

# Career Connected Learning in Out-of-School Time

*Shira Woolf Cohen, M.Ed.*

*Tiffany Searles, M.Ed.*



July 23, 2025 | Baruch College



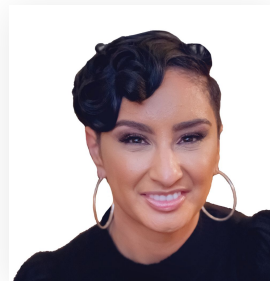
**ACTIVATING THE POWER  
OF AFTERSCHOOL**



**PASE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

# Who is Innovageous?

The mission of Innovageous is to provide continuity of learning and inclusive opportunities for all children by building the capacity of educators, schools, and families to develop **innovative** and **courageous** solutions in Education.



**Joanna Hightower**  
Co-Founder



**Alicia Woolf**  
Co-Founder



**Shira Woolf Cohen**  
Co-Founder



# Meet Your Presenters



## Shira Woolf Cohen, M.Ed. Co-Founder, Innovageous

- Mom & Wife
- Sister & Friend
- Middle School Math Teacher
- Educational Leader
- Non-Profit Board Member
- Senior Neubauer Fellow
- Higher Education Faculty
- Author
- Top Values: Opportunity & Community



# Meet Your Presenters



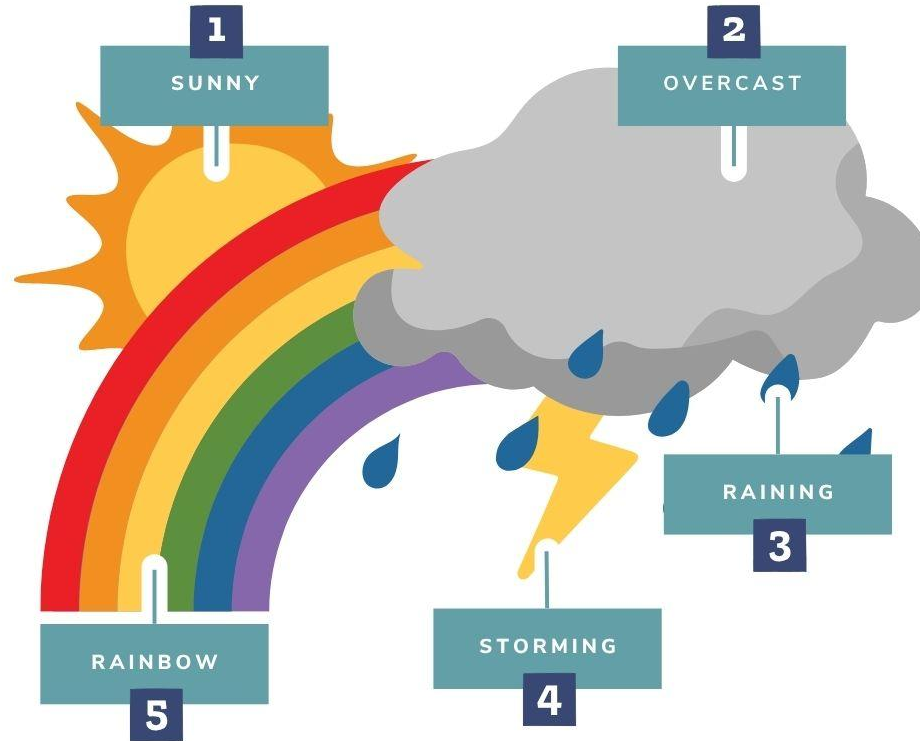
**Tiffany Searles, M.Ed.**  
Lead Partner, Innovageous

Tiffany has over a decade of experience working in district and charter schools. Her areas of expertise include out-of-school time programs, service-learning, postsecondary exploration, family and community engagement, and school communications.





# WHAT'S YOUR WEATHER TODAY?



# Session Norms



Stay engaged and  
embody the purpose



Be future  
focused



Limit  
distractions



Value  
practice



Embrace diversity  
of thought



# Plan for Our Time Together

## Agenda

1. Who's in the Room?
2. What is Career Connected Learning & Why is it Important?
3. Examples of Career Connected Learning in OST Programs
4. Strategies to Integrate Career Connected Learning
5. Your Turn: Integrating Career Connected Learning in YOUR OST Program
6. Wrap Up & Reflection



## Outcomes

1. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of what career connected learning is and strategies to implement it in their OST programs.
2. Participants will spend time thinking about how to integrate this work in their program and leave with a plan.

# Taking Notes

Use the provided note taker to jot down the most pertinent information you want to remember from this session!



[bit.ly/4nX4ZAT](https://bit.ly/4nX4ZAT)

## Career Connected Learning in Out-of-School Time



### Career Development Continuum Note Catcher

Self & Career Awareness	Career Exploration	Career Preparedness	Career Training

### Strategies to Integrate Career Connected Learning Note Catcher

Align Program Activities	Help Students Build Self Awareness	Opportunities for Real World Learning
Integrate Cross Sector Competencies	Include Intentional Reflection	Build Partnerships



# Who's In The Room?





## PLEASE SHARE

### OVERVIEW



**NAME**



**SCHOOL/PROGRAM**



**POSITION**

### YOUR JOB



**YOUR FIRST JOB OR YOUR DREAM JOB**



# **What is Career Connected Learning & Why is it Important?**





## **Word Association**

When you think of the term Career Connected Learning...what words or phrases come to mind?

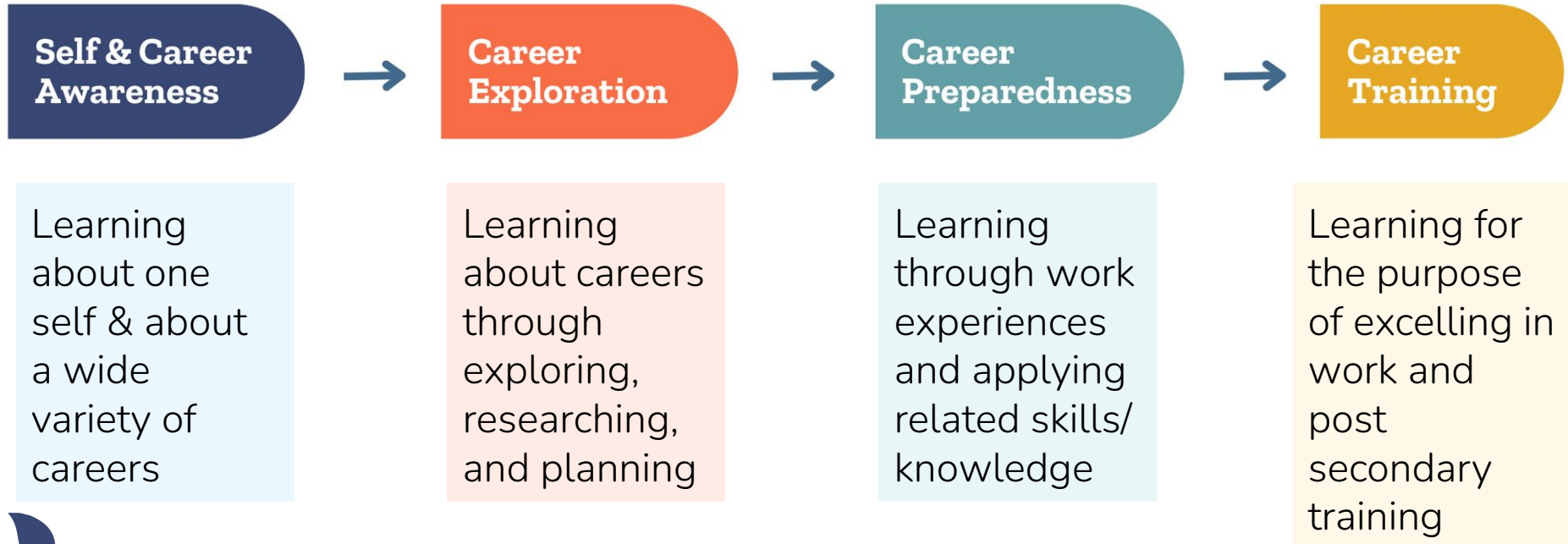


# What is Career Connected Learning?

Career connected learning is an educational approach that immerses students in opportunities that build awareness and explore diverse career pathways through experiential activities and resources to help them discover and understand various professional opportunities.



# Progression of the Career Development Continuum







**Based on the continuum,  
where would you say the  
majority of your focus is in  
your program?**

- 1** - Don't Intentionally Connect Careers
- 2** - Self & Career Awareness
- 3** - Career Exploration
- 4** - Career Preparedness
- 5** - Career Training



# Benefits of Career Connected Learning

- Gain awareness and exposure to array of careers
- Increase self-awareness and begin to form potential occupational identify
- Develop employability skills
- Be positioned to make more informed educational choices
- School engagement (dropout prevention)



# **Examples of Career Connected Learning in OST Programs**



## Example 1: Builders Club



Elementary students engage in a Builders Club weekly after school. Each week students work in groups to build something with designated supplies. Prior to starting each week's activity, the students decide their roles, and have to explain how they will make sure they are fulfilling the role. Students come up with group norms they will follow while working together.

One day, students are asked to build a bridge with newspaper and tape and are challenged to see how many pennies the bridge can hold. They have time to strategize and plan before stepping into action. During the reflection, students share what was easy or hard about the activity and identify the different careers that play a part in building a bridge - engineer, architect, construction, welding, etc.



## Example 2: Craft it Forward

Third-fifth grade students who are part of Junior Achievement's Pop Up Shop program have decided to create and produce several types of arts and crafts to sell on Youth Service Day. They learned about business basics, financial literacy, and how to build products.

As part of the revenue they generate during the sale, they will donate 25% to local charities. The students research causes close to their heart, learn how best to donate the funds, and draft a letter to accompany their donation.





## Example 3: Red Cross CPR Training & Babysitting Services



Sixth-eighth grade students are part of a Red Cross Club after school where they are learning babysitting skills, including CPR and basic first aid.

As part of their club, they decide that all students should be CPR certified, so they hold a community certification event for other students who babysit. During the event, they also bring in elementary school teachers to share ideas for activities during babysitting, and an accountant to do a workshop on saving money.



## Example 4: STEM Family Night

High School students who are enrolled in a STEM career pathway program are charged with facilitating a STEM Family Engagement night. Working with the school's OST Coordinator, they brainstorm ways that STEM careers contribute to daily activities. They each pick a career to research and interview a professional. During the interview, they ask the professional to help them design a learning station for the event.

Students are responsible for coordinating activities, recruiting participants, ordering supplies, and marketing the event. On the night of the event, students work alongside STEM professionals to facilitate their station.





## Your Related Examples!

In what ways are your OST programs integrating career development into programs?

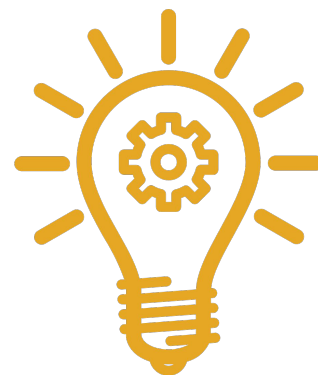


# **Strategies to Integrate Career Connected Learning**



# Strategies to Integrate Career Connected Learning

1. Align Program Activities
2. Help Students Build Self Awareness
3. Provide Opportunities for Real World Learning
4. Integrate Cross Sector Competencies
5. Include Intentional Reflection
6. Build Partnerships





# Align Program Activities

Align your program activities with phases of career development. Don't try to change your program's activities, but rather infuse the activities with opportunities to become aware, explore and prepare for careers. Find spaces to integrate guest speakers, site visits, opportunities to give back and to interact with career professionals.





## Program Jobs

**Where can participants be given roles or jobs within the activities?**

Example Jobs:

- Time Keeper
- Supply Distributor
- Clean Up Helper
- Material Organizer
- Material Transporter
- Judge/Critic
- Line Leader



# Classroom Jobs One Pager

Use this Innovageous resource to guide your deeper thinking about not only the types of jobs you make available to students, but the process in which they are assigned.



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)



## Middle School Classroom Jobs

A strategy to promote a future-focused mindset in your classroom!



### Classroom Job Process



#### Assessing Interest

How will you advertise jobs & recruit students for classroom jobs?  
How will you allow students to reflect on their passions and skills to guide their choices?



#### Applying & Interviewing

How will you have students show interest and apply for jobs in your classroom?



#### Onboarding & Training

What will the onboarding process for each job look like in your classroom?  
How will students get access to the information and resources they need to succeed in this job?



#### Education & Feedback

How will you provide feedback to your students and allow them to reflect on their experience?

### Classroom Job Ideas

#### Supportive Jobs

- Attendance Monitor
- Tech Guru
- Boards Manager
- Clerk
- Table Assistant
- Organizing Specialist
- Recycling Specialist
- Teacher's Assistant

#### Creative Jobs

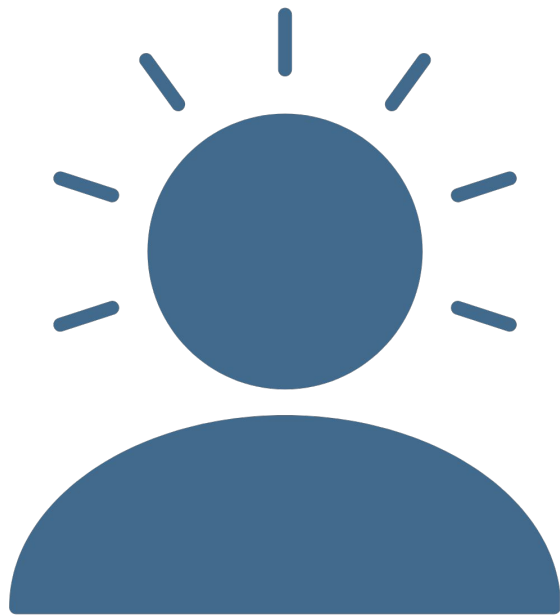
- Tutorial Creator
- Newsletter Writer
- Podcaster
- Athletic Trainer/Yogi
- DJ
- Visual Display Artist
- Photographer/Videographer
- Celebration Coordinator

#### Jobs Within an Activity

- Time Keeper
- Supply Distributor
- Clean Up Helper
- Material Organizer
- Material Transporter
- Judge/Critic
- Note Taker
- Reporter

Reference: Thom Gibson's Essential Student Jobs for the Middle School Classroom of Tomorrow

# Help Students Build Self Awareness



Focus efforts around getting to know youth in your program and ensure they are able to get to know themselves too. Find ways to have students explore their skills, talents, interests and intentions for the future. This will help prime their brain to be ready and aware of opportunities that will help them reach their goals.





## **Skill & Interest Assessment**

**When participants are trying out new skills, give them opportunities to assess their interest and skill level.**

Ask questions such as:

- Did you enjoy that activity?
- On a scale from 1-10, how good were you at it?
- Is it something that you would like to try again?



# Career Clusters Interest Survey

Use this resource to figure out what your students are interested in and how those interests align with different career clusters. You can then use this information to guide program activities and or have students complete this survey over time and reflect on how things have changed, if at all



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)



## Career Clusters Interest Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Circle the items in each box that best describe you. You may make as many or as few circles in each box as you choose. Add up the number of circles in each box. Look to see which three boxes have the highest numbers. Find the corresponding Career Clusters on the pages immediately following this survey to see which Career Clusters you may want to explore.

<b>BOX 1</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b> 1. Learn how things grow and stay alive. 2. Make the best use of the earth's natural resources. 3. Hunt and/or fish. 4. Protect the environment. 5. Be outdoors in all kinds of weather. 6. Plan, budget, and keep records. 7. Operate machines and keep them in good repair.	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b> 1. Self-reliant 2. Nature lover 3. Physically active 4. Planner 5. Creative problem solver	<b>School subjects that I like:</b> 1. Math 2. Life Sciences 3. Earth Sciences 4. Chemistry 5. Agriculture	<b>Total number circled in Box 1</b>  <input type="text"/>
--------------	---	---	---	--

<b>BOX 2</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b> 1. Read and follow blueprints and/or instructions. 2. Picture in my mind what a finished product looks like. 3. Work with my hands. 4. Perform work that requires precise results. 5. Solve technical problems. 6. Visit and learn from beautiful, historic, or interesting buildings. 7. Follow logical, step-by-step procedures.	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b> 1. Curious 2. Good at following directions 3. Pay attention to detail 4. Good at visualizing possibilities 5. Patient and persistent	<b>School subjects that I like:</b> 1. Math 2. Drafting 3. Physical Sciences 4. Construction Trades 5. Electrical Trades/Heat, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration/Technology Education	<b>Total number circled in Box 2</b>  <input type="text"/>
--------------	--	---	---	--

<b>BOX 3</b>	<b>Activities that describe what I like to do:</b> 1. Use my imagination to communicate new information to others. 2. Perform in front of others. 3. Read and write. 4. Play a musical instrument. 5. Perform creative, artistic activities. 6. Use video and recording technology. 7. Design brochures and posters.	<b>Personal qualities that describe me:</b> 1. Creative and imaginative 2. Good communicator/good vocabulary 3. Curious about new technology 4. Relate well to feelings and thoughts of others 5. Determined/tenacious	<b>School subjects that I like:</b> 1. Art/Graphic design 2. Music 3. Speech and Drama 4. Journalism/Literature 5. Audiovisual Technologies	<b>Total number circled in Box 3</b>  <input type="text"/>
--------------	---	---	--	--

Source: Adapted from the Guidance Division Survey, Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (2005)

**Note:** This survey does not make any claims of statistical reliability and has not been normed. It is intended for use as a guidance tool to generate discussion regarding careers and is valid for that purpose.

# Provide Opportunities for Real World Learning

Get youth out into the real world to learn. This could mean participating in job shadowing, work-site visits, volunteering, campus tours and networking events. Showing youth around the “real world of careers” can help them gain a deeper understanding into what it takes to be successful within specific careers and the world of work.





## Seek Opportunities for Learning Outside of Your Program

What opportunities are there to tap into your networks and/or community?



Guest Speaker



Facilitator



Field Trip



Networking





# Career Partnership Interest Survey

Use this Career Partnership Interest Survey example to build your own and inventory your currency network around how they want to engage with your students and program.



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)



## SAMPLE Career Partnership Inte

**B** *I* U [↔](#) ✕

Thank you for your interest in becoming a partner of XXXXXXXX! Please can learn more about how we can work together. Someone from our pr

What is your full name? \*

Short answer text

What is the best contact email address for you? \*

Short answer text

What is the best contact phone number for you? \*

# Integrate Cross Sector Competencies



Expand your thinking around career readiness to include cross-sector competencies, formerly known as “soft skills.” These are the skills youth need to be successful regardless of what career path they choose. Think communication, problem solving, time management, emotional regulation and conflict management, to name a few. No matter the mission of your program or specific program activities, you can have targeted focus and integration of these skills.





## **Name Cross Sector Competency Career Connections**

**Be sure to name Cross Sector Competencies and be intentional about making connections to specific careers.**

Just to name a few:

- Critical Thinking → Nursing
- Communication → Journalism
- Creativity → Graphic Design
- Problem Solving → Engineering
- Organization → Travel Agent
- Collaboration → Consulting
- Flexibility → Photographer
- Initiative → Author



# Career Cluster Posters

Use these Innovageous career cluster posters to highlight cross sector competencies needed for each. Read our blog for other innovageous ways to use this resource.



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)



## TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS



TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS INCLUDES CAREER PATHWAYS IN

Distribution

Automotive Repair

Mechanical Maintenance

Production

Operations

Procurement

Shipping

Supply Chain Management

SOME SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH THE INDUSTRY INCLUDE

Communication

Tenacity

Focus

Time Management

Leadership

Emotional Intelligence

Attention to Detail

Coordination

Problem Solving

Creativity

CAREER EXAMPLES	AVG. SALARY	EDUCATION NEEDED
Rail Yard Engineer	\$36,210	High School Diploma + Training
Automotive Technician	\$47,930	High School Diploma + Certification
Logistics Engineers	\$79,830	Bachelor's Degree

Information from [www.philasd.org/collegeandcareer/careerpathways/human-services](https://www.philasd.org/collegeandcareer/careerpathways/human-services)



## Include Intentional Reflection

Find time for reflection with youth and make targeted efforts to reflect on the connection between your program activities and the future. When it is possible, make sure youth in the program can see the direct connection between what they are doing in your program and how it can support them within society and the real world. Reflection can happen in many ways to reach a variety of different types of learners, such as journaling, photography, film making, podcasting, collaging, mind mapping, movement and more.





## Reflection

**Use choice boards that offer opportunities to reflect in ways that incorporate multiple intelligences:**

- Writing a response to a journal prompt
- Drawing a picture to represent the experience
- Creating a maze or puzzle to show obstacles or challenges
- Writing/performing a poem or song about the experience
- Interview a friend about what they would have done differently next time



# Reflection Routine Choice Boards

Use Innovageous Choice Boards that are populated with activities for K-4, 5-8, & 9-12 to help your students find different ways to include reflection practices in your program. You can also make your own using the template provided in the resource folder



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)

## Grades K-4 Choice Board Reflection Routines



Coloring  
[Mandala Coloring Pages](#)

1



Music  
[Calming Music](#)

2



Movement  
[Yoga Poses](#)

3



Breathing  
[Box Breathing Exercise](#)

4

# Build Partnerships



Build partnerships to support your program's efforts around ensuring youth are career-ready. This can include career professionals, career-industry sites, nonprofit organizations and charities, government officials and even family members. Partners are often willing to support your program and can span a continuum of partnership levels that include a basic level of a sporadic connection to a reciprocal collaboration. There are values in all these levels of partnership to support career-ready youth.







## Partnerships

**Audit your current relationships and networks to help identify assets and gaps. You can use one or more of these techniques:**

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Neighborhood / community walkabouts
- Online scavenger hunts



# Building Partnerships Asynchronous PD

Engage with our FREE Innovageous asynchronous professional development: Building Community Focused Reciprocal Partnerships to learn more and spend time planning your program's approach to this strategy.



[bit.ly/3Tr8e52](https://bit.ly/3Tr8e52)

1 Hour | Asynchronous Session

## **Building Community Focused Reciprocal Partnerships (ISD Series - FREE)**

Learn more about the ISD Community Focused principle. We will review different types of partnerships and reflect on which best meet your needs. We cover potential challenges and strategies to building high quality partnerships and then you'll have time to start planning for your own partnerships.

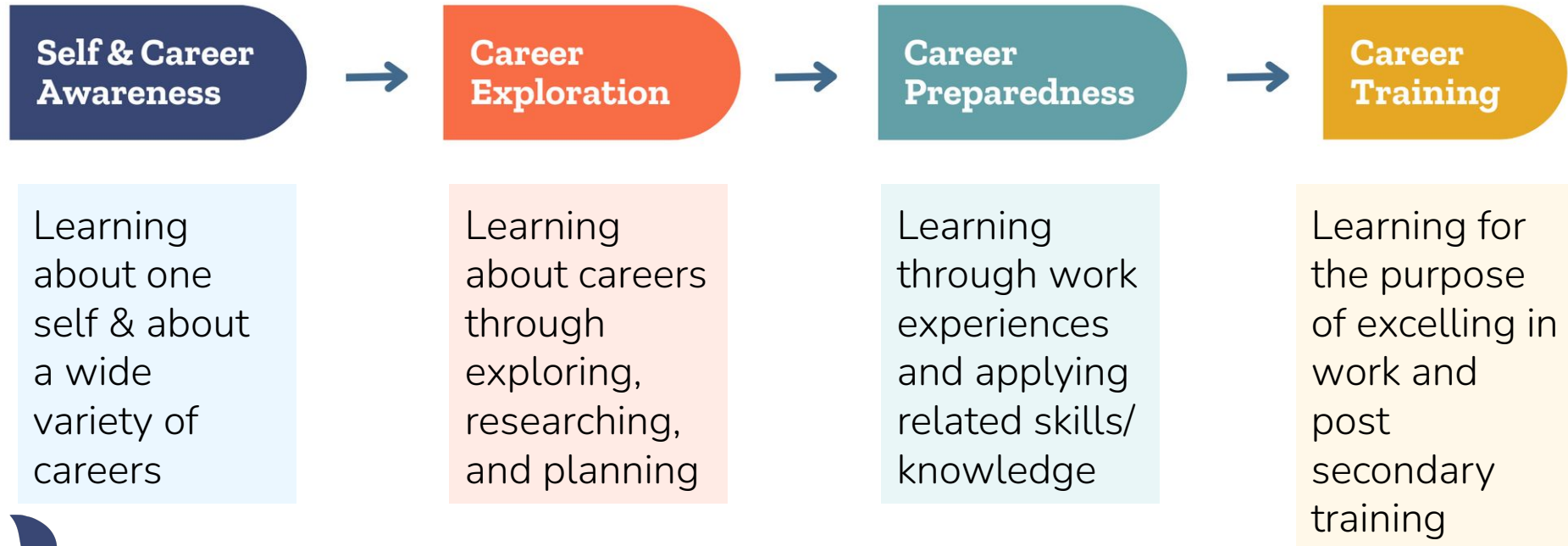
Register



# **Integrating Career Connected Learning in YOUR OST Program**



# Let's Revisit the Career Development Continuum



# Identifying Entry Points for Career-Connected Learning



## On Your Own!

1. Identify a specific program or activity you'd like to focus on.
2. Align the specific part of the progression that would be the best match based on the experiences and ages of students.



# Planning for Career-Connected Learning



## Strategies:

1. Align Program Activities
2. Help Students Build Self Awareness
3. Provide Opportunities for Real World Learning
4. Integrate Cross Sector Competencies
5. Include Intentional Reflection
6. Build Partnerships



## With like minds:

1. Brainstorm how specific strategies could be integrated naturally into your program/activity.
2. Plan some specifics of what you will do and how you will do it.

# Wrap Up & Reflection



## Final Reflection





# Resources for Further Learning

## Resources

- [Session Note Taker](#)
- Innovageous Blog & Posters: [Promoting Career Readiness](#)
- NYLC Podcast Episode: [Igniting Passions through Career Connected Service Learning](#)
- Youth Today Article: [How your program can build career ready youth](#)



@Innovageous

## Session Resource Folder



[bit.ly/4nX4ZAT](https://bit.ly/4nX4ZAT)

# Looking for More Support?

Stay in Touch!

Shira Woolf Cohen

Co-Founder

[shira@innovageous.com](mailto:shira@innovageous.com)

Tiffany Searles

Lead Partner

[tiffany@innovageous.com](mailto:tiffany@innovageous.com)



 *high quality*

**We Offer Technical Assistance & Capacity Building Services for OST Providers Including:**

Facilitating landscape analysis and collaborative strategic action planning to address short and long term goals	Facilitating professional learning opportunities for program staff in multiple synchronous and asynchronous formats
Program design planning and scheduling aligned with school or community needs	Providing leadership development & coaching for program directors
Sharing resources and best practices for high quality partnership building with school leaders and community members	Developing customized curriculum resources on diverse topics
	Offering virtual parent/caregiver cafes and family engagement events

**50+ Years** of combined OST experience including 21st CCLC, summer camps, WorkReady, school-based after school activities, tutoring & ESY.



Innovageous responds to situations appropriately and provides the ease of mind that they know what steps are necessary to yield high quality work and desired outcomes. They inspire trust and clearly show that they understand our vision for project outcomes.

- Parent Advocacy/Non-Profit Leader

Innovageous provides practical solutions. The sessions they provided were rich, informative, and engaging. Innovageous is not a one-size-fits-all organization. They took the time to learn about our culture and created a customized professional development plan for the staff.

- Program Leader

Reach out to us today at [info@innovageous.com](mailto:info@innovageous.com) to get the conversation started about how Innovageous can support your Out-of-School Time Program!

 **Bring Leading Future-Focused Schools to Your Community**

INSPIRE YOUR TEAM. EMPOWER YOUR STUDENTS. SHAPE THE FUTURE.

**Special Bulk Purchase Discounts Available!**

- KEYNOTES
- SINGLE-SESSION WORKSHOPS
- COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

**Topics to Explore for Discussions/PD Sessions**

- Cultivating a Future-Focused School Culture
- Establishing Vision & Values That Prepare Students for Life After Graduation
- Empowering Students to Explore Strengths and Passions
- Equipping Every Educator to Be a Career Educator
- Designing a School-Wide Career Development Continuum
- Developing Cross-Sector Competencies in Students
- Building Inclusive, Culturally Responsive Career Pathways
- Creating an Ecosystem of Community Partnerships
- Communicating the Value of Career-Connected Learning

**Related Services We Offer**

- Keynote Presentations
- Panel Facilitation
- Interactive Professional Development Workshops
- Monthly Professional Learning Communities
- Facilitated Strategic Action Planning
- Customized Program Development

**1-9 Copies | Preorder on Amazon**  
[Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)  
\$9.99 Kindle | \$24.95 Paperback

**10+ Copies | Complete Bulk Order Form for a discounted rate**  
[bit.ly/FutureFocusedBulkOrder](https://bit.ly/FutureFocusedBulkOrder)

**Ready to bring this to your district or community?**  
Let's build a customized proposal together or schedule a time to chat!  
[info@innovageous.com](mailto:info@innovageous.com)

Learn more at [innovageous.com/books](https://innovageous.com/books)

AND THE WINNER IS....

