

Evaluation of the Minnesota Department of Correction's Career Navigators Program

Final Report

LOIS M. DAVIS, MICHELLE C. TOLBERT, SUSAN TURNER

Sponsored by Ascendium Education Group



For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RRA1132-1.

About RAND

The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest. To learn more about RAND, visit www.rand.org.

Research Integrity

Our mission to help improve policy and decisionmaking through research and analysis is enabled through our core values of quality and objectivity and our unwavering commitment to the highest level of integrity and ethical behavior. To help ensure our research and analysis are rigorous, objective, and nonpartisan, we subject our research publications to a robust and exacting quality-assurance process; avoid both the appearance and reality of financial and other conflicts of interest through staff training, project screening, and a policy of mandatory disclosure; and pursue transparency in our research engagements through our commitment to the open publication of our research findings and recommendations, disclosure of the source of funding of published research, and policies to ensure intellectual independence. For more information, visit www.rand.org/about/principles.

RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif.

© 2022 RAND Corporation

RAND® is a registered trademark.

Limited Print and Electronic Distribution Rights

This publication and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law. This representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for noncommercial use only. Unauthorized posting of this publication online is prohibited; linking directly to its webpage on rand.org is encouraged. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of its research products for commercial purposes. For information on reprint and reuse permissions, please visit www.rand.org/pubs/permissions.

About This Report

In the context of the corrections system, career navigators assist people with college and training opportunities at the front end of the corrections process (while they are still incarcerated) and when they return to the community, identifying academic education and career technical education programs that align with their interests and that will enable them to earn certificates or degrees in their chosen fields. In recent years, career navigators have been increasingly viewed as an important part of correctional education, particularly given the significant increase in postsecondary education opportunities for incarcerated individuals.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) recognized a key gap in its education strategic plan—the lack of career navigators—and conceived the Career Navigators (CN) program to address this gap. The Ascendium Education Group (formerly the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation) awarded a grant to the RAND Corporation, in partnership with RTI International, to conduct an independent evaluation of the MNDOC’s CN program.

This research report presents the final findings from RAND’s evaluation of the CN program. This report should be of interest to educators who develop and provide education programs for incarcerated adults, subject-matter experts who study correctional education, and to policymakers.

Justice Policy Program

RAND Social and Economic Well-Being is a division of the RAND Corporation that seeks to actively improve the health and social and economic well-being of populations and communities throughout the world. This research was conducted in the Justice Policy Program within RAND Social and Economic Well-Being. The program focuses on such topics as access to justice, policing, corrections, drug policy, and court system reform, as well as other policy concerns pertaining to public safety and criminal and civil justice. For more information, email justicepolicy@rand.org.

RAND Education and Labor

This study was also jointly undertaken by RAND Education and Labor, a division of the RAND Corporation that conducts research on early childhood through postsecondary education programs, workforce development, and programs and policies affecting workers, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy and decision-making. This study was sponsored by the Ascendium Education Group, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to helping people reach the education and career goals that matter to them. Ascendium invests in initiatives designed to increase the number of students from low-income backgrounds who complete postsecondary degrees, certificates and workforce training programs, with an emphasis on first-generation students, incarcerated adults, rural community members, students of color, and veterans. For more information, visit www.ascendiumphilanthropy.org

More information about RAND can be found at rand.org. Questions about this report should be directed to Lois_Davis@rand.org, and questions about RAND Education and Labor should be directed to educationandlabor@rand.org.

Acknowledgments

We appreciate the MNDOC Educational administrators and staff, career navigators, and other program staff, as well the program participants, who facilitated data collection and participated in in-person and

phone interviews and focus groups, shared materials, and provided feedback on the different aspects of our research.

We also wish to thank Richard Donohue at RAND and Margaret diZerega at the Vera Institute of Justice for their thoughtful review of this report.

Summary

Introduction

Career navigators assist individuals with college and training opportunities when they return to the community and at the front end of the corrections process (while they are incarcerated) to identify academic education and career technical education (CTE) programs that align with their interests and that will enable them to earn certificates or degrees in their chosen fields. In recent years, career navigators have been increasingly viewed as an important part of correctional education, particularly given the significant increase in postsecondary education opportunities for incarcerated individuals. As a result, there is growing recognition of a need for career navigators. Much of the focus in the corrections system to date has been on *reentry navigators*—people who help incarcerated individuals with the reentry process when they leave prison and return to their communities.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) recognized a key gap in its education strategic plan—the lack of career navigators—and conceived the Career Navigators (CN) program to address this gap. As part of CN program, MNDOC hired four career navigators to serve at six MNDOC correctional facilities, with the goal of serving up to 650 participants per year. In addition, the MNDOC agreed to participate in an evaluation process, including tracking, documenting, and providing the necessary data. The Ascendium Education Group (formerly the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation) awarded a grant to the RAND Corporation, in partnership with RTI International, to conduct an independent process and outcomes evaluation of the MNDOC’s CN program.

The process and outcomes evaluations assessed the implementation of the CN program, including who accessed CN services, how successful incarcerated individuals were in developing education and CTE plans and in completing their programs, and how successful released individuals who received CN services were in finding employment in the fields they were trained in. Additionally, the assessment of the CN program also reviewed how successful people interested in pursuing an associate’s or higher degree were in enrolling in community colleges to continue their education. We discuss the results of the process and outcomes evaluations in the next subsections.

This report presents the final findings from the process and outcomes evaluation of the CN program.

Process Evaluation Results

To conduct the evaluation, we undertook a qualitative data-collection effort in 2019–2020, including 29 interviews (with the career navigators, state staff, facility wardens, education directors, and CTE instructors) and focus groups with 30 incarcerated students. Here, we summarize the qualitative results across categories.

Although MNDOC Education consulted with other state staff in its design of the CN program, those who oversaw the EMPLOY¹ and transition coordinator programs felt that they should have been more involved in identifying gaps in services, determining how best to avoid duplication, and leveraging existing resources.

¹ The MNDOC’s industry program is called MINNCOR Industries. MINNCOR’s EMPLOY program helps people capitalize on the work skills and training obtained while incarcerated to find suitable employment after release (see National Institute of Justice, 2017).

Some staff felt that the career navigators should have focused primarily on education rather than employment, instead of employment assistance, which was a focus of the EMPLOY program.

Still, a range of facility staff noted that the CN program fit well with the mission of the MNDOC, provided needed help to incarcerated individuals transitioning back into the community, and addressed a gap in the MNDOC's ability to track individuals after release. Students also reported a need for CN's services, with some expressing concerns that their current CTE programs did not align with their career interests and many expressing concerns about finding employment after release. They felt that the CN services would help address both sets of concerns.

There were several communication and coordination challenges in the first year of the initiative. Because the career navigators had to be hired through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development instead of the MNDOC, they were initially not seen as part of the education team.

There was also confusion about the role of the career navigators. Although facility administration and staff were briefed about their role, there was still confusion among EMPLOY staff and transition coordinators when the career navigators initially started working in the facilities. The students also did not seem to know the difference between career navigators and other service providers. The development of the CN handbook helped the career navigators solidify the different aspects of their job and determine how their roles and responsibilities aligned with other supports available at the facilities and in the communities.

Lack of a common student tracking system meant that the career navigators, EMPLOY staff, and transition coordinators did not know who was meeting with which students and when appointments were scheduled. The EMPLOY staff and career navigators also were not coordinating their contacts with employers.

Despite early implementation challenges, the CN program was beginning to address gaps in services and shortcomings noted by other facility staff. There were also plans to expand the CN program's target population to include adult education students and services to include a greater emphasis on supporting transition to postsecondary education after release. The CN supervisor also hoped the career navigators could begin supporting the American Job Centers in the facilities. However, the CN program was unable to make these changes before the end of the grant funding. The end of the program meant that the career navigators were only able to follow students out in the community until early summer 2020. This, in turn, had implications for the outcomes analysis.

Delays in implementing the CN program had implications for the full implementation of the CN model. Although the grant period began in 2018, the six-month delay in hiring meant that the four career navigators were not put into place until March 2019. It then took several months for the CN program to develop a CN handbook and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the career navigators. The CN program did not begin recruitment of CTE students and service provision until July–August 2019. Furthermore, because of an incident in one facility, which resulted in the death of a correctional officer, all CTE programming was suspended for some time, so the CN program was no longer viable to provide services to students in that facility.

The result was that the career navigators were only able to provide services to program participants from April–May 2019 to approximately May 2020. This meant that many CN program participants received services upon release from prison for only for a few months. Only 44 percent of CN participants had been released by August 2020, when the CN program ended. Because of this, it was difficult to assess the program as a whole, per original intentions.

Outcomes Evaluation Results

Our analyses of the outcomes for CN program participants and comparison groups revealed few members of the comparison group (20 percent [or 60 out of 238 people]) had been released from prison. As a result, as discussed in Chapter Five, we were unable to conduct planned propensity score matching to statistically control

for differences among the groups. Results are thus descriptive analyses. Our findings on recidivism reveal no differences between CN program participants and comparison group members—either in the percentage who return to prison or the type of return. Employment findings are also similar for both groups. About half of the people in each group were employed at some point during the first year after their release from prison. Individuals participated in a variety of employment sectors, including construction, food service, and retail trade. Earnings for those who were employed averaged between \$10,000 and \$12,000 for the year.

Conclusions

The concept of the career navigators helped fill an important gap in the overall educational plan for MNDOC. Our evaluation was affected by challenges throughout program implementation and by the early termination of the program. As a result, we were unable to conduct a robust outcomes evaluation of the CN program. Although we were unable to measure the effectiveness of the CN program in the context of no significant implementation delays, we believe the insights from the process evaluation provide important lessons learned. The experience of MNDOC in implementing the CN program is instructive for other states considering implementing a similar type of program for students who are incarcerated. For example, the MNDOC's experience underscored the importance of obtaining buy-in from other staff providing educational and reentry services, as well as ensuring close coordination and communication to enable the career navigators to become an integral part of the overall rehabilitative process.

Contents

About This Report	iii
Summary	v
Figures and Tables	xi
CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	1
Goals and Purpose of the MNDOC’s Career Navigators Program.....	1
Evaluation Goals and Approach.....	2
Process Evaluation.....	2
Outcomes Evaluation.....	3
Scoping.....	4
Road Map for This Report.....	4
CHAPTER TWO	
The Sample	5
Methods.....	5
Background Characteristics of the Two Groups.....	6
CHAPTER THREE	
Process Evaluation Findings	13
Approach.....	13
Context on Career Navigators Program.....	13
Project Timeline.....	13
Career Navigators.....	13
Process Evaluation Results: Implementation Challenges, Successes, and Lessons Learned.....	18
Conception.....	18
Onboarding.....	19
Communication and Coordination.....	19
Delays in Implementing the Career Navigators Program.....	20
Promising Features of Career Navigators Program.....	20
CHAPTER FOUR	
Review of Career Navigator Programs	23
Approach.....	23
Literature Review Results.....	23
Legislation.....	24
Research Studies.....	25
Career Navigator Resources.....	26
State Examples.....	26
Findings from Comparative Review of Navigator Programs.....	29

CHAPTER FIVE

Outcomes Evaluation Findings..... 31

 Approach..... 31

 Outcomes Findings..... 32

 Recidivism..... 32

 Employment..... 33

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions..... 35

 Findings..... 35

 Process Evaluation Findings..... 35

 Comparison of the MNDOC's Career Navigators Program with Other Types of Career Navigators..... 36

 Outcomes Evaluation Findings..... 37

 Summary..... 37

APPENDIXES

A. DEED Description for the Career Navigator Position..... 39

B. Detailed Employment Tables..... 49

Abbreviations..... 61

References..... 63

Figures and Tables

Figures

- 3.1. Project Timeline 14
- 3.2. Section of MNDOC Adult Education Flow Chart Highlighting Need for Career Coach 15

Tables

- 1.1. Minnesota Correctional Facilities with the Career Navigators Program 2
- 2.1. Background Characteristics of the Career Navigator Program Participants and Comparison Group 6
- 2.2. Background Characteristics—Risk, Commitment County, and Offense Categories: Career Navigator Program Participants and Comparison Group 9
- 4.1. Persistence and Completion: Support Networks and Peers 29
- 4.2. Common Career Navigator Roles, Responsibilities, and Hiring and Training Practices 29
- 5.1. Study Sample Released for Study Follow-Up 31
- 5.2. Sample Follow-Up Time Distribution 32
- 5.3. Recidivism Outcomes 33
- 5.4. Employment During First Year After Release from Prison 34
- B.1. Detailed Employment Results for Individuals Employed After Release 49

Introduction

Career navigators assist people with college and training opportunities when they return to the community and at the front end of the corrections process (while they are still incarcerated) to identify academic education and career technical education (CTE) programs that align with their interests and that will enable them to earn certificates or degrees in their chosen fields. In recent years, career navigators have been increasingly viewed as being an important part of correctional education, particularly given the significant increase in postsecondary education opportunities for individuals who are incarcerated. Much of the focus in correctional systems to date has been on *reentry navigators*—people who help incarcerated individuals traverse the reentry process when they leave prison and return to their communities. Career navigators, however, can help with the reentry process and continue to provide support in the community. This work is contingent on developing partnerships with education providers, prison and community corrections staff, workforce development agencies, employers, and support service providers.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections (MNDOC) recognized a key gap in its education strategic plan—the lack of career navigators—and conceived the Career Navigator (CN) program to address this gap. The Ascendium Education Group (formerly the Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation) awarded a grant to the RAND Corporation, in partnership with RTI International, to conduct an independent process and outcomes evaluation of the MNDOC’s CN program. This report presents the final findings of the process and outcomes evaluation of the CN program.

Goals and Purpose of the MNDOC’s Career Navigator Program

According to the MNDOC’s proposal to the Ascendium Education Group, the CN program was intended to provide academic and career guidance to incarcerated individuals enrolled in CTE programs or those wanting to enroll in a CTE program. Career navigators were to get those individuals into CTE programs that aligned with their career interests. When students completed the programs needed or were soon to be released from prison, career navigators would then assist them with a plan to transition to employment. In this phase, the career navigators would help all CTE participants connect with employers and with the process of creating résumés, preparing for interviews, and securing employment. The MNDOC hired four career navigators to serve the six MNDOC correctional facilities, with the goal of serving up to 650 participants per year. In addition, the MNDOC agreed to participate in the evaluation process, including tracking, documenting, and providing the necessary data to RAND for a process and outcomes evaluation.

Table 1.1 describes the six correctional facilities where the CN program was implemented.¹ They included the only women’s prison in the state—Shakopee—as well as facilities with varying security levels.

¹ Originally, seven facilities were considered for the CN program.

TABLE 1.1
Minnesota Correctional Facilities with the Career Navigators Program

Minnesota Correctional Facilities (MCF)	Description
Faribault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: Level 2 minimum, Level 3 medium • 2,000 men, medium-security facility • Faribault, the largest facility in the MDNOC system, contains a medium-security facility and two minimum-security units located outside the secure perimeter.
Rush City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: Level 4 close • Rush City houses 1,000 adult males in a high-security setting. The Minnesota Department of Corrections industries program (MINNCOR) at the facility focuses on providing production space and offender labor to the business community through subcontract services. Rush City opened in 2000 and is the MNDOC's newest facility.
Stillwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: Level 2 minimum, Level 4 close • Built in 1914, Stillwater is the state's largest close-security institution for adult male felons. The facility has seven living units inside and a minimum-security unit outside the main perimeter. • As of September 22, 2020, Stillwater had a total of 1,279 adult offenders currently at this facility.
Lino Lakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: Level 2 minimum, Level 3 medium • 1,300 men, medium-security facility • This facility has the highest concentration of educational and treatment programs. In many cases, offenders serve the final phase of their sentences at Lino Lakes so they can obtain the services they need to prepare for release.
Shakopee (women-only facility)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: All security levels • 621 women • Since 1911, Minnesota has housed all its female offenders at this facility.
Moose Lake/ Willow River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Custody level: Level 3 medium, Level 2 minimum • There are more than 1,000 male inmates at a Level 3 medium security prison off Highway 73 in Moose Lake and another 180 minimum-security inmates at the Challenge Incarceration Program (CIP) facility in Willow River. • Moose Lake is the former Moose Lake Regional Treatment Center. Conversion to a correctional facility began in 1988.

SOURCE: MNDOC, undated-a.

Evaluation Goals and Approach

The process and outcomes evaluations assessed the implementation of the CN program, including who accessed career navigator services, how successful incarcerated individuals were in developing education and CTE plans and in completing their programs, how successful released individuals who received career navigator services were in finding employment in the fields they were trained in. Additionally, the assessment of the CN program also reviewed how successful people interested in pursuing an associate's or higher degree were in enrolling in community colleges to continue their educations. We discuss each evaluation in the next subsections.

Process Evaluation

The process evaluation aimed to assess and document the MNDOC Education's experience in designing and implementing the CN program. Our goal was to capture information on who receives career navigator services, the type of services and guidance received, students' progress in CTE and other education programs, and reentry planning and linkage to employment and colleges. As part of the process evaluation, we also documented successes and challenges, adjustments made to the program, and lessons learned. We were also interested in CN participants' perceptions of the program and their experiences with the program and reentry.

To conduct the process evaluation, we originally planned two site visits to the correctional facilities where the CN program was primarily being implemented in years 1 and 2. For each site visit, we also planned to conduct focus groups with individuals who were accessing career navigator services to learn about their goals, experiences with the program, progress toward their CTE and educational goals, and experiences with reentry. In addition, we wanted to obtain their input on how the program might be improved. We also planned to conduct interviews with career navigators, MNDOC Educational staff, employment firms and community colleges, and other community partners involved with the program.

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic affected our ability to fully conduct the process evaluation per our original plans. Specifically, we were unable to conduct the second in-person site visit planned for summer 2020. This meant that we were unable to conduct the second round of focus groups with CN participants. Our hope was to focus on those CN participants who had returned to the community to learn about their experiences with reentry and the program, their support needs, and suggestions for improving the program. Thus, we obtained participants' perspectives that represent only the early phases of the CN program. Also, if we had been able to conduct the second site visit planned for 2020, our goal was to conduct interviews with employers who were involved with the CN program.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from obtaining their perspective. However, we were able to conduct in-person interviews with the career navigators at an American Correctional Association meeting in January 2020 and during telephone interviews in September 2020 to obtain an update on the activities of the career navigators and on their feedback about the program and lessons learned. We also conducted telephone interviews with MNDOC Education staff in charge of the CN program both in spring and summer 2020 to similarly obtain an update on the program, to obtain program data, and to capture their lessons learned and perspectives about what worked well and where there were opportunities for improvement.

Outcomes Evaluation

The aim of the outcomes evaluation was to assess whether individuals were employed post-release and whether participation in the CN program impacted post-release recidivism. The outcomes evaluation involved working closely with MNDOC to identify key outcome measures and to undertake data collection for the outcomes study. The primary outcomes of interest post-release from prison were (1) employment outcomes (e.g., post-release employment) and (2) criminal justice (CJ) outcomes (e.g., reduction in return to custody compared with those who did not participate in the CN program). Randomization to the CN program was not possible, and our original plan was to use propensity score matching (PSM)² to identify a comparison group among those who had participated in CTE during the study period but had not received CN services. As we discuss in Chapter Five, too few comparison group members had been released from prison during our study period to use PSM. To measure post-release outcomes, a student would have been in the community for, ideally, one year post-release to assess the impact of the CN pilot program on improving employment outcomes and reducing recidivism. All members of the outcomes-analysis sample had at least six months of follow-up time in the community; the majority had 12 months of follow-up.

Review of Career Navigator Programs

To develop a more comprehensive understanding of the career navigator position, we conducted a comparative analysis of other navigator programs in spring and summer 2021, comparing and contrasting them with

² *Propensity score matching* is a quasi-experimental approach that statistically creates an artificial comparison group for a treatment group and helps allow stronger causal inference (Rosenbaum and Rubin, 1983).

the MNDOC CN program and drawing out the broader lessons learned across these programs to help inform people interested in implementing similar types of programs.

To do the analysis, we conducted a targeted literature review of federal legislation, research studies, online manuals, job profiles, and a career navigator certification program. We also interviewed two state program directors, in Indiana and Washington, who oversee similar reentry-focused career navigator staff. The interviews were guided by a semistructured interview protocol that addressed the following topics: roles and responsibilities of navigator staff; hiring and training of navigators; program infrastructure; and successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Scoping

Several challenges and early termination of the program affected our evaluation. The start of the CN program was delayed because of a violent incident at one of Minnesota's prisons, which suspended all programming for months. In addition, delays in hiring career navigators because of their employment classification and earlier-than-expected termination of the program precluded an examination of a full-fledged program operating over a stable period of time, with outcomes examined for a robust sample. We were, however, able to document key implementation experiences and challenges and provide short-term outcome information for a number of program participants.

Road Map for This Report

In Chapter Two, we provide an overview of the sample that would be analyzed for the outcomes analysis and descriptive statistics comparing CN program participants with the comparison group (i.e., those individuals who participated in CTE programming during the relevant time period but did not receive CN services). In Chapter Three, we summarize our findings from the process evaluation. In Chapter Four, we present the results of our review of CN programs and how the CN program compares with other efforts in this area. Chapter Five presents the results of the outcomes analysis. Chapter Six summarizes key findings and lessons learned for stakeholders from other states that might be interested in implementing similar CN programs for this population.

To provide an understanding of what career navigator positions typically entail, we include the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) description for the career navigator position in Appendix A. Appendix B presents the detailed employment findings for the numbers of individuals who were employed after release from prison, by quarter; the number employed during the first year after release; and their earnings.

The Sample

Ultimately, we want to know about the CN program’s effectiveness in terms of services delivered and recidivism and employment outcomes after participants are released back to the community. Recall that one of the noted strengths of the CN program is that it would provide three years of follow-up once an individual has returned to the community—much longer than current EMPLOY¹ services, which were operational before the start of the CN program. To understand the effectiveness of the CN program, we need to compare the program with a business-as-usual or another comparison group to see how the CN outcomes differ. Ideally, a random-assignment research design, in which eligible participants are assigned to either the CN program or a comparison group on an equal-probability basis, would be used. In this way, the only difference between the two groups would be the program itself—not differences in the background characteristics of the two groups, which might be responsible for any observed differences in outcomes. However, we were unable to use a random-assignment design; instead, we used a quasi-experimental design for our current evaluation in which we “matched” the CN participants with comparison group participants who participated in CTE programs during a window between March 2019 through June 30, 2020.²

In this chapter, following a discussion of our methods, we provide an overview of the sample used for the outcomes evaluation results presented in Chapter Five. Specifically, we present the descriptive statistics on the background characteristics of the CN program participants and the comparison group.

Methods

For the comparison of background characteristics, we first needed to determine who was in the CN program participant study and the comparison group. CN program staff members provided us with an Excel file that contained information they compiled about individuals for the program using lists of people assigned to CTE programs. Career navigators approached individuals in CTE programs to determine their interest in receiving CN services. During the evaluation, some of these individuals were participating in CTE programs but were not approached by the CN program about their interest; some of those the career navigators approached declined to participate; others agreed to participate but later dropped out; and others continued in the CN program. Therefore, for the study sample, we included individuals who had agreed to participate in the CN program and who partook of at least some of the CN services provided from March 2019 through June 2020. This resulted in 373 participants. The CN program database contained a number of variables, including the location of the prison, date of release, career field of interest, CTE class list and certifications, and recommended services.

¹ MINNCOR’s EMPLOY program helps offenders capitalize on their work skills and training they obtained while incarcerated to find suitable employment after release (see MND0C, 2011).

² CNs began recruiting individuals into the program in March 2019.

For our comparison group, we requested data from the MNDOC Research and Performance Office on all individuals who had participated in CTE between March 2019 and June 2020. Individuals who were in this database, who did not participate in any CN services, were defined as the comparison group. Variables provided by the Research and Performance Office on CN program participants and the comparison group included a number of background demographic variables, prior records, current offenses, and risk levels captured primarily by the Minnesota Screening Tool Assessing Recidivism Risk (MnSTARR).³

Background Characteristics of the Two Groups

Table 2.1 presents the background characteristics of CN program participants and the comparison group between March 2019 and June 2020. We begin with a discussion of the characteristics of CN program participants shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 followed by a discussion of the comparison group.

The vast majority of CN program participants were men, with a median age of 33 (Table 2.1). Almost two-thirds of participants were White, while 28 percent were Black. About 5 percent were of Hispanic ethnicity. The vast majority of CN program participants were not married (92.2 percent). Almost all CN program participants had completed a secondary education degree, with almost three-quarters having a postsecondary degree. Although the CN program was provided in six prison facilities, almost 40 percent of the participants were at Faribault prison, 16.6 percent at Moose Lake, 12.1 percent at Shakopee, and 11.3 percent at Rush City. Very small percentages of CN program participants were at other prison facilities in the state.

TABLE 2.1
Background Characteristics of the Career Navigator Program Participants and Comparison Group

	Group			p value
	CN Program Participants (N = 373)	Comparison (N = 298)	Total (N = 671)	
Age				0.8456 ^a
Mean (SD)	34.5 (9.16)	34.6 (9.84)	34.6 (9.46)	
Median	33.0	33.0	33.0	
Range	19.0, 68.0	19.0, 71.0	19.0, 71.0	
Gender (n, %)				<0.0001 ^b
Women	45 (12.1%)	10 (3.4%)	55 (8.2%)	
Men	328 (87.9%)	288 (96.6%)	616 (91.8%)	
Race (n, %)				0.2342 ^b
American Indian or Alaskan Native	27 (7.2%)	23 (7.7%)	50 (7.5%)	
Asian or Pacific Islander	4 (1.1%)	8 (2.7%)	12 (1.8%)	

³ MNDOC began using MnSTARR in 2013 to assess recidivism risk for its prison population (Duwe and Rocque, 2019).

TABLE 2.1—CONTINUED

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 373)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 298)	Total (<i>N</i> = 671)	
Black	106 (28.4%)	96 (32.2%)	202 (30.1%)	
Unknown	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.1%)	
White	236 (63.3%)	170 (57.0%)	406 (60.5%)	
Ethnicity (<i>n</i>, %)				0.5519 ^b
Hispanic	20 (5.4%)	13 (4.4%)	33 (4.9%)	
Non-Hispanic	353 (94.6%)	285 (95.6%)	638 (95.1%)	
Married (<i>n</i>, %)				0.1426 ^b
0. No	344 (92.2%)	265 (88.9%)	609 (90.8%)	
1. Yes	29 (7.8%)	33 (11.1%)	62 (9.2%)	
Secondary degree (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0326 ^b
0. No	6 (1.6%)	13 (4.4%)	19 (2.8%)	
1. Yes	367 (98.4%)	285 (95.6%)	652 (97.2%)	
Postsecondary degree (<i>n</i>, %)				<0.0001 ^b
0. No	103 (27.6%)	167 (56.0%)	270 (40.2%)	
1. Yes	270 (72.4%)	131 (44.0%)	401 (59.8%)	
Facility (<i>n</i>, %)				<0.0001 ^b
Faribault	143 (38.3%)	108 (36.2%)	251 (37.4%)	
Faribault Minimum	7 (1.9%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (1.0%)	
Lino Lakes	43 (11.5%)	9 (3.0%)	52 (7.7%)	
Moose Lake	62 (16.6%)	5 (1.7%)	67 (10.0%)	
Oak Park Heights	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)	
Red Wing	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)	
Rush City	42 (11.3%)	18 (6.0%)	60 (8.9%)	
Shakopee	45 (12.1%)	4 (1.3%)	49 (7.3%)	
St. Cloud	1 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.1%)	
Stillwater	19 (5.1%)	7 (2.3%)	26 (3.9%)	
Stillwater Minimum	1 (0.3%)	2 (0.7%)	3 (0.4%)	
Togo	3 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (0.4%)	
Willow River	5 (1.3%)	4 (1.3%)	9 (1.3%)	
Facility information missing	0 (0.0%)	141 (47.3%)	141 (21.0%)	

NOTE: SD = standard deviation.

^aKruskal-Wallis *p* value.^bChi-square *p* value. Under “facility,” we list more than the six prisons where the CN program was implemented because the comparison group could also come from other facilities.

CN program participants represented all risk levels—almost one-quarter of CN program participants were represented in the four groups defined as low, medium, high, and very high (Table 2.2).⁴ CN program participants have substantial prior records. More than half had 12 or more total convictions, with almost half having five or more felony convictions. Table 2.2 presents the percentage of participants who have convictions for different crime types (e.g., violent, drug, property), as well as the quantity of prior convictions. Almost three-quarters had a violent prior conviction; more than half had a prior drug conviction; and nearly two-thirds had a property offense conviction. Forty-four percent had juvenile convictions in their prior record, and more than half experienced prison-discipline convictions. Half of the CN program participants had been sentenced to their current terms for violent offenses (about 35 percent for nonsexual violent offenses and almost 15 percent for sexually violent offenses). About 15 percent had been sentenced for drug offenses, and almost 10 percent for property offenses.

A comparison of the background characteristics shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 of CN program participants with the constructed comparison group shows that, although the comparison and CN program participants are similar in terms of age, race, ethnicity, and marital status, the two groups differ on many background characteristics, especially related to prior records. CN program participants appear to be higher risk and have more prior drug and property convictions. The current offenses of CN program participants are more likely to be drug offenses. CN program participants have fewer violent convictions and prison disciplinary convictions. CN program participants are also more likely to have completed secondary education and much more likely to have received a postsecondary degree. The distribution of CN program participants and the comparison group is also different, but this most likely reflects the location of career navigators at their assigned prisons.

These differences in background characteristics should be taken into account when conducting the outcomes evaluation and providing outcomes for CN program participants and the comparison group. The original plan was to control for these differences using propensity score analyses, which effectively smooth out differences between the two groups to obtain the best estimate of the effect of the CN program on ultimate participant outcomes. As shown in the subsequent chapter about outcomes, too few individuals had been released from prison, especially from the CN program, to conduct any other analyses than descriptive analyses.

⁴ Risk level was calculated by the MNDOC Research and Performance Office and is one of the variables in MnSTARR. Risk levels are determined by the recidivism probability or probabilities that meet(s) or exceed(s) the highest risk level cut point (MNDOC, undated-b).

TABLE 2.2
Background Characteristics—Risk, Commitment County, and Offense Categories: Career Navigator Program Participants and Comparison Group

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 373)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 298)	Total (<i>N</i> = 671)	
Risk level (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0022 ^a
High	91 (24.4%)	54 (18.1%)	145 (21.6%)	
Low	93 (24.9%)	108 (36.2%)	201 (30.0%)	
Medium	94 (25.2%)	53 (17.8%)	147 (21.9%)	
Very high	95 (25.5%)	83 (27.9%)	178 (26.5%)	
Commit county/metro indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.6816 ^a
0. No	106 (28.4%)	89 (29.9%)	195 (29.1%)	
1. Yes	267 (71.6%)	209 (70.1%)	476 (70.9%)	
Suicidal history (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0654 ^a
0. No	278 (74.5%)	240 (80.5%)	518 (77.2%)	
1. Yes	95 (25.5%)	58 (19.5%)	153 (22.8%)	
Total convictions (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0699 ^a
1–6	88 (23.6%)	86 (28.9%)	174 (25.9%)	
7–11	96 (25.7%)	68 (22.8%)	164 (24.4%)	
12–20	84 (22.5%)	81 (27.2%)	165 (24.6%)	
21+	105 (28.2%)	63 (21.1%)	168 (25.0%)	
Felony convictions (<i>n</i>, %)				0.6211 ^a
1–2	87 (23.3%)	82 (27.5%)	169 (25.2%)	
3–4	99 (26.5%)	73 (24.5%)	172 (25.6%)	
5–7	100 (26.8%)	73 (24.5%)	173 (25.8%)	
8+	87 (23.3%)	70 (23.5%)	157 (23.4%)	
Violent conviction (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0986 ^a
0. No	98 (26.3%)	62 (20.8%)	160 (23.8%)	
1. Yes	275 (73.7%)	236 (79.2%)	511 (76.2%)	
Violent conviction quantity				0.0247 ^b
<i>N</i>	373	298	671	
Mean (%)	2.0 (2.08)	2.4 (2.41)	2.2 (2.24)	
Median	1.0	2.0	2.0	
Range	0.0, 16.0	0.0, 17.0	0.0, 17.0	

TABLE 2.2—CONTINUED

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 373)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 298)	Total (<i>N</i> = 671)	
Drug conviction (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0226 ^a
0. No	176 (47.2%)	167 (56.0%)	343 (51.1%)	
1. Yes	197 (52.8%)	131 (44.0%)	328 (48.9%)	
Drug conviction quantity				0.0207 ^b
<i>N</i>	373	298	671	
Mean (SD)	1.5 (2.03)	1.2 (2.05)	1.4 (2.04)	
Median	1.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0, 13.0	0.0, 12.0	0.0, 13.0	
Property conviction (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0420 ^a
0. No	140 (37.5%)	135 (45.3%)	275 (41.0%)	
1. Yes	233 (62.5%)	163 (54.7%)	396 (59.0%)	
Property conviction quantity				0.0256 ^b
<i>N</i>	373	298	671	
Mean (SD)	2.7 (4.36)	2.1 (3.24)	2.4 (3.92)	
Median	1.0	1.0	1.0	
Range	0.0, 33.0	0.0, 20.0	0.0, 33.0	
Juvenile conviction (<i>n</i>, %)				0.4306 ^a
0. No	209 (56.0%)	176 (59.1%)	385 (57.4%)	
1. Yes	164 (44.0%)	122 (40.9%)	286 (42.6%)	
Juvenile conviction quantity				0.2127 ^b
<i>N</i>	373	298	671	
Mean (%)	2.1 (3.40)	1.7 (3.04)	1.9 (3.25)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0, 17.0	0.0, 15.0	0.0, 17.0	
Prison discipline conviction (<i>n</i>, %)				0.2171 ^a
0. No	159 (42.6%)	113 (37.9%)	272 (40.5%)	
1. Yes	214 (57.4%)	185 (62.1%)	399 (59.5%)	
Prison discipline conviction quantity				0.0122 ^b
<i>N</i>	373	298	671	
Mean (SD)	6.3 (15.34)	10.5 (21.03)	8.1 (18.20)	
Median	1.0	2.0	2.0	
Range	0.0, 129.0	0.0, 132.0	0.0, 132.0	

TABLE 2.2—CONTINUED

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 373)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 298)	Total (<i>N</i> = 671)	
Offense category nonsexual violence indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.09102
0. No	244 (65.4%)	176 (59.1%)	420 (62.6%)	
1. Yes	129 (34.6%)	122 (40.9%)	251 (37.4%)	
Offense category sexual indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.13362
0. No	319 (85.5%)	242 (81.2%)	561 (83.6%)	
1. Yes	54 (14.5%)	56 (18.8%)	110 (16.4%)	
Offense category drug indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.03692
0. No	296 (79.4%)	255 (85.6%)	551 (82.1%)	
1. Yes	77 (20.6%)	43 (14.4%)	120 (17.9%)	
Offense category property indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.11062
0. No	338 (90.6%)	280 (94.0%)	618 (92.1%)	
1. Yes	35 (9.4%)	18 (6.0%)	53 (7.9%)	
Offense category DWI indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.77382
0. No	356 (95.4%)	283 (95.0%)	639 (95.2%)	
1. Yes	17 (4.6%)	15 (5.0%)	32 (4.8%)	
Offense category other indicator (<i>n</i>, %)				0.57352
0. No	312 (83.6%)	254 (85.2%)	566 (84.4%)	
1. Yes	61 (16.4%)	44 (14.8%)	105 (15.6%)	

NOTE: DWI = driving while intoxicated.

^aChi-square *p* value.^bKruskal-Wallis *p* value.

Process Evaluation Findings

In the previous chapter, we provided quantitative descriptive statistics on those in the CN program and those in the comparison group. That quantitative data will be used when we conduct the outcomes evaluation. In this chapter, we discuss the qualitative information we collected that was the basis of our findings from the process evaluation.

Approach

Qualitative data for the process evaluation were collected through 29 interviews and focus groups with 30 incarcerated students in 2019–2020. Specifically, in 2019, we conducted a two-day site visit in August that focused on the two prison facilities where the CN program was up and running. The site visit was conducted approximately six months after the career navigators were hired and working. During the site visit, we conducted 15 interviews with state staff, career navigators, facility wardens and education directors, and CTE instructors. We also conducted focus groups with 15 students who were receiving CN services and 15 students who had declined CN services, for a total of 30 focus group participants. After the site visit, in November 2019, phone interviews were also conducted with four EMPLOY staff and transition coordinators.

In January 2020, career navigators presented at the American Correctional Association conference in San Diego, California. A member of our project team attended career navigators' presentations and then conducted interviews with four navigators. We also conducted a phone interview with the EMPLOY director. Finally, phone interviews were conducted with two state educational staff in July 2020 and with the three remaining career navigators in November 2020.

From these data-collection efforts, we learned that career navigators were well suited for the services they were providing the CTE students but that more communication and coordination were needed early on to facilitate the career navigators' integration into the existing infrastructure. The following section offers context for the program, and the final section in this chapter provides a summary of the qualitative results, including implementation challenges and lessons learned.

Context on Career Navigators Program

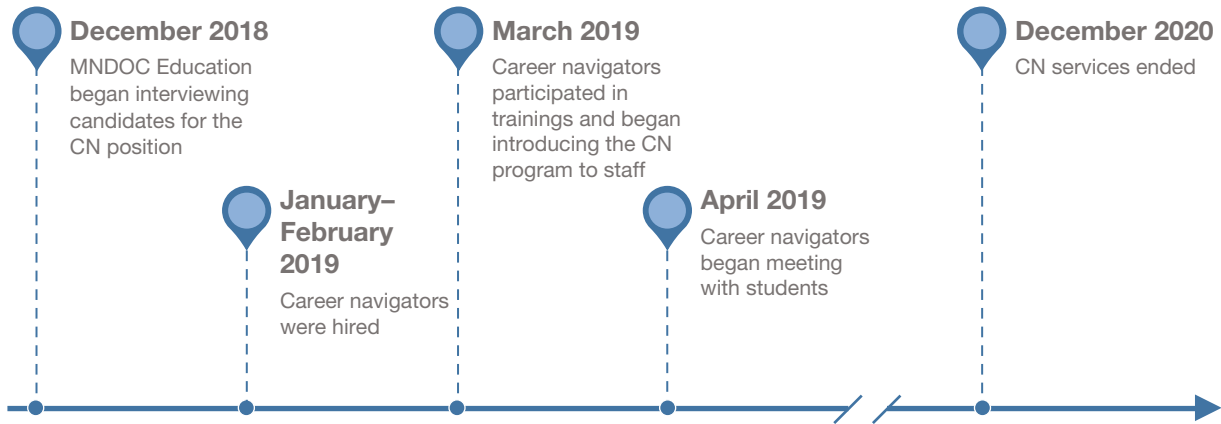
Project Timeline

Figure 3.1 shows the project timeline, including when the career navigators were hired and trained and when CN services began and ended.

Career Navigators

MNDOC Education identified the need for the career navigator position when developing its 2016–2018 Master Academic Plan (MAP), which included a flow chart (see Figure 3.2) that highlighted the need for

FIGURE 3.1
Project Timeline



a career coach/navigator (Minnesota Correctional Education Center [MCEC], 2016).¹ The prison facilities had some existing supports—case managers, EMPLOY staff, and transition coordinators (see Box 1)—to help incarcerated individuals prepare for release. None of these support staff, however, focused specifically on providing academic and career guidance and post-release employment support to incarcerated CTE students. They also did not focus on collecting data on students’ post-release employment outcomes. The career navigators were hired to address this gap.

The Hiring Process

In early 2019, the MCEC and MNDOC Education staff selected four career navigators to provide career planning and employment support to incarcerated CTE students at six of its adult state prison facilities—Shakopee, Faribault, Stillwater, Lino Lakes, Rush City, and Moose Lake. The career navigators were hired by the MNDOC’s partner, the DEED, because no appropriate MNDOC employment code was available for the newly created position. The DEED position description defined the purpose of the career navigator as follows:

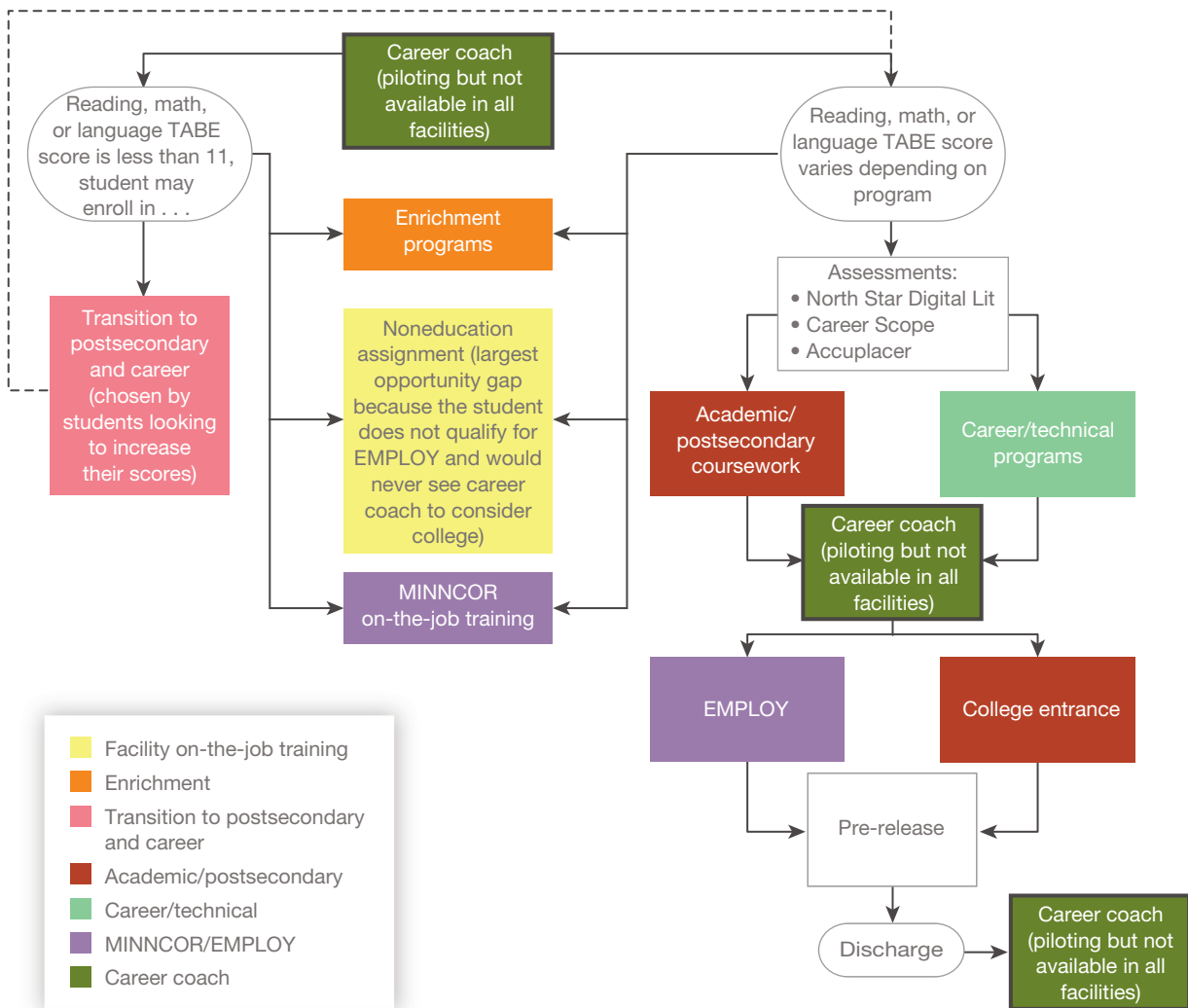
This position will work in a team setting utilizing primary partnerships with other state agencies, including DEED, DHS, and Minnesota state; it will also partner with MNDOC departments, including reentry, parole, case management, MINNCOR EMPLOY, and Transitions.

This position exists to provide advanced, comprehensive career planning, job search, and goal setting with many offenders in the MNDOC facilities to address the gap in the education flowchart. The incumbent will work with offenders as they transition to communities by assisting with the development of career planning and meaningful education goals and provide developmental and career-planning services, leading to the acquisition of employment and or completion of a college degree and/or career technical certification. The incumbent will be responsible for utilizing programming expertise to create appropriate release and employment plans for each participant.

The incumbent will serve as the primary link to employers to connect to job-ready offenders to employment by developing, validating, and qualifying new employment leads, establishing links with community resources and other state agency programs to provide seamless support services, creating partnerships to further expand the employer base in several different industries, and facilitating job placement.

¹ MCEC is the organizational structure for teaching and learning in the MNDOC.

FIGURE 3.2
Section of MNDOC Adult Education Flow Chart Highlighting Need for Career Coach



SOURCE: MCEC, 2016, p. 10.

The incumbent will be responsible for coordinating all reentry activities with MNDOC staff, WorkForce Center partners, education agencies, and community-based organizations to assist exoffenders obtain and retain employment.²

The position description also identified the following four responsibilities for the career navigators:

[Responsibility #1:] Research, market to, and meet with potential employers on behalf of program participants. Compile, maintain, and report employer data and participant employment data. Create high levels of communication with employment groups and other state agencies on the benefits of hiring exoffenders. Work with partnering agencies and MNDOC Education, DEED, and the Transitions, and Re-entry departments to provide a smooth continuum of service for participants upon release.

² See Appendix A for complete description.

[Responsibility #2:] Advising and participant case management: Use expertise in state agency programs and resources to make appropriate referrals for all participants. Provide regular group and/or individual participant contact sessions to address needs and collaborate with MNDOC Education staff and other career navigators to support at-risk participants. Serve as the primary liaison between MNDOC Education, DEED, DHS, Minnesota state, and employer partners to ensure that expectations, goals, and objectives are synchronized.

[Responsibility #3:] Maintain participant records and documentation: Gather and maintain all assigned participant case records and documentation in electronic and hard copy files. Use electronic expertise to ensure retention of data to include enrollment, assessment, support services, contact information, programs of study, and retention activities using DOC, DEED, DHS, U.S. Department of Labor, and local college reporting systems.

[Responsibility 4:] Follow all agency policies, state statutes, and statewide policies. Support the vision, mission, goals, and initiatives of the MNDOC.

MNDOC Education also sought to hire individuals with a mix of expertise in postsecondary education, workforce, corrections, and case management.

The career navigator hiring process was delayed approximately six months because of the MNDOC employment code issue. The career navigator interview process began in December 2018 and was completed in early 2019.

Training and Infrastructure

Once hired, each career navigator received 40 hours of MNDOC-required training, job readiness training with DEED, facility-specific training, and two days of MNDOC Education foundations training. The career navigators also received training in motivational interviewing, using the guidance provided in Finding True North – Role of the Navigator course (provided by the National College Transition Network at World Education) and the Offender Workforce Development Specialist program (provided by the National Institute of Corrections). Other onboarding activities included touring the CN-designated prison facilities, meeting with facility education directors, and observing CTE classes to learn about training programs available to incarcerated students.

The infrastructure supporting the career navigators included a supervisor, who was the MNDOC director of CTE, and a coordinator, who was the facility education director at another state prison, Oak Park Heights. The career navigators met twice per week in the beginning of the initiative. One of the meetings focused on developing the CN handbook, which outlined the protocols and processes for the career navigator position (e.g., developing the intake process, the method for electronic tracking, the approach to identifying jobs to match programming/MNDOC policies, materials and information to share with students, and the communication structure with students after release). Drafts of the handbook were then reviewed and approved by supervisor and coordinators. The second weekly meeting focused on reviewing student caseloads and sharing lessons learned. Supervisors and coordinators participated in most meetings by conference call or reviewed meeting minutes. Several months after being hired, the career navigators received cell phones and laptops, which helped them collect data and communicate with their students who were in the community.

Roles and Responsibilities

As noted in the position description, a primary responsibility of the career navigators was outreach and recruitment. Although the career navigators initially relied on their supervisor for contacts with employers, employer associations, and other community stakeholders, they were also charged with

- recruiting employers and associations to hold job fairs and interviews in the prison facilities and hire students after release
- developing and maintaining relationships with education directors at the prison facilities and other key staff members to provide support to students
- collaborating with reentry contacts at other state agencies to identify and share best practices
- cultivating strong partnerships with community-based organizations, state agencies, and colleges to help promote student success.

By developing these relationships, the career navigators intended to provide students with internal and external referrals.

Another primary career navigator responsibility was providing the CTE students with academic and career advice and case management support. The career navigators' direct work with the students began with CTE classroom presentations, where they provided an overview of the CN initiative and asked students to sign up for intake appointments. During intake, the career navigators asked students about their career goals and interests, discussed students' barriers and challenges, and, if time allowed, supported them with developing an education and career plan. The career navigators sought to conduct intake appointments with all CTE students, prioritizing those with an early release date. After intake, services were customized to students' needs. Possible services included

- developing/revising students' education and career plans
- providing advice about CTE programs and assisting with program enrollment
- connecting students to correspondence courses, if available CTE programs did not match students' career interests
- facilitating, organizing, and coordinating face-to-face opportunities for participants to meet and interview with employers
- holding mock interviews, assisting with résumé development, and providing other job search support
- assessing students' career interests using the Minnesota Career Information System.

The career navigators also worked with the students to prepare them for release and then kept in regular contact with them after release. The pre-release meeting typically occurred the week before release and was designed to help set expectations, have students complete an information form, and provide students with the career navigator's business cards. After release, the student was expected to call the career navigator. If that did not happen, the career navigator called them. After the initial phone call, the career navigators were required to follow up with students at 30-, 60-, 90-, and 180-day intervals. Had the CN program continued, the career navigators would have also followed up with students at one, two, and three years. The follow-ups initially occurred via email because the career navigators did not want to use their personal cell phones. Once the career navigators received cell phones from the MNDOC, they communicated with the students via text. As needed, the career navigators also would provide the students with support, such as reviewing résumés, making job referrals, and assistance with completing the federal student aid application and college enrollment. They also would connect students to housing assistance, behavioral health treatment, and other supports.

Another primary responsibility of the career navigators was to track participant progress in MNDOC programming and, after the student was released, to document the services they received while incarcerated, referrals that were made, and service-delivery outcomes. In addition to collecting information at the designated follow-up times, the career navigators also regularly followed up with employers to monitor participant progress, confirm employment retention, and address any issues.

Nonparticipants

Not all CTE students choose to receive CN services after the initial intake appointment. As summarized by the career navigators, reasons for declining services included

- already having a good job waiting for them after release
- being of retirement age and not planning to go back to work
- being transferred to another facility
- having an unrealistic expectation of what the career navigators could do for them.

Standard support services were available to those who declined CN services or who were not eligible to receive services. Standard support services included meeting with a case manager and transition coordinator while incarcerated and, when participating in MINNCOR, receiving support from the EMPLOY staff. Post-release services included working with the assigned parole agent and accessing other public support services, such as American Job Centers.

Process Evaluation Results: Implementation Challenges, Successes, and Lessons Learned

Over the nearly two years that the career navigators provided services in the facilities and community, MNDOC Education and the career navigators experienced challenges, successes, and lessons learned. The following sections describe these experiences—from the initial conception of the program to what happened once the career navigators began working in the facilities and community. Because of COVID-19, however, most of the qualitative data collected came from the career navigators' experiences in the facilities.

Conception

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, MNDOC Education conceived of the CN position when developing its 2016–2018 MAP. Although MNDOC Education consulted with other state staff, including those who oversaw the EMPLOY and transition coordinator programs, some disconnects remained. EMPLOY staff and transition coordinators, for example, felt that they should have been more involved in the beginning to help with identifying gaps in services, determining how best to avoid duplication, and leveraging existing resources. Had they been more engaged, the EMPLOY staff would have recommended that the career navigators focus primarily on education rather than employment, because employment assistance was a focus of the EMPLOY program.

Despite these criticisms, various facility staff noted that the career navigators fit well with the MNDOC's mission, provided needed help to incarcerated individuals transitioning back into the community, and addressed a gap in the MNDOC's ability to track individuals after release. An associate warden said, "Until now, we haven't had anyone who was tracking these individuals post-release to see if the skills they learned while incarcerated were transferring or resulting in a job." Similarly, a CTE instructor said that the instructors do not have "the luxury" of helping their students with transition and employment after release, so he was glad that the career navigators could play this role.

The incarcerated students also reported a need for the career navigators. Many described being concerned about finding employment after release. Some also said that their current CTE programs did not align with their career interests. When asked if they had received education and career guidance prior to the CN

program, most students said no. One student indicated that the case managers' caseload was too large for them to provide that level of support.³

Onboarding

The onboarding process was hampered from the outset because of the MNDOC employment code issue,⁴ which forced MNDOC Education to hire the career navigators through DEED. This meant that the career navigators were DEED employees, not MNDOC employees, which made it more difficult to provide the career navigators with MNDOC identifications, equipment, access to the facilities, and office space. For example, the career navigators said that several months had passed before they received the cell phones and laptops needed to communicate with their students and track program outcomes. MNDOC Education also had to set up an interagency agreement with DEED to pay the career navigators' salaries. The career navigators also said that their DEED designation impeded their integration process at the facilities and with other staff. For instance, the education staff at the facilities had to be reminded that the career navigators were part of the education program and not a separate service.

Despite these challenges, state and facility staff felt that the hiring process resulted in the right people for the job. The staff interviewed felt that only one career navigator hired at the beginning of the initiative was not a good fit, but the other career navigators were well-received by both students and staff. The career navigators' supervisor noted that she believed that the mix of career navigator expertise worked well and resulted in a more comprehensive approach to providing students with support. Some facility staff also believed that the career navigators benefited from being seen by the students as not part of the corrections system.

State and facility staff, as well as the career navigators, also indicated that the training process for the career navigators was appropriate. Several facility staff said they were pleased to hear that the career navigators received training in motivational interviewing. The career navigators' supervisor also thought the MNDOC Education training provided the career navigators with a good foundation, but she recognized that they were "building the plane as they were flying." For example, while working with the students, the career navigators collaborated on developing the CN handbook that detailed the procedures and processes for their job. Although this may have resulted in some ambiguity in the beginning, this handbook work encouraged teamwork and ownership of the job. Other hands-on activities were also helpful, including participating with CTE instructors in career tech training days, spending time in CTE classrooms and with various education staff, attending conferences, participating in other facility staff meetings (e.g., with the transition coordinators and case managers) and community meetings (e.g., with employers and workforce investment boards), and attending job fairs. Despite this range of pre- and in-service training, some facility administrators reported that there was a steep learning curve for some of the career navigators, particularly when it came to understanding the importance of safety within the correctional setting.

Communication and Coordination

The career navigators experienced some communication and coordination challenges, particularly in the first year of the initiative but were beginning to make progress with addressing those challenges. Although MNDOC Education briefed facility administration and staff on the role of the career navigator, there was still confusion among EMPLOY staff and transition coordinators when the career navigators initially started

³ As noted in Chapter One, the MNDOC hired four career navigators to serve in the six MNDOC correctional facilities, with the goal of serving up to 650 participants per year.

⁴ No employment code covered this type of position within the MNDOC.

working in the facilities. The students also did not seem to know the difference between the career navigators and other service providers. Initially, the career navigators openly admitted to being uncertain as well, but their work on developing the CN handbook helped them think through all aspects of their job and how their roles and responsibilities aligned with other supports available at the facilities and in the communities. The career navigators also noted that sharing office space with other service providers—which was the case in at least one of the facilities—helped facilitate greater communication and coordination.

Another communication and coordination challenge was the lack of a common student tracking system. As a result, the career navigators, EMPLOY staff, and transition coordinators did not know who was meeting with which students and when appointments were scheduled. The EMPLOY staff and career navigators also were not coordinating their contact with employers.

There were some additional initial communication and coordination challenges within the education program. Possibly because the career navigators had to be hired through DEED, the career navigators were not seen as part of the education team. As a result, existing education staff expressed some frustration about having to share internal resources (e.g., office space and computers) and schedules with the career navigators. The career navigators' supervisor had to remind the career navigators, facility education directors, and CTE staff that the career navigators were meant to enhance the education services being provided to the students.

Delays in Implementing the Career Navigators Program

Although the grant period began in 2018, the six-month delay in hiring meant that the four career navigators were not in place until March 2019 (see Figure 3.1 for the project timeline). It then took several months for the CN program to develop its handbook and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the career navigators. Thus, the program did not begin recruitment of CTE students and service provision until July–August 2019. Furthermore, because of an incident that resulted in the death of a correctional officer in one facility, all CTE programming was suspended for a period of time, making it impossible to provide CN services to students in that facility.

All these issues resulted in the career navigators being able to provide services to program participants only from April–May 2019 until approximately May 2020. This meant that many CN program participants received services upon release from prison for only for a few months. As noted in Chapter Five, only 44 percent of CN program participants had been released by August 2020, when the CN program effectively ended.

Promising Features of Career Navigators Program

Despite the early implementation challenges, the CN program was beginning to address gaps in services and shortcomings noted by other facility staff. According to the career navigators' supervisor, the career navigators were “figuring out how to dovetail with the other service providers.” There were also plans to expand the CN program's target population to include adult education students and to expand CN services to include a greater emphasis on supporting transition to postsecondary education after release. The career navigators' supervisor also hoped that the career navigators could begin supporting American Job Centers in the facilities.

Unfortunately, the CN program was unable to make these changes prior to the end of the grant. Nonetheless, looking back over their lessons learned and accomplishments, those interviewed as part of our research noted the following successes and promising features of the program:

- **Career navigators' expertise and skills:** The career navigators had the right mix of content expertise—postsecondary education, workforce, corrections, and case management—and were skilled at working as a team and engaging with students, employers, and other key stakeholders.

- **Career navigators' pre- and in-service training:** The career navigators were able to think through and take ownership of the protocols and process for their position because they received various foundational preservice training and worked on developing the CN handbook.
- **Bridging facility- and community-based services:** The career navigators helped address a gap between facility- and community-based services and provided a means for tracking students for three years after release.
- **Relationship development:** The career navigators worked to develop important relationships with employers, employer associations, workforce development agencies, and other community stakeholders and helped reduce the stigma of hiring someone with a criminal record.

Most important, the benefits of the career navigators did not go unnoticed by the students. As one student noted, the CN program is “just another tool that I can use to succeed.”

Review of Career Navigator Programs

As noted in Chapter One, there has been a growing recognition in the field of the need for career navigators to assist individuals not only when they are incarcerated to identify and participate in academic education and CTE programs that align with their interests but also with the reentry process and continuing to provide support in the community. Within postsecondary education, the concept of career navigators is not new to community colleges or to other education and training providers, who recognize the value of academic and career counseling in helping students navigate the postsecondary education system. In addition, several states have also implemented these types of programs for incarcerated students. We examined how the MNDOC CN program compared with these other efforts.

The MNDOC's concept for the career navigator role was like the idea for such positions established by other states, education providers, and workforce development organizations: to provide academic and career guidance to their target populations. In this chapter, we review the literature on career navigators for incarcerated individuals and other vulnerable populations, share a few examples of career navigators in other states, and describe the broader lessons learned across these roles that will help inform those interested in creating similar positions to support their incarcerated and recently released students.

Approach

To develop a more comprehensive understanding of the career navigator position, we conducted a targeted review of the literature, including federal legislation, research studies, online manuals, and training programs. We used the following search terms to identify the literature: career navigators, academic counseling, career counseling, career planning, career guidance, career pathways, guided pathways, job placement services, transitional supports, incarcerated individuals, prisoners, inmates, ex-offenders, prison, reentry, and evaluation.

We also interviewed two state program directors, in Indiana and Washington, who oversee similar reentry-focused career navigator staff. The interviews were guided by a semistructured interview protocol that addressed the following topics: roles and responsibilities of navigator staff, hiring and training of navigators, program infrastructure, and successes, challenges, and lessons learned.

Literature Review Results

As the rate of incarceration increased over the past century, so too did the rate of individuals being released from prison. Approximately 600,000 individuals are released from state and federal prisons each year. More than two-thirds of these individuals commit parole violations or new crimes within three years of release, and approximately half are reincarcerated (Carson, 2020; Hughes and Wilson, 2003). This high rate of recidivism and reentry began drawing the attention of policymakers in the late 1990s, and, ultimately, resulted in several legislative actions, including the Second Chance Act of 2007: Community Safety Through

Recidivism Prevention (Pub. L. 110-199, 2008), which offered funding and guidance on educating, training, and supporting service providers to help them better prepare incarcerated individuals for release (Travis, Crayton, and Mukamal, 2009). It also drew the attention of researchers and practitioners, who have documented the need for career navigators and developed resources to support these roles.

Legislation

The Second Chance Act was first passed in 2007 and reauthorized in 2018 as part of the First Step Act (Pub. L. 115-391, 2018), which authorized, federal investment to improve the reentry process through grant awards to reentry programs serving adults and juveniles to reduce recidivism and increase public safety. These grant awards have funded a variety of reentry services similar to those associated with the MNDOC's CN program, including employment training and assistance, education, mentoring, career counseling and job placement services, and other transitional supports. For example, a recent Second Chance Act grant program, the Correctional Adult Reentry Education, Employment, and Recidivism Reduction Strategies (CAREERRS) program, is designed to help communities establish education, vocation, and job training programs in their correctional systems that address employment challenges that incarcerated youth and adults reentering the workforce face; the CAREERRS program does this by establishing strong partnerships with corrections, parole, probation, education, workforce development, and reentry service providers. Another grant program, the Second Chance Act Community-Based Reentry Program, supports similar partnerships but with the focus on providing comprehensive case management and services aligned with an individual's risk and needs (National Reentry Resource Center, 2018).

In addition to the Second Chance Act, Congress also has passed legislation that strengthens and expands education and career training services and supports provided to individuals who have barriers to employment, including those who are incarcerated. These legislative acts include the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Pub. L. 113-128, 2014) and the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Pub. L. 115-224, 2018).

Signed into law in 2014, WIOA supports workforce development activities and workforce-related education, training, and support systems to help job seekers, particularly those with barriers to employment, succeed in the labor market and meet the needs of employers. A major objective of WIOA is to create greater coordination between workforce development agencies, education and training providers, and employers and foster the creation of career pathways and other initiatives to increase student access to education programs and credentials aligned to the needs of high-demand industries. WIOA also encourages support activities, such as career planning, which it defines as

the provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed—(A) to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and (B) to provide job, education, and career counseling, as appropriate during program participation and after job placement (Pub. L. 113-128, 2014, Sec. 3).

Similarly, the Strengthening Career and Technical Act (also known as Perkins V), which supports career and technical education programs designed to prepare individuals for a profession, promotes collaboration among secondary, postsecondary, and business and industry partners; career pathways; and the “improvement of career guidance and academic counseling programs that assist students in making informed academic and career and technical education decisions, including academic and financial aid counseling” (Pub. L. 115-224, 2018, Sec. 124). The act also underscores the importance of providing these services to special populations, which it defines as individuals in one of the following groups: individuals with disabilities; low-income

youth and adults; individuals preparing for nontraditional fields; single parents, including single pregnant women; out-of-workforce individuals; English learners; homeless individuals; youth who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system; and youth with a parent who is an active-duty member of the armed forces. Although incarcerated individuals or those with criminal histories are not specifically recognized in this definition, they typically fall in one or more of the identified special populations.

Research Studies

The legislative actions described in the previous section were informed by research and the experience of community colleges and other education and training providers that have documented the benefits of academic and career counseling with helping students navigate the postsecondary education system and support services and obtain the skills and credentials needed to be successful in the labor market (Community College Research Center, 2021; Jenkins, Lahr, and Fink, 2017). For example, a four-year evaluation of career navigators' role at community colleges found that students were more likely to enroll in college if they received support with enrollment and financial aid and help with making connections between school and work. These colleges, therefore, hired career navigators to provide comprehensive support to students, particularly those considered underrepresented or underserved, with all phases of their postsecondary education experience, including applying to college, selecting courses, earning credentials, and finding employment. The navigators were also responsible for connecting students with support services at the college and in the community and forming relationships with employers (Sylvester and Myran, 2020). Another study of several CN models found that they were most successful when they customized their services to the labor market and an individual's needs; had knowledge of education and training options; formed partnerships with community-based organizations, colleges, and employers; and were trained in adult learning theory and methods to motivate students (Choitz, Soares, and Pleasants, 2010).

Numerous studies have also looked at the career pathway model, which provides students with clear sequences of education courses and credentials aligned to the needs of high-demand industries. These studies showed that students with the greatest barriers to education and employment need additional support and resources to achieve their education and workforce goals (Prins et al., 2017). For this reason, many community colleges and other education providers are moving toward a guided pathways model, which provides more active advising and case management support that engages students in creating individual education plans that align with their career interests, supports the development of the skills students need to be successful in college and careers, offers experimental learning opportunities, and monitors student progress (Jenkins, Lahr, and Mazzariello, 2021).

The importance of providing academic and career guidance to incarcerated individuals has also been studied but to a lesser degree. Incarcerated individuals face many of the same education and employment challenges as other underrepresented and underserved populations but have some unique challenges, such as understanding job and licensing restrictions related to their convictions and addressing employers' concerns about hiring individuals with a criminal record and gaps in their work history. One study examined different approaches that counselors have used to help formerly incarcerated individuals make positive academic and career decisions. The most successful approaches addressed common career issues these individuals face, including lack of employability skills, limited job opportunities, negative career attitudes, and lack of motivation and perseverance with finding legal employment (Chen and Shields, 2020). Another study of an employment-focused group counseling intervention for men who were incarcerated found that activities designed to help with self-efficacy and goal setting led to greater engagement in vocational education and employment searches (Fitzgerald et al., 2012). According to a study of community colleges in Michigan that collaborated to strengthen career pathways in manufacturing, adults with a criminal history benefited from having career coaches, assistance with job searches and placement, and referrals to employers who knew

ahead of time about their records (Lewis-Charp, 2017). An evaluation of the NYC Justice Corps program, which was designed for youth and young adults, also documented the importance of providing case management and support with navigating education, workforce development, and social services (Cramer et al., 2019).

Career Navigator Resources

To support career navigators, numerous national organizations, state agencies, education providers, and other stakeholders have developed frameworks, manuals, and training programs. Many of these resources, such as the “College and Career Readiness: A Guide for Navigators” (FHI 360, 2019), are designed for counselors working with middle and high school students to develop education and career plans and the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in postsecondary education and employment. Others, such as the Aspen Institute’s “Resource Guide for College/Career Navigators or Those Interested in Starting a Navigator Program” (The Aspen Institute, 2017), the National College Transition Network’s College and Career Navigator Trainer Manual (Goodman, 2014), and World Education’s “Finding True North – Role of the Navigator” (World Education, undated), focus on staff working with underrepresented or underserved populations and include guidance relevant to navigators working with justice-involved individuals. Some resources are also designed specifically for those working with the corrections population. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Offender Workforce Development Specialist training (Kansas Department of Corrections, 2021): Initially developed for the National Institute of Corrections in the early 2000s and more recently adapted by the Kansas Department of Corrections, this training is for staff helping adults prepare for transition from incarceration to the community and employment. It focuses on helping adults make informed decisions about jobs and career paths, improving their knowledge and skills, and finding and retaining employment. Upon successful completion of the program, participants are certified as offender workforce development specialists.
- Career Navigator Toolkit (Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative, undated): Drawing from recommendations from a 2014 environmental scan, the Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative developed this toolkit to provide guidance to career navigators coaching youth to be successful in the workplace. It teaches career navigators about problem-solving, motivational interviewing, community organizing, and other approaches and activities to support youth.
- Community Navigators program: As part of its CJ investment initiative, the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office created this program in 2017 to train a network of community navigators to coordinate existing services and resources to ensure that people in contact with the CJ system get the support they need to achieve their education and workforce goals and avoid further engagement in criminal activity.
- Jails to Jobs initiative: Launched in 2018 and expanded in 2019, Jails to Job was created by the New York City mayor’s office to provide counseling support and tailored programming in the jail that continues after release. Services include peer navigators, transitional employment, and support with earning credentials needed for career advancement.

State Examples

The literature on career navigators reflects the experiences of similar programs in Indiana and Washington state, which were selected to be reviewed as part of our research because they are well-established programs. For nearly a decade, the Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry (HIRE) has been providing job-readiness training and placement services to individuals incarcerated in Indiana’s state prisons. For approximately five years,

adults incarcerated in Washington's state prisons have received support from reentry education navigators. To learn more about these programs, we conducted two interviews: one with the HIRE director and the other with Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' corrections education policy associate, who oversees the state's reentry education navigators.

Indiana's HIRE program

Indiana's HIRE program, created in 2012, is an Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC) program that provides job-readiness training and placement services to people who are incarcerated, have been recently released, and continue to need support for a period of time after release. The HIRE program has three areas of focus: direct client services, business relationship building, and community outreach and education. The initiative is supported by the director, regional directors, and regional coordinators, all of whom begin to work with individuals within 18 months of release. During this time, coordinators, in collaboration with facility staff, work with participants to assess career interests, education and training completed, and credentials earned. They also enroll participants in the HIRE academies or facility reentry workshops, which provide training on career readiness, including résumé development, interviewing and job applications, employment assessments, financial literacy and budgeting, computer and digital literacy, employability skills, and workplace conflict resolution. In addition, HIRE coordinators organize virtual job fairs, facility tours for employers, and opportunities to review, identify, and interview job candidates prior to release. Upon release, coordinators support participants through the parole process and then continue to meet with them for approximately one year—or for as long as they need support—to assist with work placement, work-related issues, and enrollment in community-based education and training programs. The level of contact in the community depends on the individual's needs. For example, coordinators may provide additional support to those identified as “underearners,” meaning they are not making a living wage.

HIRE staff also focus on developing and maintaining strong relationships with employers. As noted on the state of Indiana's webpage, “the HIRE program works with employers to understand their business needs and to determine the knowledge, skills, abilities, and aptitude that will make an employee successful in their organization” (State of Indiana, undated). To avoid jeopardizing relationships with employers, coordinators are trained on how to assess employers' needs and concerns, setting expectations, and placing HIRE participants in jobs only when they are ready. They also do not share publicly any information from their employer database. To identify new employers, HIRE staff attend job fairs in the community and local workforce board and business association meetings.

In addition to the employer training that HIRE coordinators receive, they participate in IDOC security training and HIRE training on the corrections system (e.g., understanding the chain of command) and critical skills for the job, including case management, crisis management, presenting, and marketing. The coordinators are also expected to have previous work experience and skills in such areas as workforce readiness practices, education and training, outreach, advocacy, employer engagement, and partnership development.

Throughout its history, HIRE has had many successes with placing participants in living-wage jobs and developing strong relationships with employers. These successes were documented in a 2017 study, which summarized the findings of a limited evaluation of the HIRE initiative. The evaluators found casual evidence that HIRE participants had a lower recidivism rate than those who did not receive services (Northcutt Bohmert, Hood, and Meckes, 2017).

HIRE also continues to grapple with the same challenges as other similar programs. These challenges include developing HIRE participants' employability skills, navigating the ups and downs of their participants' lives after release, working with IDOC to allow participants to have more access to technology to develop their computer and digital literacy skills and to facilitate connections with employers prior to release, and most recently, dealing with the effects of the pandemic on HIRE participants and employers.

Washington State's Reentry Education Navigators

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical College (SBCTC) is contracted by the Washington Department of Corrections to oversee the correctional education programs in the state's prisons. Starting approximately five years ago, SBCTC began to use the guided pathways approach, which is supported by a team of reentry education navigators. The navigators are responsible for helping students achieve their education and career goals. They also serve as a liaison between the students, prison staff, and community college staff. In prison, the navigators work with students to develop an education plan by reviewing their transcripts, employment histories, career interests, and financial aid eligibility. They also help students collect the required documentation to apply for financial aid and enroll in college after release. The navigators continue to work with the student as they transition to the community to promote student retention and completion by assisting them with enrollment and applying for financial aid, connecting them with academic resources and peer support, monitoring their progress, and referring them to community resources (e.g., housing, employment, counseling). The navigators in the community are also responsible for establishing and sustaining relationships with community organizations, employers, and college staff that may be able to help students achieve their education and career goals.

As in the HIRE program, when hiring reentry education navigators, SBCTC looks for candidates with experience in outreach, marketing, and recruitment. Recruiters also look for candidates with experience in corrections and cross-agency collaboration and a commitment to justice and equity. Once hired, navigators receive mandatory training from the Washington State Department of Corrections and are trained on the guided pathways framework and communication strategies that encourage self-determination, resilience, and self-efficacy. They also continue to receive annual in-service trainings.

A 2021 study of postsecondary program participation and completion patterns for students incarcerated in Washington's state prisons found that the navigators have had a positive effect on student outcomes and recommended funding more navigator positions to support formerly incarcerated individuals. It noted, however, the need for more-consistent policies and practices across the prisons. The report described the issue as follows:

Support networks can be integral to student success, and we identified both challenges and useful practices in place in Washington facilities [Table 4.1]. We find that without specific state policies surrounding support services for incarcerated individuals, barriers and practices tend to vary across facilities. For example, facilities with more robust programs or prison-based reentry navigators might have expanded access to instructors, advisors, and other resources for students incarcerated in those facilities. (Knoth and Fumia, 2021, p. 42)

The report also noted that, although reentry education navigators are available in some community and technical colleges, they are not available at all locations, and, as a result, some students may lack access to critical services and supports and may be less likely to continue their education. When Knoth and Fumia wrote their report, colleges in the seven highest-return counties had navigators. According to the SBCTC policy associate who was interviewed for our report, additional funds have since been approved to hire five additional navigators, which will help extend more services and supports to the 34 community and technical colleges located in other counties in the state.

TABLE 4.1
Persistence and Completion: Support Networks and Peers

Challenges	Best Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student access to support services or other resources is limited to designated class time. • There is a lack of access to qualified advisers or staff with understanding of special needs or accommodations. • There is a lack of collaboration with resources on main campus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ample information to students about learning objectives, expectations, deadlines, etc. • Integrate current students and alumni as peer mentors, teaching assistants, and facilitators. • Have academic advisers who serve current and former students. • Allow students regular access to advisers, tutors, teaching assistants, and/or faculty. • Offer student success courses or other soft-skills development, along with other course offerings. • Require advisers to meet with each student regularly to discuss education, develop individualized plans, and assess need for accommodations.

SOURCE: Knoth and Fumia, 2021, p. 42.

NOTES: For the purposes of this report, we have modified the original table (Exhibit 23 in Knoth and Fumia, 2021) to include only information related to the reentry education navigators. Some of the text also has been lightly edited.

Findings from Comparative Review of Navigator Programs

The information collected from the targeted literature review and state interviews reflect many of the same features of the MNDOC CN program. Table 4.2 summarizes the common roles, responsibilities, and hiring and training practices across the programs and literature reviewed for this report.

Although more research is needed to determine the outcomes and effects of career navigators on the education and employment success of incarcerated individuals after release, the literature and limited studies of Indiana (Northcutt Bohmert, Hood, and Meckes, 2017) and Washington (Knoth and Fumia, 2021)—as well as the experiences of the MNDOC’s CN program—clearly indicate that academic and career guidance helps facilitate the transition from incarceration to the community and workforce. Looking across the programs reviewed for this report, a common and important feature of career navigators is that they begin working with individuals while they are incarcerated and continue to support them after release. Navigators also form

TABLE 4.2
Common Career Navigator Roles, Responsibilities, and Hiring and Training Practices

Common In-Prison Roles and Responsibilities	Common In-Community Roles and Responsibilities	Common Hiring and Training Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide academic and career counseling. • Engage students in developing education and career plans. • Conduct career assessments. • Review employment history, transcripts, and credentials earned. • Determine financial aid eligibility; help with completing forms. • Provide college and career readiness training. • Develop and maintain relationship with education staff at facility. • Collaborate with other reentry and transition staff at facilities. • Develop and maintain relationships with employers. • Organize job fairs, facility tours for employers, and in-prison interviews. • Serve as a liaison between staff in facility and the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide academic and career counseling. • Help students find living-wage employment. • Help students with college enrollment and applying for financial aid. • Refer students to support services to assist with housing, transportation, and other needs. • Monitor student progress. • Cultivate strong relationships with community-based organizations and state/local agencies. • Form partnership with community supervision and coordinate services. • Develop and maintain relationships with employers. • Attend job fairs and workforce investment and industry association meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire candidates with strong marketing and communication skills. • Hire candidates who have experience with justice-involved individuals and a commitment to equity. • Hire candidates who have experience with case management and cross-agency collaboration. • Provide training on Washington State Department of Corrections security procedures. • Provide training on adult learning theory and methods to motivate students. • Provide training on job and licensing restrictions for individuals with a criminal history.

the necessary relationships with employers and other service providers to connect incarcerated individuals and those recently released with employment opportunities, supports, and education and training services they need to be successfully transition out of the CJ system.

Outcomes Evaluation Findings

The CN program was designed to enhance job training in prison and connections with outside employers to secure employment upon release into the community. We were particularly interested in whether individuals were employed post-release. In addition, we were also interested in post-release recidivism. The hope is that post-release employment will lead to reduced recidivism, although this has not always been borne out in the literature (e.g., Visher, Winterfield, and Coggeshall, 2005; Tripodi, Kim, and Bender, 2010).

Approach

Our outcomes analysis examined those individuals who had been released from prison as of August 2020. Table 5.1 shows the percentage of the CN program participants and a comparison group who had been released.

By August 2020, about 80 percent of the comparison group individuals had not been released, compared with only 44 percent of CN program participants. The difference between the groups was statistically significant. With sample sizes this small, particularly for the comparison group, our planned PSM was deemed inappropriate. Austin (2010) suggests having at least one to two comparison group members for each treatment group member when using PSM. In our sample, too few comparison group members (only 60 out of 298) were available for this type of analysis. Therefore, we present our results as descriptive analyses only. Although we provide significance tests for our outcomes, we recognize that the groups are not comparable.

For the analysis of post-release employment and recidivism, we obtained data from the MNDOC. We used DEED data (provided to the MNDOC) for our analyses of employment. These data record quarterly employment, hours worked, wages earned, and the type of jobs for those reported to DEED. To measure recidivism, we used returns to the MNDOC either as a result of a new criminal conviction or as a supervision violation.

Table 5.2 presents information on the length of follow-up for the sample. The length of follow-up was calculated as the length of time from the individual's release from prison until the outcome data were provided to us. These analyses show that 78 percent of the sample had one year of follow-up information; however,

TABLE 5.1
Study Sample Released for Study Follow-Up

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 373)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 298)	Total (<i>N</i> = 671)	
Released (<i>n</i> , %)				< 0.0001 ^a
0. No	208 (55.8%)	238 (79.9%)	446 (66.5%)	
1. Yes	165 (44.2%)	60 (20.1%)	225 (33.5%)	

^a Chi-square *p* value.

TABLE 5.2
Sample Follow-Up Time Distribution

	Group		Total (N = 671)
	CN Program Participants (N = 373)	Comparison Group (N = 298)	
Less than six-month follow-up (n, %)			
0. No	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
1. Yes	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)
One-year follow-up (n, %)			0.0302 ^a
0. No	30 (18.2%)	19 (31.7%)	49 (21.8%)
1. Yes	135 (81.8%)	41 (68.3%)	176 (78.2%)
Two-year follow-up (n, %)			0.4535 ^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	59 (98.3%)	223 (99.1%)
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	1 (1.7%)	2 (0.9%)
Number of days from release			0.0732 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225
Mean (SD)	441.8 (88.85%)	427.4 (97.99%)	438.0 (91.37%)
Median	422.0	395.5	414.0
Range	327.0, 769.0	330.0, 736.0	327.0, 769.0

NOTE: SD = standard deviation.

^a Chi-square *p* value.

^b Kruskal-Wallis *p* value.

everyone had at least six months of follow-up. Only two individuals (one in the CN program participant group and one in the comparison group) had two years of follow-up time after release from prison. The median number of days for the entire sample was 414. CN program participants had longer follow-up times than those in the comparison group. Based on this table, we focused our analysis on the first six months and then 12 months (although more than 20 percent of the sample does not have the full one-year follow-up).

Outcomes Findings

Recidivism

We measured recidivism in terms of whether the individual was returned to the MNDOC within six months and within one year of release (Table 5.3). We also considered the type of return.

Results show no differences in recidivism outcomes for the two groups (Table 5.3). Less than 5 percent of all participants were returned to custody within six months of release. At one year, 8.5 percent of the CN program participants had been returned to prison, compared with slightly less than 12 percent of the comparison group. The type of prison return was similar for both groups. Less than 10 percent returned in the first year after release; the vast majority of those were supervision returns. Individuals return to prison if they violate the terms of their supervision. The violations may not be for lawbreaking behaviors. Return-to-custody rates for a new conviction are lower than for the Minnesota population in general; historically, between 6 and 8 percent of released individuals return to prison within a year for a new offense (MNDOC, 2021).

TABLE 5.3
Recidivism Outcomes

	Group			<i>p</i> value
	CN Program Participants (<i>N</i> = 165)	Comparison Group (<i>N</i> = 60)	Total (<i>N</i> = 225)	
Returned within six months of last release date (<i>n</i>, %)				0.7583 ^a
0. No	158 (95.8%)	58 (96.7%)	216 (96.0%)	
1. Yes	7 (4.2%)	2 (3.3%)	9 (4.0%)	
Returned within one year of last release date (<i>n</i>, %)				0.4681 ^a
0. No	151 (91.5%)	53 (88.3%)	204 (90.7%)	
1. Yes	14 (8.5%)	7 (11.7%)	21 (9.3%)	
Return type #1 (within one year of last release date) (<i>n</i>, %)				0.5704 ^a
Admit new obligation	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)	
Admit release return	13 (7.9%)	7 (11.7%)	20 (8.9%)	
No return	151 (91.5%)	53 (88.3%)	204 (90.7%)	

NOTES: *Admit new obligation* refers to the type of prison return due to new offenses. *Admit release return* refers to the type of prison return due to a violation of their terms of supervision.

^a Chi-square *p* value.

Employment

For employment information, we examined the first year after release (see Table 5.4).¹ During the first year after release, slightly over 55 percent of CN program participants were employed at least one quarter, compared with 48.3 percent of the comparison group.² These differences were not significant. The median wage for those who were employed was \$9,643 for CN program participants, compared with \$12,133 for comparison group individuals. If we consider those with no employment as having zero income, the median wage for CN program participants was \$559 and \$0 for the comparison group. None of these differences were significant. In Appendix C, we present the quarter-by-quarter earnings for these groups. These findings suggest that the highest percentages of individuals are employed in the second quarter after release, with employment dropping in each successive quarter.

We were also able to examine the types of jobs for which individuals earned income after release. The DEEDS data provided information about the employment sector for income earned. Appendix B provides detailed results on whether an individual was employed in each sector for year 1 (along with income distributions) and whether an individual was employed in each of the sectors during each quarter in the first year after release from incarceration.

¹ For a small number of individuals, the reported employment quarter fell during the time that the person was in prison for the most recent incarceration. We did not include those earnings in our analyses.

² These percentages of participants who were employed and the average wages are lower than those reported for the EMPLOY program evaluation in 2011, in which 76 percent of participants in EMPLOY were employed during the first year after release. Average earnings for EMPLOY participants were over \$16,000 (see MND0C, 2011). Of course, many current study samples were released during COVID-19, when employment opportunities were reduced across the United States.

TABLE 5.4
Employment During First Year After Release from Prison

	Group			p value
	CN Program Participants (N = 165)	Comparison Group (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	
Employment post-release (year 1) (n, %)				0.36461
0. No	74 (44.8%)	31 (51.7%)	105 (46.7%)	
1. Yes	91 (55.2%)	29 (48.3%)	120 (53.3%)	
Employment post-release (year 1 wages) for those employed				0.27382
N	91	29	120	
Mean (SD)	12,102.7 (11,632.75)	15,797.2 (14,520.92)	12,995.6 (12,428.97)	
Median	9,643.0	12,133.0	10,095.0	
Range	62.0; 63,220.0	104.0; 57,455.0	62.0; 63,220.0	
Employment post-release (year 1 wages) with zeros				0.69762
N	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	6,674.8 (10,522.00)	7,635.3 (12,784.47)	6,931.0 (11,148.46)	
Median	559.0	0.0	518.0	
Range	0.0; 63,220.0	0.0; 57,455.0	0.0; 63,220.0	

NOTE: SD = standard deviation.

The most common sectors for employment were accommodation and food service (18.7 percent for CN program participants and 6.9 percent for comparison group); other services (14.3 percent for CN group and 6.9 percent for comparison group); administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (25.5 percent for CN program participants and 16.7 percent for comparison group); retail trade (19.8 percent for CN program participants and 13.8 percent for comparison group); manufacturing (17.6 percent of CN program participants and 17.2 percent of comparison group); and construction (8.8 percent of CN program participants and 17.2 percent of comparison group). None of the differences between the CN program participants and comparison groups was statistically significant.³

³ An individual can appear in more than one job category if employed in more than one sector during the follow-up period.

Conclusions

The MNDOC identified the need for career navigators as part of its 2016–2018 MAP to address a gap in support. It established a CN program that aimed to help incarcerated individuals prepare for release by providing academic and career guidance and post-release employment support to incarcerated CTE students.

The career navigators' responsibilities included (1) outreach to and recruitment of employers, as well as outreach to professional associations, other state agencies, community-based organizations, and colleges; (2) providing CTE students with academic and career advice and case management support; and (3) tracking participant progress in MNDOC programming and, upon release, documenting services students received, referrals made, and service delivery outcomes.

For individuals who declined CN services or who were not eligible to receive services, standard support services were available. These services included meeting with a case manager and transition coordinator while incarcerated and, when participating in MINNCOR, receiving support from the EMPLOY staff.

RAND and RTI International were asked to conduct a process and outcome evaluation of the CN program. Our evaluation was affected by challenges and the early termination of the program. The start of the CN program was delayed because of a violent incident at one of Minnesota's prisons, which suspended all programming for months. In addition, delays in hiring career navigators because of their employment classification and earlier-than-expected termination of the program precluded an examination of a full-fledged program operating over a stable period of time with outcomes examined for a robust sample. As a result, and as detailed in our findings, we were unable to conduct a robust outcomes evaluation of the CN program. A more stable environment in terms of program implementation and timing might have yielded more informative outcome results. Despite these challenges, we were able to document key implementation experiences and challenges and provide short-term outcome information for many program participants. We hope this information helps inform other states and programs interested in implementing a navigator-type program to support their incarcerated students.

Findings

Process Evaluation Findings

Although MNDOC Education consulted with other state staff in designing its CN program, those who oversaw EMPLOY and transition coordinator programs felt that they should have been more involved in identifying gaps in services, determining how best to avoid duplication, and leveraging existing resources. Some staff members felt that the career navigators should have focused primarily on education rather than employment because employment assistance was already the focus of the EMPLOY program.

Still, various facility staff noted that the CN program fit well with the mission of the MNDOC, provided needed help to incarcerated individuals transitioning back into the community, and addressed a gap in the MNDOC's ability to track individuals after release. Students also reported a need for CN services, with some expressing concerns that their current CTE programs did not align with their career interests, and with many

expressing concerns about finding employment after release. Students felt that the CN services would help address both sets of concerns.

In the first year of the initiative, there were several communication and coordination challenges. Because the career navigators had to be hired through DEED instead of the MNDOC, they were not initially seen as part of the education team.

There was also confusion about the role of the career navigators. Although facility administration and staff were briefed on the role of the career navigators, there was still confusion among EMPLOY staff and transition coordinators when the career navigators initially started working in the facilities. The students also did not seem to know the difference between the career navigators and other service providers. The development of the CN handbook helped the career navigators solidify the different aspects of their job and how their roles and responsibilities aligned with other supports available at the facilities and in the communities.

Lack of a common student tracking system meant that the career navigators, EMPLOY staff, and transition coordinators did not know who was meeting with which students and when appointments were scheduled. The EMPLOY staff and career navigators also were not coordinating their contacts with employers.

Despite early implementation challenges, the CN program was beginning to address gaps in services and shortcomings noted by other facility staff. There were also plans to expand the CN program's target population to include adult education students and to expand career navigator services to include a greater emphasis on supporting transition to postsecondary education after release. The career navigators' supervisor also hoped that the career navigators could begin supporting American Job Centers in the facilities. However, the CN program was unable to make these changes before the end of the grant funding. The end of the program meant that the career navigators were only able to follow students out in the community until early summer 2020. This, in turn, had implications for the outcomes analysis.

Delays in implementing the CN program had implications for the full implementation of the CN model. Although the grant period began in 2018, the six-month delay in hiring (as a result of administration matters) meant that the four career navigators were not put into place until March 2019. It then took several months for the CN program to develop a CN handbook and to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the career navigators. The CN program did not begin recruitment of CTE students and service provision until July–August 2019. Furthermore, because of an incident in one facility that resulted in the death of a correctional officer, all CTE programming had to be suspended for a period of time, making it impossible to provide CN services to students in that facility.

The result was that the career navigators were able to provide services to program participants only from April–May 2019 to approximately May 2020. This meant that many CN program participants received services upon release from prison for only a few months. As noted in Chapter Five, only 44 percent of CN participants had been released by August 2020, when the CN program ended.

Comparison of the MNDOC's Career Navigators Program with Other Types of Career Navigators

The MNDOC's concept for the career navigator role was similar to other navigator positions established by other states, education providers, and workforce development organizations to provide academic and career guidance to their target populations. The MNDOC concept of career navigators had many of the same features in terms of in-prison roles and responsibilities, community roles and responsibilities, and hiring and training practices, as identified from the targeted literature review and state interviews.

Outcomes Evaluation Findings

Most of the comparison group individuals had not been released by August 2020. Only 44 percent of CN program participants had been released. The difference between the groups was statistically significant. With sample sizes this small, particularly for the comparison group, our planned PSM was deemed inappropriate. Therefore, we presented our outcomes results as descriptive analyses only.

Our analyses showed that not everyone had one year of follow-up information; however, everyone had at least six months of follow-up. Thus, we focused our analysis on the first six months, then on 12 months.

We measured recidivism in terms of whether the individual was returned to the MNDOC within six months and within one year of release. We also considered the type of return. We found no differences in recidivism outcomes for the two groups. Less than 5 percent of CN program participants were returned to custody within six months of release. At year 1, 8.5 percent of the CN program participants had been returned to prison, compared with slightly less than 12 percent of the comparison group. The type of prison return was similar for both groups. Less than 10 percent returned in the first year after release; the vast majority of those were supervision returns. Individuals return to prison if they violate the terms of their supervision. The violations may not be for lawbreaking behaviors. Return-to-custody rates for new convictions are lower than for the Minnesota population in general; historically, between 6 and 8 percent of released individuals return to prison within a year for a new offense.

Employment findings were also similar for both groups. About half of the individuals in each group were employed at some point during the first year after their release from prison. Individuals participated in a variety of employment sectors, including construction, food service, and retail trade. Earnings for those who were employed averaged between \$10,000 and \$12,000 for the year.

Summary

The concept of the career navigators helped fill an important gap in the overall educational plan for MNDOC. Although we were unable to measure how effective the CN program would have been if it had not experienced significant implementation delays, we believe the insights from the process evaluation and our comparison with other navigator programs provide important lessons learned. The experience of MNDOC in implementing the CN program is instructive for other states considering implementing a similar type of program for students who are incarcerated. For example, it underscored the importance of obtaining buy-in from other staff providing educational and reentry services, as well as ensuring close coordination and communication to enable the career navigators to become an integral part of the overall rehabilitative process.

DEED Description for the Career Navigator Position

This appendix contains descriptions of the career navigator position provided by MNDOC’s Career Navigators program staff. The description has been lightly edited for clarity.

State of Minnesota

Position Description A

Agency/Division	Employee’s Name
Employment and Economic Development	xxxxxxx xxxxxxx

Classification Title	Working Title (if different)	Position Control Number
Workforce Development Specialist 2	DEED/DOC Career Navigator	00xxxxxxx

Prepared by	Previous Incumbent	Appraisal Period
Luis Brown-Pena		00/00/2018–00/00/2019

Employee’s Signature	Date	Supervisor’s Signature	Date
----------------------	------	------------------------	------

POSITION PURPOSE

This position will work in a team setting utilizing primary partnerships with other state agencies, including DEED, DHS, and Minnesota state; it will also partner with MNDOC departments, including reentry, parole, case management, MINNCOR EMPLOY, and Transitions.

This position exists to provide advanced, comprehensive career planning, job search, and goal setting with many offenders in the MNDOC facilities to address the gap in the education flowchart. The incumbent will work with offenders as they transition to communities by assisting with the development of career planning and meaningful education goals and provide developmental and career-planning services, leading to the acquisition of employment and or completion of a college degree and/or career technical certification. The incumbent will be responsible for utilizing programming expertise to create appropriate release and employment plans for each participant.

The incumbent will serve as the primary link to employers to connect to job-ready offenders to employment by developing, validating, and qualifying new employment leads, establishing links with community resources and other state agency programs to provide seamless support services, creating partnerships to further expand the employer base in several different industries, and facilitating job placement.

The incumbent will be responsible for coordinating all reentry activities with MNDOC staff, WorkForce Center partners, education agencies, and community-based organizations to assist exoffenders obtain and retain employment.

REPORTABILITY

Reports to: DEED State Program Administrative Manager, and DOC Facility Education Director

Supervises: Not applicable

DIMENSIONS

Budget: Not applicable

Clientele: Individuals incarcerated and released from Minnesota correctional Facilities; DOC State Office Staff, Transition, State Office and Community Reentry Managers/ Staff; DOC Transition Coordinators, Case Managers and Planners; Probation Officers; WorkForce Center Partners; Veterans Employment Program Staff; Education and Community-Based Organizations; Non-Profit, State, County and Municipal Organizations; Individual Businesses; Trade Associations; Economic Development Agencies and Individuals; Vendors, and other State Agencies such as Labor and Industry and Commerce.

Employee's Name

Position Control Number

Position Description B

This position will work in a team setting utilizing primary partnerships with other state agencies, including DEED, DHS, and Minnesota state; it will also partner with MNDOC departments, including reentry, parole, case management, MINNCOR EMPLOY, and Transitions.

This position exists to provide advanced, comprehensive career planning, job search, and goal setting with many offenders in the MNDOC facilities to address the gap in the education flowchart. The incumbent will work with offenders as they transition to communities by assisting with the development of career planning and meaningful education goals and provide developmental and career-planning services, leading to the acquisition of employment and or completion of a college degree and/or career technical certification. The incumbent will be responsible for utilizing programming expertise to create appropriate release and employment plans for each participant.

The incumbent will serve as the primary link to employers to connect to job-ready offenders to employment by developing, validating, and qualifying new employment leads, establishing links with community resources and other state agency programs to provide seamless support services, creating partnerships to further expand the employer base in several different industries, and facilitating job placement.

The incumbent will be responsible for coordinating all reentry activities with MNDOC staff, WorkForce Center partners, education agencies, and community-based organizations to assist exoffenders obtain and retain employment.

REPORTABILITY

Reports to: DEED State Program Administrative Manager, and DOC Facility Education Director

Supervises: Not applicable

DIMENSIONS

Budget: Not applicable

Cientele: Individuals incarcerated and released from Minnesota correctional Facilities; DOC State Office Staff, Transition, State Office and Community Reentry Managers/Staff; DOC Transition Coordinators, Case Managers and Planners; Probation Officers; WorkForce Center Partners; Veterans Employment Program Staff; Education and Community-Based Organizations; Non-Profit, State, County and Municipal Organizations; Individual Businesses; Trade Associations; Economic Development Agencies and Individuals; Vendors, and other State Agencies such as Labor and Industry and Commerce.

Employee's Name

Position Control Number

Position Description B

Principal Responsibilities and Tasks

Responsibility #1

Priority	Time	Discretion
A	30%	A

Research, market to, and meet with potential employers on behalf of program participants. Compile, maintain, and report employer data and participant employment data. Create high levels of communication with employment groups and other state agencies on the benefits of hiring exoffenders. Work with partnering agencies and MNDOC Education, DEED, and the Transitions, and Re-entry departments to provide a smooth continuum of service for participants upon release.

Tasks

- A. Establish, develop, and maintain appropriate service-provider and customer relationships with offenders and exoffenders designated by MNDOC as applicable to the Community Reentry program.
- B. Develop and maintain relationship with education directors and other key MNDOC departments at the prison facilities to provide support to participants who are being referred upon release.
- C. Create and maintain central physical and electronic access points for job postings and leads.
- D. Maintain database of employment groups and state agencies contacted; address employer inquiries; conduct marketing efforts; and respond to stakeholders.
- E. Give presentations to large employer groups, private organizations, legislative groups, and staff from other state agencies about MNDOC Education programs, skills trainings, and labor market information.
- F. Provide and/or refer program participants to immediate résumé assistance and supervised access to job-search tools.
- G. Facilitate, organize, and coordinate face-to-face opportunities for program participants to meet and interview with employers.
- H. Place program participants in permanent and long-term livable-wage jobs.
- I. Identify and create short-term transitional employment opportunities with nonprofit agencies, governmental agencies, or for-profit employers.
- J. Perform regular follow-up with employers to monitor participant progress, confirm employment retention, and address any consequential concerns.
- K. Establish, develop, and maintain relationships with participants' parole agents for transparent communication.
- L. Integrate each program participant's employment activity with a MNDOC-developed case management plan and keep partnering staff continuously apprised of participant's progress and employment status.
- M. Collaborate with community-based organization-sourced job-training programs that offer certifications, diplomas, and/or licensures.
- N. Refer participants to academic programs that would realistically increase their earning capacities in the current and foreseeable job market.
- O. Perform scheduled follow-up with employers to ascertain participant progress, confirm job retention, and address consequential concerns.
- P. Solicit and gainfully employ continuous feedback and peer and self-critiquing methods and instruments to improve service delivery and knowledge.

Responsibility #2

Priority	Time	Discretion
A	40%	A

Advising and participant case management: Use expertise in state agency programs and resources to make appropriate referrals for all participants. Provide regular group and/or individual participant contact sessions to address needs and collaborate with MNDOC Education staff and other career navigators to support at-risk participants. Serve as the primary liaison between MNDOC Education, DEED, DHS, Minnesota state, and employer partners to ensure that expectations, goals, and objectives are synchronized.

Tasks

- A. Monitor participant intakes, assist in determining goals and objectives, identify barriers and challenges that may impede participant success, and provide support in developing a plan of action to help participants achieve their goals.
- B. Provide advice about program planning and assist potential participants in all aspects of the program-enrollment process.
- C. Work with MNDOC Education staff to enroll eligible students in appropriate career technical or college programs.
- D. Serve as a professional resource for academic advising and coordinate DEED and WorkForce Center engagement and access to DHS public health benefits as appropriate.
- E. Support participant success, retention, and completion through consistent participant engagement.
- F. Integrate each program participant's employment goals and activities with the participant's case management plan, and keep partnering staff continuously apprised of participant's progress.
- G. Minimize and remove duplication of services provided to participants through multiple providers.

Responsibility #3

Priority	Time	Discretion
A	20%	A

Maintain participant records and documentation: Gather and maintain all assigned participant case records and documentation in electronic and hard copy files. Use electronic expertise to ensure retention of data to include enrollment, assessment, support services, contact information, programs of study, and retention activities using DOC, DEED, DHS, U.S. Department of Labor, and local college reporting systems.

Tasks

- A. Create and maintain a program-specific database and produce forms and reports on activities weekly, including partner activity, participant enrollments, referrals, and progressions. Barrier identifications and resolutions.
- B. Track and maintain a database indicating participant activities, referrals, and service delivery outcomes.
- C. Maintain a consistent centralized information access and network for program partners and support groups.
- D. Ensure all required reports and records are in compliance with all HIPAA, DEED, and MNDOC policies.
- E. Prepare and maintain documentation and reports that meet reentry grant guidelines.
- F. Monitor monthly progress reports, provide necessary follow-up, and enter required data into the MNDOC electronic system as appropriate.
- G. Create program policies and procedures documentation as required by the external researcher team.
- H. Actively participate in meetings as required.

- I. Report to the MNDOC and DEED administration and external research team all aspects of the grant activities and data updates on a monthly basis.
- J. Record and document participant activities, referrals, and service delivery outcomes.

Responsibility #4

Priority	Time	Discretion
A	10%	A

Follow all agency policies, state statutes, and statewide policies. Support the vision, mission, goals, and initiatives of the MNDOC.

Tasks

- A. Follow all agency policies, state statutes, and statewide policies. Support the vision, mission, goals, and initiatives of the MNDOC.
- B. Attend and participate in Twin Cities Transition Coalition and MNDOC Transition career and job fairs meetings, as opportunity permits.
- C. Attend events hosted by and participate in community-based service organizations; economic development; postsecondary educational institutions; WorkForce Centers; veterans, dislocated worker, and local investment boards and committees; chambers of commerce; and other local, state, MNDOC, county, and city area hiring, career, and employment organization as applicable and authorized.
- D. Other duties and related tasks as needed.

Core Responsibilities

(Responsibilities are core responsibilities applicable throughout the department. These statements and tasks should be adjusted to fit the position described. Priority is not necessary for these responsibilities.)

Responsibility Statement

The candidate exhibits a professional demeanor at all times, including positive and effective working relationships. They comply with applicable statutes, rules, regulations, and policies to effectively carry out the requirements of the position and the goals of the MNDOC, DEED, and other partnering state agencies.

- A. Completes work assignments willingly and without complaint.
- B. Develops and sustains productive, effective, and positive relationships with staff and all constituencies.
- C. Possesses current knowledge of applicable statutes, rules, regulations, and policies about issues, including affirmative action, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), harassment policies, code of ethics, and violence prevention.
- D. Attends all required training and other sessions necessary to remain current in job knowledge and skills and for growth and development purposes.
- E. Reports for duty as scheduled. Uses time wisely. Minimizes all types of waste and is conscious of costs.

Responsibility Statement

Workplace values: Every individual is responsible for adhering to and implementing the agency's core values while performing their job so that the working environment is supportive of and conducive to improving team and individual capabilities, productivity, and quality. Each of us has accountability for achievement of the mission and vision of the department.

We value each other by

- respecting each other's skills, talents, and contributions
- recognizing that all jobs are equally important and that each and every one of us plays an important role in doing the work of the group
- listening to each other and acting on that which we hear
- supporting each other during times of change
- being flexible, tolerant, and adaptable; incorporating our different styles so that objectives are achieved; and taking advantage of diverse methods and varying ideas
- taking responsibility to share learning and growth
- constantly seeking and being open to opportunities to improve both personal and task performance.

Responsibility Statement

Customer service: You are responsible for satisfying the needs of your customers by providing quality customer service. You represent your division, the Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the state of Minnesota.

- Great customer service is proactive—you have to actively look for ways to serve the customer.
- Each contact should be handled as if you have only one chance to satisfy the customer.
- Attitude is contagious: Is yours worth catching?

Position Description C

Nature and Scope (relationships, knowledge, skills and abilities, problem-solving and creativity, freedom to act)

Relationships

This position works daily with individuals incarcerated in Minnesota correctional facilities and individuals released from these facilities.

This position works closely, on a daily basis, with MNDOC Education staff and weekly with DEED and WorkForce Center partner staff, DHS, and Minnesota state. Information is shared in person and through written and electronic communication with other individuals in local Workforce Centers, in correctional facilities, and other state and local partner organizations.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

This position assists exoffenders with obtaining and retaining employment and securing other transition assistance needed to maintain successful employment. This requires the following:

1. Knowledge of Minnesota's correctional system and services available to offenders in the MNDOC facilities
2. Knowledge of general case management, employment counseling, cognitive-behavioral interventions, community resources navigation, and employment acquisition and retention techniques
3. Knowledge of WorkForce Center services
4. Knowledge of the DHS program resources and services
5. Knowledge of DEED and community resources, especially transition services available to exoffenders
6. Knowledge of general and customized job-seeking skills techniques focused on the needs of exoffenders
7. Knowledge of local labor market information
8. Skills and experience in effective group facilitation and workshop presentation techniques, including techniques focused to the needs of exoffenders
9. Skills with using computer equipment and various software programs, including using and maintaining database software, storage and retrieval, email communications, and accessing information via approved networks
10. Skills in explaining WorkForce Center resources and service, DEED programs and resources, DHS programs and resources, and Minnesota state processes and programs
11. Skills in responding to the unique questions and needs of this population
12. Excellent listening skills
13. Ability to read and interpret laws, rules, and regulations
14. Ability to communicate clearly, concisely, and accurately in written and verbal forms
15. Ability to summarize events and provide analysis and interpretation
16. Ability to lead and/or participate in teams comprising all partners.

Problem Solving and Creativity

The incumbent in this position will work with individuals who are in Minnesota state correctional facilities and recently released exoffenders. Their felony record may create difficulties in obtaining and retaining employment. Many may have limited education and/or job skills. Their criminal record will create difficulties in obtaining and retaining employment. Assisting in the areas of job-seeking skills, applying to jobs, interviewing, and counseling techniques are creative and challenging problem-solving areas. It is particularly challenging to encourage a participant to increase their awareness, recognize barriers to employment, understand the nature of jobs and job qualifications, develop employment plans and follow through on them, and become aware of other transitional services that can benefit them.

Creativity is limited only by the ability and ingenuity of the incumbent and the level of the applicant or participant. This freedom from constrictions enables the incumbent to use the various attributes of the staff and materials available.

Referrals to other agencies result when individual problems, such as those relating to legal, medical, psychological, and financial matters, are outside the employment-counseling realm or when problems are beyond the competency and/or constraints of employment counseling.

Freedom to Act

The incumbent in this position reports directly to the Education Director at the home facility and indirectly to the MNDOC Director of Career Technical Education at Central Office. Informal consultations occur as needed with seeking advice or gaining approval on such matters as how to effectively work with individuals served by this program and relevant program requirements and policies. Performance is periodically formally reviewed. Informal evaluations and reviews may occur at any time.

Federal and state employment-related laws and department regulations, policies, and guidelines set broad parameters of the position. Working with these limitations, the incumbent is allowed considerable freedom of judgment and action in the exercise of this position. Access to management is available at any time and suggestions are given consideration.

Detailed Employment Tables

Table B.1 presents data about the number of individuals who were employed after release by quarter, the number employed during the first year after release, and earnings. Earnings are presented two ways: (1) “employment post-release (first quarter wages),” which are the results for those who had earnings (individuals without earnings are dropped from the analysis) and (2) “employment post-release (first quarter wages) with zeros,” for which we assign a value a 0 for individuals with no earnings and keep them in the descriptive analysis. We also present the percentage of individuals who were employed in different sectors of the workforce. An individual may be represented in more than one employment sector. The table draws from Minnesota DEEDS data that were provided to us by the MNDOC.

TABLE B.1
Detailed Employment Results for Individuals Employed After Release

	CN (<i>N</i> = 165)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 60)	Total (<i>N</i> = 225)	<i>p</i> value
Employment post-release (first quarter) (<i>n</i>, %)				0.6642 ^a
0. No	123 (74.5%)	43 (71.7%)	166 (73.8%)	
1. Yes	42 (25.5%)	17 (28.3%)	59 (26.2%)	
Employment post-release (first quarter wages)				0.0364 ^b
<i>N</i>	42	17	59	
Mean (SD)	2,327.7 (2,765.14)	3,648.0 (3,303.25)	2,708.2 (2,962.88)	
Median	1,052.0	2,356.0	1661.0	
Range	66.0; 12,723.0	573.0; 10,750.0	66.0; 12,723.0	
Employment post-release (first quarter wages) with zeros				0.4232 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	592.5 (1,716.36)	1,033.6 (2,388.95)	710.1 (1,923.08)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0; 12,723.0	0.0; 10,750.0	0.0; 12,723.0	
Employment post-release (second quarter) (<i>n</i>, %)				0.5276 ^a
0. No	94 (57.0%)	37 (61.7%)	131 (58.2%)	
1. Yes	71 (43.0%)	23 (38.3%)	94 (41.8%)	
Employment post-release (second quarter wages)				0.4159 ^b
<i>N</i>	71	23	94	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (<i>N</i> = 165)	Comparison (<i>N</i> = 60)	Total (<i>N</i> = 225)	<i>p</i> value
Mean (SD)	5,105.1 (3,873.81)	6,247.7 (4,976.50)	5,384.6 (4,171.04)	
Median	4,307.0	4,666.0	4,358.0	
Range	35.0; 19,394.0	104.0; 16,369.0	35.0; 19,394.0	
Employment post-release (second-quarter wages) with zeros				0.7174 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	2,196.7 (3,582.31)	2,395.0 (4,314.87)	2,249.6 (3,782.48)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0; 19,394.0	0.0; 16,369.0	0.0; 19,394.0	
Employment post-release (third quarter) (<i>n</i> , %)				0.7233 ^a
0. No	103 (62.4%)	39 (65.0%)	142 (63.1%)	
1. Yes	62 (37.6%)	21 (35.0%)	83 (36.9%)	
Employment post-release (third quarter wages)				0.1976 ^b
<i>N</i>	62	21	83	
Mean (SD)	5,515.4 (4,518.67)	7,027.5 (5,122.49)	5,898.0 (4,693.26)	
Median	4,965.0	7,165.0	5,104.0	
Range	34.0; 24,182.0	0.0; 17,423.0	0.0; 24,182.0	
Employment post-release (third quarter wages) with zeros				0.8804 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	2,072.4 (3,843.61)	2,459.6 (4,507.84)	2,175.7 (4,024.67)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0; 24,182.0	0.0; 17,423.0	0.0; 24,182.0	
Employment post-release (fourth quarter) (<i>n</i> , %)				0.3893 ^a
0. No	114 (69.1%)	45 (75.0%)	159 (70.7%)	
1. Yes	51 (30.9%)	15 (25.0%)	66 (29.3%)	
Employment post-release (fourth quarter wages)				0.3389 ^b
<i>N</i>	51	15	66	
Mean (SD)	5,866.1 (5,119.39)	6,988.5 (4,818.74)	6,121.2 (5,038.46)	
Median	4,537.0	7,965.0	5,706.5	
Range	96.0; 19,644.0	296.0; 16,417.0	96.0; 19,644.0	
Employment post-release (fourth quarter wages) with zeros				0.5079 ^b

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	1,813.2 (3,922.20)	1,747.1 (3,850.00)	1,795.5 (3,894.62)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0; 19,644.0	0.0; 16,417.0	0.0; 19,644.0	
Employment post-release (year 1) (<i>n</i>, %)				0.3646 ^a
0. No	74 (44.8%)	31 (51.7%)	105 (46.7%)	
1. Yes	91 (55.2%)	29 (48.3%)	120 (53.3%)	
Employment post-release (year 1 wages)				0.2738 ^b
<i>N</i>	91	29	120	
Mean (SD)	12,102.7 (11,632.75)	15,797.2 (14,520.92)	12,995.6 (12,428.97)	
Median	9,643.0	12,133.0	10,095.0	
Range	62.0; 63,220.0	104.0; 57,455.0	62.0; 63,220.0	
Employment post-release (year 1 wages) with zeros				0.6976 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	6,674.8 (10,522.00)	7,635.3 (12,784.47)	6,931.0 (11,148.46)	
Median	559.0	0.0	518.0	
Range	0.0; 63,220.0	0.0; 57,455.0	0.0; 63,220.0	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (<i>n</i>, %)				0.0816 ¹
0. No	90 (98.9%)	27 (93.1%)	117 (97.5%)	
1. Yes	1 (1.1%)	2 (6.9%)	3 (2.5%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (<i>n</i>, %)				0.1147 ^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	58 (96.7%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	2 (3.3%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (<i>n</i>, %)				
0. No	91 (100.0%)	29 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (<i>n</i>, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): utilities (<i>n</i>, %)				
0. No	91 (100.0%)	29 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: utilities (<i>n</i>, %)				

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): construction (n, %)				0.2023^a
0. No	83 (91.2%)	24 (82.8%)	107 (89.2%)	
1. Yes	8 (8.8%)	5 (17.2%)	13 (10.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: construction (n, %)				0.3218^a
0. No	157 (95.2%)	55 (91.7%)	212 (94.2%)	
1. Yes	8 (4.8%)	5 (8.3%)	13 (5.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): manufacturing (n, %)				0.9664^a
0. No	75 (82.4%)	24 (82.8%)	99 (82.5%)	
1. Yes	16 (17.6%)	5 (17.2%)	21 (17.5%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: manufacturing (n, %)				0.7558^a
0. No	149 (90.3%)	55 (91.7%)	204 (90.7%)	
1. Yes	16 (9.7%)	5 (8.3%)	21 (9.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): wholesale trade (n, %)				0.1560^a
0. No	85 (93.4%)	29 (100.0%)	114 (95.0%)	
1. Yes	6 (6.6%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (5.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: wholesale trade (n, %)				0.1343^a
0. No	159 (96.4%)	60 (100.0%)	219 (97.3%)	
1. Yes	6 (3.6%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.7%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): retail trade (n, %)				0.4681^a
0. No	73 (80.2%)	25 (86.2%)	98 (81.7%)	
1. Yes	18 (19.8%)	4 (13.8%)	22 (18.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: retail trade (n, %)				0.3434^a
0. No	147 (89.1%)	56 (93.3%)	203 (90.2%)	
1. Yes	18 (10.9%)	4 (6.7%)	22 (9.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): transportation and warehousing (n, %)				0.3982^a
0. No	88 (96.7%)	27 (93.1%)	115 (95.8%)	
1. Yes	3 (3.3%)	2 (6.9%)	5 (4.2%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: transportation and warehousing (n, %)				0.4954^a

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
0. No	162 (98.2%)	58 (96.7%)	220 (97.8%)	
1. Yes	3 (1.8%)	2 (3.3%)	5 (2.2%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): information (n, %)				0.9684^a
0. No	88 (96.7%)	28 (96.6%)	116 (96.7%)	
1. Yes	3 (3.3%)	1 (3.4%)	4 (3.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: information (n, %)				0.9394^a
0. No	162 (98.2%)	59 (98.3%)	221 (98.2%)	
1. Yes	3 (1.8%)	1 (1.7%)	4 (1.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): finance and insurance (n, %)				
0. No	91 (100.0%)	29 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: finance and insurance (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): real estate and rental and leasing (n, %)				0.5708^a
0. No	90 (98.9%)	29 (100.0%)	119 (99.2%)	
1. Yes	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: real estate and rental and leasing (n, %)				0.5456^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	60 (100.0%)	224 (99.6%)	
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): professional, scientific, and technical services (n, %)				0.5042^a
0. No	85 (93.4%)	26 (89.7%)	111 (92.5%)	
1. Yes	6 (6.6%)	3 (10.3%)	9 (7.5%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: professional, scientific, and technical services (n, %)				0.6444^a
0. No	159 (96.4%)	57 (95.0%)	216 (96.0%)	
1. Yes	6 (3.6%)	3 (5.0%)	9 (4.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): management of companies and enterprises (n, %)				0.3895^a
0. No	90 (98.9%)	28 (96.6%)	118 (98.3%)	
1. Yes	1 (1.1%)	1 (3.4%)	2 (1.7%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: management of Companies and enterprises (n, %)				0.4535^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	59 (98.3%)	223 (99.1%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	1 (1.7%)	2 (0.9%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (n, %)				0.2694 ^a
0. No	49 (53.8%)	19 (65.5%)	68 (56.7%)	
1. Yes	42 (46.2%)	10 (34.5%)	52 (43.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (n, %)				0.1667 ^a
0. No	123 (74.5%)	50 (83.3%)	173 (76.9%)	
1. Yes	42 (25.5%)	10 (16.7%)	52 (23.1%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): educational services (n, %)				
0. No	91 (100.0%)	29 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: educational services (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): health care and social assistance (n, %)				0.9546 ^a
0. No	85 (93.4%)	27 (93.1%)	112 (93.3%)	
1. Yes	6 (6.6%)	2 (6.9%)	8 (6.7%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: health care and social assistance (n, %)				0.9136 ^a
0. No	159 (96.4%)	58 (96.7%)	217 (96.4%)	
1. Yes	6 (3.6%)	2 (3.3%)	8 (3.6%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): arts, entertainment, and recreation (n, %)				0.3221 ^a
0. No	88 (96.7%)	29 (100.0%)	117 (97.5%)	
1. Yes	3 (3.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.5%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: arts, entertainment, and recreation (n, %)				0.2930 ^a
0. No	162 (98.2%)	60 (100.0%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): accommodation and food services (n, %)				0.1301 ^a
0. No	74 (81.3%)	27 (93.1%)	101 (84.2%)	
1. Yes	17 (18.7%)	2 (6.9%)	19 (15.8%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: accommodation and food services (n, %)				0.0964 ^a
0. No	148 (89.7%)	58 (96.7%)	206 (91.6%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
1. Yes	17 (10.3%)	2 (3.3%)	19 (8.4%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): other services (except public administration) (n, %)				0.2947 ^a
0. No	78 (85.7%)	27 (93.1%)	105 (87.5%)	
1. Yes	13 (14.3%)	2 (6.9%)	15 (12.5%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: other services (except public administration) (n, %)				0.2268 ^a
0. No	152 (92.1%)	58 (96.7%)	210 (93.3%)	
1. Yes	13 (7.9%)	2 (3.3%)	15 (6.7%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release): public administration (n, %)				
0. No	91 (100.0%)	29 (100.0%)	120 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (year 1 post-release) with zeros: public administration (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment post-release (first and second quarters) (n, %)				0.7163 ^a
0. No	89 (53.9%)	34 (56.7%)	123 (54.7%)	
1. Yes	76 (46.1%)	26 (43.3%)	102 (45.3%)	
Employment post-release (first and second quarters wages)				0.4895 ^b
<i>N</i>	76	26	102	
Mean (SD)	6,055.6 (4,815.80)	7,912.0 (7,477.81)	6,528.8 (5,632.39)	
Median	5,308.5	4,840.0	5,206.5	
Range	35.0; 21,208.0	104.0; 25,554.0	35.0; 25,554.0	
Employment post-release (first and second quarter wages) with zeros				0.9093 ^b
<i>N</i>	165	60	225	
Mean (SD)	2,789.2 (4,446.60)	3,428.6 (6,271.07)	2,959.7 (4,991.46)	
Median	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Range	0.0; 21,208.0	0.0; 25,554.0	0.0; 25,554.0	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (n, %)				0.0967 ^a
0. No	75 (98.7%)	24 (92.3%)	99 (97.1%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
1. Yes	1 (1.3%)	2 (7.7%)	3 (2.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (n, %)				0.1147 ^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	58 (96.7%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	2 (3.3%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (n, %)				
0. No	76 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): utilities (n, %)				
0. No	76 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: utilities (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): construction (n, %)				0.1710 ^a
0. No	69 (90.8%)	21 (80.8%)	90 (88.2%)	
1. Yes	7 (9.2%)	5 (19.2%)	12 (11.8%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: construction (n, %)				0.2272 ^a
0. No	158 (95.8%)	55 (91.7%)	213 (94.7%)	
1. Yes	7 (4.2%)	5 (8.3%)	12 (5.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): manufacturing (n, %)				0.6401 ^a
0. No	67 (88.2%)	22 (84.6%)	89 (87.3%)	
1. Yes	9 (11.8%)	4 (15.4%)	13 (12.7%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: manufacturing (n, %)				0.7304 ¹
0. No	156 (94.5%)	56 (93.3%)	212 (94.2%)	
1. Yes	9 (5.5%)	4 (6.7%)	13 (5.8%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): wholesale trade (n, %)				0.1799 ¹
0. No	71 (93.4%)	26 (100.0%)	97 (95.1%)	
1. Yes	5 (6.6%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (4.9%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: wholesale trade (n, %)				0.1727 ^a
0. No	160 (97.0%)	60 (100.0%)	220 (97.8%)	
1. Yes	5 (3.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (2.2%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): retail trade (n, %)				0.2421 ^a
0. No	63 (82.9%)	24 (92.3%)	87 (85.3%)	
1. Yes	13 (17.1%)	2 (7.7%)	15 (14.7%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: retail trade (n, %)				0.2268 ^a
0. No	152 (92.1%)	58 (96.7%)	210 (93.3%)	
1. Yes	13 (7.9%)	2 (3.3%)	15 (6.7%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): transportation and warehousing (n, %)				0.7517 ^a
0. No	74 (97.4%)	25 (96.2%)	99 (97.1%)	
1. Yes	2 (2.6%)	1 (3.8%)	3 (2.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: transportation and warehousing (n, %)				0.7926 ^a
0. No	163 (98.8%)	59 (98.3%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	2 (1.2%)	1 (1.7%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): information (n, %)				0.7517 ^a
0. No	74 (97.4%)	25 (96.2%)	99 (97.1%)	
1. Yes	2 (2.6%)	1 (3.8%)	3 (2.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: information (n, %)				0.7926 ^a
0. No	163 (98.8%)	59 (98.3%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	2 (1.2%)	1 (1.7%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): finance and insurance (n, %)				
0. No	76 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: finance and insurance (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): real estate and rental and leasing (n, %)				0.5567 ^a
0. No	75 (98.7%)	26 (100.0%)	101 (99.0%)	
1. Yes	1 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: real estate and rental and leasing (n, %)				0.5456 ^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	60 (100.0%)	224 (99.6%)	
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): professional, scientific, and technical services (n, %)				0.0694 ^a
0. No	74 (97.4%)	23 (88.5%)	97 (95.1%)	
1. Yes	2 (2.6%)	3 (11.5%)	5 (4.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: professional, scientific, and technical services (n, %)				0.0883 ^a
0. No	163 (98.8%)	57 (95.0%)	220 (97.8%)	
1. Yes	2 (1.2%)	3 (5.0%)	5 (2.2%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): management of companies and enterprises (n, %)				0.5567 ^a
0. No	75 (98.7%)	26 (100.0%)	101 (99.0%)	
1. Yes	1 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: management of companies and enterprises (n, %)				0.5456 ^a
0. No	164 (99.4%)	60 (100.0%)	224 (99.6%)	
1. Yes	1 (0.6%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.4%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (n, %)				0.3641 ^a
0. No	45 (59.2%)	18 (69.2%)	63 (61.8%)	
1. Yes	31 (40.8%)	8 (30.8%)	39 (38.2%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: administrative and support and waste management and remediation services (n, %)				0.3392 ^a
0. No	134 (81.2%)	52 (86.7%)	186 (82.7%)	
1. Yes	31 (18.8%)	8 (13.3%)	39 (17.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): educational services (n, %)				
0. No	76 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: educational services (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	

TABLE B.1—CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	p value
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): health care and social assistance (n, %)				0.7727 ^a
0. No	72 (94.7%)	25 (96.2%)	97 (95.1%)	
1. Yes	4 (5.3%)	1 (3.8%)	5 (4.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: health care and social assistance (n, %)				0.7332 ^a
0. No	161 (97.6%)	59 (98.3%)	220 (97.8%)	
1. Yes	4 (2.4%)	1 (1.7%)	5 (2.2%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): arts, entertainment, and recreation (n, %)				0.3038 ^a
0. No	73 (96.1%)	26 (100.0%)	99 (97.1%)	
1. Yes	3 (3.9%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (2.9%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: arts, entertainment, and recreation (n, %)				0.2930 ^a
0. No	162 (98.2%)	60 (100.0%)	222 (98.7%)	
1. Yes	3 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.3%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): accommodation and food services (n, %)				0.1149 ^a
0. No	64 (84.2%)	25 (96.2%)	89 (87.3%)	
1. Yes	12 (15.8%)	1 (3.8%)	13 (12.7%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: accommodation and food services (n, %)				0.1110 ^a
0. No	153 (92.7%)	59 (98.3%)	212 (94.2%)	
1. Yes	12 (7.3%)	1 (1.7%)	13 (5.8%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): other services (except public administration) (n, %)				0.3708 ^a
0. No	65 (85.5%)	24 (92.3%)	89 (87.3%)	
1. Yes	11 (14.5%)	2 (7.7%)	13 (12.7%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: other services (except public administration) (n, %)				0.3433 ^a
0. No	154 (93.3%)	58 (96.7%)	212 (94.2%)	
1. Yes	11 (6.7%)	2 (3.3%)	13 (5.8%)	
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release): public administration (n, %)				
0. No	76 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	102 (100.0%)	

TABLE B.1 – CONTINUED

	CN (N = 165)	Comparison (N = 60)	Total (N = 225)	<i>p</i> value
Employment sector (first and second quarters post-release) with zeros: public administration (n, %)				
0. No	165 (100.0%)	60 (100.0%)	225 (100.0%)	

NOTE: SD = standard deviation.

^a Chi-square *p* value.

^b Kruskal-Wallis *p* value.

Abbreviations

CJ	criminal justice
CN	Career Navigators (program)
CAREERRS	Correctional Adult Reentry Education, Employment, and Recidivism Reduction Strategies
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CTE	career technical education
DEED	Department of Employment and Economic Development
DHS	Minnesota Department of Human Services
HIRE	Hoosier Initiative for Re-Entry
IDOC	Indiana Department of Corrections
MAP	Master Academic Plan
MCEC	Minnesota Correctional Education Center
MNDOC	Minnesota Department of Corrections
MnSTARR	Minnesota Screening Tool Assessing Recidivism Risk
PSM	propensity score matching
SBCTC	Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
SD	standard deviation
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

References

- The Aspen Institute, Workforce Strategies Initiative, “A Resource Guide for College/Career Navigators or Those Interested in Starting a Navigator Program,” Washington, D.C., 2017. As of January 5, 2022: <https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Annotated-Bibliography-Of-Resources-For-Navigators.pdf>
- Austin, Peter C., “Statistical Criteria for Selecting the Optimal Number of Untreated Subjects Matched to Each Treated Subject When Using Many-to-One Matching on the Propensity Score,” *American Journal of Epidemiology*, Vol. 172, No. 9, November 2010, pp. 1092–1097.
- Carson, E. Ann, and William J. Sabol, *Aging of the State Prison Population, 1993–2013*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 248766, May 2016. As of December 22, 2021: <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/aspp9313.pdf>
- Chen, Charles P., and Brittany Shields, “Career Counselling Ex-Offenders: Issues and Interventions,” *Australian Journal of Career Development*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 2020, pp. 36–43.
- Choitz, Vickie, Louis Soares, and Rachel Pleasants, *A New National Approach to Career Navigation for Working Adults*, Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress, March 2010. As of October 4, 2021: https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2010/03/pdf/career_counseling.pdf
- Community College Research Center, *Investing in Student Success at Community Colleges: Lessons from Research on Guided Pathways*, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, April 2021. As of October 4, 2021: <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/policy-brief-guided-pathways.pdf>
- Cramer, Lindsey, Mathew Lynch, Margaret Goff, Sino Esthappan, Travis Reginal, and David Leitson, *Bridges to Education and Employment for Justice-Involved Youth: Evaluation of the NYC Justice Corps Program*, Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, May 2019. As of October 4, 2021: https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/100308/bridges_to_education_and_employment_for_justice-involved_youth_0.pdf
- Denver Opportunity Youth Initiative, “Career Navigator Training,” webpage, undated. As of January 5, 2022: <https://denveroy.org/career-navigator-toolkit/>
- Duwe, Grant, and Michael Rocque, *The Predictive Performance of the Minnesota Screening Tool Assessing Recidivism Risk (MnSTARR): An External Validation*, St. Paul, Minn.: Minnesota Department of Corrections, November 2019. As of December 29, 2021: https://mn.gov/doc/assets/The%20Predictive%20Performance%20of%20the%20Minnesota%20Screening%20Tool%20Assessing%20Recidivism%20Risk%20%28MnSTARR%29_An%20External%20Validation_tcm1089-411842.pdf
- FHI 360, “College and Career Readiness: A Guide for Navigators,” webpage, March 2019. As of January 5, 2022: <https://www.fhi360.org/resource/college-and-career-readiness-guide-navigators>
- Fitzgerald, Erica L., Krista M. Chronister, Linda Forrest, and Lindsey Brown, “OPTIONS for Preparing Inmates for Community Reentry: An Employment Preparation Intervention,” *Counseling Psychologist*, Vol. 41, No. 7, 2012, pp. 1–21. As of October 4, 2021: <https://www.apa.org/education/ce/community-reentry.pdf>
- Goodman, Sandy, *College and Career Navigator Trainer Manual*, Boston, Mass.: National College Transition Network, World Education, Inc., August 2014. As of January 5, 2022: <http://www.collegetransition.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/NavigatorManual-July2015.pdf>
- Hughes, Timothy, and Doris James Wilson, *Reentry Trends in the United States*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, last revised August 20, 2003. As of October 4, 2021: <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/reentry.pdf>

Jenkins, Davis, Hana Lahr, and John Fink, *Implementing Guided Pathways: Early Insights from the AACC Pathways Colleges*, New York: Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, April 2017. As of October 4, 2021:
<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/implementing-guided-pathways-aacc.pdf>

Jenkins, Davis, Hana Lahr, and Amy Mazzariello, *How to Achieve More Equitable Community College Student Outcomes: Lessons from Six Years of CCRC Research on Guided Pathways*, New York: Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University, September 2021. As of October 4, 2021:
<https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/equitable-community-college-student-outcomes-guided-pathways.pdf>

Kansas Department of Corrections, “Offender Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS),” webpage, last modified July 14, 2021. As of January 5, 2022:
<https://www.doc.ks.gov/reentry/OWDS>

Knoth, Lauren, and Danielle Fumia, *Postsecondary Program Participation and Completion Patterns Among Individuals Incarcerated in Washington State Prisons*, Olympia, Wash.: Washington State Institute for Public Policy, Document Number 21-06-1901, June 2021. As of October 4, 2021:
<https://wsac.wa.gov/sites/default/files/PostsecondaryProgramParticipationandCompletionamongIndividualsIncarceratedinWashingtonPrisons.pdf>

Lewis-Charp, Heather, *Issue Brief: Moving Justice-Involved Individuals into Employment: Michigan’s M-CAM Experience*, Oakland, Calif.: Social Policy Research Associates, September 2017. As of October 4, 2021:
<http://www.spra.com/wordpress2/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Moving-Justice-Involved-Individuals-into-Employment.pdf>

Minnesota Correctional Education Center, *Master Academic Plan, 2016–2018*, St. Paul, Minn., February 2016. As of January 5, 2022:
<https://www.leg.mn.gov/docs/2016/other/160812.pdf>

Minnesota Department of Corrections, “Adult Facilities,” webpage, undated-a. As of December 28, 2021:
<https://mn.gov/doc/facilities/>

Minnesota Department of Corrections, *Minnesota Screening Tool Assessing Recidivism Risk 2.0 (MnSTARR 2.0)*, undated-b. As of December 29, 2021:
https://mn.gov/doc/assets/MnSTARR%202.0%20FAQ_tcm1089-389239.pdf

Minnesota Department of Corrections, *Research in Brief: An Outcome Evaluation of MINNCOR’s EMPLOY Program—March 2011*, St. Paul, Minn., March 2011. As of January 14, 2022:
https://mn.gov/doc/assets/03-11EMPLOYevaluationResearchinBrief_tcm1089-272767.pdf

Minnesota Department of Corrections, *Performance Report 2020*, St. Paul, Minn., January 15, 2021. As of January 5, 2021:
https://mn.gov/doc/assets/DOC%202020%20Performance%20Report%20%28final%29_tcm1089-466714.pdf

MNDOC—See Minnesota Department of Corrections.

National Institute of Justice, “Program Profile: EMPLOY (Minnesota),” CrimeSolutions webpage, March 13, 2017. As of November 8, 2021:
<https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/ratedprograms/508#pd>

National Reentry Resource Center, *The Second Chance Act*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance, April 2018. As of October 4, 2021:
https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/July-2018_SCA_factsheet.pdf

Northcutt Bohmert, Miriam, Brittany J. Hood, and Jessica Meckes, “Evaluating Recidivism and Job Quality Outcomes for Participants in the Hoosier Initiative for Reentry Employment (HIRE) Program,” *Corrections: Policy, Practice and Research*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2017, pp. 110–129. As of October 4, 2021:
<https://clear.dol.gov/Study/Evaluating-recidivism-and-job-quality-outcomes-participants-Hoosier-Initiative-Reentry>

Prins, Esther, Carol Clymer, Blair Wilson Toso, Sheri Foreman Edler, Martin Loa, Mark Needle, Becky Raymond, and Alex Ziskind, *Career Pathways Programming for Lower-Skilled Adults and Immigrants: Report on Survey Findings*, University Park, Pa.: Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, May 2017. As of October 4, 2021:
<https://sites.psu.edu/adultpathways/files/2015/08/survey-findings-IES-v.-5-12nq28m.pdf>

Pub. L.—See Public Law.

Public Law 110–199, Second Chance Act of 2007: Community Safety Through Recidivism Prevention, April 9, 2008. As of January 5, 2022:

<https://www.congress.gov/110/plaws/publ199/PLAW-110publ199.pdf>

Public Law 113–128, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, July 22, 2014. As of January 5, 2022:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-113publ128/pdf/PLAW-113publ128.pdf>

Public Law 114–224, Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, July 31, 2018.

As of January 5, 2022:

<https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ224/PLAW-115publ224.pdf>

Public Law 115–391, First Step Act of 2018, December 21, 2018. As of January 5, 2022:

<https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ391/PLAW-115publ391.pdf>

Rosenbaum, Paul R., and Donald B. Rubin, “The Central Role of Propensity Score in Observational Studies for Causal Effects,” *Biometrika*, Vol. 70, No. 1, April 1983, pp. 41–55.

State of Indiana, “Business Outreach,” webpage, undated. As of January 5, 2022:

<https://www.in.gov/idoc/re-entry/hoosier-initiative-for-re-entry-hire/hoosier-initiative-for-re-entry-hire-business-outreach/>

Sylvester, Paul, and Steve Myran, “Minding the Gaps’: Career Navigators as an Illustration for Supporting Student Growth and Learning,” *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2020, pp. 147–161. As of October 4, 2021:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10668926.2018.1560375>

Travis, Jeremy, Anna Crayton, and Debbie A. Mukamal, “New Era in Inmate Reentry,” *Corrections Today*, Vol. 71, No. 6, December 2009, pp. 38–41. As of October 4, 2021:

http://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/files/web_images/president/A_New_Era_in_Inmate_Reentry.pdf

Tripodi, Stephen J., Johnny S. Kim, and Kimberly Bender, “Is Employment Associated with Reduced Recidivism? The Complex Relationship Between Employment and Crime,” *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 54, No. 5, 2010, pp. 706–720.

Visher, Christy A., Laura Winterfield, and Mark B. Coggeshall, “Ex-Offender Employment Programs and Recidivism: A Meta-Analysis,” *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, Vol. 1, 2005, pp. 295–316.

As of December 22, 2021:

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s11292-005-8127-x.pdf>

World Education, “Finding True North – Role of the Navigator,” webpage, undated. As of January 5, 2022:

<https://elearning-worlded.coursestorm.com/course/finding-true-north-role-of-the-navigator?page=2>