ePolicyWorks
Collaborative Policymaking in Action

U.S. Department of Labor's Advancing the National Apprenticeship System Online Dialogue

August 15 – September 12, 2022
Summary Report

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Introduction

From August 15 to September 12, 2022, the ePolicyWorks national online dialogue, *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System*, gathered ideas on how to continue the growth of the U.S. Registered Apprenticeship system in the post-pandemic economy. This report summarizes key themes and takeaways gleaned from the online dialogue and associated August 15, 2022, Twitter chat that was held to kick-off the dialogue.

Since their inception, apprenticeships have proven themselves to be a high-quality career pathway for workers, and a workforce solution for employers seeking qualified talent. These structured, work-based training programs combine technical instruction in a classroom setting with learning and mentoring experiences at an employer's worksite. *Registered Apprenticeships* are industry-vetted and validated by the U.S Department of Labor (DOL) or a State Apprenticeship Agency, and in contrast to many other workplace training programs, apprenticeships offer paid opportunities for apprentices to "earn while they learn." In addition, they emphasize diversity and are designed to reflect the communities in which they operate.

The ePolicyWorks online dialogue, *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System,* set out to explore ways to best frame future apprenticeship initiatives as well as funding opportunities that promote the optimal implementation of the apprenticeship model. Hosted by DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) Apprenticeship Office, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) and Women's Bureau (WB), the dialogue sought ideas for policies, practices, strategies and approaches that will further the reach and availability of inclusive apprenticeships and help address any barriers to their success.

The dialogue utilized ePolicyWorks' crowdsourcing technology, together with an interactive Twitter chat, to gather input from numerous subject matter experts and apprenticeship stakeholders across the country. These included educational institutions, workforce development organizations, worker rights nonprofits, research organizations, service providers, disability and equity advocacy groups, state and local government representatives, employers and other members of the public.

During the national online dialogue, more than 2,500 stakeholders visited the dialogue website to view, share, comment and vote on ideas in six topic areas related to issues around the national apprenticeship system. Based on the input gathered, the dialogue identified several key themes and takeaways that will assist policymakers as they work to strengthen, expand and enhance the national apprenticeship system.

Online Dialogue Topics

The online dialogue's six topics were associated with different areas of interest for the host agencies. The topics included several related questions and prompts:

1. **Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System**
   Please share your experiences navigating the apprenticeship system including any barriers or challenges you encountered. How can DOL best support the different national, state and local entities within the apprenticeship system in their efforts to work together? How can DOL best ensure the success of apprenticeship programs?

2. **Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs**
   Please share your ideas on the characteristics of a high-quality apprenticeship program. What factors should DOL consider when assessing the quality of an apprenticeship program? Provide examples of any exemplary local and/or national apprenticeship programs that demonstrate a commitment to high-quality programming.

3. **Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship**
   Please share your experiences with pre-apprenticeship and/or youth apprenticeship. How can these programs be utilized to support an individual's career goals? What role can pre-apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs play in the expansion and diversification of all apprenticeships? How can they be used to build a pipeline to apprenticeship?

4. **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices**
   Please share your ideas on how apprenticeship programs can be used to support diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility in the workforce. What strategies and policies can be utilized to expand inclusion and increase access in registered apprenticeship for historically underrepresented populations?

5. **Voice of the Apprentice**
   Please share your ideas on how to modernize, diversify, expand and strengthen the Registered Apprenticeship system. How can apprentice feedback be incorporated into program design and improvements? What resources are needed to ensure a successful apprenticeship? How can DOL help spread the word about apprenticeships?

6. **Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries**
   Please share your ideas to make apprenticeships adaptable to industry needs while preserving quality. How can DOL build a National Apprenticeship System that is responsive to the diverse needs of industry, while leveraging the flexibility of the model to benefit both businesses and workers?

Outreach Efforts

To launch the online dialogue and generate excitement around the topic, ePolicyWorks hosted a Twitter chat on August 16, 2022. Then, to ensure a wide range of online dialogue participants' viewpoints and experiences, DOL, along with the specific host agencies, conducted numerous strategic outreach efforts. These included distributing targeted eblasts, publishing announcements in DOL newsletters, and posting on @USDOL's Twitter and other social media accounts. In addition, ePolicyWorks conducted its own outreach via the @ePolicyWorks Twitter account and through emails to targeted groups, such as the registrants of previous apprenticeship- and equity-focused ePolicyWorks online dialogues, worker organizations, industry groups, state and local government officials, and other key stakeholders, including members of the disability community.

ePolicyWorks Email and Social Media Outreach

| 9 distinct email campaigns | 46,627 emails delivered | 10,238 emails opened | 752 unique link clicks |

ePolicyWorks conducted nine distinct email campaigns to promote the Twitter chat and online dialogue. The campaigns included the following:

1. **Twitter Chat Announcement (August 15, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 12,700
   - Emails opened: 2,498 (19.7%)

2. **Twitter Chat Reminder and Dialogue Launch Announcement (Aug. 16, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 12,661
   - Emails opened: 2,252 (17.8%)

3. **Apprenticeship, Business, Labor Publications Outreach (Aug. 19, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 78
   - Emails opened: 16 (19.7%)

4. **Dialogue Reminder (General Outreach) (Aug. 25, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 9,825
   - Emails opened: 2,853 (26.5%)

5. **Dialogue Reminder (Twitter Chat Participants) (Aug. 25, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 17
   - Emails opened: 3 (17.6%)

6. **Dialogue Reminder (State Offices of Apprenticeship) (Sept. 6, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 54
   - Emails opened: 6 (11.1%)

7. **Dialogue Extension (General Outreach) (Sept. 6, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 997
   - Emails opened: 186 (18.6%)

8. **Dialogue Extension (Apprenticeship Dialogue Registrants) (Sept. 6, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 405
   - Emails opened: 129 (32.2%)

9. **Dialogue Final Reminder (Sept. 12, 2022)**
   - Total emails delivered: 9,894
   - Emails opened: 2,295 (23.1%)

In total, 46,627 emails were delivered to ePolicyWorks stakeholders regarding the apprenticeship Twitter chat and dialogue, with an open rate of more than 22%, which is several percentage points better than recent ePolicyWorks dialogue outreach campaigns and five percentage points higher than the industry average of 17%. In addition, 7.35% of individuals who opened at least one of the outreach emails clicked on a link in the email. The individuals who opened the emails were informed of the Twitter chat and the dialogue, and also learned about DOL's efforts to strengthen the U.S. apprenticeship system.

- Total emails delivered: 46,627

- Total emails opened: 10,238

- Total number of clicks on links in emails (excluding multiple clicks of the same link): 752

37
@ePolicyWorks
promotional tweets

4,275
total impressions

256
total engagements
(likes, clicks, replies,
retweets, quote tweets)

In addition to email distribution, ePolicyWorks posted 37 tweets to its Twitter account announcing the Twitter chat and promoting the dialogue. The 37 tweets resulted in 4,275 impressions and 256 engagements (likes, clicks, replies, retweets or quote tweets).
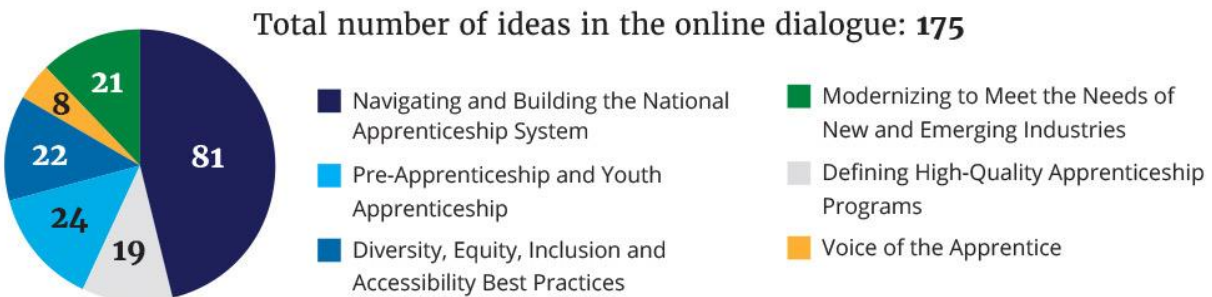
Independent Promotion

Beyond outreach by ePolicyWorks, DOL and the host agencies used their own avenues for promotion to stakeholders, including listservs, GovDelivery, Twitter and newsletters. Other public and private organizations and news outlets also promoted the Twitter chat and online dialogue through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, emails, blogs, newsletters and action alerts. Below is a sampling of the organizations that disseminated details about the Twitter chat and online dialogue:

- Apprenticeship Illinois
- Campaign for Disability Employment
- CCME Training Service
- Council of State Governments
- Center for Advancing Policy on Employment for Youth
- DRG News
- Employer Assistance and Resources Network on Disability Inclusion
- JFF
- Jobs With Justice
- Kessler Foundation
- Mathematica
- National Disability Institute
- National Institute for Work and Learning
- Partnership on Employment & Accessible Technology
- Partnership for Inclusive Apprenticeship
- RespectAbility
- Women in Government
- Workforce GPS
- Year Up

Online Dialogue Participant Summary

The *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue opened on **August 15, 2022, and** closed at the end of the day on **September 12, 2022**. Detailed below is information on contributions to the dialogue, including ideas, comments and votes, along with the number of online dialogue views and registrants, participation rates and profile information provided by registrants during the registration process.

Contributions to the Online Dialogue

Total number of ideas in the online dialogue: **175**

- Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System — 81
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship — 24
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices — 22
- Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries — 21
- Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs — 19
- Voice of the Apprentice — 8

Total number of ideas in the online dialogue: 175

- Ideas in the *Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System* Topic: **81**

- Ideas in the *Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs* Topic: **19**

- Ideas in the *Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship* Topic: **24**

- Ideas in the *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices* Topic:**22**

- Ideas in the *Voice of the Apprentice* Topic: **8**

- Ideas in the *Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries* Topic: **21**

Total number of comments in the online dialogue: **148**

- Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System — 75
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices — 35
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship — 13
- Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs — 12
- Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries — 10
- Voice of the Apprentice — 3

Total number of comments in the online dialogue: 148

- Comments in the *Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System* Topic: **75**

- Comments in the *Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs* Topic: **12**

- Comments in the *Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship* Topic: **13**

- Comments in the *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices* Topic: **35**

- Comments in the *Voice of the Apprentice* Topic: **3**

- Comments in the *Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries* Topic: **10**

Total number of votes in the online dialogue: **440**

- Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
- Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices
- Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship
- Voice of the Apprentice

Total number of votes in the online dialogue: 440

- Votes in the *Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System* Topic: **205**

- Votes in the *Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs* Topic: **49**

- Votes in the *Pre-Apprenticeship and Youth Apprenticeship* Topic: **61**

- Votes in the *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices* Topic: **62**

- Votes in the *Voice of the Apprentice* Topic: **19**

- Votes in the *Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries* Topic: **44**

Visitors, Registrants and Participants in the Online Dialogue

From August 15 to September 12, 2022, the dialogue could be viewed by visiting AdvancingApprenticeships.IdeaScale.com. Visitors to the website could access all the ideas, comments and votes in the online dialogue, as well as detailed information on how ePolicyWorks dialogues work and step-by-step instructions on how to participate. In addition, the dialogue provided apprenticeship resources including Executive Orders, Federal Government resources, ETA, VETS, WB and ODEP resources, and Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs resources.

All of this information was available to anyone who visited the website AdvancingApprenticeships.IdeaScale.com, but in order to participate in the dialogue—i.e., add an idea, comment or vote—individuals had to complete the registration process. The registration process entailed completing an online form that asked registrants to share the stakeholder group and the occupations, industries or fields of interest with which they identify. In addition, they were asked to share what they hoped to gain from participating in the dialogue. All questions were mandatory.

After the form was submitted, for security reasons, registrants were asked to verify their email to complete the process. Once an individual's email was verified by IdeaScale, they could create a password, log in and add ideas, as well as comment and vote on ideas submitted by others.

For the following dialogue metrics, "**visitors**" are defined as all individuals who visited the dialogue website, whether or not they chose to complete the registration process. As mentioned above, during the dialogue, all visitors to the website could view all ideas, comments, votes and resources. "**Registrants**" are those who successfully verified their email and created a password and "**Participants**" include anyone who submitted an idea or commented or voted on an idea submitted by another.

2,525	**278**	**158**
dialogue visits	registrants	participants
Page views: 7,793 Avg. time: 5:28 minutes	**11%** of visitors registered	**57%** of registrants participated

- Total number of visits to the online dialogue: **2,525 visits**
- Total number of page views: **7,793 pages**
- Average number of times visitors came to the online dialogue: **2.07 sessions**
- Average length of time they spent visiting the online dialogue: **5:28 minutes**

- Average pages they viewed during a visit to the online dialogue: **3.09 pages**
- Total number of registrants in the dialogue: **278 individuals**
- Total number of registrants who participated by contributing an idea, comment or vote: 158 **(57% of registrants)**
- Total number of registrants who contributed ideas: **104 individuals**
- Total number of registrants who contributed comments: **53 individuals**
- Total number of registrants who contributed votes: **146 individuals**
- Total number of states represented by dialogue registrants: **50, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Territories**

Online Dialogue Registration Questions

When registering for the *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue, registrants were asked if they would like to share information about the community and stakeholder groups with which they identify. Registrants were given prepopulated choices and could choose all answers that applied to them including a choice titled "other." Below is a summary of the responses from dialogue registrants.

## Stakeholder Group Represented*

- 136 registrants selected Employer
- 130 registrants selected Apprentice
- 109 registrants selected Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Organization
- 98 registrants selected College or University
- 97 registrants selected Career Seeker
- 91 registrants selected Intermediary Organization
- 75 registrants selected Service Provider
- 68 registrants selected Community and Faith-based Organization
- 52 registrants selected Minority Serving Institution
- 52 registrants selected Policymaker
- 52 registrants selected Union
- 48 registrants selected Secondary School
- 97 registrants selected Other

Occupations, Industries or Fields of interest Group Represented*

- 151 registrants selected Public Service (federal, state or local government, etc.)
- 141 registrants selected Manufacturing
- 136 registrants selected Information Technology
- 127 registrants selected Health Care
- 115 registrants selected Professional Services
- 103 registrants selected Energy
- 71 registrants selected Logistics
- 64 registrants selected Transportation
- 53 registrants selected Financial Services
- 38 registrants selected Retail
- 180 registrants selected Other

*Please note that for both registration questions, individuals were allowed to choose all that applied.

Review and Analysis of Online Dialogue Contributions

175 ideas	148 comments	440 votes	53 resources
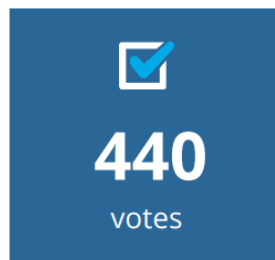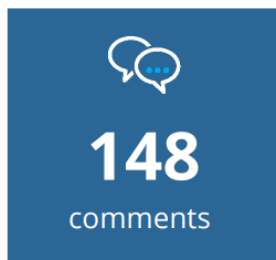
Over the course of the online dialogue, participants from across the U.S. shared thought-provoking and innovative ideas and recommendations on ways DOL can ensure it is developing the appropriate policies and providing the resources and tools employers and employees need to support the apprenticeship system. Importantly, they also shared ways to ensure the apprenticeship system is accessible to all, including those from historically underserved communities. The results will help inform future policy priorities and funding opportunities and ensure that DOL is addressing the needs of employers and employees from diverse backgrounds.

The range and depth of the ideas submitted and discussed during the Twitter chat and online dialogue demonstrate the immense value of engaging citizens in collaboration efforts. Employers, apprentices, advocates, educational institutions, local government representatives and other stakeholders jointly contributed 175 ideas, 148 comments, 440 votes, 59 resources (Appendix A) and an additional 35 resources in the Twitter chat (Appendix B).

From these contributions, several themes emerged.

Key Themes and Takeaways

Based on a preliminary analysis of the ideas and comments posted to the dialogue, the following key themes, policy recommendations and takeaways emerged:

Create Targeted Messaging About Registered Apprenticeships to Reach Employers, Job Seekers and Those from Historically Marginalized Communities

There were numerous ideas and comments in the dialogue about the need to improve communication around apprenticeship programs and ensure that employers, job seekers and those from historically marginalized communities understand the advantages Registered Apprenticeships offer to both employers and apprentices.

A participant noted that an important part of any marketing or messaging campaign is to clearly define the different audiences you are trying to reach. In addition to employers and potential apprentices, several other communities were mentioned including immigrants, refugees,

educators, older job searchers, those changing careers and those who aren't in school. Another idea stressed a particular community that should be a focus of any communication effort—Disability Service Providers who have direct contact with people with disabilities who are looking for employment.

One dialogue participant recommended targeting communications to "seasoned recruiters and coaches to provide a supplemental staffing source of diverse candidates. Sourcing candidates, equipping participants through pre-apprentice and work-based learning, coaching and screening provide immense value to the employers."

Several ideas mentioned the DOL/OA website and the need for it to be more "user friendly and up to date." One person mentioned that after three years, their RA is still not listed.

It is clear from the ideas and comments that there is the need to increase the visibility and accessibility of tools like DOL/OA's Apprenticeship Finder. It is important to understand why this is and develop strategies to increase utilization of existing or emerging tools. One suggestion was to utilize low-cost advertising/engagement with search platforms/algorithms to ensure Apprenticeship/Partner finder tools (and other similar tools) appear when searchers use key terms.

Many who were not familiar with any DOL resources that listed RAs suggested that DOL support the creation of an online database of companies that offer apprenticeships or pre-apprenticeships. They felt that this could be an effective marketing tool. The list could include contact information, length of the RA program, skills needed to apply, and certificates earned upon completion. In addition to companies, ideas suggested the database could also include industry-specific professional organizations that offer RA programs, their location, contact information and website, if applicable.

Improve Registered Apprenticeship Data Collection and Dissemination to Illustrate the Value of Registered Apprenticeships and Recognize Industry Leaders

Several ideas focused on the use of data to advance the apprenticeship system. As one idea put it, the "collection, analysis and use of apprentice data needs to be greatly improved in order to better understand the successes and challenges within Registered Apprenticeship."

Some of the ideas focused on data that could be collected from employers such as salary. They stressed that RA data collected from employers should be made available to the public and audited by DOL or the State Apprenticeship Agencies (SAA). Another idea suggested funding one "shared RA platform for industry and educational entities to use to add their information and data and also track student success."

Provide Support Services to Apprentices (Transportation, Childcare, Mentoring, etc.)

One overall theme present in a number of ideas was providing support services to apprentices. This included a discussion around making apprenticeships more inclusive of individuals with disabilities. One idea discussed the need for every RA program to have "a budget for funding reasonable accommodations, as well as defined processes for how a person can make a request at every step along the way." Several ideas mentioned having a clear accommodation request process to not only encourage individuals with disabilities to consider and participate in Ras, but also to stay and grow in the field.

Many stressed the need to offer support services during the apprenticeship as a key to retention and engagement. Support services mentioned included transportation, childcare, loans, temporary wage supplements and access to mental wellness resources.

One contributor wrote that "many underrepresented communities face barriers when it comes to entering, staying in and succeeding in apprenticeships. These obstacles for prospective apprentices include, but are not limited to, lack of transportation, need for childcare, incompatible working hours, inability to work from home, debt, necessity to earn money from day one, providing elder care, legal issues, safety issues, mental health disabilities, substance abuse disorders, and more."

There was also a discussion around the use of loans, or 529 savings plans to support those participating in apprenticeships. One parent wrote that she had saved money for her son's college, but he chose to pursue a plumber's apprenticeship instead. She would like to see "a policy discussion around using 529 college plan savings for rent (like college kids), for food (like college kids) and for tools and uniforms."

One employer brought up the fact that many apprentices are those changing careers or older workers. For those workers, the idea submitter suggested "some type of temporary wage replacement even if it had to be paid back at the completion of the apprenticeship program. I believe not making provisions for the segment of our population who is older, and as a result more mature in their goals and work habits, would eliminate a vast resource of qualified candidates."

Finally, several idea submitters highlighted the need to provide apprenticeship opportunities for refugees and immigrants. In order for these groups to be successful, they may need different supports including translation services, ESOL classes, childcare and other support services.

Support Employers Who Offer (or Want to Offer) Registered Apprenticeships Through Grants and Resources

Many of the ideas in the dialogue talked about the difficulty employers face with sponsoring RA programs. They stressed the need for resources, support and financial assistance.

Several different financial models were mentioned including a model where businesses finance 51% of the investment in each RA cohort, while federal, state and local grant funding cover the remaining 49% of the investment. Another model allowed for a certain sum of money to cover training costs. This could be based on the following: the registration of the program, a signed employer agreement with an apprentice, or the yearly audit of key quality metrics (graduation rate, job placement rate). The sum could be paid partially upfront at signature of the employer agreement, then based on student progress, to ensure high graduation rates and aligned interests.

One employer wrote that "it would be fantastic if employers who are apprenticeship standard holders were able to receive funds to support their programs without having to be tied to a community college or university. Many businesses have educated and experienced people creating and leading these programs, and the colleges and universities are not familiar with the software applications, etc. used in the business to be able to assist."

Another employer noted that they have 90 RAs a year and have incurred all costs for the program—and could do much more for the apprentices if funding opportunities were available.

Update Requirements for Registered Apprenticeships and Add More Flexibility

Many participants in the dialogue recognized the need to update current RA requirements. As industries and manufacturing change, so should Registered Apprenticeships. It was clear from the submissions to the dialogue that DOL needs to make the RA program approval process flexible enough to introduce emerging technology training as those requirements come up.

One employer stated that he found it hard to change existing Appendix A's and have them recognized by certain states. He stated that "employers need a DOL representative who can provide support on these challenges and changes and help streamline the process so that certain states will be more receptive to the changes and registration."

Another idea submitted highlighted the current teacher shortage and stated that "lots of solutions to the teacher shortage are being proposed, and we would like to see the apprenticeship process streamlined to enable [the education field] to more readily participate."

Another registrant noted that the "purest measurement of an apprentice's success should be achievement of competency, and that doesn't necessarily correlate to time in a chair. In order for this to hold true, the apprenticeship must outline detailed, actionable and measurable competencies—not just major competency domains."

Use the Apprenticeship Model to Channel Talented People with and without Disabilities into Civil Service

Several ideas in the dialogue discussed utilizing apprenticeship in different civil service careers (federal, state and local). Many felt federal agencies and states should serve as models in the apprenticeship system in how they recruit and hire new workers. This includes offering a path to employment for transitioning workers, workers with non-traditional backgrounds and others.

One submitter shared the recent report by the Council of State Governments (CSG) that discussed "state as a model employer" (SAME) policies noting that they have had much success leveraging these policies to recruit, hire, retain and promote talented workers with disabilities. The submitter wondered if some of these same practices could be used to introduce Ras into civil service.

Finally, a participant simply stated, "as the Federal Government looks at current staffing challenges and its own equity priorities, apprenticeship seems a valuable tool to use."

Work with High Schools to Promote Registered Apprenticeship

One topic that resulted in the most discussion was about working with high schools to promote the RA program. It was clear that high schools should be the primary target of information about Ras, but many are unaware of what these programs could offer their students. One individual in the dialogue shared their experience working with local school systems. In their experience, they found that neither the students, nor the teachers, nor the parents knew about apprenticeship programs and the potential they had to offer a secure future.

Several participants stressed the need to inform and educate high school guidance counselors about Ras. Ideas included grants to provide training. The training could include high school visits, training for the counselors and a presentation for the staff and students on what apprenticeship is, who can become an apprentice, what fields use apprenticeship models and the advantages to be earning an income while you learn. Many thought visits to job sites that are using apprenticeship models (a field trip to your local construction site, industrial plant or hospital lab) for high school administration would help. Others suggested broadcasting about apprenticeship through school and student networks.

In addition to training, another pointed out that "on almost every high school website you see a statistic on how many of their students graduated and are currently in college. This includes percentages on college graduations. There are no statistics about apprenticeships or apprentice graduations. High school counselors are so concerned about getting students to a college, because it reflects poorly on their numbers if they don't show student progression into college. This needs to change, and counselors should get credit for the apprenticeships as well as statistics for these numbers."

One registrant recommended creating a federal registry allowing youth to receive credited hours while participating in summer programs geared towards apprenticeship pathways. These

same programs can be replicated during the school year in areas like robotics. welding, woodworking, and computer programming. By instilling apprenticeships as part of their early learning, it becomes second nature to continue the path of apprenticeship as they get older and graduate. It also incentivizes them if you are able to provide credited hours at an early age.

Contributors also noted that high schools are full of learning standards across all of their subject areas. Unfortunately, the Career and Technical Education (CTE) content areas have learning standards dictated by a policy panel that is not connected with the school's local industry needs. There is a gap between what CTE standards deem "career ready" and what local RA programs accept as "career ready." They explained that the Department of Education and DOL need to foster an environment in high school education that encourages the connection of their learning standards to the needs of local RA programs.

Use Lessons Learned from Remote Work to Increase Flexibility in Registered Apprenticeships

According to participants, many of the lessons learned from the last several years of remote work can easily be applied to RA programs. The pandemic has made remote work an accepted reality for thousands of workers, normalizing a common reasonable accommodation request long championed by workers with disabilities. Further, businesses have learned how to make remote work successful by having multiple open lines of communication. Participants recommended that budgets be large enough to ensure that all participants have the technology they need to participate.

During the dialogue, RespectAbility, a national disability advocacy organization, shared their recent experience with RAs and remote work. They retooled their National Leadership Program from being a cohort-based internship program located in Washington D.C., into an all-virtual, work-from-anywhere, skills-based training program. The most direct consequence was that the organization significantly expanded the pool of prospective program participants. In addition, they expanded the funding support to increase National Leadership Program participants and directly opened new opportunities for recruitment.

In addition to remote work, the pandemic changed industries as well. Many industries are now comprised of contract workers. This type of work structure can make it harder for apprenticeships. One idea submitter suggested that that it would be helpful if "DOL would recognize this structural change in the workforce and develop (RA) programs appropriate for them."

Redefine High Quality Apprenticeships Based on Input from the Dialogue

There were many ideas and comments about the best ways to define a quality RA. Some of the metrics mentioned included:

- Graduation rates;
- Proportion of apprentices who started the program to apprentices who completed the program in the advertised period;
- Job placement ratios (i.e., number of apprentices who have a job in the field of study six months after graduation as compared to the number of apprentices who graduated);
- Average salary six months after program completion;
- Amount of in-house experience (i.e., ensure that learners are engaged in working on real, substantive projects that directly advance the employer's mission. Apprenticeships that focus on real wages for real work offer participants a tangible result of their work and help create a foundation for future success);
- Professional connections and networking opportunities (i.e., connect program participants to later career professionals to act as mentors and future guides on their career journeys);
- Support to identify needs and guidance related to reasonable accommodations (i.e., help workers clearly identify their reasonable accommodation needs before they make the jump to their first full-time job or position with significant responsibilities); and
- The extent to which programs are employer-led, collaborative, competency-based, outcome-driven, accessible, equity-focused, online learning eligible, as well as offer support services and well-defined on-the-job training and mentoring

Encourage Union Participation

A number of participants stressed the need to engage Unions in RA programs. One participant felt that "Registered Apprenticeship programs with equal representation by labor organizations and employer trustees are vital to creating a strong economy, protecting apprentices on the job and in their future careers, and rebuilding the middle class." One participant noted a recent study that demonstrated that when comparing union and non-union construction apprenticeship programs in the Portland, Oregon area, the study found that union apprenticeship programs provided significantly better outcomes overall for women and people of color compared to non-union programs, and that union programs had greater apprenticeship diversity in terms of both gender and race.

Several participants submitted detailed plans for what they considered the keys to successful apprenticeship programs. These four ideas can be found in detail in Appendix C.

Top Ideas by Vote

Below are the top five ideas by vote from the *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue.

Please note that the ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

Rewrite the Narrative
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
11 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 11 Net Votes
Comments: 0
Followers: 10

Apprenticeships are viable entry points to career opportunities in all fields, including "new collar," high-growth, high-demand and trade industries. However, many people view apprenticeship as a pathway into what are perceived as more traditional trades. This misconception has a trickle-down effect, which has likely resulted in fewer people pursuing apprenticeship opportunities.

Messaging about apprenticeship opportunities needs to be tailored to expand the reach of these messages to targeted underrepresented worker groups. Messaging and outreach should underscore that degree-granting programs (such as HBCUs) can indeed offer workforce development outcomes in all sectors, and that apprenticeship is a viable entry point into occupations with family-sustaining wages. It is important to engage communities directly to explain the nuanced apprenticeship associations and demonstrate that there is a return on investment for individuals who pursue apprenticeship. The benefits of inclusive apprenticeship for business owners are also well documented and should be shared widely.

Additionally, it would be great to provide funding and resources to develop talking points, templates, resources and media tools to communicate effectively across community colleges, CBOs, MSIs and HBCUs (and to educate jobseekers) about apprenticeship as a viable option for all.

Promote Data-Driven Equity
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
9 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 9 Net Votes
Comments: 1
Followers: 13

The collection, analysis and use of apprentice data needs to be greatly improved in order to better understand the successes and challenges within Registered Apprenticeship. In general data science as a field, combined with computer processing speeds, has evolved immensely. Investment into a new, improved, flexible and focused data gathering, and analysis system

would help greatly (in closing, some organization/entity responsible for conducting a constant data review and aggregate). One small example of the current situation is disability data gathering which is woefully inadequate—an overhaul of the requirements and practices regarding disability is essential. At a minimum, appointing some committee or working group to explore what/why/how use of data could improve registered apprenticeship would be a good start.

Offer Support Services
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
9 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 9 Net Votes
Comments: 1
Followers: 12

There is a need for holistic, wrap-around support services connected to RAPs. What are the supports that exist in current programs that encourage more underrepresented workers (including those with disabilities) to stay and succeed in apprenticeship programs?

Understanding disability supports and accommodations is a basic place to start. DOL should provide ways to build capacity across the RAP ecosystem to ensure apprenticeship practitioners have foundational competencies around inclusion, universal design, implicit bias and effective strategies for driving retention of apprentices with diverse backgrounds and identities. In addition to training RAP sponsors and intermediaries on how best to serve diverse apprentices, it's also important to educate them on the business case for inclusion. Not only do apprenticeships benefit underrepresented populations, but they also have a return on investment for those who run the programs.

Many underrepresented communities face barriers when it comes to entering, staying in, and succeeding in apprenticeship. These obstacles for potential apprentices include but are not limited to lack of transportation, need for childcare, incompatible working hours, inability to work from home, debt, necessity to earn money from day one, providing elder care, legal issues, safety issues, mental health disabilities, substance abuse disorders, and more.

Employer Incentives
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes
Comments: 1
Followers: 6

Employers are always asking, "What's in it for me?" meaning in the way of financial incentives. My suggestion is instead of the USDOL awarding grant funds to intermediaries, give funds directly to employers. For example, a certain dollar amount per apprentice after a certain period of time and at completion. An added bonus should be given for special populations such as youth, minorities, etc...

Eliminating Time Requirements for Competency-Based RAPs
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes
Comments: 1
Followers: 3

A major obstacle for employers to sign on with Registered Apprenticeship is the requirement of time. Although DOL has created the "competency-based" RAPs, the truth is there is still a requirement of at least 6 months (if you get 50% credit for prior time); there is also still a time requirement for related instruction contact hours. The truth is, if something is actually competency-based, then the purest measurement of an apprentice's success should be achievement of competency, and that doesn't necessarily correlate to time in a chair. In order for this to hold true, the apprenticeship must outline detailed, actionable and measurable competencies—not just major competency domains.

Top Trending Ideas

Below are the top five trending ideas from the *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue. Since the dialogue takes place over a finite period of time, it is important to highlight the ideas that gained the most attention at the conclusion of the dialogue.

One of the trending ideas, **Offer Support Services,** was also one of the top ideas by vote. See the [Top Ideas by Vote](#) section for a full description of this idea.

Below are the four other trending ideas.

Similar to the Top Ideas by Vote section, the idea listed in the following section includes minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised post.

Transportation, Childcare and Mentorship
Topic: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices
6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
Comments: 2
Followers: 18

Help with transportation, childcare and mentorship can make a real difference to aspiring apprentices. Lowering barriers to entry = expanding the pipeline. The report is attached.

https://advancingapprenticeships.ideascale.com/a/idea/1050816/41267/download

Simplification & Flexibility
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
3 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 3 Net Votes
Comments: 10
Followers: 19

One of the biggest objections that I get from potential sponsors is that the process is too time-consuming and that the required length of time is too long. With modern technology, it doesn't take as long as it did even 15 years ago to train someone to be proficient or more than proficient in a lot of occupations. I've lost several potential sponsors because what was approved as an occupation would be a four-year process when one to two years would have been sufficient.

On the same issue, we are told that RAPs are employer-driven and fully customizable, but when an employer makes changes to a program that has already been approved so the standards fit their needs, often it is rejected for not meeting the previous standards. If their work analysis states that they don't need 80 competencies, but only need 60, then that should be approved.

The Five Criteria of High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs
Topic: Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs
2 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 2 Net Votes
Comments: 6
Followers: 20

1. ***Employer-led***
    1. *Quality apprenticeships begin and end with employers*
    2. *Meet employer needs for solving the skills shortage and increasing the diversity of the in-demand, and at the same time hard-to-fill occupations*
    3. *Eliminates activities that do not add value in governance, record-keeping and assessment*
2. ***Collaborative***
    1. *Unprecedented collaborative industry/government/academic initiative*
    2. *Launched with the visible support of senior management in industry, government and academia*
    3. *Clearly defined and documented roles and responsibilities of industry, government and academia*
    4. *Active participation of college faculty and industry line managers*
3. ***Competency-based***
    1. *Employers and training providers agree on the competencies needed to perform the tasks of the work role*
    2. *Agreed upon competencies are documented, formalized and continually updated*
    3. *Competencies are aligned with the NICE Framework standards for the work roles*

        4. *Achievement of competencies are verifiable and stackable*
4. **Well-defined on-the-job training and mentoring**
   1. *Standardized, formalized and documented work process schedule for both academic instruction and on-the-job (OJT) mentoring*
   2. *Agreed upon and documented role and deliverables of the OJT mentor*
   3. *Verifiable achievement of OJT goals with emphasis on technical as well as professional skills*
   4. *Replicable across industry sectors and occupations*
5. **Outcome-driven**
   1. *Guaranteed good job upon successful completion*
   2. *Apprenticeships, not internships*
   3. *Zero dropouts*
   4. *Apprentices are productive on the job at the end of the first calendar year*
   5. *Sustained long term by demonstrating positive return on investment to employers*

Defining Success in Registered Apprenticeship
Topic: Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System
1 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 1 Net Votes
Comments: 5
Followers: 24

Based on your experience, what have you found to be the keys to a successful registered apprenticeship program? (This idea was submitted by the hosts of the dialogue. Participants responded with their insights and ideas on defining success. They are listed below.)

1. *The best predictor of a successful RAP is employer involvement. When an employer is driving the need and structure of the RI and OJL, then we know it meets the employer's needs and therefore we see more successful apprentices.*
2. *The ability to build and foster business relationships.*
3. *Employer engagement and involvement as mentioned by Kat above. The program must be industry driven and the employer must understand the value of a RAP beyond any funding opportunities and that is dependent on knowledgeable individuals who can effectively communicate the value to business, answer questions and offer guidance when appropriate. In addition, they must participate on some level in building the program not only as a means to create exactly what they are looking for to help develop their talent but so that it creates an environment where the businesses are vested in the program.*
4. *Technical Support once a RAP is approved is critical. Support and training of administrative personnel in businesses in the RAP system so they are informed and confident that they understand how this works and what the expectations are in administering their program will result in RAP's that are effectively utilized by business.*

5. *Maintaining a level of customer service that empowers but does not enable, such as coaching businesses, following up with employers to see if they have questions, engaging with and educating new staff for companies that have experienced turnover, providing referrals to other programs that might be available to employers outside of RAP (WIOA, Voc Rehab, etc.)*
6. *I believe that the key to a successful RAP is involvement and communication from all parts of the agreement. The management, the labor force and the apprentice all need to work collaboratively to provide an outcome that is suitable for ALL parties and provides a long-term, family-sustaining wage. The construction industry has a model that should be replicated in new areas of apprenticeship. As displayed by these programs, there is not a need for outside financial assistance to compensate for apprentices' wages during RI. The RI provides the correct training in the beginning of the apprenticeship to allow the apprentice to become a valuable member of the crew from the outset, while learning more and more on their way to becoming a journey level worker.*
7. *We are a statewide nonprofit and have participated as an "apprenticeship sponsor" the past two years. When we started our program, we had/were developing a great relationship with our state office, however we have struggled under new leadership. We were originally told apprenticeships only needed one wage increase (for a time-based of approximately one year), later we were told two increases. This was not doable for our employer partner, and we had to remove all apprentices from RAPIDS. We had a "pre-apprenticeship" that we had to change to "workforce readiness" because the state says that we can only enter "pre-apprentices" that are guaranteed to have an apprenticeship. We've also struggled with retaining apprentices in healthcare positions long-term because of the wages and hours. We've had success engaging employers and apprentices by using our own model. On-the-job experience with one wage increases and supporting individuals to obtain education-based certification (which abound in healthcare). In healthcare, a "labor recognized certificate" only gets an individual so far. Providing case management and supports to individuals as they work to navigate their career in healthcare and being PEOPLE-focused instead of having to check the boxes to fit rigid requirements has produced some great successes for us.*

Most Popular Ideas

Below are the top three most popular ideas from each of the online dialogue's six topic areas. "Most popular" is determined based on the idea's total number of up votes, comments and followers at the conclusion of the dialogue.

The ideas listed in the following section include minor typographical corrections, which have in no way impacted the substance or the intention of the revised posts.

Most Popular Ideas from the Navigating and Building the National Apprenticeship System Topic

1. **Rewrite the Narrative** (The full description of this idea can be found under Top Ideas by Vote)
   11 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 11 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 10

2. **Promote Data-Driven Equity** (The full description of this idea can be found under Top Ideas by Vote)
   9 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 9 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 13

3. **Offer Support Services** (The full description of this idea can be found under Top Ideas by Vote)
   9 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 9 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 12

Most Popular Ideas from the Defining High-Quality Apprenticeship Programs Topic

1. **Define Quality by Graduation Rates and Job Placement Rates**
   6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
   Comments: 0
   Followers: 7
   The quality of an apprenticeship program should be assessed through two simple yet well-defined metrics: graduation rate (number of apprentices who completed the program in the advertised period / number of apprentices who started the program) and job placement rate (number of apprentices who have a job in the field of study 6 months after graduation / number of apprentices who graduated), as well as the average salary 6 months after completion.

This data should be advertised to the public and audited by the US DOL or the SAA office. This means calling apprentices/graduates or cross-referencing tax/wage data of the state.
-OpenClassrooms, apprenticeship provider

2. **Connecting Apprenticeship Programs to Disability Providers**
   4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 3
   Connecting Existing Registered Apprenticeship Programs to Disability Service Providers: Over the course of the past several years, RespectAbility's advocacy agenda has had a strong focus on state workforce development systems and raising awareness about disability issues among state workforce leaders. A consistent theme we have heard from workforce boards across the country has been limited understanding of disability services and how a jobseeker with disabilities might benefit from coordinated services/supports. For example, much of our collaborative work in Los Angeles over the past several years has been focused on bridging gaps between workforce providers and disability service agencies together. That type of interagency cooperation can be difficult but ultimately rewarding. As such, if the national registered apprenticeship system is to become more inclusive of workers with disabilities, ensuring that programs proactively build connections to disability service providers is important.

3. **Competency-Based Performance Apprenticeships**
   3 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 3 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 10
   I've attached a case study my team carried out with a client over 3+ years on creating and starting a competency-based training and performance assessment program for existing employees and new apprentice hires. Working with the client, they hired new green recruits from technical schools to intentionally develop them in their 'company' way (think how the US Navy only recruits pilots who have never flown before (green) to teach them in the Navy Way of flying jets).

   If any interest in this pathway, I'd be glad to speak with someone in detail about how to implement such a program with a company.
   https://advancingapprenticeships.ideascale.com/a/idea/1050323/41213/download

Most Popular Ideas from the Informing Stakeholders Topic

1. **How Do You Share Information on Youth Apprenticeship Programs?** *(This idea was a prompt from one of the dialogue hosts. The idea's description below includes the comments submitted by participants.)*
   4 Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
   Comments: 2
   Followers: 7
   How can DOL reach youth to share information about pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities? How do you learn about pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities? What do you want to know about pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities?
   1.) *Consider connecting with the mentoring infrastructure to inform mentoring program coordinators, and through them mentors, about the value of pre-apprenticeship programming and registered apprenticeship opportunities. While we recognize we have a mentoring gap in the nation—there is also a gap between the mentoring movement and the apprenticeship movement. The National Disability Mentoring Coalition and MENTOR are working to close the mentoring gap and drive inclusive mentoring—there is an opportunity to connect their relationships to both pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities. In short, DOL can train mentoring organizations and they will discuss the opportunities in appropriate framing for the youth and young adults they are mentoring.*
   2.) *Please also consider sharing this information with high school counselors in your area. We have direct access to soon-to-be high school graduates who are eager to secure an apprenticeship for after graduation but are having trouble finding opportunities that will accept them, work with their current school schedules, etc. If I was made aware of local opportunities like this, I would promote them endlessly to my students!*

2. **A "BETTER" Pre-Apprenticeship**
   4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
   Comments: 6
   Followers: 22
   We all know of the thousands of "Pre-Apprenticeship" programs that utilize millions of dollars in grant funding each year and lead to nothing more than a certificate of completion and maybe a job interview.

   I propose we model after Washington State and have a Nationally Recognized Direct Entry Pre-Apprenticeship structure. These "Recognized" Pre-Apprenticeships would have preferential access to grant funding and be required to place and retain a certain percentage of individuals directly into registered apprenticeship programs. Also attached

to that recognition would be specific diversity requirements within its structure. A required partnership and letter of support from registered apprenticeships, as well as a renewal and review process every five years to maintain the recognition.

We want to ensure the grant funding that is slotted to expand Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship, as well as provide that opportunity to our underrepresented communities and youth, is accomplished!!

We know how. Now, we just need to take the steps. :)

3. **High School Collaboration**
   4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 5
   How do high school decisionmakers formulate their curriculum? Seems like there could be much more involvement if curriculum was developed in high school to consider apprenticeable occupations. The structure of computer sciences could be grouped to pre-apprenticeship opportunities as an option. Especially if there are especially strong industries in the area. Coming from Rural America, I could see how this could benefit building local workforces. Where do educators learn about apprenticeship? The Departments of Education and Labor need to be more collaborative in how to be sure educators know how it works and that decisionmakers and external stakeholders get connected. If the decisionmakers and educators are not aware of how it works, it will only advance slowly. Can you imagine how much pre-apprenticeships can mean to youth who could not go to college? Colleges need to be involved in adding it to a portion of the curriculum that is driven by the Department of Education to ensure leaders of schools are aware of the ability to develop such programs.

Most Popular Ideas from the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Best Practices Topic

1. **Offer Support Services** *(the full description of this idea can be found under* [Top Ideas by Vote)](#)
   8 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 8 Net Votes
   Comments: 2
   Followers: 15

2. **Promote Data-Driven Equity** *(the full description of this idea can be found under* [Top Ideas by Vote)](#)

7 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 7 Net Votes
Comments: 0
Followers: 9

3. **Reaching More of the Underserved Population**
6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
Comments: 4
Followers: 12
Apprenticeship marketing/branding is a key essential to reaching the underserved population. What I have discovered while working in certain communities is the awareness of apprenticeship programs (of any type). Most people are un-aware of how an apprenticeship functions, who can join and the benefits the employer/employee can receive by utilizing an apprenticeship method for employment and learning purpose.

I would love to hear feedback from other Sponsors or RTI on how often you find yourself having to explain the difference between traditional training, internship, college, apprenticeships and/or unions?

Again, AWARENESS is key.

Most Popular Ideas from the Voice of the Apprentice Topic

1. **Clearly Communicate How Apprenticeships are Different from Internships**
6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
Comments: 2
Followers: 2
Clearly Communicate How Apprenticeships are Different from Internships: Given the volatility of the job market post COVID-19, it is important that Registered Apprenticeship programs make the effort to attract new recruits by clearly communicating to the public the benefits that they offer. The communication challenges and public attitudes about apprenticeships have been well documented by other advocacy organizations but it is a factor worth considering. How do specific programs recruit their apprentices? How do they talk to prospective students about the value and pay of an apprenticeship? How do they make the financial case? These are ideas that need to be communicated to candidates and their family members.

https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/edcentral/what-americans-think-apprenticeship/

2. **Cohort Models – Building Community While Earning and Learning**
    4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
    Comments: 0
    Followers: 3

    Cohort Based Models – Building Community While "Earning and Learning": The importance of community and collaboration among apprentices in an apprenticeship program cannot be understated. Humans are social creatures. A more professional workplace will be one that supports individuals who can bring their full, authentic selves to work and to work together with others to solve collective problems. That sense of community and collaboration has been a feature of RespectAbility's own National Leadership Program from the very beginning. From a management perspective, building community among your apprentices depends on giving those program participants the chance to solve problems together and leaders to emerge. Our staff has seen this play out time and time again with apprentices in new cohorts taking the initiative to solve collective tasks, support each other when there are gaps in skills, or if they are stuck together working on a complicated professional problem. Where possible, apprenticeship program curriculums should be written to include chances for the participants themselves to build community, collaborate and solve problems together.

3. **Do Something**
    2 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 2 Net Votes
    Comments: 0
    Followers: 1

    We've learned apprenticeship programs aren't stand-alone efforts. They often succeed by building networks of support that start with high schools, expand through community outreach, and feature consistent branding. I am also pretty sure that this app is to give solutions not problems. There is always something that we can do and not try to put the problems off on the government. That is part of the problem now—somewhere along the way employers quit caring, promoting, encouraging, training and teaching employees that they are worth something. Now employers are being forced to do so to be able to get help. When every employer should already be doing something to make the workforce better if they want to be successful in their business. It's your job to give the employee the tools they need to be successful in your business and life if needed. So, do something and quit making suggestions.

Most Popular Ideas from the Modernizing to Meet the Needs of New and Emerging Industries Topic

1. **Grant Data Tracking Relief for Cohorts**
   6 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
   Comments: 1
   Followers: 14
   Challenge: The participant data collection and tracking requirements for individuals supported by federal apprenticeship grants can be onerous for sponsors, especially when sponsors are enrolling cohorts of participants. Some sponsors/employers simply do not have the capacity to collect and report the large set of individual apprentice data points, which creates a real disincentive to use federal investments to expand apprenticeship.

   Solution: USDOL could allow grantees to count apprentice cohorts (e.g., groups of apprentices participating in related instruction) as "reportable individuals." Under the ASE and SAEEI grants, this approach would require a much less burdensome process of data collection, likely increase the rate of enrollments, and generate great enthusiasm from sponsors/employers.

2. **Use Apprenticeship to Channel Talented People into Civil Service**
   7 Up Votes | 1 Down Votes | 6 Net Votes
   Comments: 2
   Followers: 9
   Use Apprenticeship Model to Channel Talented People with and without Disabilities into Civil Service: Naturally, the private sector has made good use of registered apprenticeships in recent years to recruit, train and employ talented workers. As of 2020, the Department of Labor reported over 636,000 apprentices in over 26,000 different programs nationwide - https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/apprenticeship/about/statistics/2020. That said, there is an opportunity for the Federal Government and state agencies to also benefit from the advantage conferred by apprentices.

   There are approximately 2 million federal jobs and there are estimated to be nearly 5 million jobs in state government. This is a huge pool of opportunities in all 50 states across a vast range of career fields. As such, federal agencies and states should seriously consider how they recruit and hire new workers especially as Baby Boomers retire and Millennials advance in their careers. Apprenticeships offer a path to get transition aged workers, workers with non-traditional backgrounds, and others into good paying jobs with skills trained specifically to help them succeed. Instead of sticking with traditional university degree-oriented career paths, government should explore and pilot how to use the apprenticeship model to train the next generation of career civil servants.

On a related note, as highlighted in a recent report by the Council of State Governments (CSG), "20 states and the District of Columbia have adopted… "state as a model employer" (SAME) policies. They have had much success leveraging these policies to recruit, hire, retain and promote talented workers with disabilities." More details can be found here: https://seed.csg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Accessible-Final_SAME_SEED_Report.pdf

As the Federal Government looks at current staffing challenges and its own equity priorities, apprenticeship seems a valuable tool to use.

https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/apprenticeship/about/statistics/2020

3. **Lessons Learned from the Switch to Remote Work**
   4 Up Votes | 0 Down Votes | 4 Net Votes
   Comments: 2
   Followers: 3
   Lessons Learned from the Switch to Remote Work: The pandemic has made remote work an accepted reality for thousands of workers, normalizing a common reasonable accommodation request long championed by workers with disabilities. Microsoft has dramatically expanded its accessibility features, including built-in speech-to-text technology which makes it possible for people with even the most limited mobility to use computers. This has opened an unprecedented window for people with disabilities to contribute to the success of nonprofits, communities and beyond. Remote work also has great promise at expanding apprenticeship programs into more diverse sectors of the Montana state economy, especially the knowledge economy.

   RespectAbility has retooled our own National Leadership Program from being a cohort-based internship program located in Washington D.C., into an all-virtual, work-from-anywhere skills-based training program. The most direct consequence was that we significantly expanded our recruiting pool of prospective program participants. We could now recruit and hire disability community members anywhere in the entire United States. While we had already made significant efforts to recruit diverse candidates for our program, being able to recruit candidates from anywhere has greater improved our program and opened new opportunities to those who might never before have had the chance to do a D.C.-based internship. Likewise, expanding the funding support to increase National Leadership Program participant pay also directly opened new opportunities for recruitment.

   In terms of making remote work successful, having multiple open lines of communication has been critical. Whether we are talking about daily zoom meetings,

text messaging or emails, ensuring that open lines of communication exist between participants, leaders and staff is critical. Likewise, budgeting to ensure that all participants have the technology they need to participate is also important.

Advancing the National Apprenticeship System @ePolicyWorks Twitter Chat

Twitter Chat Overview

To celebrate the 85th anniversary of the National Apprenticeship Act and as a means to launch the *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue, @ePolicyWorks hosted a Twitter chat on August 16, 2022. The Twitter chat created a space for stakeholders to discuss and explore ways to strengthen the national apprenticeship system and further its reach into new sectors and historically underrepresented communities. Featured guests for the chat included the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), Jobs for the Future (JFF), Jobs with Justice, Mathematica, North America's Building Trades Union (NABTU) and YearUp.

For one hour, participants took part in a real-time, interactive discussion to gather input and ideas on policies, practices, strategies and approaches that will expand the reach and availability of inclusive apprenticeships and address barriers to their success.

The information collected during this hour served to supplement the online dialogue and will help DOL gather ideas from stakeholders on how to best frame future apprenticeship initiatives and funding opportunities that promote the optimal implementation of the apprenticeship model.

The chat announced the launch of the *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* online dialogue and encouraged Twitter chat participants to continue the conversation by posting additional ideas in the dialogue.

Please find a compilation of all tweets from the Twitter chat at https://twitter.com/i/events/1560331045945450496.

Appendix B of this document includes resources shared during the chat.

Questions Asked During Twitter Chat

Q1. Based on your experience, what have you found to be the keys to a successful Registered Apprenticeship program? #EPWChat
Q2. What are common barriers and challenges you have seen individuals face as they navigate the registered apprenticeship system? What strategies have you used to mitigate those challenges? #EPWChat
Q3. How have you successfully partnered with stakeholders to develop high quality programs? #EPWChat
Q4. How would you characterize a high-quality registered apprenticeship program? #EPWChat

Q5. What should be considered when evaluating registered apprenticeship programs? #EPWChat
Q6. What kind of strategies have you implemented to ensure people from historically underrepresented populations can take full advantage of Registered Apprenticeship? #EPWChat
Q7. Have you had any experience with pre-apprenticeship and/or youth apprenticeship? Can you share any lessons learned? #EPWChat
Q8. Have you had success in leveraging and building relationships with pre-apprenticeship programs and other programs serving youth? #EPWChat
Q9. What drew you to participate in a Registered Apprenticeship program? #EPWChat
Q10. How has being an apprentice empowered you and promoted an overall positive career trajectory? #EPWChat
Q11. What industries do you feel are most in need of Registered Apprenticeship programs and why? #EPWChat
Q12. Going forward how can the Department of Labor support registered apprenticeship programs so that they meet the diverse needs of industry, while leveraging the flexibility of the model to benefit both businesses and workers? #EPWChat

Twitter Chat Metrics

The following metrics reflect engagement and activity in the August 16th @ePolicyWorks Twitter chat:

- Number of tweets posted by @ePolicyWorks during the chat: **48**
- Number of impressions received on tweets sent by @ePolicyWorks during the chat (total
- number of views): **23,462**
- Number of engagements received on tweets sent by ePolicyWorks during the chat (clicks
- anywhere on the tweet, including retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo or tweet expansion): **1,267**

- Number of active tweeters (participants who posted at least once, including hosts) during chat: **22**
- Number of tweets posted with the #EPWChat during the chat: (including tweets from @ePolicyWorks): **198**
- Number of resources shared during the chat: **35** (see Appendix B)

Hashtags Used During the Twitter Chat

In addition to #EPWChat, participants used other hashtags relevant to the discussion about the apprenticeship topics. This helped widen the online audience and encourage participation with additional stakeholders. Hashtags used included the following:

Hashtags used:

- #Apprenticeship
- #ApprenticeshipUSA
- #AdvancingApprenticeships
- #DEIA
- #DisabilityEmployment
- #Employment
- #JobSearch
- #MentalHealthAtWork

- #NativeAmerican
- #ODEP
- #RegisteredApprenticeship
- #UnionCarpenters
- #WeBuildCareers
- #WinWin
- #WorkforceDev
- #Youth

Twitter Chat Results

The *Advancing the National Apprenticeship System* Twitter chat generated an informative and productive conversation between the featured guests and other participants. Responses during the chat gave insight into the many ways DOL can ensure apprenticeship programs are inclusive, accessible and meet the demands of modernized industries. For example, YearUP shared that repetitive awareness of and education on apprenticeships as a pathway to a good job and career is imperative to reach and appeal to the unemployed, underemployed and frontline workers who typically come from historically underrepresented communities. Similarly, North America's Building Trades Union noted that one barrier about Registered Apprenticeships is a lack of knowledge that they exist. To promote these programs, they work with school counselors and career advisors to teach parents and students about the benefits of apprenticeships. Jobs with Justice suggested using focus groups to solicit feedback, refine messaging and inform future outreach about Registered Apprenticeship programs. Jobs for the Future also noted that when evaluating apprenticeship programs, DOL should consider data on retention, completion, wage progression and diversity of apprentices in terms of recruitment, applications, participation, completion and outcomes. Relatedly, Mathematica added that apprenticeship program assessments should consider analyzing the program's employers, training providers and intermediary state systems and highlighted that since partnerships are paramount to successful apprenticeship programs, so, too, are they intertwined in the evaluation process. Beyond the discussion on registered apprenticeships in which all featured guests contributed, Mathematica referenced their recent report to remind participants that help with basic needs like transportation and childcare can dramatically lower the barriers to entry into the apprenticeship system for aspiring apprentices.

Overall, the conversation that occurred during the Twitter chat served to inform the ways DOL can increase pipelines of talented workers, including those with disabilities; ensure equitable

access to apprenticeship opportunities; and develop successful partnerships with national, regional and local organizations to strengthen the apprenticeship network. Ideas from the Twitter chat's featured guests, along with those of other participants, were shared later in the dialogue in order to continue the conversation via comments and votes.

Appendix A: Resources Shared in the Online Dialogue

Organizations and Not-for-profits
- Apprenti
- Apprenticeships for America
- Arts2work
- CareerWise
- IGNITE Engineering Services
- Multiverse
- NCCER
- Optimum Healthcare IT
- Plumbers & Pipefitters Apprenticeship Training of Kansas
- Roots of Success
- SkillsUSA
- The National Disability Mentoring Coalition
- Torch 180
- Year Up

Reports and Resources
- Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio, Mathematica
- Apprenticeship The National Leadership Program, Respectability
- Competency Elements Proforma- NP Generator Tech
- Constructing a Diverse Workforce, Labor Education & Research Center
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Registered Apprenticeship, JFF
- Electrical Technician Profile, Shea Capability & Compliance Solutions
- Find a Mentor, MENTOR
- Find a Program in Your Area, Project Search
- Increasing Diversity and Inclusion Through Registered Apprenticeship Programs at Community Colleges, American Association of Community Colleges
- JFF's Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program, JFF
- JFF's Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program: Opportunity Youth, JFF
- Learn About Our Book, Project Search
- NVWIT Pipeline Program, Nevada Women in Trades
- Registration Dashboard, Tableau Public
- Resilience Independence Self-Advocacy Employment, NFB of Virginia
- State Experiences Expanding Registered Apprenticeship: Finding from a Federal Grant Program
- Talent for Good, Cloud for Good
- TIRAP, Wireless Infrastructure Association
- The Awareness of Required Job Skills Causes an Increase in Workplace Performance, Shea Capability & Compliance Solutions

- [The State of Apprenticeship in the US: A Plan for Scale, Apprenticeships for America](#)
- [Transitions to Work, JVS](#)

State, National and International Resources
- [Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill, 2023](#)
- [FY 2023 Congressional Budget Justification, Employment and Training Administration, Training and Employment Services](#)
- [FY 2020 Data and Statistics, Employment and Training Administration](#)
- [Job Finder, ApprenticeshipUSA](#)
- [Job Accommodation Network (JAN)](#)
- ["Step-Up" Program- Questions and Answers, Office of the Assistant to the Secretary for Labor Relations, October 5, 1992](#)
- [The State as Model Employer of People with Disabilities, The Council of State Governments](#)

News articles, blog, webinars (by date)
- [Losing Tech Talent? Shift it From a Bug to a Feature, Information Week, August 17, 2022](#)
- [Workforce Policies that Support Climate Action and Reduce Disparities, Mathematica, November 18, 2021](#)
- [Bridging German and US Apprenticeship Models, August 2021](#)
- [State Experiences Expanding Registered Apprenticeship: Findings from a Federal Grant Program, Mathematica, September 8, 2020](#)
- [Is it an Apprenticeship? Gap Letter, 2019-2022](#)
- [The HTD Revolution: Hire-Train-Deploy, Gap Letter, 2019-2022](#)
- [Building a Digital Ladder, Gap Letter, 2019-2022](#)
- [Training Regulations and How They Come About, 2017](#)
- [Debbie Reed - Registered Apprenticeship: "A Model that Works", Mathematica, November 5, 2018](#)
- [What Americans Think of Apprenticeship, New America, March 14, 2018](#)
- [Why Germany is So Much Better at Training its Workers, The Atlantic, October 16, 2014](#)

Appendix B: Resources Shared during the Twitter Chat

Organizations and Not-for-profits
- Arts2work
- Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council

Reports and Resources
- Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship, National Institute for Work and Learning
- 5 Steps to Identifying Occupations for Apprenticeship, JFF
- Apprenticeship, AHLA Foundation
- Apprenticeship Evidence-Building Portfolio, Mathematica
- Apprenticeship Resources, RAISE
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in Registered Apprenticeship, Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning
- Establishing a Registered Apprenticeship Program at a Community College, American Association of Community Colleges
- JFF's Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program, JFF
- JFF's Framework for a High-Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program: Opportunity Youth, JFF
- Promising Approaches for Connecting Opportunity Youth to Registered Apprenticeships, Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning

State, National and International Resources
- Advancing Apprenticeship Opportunities for People with Disabilities
- Apprenticeship.gov
- Becoming an Apprentice, Partnership on Inclusive Apprenticeship
- Apprenticeship Case Studies, Women's Bureau
- Creating Inclusive Virtual & Hybrid Apprenticeships, Partnership on Inclusive Apprenticeship
- Designing Inclusive Apprenticeships, Partnership on Inclusive Apprenticeship
- Executive Order on the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and Economic Opportunity for Native Americans and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities, The White House, October 11, 2021
- Meet Our Community. North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters
- The Campaign for Disability Employment

News articles, blog, webinars (by date)
- JFF Awarded $5 Million in U.S. Department of Labor Funding to Scale Registered Apprenticeships for School-Age Youth, August 8, 2022
- Workforce Policies that Support Climate Action and Reduce Disparities, Mathematica, November 18, 2021
- WIG 2021 Summer Summit Series, June 24, 2021

- [State Experiences Expanding Registered Apprenticeship: Findings from a Federal Grant Program, Mathematica, September 8, 2020](#)
- [Testing the Waters of Virtual Apprenticeship During a Pandemic and Reimagining the Future of the Media Industry, Medium, June 29, 2020](#)
- [Debbie Reed- Registered Apprenticeship : "A Model that Works", Mathematica, November 5, 2018](#)

Appendix C: Detailed Models Submitted to Dialogue

It's a long list (submitted to online dialogue on 9/12/2022)

- Establish a new public/private partnership entity called The Federal Institute for Personnel: Research, Outreach, Framework, Investment, and Training (PROFIT).
- PROFIT would be the nerve center towards which the "pulse" of the nation's labor needs flow. PROFIT would research and study these needs in order to improve the outreach strategies between and among public and private sector entities, that are working within an established common framework, to invest in and train personnel for the current and future needs of the American workforce.
- In order to take an accurate pulse, the leadership of PROFIT would consist of non-rotating and rotating members, including representatives of county, regional, and state workforce boards; representatives of chambers of commerce and labor unions; small, medium, and large company leaders; technical and community college leaders; current apprentices and trainers; and key representatives of the US Departments of Labor, Education, Commerce, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).
- PROFIT would accurately "gauge" the current and future needs of the American workforce based on the input of its members. Depending on these needs, PROFIT would establish (or eliminate) nationally recognized training certificates, from short-term micro-credentials to long-term apprenticeship programs. Furthermore, PROFIT would define the specific duration, associated theoretical curriculum, necessary on-the-job training experience, and (theoretical and practical) dual assessments required for receiving each certificate. Finally, PROFIT would be an incubator and distributor of "best practice" outreach strategies among and between companies - even competitors - with local K-12 schools, technical/community colleges, unions, employment agencies, workforce boards, etc.
- The U.S. Federal Government would offer tax incentives and other subsidies for companies that participate in "for-PROFIT" training activities. In exchange, these "for-PROFIT" training companies would pay for (invest in) the salaries for apprentices as well as cover all associated costs for on-the-job training, such as trainers and training infrastructure.
- The U.S. Federal Government would reimburse the (technical/community) college tuition of all "for-PROFIT" students that maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher as well as pass their final theoretical and practical examinations at the employer/job site.
- Ideally, each student would complete their apprenticeship and receive a nationally recognized "PROFIT" certificate in their specific field along with an AA/BA-equivalent degree, debt free, and even (taxable) income in the bank.
- Each company approved as a "PROFIT" training company would receive tax breaks and incentives based on the number of annual apprentices; would establish public and

- private training partners in their community through effective outreach strategies; would benefit from an established high-skilled workforce pipeline; would observe return on training investment within 12 months.
- Students would learn about PROFIT training companies via the effective outreach strategies promoted by companies, schools, school-based job fairs, colleges, employment agencies, etc. Students would need a GED, high school diploma, or need to complete an initial skills assessment in order to apply for a "PROFIT" apprenticeship program position via a company's website.
- Finally, union input would craft salary and benefits and OJT safety regulations, even for youth apprentices, potentially under the age of 18. Such safety regulations would also the craft the means for companies to receive and host "field trips" of students as young as the middle school grades as well as host one-week-long high school internships and day-long job shadowing opportunities for middle and high school students.

Formula Based Funding (submitted to the online dialogue on 9/9/2022)

It's time to start supporting actual apprenticeship. We could accomplish this in one of two ways. First, we could follow the example of the UK and Australia and begin funding RTI according to a schedule. That's the right thing to do, although it would involve selecting apprenticeships and setting funding levels. But in addition, after Australia's extremely effective apprenticeship creation during Covid, it's clear there's a parallel path. It's what Bob Lerman and I call pay-for-performance. Any intermediary that trains and places a qualified apprentice into a qualified job should be paid. End of story.

Federal and state governments have long used performance contracting, including for workforce programs. Bob Lerman's research leads him to believe intermediaries will be motivated by a financial incentive of $4,000 for each apprentice hired and retained, and I agree. Not only would a bounty around this level be motivating to the high-intervention intermediaries listed above, but also to the Adeccos and Manpowers considering getting into the game.

Here's what a pay-for-performance program might look like:

- Incentive for company or intermediary once new apprentice has been in job full-time for 6, 12, 18, and/or completion of the apprenticeship. $1,000 per period, maximum total of $4,000 per new hire.
- Apprenticeship requirements: Leads to an occupational field that generates a full-time, salary or wage equivalent at $40,000+ (possibly scaled based on cost of living), benefits, demonstrated career paths.

Beyond the impact to the nation, the benefits to each constituent are obvious:

- Benefit to apprentice: Estimated increase in lifetime earnings over $300,000.
- Benefit to company: Gains from worker productivity, reduced turnover, reduced recruitment costs.

- Benefit to government: In some cases, substitutes for Pell Grant: $6,495 federal annually, also reduced unemployment, and increased tax revenue over lifetime of apprentice (likely at least a 5x return)

Now implementing such a novel program in this country isn't trivial. We'd need to define eligible intermediaries, qualified apprentices, and qualified jobs. And we'd need to consider whether to provide bigger bounties for placing (and retaining) socioeconomically disadvantaged candidates, or candidates underrepresented in target industries. We'd also need to figure out how to administer it. A federal program could be run within DOL or Commerce with modest staffing – cutting out most of the middleman DOL grantees.

But these details are well worth working out. Because a pay-for-performance initiative like this could mobilize thousands of new intermediaries to scale apprenticeships and result in the establishment of hundreds of thousands of more effective pathways to economic advancement through apprenticeship. And the resulting infrastructure is likely to be durable. Research has shown that once new apprenticeship pathways are established and employers recognize and begin to depend on the resulting talent, they tend to be durable, meaning employers become increasingly willing to invest themselves in all the elements of apprenticeship. So, a pay-for-performance program could potentially limit employer eligibility to a number of years, requiring employers (and intermediaries) to become self-sustainable (at least for higher wage positions where a subsidy may not be necessary).

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While apprenticeship is, hands down, the country's most effective education and employment model, it's also the smallest. Pay-for-performance is the kind of systemic change we need to become an Apprentice Nation: broad-based incentives to stimulate the growth of an apprenticeship market. Whether it's fully funding RTI as in the UK and Australia or a pay-for-performance model, it's time America provided reliable, predictable formula funding for apprenticeships like we do for college (e.g., Pell Grants, Federal Student Aid program).

$6-12M grants to favored foundations and community college are not going to move the needle. Grants are subject to the whim of grant makers; priorities can shift over time. Moreover, even though many DOL grants are doled out over several years, it's not permanent funding, which is what intermediaries need to invest, hire, and build apprenticeship infrastructure.

Imagine if we funded college the way we currently fund apprenticeship. Instead of Pell Grants and Stafford loans allowing students to choose their own path, the Department of Education would select a fixed number of colleges a year to receive funding. Other colleges would either rely on philanthropy or only serve rich students. Meanwhile, government-selected winners wouldn't be the ones doing the best job of producing student outcomes or socioeconomic mobility.

In contrast, formula funding provides certainty about how much is available each year for apprenticeship expansion. How much are we talking about? A $4 billion program has the potential to produce 1M new apprenticeships – tripling the current number. As a point of comparison, in May 2022 Canada announced a program to spend close to $USD 200M to create 25,000 apprenticeship positions, working out to about $7,500 per job. Even if the U.S. only achieves that level of efficiency, $4 billion would easily double U.S. apprentices. And keep in mind the UK spends $USD 4.6B for a population one fifth the size. If the U.S. spent the equivalent on pay-for-performance, annual federal spend on apprenticeship would exceed $20B, and we'd increase the number of apprentices by a factor of 5-10x.

Skeptics as to whether America can afford to spend $20B on apprenticeship should look at how much federal money is flowing to one type of intermediary standing between high school and a good first job. Closed colleges receive about $150B each year from the federal government (and another $250B from states supporting public colleges). President Biden's student loan forgiveness plan will cost another $500B to $1T. And states continue to throw money at colleges; for 2022-23, California added $600M in funding to the UC, CSU, and California Community College systems. So perhaps the apprenticeship/college ratio should be 1/10 instead of 1/7. But it would take a tenured professor in rhetoric to argue it should remain at the current 1/1,000 level or that surplus federal or state dollars should automatically flow to college. In this sense, America can't afford not to spend much more on apprenticeship.

Reimagining Apprenticeship as Shifting Culture (submitted to the online dialogue on 9/6/22)

I'm grateful for the depth and breadth of these conversations -- and the opportunity to participate in a national dialogue about Apprenticeship.

As a national program sponsor for Arts2Work, we continue to confront barriers that emerge from an entrenched industry culture of unpaid, unsupervised internships designed for elite college students who can work for free, along with a lack of financial incentives that can truly help small and mid-sized employers adapt their work culture. To create the conditions for true equity and economic abundance, Apprenticeship must be embedded in the work culture as an ongoing practice, not a one-off hire that checks a diversity box. Current staff must be enabled and empowered to mentor as part of their job (and to be paid for it), schedules need to be lengthened so there is time for the Apprenticeship system to work for the bottom line, and to reach the longer-term CSR goals around diversity, equity, inclusion and access. Employers cannot be tasked to pay for an Apprentices' college tuition -- we all know a degree is not the crucial factor in this ecosystem, and you cannot tether a gifted Apprentice to an employer who may not be interested or able to offer true advancement opportunities. And you cannot expect an employer to continue participating if Apprentices leave with frequency.

Too many Apprenticeship programs report success based on transactional short-term data like number of placements -- which does not at all reflect the culture shift we need nationally to

support and sustain Apprenticeship over time. Like B Corps that are rewarded for meeting the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, legal accountability, and balancing profit and purpose -- what if we evaluated, supported and rewarded participating employers with an "A Corp" designation, showing that they have shifted their culture to include Apprenticeship, equity, community accountability, on-the-job training and mentorship. This begs an elevated role for Apprenticeship Sponsors and Intermediaries to help build that culture. Everyone is redesigning how they work in a COVID-4ever world -- and right now, many employers think that remote workers cannot mentor Apprentices. As leaders of the Apprenticeship movement in this country, we should be all over this redesign, illuminating the possibilities, lobbying for federal incentives for those businesses who build their profit models on accountable, equitable Apprenticeship.

And one more thing...why aren't government Agencies hiring Apprentices? We need them to model this program, and not just set rules for it. There should be Apprentice opportunities at the DOL, DOE, National Science Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, PBS, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, etc -- and the offices of every mayor and governor in this country should hire Apprentices in Tech and Digital Media to support local and regional communications and social impact work, along with Apprentices in health policy, city planning, etc etc etc. Let's BE the change

Deepening connections between college and apprenticeship (submitted to the online dialogue 9/6/2022)

The United States has a robust community college system and a robust Registered Apprenticeship System. These two systems should be more intricately connected. Numerous industries ranging from retail to finance and from professional services to management services require higher education/degrees. These industries almost always have entry level jobs (tasks/competencies) that can be learned from an entry level worker (apprentice) while they build their on-the-job learning skills AND attend school to earn a degree. Employers often also face retention issues as workers move to new companies to pay student loans.

These companies, and the workforce, would benefit from employers developing and instituting Registered Apprenticeship programs where entry level workers would earn a degree while learning their position with the employer. The employer would benefit from having a lower starting pay and then absorbing the relatively low cost of an AA Degree over a 3-year apprenticeship. The worker (apprentice) would benefit from having access to a degree with no college debt while also building valuable on-the-job experience with the employer. High schools, parents and community colleges would benefit from having an immediate entry point for the graduates into both industry AND college. This would be an additional benefit to students/families who believe college is not a viable option due to cost. This would be a benefit to the economy as a whole as it immediately connects more jobseekers to careers/education that lead to higher wages, education and skills and increases their employability in the event a job/career change were to occur.