

Library-based career navigators are key partners in the public workforce development system, meeting underserved populations where they live in rural, urban, and suburban communities. The American Library Association (ALA) supports the inclusion of library-based career navigation programs in federal workforce policy and a federally funded pilot program to increase the number of high-quality, library-based career navigators throughout the county.

With nearly 17,000 locations, virtually every American community has convenient access to a public library with information about career planning, job searches, and the local economy. All libraries offer job seekers free access to broadband, computers, and online tools. Many libraries also provide specialized services, such as resume and interview workshops, job clubs, and even skills-based job training courses in IT and other fields. Library professionals work closely with and refer patrons to One-Stop Career Centers/American Job Centers, local training providers, and community colleges.

According to a survey of state libraries conducted by Rutgers University¹ 88% of respondents report medium or high demand for career services,

preparation for the workforce. The program was launched in October 2021 and in March 2022 three patrons obtained employment.

"People in the community don't know about workforce centers, so the first place they come to is the library," said Career Navigator Deyanira Rohe. For example, Annette walked into the Penrose Library in February 2022 and asked for help to find a job. "She just wanted to fill out applications online for part-time fast-food jobs. During our initial conversation, she disclosed having disabilities that I thought will make those jobs difficult. After discussing her goals and work experience, we researched options more suitable for her and helped her to apply for a transitional job in the ReHire Colorado Program, where she will receive paid, on-the-job training and support while working to overcome her barriers to employment." She received a job offer on March 7, 2022. For more information:

<https://research.ppld.org/career>

Kenton County Public Library serves a community of 160,000+ cardholders with three physical branches bordering Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. The two Kenton County library-based career navigators help patrons with career exploration, identification of skill sets, resume and interview preparation and job search. The career navigator roles were originally funded by a WIOA Dislocated Workers grant, before ultimately becoming a part of the library's operating budget. Kenton County Public Library also convenes a job search support group for professional-level job seekers. The library has become an American Jobs Center Access Point, offering skills-based classes, labor market information and connection points to high-growth job opportunities for jobseekers or career changers at all levels. The library provides a navigator link on its website to enable easy access for zoom or in-person appointments.

One client shared: "Your program made a major impact in my life and helped me to get through on of the most difficult experiences that I have ever encountered. I was let go from my job during Covid cuts. I had been the supervisor for 27 years and at (the agency) for 33. I did not know even where to begin. I did not know how to market myself or network. In came your program! What a difference it made. I built a resume and a LinkedIn page and learned how to use Google. I plugged into courses on interviewing, marketing, networking, using Zoom, and building my own brand. Your program gave me confidence and the skills I needed to move ahead. Your program changed my life." For more

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