



AFA E-Digest: March 20th, 2024



AFA Holds First-Ever Summit

Over 150 apprenticeship intermediaries, researchers, advocates, and partners gathered in Washington DC last week for AFA's inaugural Summit. The event included plenary presentations from leaders at the Departments of Commerce and Labor, a keynote on the impact of artificial intelligence on labor markets and apprenticeship, and break-out sessions on technology, community colleges, occupational segregation, apprenticeship standards, registration processes, apprenticeships and people with disabilities, marketing to employers, and more. AFA thanks all who attended and looks forward to future in-person gatherings of AFA members and friends.



Thanks to AFA Summit sponsor, Apprenticeship.com, which helps apprenticeship programs recruit apprentices enabling employers, Intermediaries and community colleges to reach career seekers, high school counselors and career advisors. Contact joel@apprenticeship.com to learn more.

Comment Period on Proposed Rule Closes

With over 2,200 comments logged into the National Register, the comment period on the proposed federal rules governing apprenticeship has officially closed. AFA submitted its response, which is available [here](#).

AFA is grateful for the feedback and engagement of its members and partners in the commenting process and plans to undertake an analysis of comments once all comments are available for viewing.

The Department of Labor will begin its review of comments and will prepare responses, make adjustments to the rule, and submit the final rule for review by the Office of Management and Budget.

Executive Order on Apprenticeship

President Biden issued [an historic executive order](#) expanding the use of apprenticeship among federal workers, contractors, and grantees.

In AFA's statement on the occasion, we said: "We thank the President for his steadfast support in recognizing that registered apprenticeships are critical to ensuring students and workers have access to education and training to access good jobs. And we couldn't agree more that registered apprenticeship enables employers to access, hire, develop and retain the talent they need. The President's executive order is an historic step to promote and scale apprenticeships in the United States, both because federal agencies and contractors represent millions of workers and because it signals the value of apprenticeships across a range of occupations including information technology, manufacturing, construction, public safety, health care, and finance. AFA and its members stand ready to continue working with the administration on the implementation of this order."

AFA has produced [a brief summary of the executive order](#) issued by the President. You can also find [AFA's full statement](#) on the AFA website.

Apprenticeships in the News

[The U.S. Department of Labor has appointed 30 leaders to serve on the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship](#), representing employers, unions, community colleges, and other stakeholders. Led by Chairperson Robert Cherry, CEO of Partner4Work, the committee aims to enhance equitable access to career pathways through leveraging apprenticeship training models. Members will provide advice and recommendations to innovate and diversify the national apprenticeship system, addressing emerging industry needs.

[In a City Journal featured article](#), Steven Malanga makes the case that America's undersized apprenticeship effort is a missed opportunity to address staffing shortages and shore up America's competitiveness. Malanga calls for bold new bipartisan policy efforts to reshape apprenticeship.

[Nevada Senator Catherine Cortez Masto is backing the PATH Act](#) alongside Senator Martin Heinrich to boost workforce development in Nevada through enhanced pre-apprenticeship programs. With a focus on construction jobs, this legislation aims to equip Nevadans with the skills needed for lucrative careers in the building trades, aligning with the state's economic growth initiatives.

[Vice President Harris visited Madison, Wisconsin, highlighting the collaboration between federal and local governments to invest in apprenticeship programs](#). She emphasized the importance of such programs in providing skilled workers with good-paying jobs, contributing to community development, and announced an executive order to prioritize apprenticeship-trained individuals for federal jobs, emphasizing the value of skills beyond traditional college degrees.



In the States

[Colorado Senator John Hickenlooper chairs a Senate hearing to spotlight the Youth Apprenticeship Advancement Act](#), aiming to boost youth workforce participation through competitive apprenticeship programs for ages 16 to 22. Witnesses emphasize the bill's potential to redefine success beyond academic achievements and alleviate financial burdens associated with traditional college paths, particularly benefiting students from diverse backgrounds and abilities.

[Governor Polis and bipartisan legislators in Colorado introduce legislation to bolster the state's workforce](#) through grants supporting education and training in various industries, particularly focusing on building and construction trades. The proposed bills aim to expand apprenticeship opportunities, invest in workforce readiness programs, and connect K-12 students with technical career pathways, fostering economic growth and job opportunities statewide.

[Gov. Hochul announces a \\$2 million expansion of CUNY's successful Apprenticeship Degree Program](#), partnering with leading companies like Bloomberg, Travelers, and Northwell Health. Students will gain paid work experience, earn course credit, and strengthen their career prospects, aligning with Gov. Hochul's commitment to investing in workforce development programs and CUNY's mission to prepare students for successful futures.

Apprenticeship Called out as State Policy Trend by the NCSL and NGA

[The National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\) highlight apprenticeships as a key trend in state policy,](#)

with a focus on expanding work-based learning opportunities for young people. Indiana's recent legislation, House Bill 1002, emphasizes career exploration and readiness for youth, requiring high school students to engage with employers or labor organizations and offering scholarships for non-traditional education pathways like apprenticeships.

[The National Governors Association \(NGA\) have highlighted apprenticeships as a prominent state policy trend in education.](#) At least 38 governors have emphasized workforce development and career and technical education, aiming to expand opportunities for high school students and bolster the current workforce through initiatives such as apprenticeship programs and skills-based training.

Members in the News



[Apprenticeship leads at Business Roundtable](#)

Session: Business leaders and educators convened at the CEO Workforce Forum to address the imperative of adapting to a changing economy. Discussions underscored the pivotal role of apprenticeships in adapting to a rapidly changing economy. Discussions highlighted collaborative efforts to expand apprenticeship programs, forge partnerships with community colleges, and reimagine postsecondary pathways. Calls were made for legislative reforms to bolster the apprenticeship system and enhance economic opportunities for Americans.

[CyberUp's Cybersecurity Apprenticeship Program has attained National Programs Standards approval](#) from the Department of Labor, reinforcing its commitment to providing high-quality cybersecurity training nationwide. Partnering with American Institutes for Research (AIR), CyberUp aims to bridge the cybersecurity skills gap by offering comprehensive apprenticeship programs, empowering individuals with hands-on experience and industry-recognized certifications to excel in cybersecurity roles.

Indiana is pioneering a statewide youth apprenticeship program, modeled after Swiss apprenticeships, aimed at high school students. [With Ivy Tech Community College and EmployIndy playing critical roles, the program aims to address labor shortages and provide students with industry-relevant skills.](#) offering a high school diploma, college credit, and industry credentials. This comprehensive effort involves over 100 stakeholders and aims to create a scalable model that could potentially revolutionize career pathways and workforce development in the state.

[Wolfspeed launches a Registered Apprenticeship Program in New York](#), supported by the National Institute for Innovation and Technology, aiming to bolster workforce development for its Mohawk Valley Fab. The program, facilitated by MACNY through the GAINS initiative, offers individuals opportunities to enhance their skills and pursue careers in the semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industry.

