



AFA E-Digest: June 5th, 2024



Have you Registered for the Virtual Summit on Building Inclusive Pathways through Registered Apprenticeship?

An upcoming 2-day virtual summit hosted June 12-13th by Jobs for the Future's National Innovation Hub focuses on the crucial role of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in registered apprenticeship programs. The summit aims to provide valuable insights for employers, educators, policymakers, DEIA specialists, and apprenticeship practitioners on overcoming barriers to access and enhancing success in apprenticeships. Highlights include a fireside chat on the state of DEIA in apprenticeships, discussions on bridging education and employment, and sessions on leveraging apprentice voices for more inclusive programs.

Register for the event [here](#).

Apprenticeships in the News

In the States

[The "Working for Alabama" legislative package](#), enacted to address low labor force participation rates in Alabama, includes a series of reforms aimed at enhancing workforce training and development. Among these is the consolidation of various initiatives under the Department of Workforce, including the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship. This consolidation aims to streamline the state's approach to workforce development as part of a broader effort to modernize and strengthen Alabama's labor force readiness for the future.

[House Bill 5, recently passed in New Mexico, establishes the Workforce Development and Apprenticeship Trust Fund](#), aimed at financially supporting apprenticeship and training programs in the state. Set to be managed by the New Mexico State Investment Council starting fiscal year 2025, the fund begins with a \$30 million state allocation. It plans structured annual distributions to enhance apprentice training, with initial spending policies set at \$5 million for the first two years, followed by \$3 million annually,



ensuring the fund's operation for approximately a decade without additional appropriations.

[The Society for Human Resource Management \(SHRM\) has endorsed California's SB 480](#), a bill promoting youth apprenticeship programs in high schools beginning in the 2026-27 school year. This legislation, introduced by Sen. Anthony Portantino, aims to establish three pilot sites across diverse geographic areas in California, offering apprenticeships as an alternative to traditional courses like visual or performing arts, foreign languages, or career and technical education. These programs are designed to provide students with industry-relevant skills and address the growing demand for technical and soft skills in the workforce.



Industry-Specific Apprenticeship Developments

[The United States Department of Labor is set to approve a new sewing apprenticeship program](#) on June 5, 2024, in partnership with Tad More Tailoring and Alterations in Rockford, Illinois. This initiative, named the Tad More Sustainability Institute Apprenticeship Program, will offer participants classroom and practical training in industrial sewing, job readiness, and sustainable practices. Local officials emphasize its role in equipping individuals with lifelong skills and enhancing employment opportunities in the community.

[The Solar for All program, part of the EPA's initiative to increase solar power in low-income areas](#), is contending with a severe skilled labor shortage, partly due to insufficient apprenticeship programs for solar workers. States receiving part of the \$7 billion fund are exploring solutions, including potential partnerships with community colleges and labor organizations, to develop a trained workforce capable of supporting the burgeoning solar industry. This initiative highlights the critical need for tailored apprenticeship programs that can equip workers with the necessary skills for solar installation and maintenance.

Other Stories

[Generation Z is increasingly attracted to trade schools and blue-collar careers](#), viewing them as a practical alternative to the high costs and long-term debt associated with traditional four-year colleges. Many are pursuing apprenticeships in fields like electric power technology and telecommunications, which provide valuable on-the-job training alongside classroom instruction. This shift is driven by the resilience of these

careers during economic disruptions and the promise of steady, well-paying jobs that are less susceptible to automation by AI.

[San Damiano College for the Trades, a new Catholic educational institution in Springfield, Illinois](#), is set to open in the fall of 2025, focusing on combining traditional liberal arts education with apprenticeship-based trade skills for young men. The college, located on the historic campus previously operated by the Franciscan Brothers, aims to integrate spiritual formation with practical training in various trades, supported by labor unions covering apprenticeship costs. This initiative, part of a broader resurgence in Catholic vocational education, offers students the potential to graduate debt-free with both technical skills and a character-focused education.

Members in the News

[The American Institute of CPAs and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants have launched the Registered Apprenticeship for Finance Business Partners Program in California](#), a pioneering initiative backed by the U.S. Department of Labor. This program, in collaboration with the California Society of CPAs and industry leaders, aims to enhance the state's talent pipeline by providing rigorous training, professional certification, and mentorship opportunities. Targeting both new and existing employees, the program seeks to cultivate highly skilled, long-term finance professionals by integrating on-the-job training with structured education towards the Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) designation.

[Comcast NBCUniversal has granted \\$1.5 million to 2Gether-International \(2GI\)](#), enhancing their partnership to support disabled entrepreneurs. This funding will expand 2GI's existing initiatives, including the introduction of an innovative apprenticeship program. This program, in collaboration with **BuildWithin** and the U.S. Department of Labor, is designed specifically for aspiring startup executives with disabilities, providing them with tailored on-the-job training and educational opportunities to effectively lead their ventures.

[Governor Kathy Hochul announced \\$11.6 million in funding](#) to support workforce development initiatives for New York's clean energy economy. This funding will be used by the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and the Office of Just Energy Transition (OJET) to launch new training and apprenticeship programs, particularly benefiting disadvantaged communities. One initiative includes a \$600,000 investment in **Say Yes Buffalo's** Youth Apprenticeship Program, which will provide structured apprenticeships, paid on-the-job learning, and mentorship for high school graduates. These programs will focus on up-skilling and training workers for jobs in renewable energy sectors such as building electrification and electric vehicle charging, and include support services like childcare and transportation to ensure successful participation and completion.

[Worley, a global company with nearly 50,000 employees, is expanding its apprenticeship programs](#) to meet sustainability goals and client needs. Through standardized workforce development initiatives, including apprenticeships and upskilling programs, Worley aims to generate 75% of its revenue from sustainability-related work. Their apprenticeship programs, active in multiple states, provide comprehensive training and

certifications, helping reduce turnover and absenteeism while enhancing productivity and employee morale. Notably, Worley was recognized as the 2023 Gulf Coast Region Energy Apprenticeship Provider of the Year by **Houston Community College**, highlighting their significant contributions to skill development and advancing careers through apprenticeships.

And Finally...



[The Nebraska Winnebago Tribe's apprenticeship program](#) is proactively addressing projected skilled worker shortages by providing high school juniors and seniors with practical training in fields such as construction, IT, nursing, and education. A collaboration between Ho-Chunk, Inc., Winnebago High School, the Winnebago Tribe Education Department, and local businesses, the program allows students to earn credits and gain hands-on experience while learning essential soft skills. Graduates can either enter the workforce immediately or pursue further training, with the ultimate goal of contributing to the tribe and broader community.

