State*

Zip code*

Contact Name*

Phone Number*

Email Address*

Program Information

Principal Industries of Business*

School District

Select at least 1 and no more than 24.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allegany County | <input type="checkbox"/> Anne Arundel County | <input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore City | <input type="checkbox"/> Baltimore County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calvert County | <input type="checkbox"/> Caroline County | <input type="checkbox"/> Carroll County | <input type="checkbox"/> Cecil County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charles County | <input type="checkbox"/> Dorchester County | <input type="checkbox"/> Frederick County | <input type="checkbox"/> Garrett County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Harford County | <input type="checkbox"/> Howard County | <input type="checkbox"/> Kent County | <input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prince George's County | <input type="checkbox"/> Queen Anne's County | <input type="checkbox"/> Somerset County | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Mary's County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Talbot County | <input type="checkbox"/> Washington County | <input type="checkbox"/> Wicomico County | <input type="checkbox"/> Worcester County |

	Occupation	Hourly Rate	Hours Per Work Day	Days Per Work Week	Projected Number of Positions
1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Provide a description of the on-the-job tasks and work processes that a youth apprentice is expected to learn.*

If your company has an arrangement with an association or employee organization with whom you intend to collaborate regarding the Youth Apprenticeship Program, please identify and describe.

Agreements

By submitting this form, the Eligible Employer agrees to the following Youth Apprenticeship Standards:

1. SUPERVISION OF YOUTH APPRENTICES

The Eligible Employer shall designate a mentor who shall have full direction and control of each youth apprentice, and who shall further:

- be responsible for assignment of youth apprentices under the immediate supervision of qualified mentors for instruction; and
- be responsible for the keeping and maintaining of progress records on apprentices to include related instruction and insuring that each apprentice is advanced and rotated through the basic work processes and skills;
- perform or otherwise cause the routine and periodic evaluation of the progress of each youth apprentice, and
- provide for a safe work environment.

2. EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OF YOUTH APPRENTICES

The employment and training of youth apprentices during their youth apprenticeship shall be without discrimination of political or religious opinion or affiliation, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, sex, or age, unless sex or age constitutes a bona fide occupational qualification, or the physical or mental disability of a qualified individual with a disability.

3. TERM OF APPRENTICESHIP MARYLAND

The term of a youth apprenticeship shall be 450 hours of on-the-job training and at least one-year of classroom instruction related to the eligible career track.

4. RATIO OF YOUTH APPRENTICE(S) TO MENTOR(S)

No more youth apprentices will be employed than can be properly trained and afforded reasonable opportunity for future employment in the occupation.

- To insure proper training, the number of apprentices shall not exceed one (1) youth apprentice to every one (1) mentor regularly employed in the occupation.

Each youth apprentice must be assigned a skilled mentor at the workplace. The mentor may assign multiple "trainers" to instruct the youth apprentice while they rotate among the various workstations. One mentor may work with more than one youth apprentice in a company.

5. YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT

A Youth Apprenticeship Agreement (YAA) must be signed by all parties for every youth apprentice enrolled in the Apprenticeship Maryland program. The YAA is effective only when signed by all parties. A signed copy must be on file at the school, with youth apprentice's employer and at Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR).

6. CANCELLATION OR TERMINATION OF APPRENTICESHIP MARYLAND YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENTS

The Employer shall *immediately and in all instances*, notify the Maryland Apprenticeship and Training Council, with a copy to the Office of the Secretary, DLLR, *in writing*, stating reasons for the cancellation of a Youth Apprenticeship Agreement.

7. ACCIDENT PREVENTION AND SAFETY

Safety and Health Training. The Eligible Employer shall instruct the youth apprentice in safe and healthful, work practices and shall insure that the youth apprentice is training in facilities and other environments that are in compliance with occupational safety and health. Such instruction shall be coordinated with the actual work performed on the job and to include the appropriate tools and equipment.

8. RIGHT TO VISIT

Apprenticeship Maryland shall have the right to visit any job site where youth apprentices are employed and youth apprentice related instruction classes are in session in order to determine compliance with Youth Apprenticeship Standards.

*

I agree

By submitting this online form, you agree to the provisions outlined in this agreement.