Career Pathways:
The Arkansas Career Pathways (CP) Initiative is a comprehensive project designed to improve the earnings and post-secondary education attainment of Arkansas’s low-income Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)-eligible adults. The initiative provides funding for two year colleges to develop pathways programs that assist TANF-eligible adults earn a marketable educational credential for immediate entry into a high demand, high wage occupation. The Career Pathways Initiative emphasizes such program components as job readiness skills, basic academic skills preparation/remediation, and post-secondary credentials tied to high wage, high demand occupations.

CP is a federal program that offers assistance to families who have DEPENDENT children and are in need of economic assistance. On the federal level this program is called TANF, the acronym for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. TANF in Arkansas is called TEA or Transitional Employment Assistance. In the past, the Federal Program similar to this one was called Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC).

Career Pathways Mission:
The mission of the Career Pathways Program at Southeast Arkansas College is to assist eligible adults in meeting education and employment training goals in order to acquire and maintain a self-sustaining job and career pathway. CPI provides intensive student services that can include tutoring, book loans, transportation assistance, childcare assistance, and tuition assistance.

Expectations of Career Pathways Participants:
• Use this program to gain education and skills
• Find a career pathway for a job and ultimately a career
• Set educational and personal goals
• Take advantage of the support services that will help lead to success which may include the personal and professional arena
• Have good attendance and attitude
• Keep in close contact with Pathways Counselor and/or other CP staff
• Your success is your responsibility – Pathways Staff is here to offer assistance as needed
• Use this program after gaining employment as a way to gain support, problem solve, stay employed, and complete further steps on the Career Pathway Plan
Students accepted for the Pathways Program must meet the following criteria:

• Be an Arkansas resident
• Have a dependent child and/or children (under 21 years old)
• Be a current TEA Client OR Food stamp, Medicare recipient, ARKids recipient OR Have a family income less than 250% of the federal poverty guideline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons in Family Unit</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Annual Income</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$7,710.42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must provide documentation in order to be eligible for the program.

Documentation (include all of the following):
• Copy of Federal Tax Return, each year while in the program
• Drivers License
• Social Security Card (Student and Children)
• Proof from DHHS showing receipt of Food Stamps, TEA, Medicaid, and/or ARKids, each year while in the program
• Award or Denial letter regarding Pell status from SEARK’s Financial Aid office, each semester while in the program
• All college transcripts or high school transcript and a current transcript each semester while in the program

Child Documentation (may include one or more of the following):
• Copy of Birth Certificate
• Proof of Birth showing date of birth and parent’s name
• Adoption papers
• Court ordered documents

Enrollment:
Applications and eligibility documents must be submitted to the Career Pathways office at SEARK. Students are taken based on grant priorities and needs as well as documentation compliance. When the funding and enrollment limit is maximized, students will be placed on a pending list and enrolled at a later date based on funding availability.

Denial into Pathways Program:
The Pathways staff reserves the right to deny admission to the program even if the student meets the criteria for admission. Reasons for possible denial may include, but are not limited to:
  • Student has a history of very poor academic performance.
  • Alteration or falsification of documents.
  • Student is disrespectful and/or abusive toward staff or other students.
  • Student does not attend class regularly.
  • Student does not provide information and documents to the Career Pathways Staff in a timely manner.
  • Student has previous hours and/or degree(s) that will allow for employment in a high demand, high wage job.
  • Student is not an active job seeker.
  • Student is not degree/certificate seeking at SEARK

*Please be aware that Career Pathways is an assistance program and may not be able to fund every educational need you have. Funding is limited and services are not an entitlement.*

Probation/Suspension:
Students not complying with the provisions of the Student Handbook and/or any other agreement, including transportation and childcare, will be placed on probation that semester or for the remainder of the enrolled semester. Services may be discontinued at the
Counselor(s) and/or Director’s discretion based on the area(s) of noncompliance. Students will sign a Probation Notice to inform them of:

• Their status,
• Areas of noncompliance, and
• Corrective action required

Excessive noncompliance may result in immediate suspension.

Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA each semester in order to receive assistance. Students who receive less than a 2.0 may be placed on suspension. Students who have less than a 2.0 for the semester, but have a cumulative GPA above 2.0 will be required to meet with a counselor to determine if they will be allowed a probationary semester. A probationary semester will only be allowed if the counselors, director, and instructors feel that the student will be able to meet all standards the following semester.

Students who are in the CP program and withdraw will be placed on suspension and not be eligible for continued assistance. Students who wish to be readmitted to the program must meet with the CP director to determine eligibility. CP cannot pay tuition for any class more than once.

*Alteration and/or falsification of documents will result in immediate suspension.*

**Mandatory Meetings:**
Career Pathways Orientation is required for all Pathways students. Students are required to attend class on a regular basis and maintain satisfactory progress. The CP staff will check attendance reports monthly and will contact instructors with concerns. Students are required to meet with counselors when requested. Satisfactory progress is determined by the instructor of each class and the CP director.

**Workshops:**
Students may be required to attend scheduled workshops.

**Change of Information:**
It is very important for the CP Staff to have current and correct student contact information. Students who change mailing addresses, phone numbers, etc. need to contact their
Pathways Counselor as soon as possible so that necessary corrections can be made in the database. Updated contact information will be added to the college’s student record computer database.

**Academic Advising:**
Participants are required to meet with their appointed SEARK Academic Advisor before enrolling each semester. Pathways Counselor’s will review the students schedule and discuss degree plan options based on the schedule set by the advisor and student. Students are invited to make an appointment with their Pathways Counselor to discuss any academic difficulty and graduation plans.

**Pathways Services**
*Students need to be aware that funds are limited and Pathways Services are not entitlements.*

**Services available to Pathways Students may include:**
- Career Counseling
- Financial Assistance
- Tuition & fees
- Books
- Childcare vouchers
- Transportation vouchers
- Testing Fees
- Tutoring
- Mentoring Services
- Workshops
- Supplies
- Job Placement

**Tuition:**
Tuition will not be paid until the end of the semester and/or program. Students must make satisfactory progress and meet all program requirements before tuition will be paid.
Students who withdraw or stop participating in class will be required to pay for their own classes.

Books:
Books are available to students through the Career Pathways Book Loan Library. When available, students may check out required textbooks to use each semester. All book(s) must be returned in good condition at the end of each semester. If funding is available Career Pathways may also purchase books for students who meet requirements set by Arkansas Career Pathways. Students who do not return their books will be placed on probation and possibly suspension and an administrative hold will be placed on their accounts in the SEARK business and data entry offices, denying the student access to grades, transcripts, and the ability to registration.

Transportation:
Transportation assistance is available to students through a voucher program. Students must work a minimum of one (1) hour per week in order to receive transportation assistance. Transportation information is updated each semester and is available in the CP office.

Childcare:
Childcare assistance is available to students through a voucher program. Students must apply for vouchers through the Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care (DCC) in order to receive assistance from Career Pathways. In order to receive DDC and/or Career Pathways vouchers, the childcare provider used by the student must be state certified. Students must work a minimum of one (1) hour per week in order to receive childcare assistance. Childcare information is updated each semester and is available in the CP office.

Students must turn in the monitoring form and verification of employment before receiving a voucher. Students who have not picked up a voucher by mid-term will no longer be eligible to receive vouchers.
Testing:
Students may be eligible for assistance with testing fees. Students must contact the CP office to see if they are eligible.

Disclaimer:
All documentation and requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the Career Pathways Program. SEARK CP has the right to adjust and/or change any policy at any time with reasonable notice. All students must attend classes and make satisfactory progress in order to receive assistance. CP staff will check class attendance and progress through monitoring forms, attendance reports in CAMS and/or contact with instructors.

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action
SEARK is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution. The College, in compliance with the Higher Education Act of 1965 and other Civil Rights laws, offers equal opportunity for admission and employment. Additionally, all programs and activities of the College are provided to all students without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, Vietnam era veteran or special disabled veteran status, or sex. Questions or concerns regarding affirmative action or disabilities can be directed to the Vice President for Student Affairs, 1900 Hazel St, Pine Bluff, AR 71603, 870-543-5903
I have received the SEARK Career Pathways Program Handbook and understand the policies and procedures indicated within.

Student Name: ___________________________  Date: ______________

CPI Staff Name: __________________________  Date: ______________