

SERVICES



SUPPORT

How JFF Helps Student Success Centers Support Community Colleges

A Student Success Center is a statewide organization that supports community colleges' efforts to increase student completion. Specifically, Centers help colleges institute large-scale change and implement guided pathways.

This work is essential for colleges that want to serve all students well. It also is complex and difficult. JFF provides services that help Centers effectively support colleges as they undertake this challenging effort.



JFF Supports Centers in Three Areas

1 Centers' Work with Colleges

Support for Centers' work helping colleges implement guided pathways, including:

- Making the case for guided pathways with key stakeholders
- Developing implementation strategies with a focus on equity
- Mapping and aligning student success initiatives
- Redesigning advising and student supports
- Redesigning student onboarding and developmental education
- Engaging stakeholders in designing and driving change efforts
- Cultivating change leadership
- Tracking implementation progress

2 Collaboration across Centers

Support for Centers to learn from one another and about innovations nationwide, including:

- Cross-state information sharing and peer support
- Use of current research
- Designing solutions to meet upcoming needs
- Cross-center strategic planning at Network events

3 Center Capacity Building

Support for Centers' internal operations and long-term sustainability, including:

- Strategic planning
- Planning and strategy for policy agendas and advocacy
- Leadership development for Center staff
- Communications
- Analysis of funding and return on investment
- Improved evaluation and use of data

Why Do Centers Need Support?

They Help Colleges Undertake Challenging, Essential Work

Guided pathways are academic and career pathways that provide structure, mileposts, and clear outcomes for each student's college experience. Each pathway is based on a program of study that is aligned with specific employment goals and/or additional education. Guided pathways also incorporate a range of evidence-based supports for students.

Guided pathways are effective because they touch on every aspect of the student experience. For the same reason, implementing this approach is complicated. It demands that colleges reassess virtually everything they do, identify what is working well, and redesign elements that are not meeting students' needs.

Student Success Centers—with the support of JFF—help colleges focus on, understand, and undertake this complex, large-scale change.

JFF Services and Support

Sixteen statewide Student Success Centers make up the national Student Success Center Network, which provides opportunities for Centers to learn from one another and from experts in the field.

As manager of the Network, JFF provides guidance to Center staff, facilitates cross-Center learning, and offers a broad range of services and support.

JFF offers services to Student Success Centers in three areas: supporting Centers' work with colleges to implement guided pathways, facilitating collaboration across Centers, and building Center capacity. JFF also partners with a cadre of national providers that offer expertise related to specific elements of pathways implementation, strategic planning, state policy and advocacy, and capacity building. All of these services are provided at no cost to the Centers, through funding to JFF from national and local foundations.

JFF staff work closely with Center staff to assess the needs of each Center and its colleges—and then to connect the Center to customized technical assistance, training, and other services from both JFF and the national providers.

JFF services and support

Through its own expertise and partnerships with a variety of national organizations, JFF provides Centers with services and support, including:

Real-time guidance and customized technical assistance.

Each Center partners with a team of JFF staff members who provide ongoing consultation. The JFF teams help Center staff set strategy, design and customize services for colleges, address areas of concern, and connect with other Centers doing similar work.

Supports to build the foundation for guided pathways.

JFF and national providers, such as the National Center for Inquiry and Improvement, help Centers and colleges build momentum for guided pathways efforts. Initial

work with colleges typically focuses on case-making with key stakeholders. Some institutions are expanding their focus to include meta-majors and program mapping, and JFF is introducing services in these areas.

Training to help colleges assess their implementation of guided pathways.

JFF and the Community College Research Center (CCRC), a national provider, help Centers and colleges use the Guided Pathways Scale of Adoption self-assessment, which CCRC developed. JFF and CCRC conduct workshops for Centers

that explain the assessment in detail. Then Centers support colleges as they complete the assessment and use the results to plan next steps.

Tools and assistance for redesigning advising and student supports.

JFF and national provider Achieving the Dream support Centers in making the case for advising redesign and facilitating the institution-wide changes that are essential for this work. As Centers' needs evolve, additional services may focus on wrap-around student services and technology-enabled tools.



JFF is a national nonprofit that drives transformation in the American workforce and education systems. For 35 years, JFF has led the way in designing innovative and scalable solutions that create access to economic advancement for all. It is a leader in national college completion initiatives—such as Achieving the Dream, the Developmental Education Initiative, Accelerating Opportunity, and Completion by Design—and is a national partner in the guided pathways effort. For more than a decade, JFF has led a multi-state network committed to advancing policies and practices that accelerate student completion and success in the labor market.

JFF Services and Support

“JFF connects us to national experts and technical assistance that have helped us advance the work in our state.”

—Erica Lee Orians,
Executive Director, Michigan
Center for Student Success

Policy and advocacy expertise. JFF helps Centers understand policy development and influence the policy debate in their states. As a result, Centers are better equipped to identify favorable policy opportunities that they can leverage on behalf of their colleges.

Data and evaluation services. JFF provides strategic guidance and is building partnerships to meet Centers' growing needs in evaluation design, analysis of student outcome data, use of key performance indicators, and return-on-investment analysis.

Communications support to help Centers explain their value and impact. JFF and national provider Next Chapter Communications create messaging and materials; offer training related to storytelling and communications strategy; and provide direct, customized support to individual Centers.

JFF provides three levels of services to Centers

LEVEL 1

Online Tools and Resources

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE DELIVERY

- Online resources and tools (about guided pathways, current research, strong practices, etc.)
- Policy briefs
- Recorded webinars

LEVEL 2

Training, Convening, and Peer Learning

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE DELIVERY

- In-person Network convenings, during which Centers learn from JFF staff, national experts, and one another
- Training, group consultation, and leadership development
- Online training modules
- Learning trips to peer sites
- Cross-state orientation for new Center staff

LEVEL 3

Customized Services

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE DELIVERY

- Advanced, customized consultation provided by the JFF state teams
- Individual coaching and consultation (for Centers and colleges) provided by national experts
- Site visits conducted by JFF to support Center advisory boards, conferences, and other meetings
- Customized institutes and brokered in-state services

The Network

A COLLECTIVE EFFORT

While JFF facilitates and undertakes extensive work with individual Centers, Network activities add a critical dimension that deepens the work and makes it a cohesive whole.

JFF has created multiple ways for Centers to interact with one another and with practitioners from across the Network. In addition, the JFF team has frequent formal and informal touch points with Centers to make sure services are responding to their current needs.

In-person convenings. Twice a year, JFF hosts multi-day Network meetings that typically focus on strategic planning, peer learning and collaboration, and leadership development. JFF also hosts other Center gatherings that provide additional leadership development and time for Centers to work together.

Virtual gatherings. Between in-person convenings, JFF hosts webinars and small-group conversations on key issues.

Through these virtual gatherings, Center staff have opportunities to continue their cross-state dialogue.

Cross-Center communications. Centers have many common challenges and experiences, and they rely on one another for guidance and support. Center staff share ideas and advice at JFF events, through online connections, and through ongoing one-on-one conversations. They also attend one another's in-state events,

during which the visiting staff can make connections to their own work.

Communities of practice. Communities are forming around shared interests or expertise, such as building institutional research capacity. JFF facilitates the development of communities of practice, which promote information sharing and collaboration across the Network.

Centers' needs drive JFF's services

All of JFF's work with the Network is focused on what will best meet the needs of Center staff and, by extension, colleges and their students. Thus, JFF uses formal and informal means to gather input from Center directors.

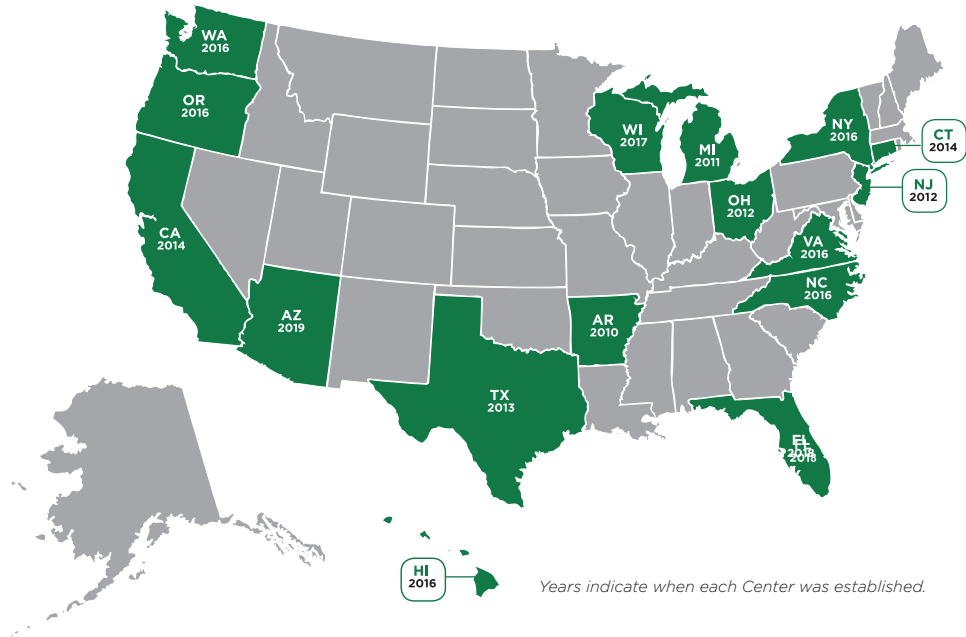
- An annual survey and targeted interviews gather input from Centers to make sure that services address the issues Centers are facing at that particular time in their development.
- Center staff have regular interactions with their JFF teams. These frequent conversations create an ongoing dialogue around each Center's needs. As Centers' needs evolve, so do JFF's services.
- JFF engages Centers in the planning and development of services. Centers contribute based on their interest and expertise.

“JFF really listens to Center directors' suggestions and immediately takes action. This level of responsiveness is much appreciated and not always the norm in other organizations. I can't imagine doing this job without this wonderful support!”

—Christine Harrington, Executive Director,
New Jersey Center for Student Success

Looking Ahead

The 16 Student Success Centers currently in the Network are national leaders in scaling implementation of guided pathways and advancing completion goals. Colleges in these 16 states serve more than half of U.S. community college students, including two-thirds of students of color and more than half of low-income students. Moreover, these 16 states have more than half of U.S. associate degree recipients.



These 16 states provide a strong start for this critical work. But to move the needle on college completion nationally, more states need a cohesive, statewide approach to scaling change and improvement. Toward that end, JFF is committed to expanding the Network to include more states and tapping the expertise of new national providers.

With this growth, JFF will continue to develop services that support Centers' and colleges' efforts to implement guided pathways and meet their completion goals.

With all new and ongoing services, JFF will continue to focus on Centers' feedback about what they need to achieve the end goal of this work: helping more students complete credentials, transfer to four-year institutions, and attain jobs with value in the labor market.

THE REACH of Student Success Centers



16 Student Success Centers

SERVE



of U.S. public community colleges

Colleges served by Student Success Centers enroll:



of U.S. community college students



of students of color at U.S. community colleges



of Pell Grant recipients at U.S. community colleges

Source: 2016–17 IPEDS data

JOIN US

For general information about Student Success Centers or the Network, contact sscn@jff.org or visit jff.org/sscnetwork. To explore the development of a Student Success Center in your state, contact Stacey Clawson, sclawson@jff.org.



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