

Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA) Conference Review

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This year, the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA) conference—titled *Pathways to Career Readiness: An Education and Workforce Symposium*, focused on how business and education can work together more effectively both regionally and statewide.

Four regional career pathway partnerships (Erie County, Dauphin County, SUN Area, and Berks County) were featured at the conference for their ability to implement regional career pathway models which encouraged sharing of resources, using common language between education and business, and reducing the number of people contacting businesses. These partnerships have allowed educators to come together and clearly define their goals as a region. Businesses meet collectively with the partnership to review curriculum, set up work site tours, offer apprenticeships, and communicate their needs and concerns. Some of the regional partnerships included PA CareerLink® partner staff. These types of partnerships can increase adult education providers' awareness of local business needs and provide resources and opportunities to help adult learners transition to in-demand jobs with self-sustaining wages.

The Center for Workforce Information and Analysis presented new tools and updated resources that adult educators can use to help adults prepare for the workforce. For example, the PA Career Guide, released in May 2017, now includes a budget worksheet in addition to career interest survey, occupation descriptions, salary information, and tips for jobseekers. (The guide is available [online](#) or in printed format). The recently revised PA Career Coach is a valuable companion to the PA Career Guide. In addition to short and more extensive career assessments, the PA Career Coach site offers an occupation crosswalk tool for veterans, and a resume builder that uses skill descriptions from O*Net to help jobseekers improve resumes. The resume builder feature allows the resume to be saved in MS Word and uploaded to JobGateway®. New tools have also been added to JobGateway®. The transferrable skills tool is useful for adult dislocated workers looking for a new career, youth with minimal work experience, and for people looking to move up in a

career pathway. Virtual job shadows for over 350 occupations are also available. The virtual shadows contain 7 to 8 minute videos that represent actual workers in the field. Finally, the “Big Interview” feature allows adults to record themselves in a mock interview and watch it or play interview question roulette.

For more information about these resources or support for career pathways or workforce development strategies, please contact Chrissie Klinger (cok5111@psu.edu) or KayLynn Hamilton (klh267@psu.edu) at the Workforce Development Project.