

News Release

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Title: Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation receives \$18.2 million federal grant to help students with disabilities advance their careers

Need to know

- Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is awarded \$18.2 million for a new project called Inclusive Career Advancement Program, or ICAP
- The program will serve 500 people with disabilities, with intentional outreach being made to marginalized communities
- Oregon's 17 community colleges as well as workforce development partners across the state will participate

(Salem) – The Oregon Department of Human Services' Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is one of eight programs across the nation that has been awarded the [Disability Innovation Fund \(DIF\) Program grant](#). VR received \$18.2 million to plan, develop and implement the Inclusive Career Advancement Program (ICAP) project.

“Thank you to our federal partners for seeing the potential in the ICAP project to increase access to career advancement for people with disabilities,” says Keith Ozols, VR Director. “We are excited to work with partners across the workforce development system to achieve equal economic opportunity for all.”

ICAP will leverage Oregon's current statewide network of career pathway services to advance educational and economic equity for people with disabilities, with intentional outreach and inclusion of marginalized communities. ICAP will braid the supports and services of VR, Self-Sufficiency Programs, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act workforce partners, and Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) with the three interrelated and foundational initiatives of Oregon's 17 community colleges. These three initiatives are:

- Career Pathways
- SNAP Training and Employment Program
- Pathways to Opportunities

As a leader in these initiatives, Portland Community College (PCC) will serve as the intermediary between core partners and community colleges.

This new project will serve 500 people with disabilities to help them get support and services needed to reach their career goals, advance in their career and ultimately reach their career potential. The project will be student-centered, evidence-based and reflect the latest research on workforce development. With equity at the forefront, VR will focus on doing intentional outreach to those who identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Color with disabilities about ICAP.

Cornell University will evaluate the project's implementation and performance to determine efficacy of ICAP practices and strategies. These findings will be shared nationally to expand access and opportunities for people with disabilities to enter and be supported in their career goals.

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About Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is a program within the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) that assists Oregonians with disabilities to achieve, maintain and advance in employment and independence. VR uses a client centered approach to provide counseling, guidance, training, transitional services, job coaching and other individualized services to assist students, employers and all Oregonians with disabilities. Visit the [ODHS VR website](#) to learn more.

