



CHRISTENSEN
INSTITUTE

Networks of Support & Opportunity

Exploring Innovative Relationship-Centered Designs

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Levers

Support intermediaries to align K12, PS and workforce system structures to create multiple high quality local education to employment pathways

Develop real time, integrated labor market and education data systems and navigation supports for students and make available within local pathways

Validate quality and test scalability of career opportunity on-ramps connected to multiple pathways

Validate quality and test scalability of intervention models that fit within multiple pathways to support students build professional skills and social capital

Increase field capacity to develop interventions that influence opportunity narratives and identity formation for young people

Enabling Environment

Reinforce narratives that create motivation for shifts in system structures and adult influencers

Advocate and support implementation of policies* that create incentives and funding shifts in K12-PS and employer systems that create quality pathways and integrated data systems

Outputs

Scalable Models, Tools, Measures and Knowledge

Increased will, aligned incentives, and increased cross-system coordination

Intermediate outcome

Increased access and participation in multiple high quality local pathways that improve credential completion and drive positive labor market outcomes for Black, Latino, and low-income youth

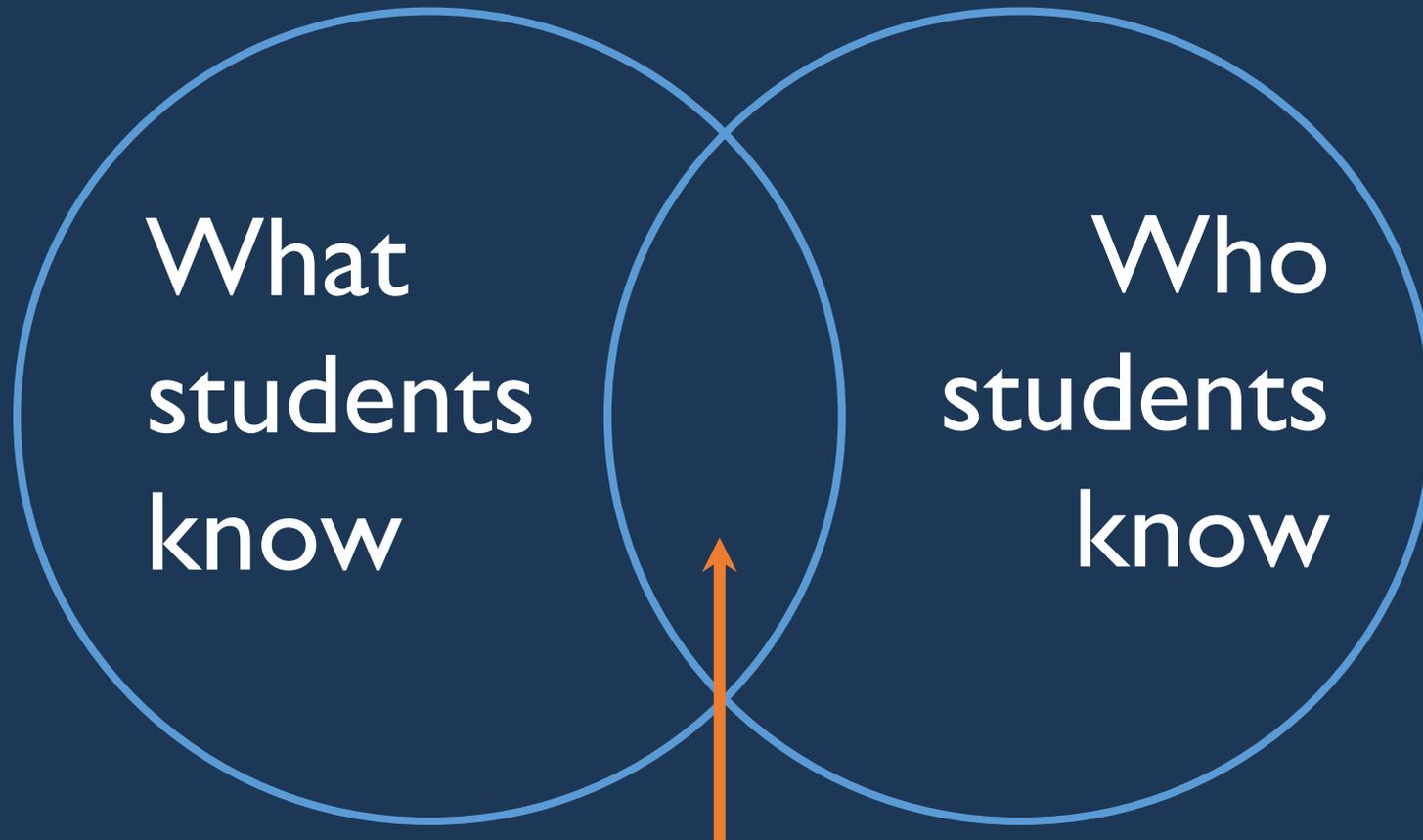
Long-term Impact Goal

Dramatically increase the number of Black, Latino, and low-income youth, ages 14-24, who have the agency, social capital, skills, credentials and early labor market outcomes needed to thrive in the workforce and life

Key research questions & approach

- What are examples of innovative programs that are deliberately designed to expand students' access to networks of support and/or networks of opportunity otherwise out of reach?
 - ◆ Snowball survey to identify 160+ programs
- In a subset of those programs, what are the specific design choices and infrastructure tools that they have implemented to put more and deeper relationships within reach?
 - ◆ Deep dive case studies into 6 programs
- Based on those attributes, how common are those design choices and tools across a wider array of programs nationally?
 - ◆ Online survey on program design sent out to 160+ programs identified above





Opportunity



50%

of jobs come through personal
connections



“The clearest message that we get from this 75-year study is this: **Good relationships keep us happier and healthier. Period.**”

- Robert Waldinger on

Harvard's Grant &
Glueck study



What is social capital?

Social networks have value.

Connections among individuals – social networks

enable people's of cities to city and ability to own and utilize human investment in social relations with expected returns

can be used for a number of purposes. Robert Putnam further their potential in the marketplace. & Nan Lin

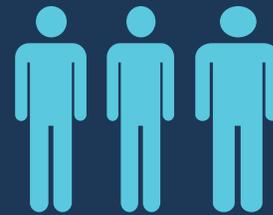
and their goals, as those goals emerge and inevitably shift over time.





Strong Ties

care, resources



Weak Ties

new information, opportunities



Where does social capital come from?

- Inherited Networks
- Neighborhoods
- Institutions as Brokers



Identifying organizations pursuing 'purposeful' relationship designs

- Snowball survey to identify 160+ programs
- Deep-dive interview-based case studies into 6 programs
- Online landscape survey back to 160+ programs on program design and measurement



Selected Sites

- Beyond I2
- COOP
- This Way Ahead
- DVX
- Boston PIC
- YouthForce NOLA

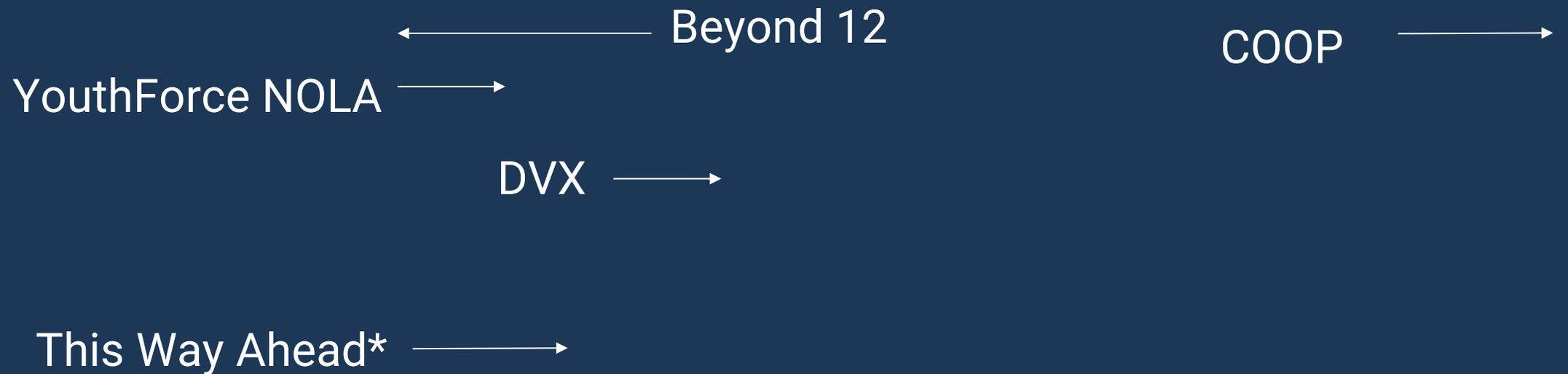


Where sites fit in the pipeline

High School Career Experience
(ages 14-18)

Postsecondary Success (18-
24)

Successful Employment (22-
28)

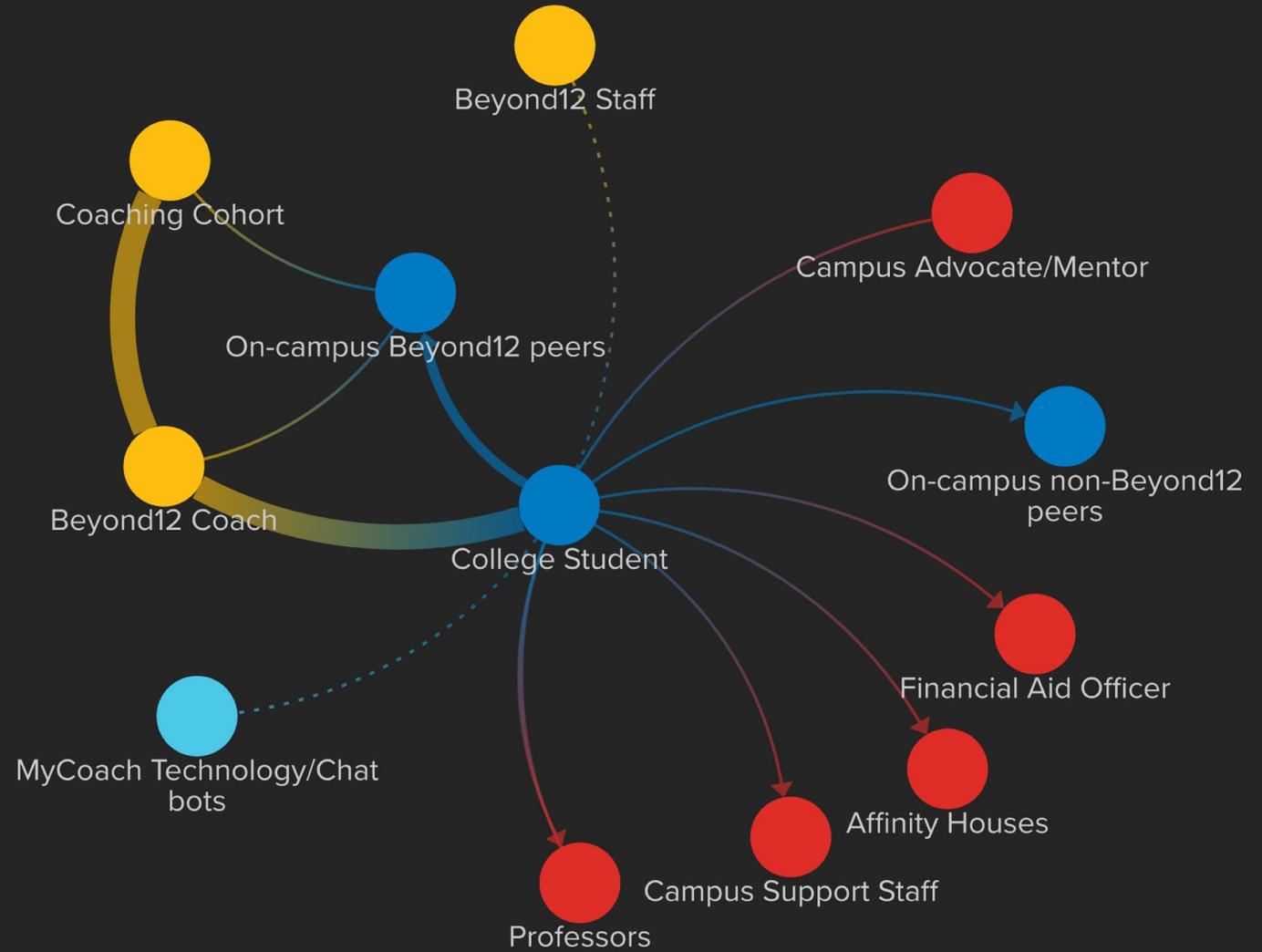


*Some TWA alums remain employed at Gap without attending postsecondary

An open notebook with yellow covers and white pages is the central focus. The pages are filled with handwritten notes in brown ink. A pen is resting on the left page. The background is blurred, showing a person's arm and a blue shirt with a white letter 'A'.

Design Takeaways

Beyond 12

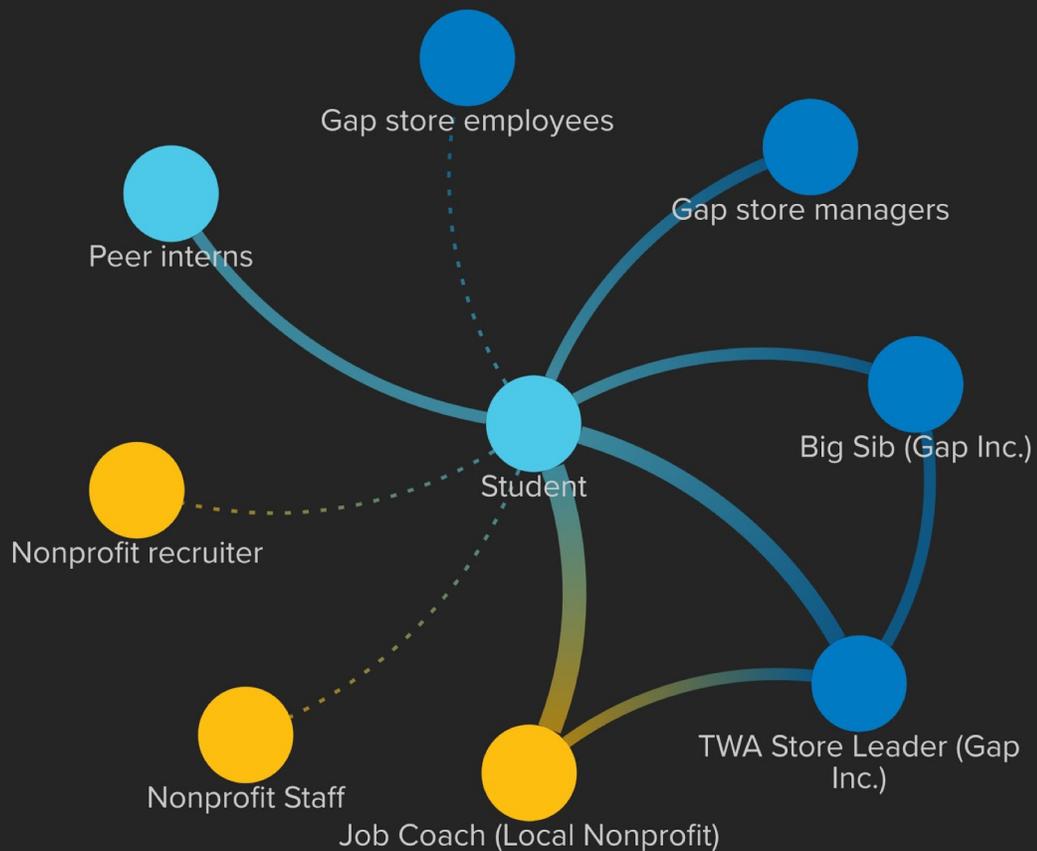


Legend

- Student
- Beyond12 Team
- Chatbot
- Postsecondary Institution



This Way Ahead

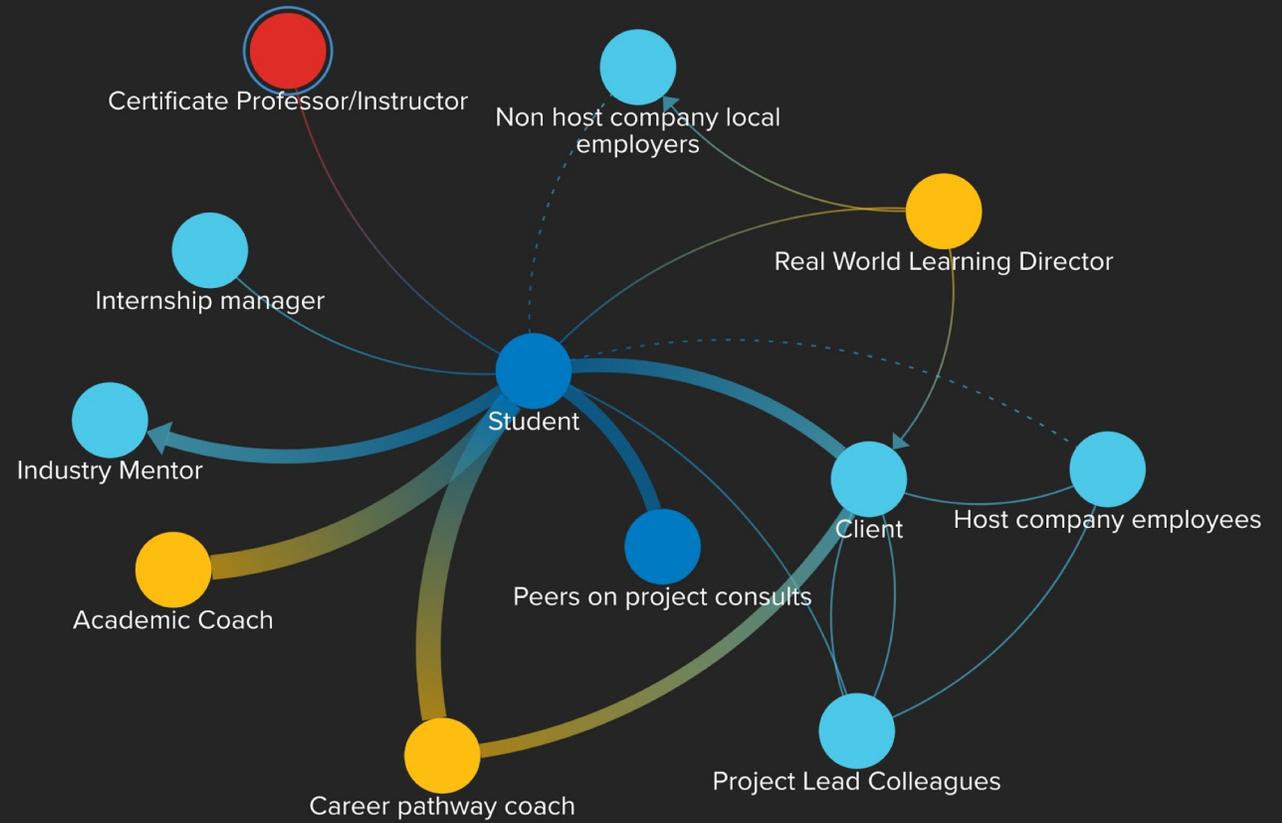


Legend

- Gap Employee
- Nonprofit Employee
- TWA student



DVX

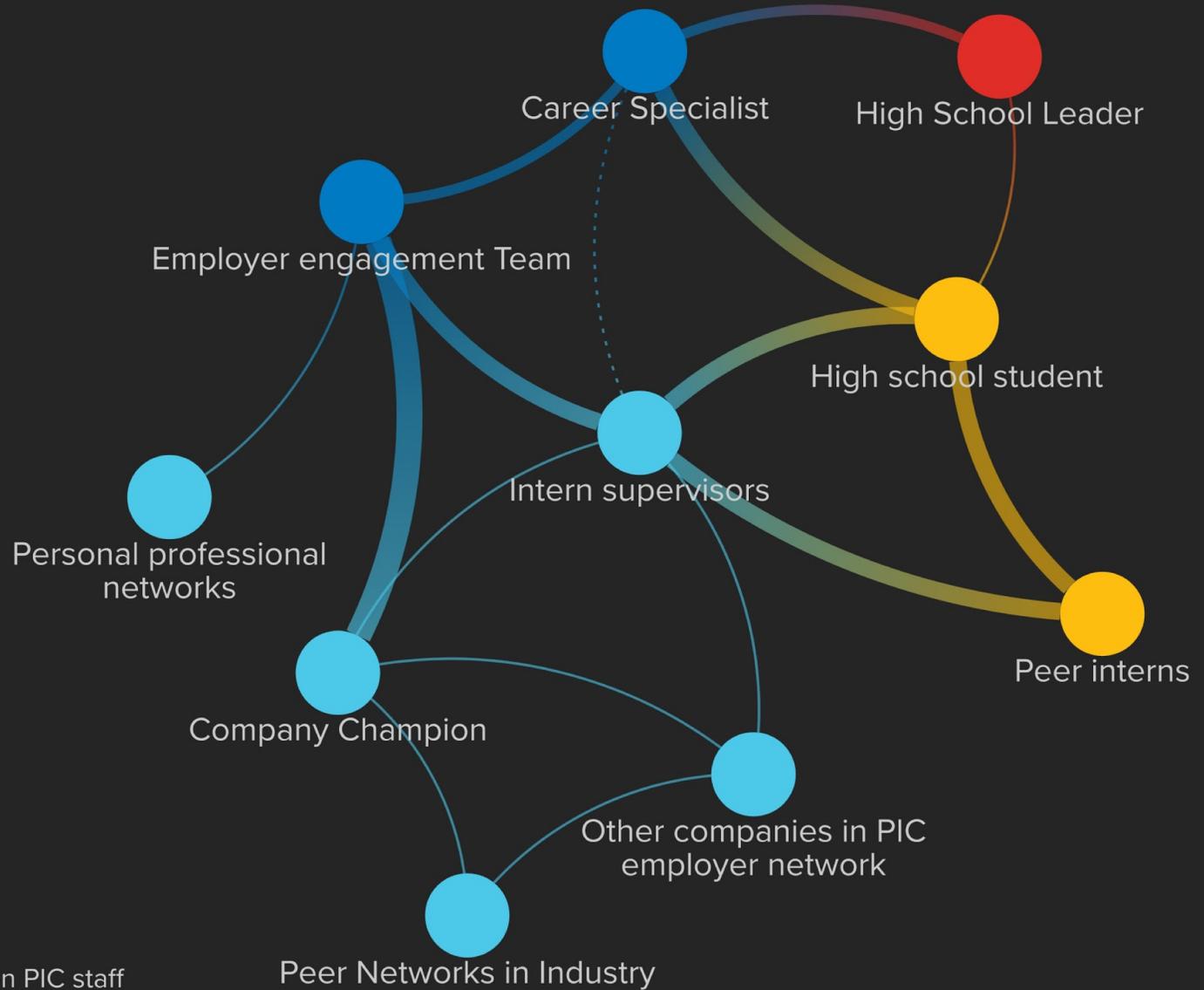


Legend

- Student
- DaVinci Staff
- Industry
- Postsecondary Partner



Boston PIC



Legend

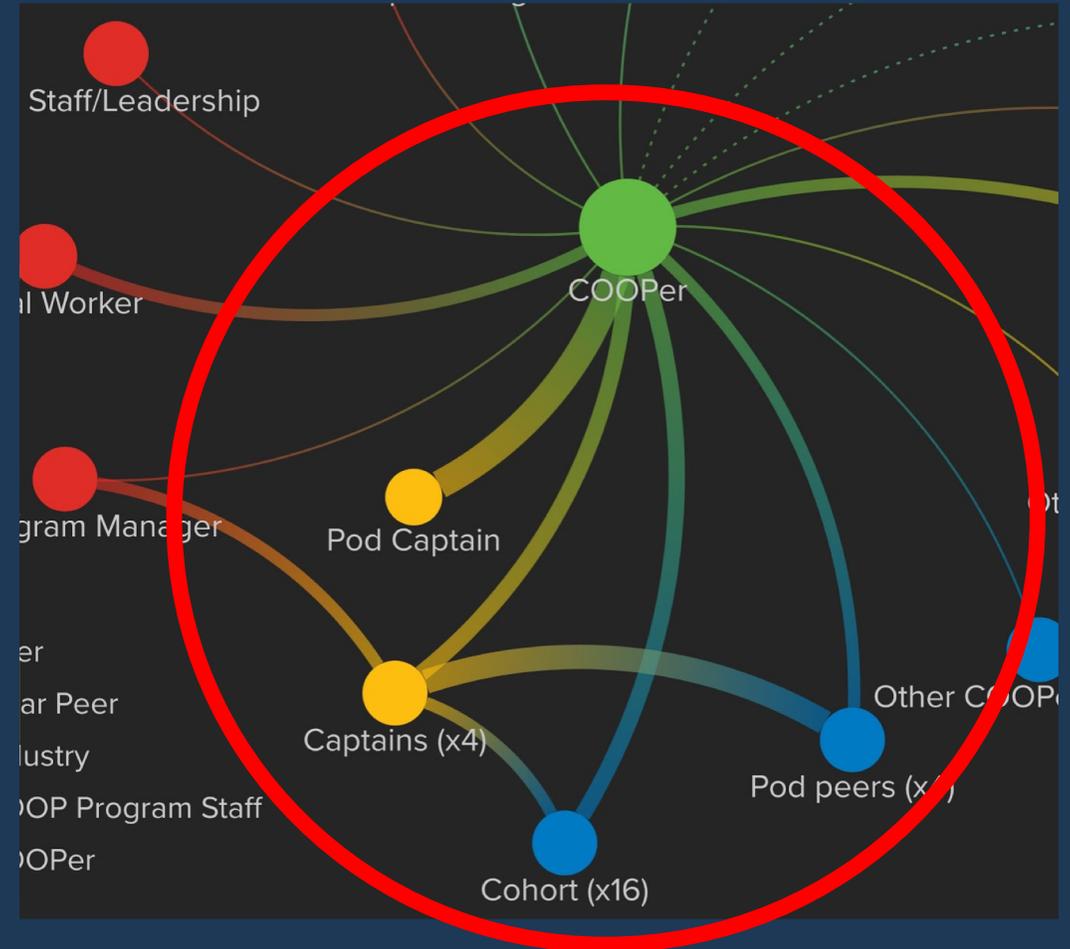
- Boston PIC staff
- Student
- Industry
- Education institutions

Key Design Choices & Tools



designing a connected *web* of new relationships

- Anchor relationships with caring adults offer key sources of support and accountability
- Near-peer coaches/captains/big sibs efficiently generate trust, relatability, reliability
- Peer cohorts buffer against isolation and offer key sources of ongoing support



designing to “teach” networking in integration with authentic connections

- Pre-work like ‘Enduring understanding’ (Beyond12) and ‘Heart’ curriculum (COOP) precedes any ‘networking’ training
- Soft skills/networking strategies are embedded into program curricula with asset-based framing upfront
- Some models are brokering connections (COOP, DVX, TWA) on behalf of students while others are coaching students to activate their own networks (Beyond12)



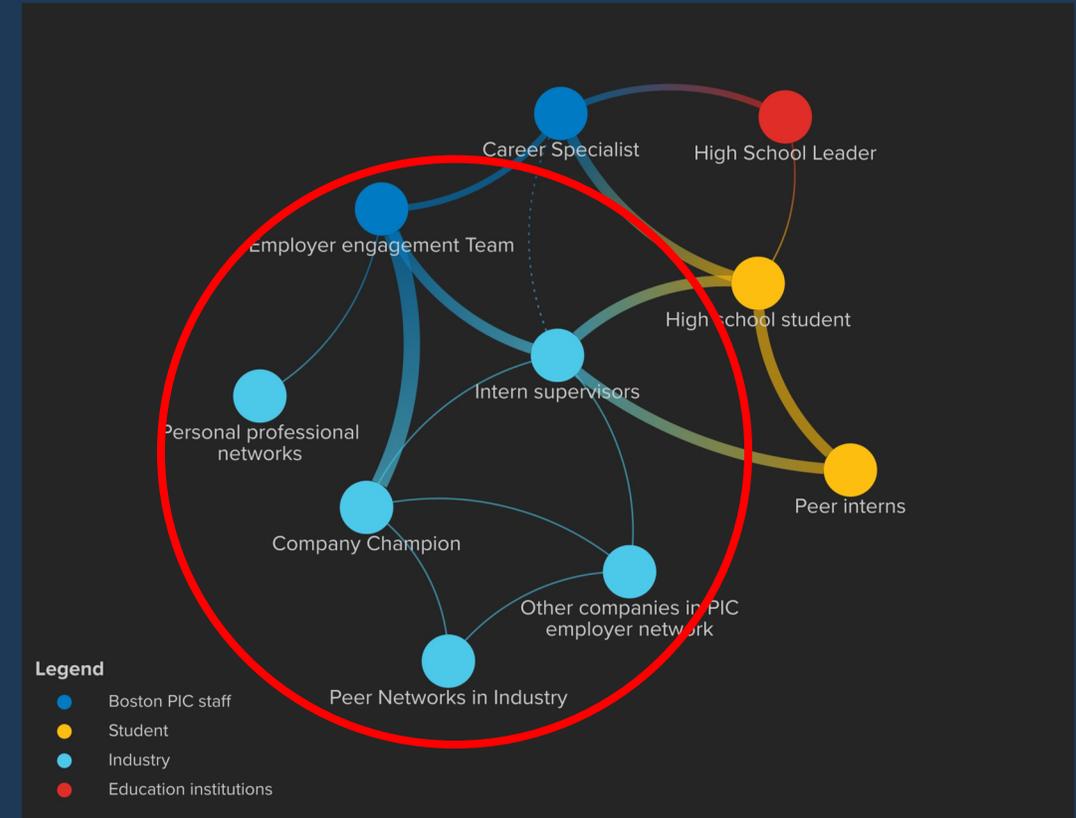
Building a personal Board of Directors

- Who do you know that is working in the industry you are interested in?
- What famous people can you focus on as inspiration?
- Who do you know that has strong professional alignment with you?
- Who are your cheerleaders that support you when you try new and challenging things?
- Who gives you the truth, even when you don't want to hear it?



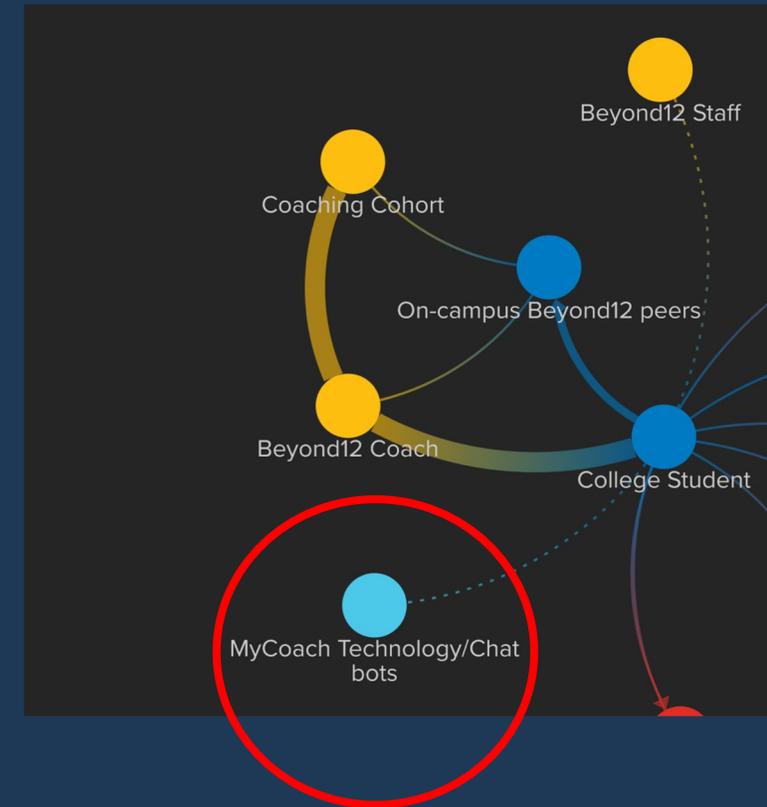
designing to leverage network effects to extend impact

- FTE's traverse silos (primarily between education and industry) to broker 'warm handoffs' and to triangulate among program, students, industry
- Employer networks sustain engagement and become distribution channels for best practices
- Networks of support can morph into networks of opportunity when students 'graduate'; alumni networks can become critical resources



designing tech for scale, measurement, & improvement

- Technology as a productivity tool can increase interview feedback and lessen redundancy
- Technology as a measurement & data analytics tool can scale supports reserving human relationships for inspiration rather than navigation
- Technology as a communication tool allows programs to maintain connections using a mix of existing and new tech (this is good because it's cheap, but bad for data-driven practice)



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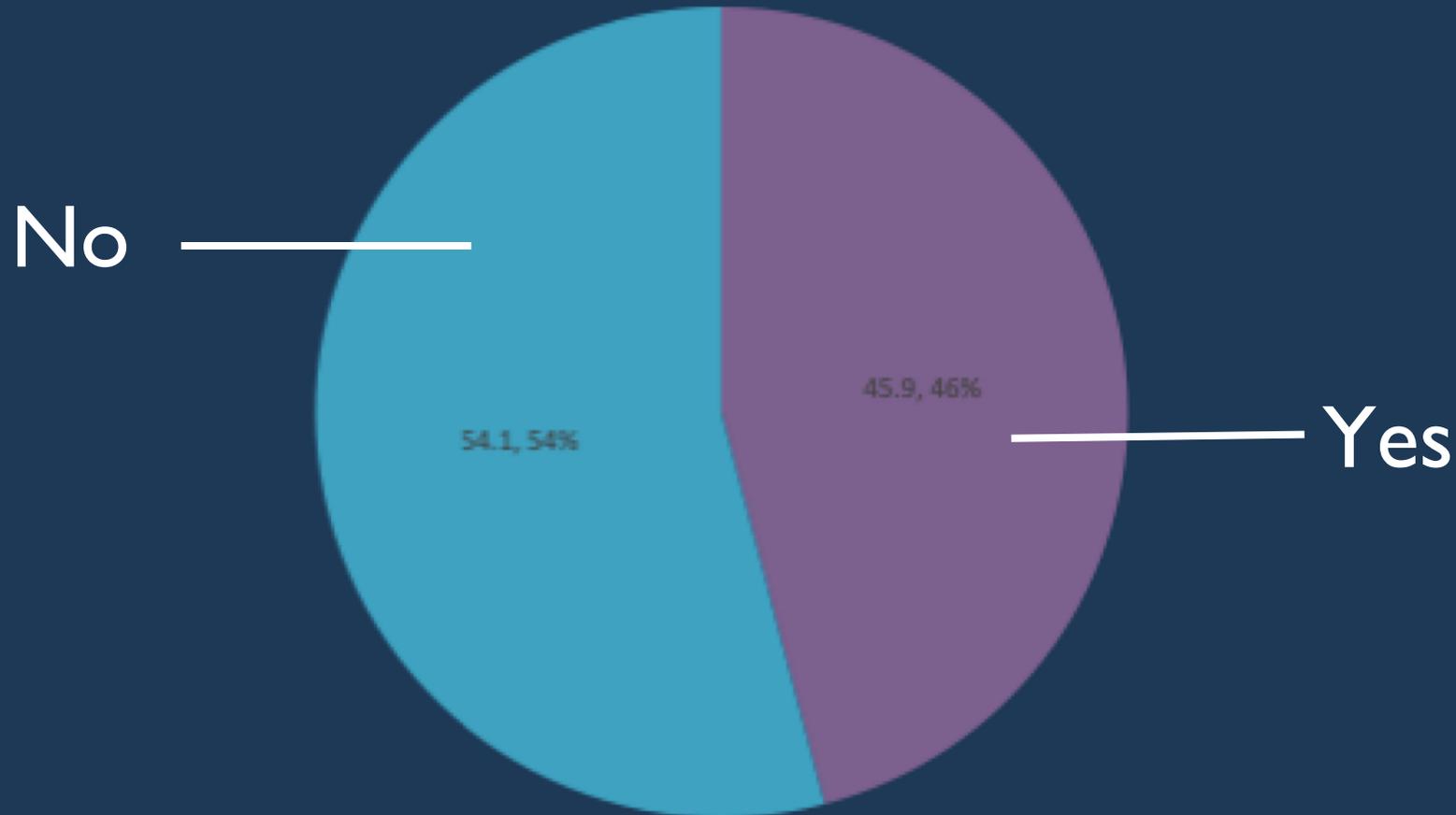
Landscape Survey - early results

- Nearly all programs build **both strong and weak ties**, with weak ties disproportionately forged with hiring managers/industry partners
- Most programs (>80%) **'teach' relationship building**, and the majority of those (>80%) create their own lessons/curriculum
- Programs use a wide range of proprietary and enterprise **technologies**



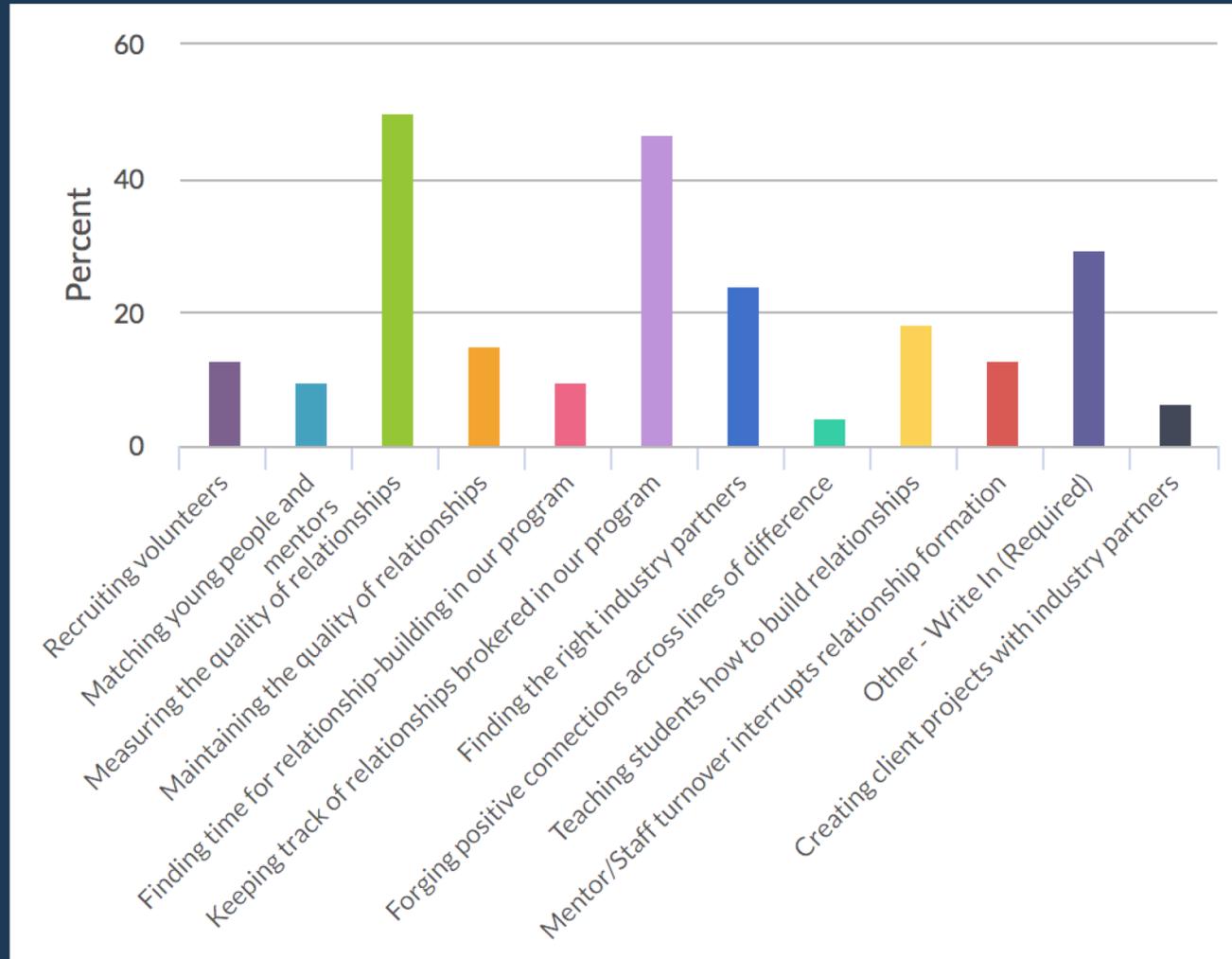
Half of programs measure network growth

Do you measure growth over time of young people's relationships and networks created through your model?



Measuring the quality of relationships and keeping track of relationships ranked as programs' top challenges

What are your top 3 challenges?



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Q&A + Next Steps

Next steps on social capital

- Support knowledge sharing, narrative development
- Improve designs and validate new measures
- Explore areas for innovation

For more information:

www.equitablefutures.org

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