

## **KC Rising Strategy Quarterly Update – KC Degrees**

**Mission:** To serve adults in the Kansas City region to earn a college degree or high-quality certificate.

**Owner:** Kansas City Degrees – Mid-America Regional Council

### **Quarterly Update:**

Accomplishments – please select 2-3. A bulleted list is fine.

- 95 percent of adult learners persisted to the spring 2018 semester and six graduated in the first year. Nationally, the persistence rate of an adult learner is just over 50 percent.
- On track to reach the planned number of Reconnectors for Year Two.
- A pilot business engagement strategy has launched and meetings with various employers have been scheduled.
- Eighty-one percent of Reconnectors attend five of the 17 network institutions. Lengthy discussions were held with these institutions of choice to address the major barriers to adult learner success. A plan is in place with each of these five institutions. Additional work is being done to share what is learned with the entire network.

Next steps: again, 2-3 that will be a priority for the most recent quarter

- Enrolled number is expected to double in August.
- Meetings to enact the coalition’s strategies to address adult learner challenges are scheduled in April. Specifically, addressing issues around prior debt in order to provide access to transcripts for enrollment and persistence and expansion of related financial literacy resources.
- Initiative messaging is being refined around the “ready” population of adults to return to college. This ready population is estimated to be 15,000 across the metro area. Plans are being considered to engage and scale in order to serve the ready population. Additional consideration is given to what it will take to move more adults in the “ready” category.
- KC Degrees website redesign and launch of a newsletter.
- A pilot project focused on alternative career pathways using The DeBruce Foundation’s assessment tool: Agile Work Profiler to launch May 1, 2018. The intent is to help students make informed decisions about course of study aligned with high-demand career fields.

Sustainability – this should be both financial and human resources

- Additional funding was secured to hire a Spanish speaking, culturally competent navigator. Current staffing includes a full-time project manager, full-time project coordinator and four part-time College Success Navigators.
- The Project Coordinator is working to expand the out-referral network and launch the business engagement pilot project.

**Road map** (12 mos rolling) Feb to Feb (from KC Rising Update to the following year)

- Jan– March – Scholarship application support
- January – spring enrollment
- August – Fall enrollment
- Oct – Feb – FAFSA Completion
- Ongoing - Reconnector intake

**Progress on metrics:**

- 511 Reconnectors (active adult learners) (79 percent of Year Two goal)
- 140 enrolled Reconnectors

- 95 percent persistence from fall to spring semesters (190 times the national average)
- 6 graduates to date, ahead of expected timeline
- Working toward a 75% completion rate