Office of Apprenticeship

May 2018

Apprenticeship Connections
A Resource for State Apprenticeship Expansion Grantees

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Resources

New Disability Outreach Tools - The Office of Disability Employment Policy's [Apprenticeship Page](#) compiles resources to support inclusive design models that attract an array of people to apprenticeship, including people with disabilities. Three new ApprenticeshipWorks Guides introduce [youth](#), [educators/service providers](#), and [businesses](#) to the benefits and opportunities of inclusive apprenticeship.

Repository of Free Workforce Development and Training Materials - The US Department of Labor's Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) program created [SkillsCommons](#) - a comprehensive collection of learning materials and program support materials for job-driven workforce development, created by over 700 community colleges across the nation. You can access free open source teaching and training materials (searchable by industry) on the site and find a showcase of apprenticeship-specific materials [here](#).

Connecticut's Advanced Manufacturing Videos - Connecticut developed two videos designed to inform viewers about apprenticeship opportunities in the advanced manufacturing sector, which they unveiled at a recent business forum. You can watch the videos [here](#) and [here](#).

Events

Community College Resources Webinar - On Wednesday, May 16th, ETA is hosting a webinar on two new tools that will help community and technical colleges understand the value and process of apprenticeship. The first tool is an "Apprenticeship Implementation Toolkit" developed by Missoula College-University of Montana for the Montana HealthCARE (Creating Access to Rural Education) TAACCCT grant. The second tool is a step-by-step guide to establishing degree-bearing, competency-based, registered apprenticeship programs, developed by Great Falls College-Montana State University. Register [here](#).

NGA Policy Alignment Case Study #2 Webinar
- NGA is hosting its second webinar on policy alignment on Wednesday, May 30th to explore how an AAI grantee has effectively aligned organizational priorities with local, state, and federal initiatives to advance their pre-apprenticeship and/or apprenticeship programs. SAE grantees and their partners are invited to register and join in the conversation.

Spotlight on Idaho: New Apprenticeship Pathways in Software Development

Software development occupations are the "hottest jobs" in Idaho as projected by the Idaho Department of Labor. Department analysts expect job opportunities in this area to grow by almost 37 percent from 2014 to 2024, and jobs pay a median wage above $80,000 per year.

To meet this demand and take advantage of these exciting opportunities for job seekers, ApprenticeshipIdaho partnered with the Idaho Technology Council (ITC) to create new IT apprenticeships, including the state's first junior software programming apprenticeship. Candidates attend a 12-week, full-time immersive coding bootcamp at CodeWorks Boise (funded in part with SAE grant funds). Students learn both front-end and back-end technologies, and work in groups under the supervision of experienced mentors to create fully functional real-world applications. At the 9th week of training, select students have an opportunity to interview with *In Time Tec*, a software development company, to become a registered apprentice, which leads to a recognized credential as a Junior Software Programmer. *In Time Tec* recently hired two apprentices from CodeWorks' first class and is committed to hiring more. The state partners, meanwhile, are working with other interested employers to expand opportunities.

Dan Puga, President of *In Time Tec*, says, "Access to talent has been a critical challenge for technology companies in Idaho for several years, and the gap has continued to widen. We are excited to have partnered with the ITC, Idaho Department of Labor, and CodeWorks Boise to provide an alternative pathway...so companies can grow and thrive and...people [can] get into the software development field who never saw it as a possibility before."

Alisa Bondurant, ITC program manager, stresses that "finding an employer sponsor who is willing to take a risk on a full-time software programmer from a non-traditional background can be long and arduous. But stand strong, as they do exist and once you have one employer, more will follow. Try and build a flexible enough program so that multiple employer sponsors can join in without having to make changes to their hiring processes and you don't have to change the standard each time you add an employer." For more information, please contact Bondurant at abondurant@idahotechcouncil.org.

Spotlight on Minnesota: Insights from Employer Sponsors

How do companies perceive apprenticeship? What about students, parents, and job seekers? What do employer sponsors and apprentices say are the benefits of apprenticeship? Several SAE grantees are using funds to explore these and other questions in order to develop responsive and effective marketing campaigns and program enhancements that better meet business and job seeker needs. Over the next 3 months, we will feature a series of articles that highlight the information gathered by one SAE grantee, Minnesota.

 Apprenticeship Minnesota at the Department of Labor and Industry contracted with a communications and marketing firm to develop a communications and branding plan for the system. To inform this work, in the fall of 2017, the firm interviewed current sponsors, conducted focus groups of prospective sponsors and apprentices, and surveyed prospective apprentices (targeting youth, women, veterans, and people of color in particular). This month, we will summarize the insights Minnesota gleaned from employer sponsors; articles in upcoming editions will focus on the perspectives of other employers, apprentices, and prospective apprentices.

Minnesota interviewed 13 sponsors selected from the construction, manufacturing, healthcare, and utilities sectors to learn more about their recruitment needs, perceived industry stigmas, apprentice training, effective awareness materials, as well as preferred recruitment tools and more. The sponsors shared a wealth of information.

- **Benefits of Apprenticeship**: Sponsors said that the two main benefits of apprenticeship are employee loyalty and something that differentiates the company in the industry.

- **Recruitment**: Recruitment is a top priority for employers, who said they target youth, young adults not satisfied with their careers, and skilled, qualified candidates. Recruitment barriers include tighter budgets, the aging population, and challenges with finding time for recruiting and training. Healthcare industry employers also said there are too few apprenticeship programs offered in their field. Suggestions included videos or other means to elevate the professions to show how they improve lives and can offer a sense of pride.

- **Marketing to Potential Employers**: Sponsors said that marketing messages should focus on benefits and return on investment (particularly increases in employee loyalty). Suggestions for marketing strategies were email, trade associations, connecting to HR professionals, sponsor tours, peer to peer outreach, and employer gatherings; social media was not seen as an effective communication vehicle for all. Smaller employers want an established program that can be customized to the employer. All employers said that it would help to get the word out that the state offers assistance throughout the registration process.

- **Marketing to Potential Apprentices**: Sponsors felt there is a significant need for people to understand apprenticeship and its benefits, as well as lifting the stigma associated with some of the trade industries - and that it be compelling enough to compete with the perception that a college degree is the only acceptable pathway to success. Sponsors identified a few key benefits - the pay, hours, and benefits packages. Employers felt there is a need for culturally sensitive marketing efforts targeting women, people of color, and youth. Suggestions included online and print marketing materials, videos, testimonials, and a website that makes it easy to find information about apprenticeships.

For more information about Minnesota's communications and branding research,

please contact Betsy Adamson, Project Manager at the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, at betsy.adamson@state.mn.us.

Apprenticeship in the News

States Equip Employers to Drive Apprenticeship

Top Reasons Why your Company Needs to Develop an Apprentice Program

High-Paying Trade Jobs Sit Empty, While High School Grads Line Up For University

Techtonic Group Raises $2 Million to Transform Tech Hiring Through Apprenticeships

Brinker, Taco Mac Join Apprenticeship Program

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