MAPPING THE ECOSYSTEM OF EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Tori Cirks, Senior Technical Assistance Consultant, AIR
Julita Bailey-Vasco, Program Manager, JFF
Session Goals

• Introduce the concept of ecosystem mapping
• Map actors in the postsecondary ecosystem
• Consider the actions and interactions of ecosystem actors
• Identify opportunities to accelerate and sustain work of the ecosystem
Ecosystem Mapping
What is an ecosystem?

“An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life.”

(National Geographic, n.d.)
What is an ecosystem?

“[You] are a unique ecosystem. There is no other ecosystem like your body.”

(American Museum of Natural History, 2016)
What is an ecosystem?
Ecosystem Map

[V]isual depiction of the landscape... as a means to identifying gaps in essential services and functions, strategizing beyond symptoms of a problem, and addressing the larger systemic issues and problems at play.

(Anthony & Edsforth, 2016)
East Syracuse Minoa Central School District STEM Learning Ecosystem
St. Louis Region Workforce Development Ecosystem
Activity: Mapping the Postsecondary Ecosystem
In your table groups...

- Step into character!
- Identify the players/actors in the ecosystem.
- Use one person/organization per sticky note.
Types of Actors

• **Accelerators.** People or organizations that contribute time, funding, information, and/or other resources.

• **Blockers.** People or organizations that you might perceive as working against you or creating/contributing to a problem.

• **Supporters.** People or organizations that are involved in complimentary work or who are allies.

• **Non-existent.** People or organizations that are present but inactive.

• Other?
Enabling or Inhibiting Conditions

- **Political.** Federal or state regulations or policies, local administrative processes and structures, etc.
- **Economic.** Funding, labor market trends, etc.
- **Geography.** Location, transportation availability, etc.
- **Infrastructure.** Technology, communications, etc.
- **Other?**
Report Out and Reflection
Report Out

• Who were the key actors identified?
• What opportunities do you see in the ecosystem map?
• What conditions need to be addressed to make progress toward student completion and success goals?
• What surprised you when looking at your ecosystem map?
Reflection

• I like....

• I wish...

• I wonder...
References Layout


