



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS IN THE IDAHO PANHANDLE . . .

- **North Idaho College**, the local community college, is fiscal agent for – and major supporter of– the Adult Education Center.
- **Regional state offices for vocational rehabilitation, health and welfare, and labor** all share clients with the Center and coordinate their services.
- **Head Start and Even Start** work with the Center on family literacy activities.
- **The Workforce Investment Board** involves the Center and other community organizations in their economic development and workforce preparation initiatives.
- **School districts** collaborate with the Center to help failing high school students get their GED diplomas.
- **Correctional facilities** bring instructors from the Center to prepare inmates to take the GED test.

## AND WHY THEY WORK . . .

- **Necessity is the mother of partnerships.** Idaho’s population is sparse and widely dispersed; partnerships among agencies are virtually the only way to get services to people who need them.
- **The community college is an anchor.** North Idaho College is a large, stable organization that provides various forms of reliable support to many of the partners.
- **Leadership is dynamic—and shared.** A leader who is an “instigator” keeps things going, but leaders of all partner groups actively support partnership efforts.
- **Communication among partners is informal—and frequent.** Partners will drop by each other’s offices and use e-mail or phone calls to keep in touch; they often bring their services to the clients by doing their work in each other’s facilities.
- **Cross-training of staff among partner agencies aids efficient delivery of service.** Staff know each other’s services, procedures, and expectations.
- **Resources are “intermingled” so that partners can focus maximum resources on their own primary missions.** Partners share the costs of rent, staff, mailings, and professional development.
- **State and federal laws encourage partnership.** Idaho provides most services on a regional basis, so partnerships are essential. The federal One-Stop grant helped create more formal partnerships in the region.

## INTRODUCTION

George, a high school dropout in his early twenties, is an adult learner whose story illustrates the close ties among the partners of the North Idaho College Adult Education Center. When a knee injury forced him to leave a well-paying manual labor job, George was referred to the Adult Education Center by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The DVR counselor advised him to earn his GED diploma in order to find a new job. Since he enrolled at the Adult Education Center, however, George's goals have expanded from simply wanting a GED diploma to wanting a college education. As he explains it, "I now see myself going on to school. I never considered college before coming here." For the first time, he says, "I can help my two daughters with their homework. Before, I didn't understand what they were doing."

With its adult learner population spread over 7,662 square miles, partnerships are a matter of survival for the North Idaho College Adult Education Center. Located in the Panhandle region of Idaho, the Center provides services to residents in five counties—Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone. The most efficient way for the Center to deliver services to such a sparse and widely dispersed population is through collaboration with a variety of partners, such as North Idaho College, the Workforce Investment Board, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Health and Welfare, the Job Service (an office of the Department of Labor), correctional facilities, and community organizations. The Center

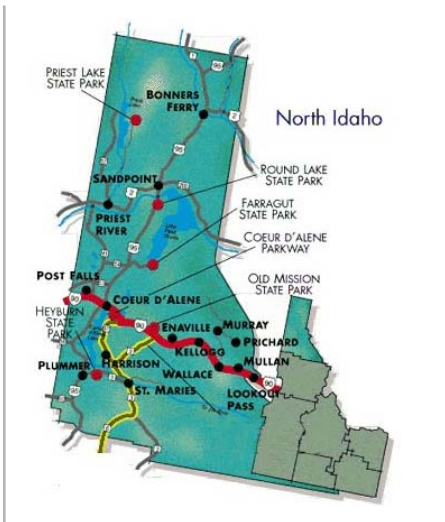
also offers adult education services in six outreach sites scattered throughout the region.

The Adult Education Center, its outreach sites, and its partners are working together to create a seamless system of services for adults with education and employment preparation needs. By sharing resources and avoiding duplication of services, they can offer residents assistance ranging from gas vouchers and childcare to adult basic education (ABE) and career guidance. Regardless of which agency or community organization adults approach, they are quickly linked to the Adult Education Center if they need basic skills instruction.

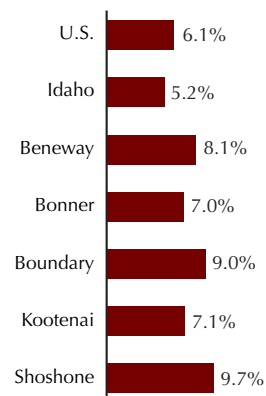
## BACKGROUND

More than 15 percent of adults in Idaho lack a high school diploma, and less than 20 percent of residents in Northern Idaho have a bachelor's degree. Until recently, though, a high school diploma or college degree was not a prerequisite for a well-paying job. Northern Idaho has long been a hub for several natural resource industries (for example, mining and timber), but these are dwindling. As a result, the five northern counties have a high unemployment rate and a low per-capita income compared to state and national figures (Figures 1 and 2). Many unemployed residents are being forced to look for jobs, such as those in technology, requiring higher levels of education and workplace skills. The Adult Education Center is working with its partners to prepare these adults for new lines of work.

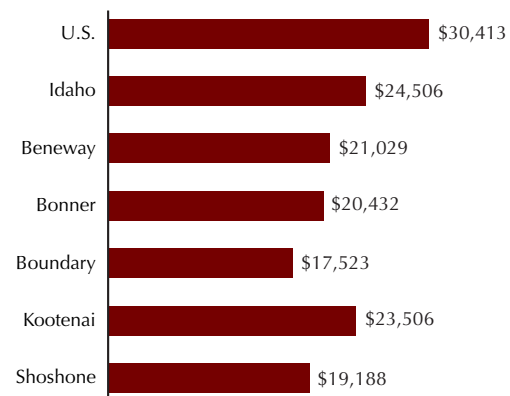
Collaboration is second nature to the Adult Education Center and its partners. In fact, the Center's staff cannot remember a time when they did not do their work through partnerships. Partnerships have been not only a matter of survival for the Center, but they also have been encouraged by the state. Since most of Idaho is sparsely populated, the state relies on a regional approach to delivering most services, including adult education. The success of this



**Figure 1: Unemployment Rate in the Five Northern Idaho Counties, May 2003**



**Figure 2: Per Capita Income in the Five Northern Idaho Counties, 2001**



SOURCE: Idaho Department of Labor.

approach is dependent upon the willingness of state-supported organizations within each of the six regions (North Idaho is Region I), such as regional adult education centers and local postsecondary institutions, to form partnerships.

Federal programs and legislation also have encouraged the Adult Education Center to partner. For example, when North Idaho received a federal One-Stop grant, the Adult Education Center and other workforce-related organizations, such as North Idaho College and the regional offices of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Idaho Industrial Commission, were asked to form the Regional Collaborative Team (RCT). RCT was directed by the lead agencies of the grant—the Job Service and the North Idaho Private Industry Council—to explore ways to reduce duplication and enhance coordination of workforce development services in North Idaho. Although the One-Stop grant ended three years ago, the work of RCT continues with the support of the Workforce Investment Board, created as a result of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. RCT now serves as the advisory committee to the One-Stop Center.

## ADULT EDUCATION IN NORTH IDAHO

Adult education in North Idaho always has been closely connected to North Idaho College (NIC). Formerly housed at the college’s main campus, the Adult Education Center recently moved to a more centrally located site in downtown Coeur d’Alene, but it is still overseen by the college. The new location for the Adult Education Center is lively and welcoming, offering computerized instruction, tutoring in an open lab setting, and structured classes in adult basic education, GED preparation, English literacy (EL), and computer literacy. These services also are offered in its six outreach sites across the region. An outreach coordinator oversees curriculum and instruction, which are the same at all sites.

The Adult Education Center’s partnerships existed before the Center’s current director, Rex Fairfield, arrived five years ago, but they are stronger now, according to staff. Rex’s willingness to build partnerships, to be an “instigator,” has fostered an internal and external atmosphere conducive to collaboration. He supports team building within the Center, capitalizing on the strengths of his various staff members, and he is willing to call local and state agencies to ask for help.



With the support of its partners, the Adult Education Center and its outreach sites served 2,166 adults, with 1,387 of those learners receiving more than twelve hours of instruction, in fiscal year 2001-2002. Instruction was provided by seven full-time and twelve part-time teachers, assisted by five para-professionals. Program costs were covered primarily by a \$232,092 federal grant administered through the Idaho State Department of Education. The state also supplied \$137,369, and North Idaho College added \$133,700 in in-kind contributions. The cost per student was \$332.37.

## PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE ADULT EDUCATION CENTER

To better serve Northern Idaho's widespread population, the Adult Education Center has formed a complex network of partnerships. Multiple agencies work with Center staff in formal and informal arrangements. All partners see collaboration as vital to their work. It's not extra work; it's how they do their jobs.

As a result, most partnership agreements with the Center are informal and not documented by contracts or memoranda of understanding. For Even Start, the Adult Education Center is a federally mandated partner and they do have a written agreement (i.e., letter of support). The Workforce Investment Board uses a memorandum of understanding, but these are the only formal agreements among the partners. Otherwise, partnerships are based on verbal discussions and shared decision-making. As one administrator said, "It is assumed that they will help." Staff reiterate this point, saying, "We can call anyone. We know them. We don't have to go through layers."

Moreover, the Center's partnerships adapt as their clients' needs change. Indeed, the Center works differently with each partnering agency, collaborating in ways that best suit the services, the delivery systems, and the clients. Some of the key partners are described below.

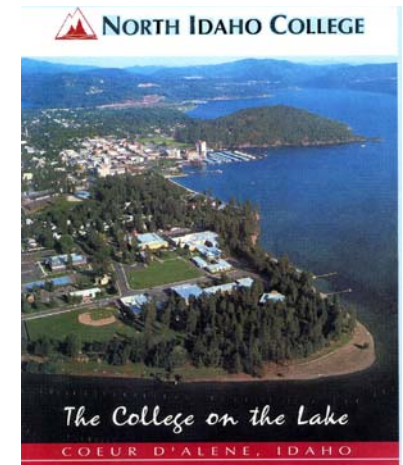
### North Idaho College

The support and resources of a large, stable organization can be vital to developing and sustaining partnerships. In this area, North Idaho College serves as a foundation for multiple regional partnerships and is a catalyst for initiating programs that support workforce development and adult education. NIC focuses on three different populations—the emerging workforce,

the incumbent workforce, and the transitional workforce. The college's work with the Adult Education Center, the One-Stop Center, and its other partners is central to ensuring that the needs of all three populations are addressed. As Steve McKenna of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare says, "NIC has been a good conduit to get things done, to move from one item to another." Some examples of how NIC supports the Adult Education Center and other local workforce development organizations are the following:

- NIC administrators serve on the Regional Collaborative Team.
- NIC is a designated operator of the One-Stop Center, a responsibility it shares with the Job Service and the Idaho Commission on Aging.
- NIC helps expand the reach of the Adult Education Center by providing marketing resources.
- NIC provides in-kind contributions to the Center and other partners.
- NIC collaborates on grants and funds many regional workforce development efforts.

NIC also operates as a fiscal agent for the Center and several of its partners, such as the Center for New Directions, a counseling center serving adult single parents, displaced homemakers, and single pregnant women, and Even Start, by providing accounting services and facilitating the transfer of



funding. This allows the partners to share and leverage funding with few bureaucratic obstacles. One agency can simply send an electronic message to the college controller and transfer funds to another agency. NIC also makes other significant contributions, such as paying the Adult Education Center rent and the director's salary and providing office space and equipment.

NIC's Workforce Training and Community Education Division, the division that directly oversees the Adult Education Center, also works with the Center and other partners to establish occupational training programs to meet the changing needs of the community and local employers. It sends out a course catalogue that includes an advertisement for the Adult Education Center to everyone in the five counties. Learners in Workforce Training programs can also get vouchers, paid for by the Department of Health and Welfare, to take classes at the Center.

NIC administrators see adult education as "part of the supply chain" of workforce development and believe that the college needs a variety of ways to help adults prepare for work. Their partnership with the Center helps them accomplish this goal. Administrators say that adult education has a "home" at the college; it is part of the institution. In fact, adult education is so important at NIC that it is one of the twelve indicators of success measured in the annual review of the entire college. As Robert Ketchum, assistant vice president for instruction at NIC says, if a program is important, "Don't hand it to the Dean of Everything Else." NIC sees the Adult Education Center as a vital part of fulfilling its mission.

### **The Educational Opportunity Center**

Started in 2002, the Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), also housed at NIC, serves students whose parents did not attend college. The EOC counsels students, helping students to complete applications to college, create educational plans, and apply for financial aid. EOC staff also offer informa-



tion on college programs. EOC staff work with students on career planning, providing computerized career information and assessments such as skill and interest surveys. EOC counselors offer many of these services at The Adult Education Center and its outreach sites, which makes access to services easier for adult learners and enables EOC to reach more potential clients.

The director, Sandra Kettle, was new to the area and relied on the Adult Education Center and Rex Fairfield to make connections to other programs, services, resources, and potential learners. Center staff refer students to the EOC and help EOC staff work with the outreach centers to reach learners in remote areas. The outreach centers welcomed the EOC, contributing office space for the EOC counselors who visit the outreach centers weekly. EOC academic and career counselors also spend a full day each week at the main Adult Education Center, doing career counseling. As Sandra Kettle observes, "Tapping into existing relationships is fundamental to the success of a new organization."

### **North Idaho Workforce Investment Board**

The federal WIA mandated the formation of a Workforce Investment Board to be responsible for coordinating all agencies involved in workforce development. With the assistance of staff from the Panhandle Area Council (PAC), a nonprofit foundation focused on economic development, the Workforce Investment Board helps the region meet the requirements of WIA. It oversees the One-Stop Center and designated three local organizations—NIC, the Job Service, and the Idaho Commission on Aging—to be the Center's operators. It also continually brings community organizations

together to address workforce development issues. These organizations work closely together on adult education, job-readiness training and job placements, employer relations, economic development, and other workforce development issues.

Many of these organizations serve on the Regional Collaborative Team, formed originally as the result of the federal One-Stop grant. The Team continues to meet regularly, years after the grant ended, to work on community issues in addition to workforce development. The Team has representatives from such agencies as the Adult Education Center, NIC, Department of Health and Welfare, the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, Job Service, and the Idaho Industrial Commission. RCT meetings serve as steering committee, sounding board, and information swap. As one member describes it, “The Team serves as a way of allowing organizations to see how they fit in the community and helps them define the services they provide.” The RCT enables partners to:

- Plan and develop solutions to community problems (e.g., transportation).
- Announce changes and updates and share information (e.g., members provide or arrange for presentations on topics of common interest).
- Check for the duplication or inefficient delivery of services and seek ways to integrate services.
- Identify existing and potential resources (e.g., new grants).
- Continue to strengthen relationships.

### **The Job Service**

Although the Workforce Investment Board has designated NIC, the Idaho Commission on Aging, and the Job Service as the shared operators of the

One-Stop Center, many of the services of the One-Stop are provided at the Job Service building. The Job Service and Adult Education Center collaborate as follows:

- The Adult Education Center’s instructors and staff refer clients to the Job Service by giving them the name of a staff member, so that they can ask for someone specific when they arrive at the busy office, and the Job Service also refers clients to adult education. During 2001-2002, the Job Service referred 71 clients for adult education services.
- Job Service staff invite the Adult Education Center staff to their office to discuss ABE programs and classes, so that they understand how to refer clients appropriately.
- One Job Service staff member has regular hours every week at the Adult Education Center to meet with clients, register them on the Job Service database, and teach them to use the Job Service web site.
- The Job Service develops an individual “plan of action” for all clients, describing what each agency will provide for them. The partners also use a **referral slip** with all of the names of partners so that they can monitor referrals and do follow up with their clients.

### **The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation**

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) expects staff to interact with other agencies to get the services their clients need. Based on an initial assessment of the client, DVR determines all the necessary services to help the client gain self-sufficiency. Most often, DVR includes a referral to adult education, based on an assessment of clients’ educational levels. DVR counselors work with adult education instructors to monitor client progress, and the adult education instructors know they can call the DVR counselors if a client doesn’t come to class or needs help.

For DVR and adult education staff, this is the usual way of doing business. DVR has a history of being involved with other organizations; each DVR counselor is assigned to act as a liaison with another agency. This structure allows DVR to maintain contacts, share information, and collaborate on grants or new programs. DVR uses the Adult Education Center for help with training and testing, and DVR counselors sometimes go to the Center to meet with clients. DVR counselors call Center staff to determine whether a client would benefit from taking classes or completing a GED diploma. Likewise, Center staff are familiar with DVR services and can refer learners there; in 2001-2002, adult education instructors referred 446 clients to DVR for assistance with healthcare, transportation, job placement, or education.

### **The Idaho Industrial Commission**

The Idaho Industrial Commission is responsible for helping people find employment after on-the-job injuries. Working with the Adult Education Center and other partners enables them to accomplish this goal. While clients are recovering physically, the Commission aims to get them motivated and “using their brains.” As their staff determine a client’s needs, they develop a plan usually involving multiple partner agencies, including the Adult Education Center. Still, the referrals are informal. Commission staff call or go to the Center to check on clients, and Center staff reciprocate by sending information on client progress to Commission staff. For the Commission, the Adult Education Center is an integral part of their approach to clients.

### **The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare**

The Department of Health and Welfare has had a long partnership with the Adult Education Center. The Center provides adult basic education and job-related training for the department’s clients. In a recent collaborative effort, the Department of Health and Welfare is funding the Jobs Education Training (JET) program statewide through local adult basic education programs, including the Adult Education Center. This collaborative project brings together support services, adult secondary education, adult vocational education, and ABE.

JET’s goal is to serve adults who score above the 8th-grade equivalent level on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), are living at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, and are responsible for a minor child. (Clients who don’t meet these criteria continue with regular adult education services.) The Center will offer participating JET clients help in obtaining, retaining, and enhancing employment through basic skills instruction. JET goes beyond the scope of ABE and will include assessment, case management services, and JET Skills Training.

The JET Skills Training will include instruction for specific positions, such as certified nursing assistant, phlebotomist, medical transcriber, office secretary/receptionist, or call center specialist. The occupational training also will include job-readiness skills and preparation for the certification process. A transition specialist will work one-on-one with learners to help them find resources, such as admissions and financial aid information at colleges or workforce training centers. Employment counselors will assist participants in their employment search.

Here’s how the partners have divided responsibilities for JET:

- An ABE instructor will coordinate the JET services for the Center.
- Administrative staff at the Center will do data entry, tracking, and reporting to the Department of Health and Welfare.
- NIC's Workforce Training Center staff will provide case management services for the JET grant, and their instructors will provide the occupational training.
- Current ABE instructors will provide ABE instruction.
- Specialized training will be purchased through the North Idaho College Workforce Training Center with \$41,000 from the Department of Health and Welfare.

## Family Literacy Programs

The Adult Education Center has partnerships with family literacy programs housed at the Harding Family Center in Coeur d'Alene, including Head Start, Early Head Start, Parents as Teachers, and Even Start. The Center and most of these family literacy programs all share NIC as their fiscal agent, easing the process of sharing funds and reducing the required paperwork for each partner.

The partnership with Even Start is a good example of how these relationships work. At the Harding Center, Even Start staff provide participating families with dinner and guide parents and children in a reading activity. A teacher then takes the parents to the Adult Education Center, about a mile from Harding, where they can work with a tutor, attend basic skills classes, or use the computer lab. While the parents are at the Center, the children remain at Harding, participating in structured literacy activities. At the end of the evening, the parents are driven back to the Even Start location.

Even Start also offers parenting classes and homework clubs for participating families. The Adult Education Center coordinates class schedules and times to enable more Even Start clients to take advantage of their classes. Even Start and its clients do not pay for the instruction or tutoring; it is an in-kind contribution from the Center. The Center also shares data on the adults' progress with the Even Start staff. Says Barb Scarth, director of Even Start, "Early childhood education, childcare, and transportation need to be a part of adult education. These are major barriers, and we need to work together."

## School Districts

The Center has a good relationship with the school districts, collaborating on family literacy grants and youth projects. The Adult Education Center and a local high school, for example, created the Option C Program for students who are failing high school and not likely to meet the requirements

for an on-time graduation. High school counselors refer students to the program to help students build their mathematics and reading skills. For some students, their improved mathematics and reading skills will encourage them to stay in school and complete their high school requirements. For others, the Option C program can help prepare them for the GED test. Students go to the Center after normal school hours and work independently on homework, attend classes, or meet with tutors.



In another collaborative agreement between the Center and local school districts, teachers provide instruction in ABE at juvenile detention centers. These instructors attend the Center's staff meetings and professional development programs. School districts also collaborate on family literacy projects in varied ways, such as providing space, sponsoring programs like "Dinner and a Book," and giving financial support.

## Correctional Facilities

The region's correctional facilities, the county jail systems, and the juvenile detention centers are all partners with the Center, which sends instructors weekly to work with inmates who request to participate or are referred by correctional facility staff. Correctional staff work closely with instructors to ensure that classroom space is available and the inmates are released for classes. The instructors conduct small classes, tutor individual students, and do testing and some counseling. The program is highly individualized and geared to helping inmates build basic skills and prepare for the GED test. Instructors use the same intake form and enrollment process used at the Center, so that when inmates are released the information can be transferred to the Center and they can continue their education.

## SHARING RESOURCES

Besides providing services for clients and cross-agency referrals, partners do presentations for adult learners, promote services provided by other agencies, serve on advisory boards, and provide office space for staff from other agencies to work directly with clients. Partners say the “intermingling” of their resources is important. For example, DVR might pay the rent for part of the office and DOL might pay for a service or a staff member working in that office, providing services to shared clients. Mailings are often shared as well, with one agency supplying the mailing list, another the letter or materials, and a third the postage.

### In-Kind Contributions Help Preserve Funds

North Idaho College helps pay the rent for all of the adult education sites. It also pays the director’s salary and benefits and contributes office equipment. Since the Center does not have to use grant money for these expenditures, those funds can go toward direct services to learners. The Presbyterian Church also provides savings for the Center by renting its space at \$.50 per square foot instead of the market rate of \$1.00 per square foot.

Professional development also is shared whenever possible. Instructors from all outreach centers and from all partners are invited to participate in any professional development offered by the Adult Education Center. The state Adult Education Department collaborates with adult education directors across the state, providing professional development for program directors and instructors, or in some cases, paying for locally designed professional development. Partner organizations share a concern about the quality of instruction, and professional development activities are a means of improving all of the adult education programs in the region. Sharing professional development activities produces two

major benefits. All agencies save money and they can help each other identify and address common areas for improvement.

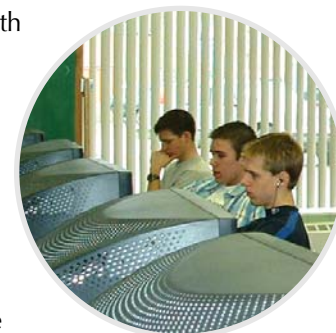
### Streamlining Services

The Adult Education Center and its partners continually look for ways to reduce duplication of services. Previously, for example, each of the five counties in North Idaho had its own Even Start program, and each provided childcare and transportation and conducted their own ABE instruction. Similarly, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation ran its own ABE program, as did the Center for New Directions, despite being just across campus from the Adult Education Center.

For a long time, these agencies and others only wanted the Adult Education Center to provide assessments and supplies. Now they coordinate services and share clients in order to stretch limited dollars and provide services more effectively. By streamlining services, the partners can use their own organization’s funds for projects more closely tied to their missions. The Center for New Directions, for example, no longer pays for adult education services. Instead, it sends its students to the Adult Education Center and, as a result, can redirect its funds into providing more counseling and advising.

### Improving Support for Learners

The Center’s partnerships have also helped with tutor and learner recruitment. For example, with money from a Computer Technology Center (CTC) grant and in collaboration with senior citizens homes and centers, the Center provided computers and computer literacy instruction to local seniors. An unexpected benefit was that seniors began to volunteer at the Center, serving as mentors in the



classroom and as tutors, and they used their contacts in the community to help recruit learners for programs at the Center.

Center staff acknowledge that partners refer many of their learners: “We wouldn’t have a lot of our students without our partners.” In 2001-2002, the Center served 374 clients referred by various partners. One learner said his probation officer recommended that he attend classes, and another credited his case manager at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with helping him get started at the Center, where his classes are paid for by DVR. Referrals are more appropriate now because the partners understand each other better. In the past, agencies would refer clients who were not always appropriate. Said one staff member, “For awhile, they just sent anyone to us, but we are not the answer for everyone.”

Partnerships create a stronger support network for clients. Counselors and case managers call the Center to check on their clients, monitoring their progress. Center instructors call other partners for information or to seek further help for clients. Phone calls, e-mail messages, and visits ensure that clients are not lost in the system and have a better chance at success.

Further, instructors say that partnerships have allowed them to offer a variety of services for clients (e.g., transportation, child-care), meeting needs their own agency could not fulfill.

This support is transparent to the clients. Learners understand how the collaboration across agencies helps them make progress toward being self-sufficient and meeting their own goals. As one said, “The instructors are kind and treat us well. They know us.”



## SHARING SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

### Empowering Staff

Front-line staff know their administrators and those of their partner agencies support their work and their efforts to collaborate. As one staff person noted, “We do what we do because we have the support from leaders. I get support from my office manager, as well as leaders from other agencies. Doors are open.” And yet they clearly recognize that “front-line people are still the ones that make it [the partnership] work, even if the leaders left.” To ensure that front-line staff know how to make referrals and share information about their partners with their clients, partners cross-trained their staff. Partner organizations didn’t just explain their programs; they walked partners through their service-delivery process. Everyone—administrators and front-line staff—from key partner agencies participated.



### Regular Communication

Many of the Center’s partners say the partnerships work because of relationships – not mandates. Currently, partners meet informally when they need to, but much of the interaction among the agencies is part of their daily routine. Communication flows constantly through a variety of channels.

The partners get together regularly over meals to discuss their activities and progress. The Workforce Investment Board sends out memoranda on current activities and upcoming meetings. The Board also organizes a monthly luncheon for the RCT, during which the partners take turns making presen-

presentations on their programs, services, and activities. The Adult Education Center instructors and administrators send brochures to other agencies and keep in “constant contact” with the staff members of other programs.

Open and frequent communication creates trust among the partners, which many identified as a key element in their effectiveness. As one partner put it, “Everyone operates under the assumption that if we understand what each of the partners is doing, we’re going to serve the client better.” They know that their partners will “do what they say they will do.” They also point out that “Partnership is developmental...it happens over time, and it is not fast.”

### **Challenges Persist**

The Center and its partners have been working together for a long time and have collaborated more intensively over the last five years, but they still face challenges. The lack of transportation in northern Idaho is a formidable obstacle. Although the Center’s outreach sites have improved access to services, many learners still cannot get services they need because they don’t have a car or access to public transportation.

Although the Center and its partners share information informally by phone and email, they do not have a common database. This informality has worked well for them in serving their clients, but they are unable to assess how well the partnership is serving the area’s adults. Like partnerships in other communities, they are struggling with how to combine data and at the same time protect their clients’ privacy.

The partners work with some businesses on a regular, though limited, basis, but they acknowledge that they need to build stronger relationships with area businesses. They also admit that they have made mistakes in the past and referred unqualified clients to businesses. Having learned from these mistakes, however, they are now more protective of their business partners and are careful to send only qualified applicants to them.

## **CONCLUSION**

The size and structure of the Center’s partnerships are highly diverse, and yet many partners cite the same key factors needed to sustain collaboration: leadership, support, communication, flexibility, responsiveness, and accountability. Admittedly, building partnerships takes time and effort, but according to the Center and its partners, the partnerships are an important part of how they serve their clients. Partnerships have helped individual agencies to gain strength and expand over the years. Through trust and collaboration, partners serve more clients, obtain grants, reduce duplication of services, and leverage resources.

Collaboration has worked for these Idaho partners for many reasons, but most importantly because they understand that they share the same goal: to help adults get better jobs and achieve self-sufficiency. As Rex Fairfield, director of the Adult Education Center, says,

*The success of our program has been greatly enhanced through all of the collaborative partnerships in our region. There is a sense of trust and cooperation, rather than competition....This has freed each of us to focus on our own agency’s core services, rather than trying to duplicate services. The ultimate benefits have been that we each meet our goals and, more importantly, that the needs of our clients are met in a more efficient manner.*

There is broad agreement among the partners that cooperation leads to better services for the clients. As one partner noted, “No one entity can do everything.” Rather than reinventing the wheel and duplicating services, these organizations believe partnerships are the best way to stretch dollars and leverage resources: “We partner for survival and have never seen a reason not to partner.”

Customer Name:

Today's Date:

Referring Agency:

Referred To:

NORTH IDAHO  
ONE STOP PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

**Adult Basic Education  
Center for New Directions**  
North Idaho College  
1000 Garden Avenue  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
ABE: (208) 769-3450  
CND: (208) 769-3445

**Aging and Adult Services**  
1221 Ironwood Drive, Ste.  
102  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 667-3179

**Coeur d'Alene Tribe**  
P.O. Box 238  
De Smet, ID 83824  
Contact: (208) 274-2403

**Community Action Agency**  
4942 Industrial Ave.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 664-8757

**Dept. of Health & Welfare**  
1120 Ironwood Dr.  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 769-1456

**Goodwill Industries**  
1621 N. 3rd, Ste. 1100  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: 208-667-6463

**Idaho Commission for the  
Blind and Visually Impaired**  
2005 Ironwood Pkwy Ste. 224  
Coeur d'Alene ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 769-1411

**Idaho Division of  
Vocational Rehabilitation**  
1010 Ironwood Dr., Ste 101  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 769-1441

**Industrial Commission**  
1221 Ironwood Dr., Ste 100  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 769-1452

**Job Corps**  
118 N. 7th St. Suite B12  
Coeur d'Alene ID 83816  
Contact: (208) 667-3799

**Job Service  
Idaho Department of Labor**  
1221 Ironwood Drive  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 769-1558

**Panhandle Area Council**  
11100 N. Airport Drive  
Hayden, ID 838354  
Contact: (208) 772-0584

**TESH Inc.**  
4825 N. Industrial Place  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814  
Contact: (208) 765-5105

**Workforce  
Training Center**  
North Idaho College  
525 W. Clearwater Loop  
Post Falls, ID 83854  
Contact: (208) 769-3444

Referral slip