



1. Happy Black History Month!

"This month is a time to honor the countless Black Americans who've excelled in every career and capacity, throughout our history, often overcoming great obstacles. It's a time to reflect on the distance we've traveled, and the victories we've yet to win in the ongoing struggle to achieve equal justice for all Americans. And it's a time to celebrate Black excellence." – Secretary Miguel Cardona

OCTAE is committed to supporting and advancing Black excellence in career and technical education, adult education, community and technical colleges, and in correctional education.

2. Happy CTE Month!

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, "Happy CTE Month!". During the month of February, we join the nation in celebrating the achievements and contributions that career and technical education (CTE) programs provide in preparing students for high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand careers. We celebrate our administrators, teachers, faculty, counselors, advisors, business and industry partners, parents, and other key stakeholders for their efforts to help our students and communities—to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential and to build a better tomorrow. Thank you for your work to support youth and adult learners—with particular thanks to the CTE state directors, state agency staff, community-based organizations, and national and state associations—for your leadership and stewardship of our nation's CTE programs and services.

This month, we can also celebrate an increase in funding. The 117th Congress released a spending package that provides \$50 million of additional funding for Perkins V's basic state grant program (a total for the formula grant account to roughly \$1.43 billion annually) and an additional \$25 million under Section 114 of the law authorized as the Perkins V's Innovation and Modernization grant program. Although we celebrate CTE Month in February, we are eager to support you

throughout the year in your continuous efforts to implement innovative practices in CTE.

Best –

Sharon Lee Miller

Director, Division of Academic and Technical Education

3.Raise the Bar: Lead the World

Last week, in a major address, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona laid out his vision for the direction the agency will follow in 2023 to promote academic excellence, improve learning conditions, and prepare our students for a world where global engagement is critical to our nation's standing. In his address Secretary Cardona remarked that "Raise the Bar: Lead the World" is not a list of new priorities, but a call to strengthen our will to transform education for the better, building on approaches that we know work in education, including a key strategy focused on career and college pathways. In his speech the Secretary shared that, "It's my intention to Raise the Bar so we can lead the world in advanced career and technical education."

Please view the press release [here](#) and a transcript of Secretary Cardona's full remarks [here](#).

Raise the Bar: Unlocking Career Success Website Launch

As part of Secretary Cardona's "Raise the Bar: Lead the World" ***the Unlocking Career Success initiative*** is an interagency partnership that is designed to reimagine how our nation's high schools prepare all students to thrive in their future careers.

This joint effort across the U.S. Departments of Education, Labor, and Commerce supports public and private sector leaders, government agencies, and other community-based organizations to help students earn postsecondary degrees and industry credentials that our employers need, and our economy demands. Together, we can create multiple pathways to success and fulfill the promise of education as a bridge for people to create the lives that they want and help our students to reach their endless potential.

To stay up to date on ***Unlocking Career Success***, visit the new website [here](#)!

4. Career and Technical Education Dual Enrollment Pays Off for North Carolina Students

High school students in North Carolina can earn credentials and college credits at no cost at state colleges and universities through the state's dual enrollment program, Career and College Promise. There are three pathways, including a

career and technical education (CTE) dual enrollment pathway. Funded by a grant from the Institute of Education Sciences, researchers at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro are studying the program and the outcomes of students who participate using a quasi-experimental research design.

In a recent [paper](#), the research team reported that participants in the CTE dual enrollment pathway were significantly more likely than non-participants to graduate from high school on-time and to enroll in postsecondary education within one year of graduation (both overall and at North Carolina public institutions of higher education). The positive impacts on graduation and postsecondary enrollment were larger for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds than for students who were not economically disadvantaged. The positive impact on enrolling in state institutions of higher education was also larger for students from racial and ethnic groups who are underrepresented in higher education than it was for students from groups who are not underrepresented in postsecondary education. The [Career and Technical Education Research Network](#) has published an [infographic](#) summarizing the results of the study.

5. ADVANCE IET Project Overview and Application Information Session

OCTAE is pleased to announce the launch of the ADVANCE IET technical assistance project. Integrated Education and Training (IET) is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. OCTAE has contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to provide a series of Integrated Education and Training (IET) technical assistance and training opportunities, beginning with IET Basic Design Camps this spring. States are invited to send teams of up to six participants, made up of one or two state-level representatives and one or two local IET provider teams. You can learn more about this project at an upcoming webinar scheduled for **February 22, 2023, from 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm ET**. Click the following link to register (registration is required): [LINK](#)

During this session, AIR will share an overview of the project activities, training, and resources being developed and provide details on how to apply to participate as a state team in the spring and summer 2023 Basic IET Design Camps. Beginning in fall 2023, there will be opportunities to participate in Advanced IET Design Camps, followed by individualized, targeted state coaching for up to 10 states in 2024. Visit ADVANCE IET for more information. Contact AIR at ietdesigncampinfo@air.org with any questions. We hope to see you at the ADVANCE IET Project Overview and Application Information Session on February 22nd!

6. Mississippi Integrated Education and Training Program Increases Learner Earnings

An Urban Institute [evaluation](#) of the [Mississippi Integrated Basic Skills and Training](#) (MIBEST) program suggests the potential promise of integrated education and training programs to improve the earnings of adult learners.

Led by the Mississippi Community College Board and implemented by the state's community colleges, MIBEST offers adults without a high school credential and others with foundational skill needs contextual basic skills and technical instruction in high-demand career areas through concurrent enrollment in adult education and career and technical education. It also provides college and career navigation support, work readiness training, job placement services, and support services.

The Urban Institute studied the program's implementation between 2016 and 2019 using a quasi-experimental design that compared the outcomes of MIBEST participants with those of adult education participants who had similar test scores, demographic characteristics, and work histories. Participants had very low earnings in the quarter before enrolling, an average of \$1,296. One year after enrolling, however, MIBEST participants earned between \$500 and \$750 more per quarter, or \$2,000 to \$3,000 annually, than learners in the comparison group.

A cost-benefit analysis by the researchers found that the state and philanthropic investment to operate MIBEST was worthwhile: for every \$1.00 invested in MIBEST, participants gained \$2.02 in lifetime earnings.

7. Grantee Spotlight: Jessamine County Adult Education

The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) is pleased to highlight the Jessamine County Adult Education located in Nicholasville, KY. Since the program's inception in 1989, Jessamine County Adult Education has helped over 3,000 adults earn a high school equivalency diploma, putting them on a path to post-secondary education and training, and greater earning potential through expanded employment opportunities. Jessamine County Adult Education offers many programs and trainings that help adults acquire the skills they need to gain employment and thrive in the workplace as well as GED preparation services.

Recent program highlights:

Jessamine County Adult Education program developed a partnership with the Jessamine County school district's transportation department to offer an Integrated Education and Training program focused on helping prospective employees prepare to pass the CDL written exam and earn the CDL Learner's Permit required for employment as a bus driver for the school system. The program was developed to address the critical shortage of bus drivers that has caused school delays and cancellations on several occasions due to shortage of drivers.

Participants who did not possess a high school diploma were dually enrolled in GED prep classes and were hired with the provision that they earn their GED within 2 years. To-date, 24 participants have earned their CDL credential, and Jessamine

County Schools began the 2022-23 school year fully staffed with drivers for the first time in over two decades.

To learn more about program opportunities at the Jessamine County Adult Education program, visit [here](#).

8. Department of Labor - Notice of Request for Information (RFI) on Sector Strategies To Meet Critical Workforce Needs Across Industries

On January 23, 2023, The U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL's) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) published the Request for Information (RFI) on Sector Strategies to Meet Critical Workforce Needs Across Industries. This RFI seeks input from stakeholders involved in economic and workforce development, particularly as it relates to the development of sector strategy models that address the workforce needs of specific industry sectors within a local or regional labor market through a strategic sector partnership.

Stakeholder input will inform the DOL's efforts to develop sustainable and scalable sector strategies through economic development and workforce collaboration that meet local and regional sector needs for skilled workers in quality jobs. Comments will also help to inform broader Administration objectives, such as equity and the inclusion of historically marginalized populations within those sectors, and responsiveness to the needs of businesses and the economy in critical industries during and beyond the pandemic.

The RFI is open for 60 days, and responses may be submitted on a rolling basis but are due no later than 5 p.m. (ET) on March 24, 2023. Interested responders can respond to any or all of the questions. More information can be found [here](#).

9. Free NASH-ECAR Training

The **NASH Refugee Resettlement Initiative (RRI)** and **[Every Campus A Refuge](#) (ECAR)** are proud to deliver a free, certificate-bearing training to leaders in higher education, *Creating Inclusive Communities Together: Transforming Higher Education Through Refugee Integration*. This training intends to empower your campus' staff to support refugee resettlement and integration in ways that powerfully intersect with your system's DEI practices and deepen your students' place-based and experiential learning.

You and your colleagues can sign up for a private training – *free of charge* - in either of the following formats:

- **One full day of in-person training** on your campus (available between April 1st and June 10th).

- **Two half days of virtual training** (available over the course of two consecutive mornings or afternoons between April 1st and July 31st).

To sign up, fill out [this form](#). A member of the ECAR-RRI Training & Development Team will follow up with you to firm up a date and set up a pre-training consultation to discuss your needs and goals.

10. Catalyst Fund Recipients

Congratulations to the 2022 recipients of the NASH Refugee Resettlement Initiative's (RRI) Catalyst Fund, to innovate higher education's engagement in refugee resettlement. Awardees include Western Kentucky University for their refugee student Navigators Program, Washington State University for the expansion of their Every Campus a Refuge chapters, and the Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner, for their RI Reconnect program. Learn more about the recipients and their projects [here](#).

Do you have an innovative idea to involve higher education in refugee resettlement? [Apply now](#) to the NASH RRI Catalyst Fund.

Follow along with the NASH RRI through their [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for more on funding, training, and networking opportunities.

11. Recommendations To Address Workforce Needs

On January 23, 2023, the Telecommunications Interagency Working Group submitted a report to Congress containing recommendations to address the expanded workforce needs being driven by the new investments in the nation's telecommunications infrastructure, principally the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). BIL includes the largest investment in broadband deployment and adoption in U.S. history, with billions of dollars available across multiple programs to help ensure that every American has access to reliable high-speed internet.

The Telecommunications Interagency Working Group was formed by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) and U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA). The recommendations focus on seven areas to support recruiting and retaining workers nationwide for high-quality jobs created in the telecommunications industry, including the safety of that workforce.

The report can be found [here](#).

12. Stackable credentials in CTE: Certification + Degree pathways to support Adult Learners

A new grant to [Workcred](#) will support four community colleges—Community College of Aurora (CO), Delta College (MI), Kirkwood Community College (IA), and Moraine Valley Community College (IL)— to develop and implement Certification+Degree (C+D) Pathways in IT, logistics, and/or health science programs in four different states and establish a process for economical replication. In addition, the project team will develop a data-informed approach to guide C+D Pathway implementation and improvement.

C+D pathways at colleges have multiple benefits. First, these pathways are an effective approach to ensure that two-year CTE degree programs are aligned with industry needs. This alignment provides learners the opportunity to master skills that lead to good jobs while also earning an associate degree. Additionally, learners who complete C+D Pathways will earn an industry-recognized credential in addition to their associate degree and benefit from the signaling that each of these credentials provide: a degree that signals a broad knowledge base and a certification to provide evidence of competencies relevant to an occupation.

Project Partners

Workcred has multiple partners on this project: it will be joined in its work by [the League for Innovation in the Community College](#), the [National Student Clearinghouse](#), and a higher education accreditation body, the [Higher Learning Commission](#).

The project is funded by ECMC Foundation, a national foundation working to improve postsecondary outcomes for students from underserved backgrounds. This project supports [its Career Readiness](#) aim to develop scalable approaches to increase learner retention and degree completion across a diverse learner population.

14. Institute of Education Sciences Seeks Input on Adult Literacy and Other Research Topics

The [National Center for Education Research](#) (NCER) in the Institute of Education Sciences is seeking public input to identify research questions within 11 broad topical areas that could be addressed by national research and development centers. Adult literacy and postsecondary education and training are 2 of the 11 topical areas of interest.

The Request for Information (RFI) asks the public to identify the topical areas that are most important to address through the research and development centers program and the highest priority research questions that should be investigated.

The RFI can be found [here](#) in the *Federal Register*. Comments are being accepted until Monday March 6, 2023. **SAVE THE DATE!**

15. OCTAE in the Field

In January 2023:

- Assistant Secretary Dr. Amy Loyd serves as an ex-officio member to the National [Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship](#) (ACA), which provides advice and recommendations related to Registered Apprenticeship policy and programs to the Secretary of Labor. Dr. Loyd and Deputy Assistant Secretary Luke Rhine attended the ACA meeting in Denver, where Dr. Loyd spoke to the ACA on youth apprenticeship and connections to CTE and career and college pathways.
- While in Colorado, Dr. Loyd and Mr. Rhine visited Roosevelt High School in Johnstown, a rural community that is part of an innovative statewide approach to supporting students to earn industry credentials, [Career Development Incentive Program](#) (CDIP). They met with students, leadership from CareerWise Colorado, the Colorado Department of Education, Weld County RE-5J School District, Jefferson County School District, and Boulder Valley School District.
- Also while in Colorado, Dr. Loyd and Mr. Rhine participated in a tour of the [Cherry Creek Innovation Campus](#), a new and cutting-edge CTE center serving Cherry Creek School District.
- Dr. Loyd joined Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, Department of Labor Assistant Secretary of the Employment and Training Administration Brent Parton, Department of Commerce Senior Advisor Zoe Baird, and a team of others from DOL and DOC on a [learning tour of the Austrian youth apprenticeship and vocational education and training \(VET\) systems](#). This trip was part of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Labor, and Education, and the Federal Ministries for Digital and Economic Affairs, Education, Science and Research, and Labor of the Republic of Austria that seeks to strengthen bilateral collaboration and learning, with a focus on shared objectives related to apprenticeship, CTE, and VET expansion, diversification, quality, and equity.
- Dr. Loyd [joined Secretary Cardona on a visit](#) to [Francis Tuttle Technology Center](#), a CTE center serving six school districts in Oklahoma that provides professional and career advancement training to high school students and adults in an array of in-demand fields. They met with students, leadership from the school, and Brent Haken, the Director of the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education.