

COLUMBIA ANALYTICAL

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

SWWDC developed connections between the Individualized Certificate Program and On-The Job Training to up-skill jobseekers and provide employers with a qualified workforce.

As a mid-sized, highly technical employer, Columbia Analytical Services (CAS) is continually recruiting and hiring for high-skill occupations. Within a semi-rural area, these types of jobs are often unable to be filled with the local employment pool. A partnership between Columbia Analytical Services, WorkSource, Southwest Washington Workforce Development Council (SWWDC), and Lower Columbia College (LCC) created a two-pronged training program with students being trained for entry-level laboratory work in skills identified by the employer, matching with academic coursework in the classroom and on-the-job training. The partnership developed a Chemical Technician Individualized Certificate Program to train participants as Chemical Technicians, which was then followed by On-the-Job Training at Columbia Analytical once hired. At the same time, incumbent workers at CAS participated in an OJT using 5809 state stimulus funds, enabling them to move up the career ladder. Their positions were then backfilled by the newly trained ICP students hired by CAS.

LCC and WorkSource vetted potential participants and screened them based on their academic and job readiness skills. Thus, when a student completed training and WorkSource provided OJT funds for employment at Columbia Analytical, the student already possessed job-specific competencies to bring to the position.

The expanded LCC Individualized Certificate Program (ICP) provides incentives to local businesses, while also providing effective and sustainable training to individuals. This partnership allows students to complete 1-2 quarters of their cooperative work experience while also providing the student an opportunity to transition into OJT for employment.

This partnership emphasized the importance of creating strong employer/training connections in workforce investments in southwest Washington.

This project strengthened the relationship between Lower Columbia College and WorkSource, enabling continued open and innovative discussions about additional opportunities for partnering.



ICP In a Nutshell

The Director of the ICP works with employers as well as LCC faculty in the design of training curriculum. This training leads to an industry specific certificate that has an employer's endorsement, a win-win situation for all involved. With the addition of OJT funding from the Workforce Development Council, the ICP model can better support the training of new workers in employer specific training. Additionally, employers are invited into the college career center to partner with ICP orientations, thus further ensuring success.

