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Page 2: Tell us who you are!

Q1 Contact Information

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Q2 Select a category.	Special Achievement/Innovation
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Q21 Project Title

GPS for Success

Q22 What was the overall goal of project, problem it sought to solve or opportunity it sought to leverage? (suggested word count 100-250)

GPS for Success is a new multi-platform website, MyGPSForSuccess.com, that students and underemployed adults will use to learn about career opportunities, income potential and education/training requirements in 16 career clusters identified locally and nationally as experiencing a shortage of skilled workers entering the workforce. The website features digital content showcasing the careers as a distinct group of occupations and industries based on the knowledge and skills they require.

The goal is to help educators and students of all ages explore different career development options and better prepare them for college and/or a vocational career. The website will be used by education providers, employment and training agencies, students and underemployed adults to learn about the identified career opportunities, income potential and education/training requirements, in all 16 of the career clusters in our area, where there is a shortage of skilled workers.

Q23 Describe the activity, what it achieved, and why it was successful. (suggested word count 200-400)

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Working in public media allows WPBS-DT, Watertown Public Media, to be responsive to community needs. We have a responsibility to form meaningful partnerships that leverage our greater potential and develop new resources that can have a long-lasting impact. The definition of success, for us, is complex. The most important determining factors are social capital and quality of content; then come the metrics of analytics, demographics, and revenue. In this way, the community finds success in the success of public media.

GPS for Success fills a community need. The Jefferson County Economic Development Council (JCED) was seeking assistance with a workforce development initiative aimed at encouraging middle-school students to consider pursuing a career in the manufacturing industry after graduation. The Council was working on behalf of local corporations struggling to find skilled workers to fill vacancies even while many required only a technical certification and not a college degree. This while the unemployment rate was over 10%, students were misinformed about careers in manufacturing, and many were fleeing our region at an alarming rate after becoming educated; partly because they were unaware about potential career opportunities.

Our team connected with manufacturers and educators to develop a 4-minute video that would be distributed through our network including 32 school districts. The video was hosted by a local high school student who introduced manufacturing as an exciting and technological career pathway featuring interviews with employees; in non-traditional fields when possible. The video also cleared common misconceptions regarding job outlook, income potential, and working conditions. The award-winning video was well received by the JCED, manufacturers, school districts, and students.

This might have been the end of the story, however, we were challenged to think beyond this as one of our educational partners informed us that manufacturing was only one of 16 career clusters identified nationally and locally as experiencing a shortage of skilled workers entering the workforce while simultaneously cash-strapped school districts were now required to complete career pathing for all students.

A meeting of the minds took place with our team, representatives from the JCED, the Chamber of Commerce, Workforce Development Board, and the Board of Corporative Educational Services in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties (BOCES). BOCES is a network of local school districts providing cost-effective shared services, including career training for high-school students and adults, special education, alternative schools, technology education, and teacher training, as well as dozens of programs to expand educational opportunities and assist districts in operating more efficiently.

We set out to develop a career pathing resource for students, educators, employment and training agencies, and underemployed adults to explore career options and prepare for college and/ or a career. To meet over three-thousand 8th and 9th grade students where they were, we created an interactive and mobile responsive website featuring one video per career cluster and resource page for each of the identified career clusters. The website would serve as a "GPS for Success" so that students might navigate their career path to a brighter future.

Over the past three years, we met with over 150 industry leaders and community partners as experts in their respective career clusters to develop www.MyGPSforSuccess.com. They advised the core committee on the scope of each video, webpage content, and helped to identify candidates for funding. Additional website resources include links to scholarship information, a career assessment tool, resources for educators use in classrooms, and student resources. Additional phases for the initiative will include resume building skills, interview skills, and lessons on ethics in the workplace and the introduction of a mobile app.

GPS for Success identifies opportunities to fill the skills gap, income potential and education requirements in each cluster. It is the only resource with established connections among State Educational agencies, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, employers, industry groups, and other stakeholders.

WPBS-DT developed GPS for Success, which is presented by the Northern New York Community Foundation in partnership with the Jefferson-Lewis & St. Lawrence- Lewis BOCES. GPS For Success SM was recently awarded a Certificate of Excellence by the New York State Economic Development Council in multi-media marketing and the North Country STEM Network Community Partner Award.

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Q24 Tell us any metrics or benchmarks that show the success of project. Please consider quantitative and qualitative data. (suggested word count 100-250)

GPS for Success is a critical resource for cash-strapped school districts, which are now required to complete career plans for all students. GPS for Success is promoted to 35 school districts in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence County school districts as a career planning tool. We demonstrate the multi-platform website at career day events and special presentations. BOCES also uses the site as a tool for career pathing for adult education students. Nearly 3,000 8th and 9th grade students will be, or have been, exposed to the website content, in addition to students in other grades and those in BOCES adult education programs. Guidance counselors and teachers have begun to use the website in classrooms. For example, all 275 8th graders in the Indian River School District are using GPS for Success for career mapping. All 8th graders across Jefferson, St. Lawrence, and Lewis Counties use GPS for Success as a lead-in to "Career Jam," a career fair held in May, featuring several hundred local businesses who meet with the students and provide a hands-on experience.

Q25 Tell us how the project leveraged national or local content (primetime, KIDS, pop-out, etc). (suggested word count 100-250)

We worked with over 150 local businesses and organizations to create videos and content for GPS for Success. GPS for Success promotes local careers in local firms, while also recognizing that many careers allow jobseekers to travel to other parts of the world. It addresses the needs of our local students and businesses. We produced 16 videos with local content for each career cluster/web page.

Q26 Do you have any supporting materials or items to upload? (optional) **No**