2025 Service Area Review for Opportunity Programs

Service Area Description

Tillamook Bay Community College Opportunity Programs provide critical support to our students. These programs remove barriers to education, ensuring students in these programs are supported and empowered to achieve academic success, persist through their courses, and ultimately graduate. The programs and grants that the Opportunity Director oversees are STEP, Resource Navigator, ICAP (community of practice), Pathways to Opportunity (PTO), the TBCC Food Pantry, and Emergency Funds.

Program Definitions

STEP: STEP, the SNAP Training and Employment Program, is a partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Portland Community College, and the Oregon Employment Department (OED). Through this program, students that are receiving SNAP benefits receive one-on-one support from the STEP coach and create a College and Career Plan which we meet monthly to review. Students are eligible for support services as well, including tuition, gas cards, training materials such as welding gear and scrubs, testing fees such as fingerprinting and CDL tests, prescription glasses, utility and rent payments, car repairs, and more.

Resource Navigator: The Resource Navigator works closely with students to connect them with resources needed to be successful in their programs. This position is responsible for assisting students in applying for available local, state, and federal benefits and resources as applicable. This position also refers students to additional internal and external partners for additional support and help coordinate student and community events.

ICAP: Inclusive Career Advancement Program. We are members of the Community of Practice and have utilized this funding to support our Accessibility Services Coordinator, Chris Biegun. This support has included participation in professional development opportunities such as ORAHEAD and AHEAD trainings, as well as staff trainings provided by Phyllis Petteys.

Pathways to Opportunity (PTO): Pathways to Opportunity (PTO) is a statewide project supported by the Oregon Presidents' Council and the Higher Education Coordination Commission's Office of Community College and Workforce Development. We use this funding to assist students with everything from small balance pay-offs to supplies like stethoscopes and scrubs.

TBCC Food Pantry: TBCC has a food pantry to help meet our students' needs. We are in partnership with Oregon Food Bank, and provide canned and fresh foods, culturally familiar foods, personal hygiene items, pet food, and more. The pantry is open to community members as well.

Emergency Funds: Financial assistance provided to students experiencing unexpected challenges such as loss of income, housing issues, or family emergencies that may interfere with their ability to stay enrolled and succeed in their program. These funds offer short-term support to help students continue their studies without interruption.

Program/Service Area Details

The Opportunity Programs has 2-3 full-time employees, the Resource Navigator, and the TBCC Food Pantry student worker(s).

Jenevieve Case, Director of Opportunity Programs 1.0 FTE:

The Director of Opportunity Programs is responsible for leading and overseeing all aspects of the Opportunity Programs at TBCC. This position provides strategic leadership and works in collaboration with campus and community organizations to secure resources that support student success. The Director's primary goal is to remove barriers to education, ensuring students in these programs are supported and empowered to achieve academic success, persist through their courses, and ultimately graduate.

- Coordination and Alignment of Opportunity Programs: The primary task is ensuring the Opportunity Programs are efficiently distributed and aligned with local service systems to maximize funding opportunities.
- Collaboration with College Leadership: Assist in developing strategies to leverage state and federal funding to support students.
- Collaborate with leadership teams to create sustainable models for funding student support services.
- Community-Based Workforce Development Programs: Facilitate the development and delivery of community-based programs targeted at specific populations, with an emphasis on workforce development and preparing students for employment opportunities.
- Serve as a point of contact between grant programs, staff, and students to ensure smooth operations and communication.
- Participate in statewide Community of Practice meetings or convenings, fostering partnerships and sharing best practices with other professionals in the field.
- Foster partnerships and build resources that sustain long-term collaborations with community organizations, businesses, and other entities that can support the Opportunity programs.
- Oversee the integration of various Opportunity Programs across the College, ensuring that resources are effectively leveraged to maximize student support.
- Manage and supervise program staff, including the Resource Navigator and food pantry student worker.
- Oversee all day-to-day operations of grant programs, ensuring efficiency and compliance with institutional goals.

- Develop, recommend, and monitor grant budgets to ensure they align with institutional and grant guidelines.
- Regularly review monthly and quarterly reports, track program progress, and evaluate program outcomes.
- Integrate DEI principles into the design, implementation, and evaluation of Opportunity Programs, ensuring that they are inclusive and accessible to all students.
- Design and implement necessary training programs for staff to ensure they are well-equipped to support the students effectively.
- Direct and manage the outreach and recruitment efforts for SNAP recipients, both within the College and through external partners like ODHS and workforce organizations.
- Provide database management and ensure staff are trained to track and support students, ensuring a clear path for students to progress toward college or workforce goals.

Professional Development Goals:

- Complete OELA leadership training
- Supervisor Support Cohort by Rebecca Nikels

Angelica Ortiz, Resource Navigator 1.0 FTE:

The Resource Navigator works under the direction of the Director of Opportunity Programs. This position is responsible for assisting students in applying for available local, state, and federal benefits and resources as applicable. This position will also refer students to additional internal and external partners for additional support. This position will organize staff events to inform students and their families of new policies, involvement, resources, and responsibilities.

The Resource Navigator collaborates with other programs and committees to create a diverse, comfortable, and welcoming environment for all students. Performs all functions and activities within the guidelines and philosophy set forth in the TBCC Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan.

Essential Job Functions:

- Outreach and Recruitment
- Agency Partnership and External Resource Navigation
- Case Management
- Participation in the HB2835 statewide consortia

Professional Development Goals:

- Public Speaking Training
- HSI Summit at Western Oregon University
- Motivational Interviewing Training

TBCC Food Pantry Student Worker

The student assistant performs general tasks of a routine nature to support the campus pantry. Assigned duties are standard, limited in scope, and average difficulty. The position requires approximately 12 hours per week and includes the following responsibilities:

- Track weekly usage of the campus pantry
- Assist clients
- Update resource documents accessible to students and the public
- Restock pantry shelves as needed
- Help unload OFB orders
- Track donations
- Keep pantry clean and organized
- Conduct monthly inventory and assist with reordering pantry stock
- Participating in required food handler training

Other Colleges and Universities

I conducted three interviews: two with Rogue Community College resource coordinators, and one with the prior STEP Navigator at Blue Mountain Community College.

My first interview was with Susan Bame, the Resource Coordinator at Rogue Community College. She is their Benefits Navigator, works closely with their pantry coordinator, and assists with their emergency funds. They have similar goals as we do which include program visibility, and a shared priority has been keeping their webpage updated. We also discussed classroom visits and how helpful they can be.

Susan shared that they have a student employee, and how helpful that's been: *"One of the most valuable insights I've gained this past year is how impactful having a student employee can be. Their presence and voice resonate strongly with other students, and that has truly been an asset."*

The second interview was with Jacquline Jones, the Food Pantry coordinator at Rogue. Jacquline shared that they also partner with Oregon Food Bank, but do not serve the public. They have been encountering the same issues as our local food bank in terms of funding freezes, and the decline in Josephine County is close to half.

They also face similar challenges in terms of working to ensure they are serving as many folks as possible. They implemented a check-out model which is a list of items that shoppers check off as they shop to ensure they don't go over allotted amounts: *"I want to make it consistent for everyone that comes through."* I don't think this model would work for us, but it's helpful to learn about what other campuses are doing to solve similar challenges.

Finally, I interviewed Stephanie Avila, a Director at Blue Mountain Community College. Stephanie was previously the STEP Navigator and oversaw their STEP program. Like us, they only have one person coordinating their STEP program (with support from her supervisor). We also have very similar service needs in our communities, including rent, transportation, utilities,

phone and internet. She shared that assistance for these resources is in high demand, and it's a challenge to keep up with the need.

These conversations with colleagues from other community colleges revealed several shared goals and challenges. Common priorities include increasing program visibility and ensuring that web pages remain current and accessible. Susan Bame and I discussed classroom visits as an effective outreach strategy and highlighted the value of employing a student worker to strengthen peer-to-peer engagement.

Concerns about sustainable funding and the need to broaden impact through strategic partnerships were shared. One particularly interesting takeaway came from a discussion about Blue Mountain's pantry check-out model, which offered insight into resource management and promoting equitable access, though this approach may not align well with our specific pantry as we do not require any personal information from pantry visitors.

After engaging in these discussions, I'm especially grateful for the support we're currently able to offer our students. At the same time, the conversations helped identify opportunities for growth, most notably, the potential impact of hiring a student employee to help us expand services.

Strengths & Weaknesses – SWOC Analysis for Programs

For the SWOC analysis I asked for input from the Student Services team and as well as the Community and Continuing Education Coordinator.

Strengths:

- Exceptional leadership and highly dedicated, equity-minded, bilingual staff who are trusted by students and community partners.
- Strong alignment with TBCC's mission of access, equity, and student success.
- Small college environment fosters personalized attention and strong student-staff relationships.
- Broad student support includes fuel cards, testing fees, emergency funds, and basic needs resources that help students persist and complete.
- Strong partnerships with PCC, Oregon Food Bank, and local service agencies.
- Well used, visible programs provide tangible, immediate help to first generation and underserved students.

Weaknesses:

- Reliance on federal and grant funding.
- Limited staffing can make outreach and data tracking challenging.
- Program visibility across campus could be stronger. Some faculty/staff may not fully understand the services offered.

- Pantry access can be inequitable for evening students.
- External community resources for referrals can be limited.

Opportunities:

- Rising community needs and expanding academic pathways increase the program's potential impact.
- Implementation of a new database and greater use of technology (e.g., text nudges) can improve efficiency and outreach.
- Collaborate with TBCC's Career Center (when complete) to link students to internships, jobs, and living-wage pathways.
- New building and pantry location create opportunities to improve visibility, access, and layout.
- Continued development of partnerships with local nonprofits will further expand pantry capacity and other wraparound support services.

Challenges:

- Uncertainty in federal and state funding.
- Rising student basic needs (housing, childcare, food, mental health) may outpace available resources, placing increased pressure on existing support programs.
- Shifts in higher education policy, such as FAFSA or Pell Grant eligibility, could impact student access.

Service Area Outcomes

Our previous SAO was to increase awareness of the programs available to students, including a new webpage featuring available support programs. The website has allowed us to increase our reach and effectively inform students of the programs available to them (in addition to classroom visits, etc.). We have been working on other SAO's, but data collection is a challenge. However, a tool that has had success is a program completion survey for STEP. Here are the most recent student responses to the question *If you could make one change to the STEP program, what would it be?*

- Nothing, Jenny was amazing and went far above and beyond both with action and attitude to help me in my educational journey.
- Nothing, just support and encouragement from Jenny and Joann, and Corey was great enough. Thank you all so very much.
- In my situation nothing the help is and was very helpful and appreciated…. that gave me the tools and certifications for really good employment (CDL)

In addition, participant data reflects that between July 2020 and July 2025, a total of 65 STEP students successfully earned certificates or degrees. These credentials span a range of fields, including computer literacy, phlebotomy, welding, emergency medical services (EMS), medical assisting, and commercial driver's license (CDL) training. Collectively, these outcomes demonstrate participants' progress toward workforce readiness and the program's role in supporting skill development across diverse career pathways.

Future Goals

Following our SWOC analysis and peer interviews with colleagues from other colleges, four themes emerged: staffing limitations, technology needs, outreach, and funding. From these future goals were identified:

- Hire a work-study student for the pantry to increase peer engagement and lighten administrative workload. This would also allow us to expand our hours and meet the needs of our evening students.
- Technology. We are excited to implement the new STEP database, which will streamline the intake process and enhance data collection efficiency. Additionally, we look forward to updating the Emergency Fund application and incorporating text message nudges to strengthen communication with students.
- Increase outreach. The website was a great start, but we will continue to work on student outreach. Some steps include more classroom visits, community events, text nudges, and faculty presentations.
- Expand funding resources. We will look at increasing collaboration with the TBCC Foundation and other resources. Another advantage to having the STEP database is it will provide information about the students being served, which can aid in grant writing. We are also preparing for the conclusion of ICAP in June 2026, which will impact our ability to support professional development for faculty and our Accessibility Services Coordinator. We will work to identify alternative funding sources to support this work.

Conclusion

The Opportunity Programs continue to grow and provide essential academic and personal support to our students, many of whom face systemic barriers to success. With continued support, we will be able to:

- Sustain and expand high-impact services that directly contribute to student retention, academic success, and mission fulfillment.
- Restore staffing support to ensure consistent daily operations and student engagement.
- Use technology to improve communication and outreach and streamline data collection.

The Opportunity Programs are essential for TBCC students. With continued support and careful planning, we are confident that the Opportunity Programs at TBCC will remain a strong and effective resource for the students who rely on them.