

STUDENT JOURNEYS IN PENNSYLVANIA'S RE-IMAGINED PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Alessandro

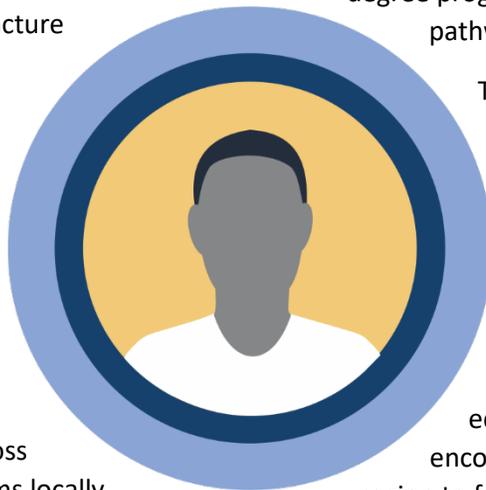
As a high school junior, Alessandro enters a 6-year coop program in manufacturing where he works part time as a machinist assistant while completing a high school diploma and then a Certificate in General Manufacture from a vocational technical college.

He pays for his education with his earnings, and with state and federal grants (awarded in part due to the state's aggressive and very successful "fill out the fafsa" campaign).

The tech college is based across the state but delivers programs locally from underutilized public facilities – part of a Commonwealth program that coordinates use of state owned buildings across departments of education, corrections, health and human services.

Alessandro advances his career as a machinist, getting progressively more skilled roles and taking advantage of certification programs offered through employer.

At 42, he enrolls part time in a mechanical engineering BS degree offered at the local university, paying for his tuition with his earnings, a forgivable student loan available for students in high-demand occupations), and with tuition assistance provided by his employer who benefits from a modest state tax credit.



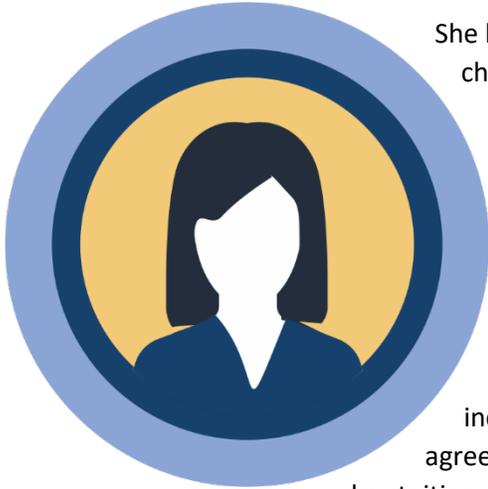
Alessandro enters university as a full junior (with 60 credits). Forty of the 60 course credits he earned at college and he was able to transfer the credits towards his degree thanks to a state policy which rewards institutions for aligning degree programs with recognized educational pathways

The university grants him another 20 credits based on competencies he mastered at work.

Alessandro also benefits from the University's low net average price which reflects state policy that rewards educators' efficiency and has encouraged dozens of providers in the region to form a consortium using common business, administrative and educational infrastructure introducing considerable scale economies and drive down price to student.

Eugenia

Eugenia, a 35-year-old single mother, enters an adult GED completion and higher ed prep program at age 35 after working years and getting nowhere in menial service roles.



She benefits from child care, and housing and food support that are subsidized for low income adults returning to school, and an income share agreement helps with her tuition.

The program focuses on both hard and soft skills, and connects Eugenia to mentors who support her success. It also involves paid temp roles with local employers who are starved for reliable entry-level employees and who in turn help Eugenia develop soft skills that are critical in the workforce

The program is stressful, financially, academically, personally. One of her mentors recognizes this and recommends Eugenia seek counselling support. This is available through a public clinic – part of a statewide network – that has focused supports for students and has greatly improved services that once supported on a best effort bases by individual colleges and school districts.

Upon completing the program, Eugenia takes a full-time job as an administrative assistant at a large non-profit that works in foster care. She

worked at the agency as a temp while in the on-ramp program

Eugenia loves her job and advances her skills by enrolling in a series of online short courses that she discovers through NonProfitNet – a website that uses private and public data to connect working learners to non-profit sector roles and the education pathways that get them there.

At 45 she has earned certificates in project management, non-profit business and sustainability planning, and fund-raising – certificates she knows from NonProfitNet will ultimately contribute to a BA in non-profit administration.

Charles

Charles enrolls in his local university after graduating from a rural PA high school with 15 college credits (a year's worth of college).

The university's gen ed courses integrate competencies defined by fortune 500 companies for foundational digital skills and he finishes his sophomore year with a certificate of digital competency.

Putting his education on pause, he takes a full-time job as webmaster in a local printing company. The company jumped at the opportunity to hire Charles. A widely available state-wide data source shows that employees who enter related jobs holding this particular digital competency certificate have higher retention and promotion rates than those that do not.

At work, Charles constantly upgrades his skills – taking courses, mostly online, in 4- or 6-week bursts, collecting various badges and certificates.

By age 40, he is doing well, but interested in more senior roles and better earnings for his family.

He consults a website connecting 260M professionals. Built on public as well as proprietary data, it identifies patterns in users' career trajectories to illustrate options available to people with Charles' profile and job interests. Fantastic, but overwhelming, so Charles pays a monthly subscription for a dedicated coach who helps him navigate.

With his coach's help, Charles chooses a technically oriented MBA as the best path towards the career he desires, and evaluates educational programs that will get him there with respect of their cost, duration, and how many of Charles' college credits, badges, certificates, and other experiences would count towards a degree.

He also looks at data from candidate programs on their graduates' earnings and location.

