



Career Advancement Project

Evaluation Report 2023



TIPPING
POINT
COMMUNITY



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Findings	3
Introduction	6
Learning Objectives	9
Methodology	10
Results	12
Outreach & Recruitment	12
Process Measures	17
Employment Outcomes	31
Scalability & Sustainability	43
Implications & Recommendations	44
Insights for the Field	48
Acknowledgements	49
Appendices	50
Appendix A: Key Informant Interview Questions	50
Appendix B: Participant Survey November 2022	51
Appendix C: Participant Survey April 2023	54
Appendix D: Focus Group Script & Guiding Questions	57

KEY FINDINGS

During the past two years, 148 JobTrain and Opportunity Junction Healthcare program alumni joined the Career Advancement Project (CAP) program to further their careers. Participants enrolled with the intention to get support in navigating employment and educational opportunities in the healthcare field.

Leap Solutions partnered with JobTrain, Opportunity Junction, and Tipping Point Community to develop 10 learning objectives for the CAP pilot program. The effectiveness of the program was assessed by the extent to which each outcome was achieved. The summary of the outcomes is listed below.

Learning Objective	Outcome
1) To what extent are staff able to recruit, enroll, and engage participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment: Total enrollments increased almost every month, reaching 148 participants (59 from the Medical Assistant (MA) program, 83 from the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program and 6 did not list either program). The career coaches recruited from a pool of approximately 683 alumni, with an average uptake rate of 26%. Outreach & Engagement: 43,101 text messages, 6,048 emails, and 847 calls were made.
2) How might different populations benefit from the coaching service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Populations served by the CAP program were diverse with a cohort consisting of Hispanic/Latinx (49%), Black/African American (20%), White (16%), and Asian (11%) clients. The ages of the clients ranged from 18 to 71 years (average 31 years) with their educational attainment levels ranging from less than high school to an advanced degree. The majority of clients were female (93%). The coaching is beneficial for all participants, but the qualitative data showed that the CAP model is particularly impactful for low-income head-of-household females, first-generation immigrants, recent undergraduates, those living with mental health conditions, recovering from substance use disorder, and/or those who have learning disabilities.
3) To what extent are staff able to provide coaching and guidance on specific career pathways?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 39% of clients had 2 to 5 meetings with the coach. The coaching topics were broad and went beyond exploring specific career pathways. Nearly all the survey respondents consistently agreed that working with their coach supported them in their career or education goals. 51% often discussed other aspects of life and nearly all reported the coaching has improved their ability to search for employment. Participants reported the most helpful thing they did with their coach was getting support with their job search and career goals (63%) followed by socio-emotional support (35%) and support with educational goals (21%).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using a proactive direct service approach to reach out to healthcare program alumni and engage them in ongoing coaching services helps them achieve longer-term educational and employment goals. Staff report that building strong relationships is the cornerstone of successful career coaching.
4) To what extent do clients develop confidence in reaching their goals within their industry of interest?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly all the survey respondents consistently showed strong confidence about success in their career and overcoming challenges. Focus groups participants said the career coaching services boosts their confidence.
5) How do clients become aware of how to advance within the industry for which they trained?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaches use a Career Action Plan template with clients to develop their career goals, actions, and a vision. Coaches provide guidance on healthcare career pathways and input on tangible next steps clients can take. Each client developed an average of 2 goals. 58% have goals related to both jobs and education. Most clients aimed to get a better job (61%) and/or get a degree (60%). The types of goals differed by track: 76% of CNA program participants had both job and education-focused goals, while only 37% of MA program participants focused on both. A total of 402 actions were defined by clients (average of 3 actions). 20% of all actions have been completed while 53% are in progress and 27% have not been started. Education related actions were more likely to have not been started. The most common career vision was to become a Registered Nurse (RN) (65 clients), followed by Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) (30 clients). Those who participated in CAP for more than one year are more likely to have achieved goals and completed actions.
6) In what ways do clients participate in professional or technical skill building programs to achieve career goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28% of those interested in becoming an RN or getting their Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) are working on it, while 68% had not started on it yet. 32% of those interested in becoming an LVN are working on it, while 63% had not started on it yet. Other certificates of interest included: radiology and surgical technicians, Medical Assistant (MA), Home Health Aide (HHA), Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), a Master's in Nursing, a certified activity director, and a sterile processing technician. There are a variety of barriers that delay progress on educational goals for coaching clients. Most survey respondents are interested in continued education or training but 79% need financial support for tuition and 48% need money to offset personal expenses.
7) Do clients advance to new employment opportunities within their industry of interest?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Out of 148, 109 clients (74%) were employed when they enrolled in CAP and 123 clients (83%) were employed as of 4/30/23. The average hourly wage increased by 11% from \$22.37 to \$24.78. The average working hours increased by 0.8 hours from 36.5 hours to 37.3 hours per week. 45 clients (30%) changed jobs after starting CAP and their average hourly wage went up by 22% (\$20.30 to \$24.80). Those who enrolled in CAP more than 1 year ago tended to have more positive employment status changes such as

	<p>getting a new job or promotion than those enrolled more recently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some clients may have a lower salary because they intentionally reduced their working hours to avoid a “benefits cliff” or pursue educational goals that will ultimately propel them into higher paying jobs.
8) To what extent do participants have increased job satisfaction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average job satisfaction did not change much. 41% of the most recent survey respondents reported enjoying their job more and 31% reported feeling less stress respectively.
9) To what extent do participants improve their quality of life?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the November 2022 survey, most reported higher wage or salary (72%), more consistent or stable hours (53%), and better benefits (38%). Some focus group clients said the coaching services improved their overall quality of life by helping them take tangible small steps towards their goals. Most clients selected high prices/finances as a challenge against achieving their goals, which affected their quality of life, and 69% discussed those challenges with their coach.
10) How might the pilot demonstrate that the model is scalable or financially sustainable?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The coaches reported that their caseloads (number of clients they meet with per week) are manageable. Staff are interested in expanding the model to offer the service to alumni of all programs. Opportunity Junction was able to secure short-term funding for another six months and JobTrain for another year. Funders of skills training or workforce development programs may recognize the need for this type of coaching program, but program participants tend to already have incomes, which puts them outside the highest need categories that funders often want to support. This may create a challenge to finding long-term funding. Taking a long-term approach to funding workforce development programs can benefit people at all income levels, which is especially important in regions where the cost of living is high.

“It really helps to have someone to talk to about my future. It is comforting to know that I have someone in my corner who is always ready to support any hardship that I face while achieving my goals.

~ CAP survey respondent, April 2023

INTRODUCTION

Career Advancement Project

In a workforce development system that is optimized for one-time placement, jobseekers and workers need services that are designed for mobility and stewardship of long-term career advancement. Many incumbent workers experience plateauing wages or get caught in a cycle of low wage work that inhibits career momentum and prevents them from reaching self-sufficient wages. In a partnership comprised of Bay Area organizations who provide career counseling and job training to low-income residents, Tipping Point Community and its grantees, JobTrain and Opportunity Junction, designed and tested a prototype for a coaching service tailored towards career advancement called the Career Advancement Project (CAP).

The CAP service is unique because it is designed to positively influence long-term employment outcomes by providing coaching on an ongoing basis. Prior to developing CAP, Opportunity Junction and JobTrain supported their healthcare program alumni, but the approach was reactive in nature (e.g., they would wait for alumni to reach out to them for help). By contrast, the new CAP model uses a *proactive direct service approach* to reach out to healthcare program alumni and engage them in ongoing coaching services to help them achieve longer-term educational and employment goals.

Coaching Service Model

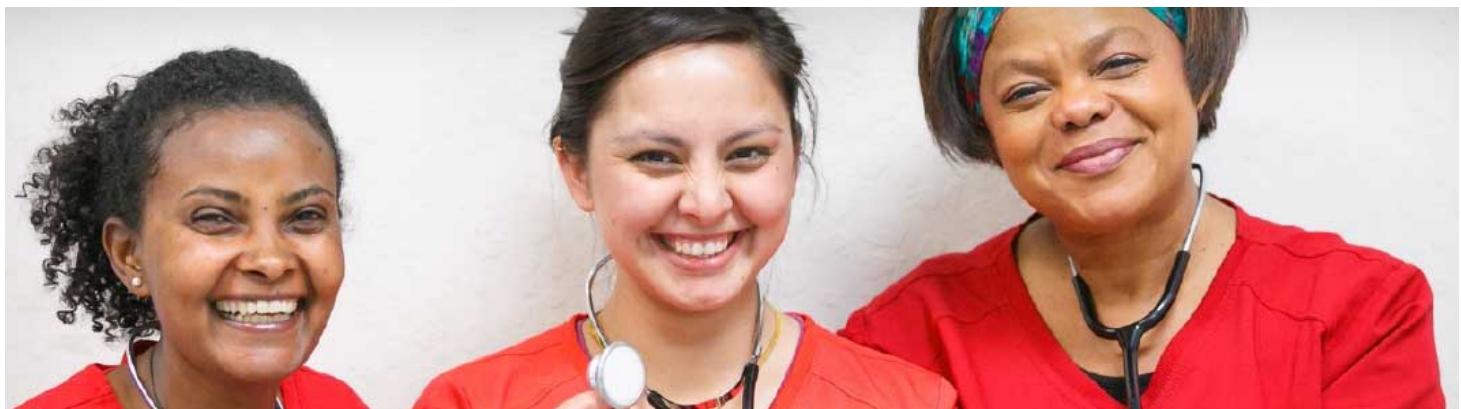
JobTrain and Opportunity Junction collaborated with Tipping Point Community to develop an alumni coaching service model for participants that have completed one of their healthcare training programs: the Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) program or the Medical Assistant (MA) program. At JobTrain, upon completing the training requirements and performing well in the class, a Career Development Specialist helps students get ready to apply for jobs, which may or may not be with one of their employee partners in the South Bay Area. At Opportunity Junction, new program graduates are placed by a professional development instructor with one of their employee partners, which is comprised of nursing facilities in Contra Costa County.

In 2021 JobTrain hired a career coach to work with the MA and CNA alumni, which is a central aspect of the coaching service model. The coach is well-versed in career counseling strategies to be able to guide and mentor alumni from their initial job experiences into other higher paying fields, such as a registered nurse, a radiology technician, a surgical technician,

etc. While the career coach was not initially a content expert in the healthcare field, they were able to learn this content on the job and integrate their career coaching skills into this sector.

Opportunity Junction also hired a career coach in 2021 to work with their Healthcare Career Pathways alumni, which is a central aspect of the coaching service model. The coach is well-versed in the healthcare field to be able to help guide and mentor alumni from their initial nursing facility experience into other higher paying fields, such as a registered nurse, a radiology technician, a surgical technician, etc.

The following page shows the CAP Coaching Processes and Outcomes, which consists of three initial stages (initial outreach, initial meeting, and intake), followed by a coaching and referral stage. As a result of the coaching, clients achieve one or more of the following outcomes: research about and applications to new jobs, continuing education, promotion or new job, social-emotional benefits, and/or connection to supportive services. These outcomes can occur sequentially or simultaneously and take place over a short or long period of time, depending on the goals and needs of the client. Coaching can be cyclical, with some clients returning immediately for more coaching after achieving an outcome or returning after some time has passed. Because JobTrain and Opportunity Junction are working with program alumni, they have established relationships through prior program participation, which contribute to stronger outcomes in social-emotional benefits and connection to supportive services.



CAP Coaching Processes and Outcomes

1. Initial Outreach

Coaches use a combination of outreach methods to help students and alumni learn about alumni coaching services. Different alumni respond to different types of outreach, so a variety of approaches is necessary, including:

- Presentations to current students enrolled in the CNA or MA training programs to introduce themselves
- Special workshops or presentations (i.e., Resume Preparation, Healthcare Careers, and Interview Preparation)
- Emails and texts to alumni (there may be multiple contacts before an alumni responds)

3. Intake

If the alumni is interested in joining, coaches begin the CAP client intake process. Coaches gather key pieces of information from alumni, including:

- Employment
- Income
- Benefits
- Hours
- Goals
- Job satisfaction levels
- Communication preferences

Coaches discuss client's career vision and goals to create a Career Action Plan. Data is entered into Salesforce.

5. Coaching Outcomes

Research & Applications

Clients and coach conduct research together on job and/or education opportunities. Coaches support clients in the application process: resumes, cover letters, mock interviews, financial aid, job leads, etc.

Continuing Education

Clients enroll in continuing education opportunities to support their career vision and goals. In some cases this requires a reduction in work hours, wages, or benefits.

Promotion or New Job

Clients secure a promotion or a new job that offers better wages and/or benefits to achieve more economic security.

Social-Emotional Benefits & Job Satisfaction

Clients improve their confidence, mood, and levels of job satisfaction.

Connection to Supportive Services

Clients get connected to other supportive services as needed, such as economic assistance, housing, and food.

2. Initial Meeting

Alumni who are interested in coaching services reach out to coaches to schedule an initial meeting.

Coaches send a meeting reminder via text or email to alumni for this first meeting.

During the initial meeting, coaches explain CAP services and discuss if it is a good fit based on alumni capacity and interest.

4. Coaching & Referrals

Coaches meet with clients at a pace determined by the client with coaching taking place via online meetings, phone calls, texts, and/or emails, depending on client preference. The coaching process meets clients where they are by:

1. Providing tailored support based on a client's specific goals and needs
2. Using the Career Action Plan to track progress towards goals, any barriers, and social-emotional changes
3. Referring to supportive services as needed
4. Documenting progress and outcomes in Salesforce

Clients generally achieve one or more of the following outcomes, which can occur sequentially or simultaneously and may take place over a small or large period of time. The work can be cyclical with clients returning immediately after attaining an outcome or returning after some time.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide a formative assessment of the first two years of the pilot project. Leap Solutions staff collaborated with Tipping Point to determine learning objectives during the evaluation design phase. Additionally, indicators and instruments were developed. JobTrain and Opportunity Junction staff were given the opportunity to adjust and refine the objectives and the indicators. The ten learning objectives are listed below and reported on in the outcomes section of this report.

Outreach & Recruitment

1. To what extent are staff able to recruit, enroll, and engage participants?
2. How might different populations (e.g., race, gender) benefit from the coaching service?

Process Measures

3. To what extent are staff able to provide coaching and guidance on specific career pathways?
4. To what extent do clients develop confidence in reaching their goals within their industry of interest?
5. How do clients become aware of how to advance within the industry for which they trained?
6. In what ways do clients participate in professional or technical skill building programs to achieve career goals?

Employment Outcomes

7. Do clients advance to new employment opportunities within their industry of interest?
8. To what extent do participants have increased job satisfaction?
9. To what extent do participants improve their quality of life?

Scalability & Sustainability

10. How might the pilot demonstrate that the model is scalable or financially sustainable?

METHODOLOGY

A mixed methods evaluation was designed to take advantage of existing communications and data gathering systems in place at JobTrain and Opportunity Junction. Additional qualitative tools, such as key informant interviews, focus groups, and case studies were layered in to provide additional context to the data.

List of Instruments / Evaluation Tools

- Salesforce data (collected throughout the program)
- Key informant interviews with staff
- Client survey
- Focus groups
- Case studies

Salesforce Data

Salesforce data are collected throughout the program. This includes demographic data, applicants' information, CAP program-related information, contact methods and frequencies, meeting summaries, client goals and actions derived from the meeting notes, historical employment information, and job satisfaction information.

Key Informant Interviews with Staff

Leap Solutions staff conducted key informant interviews with seven staff (two from JobTrain, four from Opportunity Junction, and one from Tipping Point Community) in September 2021 and September 2022. Each interview lasted between 30 to 60 minutes and elicited data about strengths, challenges, surprises, lessons learned, and suggested changes (see [Appendix A: Key Informant Questions](#)). Data was analyzed for themes and key findings are integrated into the results section of this report.

Client Survey

Leap Solutions staff collaborated with JobTrain and Opportunity Junction staff to administer an anonymous survey to their coaching clients. The survey consisted of 13 question categories including the impact of coaching, confidence about career path, feelings about the future, challenges, changes in employment status, and further training and education. The survey took approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete and respondents were offered a \$25 virtual gift card in exchange for their time, which was sent to clients by JobTrain and

Opportunity Junction staff when the survey closed. The survey was administered three times: April 2022, November 2022 (see [Appendix B: Participant Survey November 2022](#)), and April 2023 (see [Appendix C: Participant Survey April 2023](#)). In each survey, 43, 42, and 53 CAP clients responded, respectively. It should be noted that the third survey (April 2023) contained modified and additional questions based on earlier findings and the need for additional data.

Focus Groups

Leap Solutions staff conducted two 90-minute focus groups with CAP program participants in June 2022 and November 2022. Ten alumni participated (six from Opportunity Junction and four from JobTrain). Focus group participants responded to questions that elicited data about their goals, successes related to the coaching experience, challenges that they face, what boosts and drains their confidence, and any suggested changes or recommendations they may have (see [Appendix D: Focus Group Script and Guiding Questions](#)). Leap staff took notes and conducted content analysis by allowing themes to emerge from the data. Codes were identified and used to develop major theme categories and subcategories.

Case Studies

Case studies were conducted with four CAP participants (two from Opportunity Junction and two from JobTrain) in February and March 2023. Case study participants responded to a few questions that elicited data about their journey into and through the coaching services, including their experiences, successes, barriers, and recommendations for improvement. Leap staff took notes and recorded the interview, with consent, and then transcribed the data. Data was analyzed for key themes and written up into short biographical narratives. Pseudonyms were used to protect the confidentiality of case study participants.

RESULTS

Outreach & Recruitment

Learning Objective 1

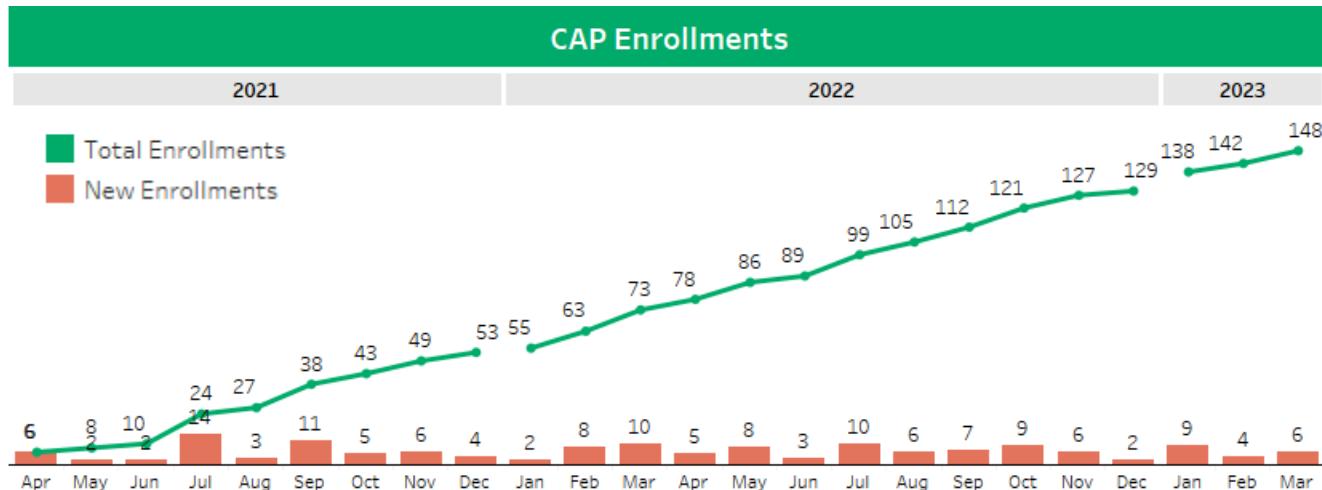
To what extent are staff able to recruit, enroll, and engage participants?

Number of Enrollments Over Time

The enrollments increased almost every month. The total enrollments as of 4/30/2023 were 148, with 19 clients added in 2023. The career coaches recruited from a pool of approximately 683 alumni (183 from Opportunity Junction and 500 from JobTrain), resulting in an average uptake rate of 26% across both organizations. Key informants spoke enthusiastically about recruitment and enrollment and that they had exceeded their initial expectations. One key informant from Opportunity Junction explained:

Since our program is brand new, we're only working with alumni who finished training in early 2020 and on, so we don't have that many alumni to possibly serve. So, in my opinion we have a very high participation rate from the general pool of alumni.

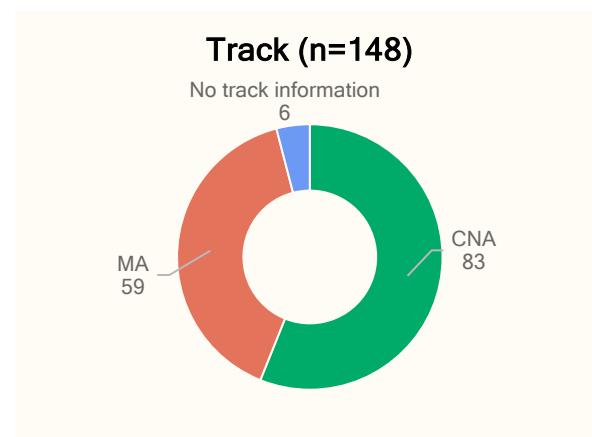
Key informants also mentioned a few elements that contributed to enrollment success: 1) starting recruitment early in the process (e.g., in the first month of class and again at graduation); 2) presenting as guest speakers in training program classes on different topics to gain student interest in the coaching services (e.g., talking about making more money for their family, talking about going back to school or how to get financial aid).



Source. Salesforce reports (04/30/2023)

Program Track

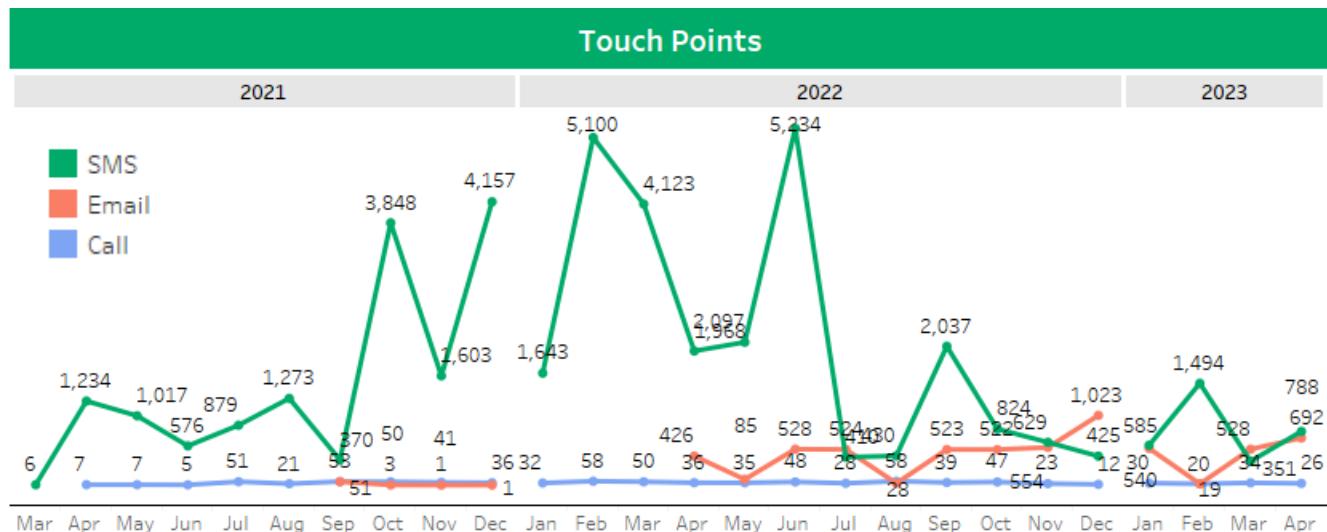
Out of 148 CAP clients, 66 graduated from CNA training programs (offered by both JobTrain and Opportunity Junction), 59 graduated from a MA program (JobTrain only), and 6 had no program information listed.



Source. Salesforce reports (04/30/2023)

Touch Points

The figure below shows the trend of outreach and communication activities over time. Only texts were sent out in the beginning and starting in September 2021 emails were sent out. A total of 43,101 texts and 6,048 emails were sent to reach out to alumni to join the program or communicate with the current clients. In total, 847 calls were made, including meetings with coaches. Data about the number of meetings clients reported having with their coaches (i.e., the typical dosage) is presented in learning objective 3, under the subcategory of ‘Coaching Sessions’.



Source. Salesforce reports (04/30/2023)

Overall, both focus group attendees and key informants were positive about the touch points with clients. Coaches emphasized the importance of paying attention to different communication preferences among clients:

I've noticed that with the younger participants, they prefer a text message versus a phone call. But sometimes I'll call and piggyback with a text message.

More information about the precise ways that coaches engage with clients can be found in other sections of this report. It should be noted that client responsiveness can sometimes be challenging. One coach explained,

It's an ebb and flow with engagement and retention. You might talk to a participant every month for 4 months and then they don't make it to a meeting you had scheduled and then it's crickets. There are just things going on in their lives that they don't need that extra person to talk to and I respect that.

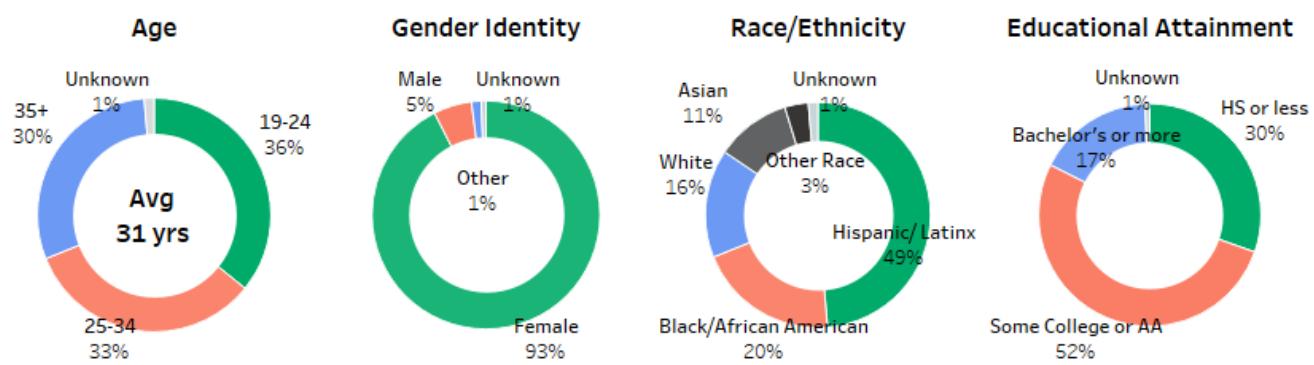
Learning Objective 2

How might different populations benefit from the coaching service?

Demographics of CAP Clients

The demographic profiles of the 148 CAP clients are summarized in the following figure. The average age of clients was 31, ranging from 18 to 71. Over a third were younger than 25 years old (36%), while another third were between 25 and 34 years old (33%). The majority (93%) are female. Approximately 49% are Hispanic or Latino; 20% are Black or African American; 16% are non-Hispanic White; and 11% are Asian. Most clients (52%) had some college experience or earned an Associate's degree, while 17% earned a Bachelor's degree and 30% graduated from high school or below.

Demographic Profiles of CAP Clients



Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023) n=148

While the program proved beneficial to all participants, qualitative data showed that the coaching is particularly impactful for the following groups:

- Low-income head-of-household females who are raising children or supporting elderly parents and need practical support to be able to reach for better or higher paying jobs.
- First-generation immigrants who need additional scaffolding. These clients particularly benefit from coaching on how to pursue a career (e.g., resumes, mock interviews) and how to navigate educational steps (e.g., pre-requisites, scholarships, financial aid).
- Recent undergraduates who no longer have access to academic counseling services offered by their former school and are left to figure out career steps on their own.
- Clients who are living with mental health conditions, recovering from substance use disorder, and/or have learning disabilities can also greatly benefit from the career coaching. However, they may need or already be working with additional coaching support (e.g., outpatient counselors, rehabilitation coaches). When paired with alumni career coaching, the various coaches can serve as a ‘network of support’ for these clients.

“It’s hard to find ‘me time’. Being a mom, or just being a woman, we’re expected to do a lot and take care of other people. But if I don’t take care of myself there’s no way I can take care of other people.”

~ CAP focus group participant, Nov 2022

“My coach helps make sure that I’m taking care of myself mentally, physically, and emotionally.”

~ Survey respondent, April 2023

Case Study #1 on the following page highlights an example of a recent undergraduate and first-generation immigrant who benefited from CAP coaching services.

Case Study #1: Maria's Story*

Maria has known since childhood that working in the medical field was her calling. After graduating from high school in 2016, she enrolled in JobTrain's Medical Assistant (MA) training program to explore the field. As an MA, she found working with patients rewarding, however, in seeing the nurses around her she realized that "I could do this too. My confidence started to grow and I realized that I wanted to become a nurse."

Once Maria received her Associate's degree, she no longer qualified for academic counseling. Her JobTrain MA professor directed her to the CAP alumni coaching services. She explained:

I felt like I was out there on my own, so I was really happy to learn about JobTrain's coaching program. I'm a DACA recipient, the oldest daughter in my family and the first to go to college. As a first-generation student, you really need some type of mentoring or guidance.

Because of her long-standing relationship with JobTrain, "the decision to sign-up for the coaching was easy." Maria began working with Cathy Weselby and immediately felt like she was talking to a friend. In their six sessions:

Cathy and I came up with a calendar schedule for how to organize myself and prepare for the TEAS exam. I had a lot of anxiety about that exam and it took me 2 or 3 times to pass but she helped me get through the process.

Maria's ultimate goal is to become a registered nurse at Kaiser. She looks forward to more responsibilities, a higher level of critical thinking, greater financial stability, and a higher degree of flexibility in her days off. She recently began attending the International School of Health Sciences in Florida virtually. The first semester of the fast-paced program has been difficult so she has adjusted from her part-time position to an on-call position with flexible hours. While the new position does not provide health benefits, it allows her to progress towards her long-term Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN) goal. She expects to continue working with Cathy as she pursues this goal.

Maria appreciates JobTrain's programs and all the support she has received has already recommended the MA and alumni coaching program to others.

Key takeaways

- Alumni who have a positive long-term relationship with a job training program may be more receptive to signing up for alumni career coaching services.
- Alumni who no longer have access to academic counselors after graduation may struggle to navigate their next steps; for these students career coaching can be a good fit. This is particularly true for first generation college students, who often need extra support.
- Clients may opt to work fewer hours, despite the subsequent loss of wages and/or health benefits, if the lighter workload enables them to continue their education.
- In addition to providing career support, coaching can help clients to develop healthy study habits and better navigate their education.

* Name changed to respect the confidentiality of case study participant

Process Measures

Learning Objective 3

To what extent are staff able to provide coaching and guidance on specific career pathways?

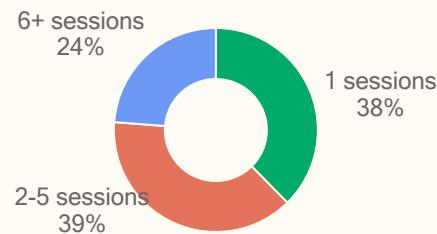
Coaching Sessions

About 38% of the 148 clients who started coaching had 1 meeting with the coach, while 39% had 2 to 5 meetings and 24% had 6 or more meetings with the coach. One coach explained the meeting rhythm can be variable:

There's no regular rhythm in terms of how often I meet with clients. One I meet with twice a month, but others it's hard to determine how often we meet. Some it's just a text check-in "how are you doing?" and if needed we'll schedule a meeting. It's case by case. If we are working on a job search its more intensive, like once a week until they find something.

The topics discussed during the coaching sessions were broad and varied, and not just limited to talking about career pathways. About half of the clients often talked about their daily life (51%), such as their mental health and well-being, challenges at home or with family, or how to get other types of assistance (e.g., food, rental assistance, therapy, etc.) and how things are going at work (49%). Also, many often talked about how to research new job opportunities (41%) and how to advance with their current employer (31%). Specific skills such as updating resumes or doing mock interviews were also cultivated with those who needed that type of support.

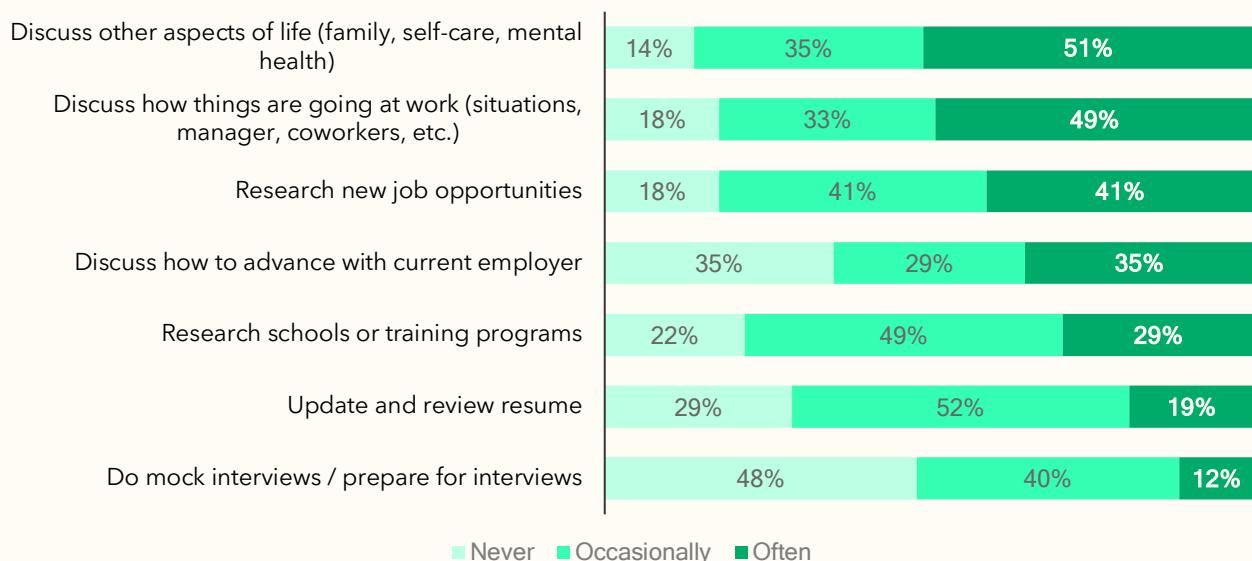
Number of meetings



"I didn't know how to write a resume or how to do an interview. JobTrain had a coach so I thought I'd take advantage of it to improve my communication skills."

~ Focus group participant, Nov 2022

Consultation Topics



Source. CAP Client Surveys (April 2023; n=51-52)

"My coach encouraged me not to give up. She also helped me get in contact with the right employers when I was looking for a job."

~ Survey Respondent, April 2023

Impact of Coaching

The following figure shows repeated client surveys administered at two points in time (April 2022 and November 2022). The surveys were anonymous and not matched. The survey respondents consistently gave strong endorsements of the coaching services. Nearly all agreed or strongly agreed on all five statements below about how the coaching impacted their career goals in the April 2022 survey. However, fewer, but still high, percentages of the respondents agreed with the statements when surveyed in November 2022. For example, in the November 2022 survey, most respondents agreed that working with their coach had improved their search ability (95%) and their access to resources (93%).

How has working with your coach impacted your career goals?

(% Agree and Strongly agree)

■ Apr '22 (n=43) ■ Nov '22 (n=42)



When participants were asked in the survey, '*What is the most helpful thing you have done with your coach?*' many gave more than one answer. Nearly two thirds (63%) said getting support with their job search and/or career goals was the most helpful thing they did. Over a third (35%) reported that the social-emotional support they received from the coach was most helpful. Descriptors used included: encouragement to keep going and not give up, motivation to achieve their long-term goals or highest potential, building their self-confidence, having an accountability partner, discussing life challenges, and exploring how to overcome struggles. One client wrote into the survey, "*She helped me feel less alone and be brave.*" Similarly, 17% of clients explained that the qualities of the coach made their sessions particularly impactful and helpful. Words used to describe the coaches included: knowledgeable, safe, trustworthy, caring, kind, honest, non-judgmental, timely, dependable, communicative, encouraging, supportive, sincere, patient, and flexible)

What is the most helpful thing you have done with your coach?	# (n=72)	%
Support with a job search and/or career goals	45	63%
Social-emotional support: encouragement, motivation, build confidence, discuss life, self-care, overcoming struggles	25	35%
Support with educational goals	15	21%
The coaches' qualities were helpful	12	17%

Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023; n=53; November 2022; n=19); Note: survey respondents often wrote in multiple answers, so the percentages add up to over 100%.

"Carmela is very down to earth and has been somebody I can talk to about stuff that has nothing to do with my career...she's very approachable and wants to know "how are you doing today?" and that means so much. When you work in healthcare, you're so used to taking care of others that you forget to care for yourself. It's really helped me to have deep conversations with her and know that I'm not the only person who has struggles."

~ Focus group participant, Nov 2022

"Cathy has helped me with a lot, from sending me jobs that are hiring, to helping me with my resume, to encouraging me to keep my head up in tough times."

~ Survey respondent, April 2023

The Keys to Success of the Coaching Model

As noted in the introduction, the CAP model uses a **proactive direct service approach** to reach out to healthcare program alumni and engage them in ongoing coaching services to help them achieve longer-term educational and employment goals. In the key informant interviews, JobTrain and Opportunity Junction coaches explained that **building strong relationships** was a cornerstone of successful career coaching. They described the relational components as follows: 1) building connection and rapport early on in the process; 2) building relationships organically; 3) allowing clients to set the frequency and pace of the sessions; 4) using a whole-person approach; 5) building joint accountability into the process (both client and coach take on responsibility); 6) believing in client potential as a way to build trust; 7) working through any disappointment and shame when it arises in client sessions; and 8) being persistent (e.g., not giving up on clients).

Key informants identified a number of other actions taken by coaches that they believe are key elements to success (see list below). The combination of building strong relationships as mentioned above and **practical career guidance** are what the interviewees believe make this type of coaching unique and impactful.

- Leveraging professional connections (with other alumni and professionals and recruiters in the health field) on behalf of clients

- Providing referrals to supportive services when needed (i.e., food, housing, mental health services, etc.)
- Building confidence through mock interviews
- Helping to update resumes
- Working with the career action plan conversationally (rather than continually presenting the template)
- Modeling professional boundaries
- Offering career pathway workshops to all alumni
- Building a website with resources available
- Having a process for tracking missed meetings

"Sometimes I'll ask clients if they have a therapist they can talk to or if they need help finding somebody. And if needed I'll refer them to supportive services."

~ CAP coach, Sept 2022

"It's an organic relationship and sometimes the conversation might be about pre-requisites they need to get into an RN program and the next one might be 'I couldn't get to work on time and I'm getting written up.' So, it's very organic and I believe that's the most fruitful way to get anywhere."

~ CAP coach, Sept 2022

Learning Objective 4

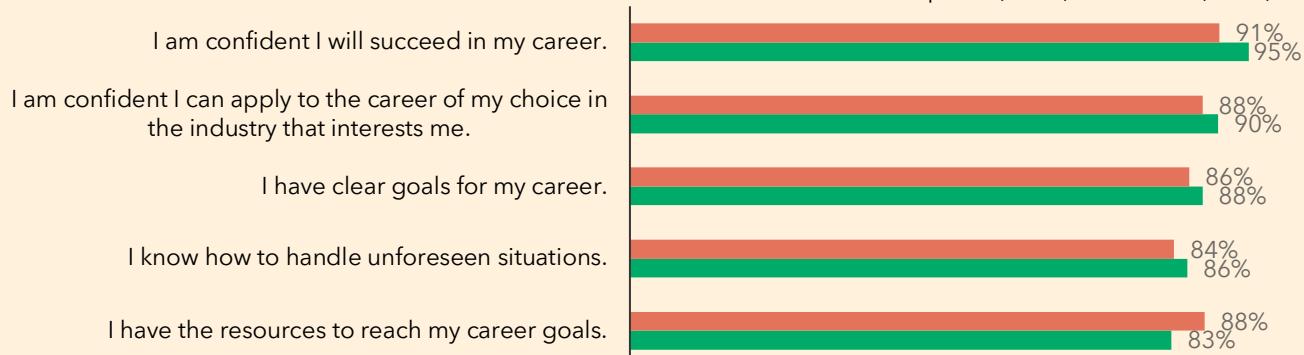
To what extent do clients develop confidence in reaching their goals within their industry of interest?

Confidence about Career Path

The clients showed strong confidence about their career path across the 2022 surveys. In November 2022, 95% of the respondents reported that they were confident that they would succeed in their career, and 90% said that they were confident they could apply to the career of their choice. In addition, 88% agreed or strongly agreed that they had clear goals for their career and 86% agreed or strongly agreed that they knew how to handle unforeseen situations. A slightly lower, but still high percentage of clients (83%) said they had the resources to reach their career goals.

How do you feel about your career goals right now?

(% Agree and Strongly agree) ■ Apr '22 (n=42) ■ Nov '22 (n=43)



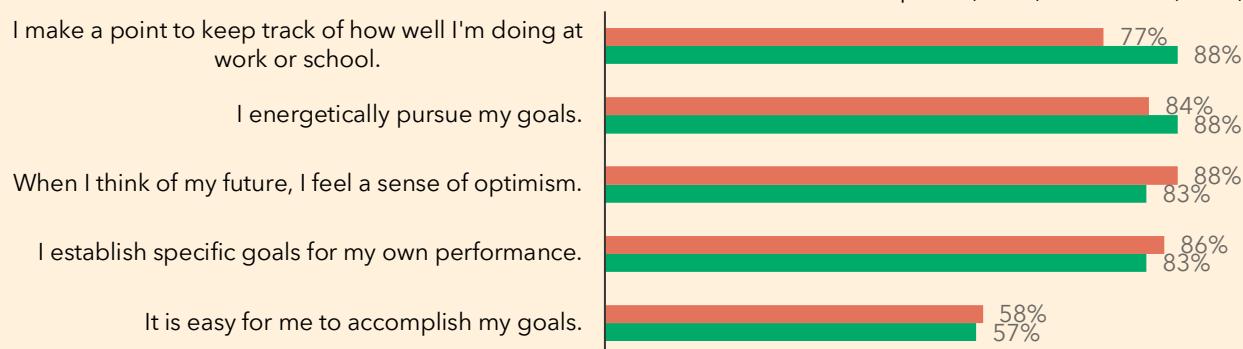
Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2022; November 2022)

The majority of clients also reported confidence about reaching their goals, in both the April 2022 and the November 2022 surveys. Between 77% and 88% reported that they made a point to keep track of how they were doing at work or school, that they were energetically pursuing their goals, that they established specific goals for their own performance, and that they felt optimistic about their future. However, only over half agreed or strongly agreed that it was easy for them to accomplish their goals.

How confident do you feel about reaching your goals?

(% Agree and Strongly agree)

■ Apr '22 (n=42) ■ Nov '22 (n=43)



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2022; November 2022)

In the focus groups, clients were asked what drains and boosts their confidence. Clients shared that their confidence is drained by:

- Self-doubt about their knowledge, skills, or ability to learn
- Fear about how hard the educational path might be
- Nurse colleagues that are not pleasant to work with
- Immigration status and concern about the citizenship process.

"I feel more confident in my career path and in myself. If I wasn't able to do the coaching, I think I would still be in the agency and having low pay, no benefits, working full time."

~ Focus Group Participant, Nov 2022

The qualitative data demonstrated that the career coaching services boosts participants' confidence. Participants talked specifically about setting goals with their coaches, having regular check-ins, using the resources the coaches provide, and talking about other aspects of life besides career goals.

It should also be noted that several key informants brought up a concern about reliance on subjective data to measure client confidence. One explained,

It's really hard to measure confidence. Let's say you ask me today and I've applied for 3 jobs and nobody has gotten back to me, I feel really bad. You ask me tomorrow and 2 people have called me for an interview so I feel really good. It's not that we haven't built a structure, it's that what we want to measure is fuzzy.

However, it is promising that data from the client surveys (shown in the figures above) demonstrates an overall high level of confidence across two time points and some clients made a direct link between the coaching services and their confidence. One survey respondent said: *"My coach helps me in getting better jobs and being more confident of myself."*

Learning Objective 5

How do clients become aware of how to advance within the industry for which they trained?

Goals, Actions, and Vision

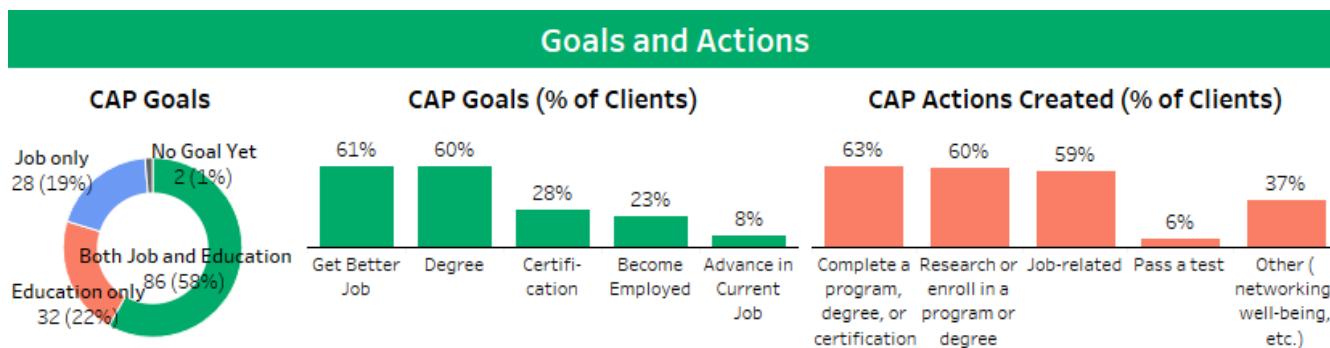
In their initial meetings, the coach uses a **Career Action Plan template** to help clients set up career and/or educational goals, specific actions, and a career vision. During the coaching

sessions, coaches provide guidance on healthcare career pathways and input on tangible next steps clients can take toward achieving their goals.

CAP goals were grouped into five categories: three categories were related to employment including to become employed, to get a better job, and to advance in their current job. The other two categories were related to education, including getting a degree and getting or renewing a certification.

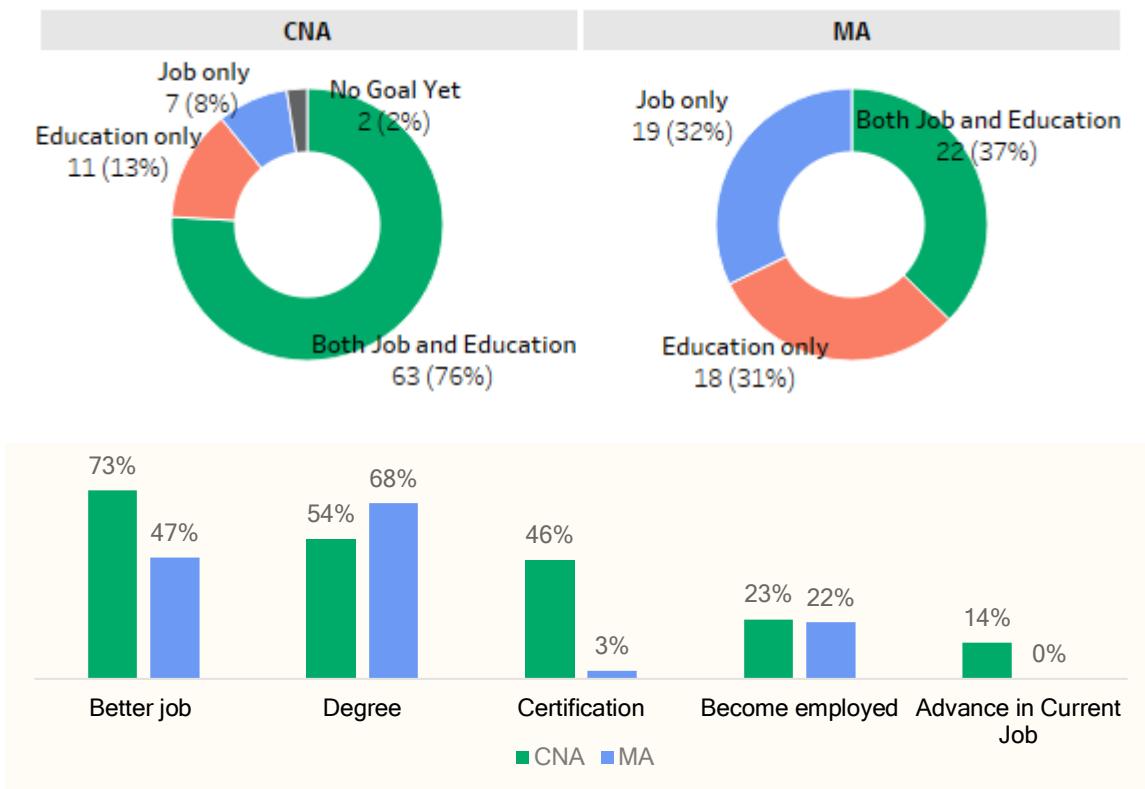
Each client has set up an average of 2 goals (ranging from 1 to 4 goals). Most clients (58%) had goals related to both jobs and education while 22% had goals related to education only and 19% had goals related to job only. Most clients aimed to get a better job (61%) and/or get a degree (60%), followed by getting or renewing certification (28%) and becoming employed (23%).

Out of 148 clients, 126 clients (85%) defined at least one CAP action toward reaching a goal (a total of 402 actions). On average, a client defined 3 CAP actions (ranging from 1 to 9 actions). 63% have created actions about completing a program or degree and 60% have created actions about researching or enrolling in a program or degree, while 59% have created job-related actions. 37% of clients have also created actions not specifically related to jobs or education, including connecting with people in their areas of interest, finding financial resources, creating good work/life balance, etc.



Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

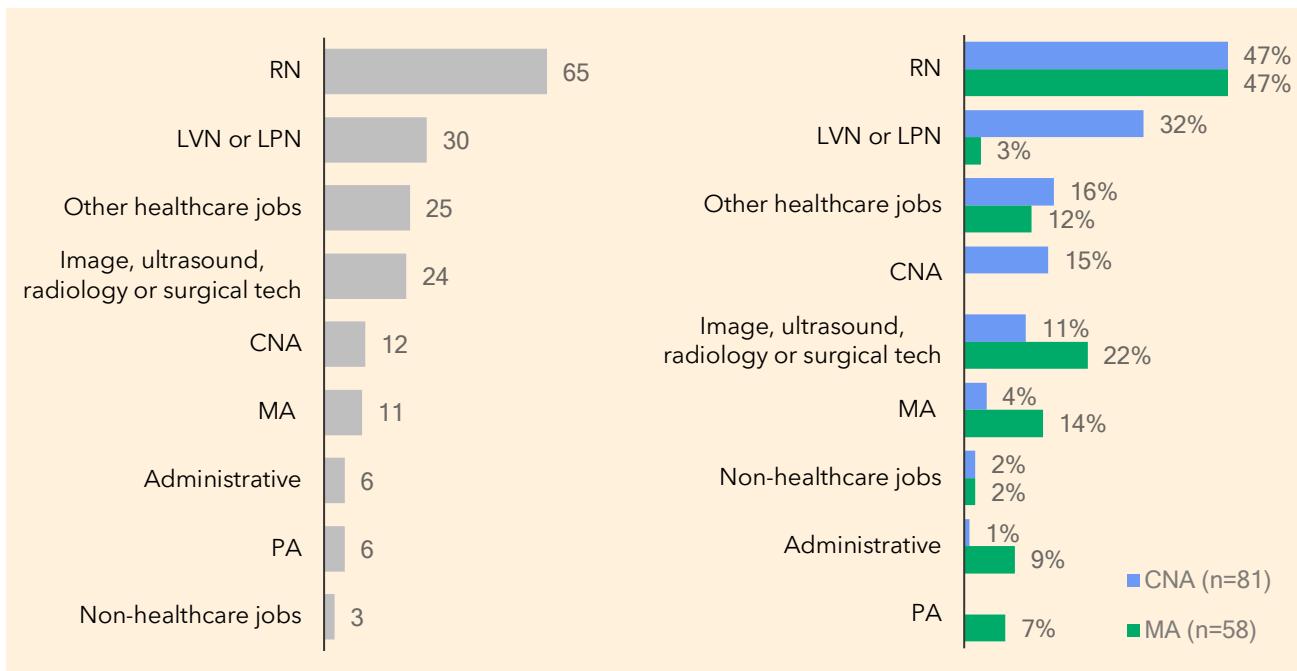
The types of goals tended to differ by whether they were a CNA or MA alumni. CNA alumni were more likely to choose both job-related and education-related goals (76%), while MA alumni were more likely to focus on either job (32%) or education (31%) only. In addition, CNA alumni were more likely to aim to get better job (73%), get other certifications (46%), and/or advance in their current job (14%) than MA alumni.



Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

The specific career visions of clients are listed below. Working as an RN was the ultimate goal for 65 clients and working as an LVN or LPN was a goal for 30 clients. An imaging, ultrasound, radiology, or surgical technician was a goal for 24 clients while 25 clients wanted to pursue other healthcare jobs such as phlebotomy, medical doctor, nurse practitioner, Home Health Aide (HHA), or doula.

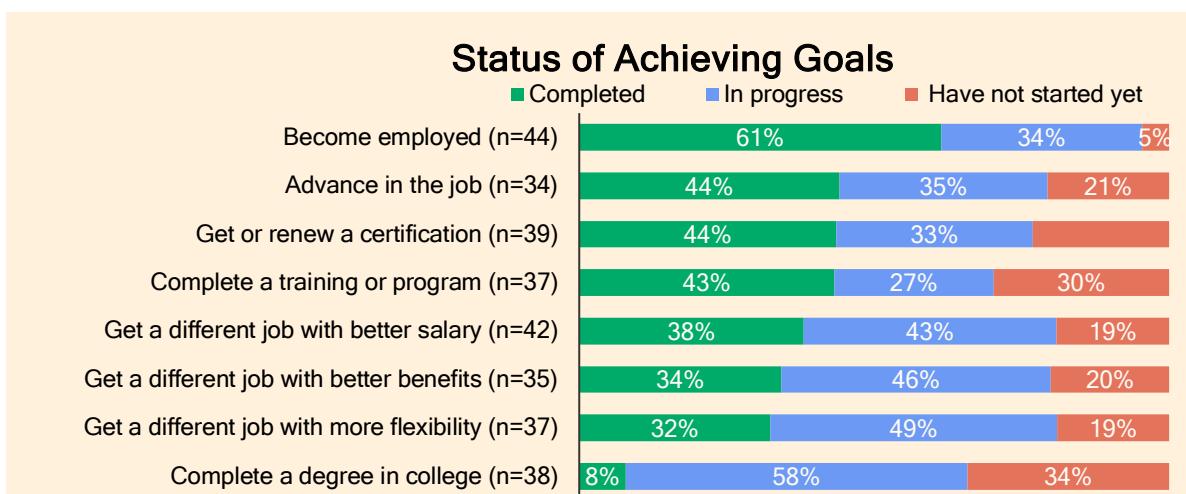
Becoming an RN was the most common goal for both CNA and MA alumni (47% each). However, LVN or LPN was the second common goal for CNA alumni (32%), whereas an imaging, ultrasound, radiology, or surgical technician was the second common goal for MA alumni (22%).



Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023). Note: Clients were allowed to have more than one career visions, so the percentages add up over 100%.

Current Progress in Goals

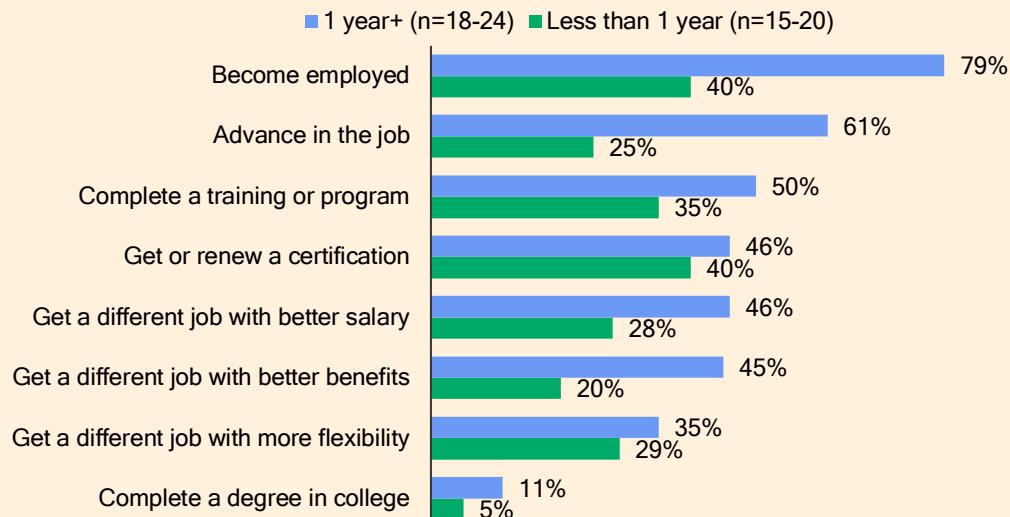
In the April 2023 survey, CAP clients responded to questions about progress in achieving their goals. Among those who aimed to become employed, 61% said they had achieved the goal, while 34% said it was in progress. The next most achieved goal was to advance in their current job, which was achieved by 44% and in progress by 35%. In addition, 44% of those who wanted to get a certification and 43% of those who wanted to complete a training or program did so. Relatively fewer respondents said they got a job with a better salary (38%) or better benefits (34%), and only 8% completed a degree in college (8%), while most (58%) were still working on it.



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023). Note: Those who were not interested in each goal were excluded from the calculations.

Not surprisingly, those who were enrolled in CAP for longer were more likely to have achieved goals such as becoming employed or advancing in their job compared to those who had been enrolled in CAP for less than one year.

% Achieved Goals by CAP Enrollment Years



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023). Note: Those who were not interested in each goal were excluded from the calculations.

Focus group participants were positive about the way that the coaching services supported them to make progress on their career path. Several spoke about how setting and tracking goals is of particular benefit in terms of advancing along their career pathway. One JobTrain client explained:

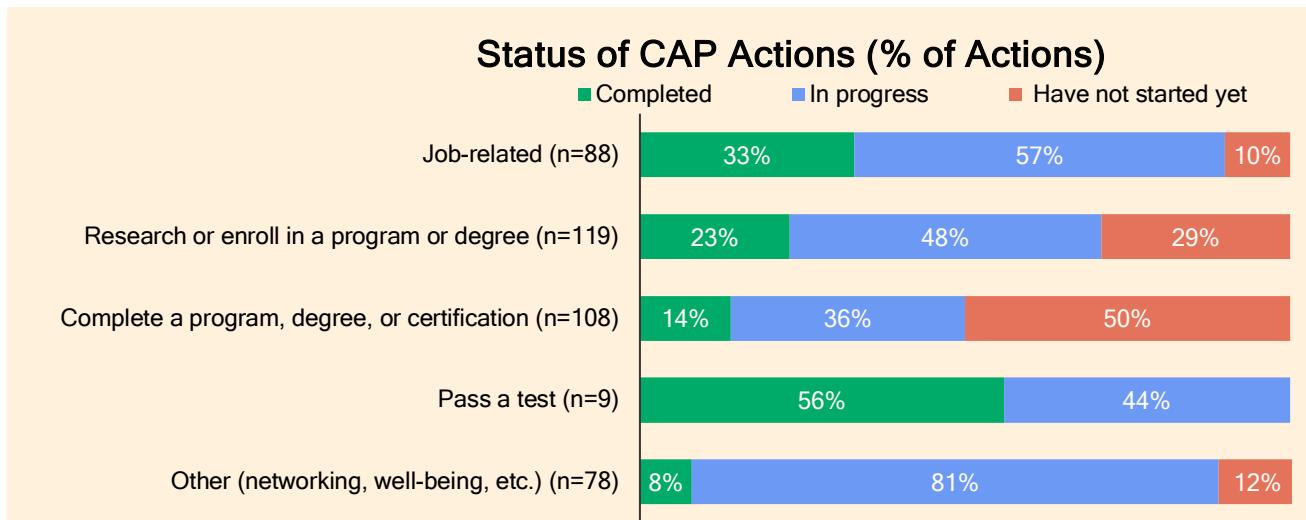
I reached my recent career goal already, so Cathy is helping me keep track of my educational goal. She contacted me last month to talk about what was the next step to meet my next goal and then apply to a nursing program. She gave me a worksheet that has a number of goals and how you can achieve them. I think writing them down will help me reach those goals. Before having a coach, I wasn't really tracking goals...

A similar sentiment was expressed by an Opportunity Junction client:

I didn't have any goals before I met Carmela. I was at a point in my CNA career where I knew that I wanted to do something else, but I didn't know what it was or how to start it. With her I've been looking at different programs and she's helping me compare schools. What are the times, will that work with your job and family? She's really good about getting me information, and then we talk about it and then do the next step. It's literally one step after the next, rather than a whole list of abcd.

Current Progress in Actions

Out of the total 410 actions created, 8 actions had been marked as no longer applicable. Among the rest of the 402 actions, 20% had been completed; 53% were in progress; and 27% had not been started yet. Actions about passing a test were mostly completed (56%), followed by job-related actions (33%) and actions about researching or enrolling in a program or degree (23%). Half of the actions related to completing a degree or program (50%) had not yet been initiated.



Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

Similar to the survey results, the actions of those who had been enrolled for more than one year were more likely to have been completed. However, different from the goals that clients create in the beginning, clients continue to create actions throughout the coaching process.



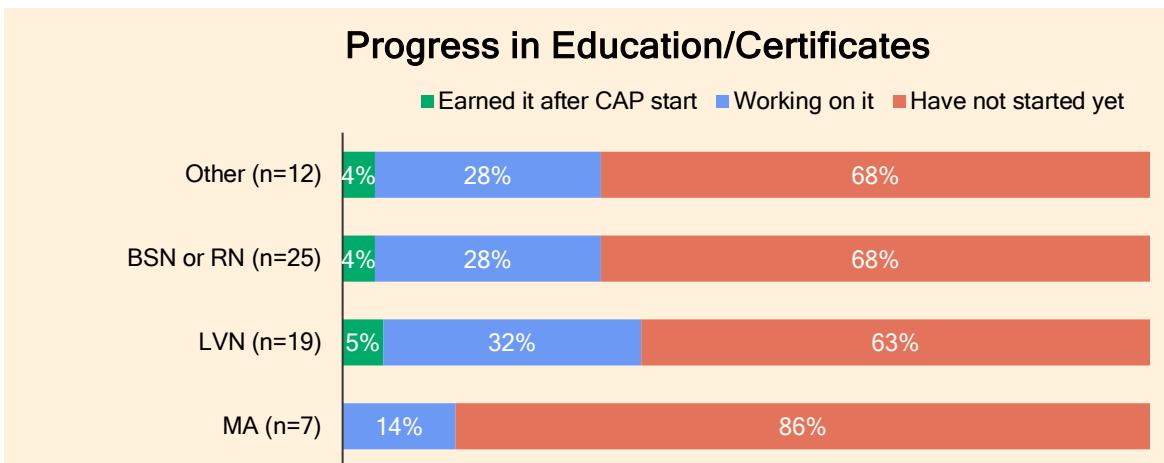
Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

Learning Objective 6

In what ways do clients participate in professional or technical skill building programs to achieve career goals?

Progress in Education and Training

The figure below describes the progress in the CAP clients' pursuing advanced degrees beyond the scope of the CNA or MA training they received through Opportunity Junction or JobTrain. About over a quarter (28%) of those were interested in becoming an RN or getting a BSN and 32% who were interested in becoming a LVN and 14% who were interested in being a MA stated they were working on it. The other certificates of interest included: a Master's in Nursing, certified activity director, radiology or surgical or sterile processing technician, Home Health Aide (HHA), and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023). Note: Those who had earned the certificate before they started CAP and those who were not interested in the certificate were excluded from calculations.

The advanced degree with the highest level of interest (25 clients) was an RN or BSN, but 68% of those interested said they had not started on it yet. CAP coaches noted that progress in education is not a straight trajectory for most of their clients and it may not be as fast or direct as it is for other populations who might have access to more resources and/or parental support. Reasons outlined by the coaches for slower progress on educational goals include:

- **Finances:** Limited funds to pay for schooling; not following up with scholarships or FAFSA; not wanting to take on personal loans; unable to get a cosigner for a loan; unable to qualify for financial resources
- **Scheduling:** Unable to scale back on work hours or having a work schedule that does not allow them to devote time towards schooling

- **Preparation:** Having to take prerequisite classes to be accepted into certain programs; having to pass entrance exams (e.g., TEAS or HESI) with a high enough score
- **Personal:** Indecisive about educational goals; managing other personal issues (e.g., mental health, lack of childcare, change in partner status, etc.)
- **Knowledge:** Lack of understanding about how to pursue continued education or secure financial aid; especially among first-generation immigrants

One JobTrain focus group participant described knowledge barriers:

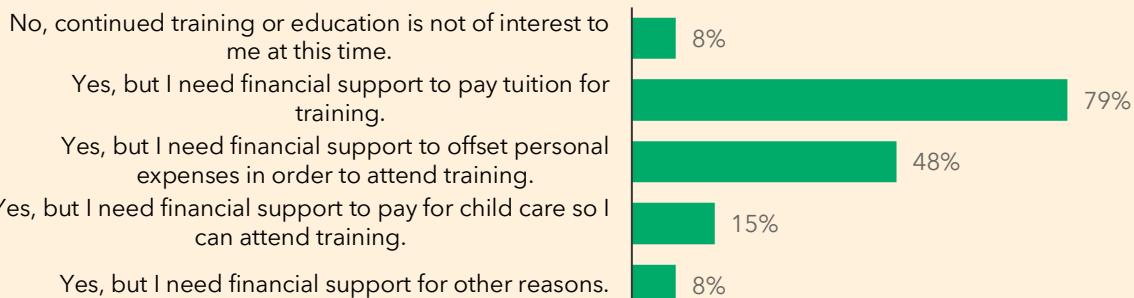
My mom didn't go to college and doesn't know English and my family members didn't have professional jobs, so they didn't know. I didn't know that there were some prerequisites for an accelerated program and I didn't know about scholarships at college...I could have gotten a boost, but I didn't know about that program. I guess just not knowing what to do as a first-generation immigrant.

Another Opportunity Junction talked about her preparation and financial barriers:

I am having a hard time getting accepted into a local Jr. College RN cohort. My pre-test scores are not high enough to be accepted on a merit-based average of 85% or higher. My test score is lower at between 68%-74% average...so I have been stressed out about that. I have an alternate private online BSN program that has accepted me already. Scholarships are a must to help offset FASFA loans and with my own money I can pay for only so much.

In the follow-up question that asked about their interests in continued training or education, most said they needed financial support. For example, 79% said they would need financial support for tuition and 48% said they would need financial support to offset personal expenses. 15% responded that they would need support for child care expenses to be able to attend training, reinforcing earlier data that showed these services are particularly beneficial for low-income head of household females.

Would you participate in continued training or education if you had more time and resources? (n=52)



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023)

Employment Outcomes

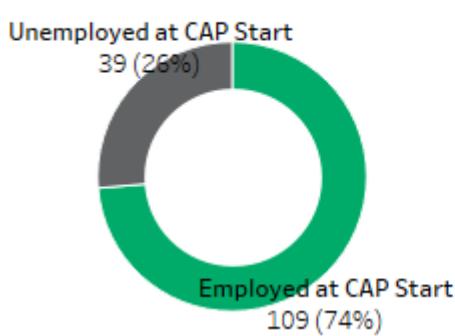
Learning Objective 7

Do clients advance to new employment opportunities within their industry of interest?

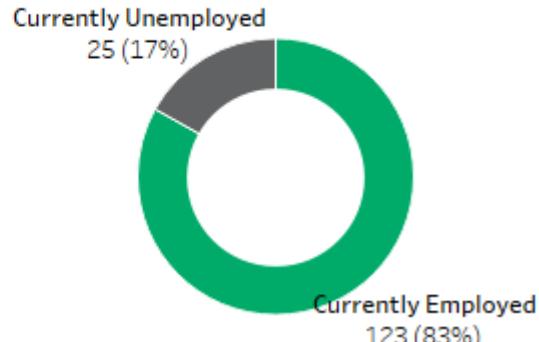
Progress in Employment

Progress in employment was measured both in Salesforce records and the survey results. Out of 148, 109 clients (74%) were employed when they enrolled in CAP. Among these 109 clients, 64 clients did not have any changes in jobs, positions, or salary and 3 lost their jobs. The rest of the 42 clients had changes in their jobs, positions, or salaries, but 4 among them were unemployed as of the end of April 2023. Out of the total 148, 39 clients (26%) were unemployed when they enrolled in CAP. Among them, 21 were currently employed and 17 were still unemployed and 1 became employed and then lost the job. As of the end of April 2023, 83% were employed.

Employed at CAP Start?



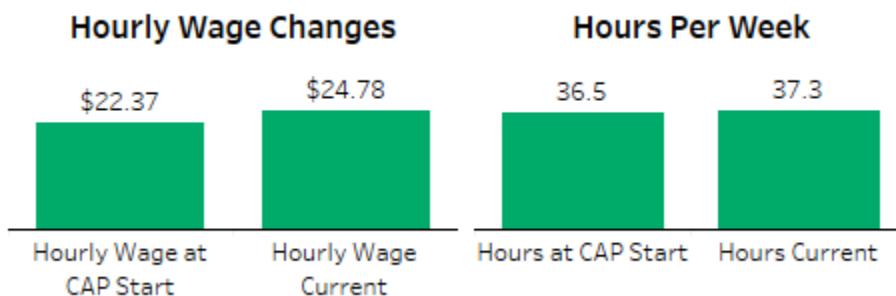
Currently Employed?



Employed at CAP Start?	Any Updates in Employment?	Currently Unemployed	Currently Employed
Unemployed at CAP Start (N=39)	No New Jobs, Positions, or Salaries	17	
	Got New Jobs, Positions, or Salaries	1	21
Employed at CAP Start (N=109)	No New Jobs, Positions, or Salaries	3	64
	Got New Jobs, Positions, or Salaries	4	38

Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

When comparing their current employment conditions to their conditions at enrollment, the **average hourly wage increased by 11%** from \$22.37 to \$24.78. The average working hours also increased by 0.8 hours from 36.5 hours per week to 37.3 hours per week.



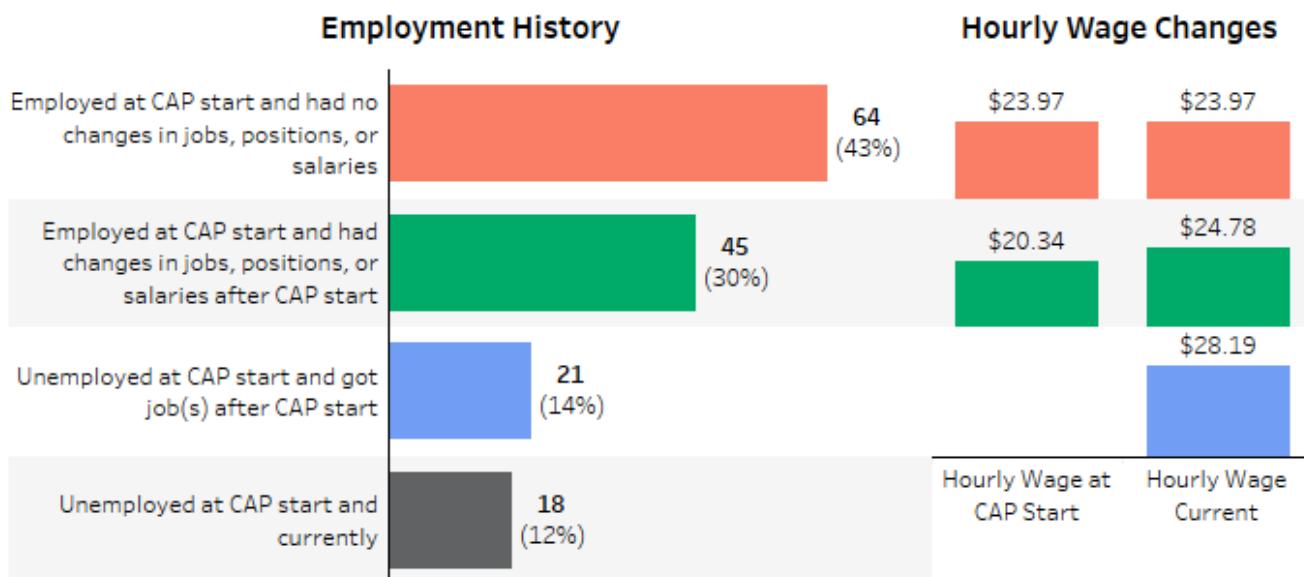
Source. Salesforce Reports (04/30/2023)

The employment history of each client is different. The 148 clients were categorized into 4 groups by their employment history. About 43% (64 clients) were employed at CAP enrollment and had no changes in their jobs, positions, or salaries after CAP enrollment, with an average hourly wage of \$23.97. 45 clients (30%) who were employed at CAP enrollment had changes in their jobs, salaries, or positions. For these 45 clients, their initial average hourly wage was \$20.34 and their wage as of the end of April 2023 went up to \$24.78 (22% increase). For the 21 clients who were not employed at enrollment and became employed, their average hourly wage was \$28.19.

"She helped me get a job and get out of unemployment. I am forever grateful."

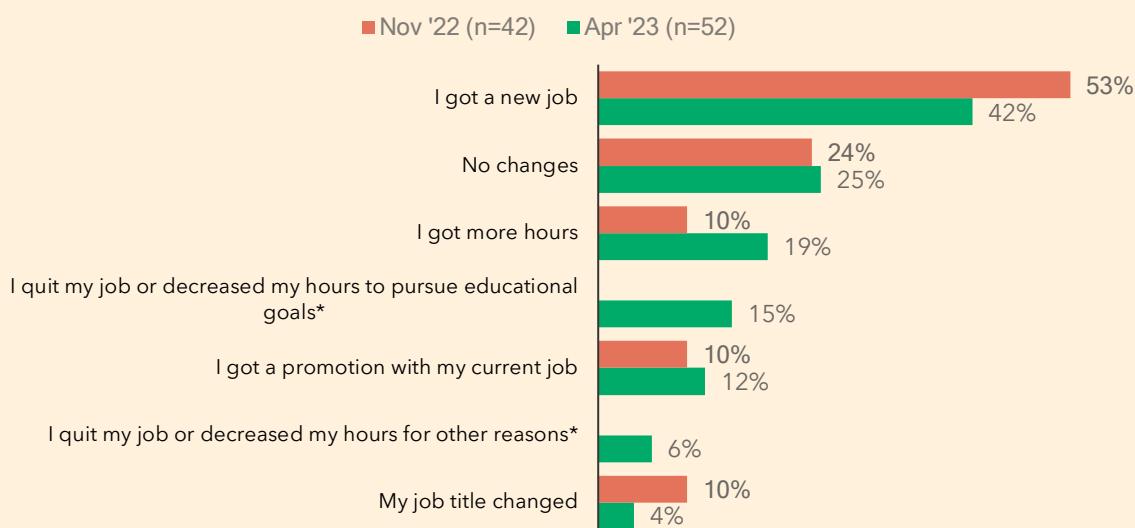
~ CAP survey respondent, April 2023

Salary and Hourly Wage Changes by Employment History



In response to questions regarding employment status changes in the second and third surveys, getting a new job was mentioned by 42% of the respondents in the most recent survey. About one out of four respondents did not have any changes recently and some reported changes of hours or position changes in their current employment.

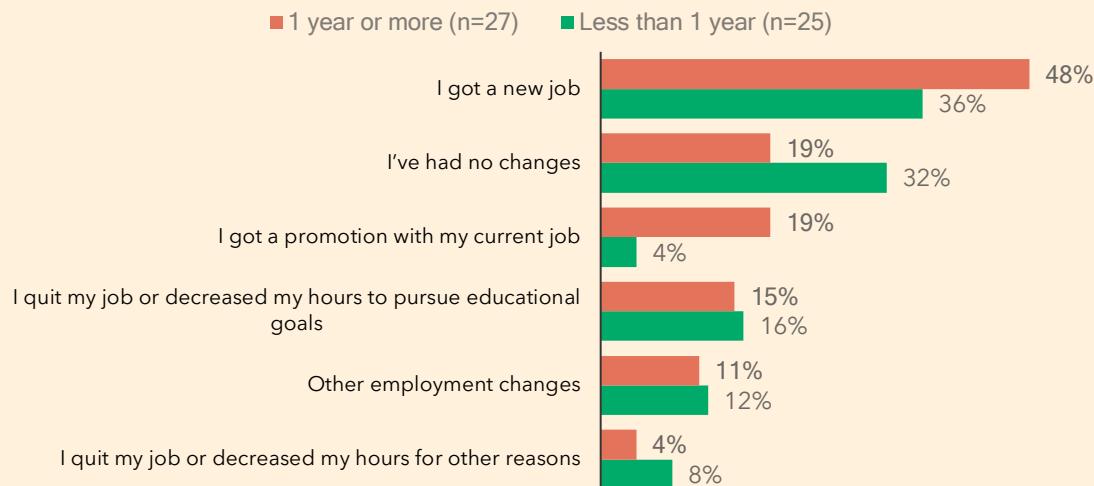
Employment status changes since working with coach



Note. "I quit my job or decreased my hours to pursue educational goals" and "I quit my job or decreased my hours for other reasons" were new options in the April 2023 survey.

According to the most recent survey (April 2023), those who enrolled in CAP more than 1 year ago tended to have more changes such as getting a new job or a promotion, compared to those who enrolled in CAP less than 1 year ago. Those who enrolled in CAP less than 1 year ago tended to report no changes overall.

Employment status changes since working with coach by time in CAP



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2023)

Case Study #2 on the following page highlights an example of a client intentionally decreasing their work hours and forgoing better wages so they can maintain benefits. This example demonstrates how wage gains can present a threat to affordable housing vouchers and other income-dependent benefits. The “benefits cliff” can create a real barrier to advancement when rising income does not offset the loss of benefits.

Case Study #3 highlights an example of a client taking on a job with a lower salary because it offers a better quality of life (i.e., flexibility, better vacation, benefits) and how coaching can help clients to navigate these types of complex employment decisions.

“My coach helped me with multiple job openings and advising me on salary negotiations, thereby helping me to enjoy more hours of work with flexible hours and enhanced or improved salary earnings and benefits.”

- CAP survey respondent, Nov 2023

Case Study #2: Linh's Story*

After getting certified through JobTrain's CNA program in 2020, Linh got a job working as a contractor at a prestigious hospital in the South Bay. She found working with children rewarding but, because her wages as a contractor were low and there were no benefits, she aspired to join the permanent staff. Other CNA alumni referred her to the alumni coaching program as a place to get resume help and she began to work with Cathy Weselby:

I felt comfortable working with Cathy right away. She was open to helping me with anything that I needed. She was exactly what I was looking for because I didn't know what to do professionally: it started with working on my resume, but then she helped me with my LinkedIn profile and we did multiple mock interviews.

After only six coaching sessions, over a period of four months, Linh landed a permanent position as a CNA at the hospital in the hospital's cardiac unit, raising her hourly wage from \$17-21 per hour to \$30-34. Her job satisfaction also improved:

I work part-time 3 days per week at nights in the cardiac unit. I have good hours, benefits, and I like my coworkers and the patients. My mom is relieved that I have health insurance and am starting to save for retirement.

One of the barriers that prevents Linh from moving along her career path is the cost of housing, which, in her region, has tripled in the past few years. She fears the "benefits cliff":

If I make over a certain amount we lose our affordable housing voucher, so I have to be careful with the number of hours I work so that I don't go over the income limit.

Even with this obstacle, Linh continues to reach for her long-term goals of getting into De Anza College's nursing program and, eventually, getting her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN). Even though she isn't currently working with Cathy, she hopes to work with her again after getting into a nursing program to help establish good study habits as she continues working.

Key takeaways

- Gains can be achieved with only a handful of targeted coaching sessions.
- Career coaching can help clients achieve substantial gains in hourly wage.
- Clients may choose to return to coaches for support after initial goals are achieved
- Wage gains present a threat to affordable housing vouchers and other income-dependent benefits. This "benefits cliff" can create a real barrier to advancement when rising income does not offset the loss of benefits. Clients may choose to work fewer hours, forgoing better wages, so they can maintain these benefits.

* Name changed to respect the confidentiality of case study participant

Case Study #3: Lorraine's Story*

Raised by immigrant parents, Lorraine has always valued hard work. She has taken that ethos to heart as she pursues her long-term goal of getting her Bachelor's of Science in Nursing (BSN). Her journey has included:

- Pursuing her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license through Opportunity Junction's 12-week CNA training program because it is a prerequisite for some nursing programs;
- Continuing on to becoming a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) because she could pursue that qualification through online courses while home with her young children during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- Enrolling in Opportunity Junction's Career Advancement Project (CAP) while working to become an LVN to continue her journey, meeting with her coach Carmela Buenrostro 22 times (so far):

Carmela helped me build a mental vision board. I sent her my resume, she worked on it and it was one of our calls just sitting and talking about my resume. What do I want to highlight to show the employer I'm the right person for the job? It was really helpful.

Not only is the coaching career guidance, but it has also been helpful for Lorraine in other aspects of her life by devoting time to how Lorraine is doing as a person.

If she can, she helps guide me and offers suggestions. She has supported me through my struggles to get to where I am.

Carmela helped Lorraine secure interviews at two skilled nursing facilities. Lorraine also secured an interview for a school nursing position on her own. While she received multiple offers, she ultimately chose the school nursing position, despite the fact that the position made \$10 to \$15 less per hour than her other offers. Lorraine explained how the coaching helped her make this tricky decision:

Carmela didn't tell me to take the school nurse job, but she guided me to see it was the better decision. If I got a job getting paid more money per hour, I wouldn't have summers, Christmas, or spring break off. I would have to fight for those vacations. Because my kids are still young, if I worked later, I'd have to hire a babysitter for them. Carmela helped me think through all the factors that we wouldn't have thought about on our own.

Lorraine's work with Carmela lately has focused on how much time to spend working as an LVN and when to return to nursing school. Lorraine highly recommends the alumni coaching: "It's career guidance and a little bit of therapy at the same time. She helped me a lot, and she's still helping me."

Key Takeaways

- The depth of the coach-client relationship is a vital component of the CAP program's success, allowing the coach to support both personal and professional development.
- Coaching can help clients develop decision-making skills and provide them with additional perspective which can, in turn, help them navigate difficult decisions.
- Clients may choose a position with lower wages if it offers a better quality of life or other

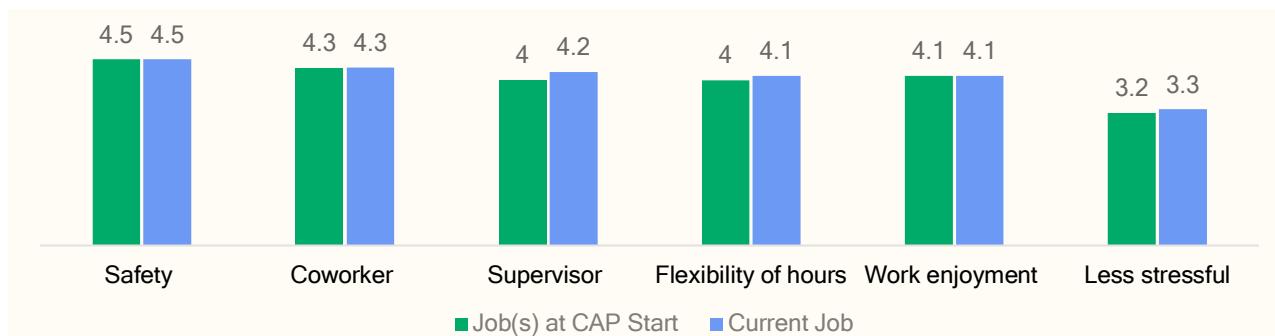
* Name changed to respect the confidentiality of case study participant

Learning Objective 8

To what extent do participants have increased job satisfaction?

Progress in Job Satisfaction

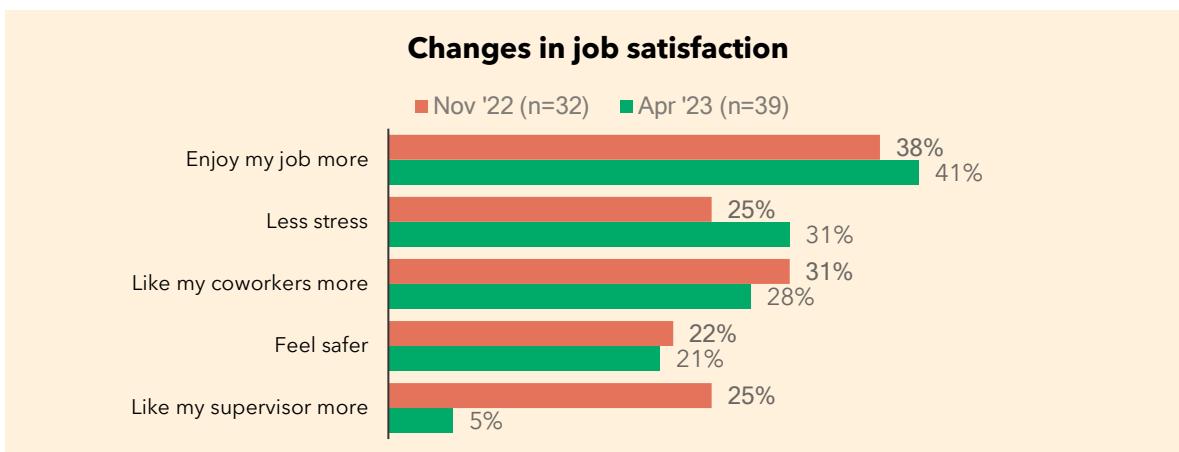
A brief interview was conducted every time a client got a new job about how satisfied they were with the new job. The chart below presents the average scores of the job satisfaction factors on a scale of 1 to 5* with 5 being positive. The average job satisfaction ratings were very similar or slightly increased between jobs at CAP start and their current jobs.



Note. These ratings are based on the reports of those who were or are employed and provided data (n=38-43). For those who did not have any changes in their employment, their ratings were the same for their jobs at CAP start and their current jobs. The job satisfaction ratings were measured on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 and a higher score indicates more satisfaction. For example, a higher score in "supervisor" indicates more satisfaction with their supervisor.

*Note: This rating was divided by 2 for Opportunity Junction, as they used a 10-point scale.

The following figure shows repeated client surveys administered at two points in time (November 2022 and April 2023). The surveys were anonymous and not matched. In the most recent April 2023 survey, 41% reported enjoying their job more and 31% reported feeling less stress while 28% reported liking coworkers more and 21% reported feeling safer.



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (November 2022; April 2023)

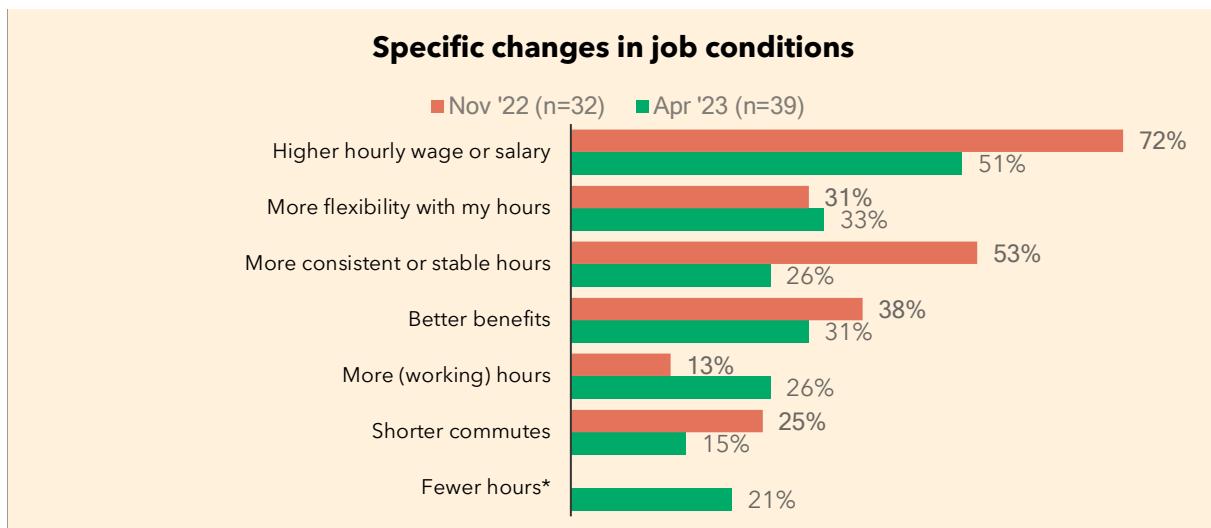
Note. Those who marked 'not applicable' for this question were not included in the total.

Learning Objective 9

To what extent do participants improve their quality of life?

Changes in Job Conditions

Positive changes in job conditions often result in improvements in quality of life. In the November 2022 survey, most clients reported getting a higher wage or salary (72%), more consistent or stable hours (53%), and better benefits (38%). In the more recent April 2023 survey, 51% reported getting a higher wage or salary and 33% reported getting more flexibility.



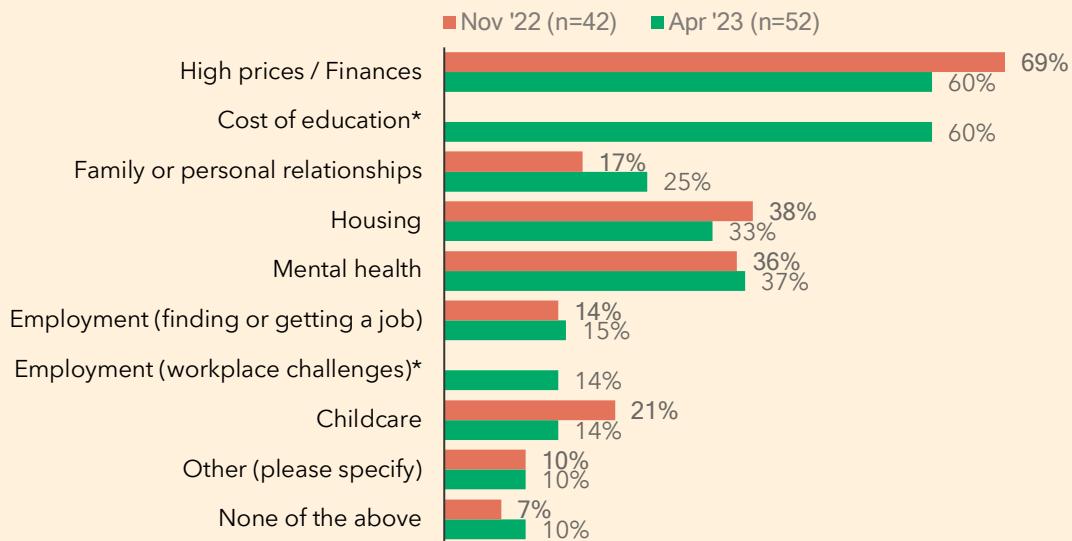
Source. CAP Clients Surveys (November 2022; April 2023)

Note. Those who marked ‘not applicable’ for this question were not included in the total. “Fewer hours” was a new option in the April 2023 survey.

Life Challenges

The graph below shows what challenges or circumstances the clients experienced in reaching their goals. Most selected high prices/finances as their challenge in the November 2022 survey (69%) and in the April 2023 survey (60%). In the April 2023 survey, cost of education (60%) was also a common challenge. Housing and mental health problems were also consistent challenges over the year. Responses to the ‘other’ category included: support needs, immigration status, and lack of motivation, lack of knowledge, and having custody of younger family members.

Challenges or barriers against reaching the goals



Source. CAP Clients Surveys (November 2022; April 2023)

Note. "Cost of education" and "Employment (workplace challenges)" were new options in the April 2023 survey.

"I'm afraid of my own thoughts. I'm too stressed about the rent to take care of myself. I'm working too hard for too little pay. I'm tired of being afraid, but it's what drives me to make ends meet."

~ CAP survey respondent, April 2023

Confidence to Meet Challenges in Life

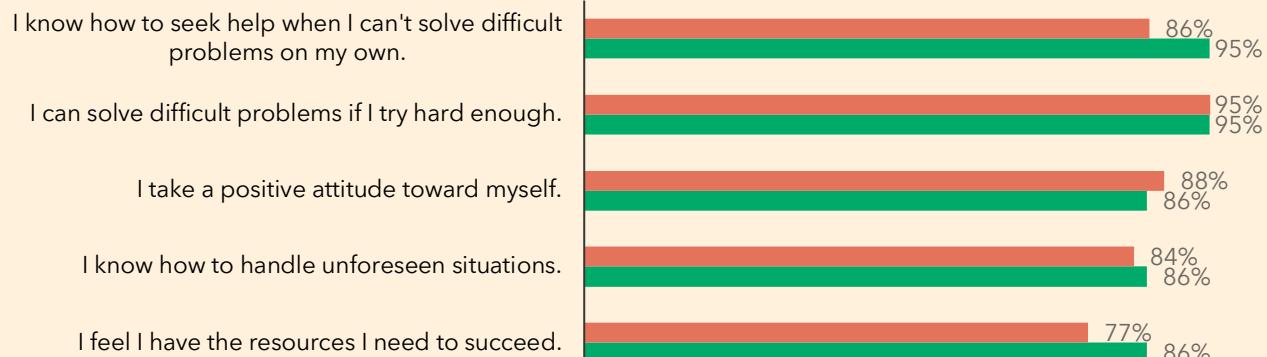
Most clients showed strong confidence about dealing with the challenges in their lives. 95% of the respondents in the most recent survey agreed or strongly agreed that they knew how to seek help for their problems and that they could solve difficult problems. Also, 86% reported that they knew how to handle unforeseen situations and that they took a positive attitude toward themselves. Finally, in November 2022, 86%, 9 percentage points higher than in April, agreed they felt they had the resources they needed for success. The inner strength and resiliency of clients is also an important factor in meeting challenges, demonstrated in the following quotes:

My family keeps me going...I also acknowledge that hard times come and go, they only make me stronger and so therefore, I must embrace every victory and failure in my journey.

It's all on me as a single female and a homeowner. Everything falls on my shoulders to survive. I have no other options, but giving up is not in my DNA.

How confident do you feel about meeting the challenges in your life?

(% Agree and Strongly agree) ■ Apr '22 (n=43) ■ Nov '22 (n=42)

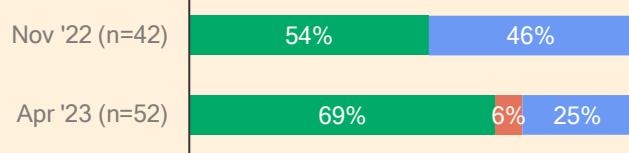


Source. CAP Clients Surveys (April 2022; November 2022)

Coaching Services & Overcoming Barriers

The clients were asked whether they had ever talked with their coach about their challenges. In November 2022, 54% said they did, and it was helpful while 46% said they did not. However, in April 2023, higher percentage of clients (69%) said they brought it up and it was helpful, while 6% said they brought it up, but it was not helpful and 25% said they did not bring it up. When asked why they did not bring up these challenges with their coaches, clients gave a few different reasons such as: "did not think about it," "did not want to bring it up," "no time to bring it up," "did not know coach could help," "too embarrassed", and "did not feel it was appropriate."

Have you ever talked with your coach to get support in overcoming these challenges?



■ Yes, and it was helpful.

■ Yes, and it was not helpful

■ No, I haven't brought it up.

Source. CAP Clients Surveys (November 2022; April 2023)

In focus groups, clients spoke at length about the personal barriers that make reaching their goals difficult. In alignment with the graphs above, the top theme was financial barriers. Clients spoke about the need to work full-time, which limits their ability to pursue educational goals to advance in their careers. They mentioned that school is expensive, there may not be any night classes which forces them to cut back on their working hours, and housing costs are unreasonably high in the Bay Area. The coaches also brought up the fact that access to technology or a private meeting space for coaching sessions can also be a challenge for some clients.

"There are no night classes, so I had to cut back on work hours to take classes. It's hard because I have dependents and the cost of rent is ridiculous and gas prices are rising."

- CAP focus group participant, June 2022

Mental health was another strong theme in terms of personal barriers. Many clients are mothers, making it hard to find time for self-care on top of all their parenting responsibilities which lead to a decline in mental health. [Case Study #4](#) highlights a story about a client recovering from substance use disorder and attending to their mental health while also pursuing their career goals.

Some clients in the focus groups directly addressed the fact that the coaching services improved their overall quality of life. They talked about how they felt connected to their coach on a personal or human level and that they were talking to someone who cared about them. Some spoke about their coach as a kind mentor who helped them feel less lost, less afraid, more excited about the future, and more confident to get out of their comfort zone and take healthy risks related to their careers.

In terms of specific behavior changes, focus group clients also spoke about how the coaching helped them to take the following tangible steps:

- 1) Set and track small actions related to their career or educational goals
- 2) Use and engage with new resources presented by the coach (i.e., workshops, recruiters, websites, gift cards)
- 3) Research and compare educational and/or career options
- 4) Conduct a job search by finding agencies that are hiring, updating their resumes, doing mock interview
- 5) Secure new jobs with higher pay and/or better conditions.

Many of these steps when combined, and certainly the last one on its own (securing a new or better job), can lead to improved quality of life for participants.

Case Study #4: Sarah's Story*

Sarah received a Bachelor's in Social Work (BSW) from San Francisco State University in 1999, but she never became a social worker. Instead, she experienced a number of health challenges in the 2000s, including substance abuse disorder, a mental breakdown, and lymphoma. Her road back to health has been long and difficult.

Sarah heard about Opportunity Junction's CNA training program through her support network and graduated in 2021. She began meeting with Opportunity Junction's alumni career coach, Carmela Buenrostro, almost immediately. To date they have had 25 sessions (approximately once a month) lasting about 60 minutes per session. In those sessions:

Carmela has kept the lines of success going in every way, shape, and form by being a liaison to go to when I'm having trouble with my registry or having a hard time getting a reference for a job. She's been someone to help bridge communication.

She described the mentoring and job coaching from Carmela as awesome and wishes she had something similar after getting her bachelors in social work. She believes Opportunity Junction's reputation for building up a pipeline of skilled nurses is built, in part, on their ability to see potential in people who have lost their way.

Sarah has drawn inspiration and support from her Opportunity Junction classmates and is now hoping to become an RN, for which she already has a Bachelor's degree. But she admits she often feels like giving up on this goal because of cost, her health, and an auditory learning disability which makes learning slower and will require specific support in school and in a future RN job placement.

Despite these challenges, she feels proud of meeting the required 1,000 CNA hours for nursing school. "They helped me stay in the workforce... and gave me the right resources, tools, and support to accomplish these hours." Sarah is now strategizing with Carmela about nursing school. Summarizing her CNA and coaching experience, she said "It's been the most rewarding career experience. I'm very surprised, grateful, and appreciative."

Main take-aways

- There is a lack of job coaching for recent college graduates, which can stifle career development, especially for those who experience significant barriers.
- The first point of contact with a job training program is important as a motivational moment, especially with clients who are struggling with confidence or self-worth.
- The CNA program and alumni coaching can lead to goal setting well beyond a client's initial aspirations through encouragement and exposure to career options.
- When paired with alumni career coaching, outpatient counselors and Department of Rehabilitation coaches, it can serve as a 'network of support' for clients with disabilities or in recovery.

* Name changed to respect the confidentiality of case study participant

Scalability & Sustainability

Learning Objective 10

How might the pilot demonstrate that the model is scalable or financially sustainable?

Model Scalability

Alumni coaching is currently offered to all alumni of the healthcare pathway. The current rate of uptake in the program is adequate to keep the alumni coaches busy, and the coaches reported that their caseload are manageable. They shared that, because the needs of program participants wax and wane depending on where the participant is in their career journey, they have the capacity to serve the active participants at any given time and have not “maxed out” the number of alumni they can serve. The success of the program has been so apparent among staff that there is interest in expanding the model at JobTrain and Opportunity Junction to make this level of service to alumni of all programs. One key informant talked about how the new alumni coaching structure is very meaningful and helping people in a more profound way. *“We’re actually guiding people towards advancement in a much more sophisticated way.”*

Financial Sustainability

According to the program managers, the results of this pilot have been strong and they recognize the need to financially sustain the alumni model. First generation students, in particular, need scaffolding to have ongoing success. With that in mind, Opportunity Junction has identified funding for another six months of the coaching program and JobTrain has secured another year of funding. Both organizations plan to continue to find ways to fund alumni coaching beyond the current grants. However, they acknowledge that program participants tend to already have income, which puts them outside the highest need categories that funders often want to support. Funders of skills training or workforce development programs tend to focus on funding people’s short-term bare sustenance, rather than their long-term economic mobility. Ironically, Opportunity Junction and JobTrain fear this may create a challenge in finding long-term funding for their programs. Whereas, taking a long-term approach to funding workforce development programs can benefit people at all income levels, which is especially important in regions, such as the Bay Area, where the cost of living is high.

IMPLICATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Since launching in April 2021, CAP has become a career coaching model that appears to be scalable and sustainable. During the past two years, 148 healthcare program alumni with a CNA or MA certificate joined CAP to further their careers. Participants enrolled with the intention to get support in navigating employment and educational opportunities in the healthcare field. This is important, as the healthcare field is competitive, complex, and difficult to navigate for many participants, especially those who are changing careers.

The alumni career coach has become a valued partner for healthcare alumni who might otherwise stay in unsatisfying jobs, be underpaid, or not have the tools or knowledge to be able to pursue more fulfilling and higher paying jobs. The CAP model uses a **proactive direct service** approach to reach out to healthcare program alumni and engage them in ongoing coaching services to help them achieve longer-term educational and employment goals. The combination of **intentional relationship building and practical career guidance** (i.e., leveraging connections, providing referrals, doing mock interviews, helping update resumes, etc.) is a strategy that works to build confidence and move participants along their chosen career path over time. Coaching can be for both professional and personal development, and the depth of the client-coach relationship is a critical factor in how much development occurs. Additionally, the coaching helps some clients develop specific job skills and allows them to get additional perspective on their career and/or educational journey that they would not otherwise receive. The coaching is beneficial for all participants, but the qualitative data showed that the CAP model is particularly impactful for low-income head-of-household females, first-generation immigrants, recent undergraduates, those living with mental health conditions, recovering from substance use disorder, and/or those who have learning disabilities.

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide a formative assessment of the implementation and first two years of the pilot project, therefore the sample size was small. Because this is an ongoing program and clients continue to build their educational and career goals, the evaluations of the program are limited to the short-term outcomes. The long-term effects of this program are not yet measurable and some qualitative measures, such as confidence, are difficult to assess due to their subjective nature. Even with these limitations, early indicators show the positive impacts of this program including **increased average salary**. It should be noted that some clients take jobs with a lower salary because it offers a better quality of life (e.g., flexibility, better vacation, benefits) and the coaching may help them navigate these types of difficult decisions. Additionally, some clients may have a lower salary because they

intentionally reduce their working hours to avoid a “benefits cliff” or pursue educational goals that will ultimately propel them into higher paying jobs. It is also notable that those who enrolled in CAP more than one year ago tended to have more positive employment status changes such as getting a new job or promotion than those enrolled more recently.

Based on the findings from the various data sources and interviews, we recommend that staff continue to implement this successful program, continue to improve the measurement of the program, and develop an arc for the coaching sessions. The details of these three recommendations are listed below:

1. Continue to Implement the Keys to Success

Continue to implement successful coaching strategies. The keys to successful coaching outlined by key informants were 1) building connection and rapport early on in the process; 2) building relationships organically; 3) allowing clients to set the frequency and pace of the sessions; 4) using a whole-person approach; 5) building joint accountability into the process (both client and coach take on responsibility); 6) believing in client potential as a way to build trust; 7) working through any disappointment and shame when it arises in client sessions; and 8) being persistent (e.g., not giving up on clients).

Continue to employ a coach (or coaches, if multiple are eventually hired) who embody qualities valued by clients. These included being knowledgeable, caring, kind, honest, encouraging, supportive, sincere, empathetic, patient, and flexible.

2. Consider Developing a System for Monitoring Client Caseload

Once an alumnus enrolls in CAP, they remain as CAP clients indefinitely. As noted above, the longer a client is enrolled in CAP the more likely they are to have achieved their goals. For the program to achieve greater outcomes (e.g., more clients become RNs and make a higher salary), it requires a long-term investment in CAP clients. However, this long-term approach could make it difficult to manage the caseload over time.

A system for monitoring the client caseload could entail moving clients into different pre-determined categories or “buckets” depending on the client’s goals and/or communication preferences. For example, some clients may work intensively with a coach until they get a new job and have a preference to take a long break until they

need coaching again. This client could go into the “inactive” category, but still receive messages and regular outreach from the coach until they reach out again for more intensive support. Another client may be “very active” and want weekly coaching indefinitely. By categorizing clients, staff may be better able to anticipate how much time different categories of clients need and thereby allocate personnel resources accordingly (e.g., hire another coach when needed).

3. Consider a Rigorous Summative Evaluation

This evaluation presented in this report was a formative assessment of the first two years of the pilot project, therefore the sample size was small. As the program grows and more years of implementation have passed, a more rigorous summative evaluation could capture data that shows longer-term quantitative outcomes (i.e., educational attainment, economic mobility, job quality, etc.). Simply put, the longer clients are in the program, the stronger the results may be. A summative evaluation will become increasingly important as the program grows and more coaches are employed to manage the caseload. It could also provide the opportunity to analyze where clients are getting “stuck” in making progress on their employment goals. We recommend the following to improve future evaluation design and data collection methods:

- a. This evaluation did not analyze demographic data beyond age, gender, race and educational attainment. A future summative evaluation could review additional demographic data already collected by JobTrain and Opportunity Junction to learn more about salary increases or other quantifiable benefits experienced by sub-groups of interest (e.g., head of household females, those living with a disability, those who are single, those with a specific number of people living in their household, etc.)
- b. Create and deploy an annual client survey. Annual client data will help inform strengths and areas of improvement for the model.
- c. Improve job satisfaction measurement. Job satisfaction was measured during the coaching sessions through interviews. We recommend JobTrain and Opportunity Junction create an online survey with the questions to simplify the procedure and administer it at every employment change. Staff may want to decide on a specific amount of time after the job change (e.g., 1 to 3 months) to

administer the job satisfaction survey, as immediately after a job change might be too early for clients to be able to report on changes in satisfaction.

INSIGHTS FOR THE FIELD

This evaluation has illuminated larger systems change implications for those asking the questions “What does it take to get people into higher paying jobs?” The findings show that long-term coaching can be a lever for equity and economic mobility, addressing occupational segregation and resulting in higher wages and advances in job quality, particularly for women of color.

The program managers shared that “closing equity gaps includes training, but also guidance and connections. The things that some folks might get in family or peer group, CAP can provide.” Particularly for first generation students, conversations with their coach can be eye opening and empowering. CAP helps students continue their job growth by helping them:

- Get into a career advancement mindset, advocating for them to continue moving up through education and self-advocacy;
- Understand what advancement opportunities exist and what steps to take, which can be opaque or even invisible for those who do not have access to this knowledge within their family or friend group;
- Apply for programs, but also help them know that the programs even exist, and how long it takes to complete them.

This evaluation also demonstrates that the longer participants were in the program, the better the results they achieved. While JobTrain and Opportunity Junction’s programs place alumni in CNA or MA positions, there are still fewer people of color in more senior roles in hospitals. Throughout the health care field, people of color are overrepresented on the whole, but under-represented in higher paying roles¹. Could ongoing coaching provide a long-term solution to continuing career advancement in health care – and other – fields? Testing this promising hypothesis will require long-term funding of coaching as well as investments in ongoing evaluations to track career growth and quality over the long-term.

This consistent and long-term investment in coaching is particularly important when working with a population that may experience stops, starts, and setbacks as the other priorities such as family, health, and immediate financial needs may interrupt direct linear progress toward their career goals. Patient and consistent support through coaching can help participants navigate these challenges while they pursue career advancement, hopefully achieving commensurate long-term gains in high quality employment.

¹ Dill J, Duffy M. Structural Racism and Black Women's Employment in the US Health Care Sector. *Health Affairs* (Millwood). 2022 Feb;41(2):265-272.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared by Leap Solutions Group, Inc. on behalf of Tipping Point Community and their grantee partners, JobTrain and Opportunity Junction. Through the course of the evaluation, several organizations and individuals contributed input on the development of the scope of work, evaluation design, methods, and analysis plan. This includes the following individuals and their respective organizations (listed in alphabetical order). We thank each individual for their invaluable and consistent support throughout this evaluation process.

- Alissa Friedman, Former President & CEO, Opportunity Junction
- Brianna Robinson, President & CEO, Opportunity Junction
- Bryan Malong, Learning and Evaluation Manager, Tipping Point Community
- Carmela Buenrostro, HCP Alumni Career Coach, Opportunity Junction
- Cathy Weselby, Healthcare Alumni Career Coach, JobTrain
- Heather Imboden, Evaluation Consultant, Leap Solutions Group, Inc.
- Jacob Leos-Urbel, Learning & Evaluation Director, Tipping Point Community
- Jennifer Overholt, Director of Impact, JobTrain
- Nancy Latham, Evaluation Consultant, Tipping Point Community
- Nolan Yee, Data Analyst, Opportunity Junction
- Sarah Underwood, Evaluation Consultant, Leap Solutions Group, Inc.
- Scott Ormerod, Partner, Leap Solutions Group, Inc.
- Susana Morales, Evaluation Consultant, Leap Solutions Group, Inc.
- Talia Nagar, Senior Program Officer, Tipping Point Community
- Yoonyoung Kwak, Evaluation Consultant, Leap Solutions Group, Inc.

Most importantly we offer thanks to the CAP clients who participated in the alumni coaching services and consented to evaluation activities. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of these participants, many of whom shared deeply personal challenges and experiences with us. We hope that the contents of this report serve to accurately represent their voices.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Key Informant Interview Questions

1. Describe your role in CAP
2. What's going well?
3. What are the sticking points? Surprises?
4. What, if anything, do you think should change?
5. Are there any lessons learned so far?
6. Do you have any questions about the evaluation process so far?
7. Is there anything else we haven't talked about that you think I should know?

Appendix B: Participant Survey November 2022

We want to hear how working with your career coach has impacted you. This short confidential survey takes about 5 minutes to complete. By completing the survey, you will receive an electronic Amazon \$25 gift card via email. The gift card will be emailed by JobTrain on Tuesday, November 15. Please complete the survey by Monday, November 14th to be eligible for a digital gift card.

1. How has working with your coach impacted your career goals?

Please rate on a scale from 1 to 5.

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Somewhat agree
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Working with my coach has helped me think about my future career choices.					
Working with my coach has supported me in increasing my network.					
Working with my coach has increased my access to resources.					
Working with my coach has improved my ability to search for employment.					
Working with my coach has helped me advance in my education.					

2. How do you feel about your career goals right now?

	1	2	3	4	5
I have clear goals for my career.					
I know the steps I need to take to reach my career goals.					
I have the resources to reach my career goals.					
I am confident I can apply to the career of my choice and in the industry that interests me.					
I am confident I will succeed in my career.					

3. How do you feel about reaching your goals?

	1	2	3	4	5
I energetically pursue my goals.					

It is easy for me to accomplish my goals.					
I establish specific goals for my own performance.					
I make a point to keep track of how well I'm doing at work or school.					
When I think of my future, I feel a sense of optimism.					

4. How confident do you feel about meeting the challenges in your life?

	1	2	3	4	5
I can solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.					
I know how to seek help when I can't solve difficult problems on my own.					
I know how to handle unforeseen situations					
I feel I have the resources I need to succeed.					
I take a positive attitude toward myself.					

5. What challenges or circumstances are currently a barrier to reaching your goals? Select all that apply.

- a. Housing
- b. Childcare
- c. High prices / Finances
- d. Family
- e. Mental health
- f. Employment
- g. Other (please specify)

6. Have you ever talked with your coach to get support in overcoming these challenges?

- a. Yes, and it was helpful.
- b. No, I haven't brought it up with my coach because... (fill in option)

7. I have had one of the following changes in my employment status since working with my coach: (Select all that apply)

- a. I got a new job (new place of employment)
- b. I got a promotion with my current job (with a higher hourly wage or salary)
- c. I got more hours from my current job
- d. My job title changed (but not my hourly wage or salary)
- e. Other (please specify)

8. This change in employment status is different from my previous situation in the following ways: (Select all that apply)

- a. Higher hourly wage or salary
- b. Better benefits
- c. I enjoy my job more

- d. I like my coworkers more
- e. I like my supervisor more
- f. I have more flexibility with my hours
- g. I have more stable or consistent hours
- h. I have less stress
- i. I feel safer at work
- j. I have a shorter commute
- k. Other (please specify)

9. What is the most helpful thing you have done with your coach? (open-ended)

10. What is the best way to reach you? Check all that apply.

- 1. Text
- 2. Phone
- 3. Email
- 4. Other (please specify) A

Appendix C: Participant Survey April 2023

We want to hear how working with your career coach has impacted you. This short confidential survey takes about 5 minutes to complete. By completing the survey, you will receive an electronic Amazon \$25 gift card via email. The gift card will be emailed by JobTrain staff on _____. Please complete the survey by _____ to be eligible for a digital gift card.

1. How long have you been working with your coach?

- a. Less than 3 months
- b. Between 3 months and 6 months
- c. Between 6 months and 12 months
- d. More than 1 year

**2. Which career and/or educational goals have you developed with your career coach?
And what is your status of achieving each goal?**

		NA	I want to do this but haven't started yet	I am currently working on this	Accomplished this goal
a.	Become employed (I was unemployed when I started with my coach)				
b.	Get a different job with better salary				
c.	Get a different job with better benefits (e.g., childcare benefits, better insurance, etc.)				
d.	Get a different job with more flexibility (e.g., shorter commute, flexible or different hours, etc.)				
e.	Advance in the job I had when I started with my coach				
f.	Get or renew a certification				
g.	Complete a degree in college				
h.	Complete a training or program				
i.	Other (please describe)				

3. What kind of education or certification do you currently have, want to get, or are currently working on?

		I <u>have</u> this	I <u>want</u> to get this (but haven't started)	I am currently <u>working</u> on this	Not applicable
a.	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) **				
b.	Medical Assistant (MA) **				
c.	Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)				
d.	Bachelors of Science in Nursing (BSN) or Registered Nurse (RN)				
e.	Other: (please describe)				

** Note: 3a and 3b led to misleading responses from respondents who had already completed these certifications prior to beginning coaching. Recommend removing these two responses from future surveys of CNA and MA program graduates.

4. Would you participate in continued training or education if you had more time and resources? (Please check all that apply)

1. No, continued training or education is not of interest to me at this time.
2. Yes, but I need financial support to pay tuition for training.
3. Yes, but I need financial support to offset personal expenses in order to attend training.
4. Yes, but I need financial support to pay for child care so I can attend training.
5. Yes, but I need financial support for other reasons (please describe)
6. Other: (please describe)

5. In general, when you meet with your coach, how often do you do the following:

		Never	Occasionally	Often
a.	Research schools or training programs			
b.	Research new job opportunities			
c.	Discuss how to advance with current employer			
d.	Update and review resume			
e.	Do mock interviews / prepare for interviews			
f.	Discuss how things are going at work (situations, manager, coworkers, etc.)			
g.	Discuss other aspects of life (family, self-care, mental health)			
h.	Other (please describe)			

6. **What is the most helpful thing you have done with your coach? (open-ended)**
7. **I have had one of the following changes in my employment status since working with my coach: (Select all that apply)**
1. I got a new job (new place of employment)
 2. I got a promotion with my current job (with a higher hourly wage or salary)
 3. My job title changed (but not my hourly wage or salary)
 4. I quit my job or decreased my hours to pursue educational goals
 5. I quit my job or decreased my hours for other reasons
 6. I've had no changes (everything is the same)
 7. Other (please specify)
8. **This change in employment status since working with my coach is different from my previous situation in the following ways: (Select all that apply)**
1. Higher hourly wage or salary
 2. Better benefits
 3. More hours
 4. Fewer hours to be able to pursue continuing education or for other reasons
 5. More consistent hours
 6. More flexibility with when I work
 7. Shorter commute
 8. Enjoy my job more
 9. Like my coworkers more
 10. Like my supervisor more
 11. Less stress
 12. Feel safer
 13. Not applicable (I have had no changes in employment status)
 14. Other (please specify)
9. **What challenges or circumstances are currently a barrier to reaching your goals? (Select all that apply)**
1. Housing
 2. Childcare
 3. High prices / finances
 - a. Cost of education
 - b. Family or personal relationships
 - c. Mental health
 - d. Employment
 - e. None of the above
 - f. Other (please specify)
10. **Have you ever talked with your coach to get support in overcoming these challenges?**
1. Yes, and it was helpful.
 2. Yes, and it was not helpful.
 3. No, I haven't brought it up with my coach because _____
11. **What keeps you going when you have a hard time with your career or education goals or want to give up? (open-ended)**

Appendix D: Focus Group Script & Guiding Questions

I. Welcome

Good (morning/afternoon/evening) and welcome to our group. My name is Sarah and this is Heather and we would like to thank you all for taking the time to be here with us. Zoom instructions:

- Please mute when you are not speaking
- Please turn your camera on if possible
- Please note that we will be recording the session only for note taking purposes

II. Explanation of Project

We are working with Opportunity Junction and JobTrain to help them improve their coaching services, such as the ones you have received. We are holding this discussion to hear from you about your experience with your coach and your action plan. We appreciate your honest reflections as they will help make the program stronger.

Confidentiality: We want to assure you that your name will be kept confidential and will not be associated with what you say today. Your personal relationship with your coach is important and what you tell us today will not be shared with them as specifically from you. We will gather themes that we hear from everyone to provide general feedback.

III. Ground rules

Before we begin, I would like to give you some more information about how today's discussion will work:

- First, it is important that we all agree to keep everything we talk about today confidential—that is, just as you would like your identity to be kept confidential, please do not repeat what anyone says in today's discussion outside of our group today.
- Also, let us respect each other and not interrupt when a person is talking. It's ok to disagree with what others say, as long as we respect each other's opinion.
- Sometimes I may ask one person to talk first and come to another person after so that we can hear what everyone wants to say.

Introductions...

- Your first name only
- One career or educational goal you are working toward

When you think about your career goals...

- What are some things that are going well?
- What are some challenges you are facing?
- What makes you feel more or less confident in your ability to reach your goals?

Prior to joining the coaching program...

- Did you have a resume?
- Did you spend time looking for jobs or at educational programs? About how much time?
- Were you setting and tracking any of your own career or educational goals? If yes, how?

Joining...

- Why did you decide to sign up for the coaching program?
- How was the process of signing up and getting started?

Delivery & Frequency...

- How many times have you met with your coach?

- How often do you like to meet with your coach? Do you find yourself scheduling regular sessions, or is it more “as needed”?

Coaching...

- What is the best or most helpful thing you have done with your coach?
- Has your coach helped you to set and track career or educational goals? If yes, what was that process like?
- Has working with a coach been useful in other aspects of your life besides your career?
- What changes have you experienced since participating and/or where would you be without the alumni coaching services?

Resources...

- Has your coach connected you to resources? If, so which ones? Have you found this useful?
- Besides resources, are there any other activities, workshops, networks, or anything else that your coach has helped you connect with?

Barriers, Improvements, Recommendations...

- What are the challenges that you bump up against? What are the barriers you face?
- Is there anything missing from the coaching services? How could we improve these services?
- Would you recommend these coaching services to a friend?