



## Texas Workforce Investment Council

# *Policy News Highlights*

Issue 22, Quarter 2, June 2013

*Policy News Highlights* is a quarterly review of selected reports relevant to the policy and research functions of the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council). Federal and state agency websites, in addition to numerous public policy and educational databases, are scanned monthly for relevant and emerging issues. Reports are catalogued and stored electronically in the Council's Information Repository.

The Information Repository is divided into 12 topic areas that correspond to priority issues supporting the Council's current strategic plan. They are: adult education, apprenticeship, career and college readiness, career and technical education, clusters and sector strategies, competitiveness, data, disabilities, dropout prevention, green initiatives, supply–demand, and training. Not every topic area is addressed each quarter.

*Policy News Highlights* is organized as an annotated bibliography with short summaries of recent articles grouped according to their topic area.

### Adult Education

***The Adult Training and Education Survey Pilot Study***, National Center for Education Statistics, April 2013  
This report describes the process and findings of a national pilot test of survey items that were developed to assess the prevalence and key characteristics of occupational certifications and licenses and sub-baccalaureate educational certificates obtained by non-institutionalized adults ages 18 and over. Based on the study, approximately 38 percent of adults reported holding a certification, license, or sub-baccalaureate educational certificate in 2010 to 2011.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013190.pdf>

### Apprenticeship

***A Shared Vision for Increasing Opportunity, Innovation, and Competitiveness for American Workers and Employers: A Report from the Secretary of Labor's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship***, July 2013

This report discusses the shared vision, goals, and objectives developed by the four main workgroups of the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (ACA). It offers the committee's recommendations for leveraging Registered Apprenticeship to improve competitiveness and prosperity for American industries and workers. It presents the benefits of the Registered Apprenticeship model for a variety of stakeholders to build more widespread support for the model as a proven and replicable solution for more employers, industries, and workers. Key areas of focus include expanding apprenticeship into new and traditional industries, and expanding pathways for under-represented populations.

[http://www.leadingage.org/uploadedFiles/Content/About/Center\\_for\\_Applied\\_Research/Robyns\\_Read/A\\_Shared\\_Vision\\_for\\_Increasing\\_Opportunity\\_Innovation\\_and\\_Competitiveness\\_for\\_American\\_Workers\\_and\\_Employers.pdf](http://www.leadingage.org/uploadedFiles/Content/About/Center_for_Applied_Research/Robyns_Read/A_Shared_Vision_for_Increasing_Opportunity_Innovation_and_Competitiveness_for_American_Workers_and_Employers.pdf)

**Wisconsin Apprenticeship since 1911**, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, April 2013  
Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development launched a new statewide initiative to increase employer and job-seeker participation in the state's apprenticeship program by promoting apprenticeship as a proven means to address skills gaps and meet employers' needs. The state-funded program is seen as crucial to providing skilled workers to the state's employers. Employers are engaged with information about the benefits of apprenticeship, while job seekers are encouraged to participate through billboard advertisements and public service announcements. The initiative includes a pre-apprenticeship training program for veterans that transitions to second-year apprentice status and guaranteed apprenticeship placement upon graduation.  
<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/>

**Michigan Advanced Technician Training (MAT<sup>2</sup>) Program**, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, February 2013  
Designed to address shortage of employees to operate and maintain systems-based technology for the manufacturing and technology industries in Michigan, MAT<sup>2</sup> program combines classroom instruction with paid work experience in a three-year, no-cost program in the field of mechatronics, which is a combination of mechanical engineering, electronics, computer technology, and information technology. The program is based on an educational model developed in conjunction with global technology leaders to combine theory, practice, and work to train a competitive workforce. Students will receive a salary throughout the three-year training program. All tuition is paid by the employer, and each student receives an advanced associate's degree and a full-time Mechatronics Technician job upon graduation.  
<http://www.mitalent.org/lib/Files/Careers/MAT2/MAT2%20Program%20Overview.pdf>

## Career and College Readiness

**The Condition of College & Career Readiness 2012**, ACT, July 2013

Since 1959, ACT has collected and reported data on students' academic readiness for college. This report provides a college and career readiness snapshot of the ACT-tested high school class of 2012. ACT defines college and career readiness as the acquisition of the knowledge and skills a student needs to enroll and succeed in credit-bearing first-year courses at a postsecondary institution without the need for remediation. The report represents 52 percent of all 2012 graduates in the United States. Test scores remained essentially the same between 2008 and 2012 even though about 17 percent more high school students took the ACT over this period and the tested population of students became more diverse. ACT research also gives some insight into how to improve college and career readiness.  
<http://media.act.org/documents/CCCR12-NationalReadinessRpt.pdf>

**2013 Reality of College Readiness Report**, ACT, June 2013

This national report includes a series of state reports that trace the enrollment, retention, and transfer patterns of 2011 ACT-tested high school graduates. It raises awareness of the fact that the path to college success is not a linear one for many students, who move through (or in and out of) multiple postsecondary experiences as they pursue their educational goals. Many of these students fail to reach their goals because transitions between and among institutions are fraught with complexities and are not transparent. In that respect, it recommends a shift in the discussion to students' achievement of individual postsecondary goals regardless of where they enroll, the length of time it takes, and where they ultimately complete their goals.  
<http://www.act.org/readinessreality/13/pdf/Reality-of-College-Readiness-2013.pdf>

***The Condition of Education 2013***, National Center for Education Statistics, May 2013

This progress report of education in America summarizes developments and trends across 42 indicators that are considered the most significant national measures on the status and condition of education for which data are available. These indicators inform the broad categories of population characteristics, participation in education, elementary and secondary education, and postsecondary education. Also included are special reports that look more closely at issues of current interest. This year, education and the workforce, tracking the rise of student loan debt, and profiling rural education are among those addressed. The website has been redeveloped to make the data easier to use.

<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013037.pdf>

***What Does It Really Mean to Be College and Work Ready? The English and Mathematics Required by First-Year Community College Students***, National Center on Education and the Economy, May 2013

This report presents findings of a study that examined the skills and knowledge in mathematics and English literacy that high school graduates need to succeed in the first year of community college, an indicator that students are ready for both college and entry into the workforce. Findings suggest that students typically need only middle-school-level math skills to succeed in community college math courses. Reading complexity of texts used in initial courses in community colleges falls somewhere between grades 11 and 12. The report offers recommendations on course requirements, assignments, and alignment of placement tests to ensure that more high school graduates succeed in community colleges.

<http://www.ncee.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Findings.pdf>

***Promoting Postsecondary Success of Court-Involved Youth: Lessons from the National Youth***

***Employment Coalition Postsecondary Success Pilot***, National Youth Employment Coalition, May 2013

This pilot was designed to strengthen the ability of a network of community-based organizations (CBOs) to engage disconnected youth onto a path leading to postsecondary attainment and employment. As part of the pilot, ten CBOs working at the intersection of education, workforce development, and youth development established partnerships with postsecondary institutions and served approximately 675 youth and young adults ages 16 to 24. This report is based on in-depth interviews with seven pilot sites that work with court-involved youth. Specific topics covered include an overview of relevant research, barriers to educational success, specific practices that were implemented by the sites, and recommendations for practice and policy and systems change.

<http://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/nyec-court-involved-youth-postsecondary201305.pdf>

***The High Cost of Youth Unemployment***, Center for American Progress, April 2013

This issue brief takes a broad look at the potential economic impact of youth unemployment to the individual and to the nation. It cites research that the unemployment rate for Americans ages 16 to 24 is more than double the national rate and demonstrates how workers who are unemployed as young adults earn lower wages for many years following their period of unemployment due to loss of work experience and missed opportunities to develop skills and move into higher employment. It compares trends in youth unemployment relative to adult workers and youth in other countries to suggest that there is considerable cause for concern about the long-term effects on the workforce and economy in the U.S.

<http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/AyresYouthUnemployment1.pdf>

***Rethinking Pell Grants***, College Board Advocacy and Policy Center, April 2013

Student populations and the expectations of employers are changing. This new policy report proposes a series of recommendations for improving the Pell Grant program so that it better supports educational access and attainment for both younger and older, low-income students. The two paths outlined recognize that the Pell Grant program is trying to serve multiple populations with very different

educational and career goals. Additional report recommendations would simplify the application process and eligibility determination for both younger and older students, support award levels that fund students based on the number of credits completed, and establish a new program of financial incentives for colleges that do the best job of helping recipients complete their academic programs.

<http://media.collegeboard.com/digitalServices/pdf/advocacy/policycenter/advocacy-rethinking-pell-grants-report.pdf>

## Career and Technical Education

### ***A Skills Beyond School Review of the United States: OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training***, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), July 2013

This report is one of a series of country-specific reviews, in development, that support two major thematic OECD reviews – the completed *Learning for Jobs* (2010), which studied vocational education and training primarily at the secondary level, and now *Skills Beyond School*, which looks at the preparation of younger people and adults for technical and professional jobs. As competitor countries improve the education and skills levels of their workforces, the U.S. faces an increasing global skills competition. This report provides comparative insight with emphasis on postsecondary career and technical education (CTE), career-focused associate degrees, postsecondary certificates, and industry certifications. The overarching recommendation for the U.S. is to take advantage of the diversity of the U.S. postsecondary system while balancing a decentralized approach with a strategic pursuit of higher quality, coherence, and transparency. Other recommendations address key issues including funding for quality, anchoring credentials in the needs of industry, and building effective transitions. The report makes recommendations that include: aid to Title IV students needs to be linked to stronger and more consistent quality assurance; a quality standard for industry certifications needs to be established; and postsecondary transitions need to be supported more systematically. Other recommendations concern the need to develop better data, strengthen career counseling, and make fuller use of work-based training. This policy review of the U.S. includes case studies of Florida, Maryland, and Washington.

<http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/ASkillsbeyondSchoolReviewoftheUnitedStates.pdf>

### ***The Hidden STEM Economy***, Brookings Institute, June 2013

This report presents the economic impact of workers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields when industry demand for a workforce of STEM professionals with less than a bachelor's degree is included. It also considers the focus of federal funding on programs that supply narrowly targeted STEM occupations and reinforces the understanding that STEM-oriented metropolitan economies perform strongly on a wide variety of economic indicators, from innovation to employment. Findings support effective approaches to “foster broad absorption of STEM knowledge” to prepare the workforce for the relevant knowledge requirements in all jobs and the significant percentage of STEM jobs that do not require a four-year college degree. Regional differences demonstrated in the clustering of STEM jobs that require a bachelor degree or higher in certain metropolitan areas and the prevalence of sub-bachelor STEM jobs in every large metropolitan area are also recognized.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2013/06/10%20stem%20economy%20rothwell/thehiddenstemeconomy610?utm\\_source=Copy+of+From+Jim%3A+Career+Academies+Part+2&utm\\_campaign=STEM&utm\\_medium=email](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2013/06/10%20stem%20economy%20rothwell/thehiddenstemeconomy610?utm_source=Copy+of+From+Jim%3A+Career+Academies+Part+2&utm_campaign=STEM&utm_medium=email)

### ***Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education: Government-wide Strategy Needed to Better Manage Overlapping Programs***, Government Accountability Office (GAO), April 2013

In fiscal year 2010, 13 federal agencies invested over \$3 billion in 209 programs designed to increase knowledge of STEM fields and attainment of STEM degrees. Eighty-three percent of the programs that GAO identified overlapped to some degree with at least one other program in that similar services are

offered to similar target groups in similar STEM fields to achieve similar objectives. Additionally, concerns have been raised about the overall effectiveness and efficiency of STEM education programs. This GAO study examined the overlap, as well as effectiveness measures. Since GAO's report, the Office of Science and Technology Policy released a progress report that identified some programs for elimination, and the Office of Management and Budget named STEM education one of its interim cross-cutting priority goals. <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/653661.pdf>

***How Career and Technical Education Can Help Students Be College and Career Ready: A Primer***, American Institutes for Research, April 2013

This brief provides an overview of the evolution of CTE in the U.S., reviews what CTE looks like in practice, and highlights issues CTE faces in the field that must be overcome for it to become successful as a wide-reaching strategy for preparing students for postsecondary success. These issues include the educator workforce, the role of employers, career guidance and counseling, alignment, collaboration, and partnerships. It discusses the importance of these programs because they allow students the opportunities to acquire the competencies required in today's workplace, and to learn about different careers by experiencing work and workplaces.

<http://www.avpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/CCRS-CTE-Primer-2013.pdf>

***Connections***, National Career Pathways Network, April 2013

This newsletter provides an update on the *Achieve Texas* initiative that was developed to align the 16 federally funded career clusters to the workforce system and industry, to recognize the unique needs of a diverse student population, and to prepare students for college and career success. More recently, crosswalks were developed for the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. It also includes updates on WhyPower, an online virtual learning curriculum; the Alamo Academies, an industry-driven, school-to-workforce pipeline development model; Geometry in Construction, an authentic applied learning experience, and descriptions of biotechnology programs in five community colleges across the state that address postsecondary alignment and student success.

[http://www.cordonline.net/connections/23\\_4/23\\_4\\_print\\_version.pdf](http://www.cordonline.net/connections/23_4/23_4_print_version.pdf)

***A Typology for Understanding the Career and Technical Education Credit-Taking Experience of High School Students***, National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, October 2012

Academic requirements have increased for all high school students in the U.S., including those taking CTE classes. Research has shown that most students participate in CTE. The typology presented in this report analyzes the CTE credit-taking experience of all high school students. The typology provides a better framework for understanding CTE than the classification of students as either academic or vocational concentrators. The analyses also showed that about 17 percent of all high school students complete high-intensity CTE in addition to their academic requirements. This study also revealed high levels of participation in CTE among higher-income students and those with parents with higher levels of educational achievement.

[http://www.nrccte.org/sites/default/files/publication-files/nrccte\\_cte\\_typology.pdf](http://www.nrccte.org/sites/default/files/publication-files/nrccte_cte_typology.pdf)

## Clusters and Sector Strategies

***Craft Workforce Development 2013 and Beyond: A Case for Greater Stakeholder Commitment***, National Center for Construction Education and Research, April 2013

The construction industry has successfully developed the supporting infrastructure for craft workforce development. However, there is concern that retirements that slowed during the economic downturn

will now occur during a recovering and highly competitive construction market. It is estimated that the industry will need to add 1.5 million workers to successfully undertake the volume of work that is expected in 2014, and that 185,000 new workers will be needed annually for the next decade. This white paper examines the current state of craft workforce development in the construction industry, the factors that have contributed to the shortage of skilled craft workers, the demographics and trends of the industry's current workforce and those of the population that the industry needs to attract, and the emerging innovative practices in craft workforce development.

[http://www.nccer.org/uploads/fileLibrary/Craft\\_WFD\\_2013\\_And\\_Beyond.pdf](http://www.nccer.org/uploads/fileLibrary/Craft_WFD_2013_And_Beyond.pdf)

## Competitiveness

***ARISE II: Unleashing America's Research & Innovation Enterprise***, Advancing Research in Science and Engineering (ARISE), American Academy of Arts and Sciences, May 2013

This report from the second Advancing Research in Science and Engineering (ARISE II) committee builds on earlier work to reform how the U.S. approaches research. *ARISE II* has two overarching goals: to promote a deep conceptual and functional integration across scientific disciplines, and to foster cooperative, synergistic interactions among academia, government, and the private sector throughout the discovery and development process. It also addresses issues facing the science and technology community including: the essential requirement of transdisciplinary and trans-sector research to advance scientific discovery; increasing uncertainty of government funding for scientific research; and the difficulty of securing support for basic curiosity-driven programs, high-risk science, and young investigators.

<http://www.amacad.org/arise2.pdf>

***The Cornerstones of Economic Security for Resilient Workers: A Policy Framework for Shared Action***, National Governors Association, April 2013

This reports looks at the nature of ongoing economic changes and the ability of the American worker to adapt to technological innovation and worldwide competition. The report suggests that workforce development in the U.S. was designed for a different set of economic realities. Four assets are proposed as foundational requirements for the workforce to adapt and succeed in this continually changing economic environment. These include skills and adaptability, income and savings, health and wellness, and mutual support and networks. The report explores the roles that government, business, and individuals play in creating new approaches to address economic and social conditions. It suggests that states can act as critical intermediaries between federal policy and local institutions, particularly in the application of policy and institutional infrastructure to influence change.

<http://www.nga.org/files/live/sites/NGA/files/pdf/2013/1304CornerstonesEconSecurityResilientWorkers.pdf>

***Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013***, World Economic Forum, September 2012

This report assesses the competitiveness landscape of 144 economies, providing insight into the drivers of productivity and prosperity. The report series remains the most comprehensive assessment of national competitiveness worldwide. This year Switzerland tops the overall rankings for the fourth consecutive year, while Singapore remains in second position. Northern and Western European countries dominate the top 10 with the U.S. ranking seventh. The report emphasizes persisting competitiveness challenges within regions and suggests that productivity improvements and private sector investment in the weaker states are required to improve global economies at a time of heightened uncertainty about the global economic outlook. For three decades, these reports have studied and benchmarked the factors that

determine national competitiveness: innovation; labor market efficiency; and a healthy, well-educated and trained workforce.

[http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_GlobalCompetitivenessReport\\_2012-13.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalCompetitivenessReport_2012-13.pdf)

## Data

***Education at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators***, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), June 2013

This publication provides comparable national statistics measuring the state of education worldwide. The report analyzes the education systems of the 34 OECD member countries, as well as Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Findings suggest that economic crises highlight the value of education, revealing an employment gap between workers with and without a postsecondary credential, in many of the countries studied, between 2008 and 2011. This report considers differences between countries in the impact of the recession on the employment outcomes of young people which suggest that data and policy experiences in some countries can inform how to more effectively allocate spending and design policies. For example, according to these findings, countries with a strong tradition of vocational education have lower unemployment rates of young graduates. This finding supports a trend toward lifelong, skills-oriented learning. Government-designed curriculum delivered exclusively in schools is proving less effective; whereas, the increased integration of academic and vocational instruction develops the right blend of school and work-based, experiential learning.

[http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20\(eng\)--FINAL%20%20June%202013.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/edu/eag2013%20(eng)--FINAL%20%20June%202013.pdf)

***Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements through 2020***, Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, June 2013

This report looks forward to the year 2020 and predicts the state of the American economy. Recovery 2020 provides vital labor market information such as which fields are expected to create the most jobs, most notably in healthcare and manufacturing. It also covers the education requirements needed to gain employment in the U.S., and the skills most sought after by employers. Findings include: differentiation in job openings due to newly created jobs and retirements; requirements by educational attainment; fastest growing jobs; and workforce shortages based upon current production rates. The report also suggests that employers will increasingly seek cognitive skills such as communication and analytics from job applicants as many jobs are automated by technology and workers perform functions that require more frequent interaction across disciplines and occupations.

<http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/Recovery2020.FR.Web.pdf> and the state report for Texas:

<http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/Texas2020.pdf>

***Using Early Warning Data to Keep Students on Track toward College and Careers: A Primer for State Policymakers***, Data Quality Campaign, June 2013

Early warning systems provide educators, administrators, and policymakers with actionable information that can be used to prepare all students to succeed in college and careers. Multiple data points are combined and translated into predictive indicators that are based on research. Stakeholders can use the indicators to determine which students are or are not on track for postsecondary success and intervene accordingly. Predictive analysis enables educators to address students' unique academic, social, and emotional needs in a timely way, including determining when more rigorous courses could be taken. Aggregate data on indicators such as grades and attendance also help school and district leaders identify system weaknesses to address through professional development, school improvement, and turnaround

strategies. According to the Data Quality Campaign's *Data for Action 2012: State Analysis*, 28 states produce early warning reports and disseminate this information.

<http://www.dataqualitycampaign.org/files/DQC%20Early%20Warning%20June12.pdf>

***The Constant: Companies That Matter***, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, May 2013

The pace at which the U.S. produces \$100 million companies has been stable over the last 20 years. However, according to this paper, the geographical locations and sectors in which those companies are created are changing. It explores the rate, industrial sector, and founding locations of such companies in the U.S. from 1980 to present. Three criteria are used to define companies that matter: scalability; quickly reaching \$100 million or more in revenues; ability to generate jobs quickly and broadly; and disproportionate creation of wealth, both directly through profits and salaries and indirectly through equity. The \$100 million firms meet an entirely different threshold that gives cities, states, and countries an even greater economic advantage. The U.S. averages twenty such technology companies founded per year, seventeen of which are usually produced in California, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, and Texas.

<http://www.kauffman.org/uploadedFiles/DownloadableResources/companies-that-matter.pdf>

***Hard Times, College Majors, Unemployment and Earnings 2013: Not All College Degrees Are Created Equal***, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, May 2013

This Georgetown report complements similar reports that provide useful information about earnings and employment associated with various college majors and career options to help current and future college students make informed decisions about postsecondary education. The report supports legislation that will require colleges to report the earnings of graduates down to the program level. The study looks at several factors including the risk of unemployment, with detailed data for college majors, industries providing the most stable employment, the relationship between college major and earnings, earnings increases with experience and additional education, and the impact of graduate degrees.

<http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/Unemployment.Final.update1.pdf>

***How Your School Compares Internationally: OECD Test for Schools Pilot Trial***, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), April 2013

In addition to assessing students' ability to apply the knowledge they have acquired, this test, based on the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), also benchmarks how students compare with their peers within and beyond state and national borders. This assessment was undertaken with 126 schools in 2012. The purpose of the pilot was to confirm the administrative conditions and procedures of the assessment, explore how results would be reported, and obtain feedback from the participating schools and districts before making the instruments publicly available. The assessment is designed to provide school-level results for benchmarking and school-improvement purposes and make PISA-based results more accessible to a wider audience, thereby empowering local educators to participate in and contribute to policy debates in their countries.

<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-basedtestforschools/OECD%20Test%20for%20Schools%20-%20Herndon%20High%20School.pdf>

***Guest Workers in the High-Skill U.S. Labor Market: An Analysis of Supply, Employment, and Wage Trends***, Economic Policy Institute, April 2013

This paper reviews and analyzes the STEM labor market and the supply of high-skill temporary foreign workers, who serve as "guest workers." It addresses three central issues in the ongoing discussion about the need for high-skill guest workers in the United States: challenges producing enough STEM-educated students at sufficient performance levels to supply the labor market; the characteristics and flow of guest workers into the STEM workforce and into the information technology (IT) workforce in particular; and the dynamics of the STEM labor market, including the employment and wage trends in the IT labor

market. Analysis of these issues provides the basis for assessing the extent of demand for STEM workers and the impact of guest worker flows on the STEM and IT workforces.

<http://www.epi.org/files/2013/bp359-guestworkers-high-skill-labor-market-analysis.pdf>

***Higher Education Pays: The Initial Earnings of Graduates of Texas Public Colleges and Universities,***

College Measures, American Institutes for Research and Matrix Knowledge, April 2013

This report details the first-year earnings of recent graduates from two- and four-year public institutions, who are working in Texas one year after obtaining their degree or certificate. The results suggest that the degree a student earns matters, but that there are important variations in returns by program and by institution. This report documents some of the differences in first-year earnings ranging from certificate programs through master's-level programs and between different community colleges. Findings highlight the success of students graduating from technical-oriented associate's degree programs.

[http://www.air.org/files/Texas\\_Graduates\\_Earnings\\_Report\\_4.26.13.pdf](http://www.air.org/files/Texas_Graduates_Earnings_Report_4.26.13.pdf)

***A Stronger Nation through Higher Education,*** Lumina Foundation, June 2013

This report supports two primary goals of Lumina's strategic plan: mobilizing stakeholders at the local, state, and national levels to reach the goal of 60 percent of Americans holding high-quality degrees, certificates, or other postsecondary credentials by 2025, and designing and helping to build the student-centered, learning-based system necessary to produce that result. This report provides the detailed college attainment data needed at the national, state, and county to drive decisions and actions. The report also provides degree-attainment data for each of the nation's 100 most populous metropolitan regions. Finally, it offers one scenario for reaching Goal 2025, and a description of other metrics Lumina uses to track progress toward college attainment.

[http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/A\\_stronger\\_nation\\_through\\_higher\\_education-2013.pdf](http://www.luminafoundation.org/publications/A_stronger_nation_through_higher_education-2013.pdf)

## Disabilities

***Improving College and Career Readiness for Students with Disabilities,*** American Institutes for Research, May 2013

This issue brief is intended to assist state policymakers in better understanding strategies to prepare students with disabilities and special needs for college and careers. It provides context and background on the numbers of students with disabilities who are college and career ready, examines issues related to preparation and readiness for postsecondary education and careers, and includes examples of current programs and policies that help students with disabilities successfully transition to college and careers. The brief stresses the importance of acknowledging how the diversity of disabilities plays an important role on these students' educational needs and goals. It highlights the importance of maintaining high expectations for students, creating realistic plans for their future, and using data to inform the process.

<http://www.aypf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Improving-College-and-Career-Readiness-for-Students-with-Disabilities.pdf>

***The Aging Workforce: The Role of Medical Professionals in Helping Older Workers and Workers with Disabilities to Stay at Work or Return to Work and Remain Employed,*** National Technical Assistance and Research Center, March 2013

This report documents the findings from a discussion that explored the relationships among medical professionals, employers, and the public workforce and vocational rehabilitation systems in terms of their current and desired roles in reducing preventable work disability. Work disability in this context describes a period of time during which an individual is not working or working at some reduced capacity attributable to a medical condition. Medical professionals play a significant role in keeping older workers

working, or facilitating their return to work following an illness or the onset of age-related disabling conditions. Participants highlighted the need to improve the quality of the data and offered a range of recommendations for the education of medical professionals, changes to Social Security Disability Insurance, engaging employers in practices that encourage workers to stay at work or return to work, and support for research and demonstration projects.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/NTAR-AgingMedicalProfessionals.pdf>

***The Aging Workforce: Challenges for the Health Care Industry Workforce***, National Technical Assistance and Research Center, March 2013

This brief identifies strategies to address the challenges a mature healthcare workforce poses for the healthcare industry both as an employer of an older workforce and as a provider of services to a growing number of older patients. State and national experts from the fields of healthcare, workforce development, and disability employment worked together to develop recommendations for employers and public policymakers. Several innovative policies and notable practices promote the employment, and continued employment, of aging workers in the healthcare sector, including those who may have acquired age-related disabilities or chronic health conditions and wish or need to extend their careers past the typical retirement age.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pdf/NTAR-AgingWorkforceHealthCare.pdf>

## Green

***Quality Employment for Women in the Green Economy: Industry, Occupation, and State-by-State Job Estimates***, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, April 2013

This report provides the first estimates of women’s employment in the green economy, state-by-state, by industry, and by occupation. The analysis draws on: the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey; the Brookings-Battelle Clean Economy database; and the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Green Goods and Services survey. The report examines women’s share of employment in the occupations predicted to see the highest growth in the green economy and includes two alternative state-by-state estimates for growth in green jobs. It is the first of a series of publications investigating strategies for improving women’s access to quality employment in the green economy; future reports will address good practices in workforce development for women in the green economy.

<http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/quality-employment-for-women-in-the-green-economy-industry-occupation-and-state-by-state-job-estimates>

## Supply Demand

***Addressing Skills Gaps, Creating Careers: Key Findings from the Washington State Centers of Excellence***, Association of Washington Business Institute, April 2013

Washington State Centers of Excellence focus on targeted industries and serve as statewide liaisons to business, industry, labor, and the state’s educational systems for the purpose of creating a highly skilled and readily available workforce to meet industry demand. This report includes data on each targeted industry and summarizes key findings from a series of industry skills-gap forums. The forums engaged more than 100 employers and 150 educators in a discussion to determine how to address the skills that employers are not finding in the candidates recruited for employment. Key findings suggest that technical skills were found to be critical across all industries and that continuing education, stackable credentials,

and flexible training models will help provide business and industry with vital incumbent worker training. Forum participants also recommend promoting available career and training programs to ensure broad awareness among middle and high school educators and students. Additional findings suggest that all workforce programs should ensure training on basic employability skills; whereas, college programs should also develop leadership and management skills.

[http://www.awbinstitute.org/docs/2013%20COE%20Report\\_vFinal\\_LR.pdf](http://www.awbinstitute.org/docs/2013%20COE%20Report_vFinal_LR.pdf)

## Training

***Signaling Success: Boosting Teen Employment Prospects***, Commonwealth Corporation, April 2013

Prompted by a significant decline in youth employment since 1999, this report considers the long-term benefits of youth employment such as skills development, improved educational attainment, and lifetime earnings, and studies the causes for the decline, particularly in sectors that traditionally hire teens. The research focused on perceptions of teens' hard skills (reading, writing, math, and technology), perceptions of teens' work behaviors, the effect of teen employment laws on hiring decisions, factors affecting hiring decisions, and hiring preferences. Findings suggest that employers view the hard skills of workers as comparable between teens and adults at the entry level; however, teens' work behaviors are considered inferior, while teens' technology skills are regarded as superior to adults in entry level jobs. Trusted referrals are preferred by employers, yet employers find it difficult to connect with teachers and guidance counselors in high schools with the exception of career and technical high schools. The findings help schools, community-based organizations, workforce boards, and career centers support increasing youth employment. The report is a companion to *Building Blocks of Labor Market Success*.

[http://commcorp.org/resources/documents/BoostingTeenEmploymentProspects\\_042013.pdf](http://commcorp.org/resources/documents/BoostingTeenEmploymentProspects_042013.pdf)

***Building Blocks of Labor Market Success: Evidence from O\*NET Job Analysis Surveys***, Commonwealth Corporation, April 2013

A companion to the *Signaling Success* report that examined barriers to teen employment in Massachusetts between 2009 and 2010, this report analyzed O\*NET data from the U.S. Department of Labor and found that the analysis reinforced insight from the employers. It first describes the Occupational Analysis Network (O\*NET) and how the system details a set of measures or worker abilities and behavioral traits and occupational requirements. This study found the largest share of employment for persons aged 16 to 19 in 10 occupations and that teens generally possess the skills necessary for those positions. It also demonstrates that the demand for education, training, and work experience rise as the level and importance of those skills increase. However, for behavioral traits, there is very little difference between entry-level/lower-skilled jobs and high-skilled jobs. These are dependability, self-control, cooperation, and integrity and are expected for all jobs. The evidence suggests that these behavioral traits are the fundamental building blocks of labor market success, reinforcing the findings and recommendations of the companion report.

<http://commcorp.org/resources/documents/ONET%20Paper%20Final.pdf>

***Integrating Financial Security and Asset-Building into Workforce Development Programs***, The Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED), April 2013

This guide provides examples of workforce programs and services that have integrated one or more financial capability and asset-building strategies. It begins with brief overviews of asset-building and the workforce development system. Examples are organized around the five imperatives in developing household financial security: learn, earn, save, invest, and protect. The guide also offers policy

recommendations that can remove barriers to integration and improve outcomes, and it concludes with a resources section.

[http://cfed.org/assets/pdfs/Integrating Financial Security and Asset-Building Strategies into Workforce Development Program.pdf](http://cfed.org/assets/pdfs/Integrating_Financial_Security_and_Asset-Building_Strategies_into_Workforce_Development_Program.pdf)

***Evaluation of the Aging Worker Initiative***, Social Policy Research Associates, March 2013

This report presents the evaluation of the design and implementation of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Aging Worker Initiative that was developed to address the rising percentage of older workers in the labor force. Ten organizations, including Goodwill Industries of Houston, Inc., were funded to develop new strategies and build the capacity of the public workforce investment system to serve this population. Findings support the requirement of focus on high-growth industries and employer partnerships.

However, the diversity of approaches limits the outcomes to indicators of service features that appear to be more effective for older workers such as career planning, personalized support that is sustained through the service period, short-term training opportunities, and group workshops with counseling.

[http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText\\_Documents/ETAOP\\_2013\\_19\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP_2013_19_Final_Report.pdf)