Framing your Data Story for Decision-Making and Advocacy

Ronda Jenson, Northern Arizona University
Linda Thurston, Kansas State University
We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects... 
Access and Inclusion
and
Civility and Respect
...this week and in all aspects of our organization.
Session Agenda

• What is a data story?
• Why is a data story important?
• Considerations and steps for building your data story.
• Data story examples
• Actions you can take
What is a data story?

- Data meets story telling
  - Often paired with compelling visualization
  - Clear connections between the data and what matters to the audience

A data story is effective when the audience/reader can see him/her/their selves in the story.
Why is a data story important?

• Can provide a multi-viewpoint perspective
• Can align lived experience with data at practice, system, and policy levels
• Facilitates the use of data for program and/or system improvements when it provides context, conditions, considerations, etc.

A data story can be a powerful message for policy and program changes
Considerations for building your data story

• Who and/or what do you want to influence?
• What types of data resonate most with each audience?
• What types of data do you have access to?
• What are your gaps in data and is there a method for filling the gaps?
• Are there natural linkages between data?
About linkages

• Linkages by using multiple perspectives for a more robust description
• Linkages by using multiple levels to describe alignment or connections (policy, systems, programs/admin, faculty, students)
• If-then logic linkages
Data story examples

1. College program for students with intellectual/developmental disabilities
2. Supporting military veterans with service-connected disabilities
Suggestions and actions

• When presented with data, ask about the rest of the story.

• When on a team tasked with gathering data, know how the data contributes to the story before you start. If there isn’t a story, lead the team to outline the story---because changes to data collection may be needed.

• Be an advocate for identifying important data needed to tell an authentic story and building collection into the system.
Contact information

Ronda Jenson, Associate Professor
Northern Arizona University
Ronda.Jenson@nau.edu
Session Evaluation

- Your feedback helps shape future programming.
- Thank you for attending!