



**EMPLOYERS, LOW-INCOME
YOUNG ADULTS,
AND POSTSECONDARY
CREDENTIALS**

A PRACTICAL TYPOLOGY FOR BUSINESS,
EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

OCTOBER 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

¹ National Commission on Adult Literacy, *Reach Higher, America*. June 2008

With an unemployment rate in July 2009 of 9.4 percent, America today presages what labor statisticians say could lie in store for us in 2020. Curiously, few speak of America's forecasted workforce shortage in terms of unemployment. They should.

Based on retirement, dropout, skill, and demographic figures, the U.S. Department of Labor is predicting a labor shortage of more than 35 million skilled and educated workers over the next 30 years. The literature is rife with data regarding the gap—and the need to fill it. Citing statistics from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, the National Commission on Adult Literacy notes that “Even if every state's high school graduation and college-going rates were equal to the top states in the country today, the United States still will not be able to meet its demand for skilled workers.”¹

What the data don't tell you is what will happen to those who are insufficiently skilled to do the work. Or for that matter, what of a practical nature might be done to avert the long unemployment lines.

Against this backdrop the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has committed to doubling the number of low-income students who earn a postsecondary degree or credential with genuine value in the workplace by age 26, which is projected to increase the number of graduates by approximately 250,000 each year.

Funded by the Foundation, this report investigates a number of education and training programs involving employers in efforts to help disadvantaged young adults attain postsecondary credentials leading to career track

employment. Our model programs meet four basic criteria:

- Getting low-income youth and young adults postsecondary credentials that will allow them to enter and advance in career track employment.
- Working with employers in industry sectors important to the region's economy.
- Maximizing employer roles and commitment.
- Demonstrating portability, scalability, and replicability.

For the purposes of our report, we define credentials to mean credit and non-credit industry-recognized certifications, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees. To better understand the programs, we divided them into categories according to the type of organization that leads them. We chose a number of fundamental characteristics to examine about each model. Finally, motivated by our intent to inform business, education, and community leaders, as well as funders interested in replicating such endeavors, we explored the aspects of the programs we believe to be of greatest interest to these audiences. To do so, we captured the common characteristics across model programs, the key challenges and how they were addressed, and the lessons learned. What has resulted is a document that is part typology report and part

practical guide. Profiles of each model detailing their defining characteristics as well as contact information appear as appendices.

ABOUT OUR MODELS

After extensive research into more than 100 programs, and interviews with more than 30, our criteria led us to 14 model programs.

The models are led by five distinct types of organizations: community-based organizations, community and technical colleges, employers, industry, and social enterprise organizations. Our typology further characterizes the models according to the following dimensions: population served, industry targeted, partnerships/partners, employer role, location (urban/rural), governance, funding profile, scale, and results.

Each of our models works in partnership with employers to help disadvantaged populations gain employment through the attainment of a postsecondary credential. Each addresses local labor market needs; with the majority focused on health care, information technology, and/or advanced manufacturing. Some of the distinguishing characteristics of our types include:

- Our **community-based** organization models research their local labor markets to determine which services to make available to local employers. They are substantial endeavors and have strong relationships with their employers, strict student eligibility criteria, and provide the majority of their services to students themselves though they also work with one-stops and other publically and privately funded organizations.
- The **community and technical college** models in our report also use labor market data to inform their workforce development efforts. They have made concerted efforts to establish client relationships with their area employers. One is a standalone program, and the other uses a comprehensive structural approach to serve its regional workforce development needs. Course offerings are industry-certified, and flexible schedules better accommodate both students and employers.
- The **employer** models featured are either individual employers or employer collaborations. They are large undertakings seeking to retain employees and establish a solid pipeline of workers. Several arrange to have their students employed during their course terms, while others offer students internships or apprenticeships.
- Our **industry** models are the result of targeted industry-sector initiatives to build worker pipelines. One is national, and the other regional. Both offer online instruction with contextualized coursework; their industry-certified credentials map to college degrees. Both have structured career paths. The regional model is operated by an association, which contracts with area employers who are required to provide their students with full-time employment and a mentor.
- The **social enterprise** organization models function, by definition, as businesses to provide their communities with a service of social value. The students enrolled in these programs provide information technology services to employer clients as part of a structured business transaction. One of the models uses these services as a means to reaching the larger objective of developing community leaders. Both teach technical and soft skills, such as professional communications and teamwork.

KEY FEATURES

Whether motivated to tackle the shortage of skilled workers, spur economic development, meet business client needs, eradicate poverty, or reduce employee turnover, each of our programs has at base three core components—students, programs, and employers. Among the most prominent features of these components are:

Students

- Support services
- Case manager
- Steady income
- Flexibility

Programs

- Direct connection to the labor market
- Accountability, using data
- Hands on curriculum, industry-certified
- Partnerships, multiple funding streams

Employers

- A relationship that adds value
- An intermediary, liaison, or other go-between
- A menu of employer engagement options
- An industry sector concentration

NEXT STEPS

Over the past several years, the United States has come to understand the increasing demand for a technologically skilled workforce that can comprehend, function, and contribute to the growth of today's knowledge-based economy. As a result, our country has made significant investments to encourage students to attain postsecondary credentials.

With the projected labor shortages in mind, we focused this report on programs that have significant employer involvement and

career track employment as a goal. Many programs—similar to the ones featured in this report—fall short of employment because they lack these important hallmarks—some only because they are just starting out; others because they see the credential as the goal, not the means to employment.

Helping low-income young adults gain the skills and knowledge they need to earn a family-sustaining wage is critical to maintaining the United States' competitive position in today's global economy. We hope business, education, and community leaders—as well as funders—will learn from this study. We even envision communities of practice scaling such efforts nationwide.

Additional research should refine and add to our record so we can build an even stronger foundation for the future success of these programs. Chambers of commerce, small businesses, and occupational colleges are among several other organizations taking on this important work. Their efforts should be investigated. From what we have discovered, how they involve employers will make a significant difference on the impact they make on their economies. Clearly, the stronger the employer relationship, the greater the prospects for career track employment.

INTRODUCTION

² Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, www.gatesfoundation.org, accessed May 6, 2009

³ Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, *Building Tomorrow's Workforce*, March 2008

⁴ American Diploma Project, *Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma That Counts*, 2004

In his first State of the Union address, President Barack Obama declared that every American should have at least one year of postsecondary education. His statement and subsequent call for the American Graduation Initiative have fueled a fire that has been raging in regions and communities across the country for years. Private foundations such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation for Education have launched ambitious initiatives to increase the number of people with postsecondary degrees. Employers, industry associations, community and technical colleges, community-based organizations, and government agencies have each figured prominently in helping low-income youth and young adults advance in careers through the acquisition of a postsecondary certificate or degree. But with more than half of all new jobs requiring some form of postsecondary education credential—and millions of low-income youth and young adults struggling to earn a living or family-sustaining wage—a greater effort needs to be made on all fronts.²

Four stark facts speak volumes. First, by 2020 one out of every four workers in the United States will be an immigrant from Latin America. Second, more than 50 percent of Hispanic immigrants have less than a high

school education.³ Third, according to the American Diploma Project, of the 70 percent of all high school graduates who enter postsecondary education, most never graduate with a degree.⁴ And fourth, from the sobering

⁵ The Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Society for Human Resource Management *Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers' Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century Workforce*, October 2006

report, *Are They Really Ready to Work?*, employers project hiring greater percentages of new entrants with two- and four-year college degrees—and a shrinking percentage with a high school degree or GED.⁵ Clearly, America's current struggles will persist well into the future unless we take action.

In all its diversity, the United States is a nation of boundless energy and goodwill when it comes to rallying for a good cause. But we are also, increasingly, a nation in competition against an ever growing number of economic barriers, not the least of which is a looming shortage of qualified workers. This is a national dilemma felt most immediately at the local level. So it is no wonder that communities, institutions, and organizations are preparing disadvantaged youth and young adults for employment in this 21st century knowledge-based economy in innumerable ways.

Local chambers of commerce are involved in everything from helping youth fill out FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) forms to participating in regional economic development initiatives led by postsecondary collaboratives. Retailer CVS Caremark has taken its Workforce Initiatives program into low-income neighborhoods to encourage pathways into pharmaceutical occupations. Industry giants Disney and McDonald's have opened their own universities. Two-year colleges such as the Community College of Baltimore County are offering countless programs to give low-income people a chance to earn a living wage in high-demand jobs. To spur economic growth in its under-performing southwestern regions, the Commonwealth of Virginia recently unveiled a plan to implement a statewide career pathways system.

But how many of these efforts offer low-income youth and young adults the

opportunity to gain a postsecondary credential that leads to career advancement? What do these efforts look like? While many communities are well on their way to addressing the needs of today's economy, many more don't know where to begin, what it takes, or whom to go to for advice.

The aim of this report is to increase the number of disadvantaged youth and young adults who get jobs as a result of receiving a postsecondary credential or market-valued certificate. To do so, we have investigated a variety of education and training models involving employers in one way or another in these efforts. For the purposes of this report, we define credentials to mean credit and non-credit industry recognized certifications, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees.

To begin to understand these models, we have broken them down by type, noting their different characteristics. With the hope of informing the decisions of those wishing to replicate or scale up such endeavors, we then analyzed them to gain a better sense of how they addressed issues of practical interest to business, education, and community leaders.

We selected models that demonstrate four main elements:

- Getting low-income youth and young adults postsecondary credentials that will allow them to enter and advance in career track employment.
- Working with employers in industry sectors important to the region's economy.
- Maximizing employer roles and commitment.
- Demonstrating portability, scalability, and replicability.

The report is not meant to be a definitive or exhaustive study. Instead, confident that the heightened focus on the need for postsec-

ondary credentialing will result in more types and additional initiatives in the future, what we present is a snapshot of what exists today. We view this report as a departure point for a living record of types and type dimensions of employer-involvement models in this field. The research presented is intended to be of primary use to practitioners in the fields of education and workforce and economic development, as well as to those who fund such endeavors. Report findings will be accessible through an online, searchable tool at www.workforcestrategy.org.

Guided by our intended use of the report and the substantial evidence that these endeavors are, by and large, undertaken by public/private partnerships or particular stakeholder groups, we have chosen to break down the typology of the sites we studied according to who is leading the effort. The types fall fairly easily into five distinct groups: community-based organizations, community and technical colleges, employers, industry, and social enterprise organizations. With each type of model, we explore the following type dimensions: population served, industry targeted, partnerships/partners, employer role, location (urban/rural), governance, funding profile, scale, and results.

METHODOLOGY

The creation of this paper involved extensive research. To identify study sites, we conducted a literature review and reached out to our extensive list of more than 15,000 contacts in the field of education, workforce development, and economic development. We also solicited recommendations from more than 50 key representatives from government, national think tanks, associations, business and industry, and public policy groups, as well as practitioners. Inquiring parties and representatives were asked to help name programs and/or initiatives characterized by our four main areas of interest.

More than 100 sites were suggested. We explored these further by soliciting details about program models, including: local conditions, partners, vision, and goals; model description, means of coordination, and governance; degree of success, or outcomes, with program participants and employer commitment; and program model portability, scalability, and replicability.

After assessing site responses, we chose to investigate further those sites that we determined: 1) met our selection criteria and 2) demonstrated the greatest degree of success in advancing the population into postsecondary education and careers; having substantial employer involvement; and being portable, scalable, and replicable. Where there were similar models, we chose one. In total, we investigated more than 40 programs, out of which we selected 34 to research further through extensive interviews. After onsite and virtual site visits to seven of the programs representing the models we found most prevalent in meeting our criteria, we have identified 14 program models.

What follows is a description of the five model types identified in our study, prefaced by a brief explanation of why postsecondary education matters, and a description of the common characteristics found across the models we studied. Examples taken from the models illustrate each type. The report concludes with some of the key challenges faced and the solutions adopted to address them, as well as lessons learned from program and community college administrators, social enterprise organizations, as well as employer and industry representatives. We feature profiles of the 14 models identified in our research, noting their type dimensions (Appendix A), as well as a list of the programs and their contact information (Appendix B).



Photo courtesy of UPS and UoL Magazine

WHY POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION MATTERS

⁶ The Conference Board, Corporate Voices for Working Families, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, Society for Human Resource Management *Are They Really Ready to Work?*

For many decades organizations have worked to help advance the standing of low-income youth and young adults through basic education and training. But today's economy is raising the stakes. To remain competitive, businesses require employees to have essential workforce skills, such as critical thinking, communications, and teamwork, all of which are typically developed through postsecondary education.⁶ What's more, researchers in the state of Washington conducted a study and found that one year of community college occupational education represented the "tipping point" for individuals to advance from low-wage to family-supporting jobs. It is no longer sufficient either for the potential employer of this population or for the individuals themselves to land a job without some postsecondary education.

Pressed by the forces of global competition, increasing workforce skills requirements, an aging workforce, and a substantially less educated populace, employers are scrambling—even during the current economic downturn—to staff their operations with people bearing the technical and soft skills and knowledge required to do increasingly more technology-based and sophisticated work. Large and small businesses alike are suffering or will suffer severe economic consequences if they are not able to employ qualified personnel. A community's workforce statistics are now more than ever a part of a business expansion or relocation equation. Economic

developers highlight specific skill sets and the transferable skills within their community. The shortage is most severe in industries such as allied health and information technology, and in the STEM areas of science, technology, engineering, and math. But the lack of qualified workers is affecting everyone.

On the opposite side of the coin, those least equipped to meet employers' workforce needs are becoming increasingly more disadvantaged. Their job placement retention rate is decreasing, as are their education levels and ability to function in a professional manner in the workplace. Industry-specific technical skills are in as much demand as critical work readi-

ness skills, such as creativity and innovation, communication, and teamwork. And with lack of education comes the added requirement for soft skills, such as getting to work on time or even at all, wearing proper attire, communicating in a professional manner, and providing customer service. Moreover, many entry-level positions no longer pay a living or family-earning wage.

While most employers engaged in helping the low-income population gain postsecondary credentials appear to be motivated primarily by the need to grow their workforce pipelines, many also seek to retain the workers they have and to advance their employees' posi-

tions in the companies. Others wish to diversify their workforce; hire local talent; hire younger, more technologically able employees; and gain credentialed employees. Even so, keeping employers engaged in helping the low-income population—especially youth who have so many attendant barriers—attain postsecondary education requires programs to be highly effective at both meeting employer demand and maintaining their commitment for the long haul. Strong employer relationships are critical to success with this population. They not only build a sense of commitment and goodwill and help to defray costs; they also build room for forgiveness.

COMMON CHARACTERISTICS ACROSS THE MODELS

Though each model in this study has unique qualities, we found a number of themes common to all. Foremost is the connection to the local labor market. As noted by a faculty member from Montgomery College, Maryland, it is not difficult to engage employers when offering them the tangible benefit of an employee who is “custom made” to meet their workforce needs.

More difficult is the fact that the low-income population these models serve faces a host of barriers requiring extensive support services. Most students also need to be able to earn a living or otherwise receive some living stipend while attending school. As a result, these education and training efforts generally require multiple funding streams to cover expenses, as well as collaboration among several public and private partners to provide all the necessary services. All of the models offer flexible training approaches and schedules to accommodate both employer and student needs. They all also use data to measure their success.

The most distinguishing characteristics across all of our models are:

- **Academic preparation.** First and foremost is each model's implicit commitment to providing low-income students with the necessary academic preparation to enter postsecondary education in pursuit of a certificate or degree. El Paso's Project ARRIBA enrolls program participants in need of college preparation in its 16-week Workforce Development Academy. College Prep courses at Clarian Health in Indianapolis combine
- **Mentoring.** Guides and coaches are critical to career track employment. Employers involved in Maryland's Washington Area New Auto Dealers Association (WANADA) program at Montgomery College are required to sign a contract agreeing to provide an onsite mentor for supervision and on-the-job training. Based in Boston, the Year Up program also calls for employers to mentor their apprentices.
- **A steady income.** More often than not people need to work while going to school. At Metropolitan College in Louisville, Kentucky, all students are employed and receive tuition reimbursement. As part of its contract with employers, WANADA students must be allowed to attend class one day during each work week in the semester.
- **Connection to the local labor market.** This is the pivot point in most models. Without the connection, education and training certifica-

tions could risk being of no value in the job market. The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) has formed the Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE), a group of industry representatives that develops, sponsors, and promotes industry-driven, standardized, quality online learning programs to meet the workforce needs of the energy industry. In direct response to employer feedback, each boot camp program at Wisconsin's Gateway Technical College awards students certifications based on national industry standards.

- **Flexibility.** Boot camps, learning communities, online and blended learning, accelerated courses, summer academies to shorten remediation time, continuing education classes instead of credit-bearing courses—all are part and parcel of what can be found peppered across the model spectrum. Cisco Systems offers online interactive courses 24/7. The Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC) schedules its training classes around the clock.
- **Partnerships.** Formal arrangements work to mutual benefit, solidifying relationships and encouraging accountability. They also can lead to the creation of benchmarks and standardized processes. The community colleges that comprise ADTEC share curriculum development and use, regional career pathways, instructors, facilities, and equipment.
- **Employer relationships.** The issue is not so much engaging employers as establishing a true relationship with them. Each of the sites featured in this report has longstanding associations with its employers. Oregon's Open Meadow is in constant contact with its business partners, maintaining, nurturing, seeking input, and checking quality. As one administrator put it, "You have to know them." Project ARRIBA has had many of the same business partners since it opened its doors in 1998.
- **Support services.** Of singular importance to serving low-income students is the critical need for providing a broad array of counseling, advising, and other support services. Open Meadow offers as comprehensive a list of services as any community-based organization in the country.
- **Use of data to track success.** Tied to connection to the market, data help determine and track employer, program, and student needs and performance. When Capital Idea in Austin, Texas, was evaluated against a comparison group, its participants were found to have greater gross earnings over time.
- **Varied funding streams.** Support services, free tuition and books, and case-managed training are expensive. Varied funding streams also seal partners' commitments. Project ARRIBA relies on one-third federal funding, one-third state and local funding, and one-third private funding.

TYPES OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING MODELS

Each type of education and training program in our study has distinguishing qualities. Table 1 below offers a glance at the different characteristics of the five model types. Each type is then illustrated by model examples drawn from the profiles found in Appendix A. Taken together, we believe the qualities noted here have contributed in substantial ways to the models' ability to meet our selection criteria. Table 2 on page 21 details industries targeted, credentials, costs and services.

TABLE 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE MODEL TYPES

Community-based Organizations	<p>Motivated to help low-income individuals earn family-supporting wages, these models are often trusted community institutions for disconnected populations. The community-based organizations have established reputations among funders, employers, and other community stakeholders and often function as brokers or clearinghouses to connect individuals to publicly and privately funded services. They have multiple partners and funding streams. They hold clients accountable and use data to track performance, progress, and quality of service.</p> <p>The model CBOs are comprehensive in their approach—with different levels of employer engagement and strict client eligibility and performance criteria. Case managers monitor client performance and the provision of multiple support services. Students are grouped into cohorts. These organizations' operations require substantial financial and resource investment. They serve specific populations and often engage in advocacy work. Their education and training services are typically provided on college campuses.</p>
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**Community and
Technical Colleges**

Workforce development is a priority with these institution models. Meeting employers' needs means embedding nationally recognized industry standards and soft skills training into their course curriculum. This model type encourages career advancement that leads to career-track employment. Flexible course schedules and instructors with industry experience are coupled with standardized curriculum taught in training centers, hands-on laboratories, onsite in the classroom and/or online.

Employer engagement is pervasive. These model colleges use labor market information to determine course offerings. Data and employer input inform curriculum development. Employers play various roles, from serving on college advisory committees to identifying industry needs, assisting with instruction, offering internships, mentoring students, and judging student competitions.

While they serve a general population, these colleges also partner with public agencies and one-stop centers to target specific groups of disadvantaged youth and young adults. Partners help provide support services. Case managers advise and track the performance of students. The colleges use data to track performance, progress, and quality of service.

Employers

Specific business needs are the primary drivers of these program models. Employee recruitment, retention—especially in hard-to-fill positions—and training through their model programs provide these employers with properly skilled employees, increased employee loyalty, freed up entry-level positions, and ready access to local talent. Some of the employers in this model group see their efforts as contributing to the education of their client base, which makes for informed consumers. They are good corporate citizens. As a result of their efforts, incumbent workers who are low-income have the opportunity to advance in their careers, and communities can depend on a good and steady partner. It's a win/win proposition.

Employer-led education and training models have high visibility. The employers are key partners in and strong advocates of their community's economic development efforts. Their programs are typically well-funded through private/public partnerships.

Low-income students and current workers receive free or discounted tuition, books, and program materials, as well as support services and the assistance of a case manager. Some workers get

time off for attending class and doing homework. Model programs partner with adult education service providers and colleges.

Employers are involved at all levels of program implementation, from policy to governance to curriculum development. They know and forecast their labor needs. They track performance, progress, and quality of service as part of an overall corporate quality assurance plan.

Industry

Industry program models see the larger economic picture. They drive industry standards, leverage industry participation and funding, and reinforce local industry employers by bringing a national perspective—and resources—to local communities. They create a pipeline of workers to fuel industry growth.

Industry-led education and training initiatives can have large-scale influence. They encourage standardization of curriculum, credentials, processes, and procedures. Industry models are portable, encouraging student mobility. They conduct training as a business.

Typically partnered with community or technical colleges, industry training is offered to incumbent workers and the general population. It also seeks to serve low-income and disadvantaged youth, young adults, and adults. Some programs create a pathway for low-income workers. Courses are taught in the classroom and online with embedded interactive simulations. Industry employers participate on governing committees and offer paid internships.

These models are often funded through an industry's non-profit organization. Curriculum and training services can be offered for free, at a reduced rate, or as part of a cost-recovery model. Equipment is often discounted. Comprehensive training and support services can be available 24/7.

Social Enterprise Organizations

Part revenue-generating business and part social-value-generating program, social enterprise organizations serve populations of youth “disconnected” from the mainstream economy. Funded by a mix of earned revenue from corporate partners, philanthropy, and, in some cases, government grants, most of these organizations are bound by a strong connection between program outcomes and revenue. They provide students with a connection to a postsecondary

credential by working with employers in industry sectors important to the region's economy.

Most social enterprises have a decided business mindset, with close scrutiny paid to accountability. Because these organizations are revenue-dependent, they are driven by multiple business pressure points, such as customer service, providing a value-added service to their customers, and innovation. Characterized as having "hard heads and soft hearts," at their core, however, they are also motivated by serving their students.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

The community-based organizations (CBOs) we have identified as models are often the first line of defense in the community for individuals seeking to address the barriers they face in preparing for the workforce. These CBOs provide the services either themselves or through a network of partners to whom they refer their clients. The organizations have worked to understand their local labor market and have recruited employer partners to invest in their programs and their clients. The organizations have developed strict eligibility criteria for their programming so clients can receive the training and education they need to advance and succeed in postsecondary educational programs and careers.

Open Meadow Alternative Schools in Portland, Oregon, operates five distinct education and transition programs designed to engage disconnected youth in secondary education, college, and the workforce. Open Meadow's Career Services is tasked with ensuring that low-income youth successfully transition from secondary education to college and the workforce. This program works with roughly 250 youth per year, ages 16–24, from all over Portland, providing intensive career advising and planning services while connecting promising young workers to college and

entry-level, career-track employment with partnering businesses.

Billed as a "high-impact economic development program focusing on high-skill, high-wage jobs," **Project ARRIBA** in El Paso, Texas, offers long-term, high-skilled training in hard-to-fill demand occupations that pay a living wage of at least \$11.50 per hour, with benefits and a career path. Occupational and workplace skills are supplemented by an integrated program of intensive case management. A public, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, Project ARRIBA has three case managers: one for licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), one for registered nurses (RNs), and one for allied health and other industries. Case managers work closely with employers. All training is provided by the El Paso Community College (EPCC) and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

Workforce Development, Inc., (WDI) serves thousands of people through career planning and pre-vocational skill training in rural, southeastern Minnesota. One special area of focus for the organization is working with populations dealing with multiple barriers to achieving meaningful employment. WDI offers a suite of services to support youth and adults to prepare them for college and future careers. WDI's Pre-Employment Academies

focus on assisting students interested in entering or moving up the career ladder in health care, manufacturing, and renewable energy.

COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES

In our study, we found community and technical colleges across the country recasting their relationship with employers. Thanks to recent investments targeted to community college workforce development initiatives by the federal government, a number of states, and private foundations, the colleges we found to be model programs are those that are responding directly to market demand and to the increasing needs of their student populations. These colleges are addressing employers' rapidly changing needs and their requirement for workers with specific technical and soft skills and job-related experience. They are also dealing with the significant obstacles low-income students have to overcome to be able to access education and remain in school to gain a postsecondary certification or degree.

Gateway Technical College's Boot Camp model was created to retrain dislocated workers with the skills needed to meet the new demand. Serving Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth counties in Wisconsin, Gateway Technical College partners with employers and Workforce Development Centers to meet local labor market demand as it emerges. In 2004, the partners identified CNC (computer numerical control) operator as the occupation with the greatest number of openings and shortage of qualified applicants. Employers inform curriculum, and students graduate with certificates that align with national industry standards. The CNC Boot Camp is a 14-week course that covers math, blueprint reading, gauging, CNC Offsets,

safety, and manufacturing excellence. To simulate the workplace, classes meet for eight hours per day, five days a week. Employers are in constant communication with the college and other partners. Instructors have industry experience and are often on loan from local employers. Case managers provide student services and supervision. Gateway has replicated the CNC Boot Camp model for use in welding and machine repair training.

In 2005, five community colleges of the Arkansas Community College System joined to form a partnership to promote economic development in the economically depressed 12-county Arkansas Delta region. The **Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium** (ADTEC) has adopted an industry-driven, pathways approach as a means of promoting comprehensive regional economic development. Through a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, these colleges also operate secondary technical centers on their campuses. As a part of the college, the centers provide career and technical high school courses to more than 30 high schools in the ADTEC region. The consortium is currently focused on three industries assessed to have the greatest need for education and training in the region: advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and allied health. Since ADTEC was formed, the colleges pool and share their various faculty, equipment, and workforce development resources to offer students and regional employers a cohesive, seamless set of education and training courses.

EMPLOYERS

How employers are involved in these training and education efforts and the roles they play

take on multiple forms and often correlate to the size of the company. The employer-led models featured in this report are driven by individual employers or employer collaborations. They are large companies that have made substantial investments in efforts to attract and retain employees. These employers are involved in all aspects of their programs and are prominent players in their communities. The companies have long-standing partnerships with educational institutions, as well as with national, state, and local governments and community-based organizations.

Since 1919 *The Apprentice School* has been preparing the workforce for Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia. The School offers educational and career opportunity that provides four- and five-year apprentice programs for students interested in shipbuilding careers. Apprentices are hired by Northrop Grumman and are considered full-time employees receiving wages and benefits during their period of study. The Apprentice School programs are fully articulated with area colleges so that Apprentice School students receive full credit for their training. The Apprentice School is a function of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and is located on Northrop Grumman grounds. Northrop runs all of the School's operations, including administration, recruitment, placement, curriculum development, and accreditation and hiring of all faculty.

In 1997, Cisco Systems, Inc., a global leader in networking, began laying the education groundwork to support 21st-century information technology needs. Today, the multinational company partners with more than 2,200 education institutions in the United States through its *Cisco Networking Academy* program, providing IT and networking knowl-

edge and skills to more than 128,000 students in the country each year. Networking Academy curriculum helps students become career- and college-ready. Networking Academy courses map to both industry certifications and college-degree programs, allowing students to move seamlessly from secondary to postsecondary education. Cisco's curricula are aligned to national education standards in math, language arts, and technology, as well as to IT industry certifications.

Having noted that a significant number of its low-wage employees were having difficulty finishing its education programs, Clarian Health in Indianapolis made a corporate decision to help its employees overcome barriers to education and career advancement. With the *Clarian Health Workforce Prosperity Program*, the health cooperative hopes to help its environmental services employees advance into clinical positions, increase its job retention rate, and add diversity to its mid- and higher-level corporate management. Developed and operated in partnership with Ivy Tech Community College, the program enables employees who score too low on the COMPASS assessment to place into college-level courses to enroll in Clarian's College Prep courses first. Employees, many of whom are first-generation college students, are provided counseling, coaching, and tutoring as needed as part of the Workforce Prosperity initiative.

The *Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati* (Ohio) is an employer-led career pathways partnership with managing partners consisting of three hospital systems employing approximately 30,000 individuals and two education institutions. Additional partners include two community-based

organizations, the local one-stop center, and the Greater Cincinnati Health Council. Collaborative students are either workers from one of the employer partners or individuals from the general public interested in pursuing a career in health care. Individuals from the general public are supported with Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding. Once students have completed all eligibility requirements, they are enrolled in either a State Tested Nursing Assistant or a Health Unit Coordinator certificate program offered by Great Oaks at the Health Careers Collaborative's training facility in urban Cincinnati.

Born 10 years ago out of the need to retain the United Parcel Service (UPS), the State of Kentucky's largest employer, **Metropolitan College (MC)** today offers the citizens of Kentucky tuition-free postsecondary education, as well as support services and employment opportunities. MC is a unique education, workforce, and economic development partnership among UPS, Jefferson Community and Technical College, and the University of Louisville.

UPS employees enrolled in MC receive a panoply of services and benefits:

- A part-time job of 15 to 18 hours per week, Next Day Air night shift, \$8.50 per hour to start and full-time benefits.
- Full in-state tuition deferment, for any major, for coursework passed with a C or better (half paid by MC and half paid by UPS).
- Up to \$65 of textbook reimbursement per class.
- Bonuses for completing a semester, reaching credit-hour milestones, and for graduation.
- Academic counseling through a Student Development Team, which acts as a liaison

to connect students with student services at UPS and educational partner campuses.

- Career exploration, planning, and placement services.

INDUSTRY

With the focus on high-skill, high-demand jobs, regional education, and workforce and economic development, institutions are mobilizing capacity and resources around targeted industry-sector economic growth strategies. The industry-led models featured here are involved in offering training that meets national industry standards. These industry-led education and training programs operate on a national scale, either partnered with community colleges and other educational institutions or via the Internet. Their goal is to create a pipeline of workers, and their scale tends to leverage government and community investments.

The **Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE)** is a national alliance delivering solutions to attract and engage the energy industry's workforce through quality online education. Expanding beyond standard job training, EPCE's online programs are contextualized credit-bearing courses leading to certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees. These programs offer interested candidates and current workers technical skills as well as academic knowledge needed for industry career paths in electric utilities, nuclear power, and gas distribution. EPCE offers online high school and associate and bachelor's degree programs for the energy industry in electrical power, with newly revised content for the green/renewable areas. Online certificate and degree programs are also offered in nuclear power, natural gas, and electrical engineering.

The **Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association** (WANADA) Technician Training Program offers students one day a week of postsecondary training plus a 40 hour per week full-time entry-level job with an employer-assigned mentor at a local auto dealership. Students are also required to take one hour per week of manufacturer-specific training online and to pass the tests tied to that subject matter. Dealers must agree to:

- Provide each student with a full-time entry-level job starting at a minimum of \$9 per hour.
- Provide a mentor.
- Pay \$1,000 per employee per semester for a total of \$4,000 if the employee finishes the program.
- Allow each student to attend class one day a week.

Not unlike many community-based education programs working with at-risk youth, the automotive industry program offers its candidates and their employers the assurance of multiple support systems.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ORGANIZATIONS

The organizations featured here provide students with a connection to a postsecondary credential by working with employers in industry sectors important to the region's economy. In both of our cases, the organizations have chosen to focus on information technology, and in both cases strong attention is paid to the additional development of soft skills such as teamwork and professional communications. Strong partnerships with employers and neighboring educational institutions pave the road for employment and further postsecondary education—as do real world experience in the form of internships and

apprenticeships. In each case, the social enterprise organization distinguishes itself from similar community-based efforts by handling its program as a business that adds value to its employer partners.

Based in Chicago, **i.c.stars** was formed in 1999 as a non-profit organization to help young adults with a high school diploma or GED to become community leaders. The goal is to develop 1,000 community leaders by 2020. Ten years later, its trademark—strong team skills and real work experience—sets i.c.stars alumni apart from their competitors. As a result, alumni have found full-time employment with some of Chicago's top employers. Known to locals as the "inner city MBA program," i.c.stars uses technology and a strict business curriculum to shape the next generation of community leaders. Websites are built for Fortune 500 companies, business plans are presented to venture capitalists, and IT projects involve non-profits, small businesses, and IT sector employers. As a result, 38 percent of i.c.stars graduates are pursuing college.

High school graduates and GED recipients of low or moderate means are eligible to take part in **Year Up**, a corporate apprenticeship program in Boston. The model has three components: cultivating relationships with businesses, preparing students for successful transitions into the workplace, and, perhaps most important, continuously improving the quality of services to students and businesses. Staff embrace an apprentice management philosophy that includes a matching process, a transitional process for introducing apprentices to the workplace, and a system for supporting apprentices throughout the apprenticeship phase. Year Up students undergo extensive testing, reference checking,

and interviewing to gain entry into the competitive program. Customer service is a constant, feedback and participation are encouraged,

and all critical findings are fed back into the loop to improve the model.

TABLE 2: MODEL, INDUSTRIES TARGETED, CREDENTIALS, COST, AND SERVICES

MODEL	INDUSTRY/ OCCUPATIONS	CERTIFICATES/ DEGREES	COST/ STUDENT	SERVICES COVERED BY THE COST/STUDENT
Community-based Organizations				
Open Meadow Alternative Schools	Business Services Creative (advertising, design) Health Care Public Service	3–9 month occupational skills credentials from Portland Community College in the areas of: HVAC, Pharmacy Tech- nician, Computer Techn- ology Support, CNA, Phlebotomy, and other areas Portland State University, School of Business Administration, offers 2 college credits to those students who complete the Career Connections training and internship	\$6,600 over a 3-year period	Intensive career advising and planning Intensive 5-week training Job/internship placement Long-term support—3-year com- mitment to the career develop- ment of each participant, includ- ing connections to post-secondary education Support services, including stip- ends for transportation, child care, and other services
Project ARRIBA	Health Care (LVN, RN) Education Information Technology	16-week college pre- paration program Certificate and degree programs at El Paso Community College and the University of Texas El Paso leading to licensure or industry-recognized certification in the spec- ified program	\$5,500	Occupational and workforce skills training Case management Skills assessment Wrap-around support services such as child care, tuition, books, and supplies as appropriate
Workforce Development Inc., Pre- Employment Academies	Advanced Manufac- turing Health Care Renewable Energy	Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification Forklift driving licensure	\$1,200	Workplace skills training Job shadowing Personal and college success skills Wrap-around support services College tuition Career planning services

continued

MODEL	INDUSTRY/ OCCUPATIONS	CERTIFICATES/ DEGREES	COST/ STUDENT	SERVICES COVERED BY THE COST/STUDENT
Community and Technical Colleges				
ADTEC	Allied Health Advanced Manufacturing Renewable Energy	Community college Certificate of Proficiency Community College Technical Certificate (24 credits) AAS degree in area of study	\$5,000 for a two-year degree	Tuition Fees Textbooks
Gateway Technical College Boot Camp	Advanced Manufacturing CNC (computer numerical control) Operator Welding Machine repair (boot camp in development)	National certifications based on industry standards Courses are certified by the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC), the American Welding Society (AWS), and the National Occupa- tional Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI).	\$3,887 for welding \$5,354 for CNC operator \$8,784 for machine repair	Instruction Textbooks Certification exams
Employers				
The Apprentice School	Shipbuilding Dimensional control Technician Electrician Electrician Maintenance Heating & Air Cond- itioning Heavy metal fabricator Machinist Millwright Non-Destructive tester (NDT) Outside machinist Painter-Insulator Pipefitter Pipefitter maintenance Rigger	Apprentices may obtain one of the following degrees as a part of their apprenticeship: Associate degree in Engineering, AAS degree in Engineer- ing Technology in Mechanical or Electrical, AS degree in Business Administration	Not Available	Full-time employment Wages and benefits Credit for training through articu- lation agreements with area colleges Classroom and on-the-job instruction Student activities such as student government and intercollegiate athletics Opportunity for membership in professional societies

continued

MODEL	INDUSTRY/ OCCUPATIONS	CERTIFICATES/ DEGREES	COST/ STUDENT	SERVICES COVERED BY THE COST/STUDENT
Employers				
The Apprentice School	Sheet metal worker Shipfitter Welder Welding equipment Repairer Molder			
Cisco Networking Academy	Information Techno- logy STEM (Science, Technology, Engineer- ing and Math)	Industry certification College courses leading to degree attainment	Not Available	Online assessment Licensed curriculum Train-the-trainer instruction Lab equipment Classroom and one-on-one course teaching and coaching 24/7 web-based support for instructors
Clarian Health Workforce Prosperity Program	Health Care	College prep courses Ivy Tech Community College courses	\$1,200	Academic courses and Career advancement classes or Pathways to Prosperity training
Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati	Health Care Unit coordinator Patient care assistant Orthopedic technician Electro-Neurodiagnos- tic technician Licensed practical nurse Registered nurse Respiratory therapist Surgical technician Clinical lab technician	Industry certification and licensure Technical certificates AS degrees BS degrees	Not Available	Remedial training as appropriate Tuition Fees Textbooks Wrap-around services Job search skills Job referrals as appropriate

continued

MODEL	INDUSTRY/ OCCUPATIONS	CERTIFICATES/ DEGREES	COST/ STUDENT	SERVICES COVERED BY THE COST/STUDENT
Employers				
Metropolitan College	Students are permitted to pursue degrees in their area of interest	AA/AS from Jefferson Community and Technical College BA/BS from the University of Louisville	For the 2007–2008 academic year: \$1,991 (funded by Metropolitan College from the state, city, and two educational institutions) \$2,853* from UPS	The MC portion covers: ½ tuition Personnel for student development counseling Recruiting and administrative staff Office lease Supplies and other overhead The UPS portion covers: ½ tuition Academic bonuses Textbook reimbursement *Note that wages paid to students by UPS are not included in this figure
Industry				
EPCE	Energy Industry including: Electrical power Nuclear power Gas distribution	College certificates AS degree BS degrees Electrical Power, Nuclear Power, Natural Gas, and Electrical Engineering	Not Available	
WANADA	Automotive Automotive Service Excellence certification leading to a Master Technician Respiratory therapist Surgical technician Clinical lab technician	4 Automotive Service Excellence certifications (ASE) 4 Credits per ASE certification from Montgomery College	\$8,000** (\$2,000 per candidate per semester)	One day per week of post-secondary training over a two-year period Entry-level full-time (40 hours per week) job Employer-assigned mentor One hour per week manufacturer-specific training online over a two-year period **Note that neither wages paid to students nor the time spent by the mentors is included in this figure

continued

MODEL	INDUSTRY/ OCCUPATIONS	CERTIFICATES/ DEGREES	COST/ STUDENT	SERVICES COVERED BY THE COST/STUDENT
Social Enterprise Organizations				
i.c.stars	Information Technology	i.c.stars alumni are eligible for special admission and automatic acceptance into DePaul University's School of Computer Science, Telecommunications, and Information Systems (CTI) or School for New Learning bachelor's programs. Northwestern University offers scholarships to two i.c.stars interns each year.	\$12,800	16-week training cycle including business training, software skills, client interaction, and leadership development Paid internship involving 4 distinct projects Career counseling Job placement Materials Meetings and events
Year Up	Financial Services Portfolio accountants Fund administrators In-trade reconciliation roles Information Technology Help desk Desktop support	Through articulation agreements with local colleges, Year Up apprentices can earn up to 18 college credits for successful participation in Year Up.	\$25,000	6-month Learning and Development intensive training 6-month Apprenticeship Counseling Mentoring Job placement services



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CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Each of our models is ambitious in its own right in that it breaks new ground in engaging employers in attempts to take low-income youth and young adults beyond traditional job placement outcomes to attainment of postsecondary education credentials that lead to a job. Undertaking efforts such as those captured in this report can present real difficulties. Several of these are presented below, together with a sampling of strategies our models use to address them. Though some of what follows may not be altogether new to literature in the larger field of workforce development, it is nonetheless important to note.

SERVING LOW-INCOME YOUTH

Education and training programs that target low-income and low-skilled workers or unemployed individuals generally face a number of challenges. Those serving low-income youth confront a particular set of additional issues. Among them is the need to make them accountable, to have someone advocate on their behalf, to work around their untraditional schedules, and to give them a sense of belonging.

Our model programs help students to stay in and complete their courses in a variety of ways. Organizers of the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati believe that the learning community aspect of their program encourages completion. Students are placed in classes as a cohort so they can study together and support one another throughout the program. The Collaborative has set aside class slots and a special registration

for students in the learning community so they will be ensured seats in the classes. But getting into classes doesn't mean they will complete their courses. Several of the programs require their employer partners to sign agreements that they will not hire students prior to course completion.

Instead of using cohorts, with career pathways in place ADTEC has chosen to structure its programs to facilitate the frequent comings and goings that occur with so many low-income youth. Gateway Technical College employs a strong case management component in its boot camps to support its students. At a ratio of 1:16, Gateway case managers not only keep students in school but make certain they show up for work. WANADA's liaison plays a similar role, as do Year Up's case managers. Case managers are especially important to ESL students, who often need extra help understanding what is

expected of them and where to turn for assistance.

Project ARRIBA and i.c.stars make a concerted effort to build their students' commitment to their communities to give them a sense of belonging and identity. Hosting community events, working with community-based organizations, and creating student associations raises their programs' visibility in the community, making students accountable not just as individuals but as members of their program.

MAINTAINING EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT

Even with strong employer relationships, coordinating and managing employer involvement can pose hurdles for community-based and social enterprise organizations, as well as community and technical colleges. Open Meadow has established strong relationships with its employer partners by offering them a menu of choices and by formalizing their relationships through a Memorandum of Understanding. By documenting those relationships, and the roles and responsibilities of each partner, Open Meadow has been able to institutionalize partnerships with the employer. In this way, the partnership is not dependent upon personalities, or just one individual at the employer site, but becomes a part of the way Open Meadow and the employer partner conduct business. i.c.stars has a Partnership Model that organizes, guides, and packages employer sponsorship of its various program activities. Year Up has an employer management manual to instruct staff at every point on how to build a relationship with employers.

For community colleges, the challenge is only somewhat simpler: Either they meet the employer's training and occupational need or they don't. The programs noted in this study

have direct and long-standing connections with the majority of their employers to make sure they are being responsive. Employers inform the content and design of their workforce development coursework. Many if not most of the courses are industry-certified; the majority are mapped to college credits.

POSITIONING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

From a community college perspective, restructuring or otherwise organizing to meet labor market demand is a monumental effort that requires not only time and industry- or employer-driven courses, but suitably trained and credentialed faculty, the proper training facilities, and, of course, sufficient funding. The colleges featured in this report depend on the relationships they have with their employers to address the majority of these challenges.

The most ambitious colleges, such as members of ADTEC, adopt career pathways as a structural approach to align educational offerings with their region's industry demand. Advisory councils target different sectors, labor market information informs discussions with employers, and employers serve on the councils and assist in developing course curriculum. Faculty are often employees retired from the regional sectors targeted. Facilities are likewise often provided by the employers, sometimes through collocation with the college and sometimes by donation of mobile training trailers.

BRIDGING CULTURAL DIVIDES

As with many of our model programs, the different private sector employer, government agency, and educational institution cultures can present challenges to management, communications, and scale. In most cases, an

intermediary of sorts has been created to bridge these differences. UPS's Metropolitan College is perhaps the most notable intermediary, convening partners, setting agendas, following up on program implementation, and reporting on issues and progress. At community colleges, faculty and employer advisory councils serve the same neutral functions. In some instances, programs use case managers to coordinate their efforts.

SERVING INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

Formerly incarcerated individuals are among the groups hardest to serve with respect to employment preparation and placement. WDI has worked to address this by identifying employment opportunities available to these individuals. By providing the associated training in partnership with correctional facilities while these job seekers are still incarcerated, the individuals can leave with a job skill to aid them in their search for employment.



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LESSONS LEARNED

For an education and training program to succeed in helping low-income youth and young adults attain postsecondary credentials leading to career track employment is no small undertaking. It takes time and calls for long-term commitments, significant financial investments, and tremendous attention to detail. With global competition at full tilt and qualified workers in short supply, involving employers in the process is a prerequisite. So is being flexible and responding quickly. According to Mike Winslow, general counsel of the Standard Insurance Company, Oregon's Open Meadow "can maneuver very quickly. Staff is amenable to making things work. They have been as nimble as we have been." Below are a number of lessons learned from the models we feature in this report.

BUILDING COMMUNITY AWARENESS

To succeed in attaining postsecondary education, the disadvantaged, especially youth, need strong community support. Even in these uncertain times, representatives from community-based organizations were especially vocal about the fact that too many communities remain unaware that the nation's ability to maintain its edge against global competition demands at least one year of postsecondary education of the *majority* of its working-age citizens.

Communities need first to recognize that they have a role in regional and national economic development. They then must understand that where low-income people are

concerned, the need is that much greater. It is not simply a matter of calling for a community to leverage its resources. Global competition is knocking at everyone's door. Communities must embrace a culture of encouragement and higher expectations for all of its citizens.

PREPARING AND SUPPORTING STUDENTS

Program administrators, college presidents, and employers were fairly uniform in their recommendations with regard to what is entailed in helping low-income youth and young adults to persist in attaining postsecondary credentials. Underestimating student barriers and the associated expense of dealing with them is easy to do when a program is first launched.

Program representatives underscored repeatedly how critical it is that programs provide consistent career counseling and advising services from the outset. Also necessary is the recognition that students will opt in and out of education and training programs, creating the commensurate need for a flexible schedule.

They noted the need for “a great deal” of student individualized attention, as well as wrap-around social services such as housing, transportation, and child care. Metropolitan College goes so far as to cross-train staff from different partnering organizations to make certain student needs do not fall through the cracks. Bill Lecher from Cincinnati Children’s Hospital put it this way: “We get folks interested in the program because we provide so much support. Finding out they can do this builds self-confidence, and it builds loyalty to the employer.”

Other recommendations include: monitor performance regularly and identify issues early; offer tuition-free classes and textbook reimbursement; incorporate a hands-on component into the curriculum; and offer a flexible schedule of classes, both on and off campus.

CREATING MODEL PROGRAMS

Program administrators across each model type echoed the same refrain: “Build it, and they will come.” As is so often heard, some cautioned that it is best to start on a small scale with a pilot, test it, and then expand accordingly. In all cases, a direct link to the labor market and relationships, not simply connections, to employers were cited as being key to program success.

WANADA and ADTEC representatives went further to note how important it is to establish a base of demand. It is essential that employers within industry groups band togeth-

er so that training and education programs can avoid creating boutique programs and instead develop and run programs that can realize cost efficiencies for all involved. The greater the demand, the greater the probability of a program’s success at preparing a student for employment.

Use of data to track performance, progress, and quality is also required, especially as partners are increasingly demanding a return on their investments. Employers need to know that they are exacting a cost savings by turning to these institutions when they seek to reduce turnover, train their staff, and invest in a pipeline for future workers. Government agencies need to see that productive workers are adding to their tax base. Students and workers alike expect increases in salary. i.c.stars tracks its graduates’ salary earnings and is able to report on increases after the first and third years post graduation. While some aspects of these programs, especially the more comprehensive ones, are difficult to measure, it is imperative that measurement systems be put in place up front.

Among the data points that should be captured are: the number of participants per year; the number who earn a postsecondary credential; the number of diplomas, and associate and bachelor’s degrees awarded; the average number of students retained from fall to fall in academic programs; and the average number of students retained from fall to fall at a program-related job, internship, and/or apprenticeship program. UPS keeps track of the percentage of its workforce who are students. As a result, it knows that prior to the creation of Metropolitan College 8 percent of its workforce were student workers. Today, 59 percent are student workers.

MANAGING EMPLOYER INVOLVEMENT

Across the board, program administrators strongly recommended that employers be offered a menu of engagement options with corresponding roles and responsibilities and memoranda of understandings for all levels of engagement. They cautioned against creating as many employer partnerships as program slots.

All organizations agreed that success, level of commitment, and continued employer involvement are largely built on relationships. But it also depends on the details: how an employer is approached; how well the curriculum addresses their needs and how quickly it can be developed and delivered; and how well programs monitor and attend to issues dealing with performance. Don't overpromise. That said, among the most striking lessons is that businesses are not always aware of what their needs are.

MANAGING PARTNERSHIPS

All the model programs involve multiple partners that have different disciplines and speak different languages. All agreed on the need to have clear communications, documentation of policies and procedures, and an agreement on how the more informal communications would take place. ADTEC requires that processes and procedures be standardized, and that the partnering colleges have access to technology to provide online courses. With a community college consortium, some colleges are ahead of others; there are different need levels and different levels of capacity. Some will grow more than others; leaders will naturally assume a mentor role.

For Metropolitan College, having an intermediary to bridge the different organizational cultures has been critical to the institution's

success. So has branding its services. Connecting Resources, Education, and Workforce (CREW) is the career center associated with MC, which operates it together with several partner organizations. They opted to call it by the acronym rather than Metropolitan's career center to give a sense of common partner ownership so that "everyone has skin in the game."

And finally, again, programs reiterated the importance of relationships. According to Nan Poppe, president of the Extended Learning Campus at Portland Community College (Oregon), "If programs outside the college don't have relationships with people inside the college, we get really siloed. It works so much better if we work together to provide these seamless connections and well-coordinated handoffs. It is all about relationships."



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LOOKING FORWARD

⁷ James E. Rosenbaum, Regina Deil-Amen, and Ann E. Person, *After Admission: From College Access to College Success*, 2006.

This typology report has only begun to create a record of the model types and models that might help low-income youth and young adults move into family-supporting careers in the United States. Several types of workforce development organizations deserve further research.

Chambers of commerce are undertaking a variety of campaigns to encourage postsecondary education in their communities. Small businesses are also helping the disadvantaged citizens in their localities gain postsecondary credentials in multiple and significant ways. A small number of private (profit or not-for-profit) two-year, associate degree granting institutions known as occupational colleges are successfully working with employers to help low-income students complete degrees leading to job placement and careers.⁷ But are these efforts connected to their local labor markets? Do they lead to career track employment?

And because we chose to include in this report only one model to represent a group of similar model programs, and only those with records of success, we leave open the possibility for adding worthy programs such as those at Capital IDEA, Community College of Baltimore County, Focus: HOPE, Project QUEST, and the still fledgling Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York.

With this report we have created the foundation for a community of practice that has the potential to inform the nation's economic future in a number of powerful ways. What can one college or one employer learn from another? What can community-based organizations learn from industry groups and social enterprise

organizations? Creating such a community could lead the many good programs currently in existence to fruition in the labor market.

Further research is also needed to identify other programs that are successful in their attempts to bring together employers, educational institutions, and needy students to ensure they are attaining postsecondary credentials leading to careers. This will require the help of advocates, industry associations, and other leaders who can organize and bring together this broad community of stakeholders. Finally, we need to understand how to define and measure successful employer engagement in these efforts. What defines a successful program? How do we measure it? Can it be scaled? Can it be replicated? How will we know if a program has, in fact, led to career track employment?

Our research shines a bright light on 14 models that we believe demonstrate to business, education, and community leaders and funders across the nation that they too can build it and students will come.



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MODEL PROFILES

1

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

CAREER SERVICES AND CAREER CONNECTIONS

OPEN MEADOW ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

PORTLAND, OREGON

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Open Meadow operates five distinct education and transition programs designed to engage disconnected youth in secondary education, college, and the workforce.

Career Services is the Open Meadow program tasked with ensuring that low-income youth successfully transition from secondary education to college and the workforce. This program works with roughly 250 youth ages 16 to 24 per year from all over Portland, providing intensive career advising and planning services while connecting promising young workers to college and entry-level, career-track employment with partnering businesses. The focus of the program is not on job placement but on career decision-making and long-term self-sufficiency. Open Meadow makes a three-year career advising commitment to each enrollee; services go far beyond initial job or college placements. Career Services staff members strive to ensure that all participants can successfully navigate public and private systems crucial to long-term financial success and independence.

Career Services provides regular opportunities to highlight the ongoing asset-building successes of students. Successful completion of this program doesn't necessarily hinge on job or college placement but instead on progress toward self-sufficiency, measured through successive attainment on individualized goal plans. Job placements and college success tend to be byproducts of diverse successes in personal management and goal pursuit.

Career Services programming is divided into three areas that correlate to high school progress:

- Work readiness/career exploration activities and advising for high school juniors and early seniors.
- Intensive college and career exposure/planning activities for high school seniors preparing to transition to college or the workforce within 24 weeks (two trimesters).
- Career Connections, an employer-supported professional career preparation program for high school graduates ages 18 to 24 seeking professional workforce attachment.

This profile focuses on the services offered through Career Connections—a no-cost career development program for young adults who are interested in exploring and breaking into the world of professional work. Career Connections starts with an intensive five-week training followed by long-term, participant-tailored career advising services. Program services include:

- Training—Five-week training held at partner company locations focuses on professional work culture, career planning, and industry exposure. Industry partners hold tours of their locations and facilitate workshops on topics such as behavioral interviewing, customer service, networking, and personal finance.
- Job/Internship Placement—Open Meadow partners with diverse organizations that offer internship and work experiences for training

- graduates. Internship experiences are 200 hours in length, with a stipend paid through Open Meadow at no cost to the employer.
- **Career Advising**—Each participant has a Career Advisor who acts as a mentor, advocate, and career coach. Career Advisors help advisees refine their goals, set up action plans, and make connections to the professional world.
 - **Long-term Support**—Open Meadow makes a three-year commitment to the career development of each participant, so programming goes far beyond initial job placements. Career Advisors help participants plan for long-term financial stability, post-secondary education, and advancement in their chosen career field beyond entry-level employment.
 - **Support Services**—Career Services can provide incentives and stipends, transportation support, child care, and other supportive services for youth who are actively engaged in programming and have a demonstrated need.

Students are carefully selected for participation in the Career Connections program. They must write an essay, engage in an interview, and return to Open Meadow a number of times to show commitment before they are selected. Once selected, students are paired with a counselor with whom they meet weekly throughout their participation in the program. The counselor also interacts with employers once students are placed in internships. Students and employers alike cite the consistent role of the counselor as a primary key to the success of Open Meadow.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Open Meadow serves low-income youth ages 11 to 24. In the 2007–2008 program year, 85 percent qualified for free or reduced lunch; 62 percent were youth of color, about half of whom were male. Thirty-eight percent of students lived with a single mother, and another 15 percent lived with grandparents, relatives, or friends. Twenty-four percent lived with both parents.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

- Business services
- Creative (advertising, design)
- Health care
- Public service

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Open Meadow works in partnership with and receives funding from the City of Portland, Bureau of Housing and Community Development; Worksystems, Inc.; Multnomah County and Metro Regional Government; Portland Community College Career Pathways; Portland State University School of Business Administration; Oregon Youth Conservation Corps; and Portland Public Schools.

It has a number of employer partnerships and partners: Standard Insurance Company; Kaiser Permanente; Oregon Healthcare Association; Today's Office Professionals; Comcast; Trail Blazers, Inc.; Bullivant Houser Bailey and Dunn Carney; Albina Community Bank; Umpqua Bank; Wells Fargo; US Bank; Bank of America; OnPoint Community Credit Union; Sterling Savings Bank; and Bank of the West.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers serve as a fundamental backbone to Career Services programming. In fact, the Career Connections aspect of Career Services started as the result of a proposal to the City of Portland written in collaboration among Open Meadow, seven corporate partners, and the Portland State School of Business. Over time, business partnerships have grown in both number and depth.

Open Meadow employer partners take on any of four areas of partnership when engaging with Career Services: advising, training, internships, and employment. They are asked to sign a Memorandum of Understanding that describes the roles and responsibilities required at each level. Employers have also taken on additional roles such as:

- Board membership
- Business mentor to the executive director
- Marketing and promotion
- Advocacy

LOCATION

Portland, Oregon, metro region (urban)

GOVERNANCE

Open Meadow is governed by a Board of Directors. An Executive Director and Associate Director are responsible for program operation. Program Directors run each of the programs and are responsible for employer relationships. The Career Services program has nine staff members.

FUNDING PROFILE

Open Meadow is financially supported through a contract with the local school district (50 percent), state and local workforce contracts (30 percent), private fundraising (10 percent), and other sources of revenue.

SCALE

In 2007 and 2008, Open Meadow had 719 unduplicated former dropouts in five programs. Career Connections alone serves roughly 120 participants per year.

RESULTS

- Overall, Career Connections has a 92 percent placement rate into college and/or career-track employment.
- Career Connections enrollment has increased by 100 percent since 2007, indicating significant growth. Career Connections completers typically increase their earnings from \$735 per month in year one of the program to \$2,038 per month in year two (an increase of 177 percent). Thirty percent of youth successfully engage in postsecondary education during their three years of service, a number that has also risen significantly over the past two years as the program has expanded in focus and number of youth served.

PROJECT ARRIBA

EL PASO, TEXAS

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Based in El Paso, Texas, Project ARRIBA was incorporated as a public, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation in 1998. Billed as a “high-impact economic development program focusing on high-skill, high-wage jobs,” the program resulted from the collective efforts of the El Paso Interreligious Sponsoring Organization (EPISO) and business leaders eager to move their community out of an economy based on low-wage employment. Project ARRIBA offers long-term high-skilled training in hard-to-fill, high-demand occupations that pay a living wage of at least \$11.50 per hour, with benefits and a career path. Occupational and workplace skills are supplemented by an integrated program of intensive case management.

Project ARRIBA is based on a case-management model. It has three case managers: one for licensed vocational nurses (LVNs), one for registered nurses (RNs), and one for allied health and other industries. Cases managers work closely with employers. All training is provided by the El Paso Community College (EPCC) and the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

The program has a six-step application process:

- Orientation
- Adult Basic Education (TABE) testing
- System Assessment for Group Evaluation (SAGE) testing
- Intake
- Individuals' Service Strategy (ISS)
- Participation Evaluation Team (PET)

Specific eligibility criteria include:

- U.S. citizen or legal resident eligible to work in the United States
- Resident of El Paso County
- Income at or below 200 percent of the Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines
- Age 18 or older
- High school diploma or GED

Once participants enter a training program, they are assessed on a regular basis and are provided wrap-around support services as needed: child care, tuition, textbooks, supplies, and other assistance. Every six months, students are asked to recertify, to ensure that the participant is still meeting income guidelines as stipulated by Project ARRIBA funders. If the case manager sees that the participant is having financial difficulties, this is addressed at that meeting.

Participants attend monthly Vision, Initiative, and Perseverance (VIP) group meetings to develop workforce/soft skills. Additionally, job placement services are offered for one year. According to Project ARRIBA, it takes an average of 2.6 years to fully train a participant for a living-wage, high-demand career. The Workforce Development Academy (WDA) is a 16-week college preparation course offered in-house for participants scoring below a 12th-grade level on the TABE. The purpose of the WDA is to prepare participants for the placement test and to reduce or eliminate the number of remediation classes added to the participant's degree plan. Remediation extends time in training and uses up financial aid. All participants begin at EPCC, to reduce program costs.

POPULATIONS SERVED

The target populations served by Project ARRIBA are El Paso County's displaced, unemployed, or underemployed needing help to achieve higher education and "living wage" employment.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

- Health care
- Education
- Information technology

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Project ARRIBA is in partnership with the University of Texas at El Paso and El Paso Community College. It has had more than 50 business partners since it opened its doors in 1999.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers are involved in various facets of Project ARRIBA's operation. Those who serve as members of the Board of Directors are responsible for outreach, recruitment, and fundraising. Employer partners play multiple roles—from helping to identify high-demand occupations, the shortage of qualified workers, and the skills and services needed to fill the gaps to serving as mentors, offering internships, providing feedback on curriculum, and contributing to the continuous improvement process.

LOCATION

El Paso County, Texas (urban and rural)

GOVERNANCE

Project ARRIBA is governed by a Board of Directors. Half of the members of the board are from the business community; the other half are members of El Paso's interfaith and interreligious faith community. The targeted industries are broken down into three areas, each managed by a case manager.

FUNDING PROFILE

Project ARRIBA's operating budget comes equally from three sources: federal and state funds, city and county funds, and private foundations and donors. All students are required to apply for financial aid.

SCALE

Project ARRIBA serves approximately 450 students each year.

RESULTS

- 96 percent academic retention rate.
- 92 percent pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), used by state boards of nursing to measure the entry-level nursing competence of candidates for licensure of registered or licensed nurses.
- 697 participants have graduated from the program.
- Graduates' post-training wages average more than \$37,003 a year.
- Program graduates have added \$185.3 million in income to El Paso's economy (according to an Institute for Policy & Economic Development study).
- An average \$16.09 is returned to the community of El Paso for every dollar invested into the program since its inception (according to same study noted above).

PRE-EMPLOYMENT ACADEMIES
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, INC.
SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Workforce Development, Inc., (WDI) serves thousands of people through career planning and pre-vocational skill training in rural, south-eastern Minnesota. With its primary focus on helping populations with multiple barriers to achieve meaningful employment, WDI supports youth and adults preparing for college and career.

Pre-Employment Academies are one of WDI's services to help students interested in entering the workforce or moving up the career ladder. Industries served include health care, advanced manufacturing, and renewable energy. The academies expose participants to the industry of their choice. During a three-to-four-week program, participants are provided with workplace skills such as communications, problem solving, and decision making. They have job shadowing opportunities and learn about industry-specific workplace culture, terminology, and the coursework they will pursue at the college level. Students also focus on personal and college success skills such as study and test taking, personal wellness, and techniques for achieving their potential. The final step is to attend college-level classes to obtain industry certifications (i.e., Certified Nursing Assistant or Forklift Driving License).

Academy candidates are referred to their local one-stop center. The program serves individuals with multiple barriers to achieving meaningful employment. Students must meet minimum academic achievements. Those not meeting minimum requirements are referred to Adult Basic Education programs for remediation and accepted into later classes.

Individuals meet with a counselor and undergo academic assessment. If their basic skills do not meet those needed to participate in the academy, individuals are referred for remediation, where a counselor monitors their progress.

Each class has 15 to 20 students. Students first meet with a counselor to develop a job plan and receive assistance with any necessary wrap-around services. Classes are held for a half-day, Monday through Friday. Participants are expected to attend every class. If a participant is absent, he or she is advised to come back and attend the next session. Slots in an appropriate college program are reserved for students. College tuition is covered through WDI funding.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Candidates may be low-income or dislocated workers, individuals receiving public assistance, or may have been referred from a community-based organization or vocational rehabilitation office.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

- Advanced manufacturing
- Health care
- Renewable energy

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

WDI collaborates with area economic development groups, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU), and K-12 school systems as well as local, county, state, and national leadership.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers participate in several ways, including:

- Advisory board participation: sharing industry information and reviewing curriculum.
- Candidate referral.
- Guest speaking to discuss employer expectations.
- Hiring those who complete the program.

LOCATION

Southeast Minnesota (rural)

GOVERNANCE

WDI is governed by a Board with 60 percent private-sector employers as well as organized labor and the K-12, community college, and adult education sectors. Each academy also convenes an Advisory Board of area employers who share industry information, review curriculum, and offer resources such as speakers or faculty.

FUNDING PROFILE

Student participation in the Pre-Employment Academies is supported by WIA funds, Vocational Rehabilitation funds, grant funds, and in some cases, by the students themselves.

SCALE

Pre-Employment Academies have been in operation for nine years and have served 1,620 individuals since their inception. The academies have spread from one to four locations throughout the region. WDI is also training workforce boards to start academies in three additional communities.

RESULTS

- MNSCU is reporting a reduced turnover rate of students among academy graduates vs. general enrollees.
- Employers, particularly in the health care field, look to the Pre-Employment Academies as a recruitment source.
- Employers are reporting lower turnover rates among CNAs (Certified Nursing Assistants) at long-term health care facilities and subsequent financial savings. These employers report a cost of \$13,000 per CNA turnover.
- The Pre-Employment Health Care Academy also has shown a return on investment (ROI) rate that ranges from 600 percent to more than 1,100 percent.
- For every dollar spent operating the Academy, between \$6 and \$11 is returned to the economy through increased taxes paid and welfare-cost savings.
- Experience shows this return on investment rate to drop initially when the model is replicated into a new area, but the rate recovers as the new site becomes more efficient and employers and job counselors recognize the benefits of the program.

2

COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES

ARKANSAS DELTA TRAINING AND EDUCATION CONSORTIUM ARKANSAS DELTA

MODEL DESCRIPTION

In 2005, five community colleges of the Arkansas Community College System formed a partnership to promote economic development in the economically depressed 12-county Arkansas Delta region. Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) and Community-Based Job Training grants, the Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC) adopted an industry-driven pathways approach to advance comprehensive regional economic development.

ADTEC partners are Arkansas Northeastern College, Arkansas State University–Newport, East Arkansas Community College, Mid-South Community College, and Phillips Community College. Through a partnership with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, these colleges also operate secondary technical centers on their campuses. As part of their colleges, the centers provide career and technical high school courses to more than 30 high schools in the ADTEC region. The consortium is currently focused on three industries assessed to have the greatest need for education and training in the region: advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and allied health. ADTEC started by reengineering the region's advanced manufacturing programs; it is in the process of doing the same for renewable energy and allied health.

The colleges pool and share faculty, equipment, and workforce development resources to offer students and regional

employers a cohesive, seamless set of education and training courses. They have standardized their processes and procedures. As a consortium, they work with industry to identify high-demand occupations in the region and the industry-specific skills necessary to fill them. The consortium then collaborates with industry representatives to develop curriculum using the DACUM (Developing a Curriculum) job analysis process. Learning is measured by industry-defined competencies, and progress is tracked and success measured by a common set of results indicators.

With ADTEC, education in the region has come to be viewed as a lifelong-learning continuum; there are no student cohorts. With the regional secondary technical center system connected to the Arkansas Community College System on a shared common curriculum, and with dual enrollment in place, ADTEC has designed industry pathways to allow students to move easily from secondary education to postsecondary education and between two-year and four-year institutions in the state. Learning time is “chunked out” into 15-week, two-year, and four-year increments. Students can earn a certificate of proficiency and up to 24 college credits toward a technical certificate and associate of applied science degree after completing a designated two-year program. They can go on to work and re-enter the education pathway at any time to reach the next level.

At the secondary level, ADTEC-funded workforce counselors use interest assessments to set students on a career track.

Counselors continue tracking until students complete a four-year degree or enter the workforce. The technical centers have incorporated a postsecondary component into many workforce development training programs, allowing students to get a head start on college. To attract students into different industries, the consortium also coordinates recruitment efforts, marketing, and scholarships. The colleges collaborate on all aspects of the consortium, playing to individual strengths and mentoring one another as necessary. Data are collected at all levels across the region to measure progress and performance.

Since ADTEC began, the colleges have experienced many changes, including assuming a more publicly acknowledged role as engines of regional economic development. Through Arkansas Northeastern College's for-profit industry center, the Solutions Group, the consortium offers industries customized training as well as certificate and credit courses and programs. Training takes place throughout the week and weekends and is validated through experiential learning. Colleges share instructors who come from various industries, offer classes 24/7, and have incentive contracts. In past economic downturns, local employers have cut training; this year has been the Solutions Group's biggest year ever.

For each industry program, a regional advisory committee of educators and employers meets twice a year to assess and establish training needs and maintain relationships with employers. Workforce counselors conduct plant tours to better understand training needs. In return, employers are asked not to hire students until the students have gained a proficiency or postsecondary credential.

Employers note a "dramatic" change in

how the colleges operate and in the skill level of the students. One employer that used to provide its own training and hire outside the region for specialized work partnered with another employer in the industry on an apprenticeship program to encourage local talent in technical occupations. Employees are being encouraged to move up career ladders. Another employer characterized his previous involvement with education—judging student competitions—as a community service. He now focuses on evaluating students' potential as future employees, with the hope of recruiting and hiring them into his industry. Employers are beginning to see their role in the bigger regional economic development picture.

While ADTEC has received multiple funding grants since 2005, its original grant was targeted to build the region's capacity to sustain the consortium. The colleges believe they have reached this goal and now plan to apply the framework they have developed to additional industries.

POPULATIONS SERVED

ADTEC serves students ages 16 to 18 at the secondary technical center level, and 18 and older at the postsecondary level.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

- Advanced manufacturing
- Allied health
- Renewable energy

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

The Consortium is a partnership of five community colleges: Arkansas Northeastern College (ANC), Arkansas State University—Newport, East Arkansas Community College, Mid-South Community

College, and Phillips Community College. Hundreds of business partners are involved in the consortium.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers specify industry needs and work with the consortium to develop curricula and map competencies and pathways. They also serve on industry advisory committees and as mentors, offer apprenticeships (some paid), participate in robotics courses, and recruit students.

LOCATION

The Arkansas Delta region (rural)

GOVERNANCE

Each industry program has a consortium program manager and an advisory committee. Colleges share responsibility for the consortium. For each industry targeted, a different college assumes the lead: Mid-South for manufacturing, Phillips Community College for renewable energy, and ANC for allied health.

FUNDING PROFILE

For the period of October 2005 through April 2009, investments totaled over \$36,122,000.

SCALE

The Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium involves five colleges, which cover 12 counties. It has provided advanced manufacturing training to 9,449 new and incumbent workers: 1,040 youth trained through the secondary technical centers, 2,104 adults received college credit, and 6,305 were incumbent workers.

RESULTS

- All programs now have a postsecondary component.
- The consortium has been able to leverage the ADTEC concept at the state level to receive additional funding.
- Since the advent of ADTEC, competition has decreased among colleges. Instead, colleges play to each other's strengths and function more cooperatively as a cohesive whole.
- To promote economic growth, developers are able to cite ADTEC as a resource unique to the Arkansas Delta region.
- Partnership has motivated community colleges to aggressively accelerate development of new training programs in response to emerging industry needs.
- Working in partnership has motivated community colleges to build alliances with secondary schools and universities in order to bridge gaps in the educational pathway.

BOOT CAMP

GATEWAY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

KENOSHA, RACINE, AND WALWORTH COUNTIES, WISCONSIN

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Gateway Technical College serves the southeastern Wisconsin counties of Kenosha, Racine, and Walworth. The total population exceeds 400,000, with many residents working outside the district boundaries or commuting to Illinois. Despite an overall decrease in manufacturing jobs in the region, the manufacturing industry remains the top employer in this region, employing 25 percent of the workforce in Racine, 19 percent in Kenosha, and nearly 23 percent in Walworth counties.

Advanced manufacturing companies remaining in the region are being transformed by technology and innovation, requiring new worker skill sets. Area manufacturers are replacing assembly lines with innovative robotic and technology-based systems that require workers with advanced skills. Local manufacturing employer focus groups revealed a need for employees with a solid work ethic and technical skills based on national industry standards.

It was against this backdrop that Gateway's Boot Camp model was developed. Its original CNC (computer numerical control) boot camp program was designed to retrain dislocated workers in a short period of time to gain the entry-level skills needed to fill the advanced manufacturing industry occupation with the greatest shortage of qualified applicants.

The program has since been replicated for welding, and the college is currently developing a boot camp for machine repair. Gateway is finding skills needed for machine repair are also needed for wind and solar

energy sector training, which is currently under development at the college. All boot camp courses are embedded with national certifications based on industry standards. Courses are certified by the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC), the American Welding Society (AWS), and the National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI). Gateway has also added a substantial case-management component to both boot camp programs.

The boot camp concept began in early in 2004, when Gateway Technical College met with local manufacturing employers to discuss solutions to workforce shortages, especially in skilled areas. CNC operator was identified as the occupation with the greatest number of openings and a shortage of qualified applicants. CNC employers met with Gateway administrators and faculty to determine required skill levels. Employers also reviewed and approved the assessment tool used in the boot camps.

Employer support also includes providing the college with "loaner" employees to assist with production runs and sending supervisors to the boot camp to observe the students in action. Employer partners work with the workforce development and college partners to shape curriculum development, boot camp delivery, and the completion ceremony. Near the end of the CNC Boot Camp, employers are provided with a "catalog" of participant resumes, to assist in the interview process. Many employers attend graduation and conduct onsite interviews immediately after the ceremony.

Participants attend classes five days a week, eight hours a day, in a model designed to simulate the work environment. Participants who are tardy or absent must meet with the workforce development case manager to determine the reason. The case manager assists with removing barriers for learning (e.g., transportation or daycare issues). Participants who continue to be tardy or absent are dropped from the program.

The CNC Boot Camp runs 14 weeks and covers math, blueprint reading, gauging, CNC Offsets, safety, and manufacturing excellence. The Welding Boot Camp is 16 weeks and covers math, blueprint reading, safety, and welding. Classes meet for four hours a day, five days a week, in order to simulate a work week schedule.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Boot camps are offered to unemployed or dislocated workers in the Gateway Technical College region as well as to high school and community college students. The CNC Boot Camp serves dislocated workers; the Welding Boot Camp serves both dislocated workers and high school seniors.

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Advanced manufacturing

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Project partners include employers, Workforce Development Centers, and Gateway Technical College.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employer partners have provided input into the boot camp curriculum as well as supplies, equipment, materials, personnel, and in some cases, training facilities. Employer representa-

tives also speak with program participants about job expectations and often visit the classroom to interact with participants.

LOCATION

Southeast Wisconsin (urban/rural)

GOVERNANCE

Each boot camp is led by a Gateway project manager. Decisions regarding program delivery and partner roles are addressed in a collaborative setting, to give each partner a stake in the program. The project manager relies on the expertise of each employer partner and the workforce development partners.

FUNDING PROFILE

Funding for the boot camps comes from Workforce Investment Act (WIA) grants, Dislocated Worker Training grants, other private sources, Federal financial aid, and employers.

SCALE

Gateway Technical College has run 10 CNC Boot Camps since January 2005, enrolling 177 participants. Of those enrolled, 144 have finished the program, and 108 have attained a certificate. Additionally, Gateway has run five Welding Boot Camps since October 2006, enrolling 76 participants. Of those enrolled, 63 have finished the program, and 58 have attained a certificate.

RESULTS

According to a voluntary post-boot camp survey, 64 percent of CNC Boot Camp students and 60 percent of the Welding Boot Camp students were employed in their field, with an average starting salary of \$12 an hour.

3

EMPLOYERS

CISCO NETWORKING ACADEMY **CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.** **SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA (HEADQUARTERS)**

MODEL DESCRIPTION

In 1997, Cisco Systems, a global leader in networking, began laying the education groundwork to support 21st-century information technology needs. Today, the multinational company partners with more than 2,200 educational institutions in the United States through its Cisco Networking Academy program. The academy program provides IT and networking knowledge and skills to more than 128,000 students each year. Moreover, the Networking Academy curriculum helps students become career- and college-ready. Networking Academy courses map to both industry certifications and college degree programs, allowing students to move seamlessly from secondary to postsecondary education.

Cisco created the infrastructure to foster student interest and skills in designing, building, and maintaining networks. The result is a pipeline of highly skilled IT workers with improved career and economic opportunities. To create this infrastructure, the Networking Academy partners with high schools, community and technical colleges, and universities, as well as federal, state, and local governments, and non-profit organizations.

Cisco's curricula are geared to the needs of the learner. Using a 21st-century learning model, Networking Academy curricula and student assessments are delivered online and by classroom instructors supported by 24/7 access to web-based assistance. Courses have been designed so instructors spend less time dealing with classroom implementation and more time teaching and coaching individual students as well as providing hands-on lab

activities. The online assessments not only provide personalized feedback to students and instructors, but also become part of Cisco's quality assurance efforts. The cycle of continuous improvement is also informed by course feedback surveys when students complete a course and by student-outcome surveys sent to students six months after course completion.

To implement a Cisco Networking Academy, local entities contract with a regional Networking Academy, which provides instructor training and support for the entity. While the curriculum is licensed at no charge to not-for-profit organizations, Academies may be charged in a cost-recovery model for teacher training, mentoring, and other support provided by the regional Academy in a train-the-trainer model. Lab equipment for hands-on student activities is provided at a discounted price. The Cisco Networking Academy team works closely with the certification authorities to assure curriculum alignment. About half the community colleges in the United States have Cisco Networking Academy programs.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Cisco Networking Academy educational services are available to high-school-age youth and postsecondary-age adults in community-based organizations, secondary and postsecondary education institutions, and Job Corps. Cisco does not collect income data.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

The industries targeted include IT and any industry that demands science, technology, education, and math (STEM) skills and knowledge.

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Cisco partners with high schools, community and technical colleges, and universities, as well as with federal, state, and local governments and non-profit organizations.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Cisco encourages Academies to work with local employers to provide internships and mentors and to facilitate job placement. It also leverages its business ecosystem by promoting relationships with local Cisco offices and channel partners as guest lecturers and for activities such as site visits, participation in student competitions, job shadowing, student internships, mentoring, and job fairs.

LOCATION

Academies are located in every state in the United States and in 97 percent of congressional districts (urban and rural), and more than half of community colleges in the country.

GOVERNANCE

Each educational institution governs its Cisco Networking Academy locally with guidance from a common quality-assurance plan, which outlines roles and responsibilities. Community and technical colleges, as well as career and technical programs in high schools, generally utilize advisory committees, typically made up of educators and representatives from local and regional businesses, to give program guidance and make local employer connections for students.

FUNDING PROFILE

Cisco licenses Networking Academy curriculum at no charge to not-for-profit educational institutions. Startup costs include:

- Funding the necessary lab equipment for the hands-on labs (typically \$5,000 to \$10,000).
- Instructor training and support (cost-recovery basis with regional academy).
- PC lab with Internet connectivity for curriculum access.

SCALE

- There are 2,200 active Cisco Networking Academy locations in the United States.
- More than 128,000 students were enrolled in a Networking Academy in 2008.

RESULTS

- Many Networking Academy students go on to pursue degrees in engineering, science, mathematics, and other fields.
- Other Networking Academy students use their skills to build their own businesses and work in IT across virtually every industry.

WORKFORCE PROSPERITY PROGRAM
CLARIAN HEALTH
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Having noted that a significant number of its low-wage employees were taking advantage of its education programs but were having difficulty finishing, Clarian Health made a corporate decision to help its employees overcome barriers to education and career advancement. Through its Workforce Prosperity Program, Clarian hopes to help its environmental services employees advance into clinical positions, increase its job retention rate, and add diversity to its mid- and higher-level corporate management. Clarian Health is a cooperative effort among three major hospitals located in Indianapolis, Indiana: Methodist Hospital, Indiana University Hospital, and Riley Hospital for Children.

Investing in the growth and development of employees has been a core tenet of the mission of Clarian Health. Created in 1995, its Employee Education and Development department offers a wide array of classes, courses, and educational programs to all Clarian employees to enhance their knowledge, skills, and career development. Clarian launched its Workforce Prosperity initiative in 2005 with the specific intention of assisting its low-wage employees so that they might be better able to manage their resources, retain their jobs, and prepare for career advancement in the hospital.

The initiative offers financial, health and technology classes, as well as several courses designed to advance employees' educational and career attainment. Among these are College at Work, College Prep, Pathways Seminars, and Promoveo™. Developed and

operated in partnership with Ivy Tech Community College, Clarian's College at Work program offers employees access to four Ivy Tech freshman-level core courses onsite at Clarian. Employees who score too low on the COMPASS assessment to place into college-level courses can enroll in Clarian's College Prep courses first. College Prep uses a blended-learning approach that combines Ivy Tech's Online Accelerated Remediation (OAR) program with classroom sessions taught in a lab setting before or after work hours.

Employees, many of whom are first-generation college students, are provided counseling, coaching, and tutoring as needed during both College Prep and College at Work enrollment. Pathways Seminars are offered to enhance problem solving, critical thinking, computer literacy, communications, teamwork, and professionalism. A Career Planning program helps employees to establish and achieve next step goals in their health care careers. The organization provides tuition reimbursement and textbook assistance and has a formal Celebration of Achievement ceremony at least once a year with senior leadership.

Clarian also has "Getting Ahead in a Just-Getting-By World" workshops for employees and "Pathways to Prosperity" seminars for leaders to help acquaint them with the culture of poverty and how it affects individuals, families, Clarian patients, Clarian as a business, and the community at large. A new course called Promoveo™ is being launched to help guide employees' advancement up the health-career ladder.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Clarian employees, many of whom are entry-level, interested in gaining education, skills, and upward career mobility

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Health care

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Scores of Clarian leaders and educators support the program. Those most involved include Ivy Tech Community College, Warren Township Adult Education, the Methodist Health Foundation and the Methodist Task Core, and Indiana Workforce Development.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Clarian Health manages the Workforce Prosperity initiative. The hospital also works with local high schools by providing internships, tours, and summer jobs. Staff speak with students and help teach classes. They also coordinate public services for employee-participants and raise funds.

LOCATION

Greater Indianapolis, Indiana (urban)

GOVERNANCE

Warren Township Adult Education instructors who provide College Prep classroom instruction work closely with Ivy Tech's OAR tutors and Clarian's coaches. In addition, Clarian Health has established committees that meet on a regular basis to monitor progress and coordinate efforts.

FUNDING PROFILE

Various sources of grant funding have been used to conduct pilots, after which Clarian assumes the expense for continuation.

SCALE

Between 2007 and first quarter 2009, 65 employees enrolled in the College at Work, College Prep, OAR, and Promoveo™ Career Exploration programs. Clarian is expanding its efforts. It is also finalizing installation of a new database that will allow reporting on skill-level gains, wage gains, promotions, retention rates, and numbers of employees enrolling in college or certificate training programs.

RESULTS

- Clarian reports a visible increase in the number of workers who want to gain new skills to advance within the organization.
- Clarian reports a visible skill-level gain among employees who participate in 12 hours of instruction over three to four weeks.
- With its Workforce Prosperity Program, Clarian has developed 10 courses that have been attended by more than 800 participants in total, with 65 employees participating in College at Work, OAR, and College Prep courses during 2007-2008.

HEALTH CAREERS COLLABORATIVE OF GREATER CINCINNATI GREATER CINCINNATI REGION, OHIO

MODEL DESCRIPTION

The Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati is an employer-led health career pathway partnership. Its managing partners are three hospital systems that together employ approximately 30,000 individuals and two education institutions. Additional partners include two community-based organizations, the local one-stop workforce development center, and the Greater Cincinnati Health Council.

The Collaborative has three interrelated and complementary purposes:

- Provide access to health care careers for underutilized labor pools, such as lower-wage employees at employer partners and unemployed or underemployed individuals.
- Alleviate regional health care workforce shortages.
- Increase the diversity of the health care workforce in Greater Cincinnati.

Students who currently work for one of the employer partners learn about the career pathways program through their employers, usually at an informational worksite meeting. They must apply to participate. They are then assessed, and, if selected, their tuition costs are paid. Some are sent for remediation, if it is needed. (Developmental education is required for approximately 90 percent of employer partner employees.) The partnering college allows employee/students from the Collaborative to enroll in classes before opening classes to the general public. This allows the employee/student to attend classes as a cohort and progress together.

The Collaborative program is also open to the public. Prospective students find out about the Collaborative through direct mail to their homes, at SuperJobs (the local one-stop center), or through a variety of community-based organizations. These prospective students are assessed to determine their academic levels and are referred to any remedial training as needed, or to services to address any non-academic barriers. Once they have completed all eligibility requirements, they enroll in a certificate program offered by Great Oaks at the Health Careers Collaborative's training facility in urban Cincinnati—walking distance from many of the area hospitals—where they complete their training. As a part of the certificate training, students are required to develop a resume and are provided with job search and job retention skills. They also participate in a mock interview with one of the area employers and are referred to member employers with open positions. If hired, these certificate workers become eligible to enter into the cohort/degree training program after an appropriate period of successful employment.

POPULATIONS SERVED

The Collaborative targets two groups of students:

- Workers who have not previously been college-bound or who have not been successful with college (to be considered, individuals must have 25 or fewer college credits).
- Individuals from the general public interested in pursuing careers in health care.

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Health care, specifically:

- Entry-level: Unit Coordinator, Patient Care Assistant.
- Mid-level: Orthopedic Technician, Electro-Neurodiagnostic Technician, Licensed Practical Nurse.
- Advanced, with associate/baccalaureate degrees: Registered Nurse, Respiratory Therapist, Surgical Technician, Clinical Lab Technician.

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

The Collaborative is a public/private partnership among community-based organizations (Dress for Success, Mercy Neighborhood Ministries), SuperJobs, educational institutions (Cincinnati State Community and Technical College, Great Oaks), and employers (Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, The Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati—a five-hospital system, and Tri-Health—a two-hospital system).

EMPLOYER ROLE

The employers lead the Collaborative's organization, operation, and education efforts. The original employer partners and education partners contributed financially toward the development of the training facility.

Employers identify training and hiring needs, recruit students, and provide preceptors and clinical experiences for students as well as provide educators and guest speakers. They also assist with the marketing plan and have been involved in developing and implementing the sustainability plan. Employer members are required to pre-pay tuition and the cost of developmental courses. Finally, employers work with department supervisors to

provide flexible scheduling options so that employee/students will be able to attend classes to complete their training.

LOCATION

Greater Cincinnati Region, Ohio (urban)

GOVERNANCE

Cincinnati Children's Hospital has chaired the Managing Partners Board of the Collaborative for more than three years. It will soon be replaced in that role by the Health Alliance. Great Oaks serves as a Collaborative managing partner and helps set policy. Cincinnati State Community and Technical College is another Collaborative managing partner.

FUNDING PROFILE

The initiative started with a planning, and later implementation, grant from the KnowledgeWorks Foundation, as a part of its Ohio Bridges to Opportunity Initiative. Since that initial investment, the Health Career Collaborative has received a U.S.

Department of Labor Community Based Job Training Initiative grant; a three-year grant from the United Way of Ohio; employer investments, including dollars for training space expansion and upgrade, faculty salary support, tuition advancement, and in-kind investments such as staff time, clinical space, and marketing expertise. Many students also use WIA Individual Training Accounts to underwrite their education and training and financial aid. Most recently, Cincinnati has been selected as a National Fund for Workforce Solutions site.

SCALE

Now starting its seventh cohort of employee/students, the Collaborative has 145 students enrolled in associate degree programs. The Collaborative has graduated more than 1,500 certificate students.

The original partners (Cincinnati Children's Hospital, The Health Alliance of Greater Cincinnati, Great Oaks, and Cincinnati State Community College) felt the program to be so successful that they have added Tri-Health as an employer partner.

RESULTS

- 1,500 certificate graduates.
- 145 current associate of arts degree students.
- 98 percent retention rate.
- Of the percent retained, 98 percent were placed in jobs, earning an average wage between \$11 and \$13 per hour. More than 72 percent of these positions also offer health benefits.

METROPOLITAN COLLEGE

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Metropolitan College (MC) is a unique education, workforce, and economic development partnership among Jefferson Community and Technical College (JCTC), the University of Louisville, and United Parcel Service of America (UPS). Born 10 years ago out of the need to retain the State of Kentucky's largest employer, the institution today offers the citizens of Kentucky tuition-free postsecondary education, in addition to support services and employment opportunities.

Looking to create a large airport hub, in 1997 UPS approached the state of Kentucky with a win/win proposal. UPS would build its hub in Louisville if the state agreed to help UPS offer its employees postsecondary opportunities. The delivery giant had for years struggled to retain employees on its Next Day Air operation night shift. With help from Kentucky's governor, Metropolitan College (MC) was created.

Participants in MC receive a panoply of services and benefits:

- A part-time job of 15 to 18 hours per week, Next Day Air night shift, starting at \$8.50 per hour, with full-time benefits.
- Full in-state tuition deferred, for any major, for coursework passed with a C or better (half paid by MC and half paid by UPS).
- Up to \$65 of textbook reimbursement per class.
- Bonuses: \$350 to \$500 for completing a semester, \$600 for reaching milestones of 30, 60, and 90 credit hours, and between \$400 and \$1,400 upon graduation.
- Academic counseling through a Student Development Team, which connects stu-

dents with services at UPS and the educational partner campuses.

- Career exploration, planning, and placement via CREW, the college's career center.

MC marries academics with workforce preparation. All students are required to meet the requirements of the Career and Academic Planning Program (CAPP), designed to assist students as they progress through their academic program and prepare for a career. CAPP has five elements:

- The Student Transition Program, which introduces all new students to MC's requirements and benefits, including financial literacy, major/career exploration, student support services, and time management.
- A resume, which students must prepare after attaining between 13 and 29 credits and customize and update as they progress through MC.
- The Career and Academic Survey, which students must complete when they have earned between 30 and 59 credits, which helps MC staff assess progress and advise students in selection of a major that will help them attain their career goals.
- A mock interview in their chosen career field, which students must participate in once they have earned between 60 and 89 credits. Interviews are conducted by Student Development Counselors. Students are expected to dress appropriately and bring their resumes for assessment. Counselors provide feedback to help students prepare for job searches.

- A Graduation Plan Survey after earning 110 or more credits.

The college's career center, Connecting Resources, Education, and Workforce (CREW), is coordinated by MC and operates in partnership with JCTC and KentuckianaWorks (the local Workforce Investment Board). CREW is designed to offer a seamless transition connecting educational attainment to individual, employer, and community workforce needs. Located at JCTC, CREW provides career exploration, planning, and placement services to MC students as well as JCTC students and the general public.

Two additional companies joined MC after its inception: Community Alternatives Kentucky (CAKY) and Humana Associates. CAKY, a direct-care provider for persons with developmental and other disabilities, came to the program because it was having difficulty retaining employees. CAKY now offers free tuition for up to six credit hours, and Metropolitan College provides support services. MC also pays a \$600 bonus when employees reach academic milestones. MC has also agreed to offer CAKY deferred tuition.

Humana Associates is the newest MC partner. With the goal of grooming employees for advancement, the Humana Higher Education Program pays all of its employees' tuition costs.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Students are recruited from throughout Kentucky. The majority are 18 to 24 years of age. To be eligible, students must be employed by one of the employer partners and enrolled in one of the partner educational institutions.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

Originally founded to serve UPS's Next Day Air operation, MC has expanded to serve additional industries.

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

MC is a joint initiative of UPS, Jefferson Community and Technical College (JCTC), the University of Louisville, and the Louisville Metro and State of Kentucky governments.

EMPLOYER ROLE

UPS, the founding employer partner of MC, serves on the MC Council and takes on the following responsibilities:

- Hires students who become MC participants.
- Pays salaries and benefits, 50 percent of student tuition, and 100 percent of the textbook reimbursement, as well as academic achievement bonuses.
- Recruits students throughout the state.
- Promotes and markets the program.

Additional employer partners have been brought on board, and in each case, the employer hires students and provides tuition assistance.

LOCATION

Louisville, Kentucky (Students are recruited from urban and rural areas throughout the state.)

GOVERNANCE

The MC Council governs the college. Voting members include JCTC, University of Louisville, UPS, Metro Government, and Making Connections, Louisville. Bluegrass State Skills Corporation, which operates under the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic

Development, is represented as a non-voting ad hoc member. The University of Louisville acts as the fiscal agent.

FUNDING PROFILE

Funding to provide 50 percent tuition match and infrastructure cost is received from:

- The Commonwealth of Kentucky
- Louisville Metro Government
- University of Louisville
- JCTC

UPS funds 50 percent tuition and 100 percent of bonuses and textbook reimbursements.

SCALE

Since the inception of MC in 1998, there have been 10,008 UPS participants in the program.

RESULTS

The employer partners have experienced differing results according to their goals:

UPS

- An increase in employee job retention, from eight weeks to almost two years, for the 15- to 18-hour night shift.
- 716 certificates, 688 associate of arts degrees, 1,161 bachelor of science/bachelor of arts degrees, and 140 master's or advanced degrees awarded to students from the start of the program through the fall of 2008.
- Increased retention of college students.
- Replication of the MC model in Chicago with the Chicagoland Regional College.

CAKY

- Employee retention has increased to two years, up from an average of six months prior to the company's involvement with MC.

HUMANA ASSOCIATES

- Today, Humana Associates employs workers full time during the open enrollment period, July through December, and part time January through June. Of the 200 people Humana Associates recently employed, 110 are enrolled in MC.

THE APPRENTICE SCHOOL
NORTHROP GRUMMAN SHIPBUILDING
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

MODEL DESCRIPTION

The mission of The Apprentice School is to contribute to the profitability and growth of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding by recruiting, training, and developing men and women for careers in shipbuilding. The School seeks to provide the company with a continuous supply of individuals who possess not only the skills, knowledge, and pride of workmanship, but also the educational foundation and personal qualities that they will require to fully meet the challenges of a shipbuilding career.

In continuous operation since 1919, The Apprentice School carries out this mission by providing an apprentice program consisting of craft training, related academic instruction, and extracurricular activities (including student government and athletics) that contribute positively and synergistically to develop “Three Ships”—Craftsmanship, Scholarship, and Leadership.

The Apprentice School is an educational and career opportunity that provides 4- and 5-year apprentice programs for students interested in shipbuilding careers. Apprentices are hired by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and are considered full-time employees receiving wages and benefits during their period of study. Apprentice School programs are fully articulated with area colleges so that Apprentice School students receive full credit for their training, all of which is conducted “on the clock.”

Apprentices pursue a combination of classroom and on-the-job instruction. All apprentices are required to complete all courses that make up the World Class Shipbuilder

Curriculum, which consists of instruction in the subject matter areas of computers, technical math, drafting, naval architecture and marine engineering, business processes, physical science, and technical communications.

Additionally, apprentices pursue courses in Trade Related Education Curricula, which are designed to support the on-the-job training they receive in one of 18 registered apprenticeship programs which include:

- Dimensional Control Technician
- Electrician
- Electrician Maintenance
- Heating & Air Conditioning
- Heavy Metal Fabricator
- Machinist
- Millwright
- Non-Destructive Tester (NDT)
- Outside Machinist
- Painter-Insulator
- Pipefitter
- Pipefitter Maintenance
- Rigger
- Sheet Metal Worker
- Shipfitter
- Welder
- Welding Equipment Repairer
- Molder

Additionally, six optional programs, Advanced Shipyard Operations, Production Planner, Modeling & Simulation, Cost Estimator, Nuclear Test Technician, and Marine Designer, are offered on a competitive basis to those apprentices who desire additional education and who meet established performance standards in the required coursework.

Student activities include student government, six Division-III Level intercollegiate athletic programs, three student chapters of professional societies, plus alumni and athletic associations.

Apprentices are recruited nationwide and in particular from 50 area high schools by alumni as well as recruiters employed by The Apprentice School. They are also recruited from among the ranks of Northrop Grumman employees and local military transition offices. The School also has a website: www.apprenticeschool.com.

To be eligible, applicants to the School must be United States citizens, able to obtain a security clearance, and hold a high school diploma or GED. The program also requires that students meet an academic minimum of classes and have a willingness and desire to work with their hands. All apprentices are interviewed before being accepted into the program.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Apprentices must be at least 18 years of age and meet the criteria indicated above.

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Shipbuilding and Ship Repair and Overhaul

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

The Apprentice School partners with Thomas Nelson Community College and Tidewater Community College to provide the technical and non-technical educational courses required so that apprentices may attain an associate degree in Engineering, an AAS degree in Engineering Technology in Mechanical or Electrical, or an AS degree in Business Administration as part of their apprenticeship. The School also works with the local workforce development center utilizing their classrooms to offer those educational programs.

EMPLOYER ROLE

The Apprentice School is a function of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding. All apprentices are Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding employees, with the company providing all salaries and benefits. The School is located on Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding grounds. Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding runs all of the School's operations including administration, recruitment, placement, curriculum development and delivery, accreditation, and hiring of all faculty.

As a part of its recruitment efforts, The Apprentice School participates in job fairs, engages alumni to assist in recruitment, and invites applicants and their families to tour the facilities. Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding also offers education assistance so that Apprentice School graduates can continue their formal education through baccalaureate and graduate education.

LOCATION

Newport News, Virginia (urban)

GOVERNANCE

The Apprentice School is wholly operated by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and is a federally registered apprenticeship program. Additionally, the School is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Council on Occupational Education and must meet the Council's standards.

FUNDING PROFILE

The programs of The Apprentice School are fully funded by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding.

SCALE

The Apprentice School, which was founded in 1919, has produced over 9,000 graduates in support of the operational needs of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding.

RESULTS

Currently more than 2,650 alumni of the School fill approximately 240 different types of jobs at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding from nuclear pipe welders to senior executives. More than 42 percent of the Shipyard's production management personnel are Apprentice School graduates. The School is considered a critical asset that gives the company a competitive advantage; it's analogous to the role that service academies provide to the armed forces.

4

INDUSTRY

ENERGY PROVIDERS COALITION FOR EDUCATION NATIONALLY AVAILABLE

MODEL DESCRIPTION

The Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE) is a national alliance delivering solutions to attract and engage the energy industry's workforce through quality online education.

Expanding beyond standard job training, EPCE's online programs are contextualized credit-bearing courses leading to certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees. These programs offer interested candidates and incumbent workers technical skills as well as academic knowledge needed for industry career paths in electric utilities, nuclear power, and gas distribution.

EPCE members (representing more than two-thirds of the industry) include energy employers, associations, contractors, labor organizations, and education providers. EPCE members champion industry needs in their joint efforts to develop and sponsor online curriculum with qualified accredited high schools, colleges, and universities. This collaborative strategy ensures continued program expansion across electric utilities and the energy industry at large.

Industry stakeholders become EPCE members to lead the development and use of online learning for energy workforce development. Other membership benefits include networking with peers, discounts on tuition and fees, and taking a hand in directing the future of EPCE.

EPCE was established to address critical industry needs in these ways:

- Develop a pipeline of workers in response to the retirement of a significant number of workers within the next decade.

- Ensure that newly hired employees entering the industry have the necessary skills.
- Re-train current employees so they remain up-to-date with changing technologies.

EPCE offers online high school and associate and bachelor's degree programs for the energy industry in electrical power, with newly revised content for green/renewable areas. Online certificate and degree programs are also offered in nuclear power, natural gas, and electrical engineering. The high school program is called Light Up Your Future.

Light Up Your Future is designed to excite high school students about math, encourage exploration into energy industry opportunities, and connect students to energy-related college programs and internships leading to high-potential career opportunities in energy. Students take a 15-week online high school course (for elective credit) and participate in career-related activities, such as utility tours, career panels, internships, summer camps, and additional online courses designed for utility workers. This model complements the college-level online learning through EPCE, connecting high school students to a potential future with their local energy employer.

Current employees and others interested in pursuing careers or upgraded skills in the energy industry may participate in a variety of online certificate and degree programs offered in an asynchronous fashion over the web with industry faculty. While offered online, these courses require important student engagement through online tools including discussions, e-mail, and chats.

POPULATIONS SERVED

EPCE provides online education and training in the electric power industry to high school students, others interested in entering the industry, and current workers.

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Energy/electrical power

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

EPCE is a national partnership of electric power utilities, national and regional industry associations, contractors, labor, and industry-related organizations. Educational partners include: Bismarck State College, CCCOnline, Clemson State University, Excelsior College, Thomas Edison State College, and the Virtual High School Global Consortium.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Employers participate and support the program in several ways:

- Participate on one or more of the three member committees.
- Recruit for EPCE programs internally in their companies among employees.
- Provide support to employees to help them enroll in EPCE programs.
- Provide tuition reimbursement and cover the cost of class materials as appropriate.
- Recruit students from the Light Up Your Future program, provide internships, and pay tuition for two-year associate degrees.
- Promote EPCE externally at conferences.

LOCATION

EPCE's online programs are offered nationally (accessible to both urban and rural students).

GOVERNANCE

The Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) founded EPCE and manages the consortium. Administration, finance, and marketing of EPCE are managed by CAEL. Guidance and oversight are provided by EPCE's three member committees: governance, curriculum, and marketing.

FUNDING PROFILE

EPCE has received funding from a variety of public and private sources, such as The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Education for Science and Careers program, the National Science Foundation for the development of the Nuclear Power Technology program curriculum, the Xcel Energy Foundation, Denver WIRED, and Northeast Utilities.

SCALE

Enrollments for the postsecondary EPCE programs continue to grow and average 1,500 a year. The Light Up Your Future online high school program started two-and-a-half years ago as a pilot in Denver, with five high schools and 60 students. In Oklahoma (starting two years ago) through Oklahoma Gas and Electric, the program has sponsored two small groups of students in one high school and is expanding to four high schools, to include Arkansas (spring 2010). Groups average from one to four students per high school. However, as Northeast Utilities implements this model in two technical schools in its location, it is sponsoring 15 students.

RESULTS

According to a CAEL study published in 2007, looking at EPCE students enrolled in Bismarck State College's Electrical Power Technology program:

- Among students who enrolled in the program during the 2001–2002 academic year, 22 percent had either graduated or remained enrolled in 2005.
- That number increased to 56.3 percent for those enrolled in 2002–2003 and to 63 percent for the 2003–2004 academic year.
- As designed, the Light Up Your Future program has increased high school students' awareness and understanding of careers in the energy industry, while increasing their access to high-quality contextualized online education.
- Following the "proof of concept" stage, the data from the next cohort of students indicated that 79 percent successfully passed the first portion of the energy industry-driven online course, and 80 percent will have participated in employer-driven career connections, including job-shadow experiences ending summer 2009.

**WASHINGTON AREA NEW AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION (WANADA)
TECHNICIAN TRAINING PROGRAM
WASHINGTON AREA NEW AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION
WASHINGTON, DC, METROPOLITAN AREA**

MODEL DESCRIPTION

When it granted its certification, the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) drew attention to the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association (WANADA) Technician Training Program's potential as a template for future education/industry collaborative training efforts. Started in 2000 at the peak of a workforce shortage, the program initially set out to help at-risk young adults get hired into the auto industry. Today, more concerned with helping them to gain career opportunities through technician training, the program has developed into what its manager calls a "pretty good model for how to deal with the real world."

The WANADA Technician Training Program began with a grant from the Ford Motor Co. Since the grant ended, the program has been funded primarily through the association, with support from additional grants and, for the past several years, additional car dealerships. The program offers students one day a week of postsecondary training plus a 40 hour per week full-time entry-level job with an employer-assigned mentor. Students are also required to take one hour per week of manufacturer-specific training online and to pass the tests tied to that subject matter. The two-year program presents technician candidates with four modules, one per semester, each of which qualifies them to take four separate Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) tests. To become a master technician requires passing eight ASE tests.

Not unlike many community-based education programs working with at-risk youth, the

automotive industry program offers its candidates and their employers the assurance of multiple support systems. The Montgomery College automotive program director cites the liaison provided by WANADA as a critical component of the program's success. Like a case manager, the liaison acts as a go-between, making contact with the students and the class instructor, as well as WANADA and the participating dealerships, on a daily basis. The liaison is responsible for coordination, marketing, checking on progress, recruitment, and advocacy. Problems are generally worked out among all parties.

The liaison is complemented by a dealership-provided mentor, who is tasked with reinforcing college-provided training with on-the-job training in the shop and technician supervision. According to NATEF President William Kersten, certification of the WANADA program was "the first time NATEF had certified a training system where a major portion of the required instructional hours are under the supervision of employer-assigned mentors."

In order to participate in the program, candidates must have a high school diploma or GED and a clean driving record. Dealers must agree to:

- Provide each student with a full-time entry-level job starting at a minimum of \$9 per hour.
- Provide a mentor.
- Pay \$1,000 per employee per semester, for a total of \$4,000 if the employee finishes the program.
- Allow each student to attend class one day a week.

WANADA is responsible for recruitment and coordination and for replacing any student that drops out of the program. Students are primarily recruited from local high schools, as well as from area Veterans Administration offices through the local Montgomery Works one-stop center. As an added incentive, WANADA offers program completers a set of SNAP ON tools valued at \$2,000. Montgomery College provides an ASE-certified instructor, classroom space, and equipment and allows the ASE certifications to count toward college credit, granting four credits for each test passed.

Employers are invited to a kickoff meeting at the college and convene on a regular basis with the leadership team to check on progress. Classes are offered on three different days, with four hours in a classroom setting and three in the shop or provided through web-based training. In addition, students typically work five and sometimes six days a week. WANADA tries to limit classes to 16 candidates. Most candidates are immigrant, first-generation college students. Other students may join if spaces are available. In addition to acquiring auto-mechanics knowledge and skills, students credit the program with helping to increase their work speed.

Run as a service of its Automotive Dealer Education Institute (ADEI) Foundation, the WANADA program is driven by demand. This past year the program served 38 students in three classes. On average, 10 students graduate each year; this year seven will complete the program. There are currently more students interested in taking the class than dealerships willing to place them. According to WANADA: "Dealers see the value; they just don't have the money." ADEI is seeking to increase its grant funding base in order to

support costs averaging roughly double what the dealerships pay at Montgomery College. Additional funding will also help to support classes already offered at Northern Virginia Community College on a modified basis as well as plans to expand the program to the Community College of Baltimore County.

In the past five years, more than 200 students have completed the WANADA program. As they pass ASE tests, students have gained a 10 percent to 20 percent increase in hourly compensation. Many have advanced to take and pass multiple ASE certifications. A few have gone on to become service advisors. Some former students are now mentors; others continue to further their postsecondary education. More than 90 percent of the students stay with their sponsoring dealership. WANADA Program Manager Bill Belew sums it up: "You have the best technicians when you train your own."

POPULATIONS SERVED

The program serves an at-risk population, mostly ages 18 to 22. Largely immigrant, first-generation college students, participants are primarily selected from local high schools as well as local Veterans Administration programs.

INDUSTRY TARGETED

Automotive industry

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

WANADA has 212 members, almost all of which have participated in the WANADA program at Montgomery College. WANADA currently runs its program in partnership with Montgomery College and Northern Virginia Community College.

EMPLOYER ROLE

The industry and the employers fulfill different roles in the program:

WANADA

- Pre-screens and interviews technicians.
- Arranges for structured classroom, shop, and manufacturer-specific interactive curriculum and on-the-job training.
- Continuously monitors and reports on technician progress over the length of the training program to ensure successful passage of relevant ASE tests.
- Provides technician with a set of tools upon successful completion of 60 days of in-dealership work and class participation.
- Guarantees the dealership a dependable, productive employee for a fraction of normal costs.

DEALERSHIP

- Provides the candidate a full-time job, starting with a \$9 per hour minimum wage.
- Contributes \$1,000 per semester per candidate to help offset training costs.
- Agrees to provide an onsite mentor for candidate supervision and on-the-job training.
- Agrees to allow the student to attend school one day a week.

LOCATION

Washington, DC, metropolitan area (mostly urban)

GOVERNANCE

The WANADA Training Technician Program is governed by a Board of Directors. At Montgomery College, a leadership team comprising the college's Program Director of the Automotive Program, the ASE-certified instructor, the WANADA Program Manager, and dealership service managers meet on a regular basis.

FUNDING PROFILE

The training program costs approximately \$2,000 per candidate per semester. Half of the cost is covered by the dealership; the remainder comes from either ADEI or grant funding awarded to the foundation through the auto industry, Montgomery Works, and local Rotary clubs.

SCALE

The WANADA program has graduated more than 200 students through Montgomery College. In addition to the program at Montgomery College, WANADA has started operation at Northern Virginia Community College and expects to offer the technician program at the Community College of Baltimore County.

RESULTS

- Placed more than 200 production technicians over the past five years.
- 80 percent college retention rate.
- 90 percent dealership retention rate.
- WANADA has been able to determine that technicians who graduate from their program increase gross service-department profits by as much as \$500 in the first month of program participation.

5

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE ORGANIZATIONS

I.C.STARS **CHICAGO, ILLINOIS**

MODEL DESCRIPTION

Guided by the principle that “leadership is making opportunities for others,” i.c.stars was formed in 1999 to help inner-city young adults with a high school diploma or GED to “harness the strength of business for social and economic leadership.” Based in Chicago, Illinois, the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization has as its goal to develop 1,000 community leaders by 2020. Ten years later, its trademark—strong team skills and real work experience—sets i.c.stars alumni apart from their competitors. As a result, alumni have found full-time employment with some of Chicago’s top employers, and 38 percent of graduates are pursuing college education.

Known to locals as the “inner-city MBA program,” i.c.stars uses technology and a strict business curriculum to shape the next generation of community leaders. Integrating project-based business training and leadership development, the program runs four training cycles of 16-week courses a year. Each cycle has 10 to 12 participants who work in teams of three to four people on three client projects to complete 1,000 hours of coursework. As part of their internship, teams compete to work with corporate partners on IT projects, dream up and build a plan to start their own e-commerce businesses, build databases and reporting systems for a large company to keep track of its computers, and build a website for a non-profit organization or small business.

During each of the month-long projects, the program is designed to expose participants

to different types of businesses and community-based organizations. Websites are built for Fortune 500 companies, business plans are presented to venture capitalists, and IT projects involve non-profits, small businesses, and IT sector employers. Students learn complex software skills and are taught how to interact with clients and compete as a team. i.c.stars offers the program free of charge to participants and pays students a \$600 stipend for each month of their internship. Eligibility criteria include having six months of work experience and being financially responsible for someone other than self. A rigorous screening process further culls applicants who have numbered up to 400 in the recent past.

After program completion, career counseling and job placement services are available to graduates for three to five years. An alumni association meets monthly. In addition, all graduates have the opportunity to work for the i.c.stars Bridges program, which is a community staff augmentation social enterprise service. i.c.stars alumni are eligible for special admission and automatic acceptance into DePaul University’s School of Computer Science, Telecommunications, and Information Systems (CTI) or School for New Learning bachelors programs. Northwestern University offers scholarships to two interns each year.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Urban individuals ages 18 to 27. To be eligible, applicants must have 1) a high school diploma or GED, 2) financial responsibilities

outside of self (such as caregiver for relative), 3) six months work experience, and 4) MS Windows proficiency.

INDUSTRY TARGETED
Information technology

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS
Corporate partners number some 40 businesses, including Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, Allstate, Grainger, Hewitt Associates, Accenture, Dade Behring, Siemens, Insight, Juno Lighting, ThoughtWorks, The Northern Trust, Microsoft, PepsiCo, CNA, Exelon, Loyola University, and Sonnenschein. i.c.stars works in partnership with DePaul University and Northwestern University and also has more than 100 community partners.

EMPLOYER ROLE
Employers are involved in all aspects of the i.c.stars program, from helping to design curriculum, volunteering IT staff to work with and mentor students on a regular basis during their internships, and attending daily “high tea” discussion groups and quarterly program networking events.

LOCATION
Chicago, Illinois (urban)

GOVERNANCE
i.c. stars is governed by a 32-member Board of Directors that meets quarterly. The Board's committees meet on a biweekly or monthly schedule. Day-to-day operations are handled by the president, the chief operations officer, and 12 staff members.

FUNDING PROFILE
Employer sponsorships are the primary source

of funding for i.c. stars's annual budget of approximately \$710,000. Employer sponsorship in i.c.stars is built around a Partnership Model. Participation is encouraged in three areas: leadership development, staffing, and events. Leadership development includes mentoring and coaching students and alumni. Staffing is offered on either a staff augmentation or staff rotation basis. Four events each year offer employers opportunities to network, be visible in their community, and learn from business and IT leaders. Sponsorship opportunities are available as part of a discounted package that offers different levels of engagement or a la carte. Each carries an associated cost ranging from an annual fee of \$35,000 for a level 1 Leadership Development Sponsorship package (valued at \$52,000 a la carte) to a \$26 to \$30/hour staffing rotation rate.

Additional revenue is generated from the Bridges program and from funds raised through foundation grants, events, and individual contributions. i.c. stars does not accept government funding.

SCALE
i.c.stars has graduated 175 students from its program since 2000. While the program has attracted attention from as far away as Rwanda and from various cities across the United States, i.c.stars has chosen to continue development in Chicago before scaling to other locations.

RESULTS

- 82 percent graduation rate.
- 76 percent initial placement rate.
- 38 percent pursuing college.
- Average annual salary three years after the program is \$45,800, up from an average of \$12,315 per year.

YEAR UP

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS (HEADQUARTERS)

MODEL DESCRIPTION

The founder of Year Up, Gerald Chertavian, opened Year Up in Boston in 2000 by applying his organizational management and business background to teach basic business skills to urban young adults and, at the same time, give companies confidence in the urban workforce. His goal is clearly stated: “Our mission is to close the opportunity divide by providing urban young adults with the skills, experience, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through professional careers and higher education.”

Year Up’s model has three components: cultivating relationships with businesses, preparing students for successful transitions into the workplace, and perhaps most important, continuously improving the quality of services to students and businesses. Staff members embrace an apprentice management philosophy that includes a matching process, a transitional process for introducing apprentices to the workplace, and a system for supporting apprentices throughout the apprenticeship phase. Year Up students undergo extensive testing, reference checking, and interviewing to gain entry into the competitive program.

The Year Up program consists of two six-month phases: Learning and Development, followed by Apprenticeship. Its “high expectations, high support” program model expects students to meet rigorous technical and professional standards in order to enable them to attain apprenticeships and transition into full-time work. At the same time, to help overcome barriers, students are provided with

strong, structured support services.

During the Learning and Development phase, students take part in an intensive training session to develop the professional, or soft, and technical skills necessary to succeed in a corporate environment. For the technical skills portion, students receive training in either information technology (IT) or investment operations (IO), which, according to Year Up research, are two of the skill sets in highest demand in corporate America. Students have the opportunity to choose a training area of interest to them. Their technical learning is then complemented by coursework on communication, teamwork, self advocacy, and general workplace skills. All Year Up instructors either have professional experience in the industry they teach or have teaching backgrounds in their fields.

The second part of the program year, the Apprenticeship phase, involves on-the-job training. Students complete a full-time apprenticeship with a local partner company in a field related to their IT or IO specialty. IT apprentices typically work in help desk or desktop support roles in their host companies. IO apprentices work in jobs as portfolio accountants, fund administrators, and in trade reconciliation roles.

To increase their marketability, students receive college credit through articulation agreements or dual enrollment partnerships that Year Up sites have set up with local colleges or universities. The articulation agreements vary from site to site, but currently students can earn as many as 18 college credits.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Urban young adults ages 18 to 24.

INDUSTRIES TARGETED

- Financial services
- Information technology

PARTNERSHIPS/PARTNERS

Year Up has an extensive network of more than 60 partners who support the organization in various ways. Non-profits and community-based organizations work with Year Up to enhance the services available to students, and local postsecondary institutions partner with Year Up to offer students college credit for the coursework they complete during the program.

EMPLOYER ROLE

Corporate apprenticeship partners hire and mentor Year Up apprentices. Other corporate partners provide funding and other resources such as physical space for housing the program, sponsorship of events, student mentors, and guest lecturers.

LOCATION

Year Up is currently located in Boston, Providence, New York, Washington, DC, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Atlanta (urban)

GOVERNANCE

The Year Up national staff members are located in Boston, and from there they facilitate the management systems and classroom and physical infrastructure necessary to support the local sites. Each local site includes seven staff teams to cover:

- Outreach and Admissions
- Learning and Development
- Apprenticeships

- Alumni and Career Services
- Finance and Human Resources
- Development
- Information Technology

FUNDING PROFILE

With an annual operating budget of nearly \$25 million, approximately 60 percent of the budget at each site comes from the “sale” of apprenticeships, which cost businesses on average \$795 per week for each apprentice. The remaining revenue comes from a combination of gifts, grants and contracts from private individuals, foundations, and government.

SCALE

The number of Year Up locations, corporate partners, and apprenticeships has grown each year since the organization began serving students. The first class of 22 students in Boston began the program in January 2001. As of July 2008, the program had served 1,889 students, and 95 employers had partnered with Year Up and sponsored apprentices.

RESULTS

- 100 percent placement rate of qualified students into apprenticeships.
- 87 percent of graduates placed in full- or part-time jobs within four months of graduation.
- An average wage of \$15 per hour.
- Nearly half of the graduates continuing in postsecondary education.
- In a recent survey, 96 percent of Year Up's apprenticeship partners say that based on their apprentice's performance, they will continue their relationship with the program.
- 93 percent of partners chose to stay as “active” partners or “on board for the future.”

APPENDIX B

PROGRAMS FEATURED IN THE REPORT

Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium (ADTEC)

Arkansas Delta
Sherri Bennett
sbennett@anc.edu
www.anc.edu

Cisco Networking Academy

National Program
Carroll McGillin
cmcgilli@cisco.com
www.cisco.com/web/learning/netacad/index.html

Clarian Health: Workforce Prosperity Program

Greater Indianapolis, Indiana
Sherry Makely
smakely@clarian.org
www.clarian.org

Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE): Light Up Your Future

National Program
Jo Winger de Rondon
jwdr@cael.org
www.epceonline.org

Gateway Technical College: Boot Camp

Southeast Wisconsin
Debbie Davidson
davidsond@gtc.edu
www.gtc.edu/page.asp?q=192

Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati

Greater Cincinnati Region, Ohio
William T. Lecher
william.lecher@cchmc.org
www.hccgc.org

i.c.stars

Chicago, Illinois
Sande Kastrul
skastrul@icstars.org
www.icstars.org

Metropolitan College

Louisville, Kentucky
George Poling
george.poling@kctcs.edu
www.metro-college.com

Northrop Grumman, The Apprenticeship School

Newport News, Virginia
Robert Leber
Robert.leber@ngc.com
www.apprenticeschool.com

Open Meadow Alternative Schools: Career Services and Career Connections

Portland Metro Region, Oregon
Nicholas P. Knudsen
nicholas@openmeadow.org
www.openmeadow.org

Project ARRIBA

El Paso County, Texas
Laura Ponce
lponce@projectarriba.org
www.projectarriba.org

Washington Area New Auto Dealers Association Technician Training Program

Washington, D.C., Metro Area
Jake Kelderman
jak@wanada.org
www.wanada.org

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI): Pre-Employment Academies

Southeast Minnesota
Becky Thofson
bthofson@wfdi.ws
www.workforcedevelopmentinc.org/Academies/

Year Up

Boston, Massachusetts
Shawn Bohan
sbohan@yearup.org
www.yearup.org

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**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MODELS FEATURED IN THIS REPORT,
PLEASE SEE THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES:**

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WHO WE ARE:

Workforce Strategy Center (WSC) is one of America's most experienced non-profits working to grow the nation's economy by producing a prosperous and globally competitive workforce. WSC helps workers and business advance by making education and workforce development more responsive to the economy. To learn more about WSC, please visit our website at www.workforcestrategy.org.