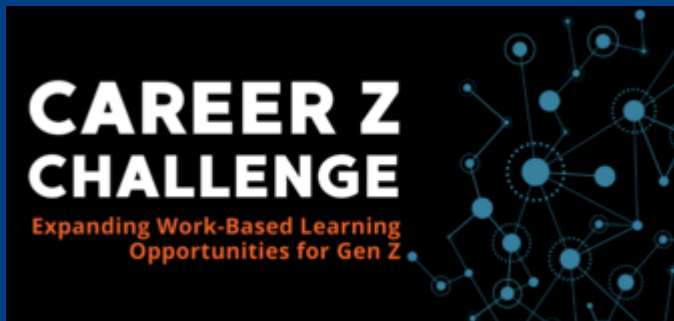




OCTAE Connections

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Unlocking Career Success

1. Career Challenge Z



Interested in starting or expanding work-based learning (WBL) opportunities for your high school students? Then join the **Career Z Challenge**, a \$2.5 million prize competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education

Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE).

Perkins-eligible schools, districts, and consortiums are invited to share their ideas for creating or enhancing WBL opportunities through collaborative ecosystems of educators, businesses, industries, workforce professionals, and community stakeholders to provide students with interconnected career development opportunities and experiences across grades 9 – 12.

Semi-finalists and finalists will be eligible to receive targeted technical assistance including professional development support, webinars and training, participation in a community of practice (CoP), as well as a portion of a \$2.5 million prize pool.

The lessons learned from this challenge will inform resources and models that will foster growth and expansion of high-quality, sustainable WBL experiences for students nationwide.

2. Your Place in Space Challenge

The Department is excited to announce the *Your Place in Space Challenge* which is part of the [CTE Momentum](#) challenge to create new solutions for space and inspire students to envision careers in the space industry. From botanists to chefs, and writers to personal trainers, almost any career can be a space career. High school CTE students and teachers are invited to submit designs for a product or service that contributes to space missions or exploration or helps students to explore space careers.

Register [here](#) for the May 10 *Your Place in Space Challenge* virtual information session. Questions should be submitted in advance through the registration form. A video recording and summary of questions and answers will be published following the session.

3. New Research: Earnings Gains for CTE Concentrators Vary by Student Subpopulation and Career Cluster

In the recent “[Heterogeneity in High School Career and Technical Education Outcomes](#),” research article, researchers Walter G. Ecton and Shaun M. Dougherty used state longitudinal data in Massachusetts to examine earnings gains for career and technical education (CTE) concentrators and non-CTE students with similar observable characteristics. They also explored how the outcomes of CTE concentrators differ across different student subpopulations and different career clusters. Areas of note from the research on student earnings within the first seven years following high school graduation includes:

- Overall, students who were CTE concentrators earned \$3,359 more per year than non-CTE students, but earnings differences were larger for males than for females.
- CTE concentrators who were Black and Latino, low-income, and students with disabilities all had higher earnings than peers who were not concentrators.
- CTE concentrators who attended college earned more per year than their non-CTE peers who also attended college in many fields. For example, in the field of healthcare, CTE concentrators who attended college earned \$5,491 more per year than non-CTE students who also attended college.

- There were also differences in earnings for students who did not attend college. The CTE concentrators who did not attend college earned \$6,053 more per year than their non-CTE peers who did not attend college.
 - One career cluster where CTE concentrators had even higher earnings was in the field of construction, where they earned \$7,698 more per year than their peers in the field who were non-CTE students. On the other hand, students who concentrated their studies in hospitality, agriculture, and communications saw little to no increase in their earnings.
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4. National Coalition of Certification Centers' Signing Day

On Thursday April 20th, Dr. Amy Loyd visited [Pima Community College](#) (PCC) in Tuscon, AZ. Dr. Loyd addressed over 500 new and prospective career and technical education students for the National Coalition of Certification Centers' (NC3) [National Signing Day](#) at PCC's soon-to-be-opened \$35 Million Advanced Manufacturing Building.

NC3 Signing Day is a celebration of career and technical education, and helps students, and their families to connect their educational journey at Pima to the more than 150 local employers, who were on-site as part of the signing ceremony. Over 70 community and technical colleges participated in the Signing Day event across the country.

The event was held at PCC's soon-to-open \$35 million [Advanced Manufacturing Building](#). The new building, a key component of PCC's workforce development initiatives, will be home to Pima's Automated Industrial Technology, Computer-Aided Design (CAD), Machining, and Welding programs and will help support PCC's numerous training partnerships with local industry. Pima is providing opportunities in Apprenticeships, Micro-pathways (Pima FastTrack), and Integrated Basic Education & Skills Training (IBEST) in those fields, so that all people of all backgrounds have an "open door" to these education and training opportunities.

4. Funding Opportunities!

Rehabilitation Services Administration Invites Applications for Improving Pre-Employment Transition Services for Youth with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration ([RSA](#)) is pleased to announce a notice inviting applications on April 5, 2023 for the Disability Innovation Fund, Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project (Pathways to Partnerships), Assistance Listing Number 84.421E. The application deadline is June 5, 2023.

The Pathways to Partnership program is the largest discretionary grant administered by RSA, with an estimated \$224 million available to fund multiple innovative model demonstration projects administered through partnerships among state vocational rehabilitation agencies, state or local education agencies, and centers for independent living focused on the creation of systemic approaches to improve access to pre-employment transition services for children and youth with disabilities. This historic funding opportunity helps to pave a clear and robust path to competitive integrated employment as children and youth with disabilities transition from high school to postsecondary education and careers.

The Notice Inviting Applications and additional information, including the Application Package, can be found [here](#).

\$4.5 Million STEM Talent Challenge Funding Opportunity Launched to Build a Robust STEM Talent Workforce

The U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), a bureau of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is now accepting applications for its [STEM Talent Challenge](#) to support programs to train science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) talent and fuel regional innovation economies across the nation.

The \$4.5 million competition will provide funding for programs that help build a robust STEM workforce in emerging and transformative sectors such as aerospace, aeronautics, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, among others.

To learn more about the challenge, click [here](#)!

Department of Labor announces \$5M Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations Grants

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced a funding opportunity of \$5 million for up to 14 grants to attract and support women in **Registered Apprenticeship Programs** and industries where they are underrepresented such as construction, manufacturing, and cybersecurity.

Administered by the DOL's **Employment and Training Administration** and **Women's Bureau**, the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) grant program supports community-based organizations in their efforts to recruit, train, and retain more women in Registered Apprenticeships and nontraditional occupations.

Apply for the 2023 WANTO grant at grants.gov by May 29, 2023.

Department of Labor Announces \$80M In Funding Available To Develop, Strengthen, Scale Equitable Pathways to Good Infrastructure Jobs

To maximize the impact of the Biden-Harris administration's historic infrastructure, manufacturing and clean energy investments, the U.S. Department of Labor announced the availability of \$80 million in funding through its Building Pathways to Infrastructure Jobs Grant Program.

The Investing in America agenda, which includes legislation such as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act, is creating millions of good-paying jobs in renewable energy, transportation and broadband infrastructure sectors, and the Biden-Harris administration is helping workers access the training and develop the skills needed to fill these jobs.

To learn more about this funding opportunity, click [here](#)!

EDA Announces University Center Program Funding Opportunity

The Economic Development Administration has posted a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) opening the University Center Economic Development

Program competition. The program annually rotates which EDA regions are included in the funding notice. The 2023 funding opportunity is open to the following regions:

EDA's Austin Region:

Arkansas

Louisiana

New Mexico

Oklahoma

Texas

EDA's Denver Region:

Colorado

Iowa

Kansas

Missouri

Montana

North Dakota

Nebraska

South Dakota

Utah

Wyoming

The EDA [University Center program](#) leverages university assets to build and expand regional economic ecosystems that support innovation and high-growth entrepreneurship that are both resilient and inclusive. For more information about this funding opportunity, click [here](#)!

5. 2022 Advancing Equity in Career-Connected Education Summit

On behalf of Assistant Secretary Dr. Amy Loyd, we are inviting you to participate in the Office of Career Technical and Adult Education's (OCTAE) 2023 Equity Summit Webinar Series entitled **Equity in Career Connected Education: Advancing Economic Mobility**. On February 2, 2022, OCTAE held the [2022 Advancing Equity in Career-Connected Education Summit](#) (Summit). This event was an important component of the Department of Education's efforts to implement [Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#). One of the goals of the Summit was to identify themes and topics across those issue areas for further exploration such as data, state or local roles, the role of industry, or existing systemic challenges such as misaligned incentives in adult education, career technical education, community colleges, and correctional education.

Based on what we learned from the Summit, OCTAE is hosting a series of equity webinars focusing on topics such as [dual enrollment](#), [Second Chance Pell](#), [digital literacy](#), and [career pathways](#). The fourth in the series will be held on June 27, 2023, at 2:00 pm ET. This webinar will focus on Economic Mobility for LGBTQ+ Youth. The registration link and additional webinar information will be provided in a forthcoming email. We hope you will join us!

6. For Your Reading Pleasure:

On April 17, the White House released the Alternatives, Rehabilitation, and Reentry Strategic Plan. Read the full strategic plan [here](#)!

April 28, the Institute of Education Sciences released a blog titled Research to Inform Strong Adult Education ESL Policy and Practice. Read the full blog [here](#)!

On May 3, Secretary Cardona released a letter to community colleges to underscore the important role they play in creating pathways for students of all backgrounds to build rewarding careers and prosperous communities. Read the full letter [here](#)! Also be sure to read three exciting community college-related ED Homeroom blogs:

- On April 27, ED featured *Mary S. Graham, President of Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, on Investing in Student and Community Success* [here](#).
- On April 24, ED featured Ángel Gabriel Garcia, Student at Oxnard College, on [My Hometown Community College & The Change It's Made In Me](#) [here](#)

- On April 19, ED featured Assistant Secretary Loyd on [Celebrating Our Nation's Community Colleges](#)

OCTAE Connections with the Field

- April 3: Dr. Loyd kicked off Community College Month and Second Chance Month by going to the **Miami-Dade** College campus located at Everglades Correctional Institution for an event with DOJ, the FL DOC, and the Vera Institute of Justice on *Identifying the Power and Potential of Pell Reinstatement*. Here's a [readout from the event](#).
 - Also, while in Miami, Dr. Loyd visited the [Robert Morgan Educational Center & Technical College](#), where she met with Miami-Dade County Public School [Board members](#) and leadership from the high school and college, toured the campus, and met with students.
- April 4: Dr. Loyd had the pleasure of speaking at COABE's opening plenary at their annual conference in **Atlanta**, where she gave an overview of OCTAE's impressive array of National Leadership Activities, and spoke to how now is our moment for adult education to boldly and fully step into the potential and the power that it holds to truly transform outcomes for people, economies, and communities.
 - Also while in Atlanta, Loyd had the opportunity to meet with the President of [Atlanta Technical College](#) and the Executive Director of the Technical Colleges Directors' Association and tour the ATC programs and facility, learning about their CTE and career-connected programming. Dr. Loyd then met with the co-director of the [Georgia Coalition for Higher Education in Prison](#) to learn more about their extensive and growing work in correctional education.

April 5: Secretary Cardona joined the First Lady on an Investing in America tour in **Maine** and **Vermont**, where they elevated our Administration's commitment to career-connected learning and community colleges – they are both all in on CTE and our work.