

GSA 2025

Strengthening the Aging Workforce: Building Sustainable Partnerships for Innovative, Skill-Based Training

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School of Social Work:
Center for Aging & Disability Education & Research



CADER

**Center for Aging & Disability
Education & Research**



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Mission Statement:
Strengthen the workforce
that provides health and
long-term supports and
services to older adults
and people with
disabilities.

CADER Overview

CADER is a national leader in creating comprehensive online training for individuals and organizations.



Our History:

- Originally funded in 2002 by The Atlantic Philanthropies
- Currently funded through grants and state and local contracts across the country

Our Research:

- We evaluate the impact of our real-world, scenario-based online training programs that build the skills, competencies, and career paths of workers in health and human services

A stylized, colorful illustration of a town or village. It features various houses in shades of green, blue, and yellow, interspersed with trees of different shapes and colors. The sky is white with light blue clouds and a bright yellow sun with a green center. The overall style is flat and modern.

CADER Impact

Since 2002, CADER has:

- Trained over 50,000 health and human services professionals
- Worked with over 500 organizations nation-wide

CADER

Programs

[View Our Learning Catalog](#)



CADER offers more than 30 courses and certificates.

Signature programs include:

Foundations in Aging & Disabilities Certificate:

- Three courses
- Utilizes a strength-based approach when looking at aging and disabilities from a biological, psychological, and social perspective. Includes content on assessment and available supports.

Case Management Certificate:

- Five courses
- Provides information on the core functions of care management and care coordination, an introduction to care transitions, and an overview of community-based resources.

Behavioral Health in Aging Certificate:

- Five courses
- Describes the major mental health conditions and substance use concerns facing older adults, teaches interventions, and discusses the importance of promoting resilience.

Who CADER Works With

Organizations:

Community-based organizations, state departments, non-profit organizations

- Onboarding new employees
- Upskilling current staff
- Mandated or supported trainings

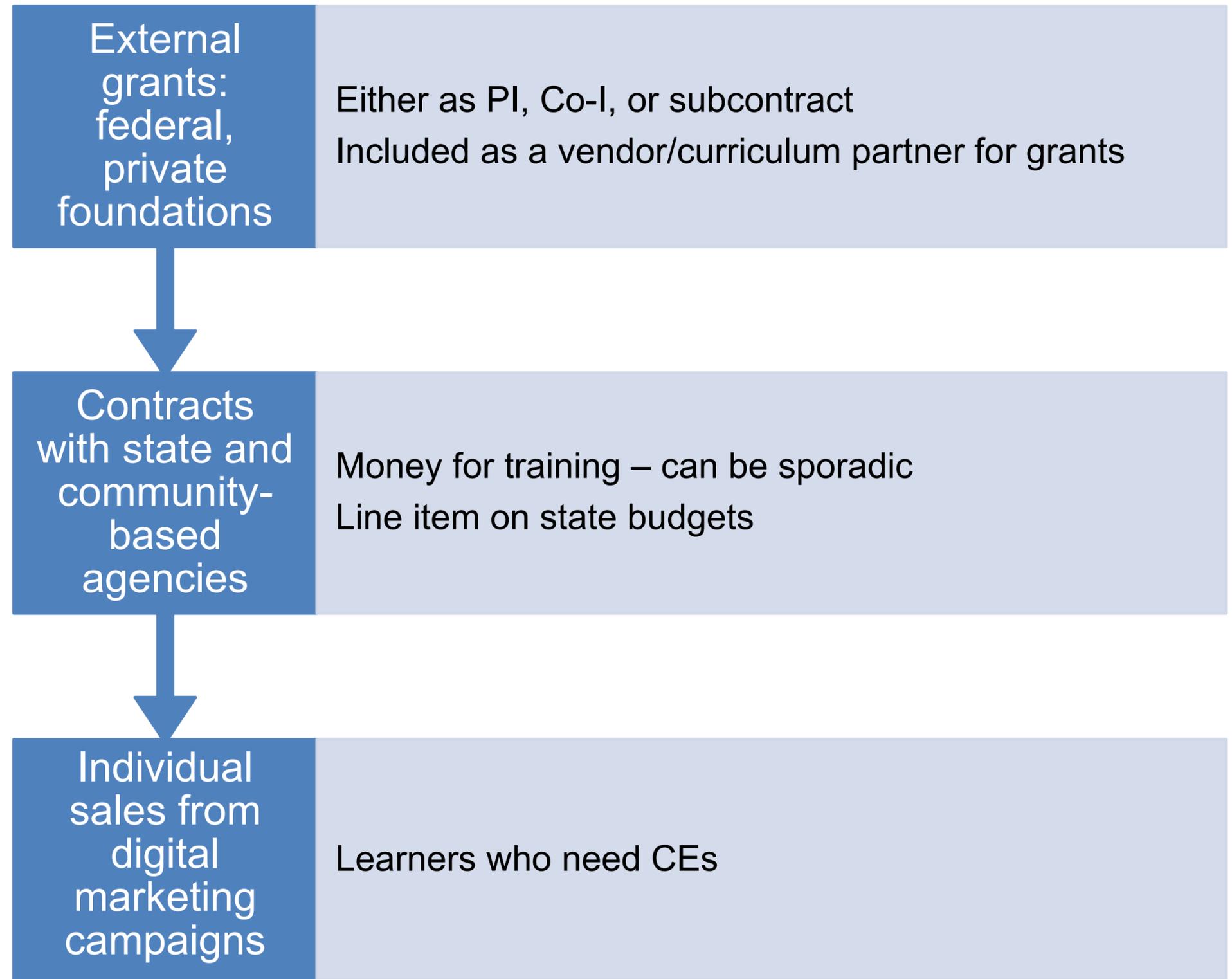
Individuals:

Variety of adult learners, from high school educated to advanced degrees

- Building new skills
- Seeking career credentials and opportunities for job advancement
- May require CEs for licensure
- Train on their own time - flexibility



Creating a Self-Sustaining Center



Reciprocal Relationships: Academia and CBOs

Strategically align your mission with key stakeholders and present this material concisely:

- Identify key funders and constituents for your industry and build relationships
- Identify trade and professional groups to partner with for enhanced visibility and credibility

Develop materials to bridge academia with community-based stakeholders in accessible and inclusive language

- Create brief informational material to share with key stakeholders, e.g., executive summaries, PowerPoint presentations
- Develop an elevator pitch to share with key stakeholders

Key Partnership: Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE)

Training partnership since 2006 to offer online training across the Massachusetts aging services network

Hosting the mandated LGBTQ Aging online course

- Trained over 35,000 across the Commonwealth with the LGBTQ Aging course

Currently offering two programs to staff at Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) and Councils on Aging (COAs)

- Behavioral Health and Aging Certificate Program
- Person-Centered Case Management Certificate Program
- New Certificate under development

95%

of learners agreed or strongly agreed that the course helped them learn to communicate with people who have Alzheimer's disease and other dementias

See Evaluation Report / Massachusetts EOEA Certificate Training Initiative - Full Report (2023)

Key Partnership: New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA)



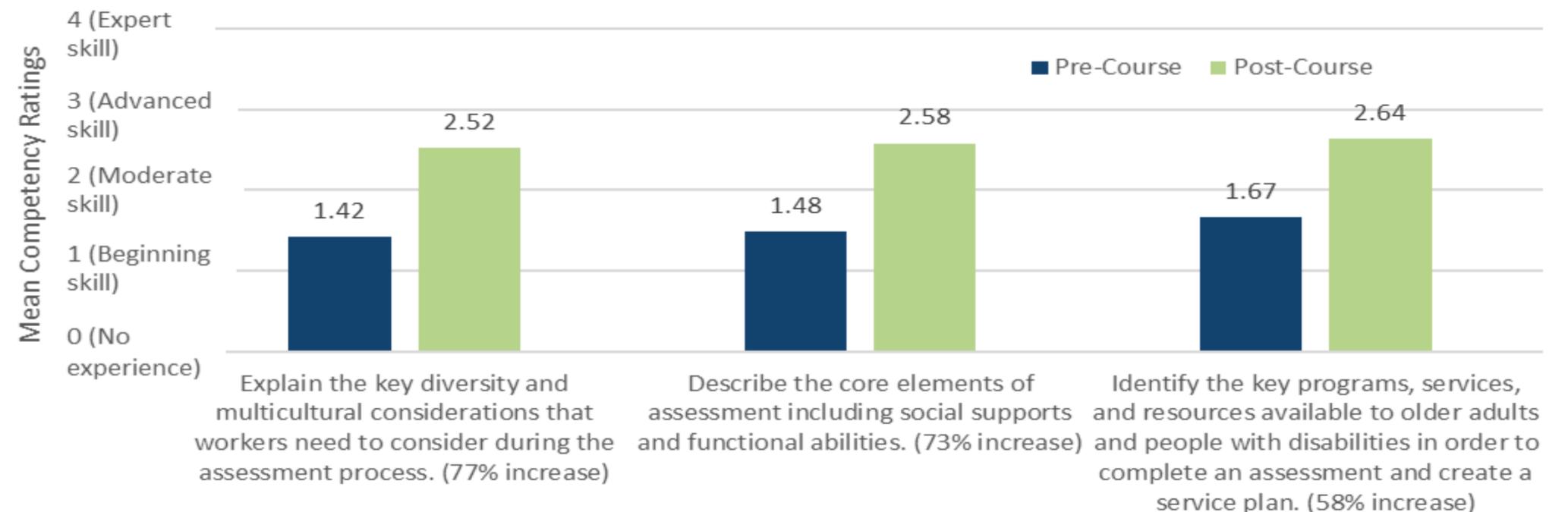
- Partnership began 10 years ago with offering CADER's Case Management Certificate Program to all state-funded case managers
 - Since 2016, this training has been mandated for all new hires
- CADER recently created a custom training for the NY Connects/ADRC workforce

97%

of learners agreed or strongly agreed that this course effectively taught them to identify how culture, ethnicity, and health literacy impact care transitioning.

See Evaluation Report / New York State Case Management Certificate Training Program - Full Report (2022)

Assessment with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities Mean Competency Ratings



Key Partnership: National Council on Aging (NCOA)

- Current offerings:
 - Behavioral Health in Aging Certificate Program
 - Volunteer Engagement in the Aging Network
- From 2018-2020, CADER and the NCOA collaborated to train 228 senior center staff in Florida, Illinois, and Wisconsin using the Behavioral Health in Aging Certificate
 - Funded by the RRF Foundation for Aging
 - Senior center staff showed statistically significant improvements in competencies related to behavioral health and aging



Gerontology & Geriatrics Education

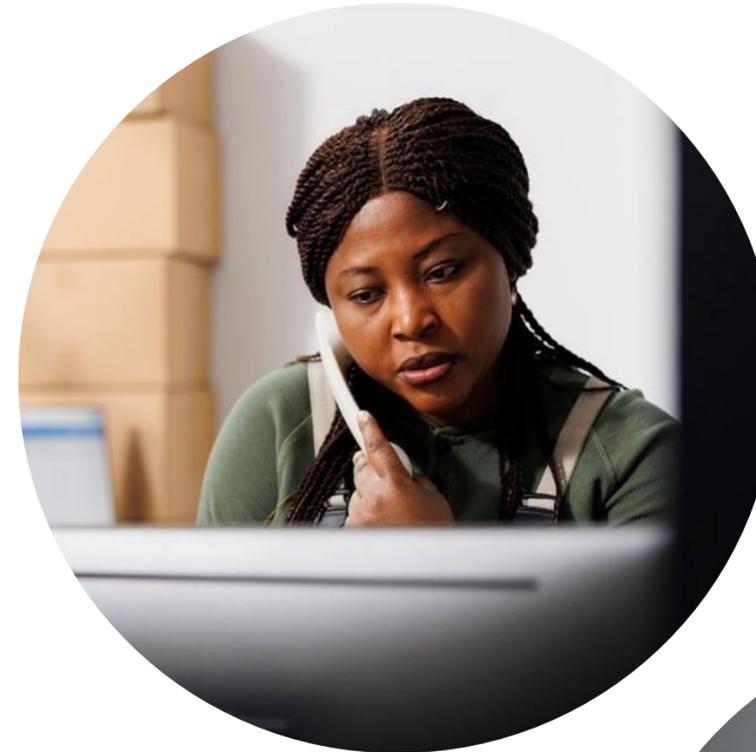
ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/wgge20>

**Enhancing behavioral health competencies
for senior center staff through workforce
development and training**

Bronwyn Keefe, Corinne A. Beaugard & Jennifer Tripken

Conclusions and Implications

- The workforce is looking to build its competencies and seeking career advancement pathways.
- By collaborating with state and community-based agencies, academic institutions can align workforce development programs with real-world needs and policy priorities, ensuring relevance and sustainability.
- Statewide training initiatives help ensure that workers have the essential knowledge and skills to feel confident in their job roles.
- Cross-sector partnerships anchored by academic leadership in workforce development provide the foundation to create innovations that are scalable, equitable, and culturally relevant—ensuring that advances improve access and quality for all populations served.



Disclosures

I have no commercial relationships to disclose

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

- Seeking scholars with a strong commitment to social justice-based practice, scholarship, & teaching whose research focuses on the intersection of social work and health.

TWO ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

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- Human Behavior, Research & Policy Department



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Thank you!

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