

Work. Better. Together.

A Video Storytelling Campaign for Baltimore's Workforce System

Sept - Nov 2021

Storyteller & Champion Toolkit



Work. Better. Together.

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BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

What is the workforce system Baltimore deserves?

We deserve a workforce system that works for everyone in Baltimore, a system that strives for equitable outcomes because every Baltimore resident deserves meaningful work and a hopeful future.

Baltimore deserves a system that's **coordinated, innovative, integrative and equitable**.

We're building a workforce landscape where employers and jobseekers have simple and straightforward access points to the services and support they need.

We're implementing a system where all the providers and funders of those services work in a coordinated and aligned way to minimize duplication while closing gaps that hinder progress toward common goals.

We're creating a transparent workforce system with a shared definition of success for which we all hold each other accountable. We're committed to continuous improvement.

We're stronger in partnership. We each hold part of the solution and it's only through collaborative and comprehensive efforts, that leverage our diverse expertise and experience, that we will meet the needs of all job seekers and employers – and fulfill the promise of workforce development.

We call this vision, Baltimore's Citywide Workforce Landscape. For more on the Landscape, please visit <https://www.baltoworkforce.com/vision-2020>.



What's the history behind Baltimore's Citywide Workforce Landscape?

In response to the unrest of April 2015, the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) applied for and was awarded a \$5 million demonstration grant from the US Department of Labor via the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

Our initiative, called **One Baltimore for Jobs (1B4J)**, focused on young Black males from distressed neighborhoods.

Prior to the start of the grant, city officials conducted a series of community conversations. Residents expressed feeling disconnected from employment services and noted that workforce services were often disconnected from one another.

1B4J sought to demonstrate we could build a workforce system that fused occupational skills training with key support services. Previously, grants for training and support services were made separately and the "partnerships" were more of a hope than a reality. Through 1B4J, MOED funded 19 organizations directly and more than 50 community-based organizations through sub-grants.

The result is a local workforce system that - for perhaps the first time - **functions like an integrated network**. In addition, **1B4J exceeded every performance goal prescribed by the US Department of Labor**.

But the truth is, 1B4J was never about hitting numbers. It was about developing a better way to serve Baltimore residents that would extend beyond the boundaries of a grant. The workforce system vision described earlier, this campaign and its specific themes are just a few examples of how the work continues.

VISION 2020

OUR FUTURE CITYWIDE WORKFORCE LANDSCAPE





What is the Work. Better. Together. campaign?

Managed by MOED and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Work. Better. Together. is the Baltimore Workforce Development Board's time-limited campaign, using video stories and social media to:

- Celebrate and share the progress to date to create the workforce system Baltimore deserves.
- Bring to life and share examples of the elements of the Citywide Workforce Landscape.
- Inspire important players in the landscape to take one action to learn more or align their work with the vision.

Our goal is to **collect and share stories from at least 30 people who have direct experience with the workforce system**, including employers, workers, jobseekers, leaders and staff from job training and job placement providers, city government representatives and workforce funders.

For this first storytelling effort, we're focused on raising awareness and action among:

- Baltimore employers (especially those organizations represented on the BWDB)
- Baltimore area funders
- CEOs/Executive Directors of Practice Advisory member organizations
- Local elected officials

Of course, many other stakeholders are vital to realizing the Citywide Workforce Landscape vision, but we're starting with a few groups to build momentum and test out the campaign concept.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

If this vision for Baltimore's workforce landscape is something you want too, there are **three things you can do right now to show your support and help make it real.**

1. Record and upload your video story

- In two minutes or less, share your a-ha moment about the benefits of the Citywide Workforce Landscape or your frustrations with the way things work now and why you believe they can be better.
- Use one of the story frameworks, story prompts or sample stories to get started.

2. Share your story.

- Post your story on social media using the hashtag #WorkBetterTogether
- Share your story inside and outside your organization (see pages 16-19 for a list of ideas)

3. Take one action to learn more or align your work with the vision.

- Telling your story is just the start... build momentum with one additional action.
- See pages 20-21 for options.

The following pages outline these steps in more detail and provide everything you need to take these three steps.

Record & Upload Your Story

Telling Your Story

Storytelling Tips

- Share just enough information, but don't overwhelm your viewer.
 - Keep it to one simple message.
 - What's the simplest clearest way to say the one thing? It doesn't have to include all the nuance, context, or detail.
 - What's just enough to pique their interest and get them to take the next step...
 - Think: "Quench the thirst." Not "firehose!"
- When crafting and recording your story, imagine you're talking to one specific person. Who is that person your story is meant to inspire or influence? Think of them and imagine speaking only to them.
- Think about the call to emotion you want to achieve - think about your viewer's current state, and what the desired state you think they want is. Tell a story that helps them see that transformation in their mind.
- A script is ok, but sometimes prompts feel and sound more natural vs. something you have to read.
- Keep the story to 2 minutes or less. It seems short, but you can convey a lot in 2 minutes if you keep the tips above in mind.
- You can practice either while filming or without filming, but time yourself to see how close you are to the 2 minute guideline. Aim to practice 2-3 times, then record.
- Be sure to include:
 - Your name
 - Your role or title
 - Name of your organization
- Follow one of the frameworks outlined next if it helps you get started and keep your story short.

Storytelling Framework Options

You can view two sample video stories [here](#) (labeled “Sample_Story_1_WBT2021” and “Sample_Story_2_WBT2021”).

Framework Option #1

At first...

But then...

And now...

Example of Framework #1

When my program director came to me with this idea of sharing our program data in a citywide database for all to see, my first reaction was, “That’s crazy!” Not because I thought we had something to hide or because I’m not proud of the work we do, but it’s like comparing apples to oranges. I was afraid it might undermine our standing among funders if they were just looking at numbers in a database without the context of how we operate and who we serve.

But then, my program director shared conversations she was having at Practice Advisory with her peers in other organizations. She told me every executive director has the same concern! I realized maybe we all need to be a little braver and I could be one of the first to take the leap. If I truly believe in the effectiveness of our approach and the quality of our work, then I shouldn’t be afraid to put the numbers out there to start a conversation.

And now that we’ve done just that, it’s actually making us better. It’s helping me see opportunities to improve and learn from others. I encourage all executive directors to learn more about the lessons and opportunities coming out of Practice Advisory so that we can serve even more Baltimore residents even better.

Framework Option #2



Start with the Heart: Note the emotion or feeling you had AND the emotion you want to trigger in your audience.



Move to a SINGLE Place & Time (When & Where): Put the viewer in the scene with you. Be as specific as possible.



Desire, Decision & Action: What did you want? What did you do and/or decide? Think of actual words spoken or internal dialogue.



Desire, Decision & Action: What did you want? What did you do and/or decide? Think of actual words spoken or internal dialogue.

Key Take Away / Call to Action:

Still stuck? Need more ideas?

Try writing responses to the following prompts to jump start your creative thinking....

Everyone deserves the opportunity for meaningful work and a hopeful future.
This matters to me because:

What personal experience, stories, data, or examples can help explain to others why this should matter to them?

Working within the Citywide Workforce Landscape enables us to **attract more resources, work more effectively and efficiently, and get more equitable outcomes** – fulfilling the promise of workforce development.

Job seekers will have clearer access points and standardized ways for getting what they need, including tools and supports for job retention and long-term self-sufficiency.

Employers will have streamlined tools for identifying highly qualified workers to fill their immediate – and future – needs.

Workforce partners will have common performance measures across funding sources; access to strategic funding, professional development, and a central source and repository for data collection analysis and interpretation; and collective annual goal setting and celebration of achievements.

The incentive(s)/benefit(s) that resonate most for me are:

Some personal experiences, stories, data, or examples that help explain why I believe these benefits are real are:

Recording Your Story

General Tips

1. It's ok if you make mistakes. You can restart as many times as you like.
2. Find the camera lens on your device. That's where you'll want to be looking as you record to intentionally make "eye contact" with your viewer, even if you have to refer to notes or prompts as you're recording.
3. Right before you begin filming, take a deep breath and smile. Nothing will make your video story more trustworthy than a genuine smile!
4. After you press "record," hold the smile for 3-4 seconds before you start talking. Hold a smile again for 3-4 seconds at the end before pressing "stop."

Recording Your Story (cont.)

Capturing Sound

- Quality sound is crucial when it comes to compelling video stories. As much as possible, eliminate background noise (including wind if you're outdoors), speak clearly.
- Close any sound producing programs on your computer (email alerts, calendar reminders, etc.)
- Avoid jewelry, scarves or clothing that will ruffle against or make noise, distorting your audio quality.
- The standard microphone on your phone or computer can work fine.
- Speak slowly and clearly – we don't want to miss a thing!

Maintaining Stability

- With video and audio taken care of, there's one more thing that will make your video testimonial that much better – a stable image!
- If you have a tripod for your phone, that's great, but not necessary. A selfie-stick can work ok too, but the person holding it must remain still.
- Even better, position your phone against a stack of books or something else stable.

Tools & Equipment

- Smartphone or tablet – you can simply record using the camera on your device
- Alternatively, you can use a web-based platform or apps such as [Zoom](#), [GoToMeeting](#), or [Loom](#).
 1. Start a "meeting" (or start a recording on Loom)
 2. Record to your computer
 3. End meeting/recording. The computer will automatically convert and save your video. (Pay attention to where it's saving or downloading, so you'll know where to find it.)

Recording Your Story (cont.)

Staging Setup and Environment

Think about the environment in which you'll be recording. More precisely, the lighting, location, and positioning of you and things around you.

Lighting & Location

- Leverage natural light whenever you can.
- Avoid filming in dark or windy locations when filming outdoors.
- Use an external light source when needed such as a portable light. [There are plenty of options for all kinds of budgets.](#) Or simply use a lamp that's easily moved or position yourself facing a window during daylight hours.
- For best results, the source of light should be in front of the person on camera. Avoid being "backlit" as that will leave you in the shadow.

Framing

- Mount your phone on a tripod in a horizontal position (landscape view) or position it horizontally on your stable surface.
- Ensure you are centered, left to right and top to bottom. Make sure your camera isn't angled to show more of the ceiling than your face .
- Find the camera on your device so you can make "eye contact" with it. Eye contact is what makes your video engaging and trustworthy.
- It can also be helpful place or tape your prompts close to the camera so you can still refer to them without turning away.
- You're now ready to press record.

Video Tutorial

If you'd like to watch a video tutorial of these tips, [click here](#).

Uploading Your Story

We're using Google Drive to collect stories.

Please upload your video [here](#) no later than Nov 5, 2021. We'll promote and share stories throughout October and November so please record and upload as early as possible.

When you upload your story, please be sure to name the file with your first name, underscore, then last name, underscore, followed by "WBT2021."

For example, "Angela_Miller_WBT2021"

You will need to be **signed in** to a Google account to upload to the folder. If you don't have a Google account, you will need to create one to upload to the folder.

If you have any technical difficulties, please contact info@csrcommunications.com for assistance.

Share Your Story

The campaign will post your story on social media and on the Baltimore Workforce Development Board's (BWDB) website. We hope you'll share it too!

Social Media

MOED/BWDB will post your story on social media throughout October and November. We can't determine yet exactly which day your story will be featured, but we will tag you when it's posted.

Hashtags

Campaign theme: #WorkBetterTogether

Additional themes that may be relevant for your story or represent the element of the Citywide Workforce Landscape vision you'd like to highlight...

Share Your Story (cont.)

Hashtags (cont.)

#AccessPoints

#BeyondtheJob

#Equity

#MeaningfulWork

#SharedData

#StrongerinPartnership

#WorkforceProfessionalsMonth

(September is Workforce Development Professionals Month. To learn more about this celebration, please visit:

<https://www.nawdp.org/page/WorkforceDevMonth>)

Social Media Handles

Please tag campaign partners so that we can track and share stories.



Twitter

@BaltMOED

@AECFNews



Facebook

@BaltMOED

@AnnieECaseyFndn



LinkedIn

@Baltimore Workforce Development Board

(<https://www.linkedin.com/company/baltoworkforce/>)

@Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Employment Development

(<https://www.linkedin.com/company/baltimore-city-mayor's-office-of-employment-development/>)

Share Your Story (cont.)

Sample Social Media Posts

Because every Baltimore resident deserves meaningful work & a hopeful future, [@your organization handle] is hiring local & hiring through our citywide workforce network. Check out my story to learn why that makes a difference. If you're ready to #HireLocal, visit <https://moed.baltimorecity.gov/employer-services>. #WorkBetterTogether

What's the #workforce system Baltimore residents deserve? One that's #equitable, #innovative, & coordinated. Learn how I'm making that vision real at [@your organization handle] by watching my #WorkBetterTogether story.

I help Baltimore residents find meaningful work & create a hopeful future for themselves & their families. I'm a proud #workforcedevelopmentprofessional! Watch my story to learn more about Baltimore's workforce system that works for all. #WorkBetterTogether #WorkforceProfessionalsMonth

We each hold part of the solution to create & sustain a workforce system that works for all residents in Baltimore. We're stronger in #partnership! Watch my story to learn how I'm #partofthesolution. Learn more at <https://www.baltoworkforce.com/>. #WorkBetterTogether

Every Baltimore resident deserves meaningful work & a hopeful future. That means our #workforcedevelopment must be #equitable, #innovative & coordinated. Learn what that looks like in practice [@your organization name] by watching my #WorkBetterTogether story. #BeyondtheJob

Share Your Story (cont.)

Beyond Social Media

Below are **additional ideas and tips for sharing your story** (and maybe others' stories too!) with as many people as possible.

- Play it at the start or end of staff meetings
- Play it at the start or end of board meetings
- Post on your organization's website
- Include a link in an email to your local and state elected officials
- Include a link in your next grant report to your funder(s)
- Make it part of orientation for new hires and new board members
- Write a blog post or LinkedIn article to share more background on your story and include the video link

What other ideas do you have? Please share with us via email at info@csrcommunications.com.

Please keep in mind that for this campaign we're focused on increasing awareness and action among:

- Baltimore employers (especially those organizations represented on the BWDB)
- Baltimore area funders
- CEOs/Executive Directors of Practice Advisory member organizations
- Local elected officials

Of course, many other stakeholders are vital to realizing the Citywide Workforce Landscape vision, but we're starting with a few groups to build momentum and test out the campaign concept.

Take One Action to Learn More or Align Your Work with the Vision

Now that you’ve recorded and shared your story, are you ready to take the next step? Below are suggestions for one action you can take (and that you can ask your peers to take) right now to bring our vision closer to reality.

How do you describe your role in the workforce landscape?	One Action to Take Now	Contact or Link
CEO/Executive Director of a Practice Advisory member organization	Join a 45-minute virtual coffee chat with fellow CEOs. You’ll learn the collective priorities of Practice Advisory and explore ways you can support them. Date and time to be announced.	Registration info to be announced.
Employer	Hire local. Hire via the Citywide Workforce Landscape Network.	Yvette Clark, Assistant Director, Chief of Employer Services, MOED yclark@oedworks.com

Continued next Page...

Take One Action (cont.)

How do you describe your role in the workforce landscape?	One Action to Take Now	Contact or Link
Local elected officials	<p>Connect with the Workforce Development Board as your first resource on new policies and initiatives to ensure alignment with the citywide strategy and identify opportunities to connect to the workforce landscape.</p>	<p>Baltimore Workforce Development Board</p> <p>https://www.baltoworkforce.com/</p> <p>Contact: Jason Perkins-Cohen, Director, MOED</p> <p>Jperkins-cohen@oedworks.com</p> <p>Neishall Schuyler, Associate Director, Strategic Initiatives, MOED</p> <p>nschuyler@oedworks.com</p>
Funder	<p>Be the “magnet” – use your grants to attract other funds, as a match for public or national resources.</p> <p>Supplement public funds with your flexible resources, especially when funds are needed to support collaboration and fill gaps.</p> <p>Include funds in grant budgets that grantees can use to support collaborative activity.</p>	<p>Download B’more for Healthy Babies report for ideas and examples from a successful initiative.</p> <p>https://www.aecf.org/resources/bmore-for-healthy-babies</p>

Help Us Recruit More Storytellers!

If you enjoyed this process, spread the word and recruit other storytellers. Below is a draft email you can personalize and send to folks in your network

Dear [insert name],

I just did the coolest thing and I wanted to share the same opportunity with you.

As part of the **Work. Better. Together. campaign** organized by the Workforce Development Board, MOED and Annie E. Casey Foundation, I got to **record and share a personal story about what a citywide workforce system that works for all means to me, why it matters and how I've contributed to creating that system.**

It was fun, easy to do, and a powerful reminder of why I do the work I do every day. I'd love to hear your story and I know it will add richness to this campaign.

The whole process – from preparing the story to recording and uploading it – took me **less than 30 minutes**. I've **attached a thorough tool kit** that walks you through everything. You also can **view sample stories, my video story as well as others' stories** [here](#) before you decide.

Sound like something you're willing to do?

If so, **please record and upload your story before November 5th.**

I'm happy to share more about my experience if that's helpful. And the campaign consultant, **Nancy Murphy, is hosting weekly "office hours" for storytellers via Zoom every Friday, 12:30-1:00 pm ET.** You can access office hours here:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86024700051?
pwd=cTRBTGJoeWpWcGIhT0lDMFJ3d0thUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86024700051?pwd=cTRBTGJoeWpWcGIhT0lDMFJ3d0thUT09)

Meeting ID: 860 2470 0051

Passcode: 305287

Best,
[Your Name]

CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

DATE	ACTIVITY
Week August 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin recruiting storytellers • Co-Chairs record and submit their stories • Write basic copy, create/select graphics, build landing page [What's the call to action here in addition to watch these videos and/or upload your story?]
Week August 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytellers recruit storytellers
Week August 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare sample social media posts for Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter • First five videos edited, as necessary; ready for sharing • Identify at least 10 relevant influencers to maximize campaign visibility
Week August 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign Kickoff • Upload week one stories to landing page
September 1- November 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytellers recruit storytellers • Post daily video story on BWDB social media platforms • Share BWDB post of daily video story on storyteller, co-chair, planning committee members' (individual and MOED/AECF) social media platforms • Manage and drive post engagement; identify additional influencers based on engagement; adapt posting strategy for next day
December 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Campaign Summary, including recommended next steps

Work. Better. Together.

Thank you for your support!

