

**Subject:** New submission ALBANY Workforce Development Application**Date:** Friday, June 30, 2023 at 1:15:51 PM Eastern Daylight Time**From:** jnytko@govsol.org**To:** jnytko@govsol.org

<b>General Information</b>
<b>Date of application</b>
06/30/2023
<b>Entity name</b>
Albany County Opportunity, Inc.
<b>Entity TIN, EIN or Social Security Number</b>
14-6037204
<b>Entity physical address</b>
333 Sheridan Avenue Albany, NY 12206 United States <a href="#">Map It</a>
<b>Is the entity's mailing address different from the physical address?</b>
No
<b>Contact Information</b>
<b>Primary contact name</b>
Neenah Bland
<b>Primary contact title</b>
Executive Director
<b>Primary contact phone</b>
(518) 463-3175
<b>Primary contact email</b>
<a href="mailto:nbland@albanycap.org">nbland@albanycap.org</a>
<b>What is the preferred method of contact?</b>
Email
<b>Website (if available)</b>
<a href="https://www.albanycap.org">https://www.albanycap.org</a>
<b>Entity Info and Structure</b>
<b>Which legal structure best describes the entity?</b>
Nonprofit
<b>What was the date of the entity's establishment?</b>
07/28/1966

**If a business, what is the primary function (select best option)**

Social Services

**If applicable, is the business a M/WBE (Minority or Women-Owned Business Enterprise)?**

No

**Have you or the entity ever received any form of COVID-19 relief funds?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please specify type and amount.**

Albany Community Action Partnership

- COVID Paycheck Protection Program Loan: \$483,000

Early Childhood Education Department

- Head Start (HS) American Rescue Funds: \$567,000
- HS COVID CARES: \$558,000
- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation: \$50,000
- NYS Cares for Communities: \$25,000

Community & Career Services Department

- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) CARES: \$358,000
- CSBG CARES Rapid-Cycle: \$200,000
- OTDA CARES: \$30,000

- ARPA through Cares of NY: \$75,000

Energy Services Department

- ARPA: \$85,000

**Project Information****Please provide a short summary of your proposed project including a project name, general description, total cost, reason(s) why you are pursuing the project and anticipated impact:**

Albany County Opportunity, Inc. d/b/a Albany Community Action Partnership is requesting \$250,000 to support ACAP's Workforce Reinvestment (WRI), a program designed to support unemployed/underemployed Albany County residents who live in poverty by offering training and support for high demand jobs in the post-COVID economy. Our goals are to provide individuals with marketable job skills in Health Care and Logistics (two significant industries denoted by the Department of Labor for the Capital Region); to help individuals obtain job retention/soft skills needed for sustainable employment and upward career mobility; to enhance an individual's professional networking opportunities; and to provide access to case management and support services, reducing barriers to employment. We strongly believe in integrating wraparound services into a workforce development program as we have repeatedly seen firsthand thousands of individuals succeed in finding sustainable careers by reducing barriers and increasing opportunities for skill development and networking. ACAP anticipates we will be able to support 38 individuals in obtaining industry-recognized occupational trainings with certifications/licenses: 30 certifications in health care and 8 CDL Class B Licenses.

**What amount of funding is being requested?**

\$250,000

**Does the project budget have any additional sources of funds?**

No

**I certify that if awarded, ARPA funding will not displace any other project funding**

Yes, I certify

**Project Description****Identify and describe whether funds will be used in any of the following areas. Check all that apply.**

- 3. Expanding an existing program – providing tuition or stipends for County residents or /expanding program

- 4. Expanding an existing program – investment in wraparound services connected to a workforce development program (i.e. childcare, transportation, etc.)

**If "3. Expanding an existing program – providing tuition or stipends for County residents/expand program seats" above, describe in detail how funds will be used to support.**

The Workforce Reinvestment (WRI) program will provide tuition for industry recognized occupational training and certification/license to Albany County residents living at or below 350% FPL in the industries of Health Care and Logistics. Certifications in health care include Phlebotomy, EKG, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), and Medical Administrative Assistant (MAA). Trainings are provided by local accredited educational institutions and are designed with a relatively quick turnaround time (approximately 6 weeks), ensuring customers are successful in completing the program and can find a job or accept a promotion as soon as it is available. On average, tuition is estimated to cost approximately \$1,800 per certification.

Training for the CDL Class B license is provided by a licensed business, with opportunities for testing support and tangible practice. Typically, the training takes about 6 weeks with practice and support being offered until time of licensing test. Tuition and licensing are anticipated to cost on average \$2,300 per customer.

Career planning and readiness services will be tailored to each individual's needs and experience. Individuals who are new to these sectors, or who have been unemployed for a long period, will participate in our Workforce Development Credential (WDC) training. WDC is a 30-hour intensive career readiness training designed to help customers develop job readiness skills and soft skills, helping increase the chance of finding successful and sustainable employment. The training is held in-person in small groups of 1 – 10 individuals at ACAP's Main Office. Curriculum and activities are run by ACAP staff with the occasional community partner expert presenter.

Individuals with current or previous employment in these sectors will have a chance to participate in our Valued In your Profession (VIP) pathway. The VIP pathway is designed for experienced individuals who are looking to leverage their skillsets and grow within their careers through promotions or new opportunities. The VIP pathway differs in that the customer does not participate in WDC and instead participates in self-paced learning activities which are scheduled to avoid conflict with their current employment schedule. No matter which pathway, all customers will have many learning opportunities through workshops, one-on-ones with ACAP staff and community partners, and connection with employers hiring within their chosen sectors.

**If "4. Expanding an existing program – investment in wraparound services connected to a workforce development program (i.e. childcare, transportation, etc.)" above, describe in detail how funds will be used to support.**

Wraparound services for WRI will focus mainly on case management provided by ACAP staff; access to barrier reduction resources (ie: bus passes, gas cards, and scrub vouchers); financial literacy and asset development opportunities; and community building and networking. Funding will pay for ACAP staff to provide the wraparound services as well as purchase any barrier reduction resource (as mentioned in the previous sentence). Comprehensive case management will not only focus on the customer enrolled in training; it will also address needs of other family members (ie: enrolling a 4-year-old child into preschool) to ensure all members have access to resources and opportunities to improve the family's circumstance and reduce additional barriers the customer may have towards employment.

Female-identifying customers will have an opportunity to participate in our program, Dress for Success Albany, where they will receive confidence-coaching and additional skill development activities accompanied by an individualized "suiting" at the Dress for Success Boutique. The "suiting" will supply each customer with high-quality professional attire, including shoes and accessories, appropriate for an interview or professional event. Once a job offer is received, customers who complete the first "suiting" will be invited back to the Boutique to choose an additional five outfits to begin their new jobs/promotions with confidence.

Through the financial literacy and asset development opportunities, customers will learn how to navigate the salary increase from their primary jobs as well as other beneficial financial information such as debt reduction, credit management, wealth-building, and family budgeting. Customers will be presented opportunities to engage with local financial institutions during financial literacy activities. This will encourage them to become banked or invested while also dispelling myths which have traditionally kept disadvantaged communities from building wealth and relationships with financial institutions. Additionally, all customers will have access to self-paced learning curriculum including Grow with Google and Money Smarts.

**Describe your organizations experience as a provider of workforce development/ training opportunities, including any experience in Albany County.**

ACAP has provided services to low-income families living in Albany County for over 57 years. For nearly 15 of these

years, the Career Services department has continuously implemented innovative approaches to workforce programs. For over 11 years, ACAP was a key partner (a first for a local human services agency) in the Health Profession Opportunity Grant (HPOG), providing wraparound case management and intensive career services to over 2,300 low-income individuals. In 2015, we participated in a pilot study program from W.K. Kellogg's Foundation, called STEPS, where we provided opportunities to increase greater educational, employment, and economic security outcomes for unemployed mothers and their young children. In 2021, we were one of 16 entities across the country which participated in the CSBG CARES Rapid-Cycle Impact Program from the Office of Community Services, the goal of which was to adapt current service models to effectively respond to community needs while simultaneously testing community approaches to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the effects of COVID-19.

During implementation of these programs, ACAP worked tirelessly on behalf of our customers, meeting them where they are at in their career journeys and providing opportunities to reduce barriers and support sustainable employment. We designed the WDC training program and the VIP pathway (both mentioned above) to prepare our customers for successful employment based on their individual needs. We have also partnered with over 150 local organizations, employers, and trainers to ensure customers have options and that as many needs can be met through community-building. We also have listened to our customer and communities' needs, utilizing our customer satisfaction surveys and tri-annual Community Needs Assessment. This feedback has encouraged us to tailor each program to address these needs and quickly adapt throughout the program year to ensure success for as many customers as possible.

**List any project partners, their role, and any funding they will receive (please note project partners may also be subject to compliance and reporting requirements).**

NA

**If an award is made, describe how Albany County residents will benefit. Use specific metrics where possible (e.g. number of individuals sectoral job training programs).**

If awarded, we believe the WRI program will greatly benefit the Albany County residents and their families. We anticipate enrolling 38 (30 in health care; 8 in logistics) low-income Albany County residents into the training program, helping them earn industry-recognized certifications/licenses which they can use to find a new employment opportunity or grow and be promoted by their current employer. As we have seen in previous years, these customers (and their families) will experience career and economic mobility by entering into industries in high demand jobs opportunities for growth. As such, household income will increase and/or stabilize as customers increase their wage from a single primary job without having to find multiple avenues of employment. We also anticipate nearly 83% of customers who pursue a certification/license will receive wraparound support services increasing the success of sustainable employment and 100% of customers will participate in an asset development opportunity and experience an increase in their financial literacy knowledge.

Albany County residents will also benefit indirectly from WRI as the program will create a pipeline of skilled employees to fill vacancies in in-demand positions within significant industries. In the post-pandemic economy, the workforce is struggling to recover the loss of skilled employees while simultaneously trying to anticipate and meet the growing demands of these industries. The WRI not only provides trainings for individuals, but also helps create support networks and community-building opportunities across the County.

**In order to be eligible for ARPA funding, programs must serve low-to-moderate income households/communities (classified as 350% of the Federal Poverty Level) or households that experienced unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please describe specifically how your proposal will benefit unemployed or underemployed individuals meet this requirement and how you will verify this to the County.**

As a Community Action Agency, ACAP is focused on serving low-income families of Albany County. The Community & Career Services department currently serves residents at or below 200% Federal Poverty Limit. However, this threshold is only limited to the regulations designated by the funding available. As such, ACAP will conduct an income verification for every Albany County resident seeking services and retain a copy of this verification for our records to demonstrate we are serving those living at 350% FPL or below. These records will be made available at the County's request at any point.

**How Will You Track Performance Goals And Define Success? Include at least two Key Performance Indicators and expected annual outcomes/impact during the reporting period (September 2023 - December 2026).**

The WRI program is designed for customers to experience multiple layers of success throughout their participation in the program. ACAP utilizes a confidential fully integrated web-based data collection and assessment system, designed for Community Action Agencies, called CAP60. This system allows ACAP to track customer eligibility and progress through programs. Staff will track performance goals through a combination of case notes, attendance records, accessed services and resources, copies of certifications/licenses, and employment verification.

Key performance indicators for the WRI program are the completion of the occupational training and Phlebotomy/EKG/MAA certification or CDL Class B License and the status of employment at the 30-day follow-up.

ACAP anticipates 38 customers will earn an industry recognized certification/license: 30 in health care and 8 in logistics. We expect 24 customers to complete ACAP's WDC training, 38 customers to participate in at least one financial literacy/asset development opportunity, 20 customers to receive job placement services, and 18 customers to receive post-employment services for up to 30 days.

**What is the proposed project start date?**

October 1, 2023

**What is the anticipated date of completion?**

September 30, 2024

**Please provide key project milestones inclusive of the anticipated timelines and descriptions**

Milestone	Anticipated Date	Task Description
30 customers complete training in health care and earn certification	1st Quarter (Oct. 2023 – Dec. 2023): 0; 2nd Quarter (Jan. 2024 – Mar. 2024): 10; 3rd Quarter (Apr. 2024 – June 2024): 13; 4th Quarter (July 2024 – Sept. 2024): 7	Customer will complete a training with an accredited educational institution (length of training dependent on program) and earn an industry-recognized certification
8 customers complete training and earn CDL Class B License	1st Quarter: 0; 2nd Quarter: 2; 3rd Quarter: 3; 4th Quarter: 3	Customer will complete a 6-week long training and earn their CDL Class B license
24 customers enroll and complete Workforce Development Credential training	1st Quarter: 5; 2nd Quarter: 7; 3rd Quarter: 7; 4th Quarter: 5	Customer will participate in a 30-hour program to develop soft skills to help support employment sustainability
38 customers participate in financial literacy/asset development opportunity	1st Quarter: 5; 2nd Quarter: 7; 3rd Quarter: 7; 4th Quarter: 6	Customer will complete at least financial literacy/asset development workshop (self-paced or from a financial institution)
20 customers receive job placement services	1st Quarter: 0; 2nd Quarter: 5; 3rd Quarter: 8; 4th Quarter: 7	Customer will receive support from ACAP staff to network with potential employers and simultaneously practicing job obtainment skills (ie: mock interviews)
18 customers receive post-employment services for up to 30 days	1st Quarter: 0; 2nd Quarter: 2; 3rd Quarter: 8; 4th Quarter: 8	Customer will receive follow up, starting with job offer, from ACAP staff to ensure first 30 days are successful

**Describe how the funding will support a sustainable workforce development initiative that will continue to serve Albany County residents after ARPA funds have been exhausted.**

If funded, the WRI program will have completed two full successful years, including the first year as a pilot program. As part of our sustainability plan, resource development efforts will include the creation of a sustainability plan, identification of potential funding sources, and application for funds as need to ensure the program continues. Results achieved and any lessons learned will be utilized to illustrate the return on invest to be gained by investing in cross-sector services and support, particularly emphasizing the value of offering opportunities for career growth to low-income individuals while simultaneously providing wraparound and barrier reducing services. As part of our ongoing sustainability efforts, ACAP will continue to conduct ongoing outreach, relationship building, and partnership development activities. We will continue to track customer data in our data management tool (CAP60) and, utilizing the rapid cycle learning model, will continue to pivot and adjust service delivery to better fit the evolving needs of the communities we serve.

**Explain why arpa funds are needed to complete the project. Would the project be possible either without arpa assistance or assistance to a lesser degree?**

ACAP seeks ARPA funds to rebuild the pipeline of trained and professionally developed employees to fill vacancies in significant industries while simultaneously helping rebuild the Albany County communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. ACAP has been awarded various grants to provide aspects of services provided by Community & Career Services such as financial literacy and asset development and wraparound support and barrier reduction services. However, none of our awards currently provide funding for occupational trainings for customers. To mitigate this, ACAP has leveraged our well-developed partnerships with employers who offer paid trainings, but this is not a long-term solution. One of the important aspects of the Workforce Reinvestment Initiative (WRI) is to offer individuals dignity of choice: choosing from a selection of educational institutions, employers, and industry recognized certifications/licenses. By only being able to work with a limited amount of employers, we are limiting options for the individuals seeking our services. If we were to receive a smaller grant than requested, we would make every effort to serve as many individuals as possible. However, we would need to reduce the amount of individuals who receive tuition for training and certification.

**Are you a Workforce Development/Training Provider?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, describe the industry or industries served by this program. List any specific companies who you will be partnering with.**

Health Care:

- Bryant & Stratton
- Mildred Elley
- Pulse Career Solutions
- Albany Medical Center
- St. Peter's Health Partners

Logistics:

- The CDL School of Menands
- Tech Valley Shuttle
- First Student Bus Company

**Are you a company?**

No

**At the top of this page is a downloadable project budget. Please download the budget form and upload it here.**

- [ACAP-WRI-Budget.pdf](#)

**Is any upfront funding needed to successfully implement your proposed project?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please explain how much and why**

ACAP requests Albany County to consider funding 25% of this program upfront. While some of the services of this program are provided inhouse (ie: case management, soft skills development, job placement services, etc.), the core component of the program is to provide occupational training and certification/licensing. Without funds, we will not be able to enroll customers into training and we will be unable to provide specific resources (ie: bus passes, scrub vouchers).

**Explain why ARPA Funds Are Needed to Complete the proposed program/project. Would the proposal be Possible Without ARPA Assistance? Describe how your proposal would be impacted if you are awarded a smaller grant than requested?**

ACAP seeks ARPA funds to rebuild the pipeline of trained and professionally developed employees to fill vacancies in significant industries while simultaneously helping rebuild the Albany County communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. ACAP has been awarded various grants to provide aspects of services provided by Community & Career Services such as financial literacy and asset development and wraparound support and barrier reduction services. However, none of our awards currently provide funding for occupational trainings for customers. To mitigate this, ACAP has leveraged our well-developed partnerships with employers who offer paid trainings, but this is not a long-term solution. One of the important aspects of the Workforce Reinvestment Initiative (WRI) is to offer individuals dignity of choice: choosing from a selection of educational institutions, employers, and industry recognized certifications/licenses. By only being able to work with a limited amount of employers, we are limiting



options for the individuals seeking our services. If we were to receive a smaller grant than requested, we would make every effort to serve as many individuals as possible. However, we would need to reduce the amount of individuals who receive tuition for training and certification.

**Provide any additional project related information you feel may support your application (optional)**

- [Letter-of-Support-Pulse-Career-Solutions.pdf](#)

**Tax Information**

**Please upload Federal tax returns for 2019**

- [Form-990-990T-and-CHAR-500-080119.pdf](#)

**Please upload Federal tax returns for 2020**

- [Signed-FORM-2019-990-08052020.pdf](#)

**Please upload Federal tax returns for 2021**

- [2021-Form-990.pdf](#)

**If available, please provide your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from SAM.gov**

XNY1M46JZTJ1

**Risk Assessment**

**Has the entity adopted and/or implemented policies relating to: records retention, conflict of interest, code of ethics, and/or nondiscrimination policies?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, what policies have been adopted?**

ACAP's current conflict of interest, code of ethics, and nondiscrimination policy is found ACAP's Personnel Policies Manual, last updated July 2021. Our Senior Management and Human Resources team are finalizing our Inclusion Code of Conduct policy, which combines the Code of Conduct and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policies to an updated and more robust policy. Our record retention policy is found in the ACAP Fiscal Policies Manual.

**Is the entity properly licensed or certified by a recognized source ?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please provide additional information.**

ACAP was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization in 1966 and is recognized as a federally designated Community Action Agency serving Albany County, New York by the Community Services Block Grant, overseen by the Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, and United States Department of Health and Human Services.

**Does the entity have a financial management system?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please describe the financial system, its capabilities and how it will help to track the proposed project.**

ACAP's Director of Finance oversees the finance department. As a member of the Senior Management team, the Director interacts with Program Directors to develop budgets and manages program and agency audits, as well as financial monitoring by multiple government organizations and funding sources. The Director also oversees accounts receivable and property management, working with the Staff Accountant responsible for payroll and accounts payable functions. The Fiscal team is responsible for providing budget projections, maintaining and reconciling the general ledger, bank reconciliation, cash flow management, in addition to other contract management activities.

ACAP's staff model ensures internal controls are effective so the agency can meet the strict standards of the

Federal A-122 cost principles. Results of ACAP's A-133 Audits consistently show no Finds, Material Weaknesses, or Significant Deficiencies. Strong internal financial controls and experienced staff members contribute to effective financial management of the organization. Financial Statements are prepared annually. ACAP's established Fiscal Policies and Procedures Manual is updated regularly. This Manual includes detailed Procurement and Purchase Procedures Payroll Procedures; Accounts Receivable and Cash Receipts Procedures; Petty Cash and Cash Account Procedures; Budgeting and Financial Reporting Processes' Administrative Indirect Cost Allocation Procedures; Travel Procedures; Cost Allocation Procedures; and the Agency's Investment Policy and Risk Profile.

**Has there been any change in the entity's key staffing positions in the last 2 years?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please provide additional information below.**

When the previous Director of Administration, Fiscal, and Human Resources left July 2021, the position was split into two separate director positions: Director of Human Resources & Administration and Director of Fiscal.

**Has the entity previously done work for or received funds from the Federal government (i.e. Is the entity experienced in managing Federal funds)?**

Yes

**If "Yes" above, please provide additional details below.**

ACAP has a long history of managing federal grants examples of which include Head Start through the Office of Children & Family Services (40+ years); Healthcare Professional Opportunity Grant (11 years); CSBG CARES Rapid-Cycle (18 months); and we have been recently awarded funding through the FCC for the Affordable Outreach Program grant.

**The County is careful about identifying and avoiding conflicts of interest, especially with grants awarded through the County. A conflict of interest arises when a person's self-interest and professional interest or public interest intersect. In this situation, there is the potential for biased professional judgment and lack of objectivity which creates a serious conflict when one of the interests can benefit financially or personally from actions or decisions made in the official capacity. A conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest; there only needs to be the possibility of bias for a conflict. If your organization knows of a possible conflict of interest with your application for funds please disclose that information here. Otherwise write "None."**

None

**Certifications**

**US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 1**

- I Have Been Provided a Copy and Understand the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Guidance for State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (see link or PDF included at the top of page)

**US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 2**

- Should the County Allocate ARPA Funds, I am Able to and Pledge to Adhere to ALL Compliance and Reporting Requirements of the U.S. Treasury as it relates to any State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

**US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 3**

- I Understand the County Will Contact me if/when Additional Information is Needed and that Information will be Promptly Provided to the County to Support Reporting Requirements

**US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 4**

- If for Any Reason I am Unable to Comply with the U.S. Treasury's Compliance and Reporting Requirements I will Immediately Notify the County in writing by email or letter

**US Treasury Reporting & Compliance Acknowledgment 5**

- All Information Submitted in this Application is True & Accurate



**Electronic Signature Agreement**

I agree

By checking the "I agree" box below, you agree and acknowledge that 1) your application will not be signed in the sense of a traditional paper document, 2) by signing in this alternate manner, you authorize your electronic signature to be valid and binding upon you to the same force and effect as a handwritten signature, and 3) you may still be required to provide a traditional signature at a later date.

**Type Name Below**

Neenah Bland