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AFA E-Digest

November 19, 2024

Happy Apprenticeship Week!

This week, approximately 1,500 events nationwide are commemorating the story of apprenticeship in the United States. At Apprenticeships for America, we are delighted to collaborate with partners in a diverse array of events.

The tenth anniversary of National Apprenticeship Week presents an opportune moment to assess the trajectory of apprenticeship growth and the expanding spectrum of occupations and individuals it encompasses.

AFA is pleased to report on significant advancements in public policy. Our signature policy proposal for a pay-for-apprenticeship funding model has garnered substantial support from the Department of Labor, which has identified potential pilot projects to evaluate the concept through states and in specific occupations. (Please refer to [AFA's analysis for further details.](#)) Concurrently, remarkable progress is being made at the state level. Watch for the release of a comprehensive state policy review in the coming days.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all sponsors and participants of National Apprenticeship Week and to our members who are actively engaged in expanding pathways to opportunity and nurturing the talent of America's businesses.



Upcoming Event

The Restaurant & Hospitality Leadership Center, in collaboration with **ArcStratta**, is hosting a webinar to introduce the Apprenticeship Toolkit: Fostering Diverse Teams and Inclusive Leadership. This resource provides employers with strategies to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in their apprenticeship programs through talent acquisition and leadership development. The webinar, scheduled for November 21st at 2 PM EST, will explore how the toolkit can support organizations

in building an inclusive workplace
and a skilled talent pipeline.

Register Now



In the States

New Jersey's Department of Labor is offering \$7 million in grant funding through its GAINS and PACE programs to support apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship initiatives. GAINS funds help offset training costs for registered apprenticeship programs, while PACE provides support for pre-apprenticeship programs partnered with apprenticeships, including covering expenses like childcare. Letters of intent are due by December 13. More information on how to apply can be found [here](#).

[State legislatures in 2024 continued advancing apprenticeship and nondegree credential opportunities within workforce development efforts](#). Key initiatives documented by The National Conference of State Legislatures included expanding financial aid for nondegree credentials (e.g., Georgia's High Demand Apprenticeship Program), enhancing quality standards through frameworks and credential registries (e.g., Colorado's SB 143), and promoting skills-based hiring to reduce reliance on degree requirements in public sector jobs. States like Idaho, Virginia, and Oklahoma passed legislation to strengthen access, quality, and alignment of credentials with employer needs, reflecting broader trends in integrating nondegree pathways into education and career systems.

[Governor Kim Reynolds highlighted Broadlawns Medical Center's TECH and TEACH apprenticeship programs as effective models for addressing Iowa's health care workforce shortages](#). These programs, which have trained 285 certified nursing assistants (CNAs) since 2016, focus on recruiting from local communities and providing resources to help participants succeed. With nearly \$16 million invested in health care apprenticeships statewide, Iowa has

enrolled over 380 apprentices in the last three years, showcasing the potential of apprenticeships beyond traditional trades to meet workforce needs in critical sectors like health care.

Industry-Specific Apprenticeship Developments



[Owens Community College has launched Ohio's first Peer Specialist Apprenticeship Program \(PSAP\)](#), in partnership with Wood County Job and Family Services. This 2,000-hour paid program provides students with hands-on experience and professional exposure to careers in human services, such as Child and Adult Protective Services and Fiscal Operations. While completing the apprenticeship, students can fulfill their academic curriculum and earn associate degrees, with eligibility to transition into a fellowship program. The initiative aims to address the projected shortage of 74,000 social workers annually by equipping students with practical knowledge and support systems to navigate their careers.

[Indiana is launching a statewide high school banking apprenticeship program](#) inspired by Switzerland's CYP banking school, set to begin in 2025. Students will work at partnering banks up to three days per week while attending high school the remaining days, gaining hands-on experience across various bank departments. The initiative, led by the Indiana Bankers Association, includes a Financial Services Academy modeled after CYP, offering specialized banking skills training. This program represents one of the first large-scale U.S. white-collar apprenticeships, aiming to provide meaningful career pathways for students not pursuing college while addressing workforce needs in the financial sector.

Other Stories

[The White House recently hosted the "Classroom to Career" Summit](#), highlighting efforts to expand high-quality career pathways and workforce development programs, including Registered Apprenticeships. Key

announcements included the commitment of over \$80 billion from the American Rescue Plan to workforce initiatives, the growth of free community college programs to 34 states and Washington, D.C., and expansions in training programs across infrastructure, clean energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors. Notably, the Department of Labor reported over one million new apprentices since 2021, including record numbers of women in apprenticeships and the launch of K-12 teacher apprenticeship programs in 46 states. These developments underscore the Administration's focus on accessible, skills-based career opportunities.

[Rowan University and IBEW Local 102 have expanded their partnership to offer an “earn as you learn” program](#), integrating full-time work with university credit through a five-year apprenticeship. Graduates can pursue Rowan's fully online construction management certificates or a bachelor's degree, with credits from the apprenticeship applied toward advanced credentials. IBEW Local 102 covers 75% of tuition, supporting members' career growth into management roles while maintaining their strong foundation in electrical work.

Members and AFA in the News

[The Gateway Apprenticeship Program™ was launched in Ohio during National Apprenticeship Week](#), focusing on bridging K-12 education and manufacturing careers. Hosted by the **National Institute for Industry and Career Advancement (NIICA)** and key partners, the initiative integrates pre-apprenticeships within Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, creating direct pathways from high school to Registered Apprenticeships (RAs). The event emphasized inclusion, with commitments from employers to support underrepresented groups, and introduced the Manufacturing Works for Women Campaign to further diversify Ohio's manufacturing workforce.

A new [case study](#) by **NGA** and **Opportunity@Work** highlights Colorado's efforts to transform its workforce through skills-based practices. Since 2019, the state has implemented executive orders promoting skills-based hiring, work-based learning, and apprenticeships in state government, shifting focus from traditional degree-based hiring to skill demonstration. This multipronged approach aims to build a workforce that reflects Colorado's diverse population and meets future talent challenges.

[Harris County recently approved an additional \\$6.7 million from the American Rescue Plan Act to expand the Apprenticeship Advantage program](#), which supports Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) in the region. This funding will add over 300 training slots and broaden access to high-demand industries like construction, technology, and transportation. With a focus on underrepresented groups, the program has already helped nearly 700 participants secure well-paying jobs, aiming to serve 1,200 individuals by 2026. Key partners include Gulf Coast AFL-CIO and **NPower**, which provide opportunities to “earn while you learn” and build a skilled workforce.



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