



A Talent Development Solution:

Exploring Business Drivers
and Returns in Learn and
Earn Partnerships

September 2012

LEARN AND EARN PARTNERSHIPS

Learn and Earn partnerships between business and education providers bridge the skills gap for employers while encouraging and supporting current and future employees' attainment of postsecondary credentials with labor market value.

About Corporate Voices for Working Families

Corporate Voices for Working Families (Corporate Voices) is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we create and advance innovative policy solutions that reflect a commonality of interests among the private sector both global and domestic, government and other stakeholders.



We are a unique voice, and we provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

www.corporatevoices.org

Acknowledgments

At Corporate Voices, we identify and promote innovative partnerships between business and education providers, also known as Learn and Earn models. These partnerships help bridge the skills gap for America's employers while supporting the education and career aspirations of employees, encouraging their pursuit of postsecondary credentials with labor market value. The findings in this report reflect the compilation of research, discussions, dialogue and documentation of employer drivers and best practices within the emerging Learn and Earn field.

Corporate Voices would like to thank The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for its generous support of our Learn and Earn initiative and this research project. In particular, we are grateful to Parminder Jassal for her unfailing vision and leadership on the importance of connecting postsecondary education and the labor market.

We would also like to acknowledge Sara Toland, Peggy Walton and the entire Corporate Voices' workforce readiness team, who worked diligently to analyze, document and compile the findings in this research.

Corporate Voices would like to recognize those corporate and national nonprofit partners who reviewed and provided substantive input on this document, including:

- Achieving the Dream
- American Association of Community Colleges
- Center for Energy Workforce Development
- Expeditors
- Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
- IBM Corporation
- League for Innovation in the Community College
- National Skills Coalition
- Stater Bros. Market
- Tri-Health
- Verizon Wireless

Most importantly, Corporate Voices would like to thank the many businesses and education providers that generously shared their internal practices, successes and challenges of building Learn and Earn partnerships. Thank you for your commitment, enthusiasm and dedication to these partnerships and to the working families in your companies and communities.

Executive Summary & Key Findings

For more than a decade, Corporate Voices for Working Families (Corporate Voices) has cultivated public and private policies that promote the wellbeing of working families while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities. Our partner companies lead their industries in developing best practices that both help working families and meet bottom-line business goals. Nowhere is this more evident than in Corporate Voices' work on jobs, skills, education and training.

A Talent Development Solution provides a summary of research Corporate Voices conducted over the past 24 months identifying the practices, characteristics, and returns of innovative, business-led partnerships between employers and education providers. It presents a comprehensive overview of this emerging *Learn and Earn* field—an approach to the connections between employers and education providers that builds the talent pools employers need and offers employees the opportunity to gain tangible skills and earn a postsecondary degree or credential, and a path to a brighter economic future.

Corporate Voices came to this work through early research in *Are They Really Ready to Work*,¹ which highlighted the gap between the 21st-century skills employers need and what they are getting from applicants and new hires. Further research in *The Ill-Prepared Workforce*² showed that while employers are committed to overcoming skills deficits in their workforce through an array of programs, most do not have a clear understanding of the impact of these programs.

A Talent Development Solution explores the business impact of Learn and Earn partnerships, offering examples from some of the nation's leading corporations. Profiled in case studies throughout the report are 22 best-practice companies that range in size, sector, location, and type of education partner. The report documents significant positive returns companies can realize by investing in Learn and Earn initiatives—impacts that go beyond building a talent pool, which is a key driver of Learn and Earn models, to employee engagement, diversity, corporate brand recognition and more.

A Talent Development Solution aggregates many lessons learned from Learn and Earn partnerships. A primary lesson is that Learn and Earn partnerships *work*. These partnerships serve business interests, enabling employers to build a better-skilled workforce by leveraging the strengths education providers bring to the table. At the same time, these partnerships create valuable opportunities for employees—especially for lower-income individuals, who often have no choice but to earn a living while they pursue higher education.

Finally, *A Talent Development Solution* provides willing business leaders a roadmap to establishing partnerships that leverage current workplace practices and policies, such as tuition assistance and flexibility benefits that enhance workplace performance while supporting the education and career aspirations of working learners.

At this time in our nation's history, when Americans look to business for leadership in a challenging employment market, Corporate Voices invites employers to consider the Learn and Earn practices presented in *A Talent Development Solution*.

1 Corporate Voices for Working Families, The Conference Board, Society for Human Resource Management and Partnership for 21st Century Skills. *Are They Really Ready to Work? Employers Perspectives on the Basic Knowledge and Applied Skills of New Entrants to the 21st Century U.S. Workforce*. Washington, D.C.: Corporate Voices, 2006.

2 Corporate Voices for Working Families, ASTD, Society for Human Resource Management and The Conference Board. *The Ill-Prepared U.S. Workforce Exploring the Challenges of Employer-Provided Workforce Readiness Training*. Washington, D.C.: Corporate Voices, 2009.

Key Findings

A Talent Development Solution explores successful Learn and Earn partnerships to answer these and other questions:

• Why does Learn and Earn work for business?

- *Business imperatives drive these partnerships and they are usually designed to meet bottom-line business needs*
- *Companies realize a range of returns on their investment, including higher employee retention, increased productivity, and enhanced reputation*
- *Successful partnerships serve employees' needs by offering flexibility and helping them balance the demands of work and school*

• What makes a model Learn and Earn partnership?

- *A clear business imperative, such as the need to stabilize a company's workforce*
- *A strong relationship between business and an education provider*
- *Relevant curriculum linked to a postsecondary credential and career advancement*
- *The ability to measure and track progress of the investment*

• What works in Learn and Earn partnerships?

- *A corporate culture, starting at the top, that supports talent development and learning*
- *Other business practices that promote lifelong learning, including tuition assistance utilized as a talent strategy to encourage employees to pursue higher education*
- *Leveraging the expertise of strong education providers*

• Who benefits from Learn and Earn partnerships?

- *Employers—through improved talent development and bottom-line contributions*
- *Employees—both current and prospective*
- *Education providers—by gaining strong business partners*
- *A range of companies across industry sectors and geographic areas*
- *Local economies—by virtue of a better-skilled workforce in their region*

• What are the challenges and opportunities to creating Learn and Earn partnerships?

- *Large employers in multiple locations can find it challenging to implement local solutions, but successful models do exist*
- *Cultivating willing partners can be difficult, but partnerships provide a valuable source of talent*
- *Measuring success can also be challenging, but business decisions are data driven*

As ongoing research suggests, Learn and Earn partnerships offer meaningful returns for companies profiled in the series. These businesses have discovered the real potential of Learn and Earn partnerships to meet immediate talent development needs, to support educational attainment among employees, and to enhance the skills and economic competitiveness of the regional labor markets from which companies draw talent.

A Talent Development Solution provides a real path forward for employers eager to join these best-practice companies.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Why Does Learn and Earn Work for Business?	8
What Makes a Model Learn and Earn Partnership?	14
What Works in Learn and Earn Partnerships?	19
Who Benefits from Learn and Earn Partnerships?	26
What are the Challenges and Opportunities to Creating Learn and Earn Partnerships?	30
Looking Forward	33
Appendix A: Glossary of Terms	35
Appendix B: Learn and Earn Employer References	36
Appendix C: Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series	39

Introduction

In many regions of the nation and many sectors of the economy, American businesses report talent deserts, where operations and high growth are limited by shortages in skilled talent needed to build healthy and vibrant companies and contribute to a robust economy. In an economy still facing stubbornly high unemployment, with millions of citizens eager to find good jobs, how is it possible that companies can not find the skilled workforce they require?

A recent survey of 2,000 U.S. companies found that two-thirds reported difficulty in filling job vacancies. The top deficits they pointed to among applicants were unsuitable work habits and insufficient experience.³ While they struggle to hire entry-level talent, business managers also reported the need for emerging leaders, workers with the skills and drive to move up the career ladder to managerial positions. In both cases, employers are seeking candidates with a clear understanding of 21st-century workplace demands, including the ability to work in teams, the need for wide-ranging communications skills and the aptitude to solve complex problems.

At the same time, well-documented changes in the global economy are fueling demand for a more highly educated American workforce. Leading economists report that nearly two-thirds of job openings in the next decade will require some type of postsecondary education credential, including a bachelor's degree, associate degree or trade certificate.⁴

In an effort to close the education and skills gap, U.S. companies spend an estimated \$485 billion annually on formal and informal education and training. By comparison, the nation's array of public job-training programs expend about \$16 billion a year, while total annual spending on postsecondary education for public and private colleges and universities amounts to another \$271 billion.⁵

Despite this vast collective investment of resources and capital from the private sector and public funding streams, a national skills mismatch persists. This presents enormous challenges for businesses hoping to excel domestically and in an increasingly competitive global marketplace.

Defining Learn and Earn

One way companies are addressing their need for workforce talent is through Learn and Earn partnerships—alliances with education providers, organizations of higher learning that award accredited postsecondary credentials. Learn and Earn partnerships help bridge the skills gap for employers while encouraging and supporting current and future employees' attainment of postsecondary credentials with labor market value—the most significant benchmark for achieving economic sustainability.

Typically, these partnerships work because business and education share key and complementary goals. Employers seek a better-prepared workforce, and education providers are committed to preparing students with the education and credentials needed to succeed.⁶

Defining Learn and Earn Partnerships

Learn and Earn partnerships between business and education providers bridge the skills gap for employers while encouraging and supporting current and future employees' attainment of postsecondary credentials with labor market value.

3 Manyika, James et al., McKinsey Global Institute. *An Economy that Works: Job Creation and America's Future*. McKinsey & Company, 2011.

4 Carnevale, Anthony P., Nicole Smith and Jeff Strohl. *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 2010.

5 Carnevale, Smith and Strohl, *Help Wanted*.

6 Corporate Voices for Working Families. *From an "Ill-Prepared" to a "Well-Prepared" Workforce The Shared Imperatives for Employers and Community Colleges to Collaborate*. Washington, D.C.: Corporate Voices, 2011.

Graphic 1: Learn & Earn Model Partnership



Learn and Earn partnerships deliver contextualized learning and the opportunity to apply a range of real-world experiences to academic and other instruction. By blending workplace relevance, on-the-job training, and more formalized education, they help students gain the skills and competencies required in today's workforce.

The benefits for workers—especially low-wage workers who have to work while they study⁷—of Learn & Earn programs are clear. But why are some leading employers investing in Learn & Earn partnerships? One reason is an extensive and growing body of research documenting the bottom-line financial value associated with education and skills acquisition for employer and employee alike. Studies have validated the returns from strategic investments by employers in postsecondary completion for members of their workforce. One new study goes farther,⁸ finding that it may be more advantageous for companies to hire employees without college-level degrees and invest in their continuing education than it is to recruit those who have already completed their schooling. The research suggests that helping those without degrees pursue higher education creates value through better job performance, enhanced advancement, and higher retention.

When done well, Learn and Earn partnerships deliver a win-win: success for individual workers pursuing higher education, and a pool of new talent ready and able to meet the business goals of American companies.

Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series

For the past two years, Corporate Voices for Working Families (Corporate Voices) has identified and promoted innovative Learn and Earn partnerships through its Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series. The series highlights companies' motivations for entering these partnerships. It defines the key characteristics of such partnerships, as well as business outcomes and employee impacts. Often these business outcomes can be calculated in concrete return on investment (ROI) figures, as well as in other benefits that are more difficult to quantify but are of real value to employers and employees nonetheless. The series also highlights how these models meet employee needs for flexibility and other supports to balance the demands of work and school—supports that are especially important for lower-income workers who typically must earn a living while they pursue higher education.

Written both to and from a business perspective, these 22 micro-business cases serve as key models to which business leaders can refer when planning and revising their talent development strategies and investments. These partnerships with education providers are led by small, medium and large employers across the country. While some have been around for decades, others are still emerging as best practices. *Chart 1* provides an overview of the companies and partnerships highlighted in the series.

⁷ Tampkins, Melinda M. et al., Families and Work Institute. *A Profile of Young Workers (16-26) in Low-Income Families*. Washington, D.C.: Corporate Voices, 2011.

⁸ Human Capital Lab. *Employer Value from Investing in Workforce Education*. Omaha, Nebraska: Bellevue University, 2012.

Chart 1. Quick Glance: The Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series⁹

Company	Program / Partnership	Description
AOL	Year Up / Northern Virginia Community College	Year Up, a nonprofit, provides guaranteed successful intern matches to AOL at a fixed price, offering a cost-competitive opportunity to explore entry-level talent on a risk-free trial basis, while the interns earn college credit.
Applied Scientific Instrumentation	Cooperative Education Program / Lane Community College	Offering relevant work experiences to students within a community college cooperative education program provides a small technology firm with the opportunity to “hand pick” a successful team and decrease recruitment costs.
AREVA	Employee Training Program / Central Virginia Community College	AREVA, in partnership with Central Virginia Community College, hires high school graduates and provides them with the opportunity to earn an associate degree, creating a pipeline of skilled and educated workers and ensuring AREVA is an employer of choice in the central Virginia region.
Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation	Manufacturing Skills Standard Council: Certified Production Technician / Education Providers in Illinois	Investments in training that lead to an industry-endorsed, postsecondary skills certification produce a 23 percent increase in performance indicators and a 31 percent productivity gain.
Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC	eChild Development Associate (eCDA) Program / Nationwide Network of Public and Private Universities	Bright Horizons’ online training program helps its teachers acquire their Child Development Associate credential, professionalizing the field of early education and achieving greater center accreditation, the industry standard of excellence.
Convergys	Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate – P3CM / Bellevue University	Partnering with Bellevue University, a responsive, flexible education provider, Convergys has improved its management succession bench by 25 percent with little initial investment.
Crest Cadillac	Automotive Service Education Program / Brookhaven College	Automotive training program leads to postsecondary credentials, increasing technician efficiency and dealership retention rates.
CVS Caremark	Public and Private Partnership Programs	By partnering with public workforce systems to source and train job candidates, and by tapping Work Opportunity Tax Credits, CVS Caremark generates significant returns relative to costs.
Expeditors	Opportunity Knocks	Vision, leadership and passion for developing young, raw talent changes individual lives, grows future talent and benefits this global logistics company.
Georgia Power	Electrical Lineworker Bootcamp / Technical College System of Georgia	Developed in partnership with Technical College System of Georgia, the Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate increases the quality of applicant pool and decreases hiring costs for Georgia Power.
Health Careers Collaborative	Health Careers Collaborative / Cincinnati State Technical and Community College	Employer-led consortium collaborates to increase the skills and education level of entry-level workers, creating a shared talent pool and setting best-practice business standards.
IBM	Latino STEM Support Network Early Alert System / Queensborough Community College	To grow the future STEM workforce, IBM partners with Queensborough Community College to create an early warning system to identify Latino students at risk of dropping out.
KPMG LLP	Future Diversity Leaders / Historically Black Colleges and Universities	Through close partnership with postsecondary institutions and by providing internships, tuition support and mentors, KPMG can hire more diverse, better skilled and ready workers.
McDonald’s	Hamburger University / University College Alliance	Committed to being the world’s “best talent developer,” McDonald’s obtains college credit recommendations through the American Council on Education CREDIT® review process for its corporate training through its innovative Hamburger University.
Millstone Power Station	Nuclear Engineering Technology Program / Three Rivers Community College	Nuclear power station’s investment in its future workforce delivers increased retention rates and a solid return on investment for future on-the-job training and licensure.
Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding	The Apprentice School / Thomas Nelson Community College & Tidewater Community College	More than 2,700 current employees of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding are graduates of The Apprentice School, which provides a reliable source of skilled talent and future leaders in shipbuilding and repair. Some 240 serve in leadership jobs-- including 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers. ⁷

⁹ The Apprentice School was founded and operated originally by Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia. It was then purchased by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and most recently sold to Huntington Ingalls Industry who is still running the school.

Company	Program / Partnership	Description
Pacific Gas and Electric	PowerPathway™ / Community Colleges	Time-to-productivity gained through PG&E's PowerPathway™ program—a collaboration between business, the public workforce system and higher education—creates a skilled, “ready now” and diverse pool of talent with a return on investment of over 3-to-1.
Toyota	Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative / Kentucky Community and Technical College System	Toyota lends leadership to community college-industry partnership, AMTEC (a National Science Foundation grantee), in order to scale advanced manufacturing technician offerings for industry and to assure education and learning outcomes are consistent across multiple education providers.
UPS	Metropolitan College / Jefferson Community and Technical College & University of Louisville	Workforce turnover rate decreases from 70 percent to less than 20 percent among part-time, overnight employees participating in Metropolitan College partnership.
Verizon Wireless	LearningLINK / Education Provider Network	The program reduces turnover by 50 to 60 percent, while 55 percent of participants in LearningLINK program said the company's tuition assistance program positively influenced their employment decision.
Walmart	Lifelong Learning Program / American Public University	Partnering with higher education provider American Public University, Walmart builds an educated and skilled pipeline while offering entry-level workers the opportunity to earn college credits for prior and on-the-job training and to continue postsecondary education.
Western Association of Food Chains	Retail Management Certificate Program / Community College Partners	The Retail Food Industry Association creates a competency-based certification in partnership with community colleges that establish career pathways and develop emerging leaders.

Throughout this report, more detailed information about each company's Learn and Earn model can be found in call-out boxes. These boxes provide a brief overview of the business imperatives for the partnership, the best practices implemented by the company and the outcomes achieved by the model. To distinguish among different approaches and solutions for companies of various sizes and sectors, the boxes also identify:

The size of the company:



SMALL
up to 50 employees



MEDIUM
50 to 500 employees



LARGE
more than 500 employees

The Level of Engagement (resource, time intensity; complexity of collaboration):



LIMITED
minimal or in-kind time and resource allocation



INTERMEDIATE
deeper investment of resources, developing strategic initiative



COMPLEX
significant investment of resources, key strategic initiative

The full series of business cases can also be found in **Appendix C**.

Why Does Learn And Earn Work For Business?

Learn and Earn talent development partnerships are advantageous for businesses because:

- They address a particular challenge or imperative facing employers;
- Companies supporting Learn and Earn programs usually realize returns linked to business strategies; and
- They meet the needs of employees, while building a more engaged, loyal and skilled workforce.

Business Imperatives Drive Learn and Earn Partnerships

The common element of Learn and Earn partnerships is that they are established to meet bottom-line business strategies. Most employers invest in such efforts for one central reason: to strengthen their talent pipeline of current and future workers.¹⁰ Other motivations (see *Graphic 2*) may include the need: to replace a retiring workforce; to stabilize the workforce by reducing employee turnover and increasing retention; to increase diversity among their employees; to improve job performance and customer satisfaction; and to meet industry demands.

Graphic 2. Business Drivers Behind Learn and Earn Partnerships



Build a Talent Pipeline of Ready and Skilled Workers

Several years ago, [Pacific Gas and Electric Company](#) (PG&E) faced a growing challenge within its workforce: most job applicants lacked the skills needed to meet the demands of the industry's new green-energy technologies, while rapid retirements were depleting the ranks of experienced employees. In response, PG&E, a California energy company, established its PowerPathway™ program, joining with higher education, the public workforce system, and partners in labor and industry to build a strong and diverse pool of new, skilled workers.

¹⁰ Corporate Voices for Working Families. "The Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series." Accessed July 2012. www.corporatevoices.org/our-work/pse/micro_cases.

The program has returned several important outcomes to the company. PG&E reports that the average PowerPathway™ graduate progresses six months ahead of peers who were not hired through the program, which saves the company an estimated \$30,000 in salary alone in their time to productivity, a key performance indicator. According to PG&E, the training program also engenders an increase in hiring satisfaction among managers. It has improved community goodwill, and has increased diversity within the company's workforce as well.

Meet Industry Demand for Excellence

[Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC](#) (Bright Horizons) is the world's leading provider of employer-sponsored child care and early education programs. To meet growing demand for high-quality early childhood education teachers nationwide, the company launched an innovative Learn and Earn model.

In partnership with a respected education provider, the company developed an online training program that helps its aspiring teachers earn the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, a baseline requirement for early care and education providers nationally. To gain accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Bright Horizons and other providers must show that 75 percent of teachers in each center hold the CDA.

Bright Horizons also teamed up with multiple higher education partners, including community colleges, to help its employees pursue postsecondary education beyond their CDA. To date, 1,200 employees have completed the program and Bright Horizons is able to meet an industry benchmark of excellence.

Companies Realize Returns Linked to Business Strategies

Over time, many companies that launch Learn and Earn programs are able to document a return on their investment. Often, these returns can be measured in the form of higher retention rates and increases in productivity. In other cases, the returns are less tangible but important to businesses nonetheless. They include stronger community partnerships, risk-free talent exploration, increased workforce diversity, and enhanced brand recognition. Diligent businesses are able to report the impact of calculating ROI and investing in lifelong learning. They track ways in which these investments pay off in concrete outcomes and cost savings.¹¹

¹¹ Corporate Voices for Working Families. *Why Companies Invest in "Grow Your Own" Talent Development Models (Including a Tool for Calculating Return on Workforce Readiness Programs)*. Washington, D.C.: Corporate Voices, 2011.



Pacific Gas and Electric Company

PowerPathway™



Business Imperative: Build a talent pipeline of workers with green job knowledge and skills. Gain support in building a strong regional pool of workers.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Customizes workforce training with higher education partners
- Cultivates career pathways
- Fosters public and private partnership with workforce investment boards and higher education

Outcomes:

- Over 3:1 ROI due to accelerated time to productivity
- Increased rate of hiring satisfaction
- 60 percent average diversity of applicant pool
- Created pool of skilled workers in region



Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC

eChild Development Associate Program



Business Imperative: Meet child care education industry credentialing demands

Best Practices Implemented:

- Online training program to prepare employees to gain the CDA credential
- Links education completion with salary increase
- Provides flexible online delivery model
- Translates training into credit hours for further education

Outcomes:

- Meets industry excellence benchmark
- Establishes credentialed professional workforce
- Increases quality of care provided at centers
- 1,200 have completed the program

Calculating a Return on Investment for Learn and Earn Partnerships

For companies like [Bright Horizons](#) and [PG&E](#), launching a Learn and Earn partnership and capturing the data needed to measure their investment has shown real impact on overall business strategies. However, only an estimated 10 percent of companies measure investments across organization-wide business goals and only seven percent utilize those measures to develop talent and make business decisions.¹² By calculating potential ROI and linking it to business goals and strategies, managers can build a persuasive case for Learn and Earn investments within their companies and enhance the perceived value of these partnerships within the wider business and education communities.

The most common way companies calculate ROI is through the impact on employee recruitment, turnover, retention, and productivity. [Verizon Wireless](#), often recognized as an industry leader in training and development, tracks and measures the business impact of its tuition assistance (TA) program, LearningLINK. Producing monthly reports for senior leadership, Verizon Wireless demonstrates the connection between LearningLINK and continued improvement in four key business strategies: recruitment, retention, career mobility and job performance. Since the start of the program, the turnover rate among the company's entry-level workers has been reduced by 50 percent. Moreover, 55 percent of new recruits cite Verizon Wireless' TA program as a factor in their decision to join the company. In 2009, more than 20 percent of the company's entire workforce took advantage of LearningLINK—making the program a real standout among corporate tuition initiatives nationally.

Another example of a company moving beyond simple data tracking to measure specific business impact is [Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation](#) (Bison Gear), a Chicago-area manufacturer. Bison Gear developed partnerships with local community colleges to deliver customized training that leads to an industry-recognized credential. To determine the program's ROI, company managers tracked two key performance measures—productivity and the “Bison Pride” rating, which is a compilation of three metrics for great customer performance: on-time shipment rate; how often the company says yes to customers' requested delivery date; and in-field warranty return rate to assess product reliability. Through its Learn and Earn partnerships, Bison Gear was able to measure and track a 23 percent gain in performance measures and a 31 percent gain in productivity.



Why Companies Invest in “Grow Your Own” Talent Development Models
(Including a Tool for Calculating Return on Workforce Readiness Programs)¹³

www.corporatevoices.org



Verizon Wireless

LearningLINK



Business Imperative: Suffering high turnover rates in its entry-level positions, company sought to increase retention, performance and productivity of employees.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Tuition assistance benefits program—100 percent prepaid
- Career navigation supports and pathways provided
- Partnerships with more than 1,800 colleges and universities

Outcomes:

- Strong succession planning: career mobility increased by 20 percent
- Key talent development strategy: 20 percent of workforce participates
- Turnover reduced by 50 percent
- Recruitment strategy: 55 percent cite tuition assistance as factor
- 96 percent of participants intend to stay with company for at least two years after degree

¹² Hewitt Associates, in partnership with Human Capital Institute. *The State of Talent Management: Today's Challenges, Tomorrow's Opportunities*. Chicago: 2008.

¹³ Corporate Voices for Working Families, *Why Companies Invest in “Grow Your Own.”*

Recognizing Other Benefits of Learn and Earn Partnerships

While it is important to track the impact of investments in Learn and Earn partnerships and quantify the returns when possible, research indicates that business leaders value a wide range of less tangible benefits as well. These benefits typically mirror the business imperative for developing Learn and Earn partnerships in the first place (see p. 8). They include:

- Building a more professional workforce;
- Achieving greater workforce diversity;
- Increasing employee satisfaction and engagement;
- Strengthening community partnerships;
- Risk-free talent exploration;
- Building brand recognition, including employer of choice and best-practice company; and
- Successfully meeting industry demands.

[Georgia Power](#), the largest subsidiary of Southern Company, one of the nation's largest generators of electricity, created a Learn and Earn model that delivers impressive financial returns as well as other important outcomes. The company's Electrical Lineworker Bootcamp has earned national attention within the energy sector and from educational institutions searching for exemplary industry partnerships. Working with Technical College System of Georgia, the company supports prospective employees who pursue a postsecondary education credential in preparation for lineworker careers. Georgia Power is now recognized as a best-practice company within the industry and has received numerous awards for contributions to the state's economic development. In addition to the outstanding brand recognition and enhanced reputation it earned, Georgia Power has enjoyed financial returns. The company previously hired a single employee out of every 42 applicants; now it makes one hire for every three applicants. By spending less time eliminating unqualified applications in the hiring process, Georgia Power decreased hiring costs by more than half and increased retention rates to 94 percent.



Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation

Manufacturing Skills Standard Council: Certified Production Technician



Business Imperative: Demand for employees with highly technical and customized skills

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with community colleges to deliver customized training to gain credential

Outcomes:

- 23 percent gain in performance measures
- 31 percent gain in productivity
- Employee skills development
- 64 employees continuing education
- Develop manufacturing technician career and education pathway



Georgia Power

Electrical Lineworker Bootcamp



Business Imperative: Shortage of skilled linemen in the energy workforce. Company went through 42 applicants to hire one qualified lineworker. Needed a stronger applicant pool.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Public and private partnership
- Support industry-endorsed skills certification for lineworkers
- Graduates eligible for apprenticeship program

Outcomes:

- Hiring ratio decreased to one hire for every three applicants
- Retention rate increased by 18 percent—to 94 percent
- Hiring costs decreased by more than half
- 900 graduates earned postsecondary education certificate and 144 hired at Georgia Power

Learn and Earn Models Engage and Meet Employee Needs

By providing flexibility and other supports to help individuals balance the demands of school and work, Learn and Earn models serve the needs of many employees. These programs are especially valuable for lower-income workers who have no choice but to work while they pursue higher education and earn a credential.¹⁴

Too often, working adults who begin their higher education stop short of receiving a postsecondary credential. More than 37 million Americans have some college credits but never earned a degree—representing 22 percent, or more than one in five, of the nation's working-age population. When young adults under age 25 are included, the total is well above 40 million people.¹⁵

Flexibility to Balance Work and School

Research shows that many of these individuals drop out because they lack the support services to help with life challenges, the flexibility to balance the demands of work and school or the funds to pay for tuition. Between 70 and 80 percent of students who are enrolled in higher education have to work,¹⁶ but workplace and classroom schedules are seldom coordinated in a way that could help them succeed. Importantly, Learn and Earn partnerships often provide these working learners the ability to balance the dual demands of education and work.

One leading energy company is using a flexible Learn and Earn model to help meet its critical workforce needs. [AREVA](#) is a global company whose U.S. branch provides services, fuel and engineering support to nuclear plants worldwide. It recruits participants into its Employee Training Program (ETP) directly from high school and from those currently in the workforce who may need a career change. Successful participants are hired full-time by AREVA. In addition to salary and benefits, participants receive prepaid tuition for an associate degree and earn academic credits through on-the-job training. AREVA's partnership with Central Virginia Community College (CVCC) provides the working learners flexibility to meet the demands of both work and school. During the summer and winter, participants take accelerated learning classes at CVCC, and AREVA places them in the field at nuclear sites in the spring and fall, where they continue to earn credits year-round toward an associate degree.

As a result of this flexible training partnership, AREVA creates a strong talent pipeline and a successful entry-level recruitment model. Furthermore, the company is recognized not only as an employer of choice in the community, but also as a strong contributor to central Virginia's regional economy.



AREVA

Employee Training Program



Business Imperative: Workforce retiring. Needed talent pipeline of skilled workers. Wanted recognition as local employer of choice.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with community college
- Hire as full-time employee and prepay full tuition for degree
- Earn academic credits through on-the-job training

Outcomes:

- Created talent pipeline
- Flexible strategic partnership
- Successful entry-level recruitment model
- Recognized as employer of choice within region
- 76 graduated and 144 hired to date
- Contributed to growth of regional economy

¹⁴ Tampkins, et al., *A Profile of Young Workers*.

¹⁵ Merisotis, Jamie P. "The Difference Makers: Adult Students and Achieving Goal 2025." Presented at the American Association for Adult and Continuing Education, Indianapolis, November 2, 2011.

¹⁶ American Council on Education. "Working Their Way Through College: Student Employment and Its Impact on the College Experience." *Issue Brief*, 2006.

Employers Can Help Working Learners Overcome Challenges to Continuing Education

Beyond the need for flexibility, working learners may struggle with other challenges that best-practice companies can help ameliorate. Conversations with Learn and Earn employers and employees reveal that many adults in the workplace resist seemingly outstanding opportunities to continue education. The reasons vary, but employers report the necessity to acknowledge this resistance and seek ways to overcome barriers to education completion for their employees.

There are several simple ways to start. Some employees can be motivated by low-cost incentives such as peer recognition, celebrations or bonuses at incremental education milestones. For those employees unsure of the continuing education process, successful learning interventions within the workplace might include advising on education and career navigation and mentoring. (Examples: [Bright Horizons](#), [Expeditors](#), [KPMG LLP](#) and [Verizon Wireless](#))

A great many working learners have some college education, but did not complete a postsecondary credential. Often, recruiting them into a continuing education opportunity is a matter of getting enough of the right information to them. Many of the Learn and Earn partnerships aggressively recruit through internal marketing campaigns via company intranet, internal newsletters, and other direct marketing. Education providers often support these campaigns with collateral materials. (Examples: [Convergys](#) and [Western Association of Food Chains](#))

Employers' willingness to prepay TA rather than reimbursing it later is a best practice because employees—particularly lower-skilled ones—are often constrained financially. Other challenges tied to financial needs, such as transportation and child care, often disrupt continuing education for low-wage workers as well. These might be overcome by partnering through education providers with community-based organizations that provide transportation and child-care assistance. (Examples: [AOL & Year UP](#) and [IBM](#))

By understanding the needs of working learners and ways in which to motivate and support them to complete a credential, employers are better able to offer low-cost supports that increase employee engagement and build a skilled talent pool within their companies and communities.



What Makes A Model Learn And Earn Partnership?

In an effort to understand the keys to success across the expanding Learn and Earn landscape, Corporate Voices studied a range of different approaches and distilled common elements among the partnerships. While models certainly vary, successful partnerships often share these key features:

- A strong business imperative;
- Solid and sustained partnerships between business and education providers;
- Relevant curriculum linked to a credential and career advancement;
- The ability to measure and track progress of the Learn and Earn investment; and
- The capacity to explore evolving and emerging trends in the business and education fields.

A Strong Business Imperative

Learn and Earn models are driven by business needs and goals (see p. 8).

[Convergys](#), a global leader in relationship management, forged a Learn and Earn partnership to stabilize the workforce at its call centers and develop a strong bench of middle managers. For its education partner, the company chose Bellevue University, the largest private, nonprofit university in Nebraska, offering both online and in-class settings to 9,000 students worldwide. Bellevue was willing to invest and utilize training resources to provide up-front costs of custom-designed curriculum development. With direct input from Convergys, Bellevue developed courses that lead to a Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Customer Care Center Management (P3CM). As a result of this partnership, Convergys is meeting its core business imperative. When the case study was conducted, the company had improved its management succession bench by 25 percent, and some 350 employees were in the pipeline, poised for future learning opportunities within the company.

Solid Partnerships Between Business and Education Provider

An education provider includes any organization of higher learning that awards accredited postsecondary credentials. Companies partner successfully with many different kinds, including public and private, not-for-profit and for-profit, community and technical colleges, and four-year colleges and universities.



Convergys

Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate – P3CM



Business Imperative: Need a customized, industry-specific program to develop middle managers into their customer care operations. Need to stabilize workforce at call centers.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with private university to develop customized education and credential with labor market value
- Built on traditional tuition assistance program with a scholarship opportunity

Outcomes:

- Improved its talent bench of managers by 25 percent
- Cost-neutral customized education program
- Developed student pipeline of 350+
- 63 employees gained skills, competencies, and college credit

The [Western Association of Food Chains](#) (WAFC) is a nonprofit business organization comprising executives from the retail and wholesale food industry. WAFC’s primary mission is elevating education within the retail food industry. Working with a wide-ranging network of community college partners across the western United States, the association created a competency-based certification that establishes career pathways and develops emerging leaders. Its Retail Management Certificate (RMC) program is built directly from standard academic curriculum within the community colleges. Together, WAFC and the colleges make it possible for both full-time and part-time employees to earn the management certificate by offering classes whenever possible online and in accelerated formats. After starting small in 2000, the program has forged an extensive network of partnerships with community colleges—expanding to 150 institutions in 12 western states and online. As it has grown, this innovative Learn and Earn model has fostered emerging leaders, elevated skills attainment, and set a standard of professionalism within the retail food industry.

Relevant Curriculum Linked to Credential and Career Advancement

Learn and Earn models encourage participants to earn a postsecondary credential or degree with labor market value and obtain work experience. One feature of successful Learn and Earn partnerships is aligning education classes and curricula to help working students attain industry-recognized credentials that earn “stackable” college credit toward postsecondary degree. The academic term for this alignment is programs of study, which create efficiencies that expedite a postsecondary degree attainment. Upon completion, many working learners have experienced the link between education and their work, and they often express interest in moving into supervisory or managerial positions with the intent of continuing education.

Best-practice employers are attentive to employee aspirations and leverage their investments through deep engagement along career paths for working learners. Many of the companies highlighted in the series link the curriculum delivered to both career and education advancement. For instance, the health care employers participating in the [Health Careers Collaborative](#) (HCC) (see p. 21) in Cincinnati, Ohio, created a career pathway with multiple entrance and exit points for incumbent, low-skilled, entry-level hospital workers to advance. It also provides for unemployed individuals to complete education and training that positions them to fill entry-level work opportunities created as incumbent workers advance. The employees involved in HCC may participate in developmental classes and associate degree programs specifically focused on the health care field, in disciplines such as nursing, respiratory care and occupational therapy assistance. The participants understand that these programs of study will help them advance along a career and educational pathway. Other employer examples include: [AREVA](#), [Bright Horizons](#), [Convergys](#), and [Millstone Power](#).

Defining an Education Provider

An education provider includes any organization of higher learning that awards accredited postsecondary credentials, including public and private, not-for-profit and for-profit, community and technical colleges, and four-year colleges and universities.



Western Association of Food Chains

Retail Management Certificate program



Business Imperative: Historically, retail industry has seen only 14 to 20 percent of employees attain postsecondary degrees, but management positions require technical skills.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Creates a partnership between food chains and community colleges
- Creates competency-based certification to establish career pathways and develop emerging leaders
- Provides career navigation

Outcomes:

- Fostered emerging leaders
- Filled succession pipeline
- More than 600 received industry-endorsed credential
- 44 percent earned associate degree
- 21 percent earned a bachelor’s degree or higher

Ability to Measure and Track Progress of Learn and Earn Investments

Another common feature of successful Learn and Earn models is the ability to measure and track the progress of their investments. Partnerships that succeed measure results, and report on how their investments link back to business goals and outcomes. As detailed in the previous chapter, such efforts to quantify the payoff from education investments have their own intrinsic value. But they can also generate internal buy in among corporate decision makers, thereby helping to sustain a commitment to the effort.

These success metrics are important no matter what form the partnership takes, from a simple, low-cost mentorship program to large, strategic investments of time and resources.

Business investments in Learn and Earn partnerships vary widely with the size of the company, its talent development needs and the types of best practices it is implementing.



Potential Costs of Learn and Earn Partnerships

- Lifelong learning support through TA, books, stipends, etc.
- Start-up and fixed costs, such as curriculum development and space for classes
- Cost to establish credit recommendations for corporate training
- Variable costs, such as books, teachers, and bonuses for milestones achieved
- Paid work time, whether participants are hired as interns, apprentices, part-time or full-time employees, including health and other benefits
- Program support related to staff and volunteer participation within internships, mentoring, and other models

For the companies studied in this report, the costs are outweighed by an array of potentially significant returns on investment.

Potential Returns of Learn and Earn Partnerships

- Increased performance and productivity
- Reduced turnover rates that reduce cost of recruitment and hiring
- Employee engagement that can often be tracked to increased customer satisfaction and sales
- Decreased time to productivity
- Greater workplace diversity or progress toward company's diversity goals
- Gains in brand equity
- Expanded corporate social responsibility investments
- Sustained corporate commitments to lifelong learning

Companies measure business returns in Learn and Earn partnerships in many ways. The strongest metrics track directly to an employer's bottom line. That is the case with [Bison Gear](#), [Verizon Wireless](#), and [CVS Caremark](#) (CVS). CVS, one of the country's largest pharmacy benefits managers, partners with public workforce development entities in cities across the United States to meet its national need for entry-level workers. Partnerships with a variety of public programs are fed by CVS' commitment to innovation, lifelong learning and the training of its current and future employees.

Through its programs, CVS is meeting key business outcomes, including a 30 percent higher retention rate and a 50 percent reduction in turnover. CVS has also realized other valuable returns, such as higher customer satisfaction ratings and an increase in community engagement opportunities.

Emerging Learning Practices Advance Partnership Models

The previous sections summarized several key characteristics of leading Learn and Earn partnerships, as identified in Corporate Voices' series. As the Learn and Earn field continues to develop, businesses and education providers are exploring approaches that hold promise for producing the skilled talent required in the 21st-century workforce. These emerging practices include:

- **Accelerated and competency-based learning:**

The ability to speed up skills acquisition through concentrated, time-shortened delivery of curricula that move working learners to credentials based on industry-confirmed competency requirements is a model that meets business demand for expediency. (Examples: [AREVA](#) and [Convergys](#))

- **Stackable credentials:** Aligning industry recognized credentials with a clearly defined program of study provides employees the ability to earn college credit toward the attainment of an academic degree.¹⁷ By providing greater career navigation supports, employers can promote a stronger link from postsecondary credentials earned to career advancement. Many companies provide mentors, coaches, or career navigators to guide working learners through the attainment of credentials connected to career pathways. In best cases, the credentials earn college credits allowing multiple entry and exit points along an educational continuum leading to a degree. (Examples: [Bright Horizons](#), [PG&E](#) and [HCC](#))

- **Accredited corporate training:** Companies go through a rigorous process of assessment of internal training offerings in order to establish college credit recommendations from the American Council on Education or directly from partnered education providers. (Examples: [McDonald's](#) and [Walmart](#))

- **Open Source Learning Opportunities:** The field of open sourced education and learning supports is rapidly emerging as an asset to Learn and Earn models as they hold great potential for education equity among low-income populations. From massive open online courses (MOOCs) that offer Ivy League classes to the simple leveraging of open sourced text books, digital learning is changing the face of education and training. Open source learning opportunities are on the radar screen of best-practice companies. (Examples: [WAFC](#))

- **Prior Learning Assessments (PLAs):** Learning happens in multiple arenas of life, including work, volunteer positions, and self-initiated inquiry. PLAs are being supported by employers as a process of college credit attainment for working learners. Leveraging PLAs contributes to accelerated credential attainment while decreasing employers' costs of tuition reimbursement. (Example: [Walmart](#))



CVS Caremark

Government Partnership Programs



Business Imperative: Need a wide source of entry-level talent and way of developing that talent into high growth/high need positions.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnerships with public workforce entity and community college to define career pathway and credential

Outcomes:

- 48,000 hired, trained and retained
- 30 percent higher retention rate
- Turnover reduced by 50 percent
- 179 percent return on the Work Opportunity Tax Credits relative to costs
- Three time higher customer satisfaction ratings through trained workers
- Established defined career pathways

¹⁷ Center for Energy Workforce Development and Council for Adult Experiential Learning. *Get Into Energy Career Pathways for Skilled Utility Technicians*. Center for Energy Workforce Development: Washington, D.C., 2010.

- **Wraparound Supports:** Usually in partnership with education providers, community-based organizations can support working learners by “wrapping” additional life supports, such as child care, transportation and other services they need to complete their studies. (Examples: [AOL & Year Up](#) and [IBM](#))

IBM’s partnership with Queensborough Community College (QCC) is a promising Learn and Earn model. Seeking a diversified STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) talent pool, IBM decided to invest in boosting college completion for Latino students in New York. The company partnered with QCC to utilize its expertise, creating an online tool that identifies and intervenes early with Latino STEM students at greatest risk of dropping out, and helps support them to college completion. The college also partners with Queens Community House, a local community-based organization, which helps students who need support services for non-academic hurdles such as child care and transportation. Although the partnership is relatively new, early results from the first pilot project are promising. In the first semester, completion rates (students receiving at least a C+) increased 8 percent, and the partnership is planning to expand throughout the Queensborough Community College system.



IBM

Latino STEM Support Network (LSSN) Early Alert System



Business Imperative: Foster a diverse STEM talent pool.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with local community college to establish a system to flag high drop out risk students
- Strong partnerships from faculty to administration
- Community-based organization supports for non-academic hurdles

Outcomes:

- Developing Latino STEM talent pool
- 8 percent higher C+ grades
- 7 percent lower F-to-C grades



What Works In Learn and Earn Partnerships?

The preceding section reviewed key features that characterize a range of model Learn and Earn partnerships. Building on that, research reveals that important key practices lead to a greater likelihood of success. They include:

- Cultivating a corporate culture that supports talent development and learning;
- Promoting lifelong learning and education attainment; and
- Forging partnerships with education providers.

Corporate Culture Supportive of Talent Development and Learning

Companies that successfully develop Learn and Earn partnerships often share fundamental preconditions, such as strong leadership that recognizes talent as an important asset and a corporate culture that supports lifelong learning.

Strong Leadership

Best practice Learn and Earn companies report that executive leadership sets the tone for the company. Commitments from the top resonate to the front line and are extremely important in engaging employees. Leaders who display commitments to lifelong learning and who understand the importance of continuous talent development are essential to successful Learn and Earn models. Often driven by a personal passion for people development, these leaders become compelling forces within their companies. Multiple companies documented in this report benefit from such leadership.

One such leader is Dan Wall, Senior Vice President of [Expeditors](#), a global logistics management solutions corporation. Expeditors hires young adults who are in high school but not planning to pursue higher education due to cost, lack of motivation, or other reasons. The company's Learn and Earn model, called Opportunity Knocks, offers these youth a part-time job with the promise of full-time employment with benefits if they meet or exceed expectations and graduate high school. The concept of Opportunity Knocks is based on the personal experience of Mr. Wall, who, at age 18, joined Expeditors in an entry-level job and worked his way to his current position, earning an MBA in the process. Under Wall's leadership, Opportunity Knocks provides these young adults with much needed mentoring, encouragement and opportunities to acquire job skills. At the same time, Expeditors is able to explore future talent and boost its connections within the communities it serves.

Expeditors®

Expeditors

Opportunity Knocks



Business Imperative: Focus on building long term stability within its workforce. Commitments to maintaining the highest caliber of employees.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Professional skills development through employment with benefits
- Provide postsecondary education opportunities

Outcomes:

- Established high school recruitment program
- Talent exploration
- Creates community connections
- Mentoring opportunity for employees

Culture Supportive of Lifelong Learning

Similarly, Learn and Earn partners report that a corporate culture promoting lifelong learning – the continuous building of skills and knowledge—positions the company for the fast turnaround of skills acquisition required in today’s workplace. This commitment fosters growth and innovations within its workforce while elevating employee engagement through continuous investment in their development. From day one of employment, new hires at [Verizon Wireless](#) are encouraged to consider their career pathways. They are introduced to “Plan Your Career,” a course that allows employees to complete an online assessment of their skills and abilities and to benchmark themselves against corporate job opportunities. Verizon Wireless then supports continuous learning through its generous TA program detailed on p. 10.

In a similar manner, [Walmart](#), the nation’s largest retailer, is committed to building the education and skill levels of its workforce through its Lifelong Learning Program. Walmart partners with American Public University (APU), an online education provider, and offers associates the opportunity to earn college credits for prior on-the-job training while building a portfolio of work and education experience. In 2010, Walmart established the Lifelong Learning Program and committed up to \$50 million to the effort. Walmart associates can gain credit for on-the-job training which seeds their college attainment and boosts academic completion rates. And for its part, Walmart realizes a better educated talent pool while supporting and promoting the company’s commitment to lifelong learning.

Business Practices that Promote Lifelong Learning and Education Attainment

Although education delivery is rarely a core competency of businesses, many best-practice companies understand that continuous, lifelong learning is required in the 21st-century workplace. Therefore, building strong partnerships with education providers is a best practice that will help meet their current and future need for an appropriately skilled talent pool.

Many companies consider TA the most basic element of their learning investments. While such assistance is usually administered from the benefits department, more companies are linking TA to talent development strategies and realizing growing returns. Other business practices that promote lifelong learning include cooperative education partnerships, mentoring and internships, flexible work scheduling, and forming public and private partnerships.

Chart 2 summarizes business best practices and companies pursuing them.



Walmart
Lifelong Learning Program



Business Imperative: Grow pipeline of emerging leaders, offer career advancement opportunities and be a best practice company through commitment to lifelong learning.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Credit for on-the-job training through American Public University (APU)
- 450,000 positions identified as college credit eligible
- Provide 15 percent tuition grant

Outcomes:

- Create skilled and educated talent pool
- Credit for on-the-job training decreases tuition costs
- Ability to create an education, work-based learning portfolio
- Block transfer agreements between APU and 42 community colleges

Chart 2. Employer Practices that Support Learn and Earn Models

Best Practice	Description	Best-Practice Company
Tuition Assistance Programs	Best practices include: pre-paid tuition, books, stipend, recognition of academic milestones and completion bonus.	Most Best-Practice Companies
Accredited Corporate Training	Work with colleges, universities and the American Council on Education to gain accreditation or credit recommendation for internal training.	Walmart; Bright Horizons Family Solutions; McDonald's
Flexible Work Scheduling	Applying flexibility policies to working learners to support academic schedules.	Millstone Power Station; AREVA; Health Careers Collaborative (HCC)
Prior Learning Assessment	Support for process of attaining academic credit for prior learning, training or experience gained outside of a classroom.	Walmart; McDonald's; Verizon Wireless
Public and Private Partnership	Participation in regional collaborations with public entities to establish education supports and pathways. May include working with the public workforce system or regional economic development authorities, usually in partnership with education providers.	AREVA; CVS Caremark; Georgia Power; HCC; IBM; Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E); Toyota & AMTEC; UPS & Metropolitan College
Cooperative Education Partnerships	Collaborate with higher education providers to provide contextualized learning opportunities. This is often a formalized process with academic credit and often salary.	Applied Scientific Instrumentation; Crest Cadillac
Internship / Mentorship	Contextualized learning with work experience and support for participants with career and education guidance.	AOL & Year Up; Expeditors; KPMG LLP
Career Navigation	Links academic achievement to defined career pathways and talent management strategies.	CVS Caremark; PG&E; Verizon Wireless
Apprenticeships	Full-time paid employment with benefits while learning a trade and earning a credential.	Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding
Supporting Industry-Endorsed Skills Certifications	Acknowledgement of the value of industry- recognized credentials and certifications with specific monetary support for attainment. Best practices also reward attainment.	Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation; Georgia Power; Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC)
Negotiate Instructional Delivery	Establish blended learning opportunities with online, on-demand access or on-site instruction.	Convergys; Verizon Wireless; WAFC

Tuition Assistance

Offering TA is considered “table stakes” to best-practice employers seeking to attract and keep top talent.¹⁸ As previously mentioned research confirms that innovative companies leverage TA programs beyond an employee benefit, offering it as a talent development strategy. Moreover, some companies prepay tuition in order to cut out-of-pocket costs—enabling more low-income workers to take advantage of Learn and Earn programs.

The (HCC) is an employer-led consortium with the goal of increasing the skills and education levels of entry-level health care workers, creating a shared professional talent pool and setting best-practice business standards. HCC requires participating employers to prepay TA for its career pathway participants. While providing prepaid tuition helps working learners complete a postsecondary degree, one hospital also reports an 11 percent return on investment for its participation in the consortium based on measures of retention, absenteeism and performance scores among participating employees.



Health Careers Collaborative



Business Imperative: Healthcare employers in Greater Cincinnati competing against each other for professional employees. Experience high levels of turnover rates in entry-level positions.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Public and private collaborative established based on business need
- Create career pathway to professional careers for entry-level workforce
- Prepaid tuition for credential and associate degree
- Partnership provides workplace flexibility and career navigation supports

Outcomes:

- 11.9 percent ROI measured for one partner
- 85 percent retention rate
- 90 percent transition to finish bachelor's degree
- Diverse and professional health care talent pool
- Career pathway for entry-level workers

18 Montgomery, Dan. Conversations with Dan Montgomery, Senior Director, Learning Strategy and Quality, Convergys. 2011.

Cooperative Education Partnerships

Cooperative education partnerships (co-ops) are not a new model, but they are attracting renewed interest. Under a co-op approach, companies partner with higher education providers to offer contextualized learning opportunities. Students receive classroom instruction, along with on-the-job training for which they receive college credit and often a financial stipend. While co-ops are more common in higher level education programs, they are less widely utilized at the community college level.

However, Lane Community College (Lane), located in Eugene, Oregon, delivers cooperative education programs in partnership with more than 800 local businesses, including [Applied Scientific Instrumentation](#) (ASI), a small high-tech firm. The partnership is supported by ASI's chief executive, who understands the value of evaluating students over a three month period. Prior to making a job offer ASI is able to determine if the student will be a good fit in the company. To date, 70 percent of ASI's 22 full-time employees are former students or graduates of Lane, a testament to the success of co-op programs at the community college level.

Mentoring / Internships

While cooperative education programs give employers the chance to vet talent prior to hiring, they also require a highly structured partnership agreement with defined learning outcomes for students. For some work situations, mentoring and internship opportunities offer a more suitable approach. [AOL](#), a global web services company, partners with Year Up™, a nonprofit organization that hosts a training program for low-income young adults, ages 18-24. Year Up™ combines hands-on skills development with wraparound or life supports within a corporate internship that also bestows college credit in conjunction with a community college partner—in this case, Northern Virginia Community College. AOL provides the young adults a corporate internship and contextualized learning experience, after which the company offers most participants full-time positions and continues to support their lifelong learning endeavors.

Partnering with Education Providers

Education providers are key to Learn and Earn partnerships—the complementary “learn” to the businesses’ “earn.” While education partners take many different forms, employers often find that community colleges have the flexibility and low-cost options to meet the needs of lower-wage and entry-level working learners.



Applied Scientific Instrumentation

Lane Community College Co-Op Education Program



Business Imperative: Need for highly technical workforce with skills specific to industry.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Cooperative Education Program – gain college credit while receiving work experience
- College covers worker's compensation expenses

Outcomes:

- 70 percent of full-time employees recruited from program
- High-performance talent sourced
- Decreased recruitment costs
- High quality customer support

Aol.

AOL

Year Up™ Partnership



Business Imperative: Need tech savvy young workers.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Internship, stipend and gain corporate experience
- Mentor

Outcomes:

- Successful entry-level recruitment strategy
- Reinforce diversity strategy
- Pipeline of vetted skilled talent source
- Risk-free talent exploration

Benefits of Education Provider Partners

Education partners (as described in detail on p. 15) possess the knowledge and expertise to help businesses reach talent development goals. Importantly, education providers and the companies they work with complement each others' core competencies:

- Businesses need education providers to support the skills acquisition required in talent development and to meet business goals,¹⁹ and
- Education providers need businesses to support and inform their mission and to provide perspective on changing labor market skills and competency requirements of their students and communities.

Partnerships with education providers can take many forms. Based on the business best practices that comprise Learn and Earn models, *Graphic 3* presents examples of business-education partnerships along a continuum, from lower levels of engagement and resource intensity to more complex collaborations and investments. Whatever shape they take, model collaborations require relationship building and mutual support that pays off over time.

Graphic 3. Level of Engagement (resource, time intensity; complexity of collaboration)

LIMITED minimal or in-kind time and resource allocation	INTERMEDIATE deeper investment of resources, developing strategic initiative	COMPLEX significant investment of resources, key strategic initiative
EXAMPLES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring • Professional Development • Career & Education Navigation • In-Kind Resources (e.g. space, materials, expertise) 	EXAMPLES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition Assistance Programs • Internships • Externships for Professors and Instructors • Curricula Development • Flexible Work Scheduling 	EXAMPLES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accredited Corporate Training • Prior Learning Assessments • Public and Private Partnerships • Cooperative Education Partnerships • Apprenticeships • Industry Credentials • Negotiate Instructional Delivery

Choosing the Right Education Partners

Choosing appropriate education providers is important, and should be influenced by the type of education, training, and postsecondary credential required. Some business leaders undergo rigorous searches for the partner best-suited to meet their particular workforce training needs. When negotiating education partnerships, employers find it helpful to weigh some or all of the following key factors:

- ✓ Strength of leadership and provision of single point of contact within the education provider;
- ✓ Reputation of the education partner for understanding business needs and successfully partnering with other businesses in the community;
- ✓ Capability to customize curriculum based on business needs;
- ✓ Flexibility, with speed to market—the ability to respond quickly to industry need and to steer course corrections in curriculum as business needs change;
- ✓ Ability to accelerate learning to move the working learner to credential in a shorter period of time;
- ✓ Capability to deliver stackable credentials in a clearly-defined program of study to industry-recognized credentials linked to employment opportunities and advancement;
- ✓ Ability to provide program recruitment support with outreach processes and collateral materials;
- ✓ Ability to establish feedback loops driven by data and the capacity to transition the partnership based on business and regional economies; and
- ✓ Willingness to negotiate fees with volume discount.

¹⁹ Corporate Voices for Working Families, "Ill-Prepared" to "Well-Prepared" Workforce.

[Millstone Power Station](#) (Millstone), a nuclear power facility in southeast Connecticut, turned to Three Rivers Community College to help it respond to changes in industry credentials and licensure after the Three Mile Island nuclear accident in 1979. Millstone's Nuclear Engineering Technology Program has evolved over the decades to meet the changing demands of the nuclear industry. Participants receive tuition support toward an associate degree, along with a 12-week paid internship. The community college is able to quickly adapt to changing business needs, including new industry requirements that followed September 11, 2001. It also plays a vital role in recruiting the top working learners into the program. This business and community college partnership provides Millstone with a successful entry-level recruitment strategy, contributes to lower recruiting costs and produces a pool of industry educated and highly capable employees.

Community College Partners

Community colleges, like Three Rivers Community College, can be valuable education partners because they have historically served as an entry point to postsecondary education for front-line workers who want to gain more education and skills to succeed at work. More than 60 percent of companies featured in Corporate Voices' Learn and Earn case studies include partnerships between employers and community colleges.

In addition, some businesses are motivated to partner with a local community college because they best understand and have the flexibility to meet the evolving demands of local and regional labor markets, as Millstone found. These companies most often are committed to building a talent pool in their local communities. Other important strengths of community college partners can include²⁰:

- Development of customized curriculum to meet labor-market needs;
- Low-cost training options and facilities;
- Flexible course development, scheduling and delivery;
- Connection to the regional economic community;
- Speed to market of new and revised courses and certifications;
- Creation of employee learning communities and support structures;
- Intermediary facilitation among multiple small businesses;
- Corporate capacity building; and
- Opportunity to improve long-term community relations.

Millstone Power Station

Nuclear Engineering Tech Program



Business Imperative: Meeting nuclear industry credential demands.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with local community college to provide internship
- Provide tuition assistance for associate degree, flexible class schedules and on-the-job work experience

Outcomes:

- Develop a pool of industry educated and highly capable employees
- Establish successful entry-level recruitment strategy
- Lower recruitment costs
- Increase retention rates
- To date, 222 graduates received full-time job offers



Crest Cadillac

Automotive Service Education Program



Business Imperative: Need to grow specialized workforce to meet its unique product knowledge and skills requirements.

Best Practices Implemented:

- Join cooperative education program in Dallas and provide paid internship
- Tuition reimbursement for associate degree attainment
- Provide competitive salaries, lower student debt and other bonuses available

Outcomes:

- Increase retention rates
- Increase efficiency
- Improve GM Customer Satisfaction Scores
- Enhance technician skill levels
- Meet industry needs

[Crest Cadillac](#), a leading automotive dealership in the Dallas metro area, partners with Brookhaven College of the Dallas County Community College District's (DCCCD) cooperative education program to ensure that its future talent has completed the General Motors' Automotive Service Education Program. Working learners combine a paid, part-time internship at the dealership with part-time school during the week. Thanks to its education partnership, the auto dealer has seen an increase in retention and efficiency rates among its new hires. Crest Cadillac's partnership with Brookhaven College is one of nine similar automotive industry partnerships supported throughout the region by the DCCCD. GM, Honda, Ford, Nissan and Bridgestone/Firestone have all played a role in customizing automotive degree programs through their partnerships with DCCCD.

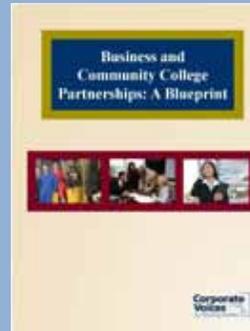
Additional Education Providers

Notwithstanding the advantages offered by community colleges, not all businesses turn to them for solutions to their talent development needs. Businesses report establishing Learn and Earn partnerships with a variety of other education partners, including public and private, not-for-profit and for-profit, and four-year colleges and universities.

Several businesses in the case series opt to partner with for-profit or online institutions to build Learn and Earn partnerships because, in part, these providers ensure flexible delivery of curriculum. The trend toward online providers is growing especially among large companies that serve a wide variety of employees across a broad geographic area.

While some companies choose one partner, other businesses, like [Bright Horizons](#), [Verizon Wireless](#), [Walmart](#) and others create consortia of four-year universities, community colleges and for-profit education institutions to meet the demands of their working learners. The employer maintains partnerships with each education provider within the consortium, and allows its employees the flexibility to pick options that best work for them. This leads to a larger success rate of completion for the working learner, and allows the company to reach its goals.

[McDonald's](#), a global food service retailer, developed Hamburger University in 1961 and has since facilitated the development of 22 regional training centers. Employees can earn college credit recommendations through the American Council on Education CREDIT® review process for on-the-job training at Hamburger University. Then, the employee can translate those college credit recommendations, as applicable, to one of 15 education providers through McDonald's University College Alliance. The University College Alliance consists of schools that have agreed to accept the transfer of most, if not all, of the credits earned by the employee while completing training at McDonald's. Through this Learn and Earn model, McDonald's is providing a head start to its employees in further degree attainment and building a stronger pipeline of leaders in its company.



Business and Community College Partnerships: A Blueprint²¹

For more information on how to partner with community colleges, the roles community colleges can play in Learn and Earn models, and general guidelines of partnering with education providers. www.corporatevoices.org



McDonald's *Hamburger University*



Business Imperative: Need to build the talent bench of emerging and talented managers

Best Practices Implemented:

- In 1961, established Hamburger University and since then a network of 22 regional training centers
- Provides on-the-job training and earns college credit recommendations through American Council on Education CREDIT® review process
- Receive tuition support and partners with 15 education providers through University College Alliance

Outcomes:

- Stronger pipeline of future leaders and owners/operators
- More effective restaurant leaders
- Increase restaurant profitability
- Utilize as a retention incentive
- 80,000 graduates to date
- Educates 5,000 managers annually through global network of campuses

²¹ Corporate Voices for Working Families, *Business and Community College Partnerships*.

Who Benefits From Learn and Earn Partnerships?

Many of the Learn and Earn partnerships documented by Corporate Voices have gained national recognition from industry experts because of the many entities that benefit from these successful models. The most direct beneficiaries of these programs are:

- The business' talent pool and bottom line;
- Both current and future employees;
- Education providers;
- A range of businesses across many sectors and geographic regions; and
- Local economies where successful partnerships take hold.

Corporate Talent Development and Operations Bottom Line

As has been established throughout the research, Learn and Earn partnerships are driven by a bottom-line business strategy and often yield a positive return on investment that can be directly tied to business goals.²²

Current and Future Employees

Beyond the business bottom line, the most immediate beneficiaries of successful Learn and Earn efforts are employees who participate, pursue further studies and earn a degree or credential. Doing so provides employees with a personal and marketable asset, and often, a path to career advancement opportunities, greater financial stability and other rewards. At the same time, research suggests that a higher level of engagement and job performance is often gained simply through participation in Learn and Earn programs.

[KPMG LLP](#) (KPMG), a leading audit, tax and advisory services firm, hosts a Future Diversity Leaders (FDL) program. Through this initiative, KPMG targets Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the country to increase the diversity of its workforce. Dominique Nettles, a college student, participated in FDL and interned at a KPMG office. Upon graduation she was offered a job as a first-year tax



KPMG LLP
Future Diversity Leaders



Business Imperative: Attract and retain a diverse talent pool to mirror customer demands

Best Practices Implemented:

- Partnership with Historically Black Colleges & Universities
- Provide tuition scholarship support for bachelor's degree
- Provide corporate experience through summer internship
- Mentorship
- Possibility of full-time positions with benefits

Outcomes:

- Increase workforce diversity
- Pipeline of vetted and skilled talent
- New entry-level recruitment model
- Acknowledgment of best practice company
- 91 percent receive paid internships

²² See *Why Learn and Earn Works for Business*, p. 8.

associate. Dominique directly credits FDL with putting her “ahead of the curve” as she enters the workforce. Dominique’s statements about work readiness and the subsequent job offer are just one example of how these partnerships benefit working learners.

Graphic 4. What Working Learners Are Saying About the Impact of Learn and Earn Partnerships

“My career at Walmart has shown me that there are opportunities for those who are willing to work hard. The Lifelong Learning Program and the ability to learn no matter where you are in life is one of those opportunities.”
– James Buskell, Walmart

“I recently graduated with my bachelor’s degree in business administration and I have Verizon Wireless to thank. The tuition assistance program is so generous, easy to use and such a blessing. I am fortunate to be working for a company that is willing to invest in its employees . . .”
– Shawna VanDrask, Verizon Wireless

“This is a male dominated business [nuclear industry] and here I am a female and an older student, I was given the opportunity to prove myself and I am lucky that Millstone took a chance on me that I can and wanted to learn.”
–Sandra Goddard, Millstone Power Station

“The eCDA program gave me the confidence to be able to answer question from other staff. I became the ‘go-to’ staff member.”
– Martha Echevarria, Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC

“The program [Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate] connects my studies to my real work, allowing me to grow and become more valuable to the company.”
– Marie Duque, Convergys

“Since graduation, my career has led me on a path that includes international travel, an exciting work environment, the opportunity for growth in a stable, expanding and environmentally friendly industry.”
– John Hoffmeister, AREVA

Education Providers Gain Strong Business Partners

Education partners need business to inform their mission of meeting evolving learning requirements within a regional economy. By establishing a Learn and Earn model with a business partner, education providers receive insight into labor market demands and gain valuable private-sector perspectives. And, by establishing their value to business as a critical source of skilled talent, education partners gain a powerful ally and advocate within regional economies.

To counter widespread retirements within its workforce and to build a pipeline of skilled workers for shipbuilding in Virginia, [Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding](#)²³ established the Apprentice School. In continuous operation since 1919, the Apprentice School offers academic instruction in 19 registered apprenticeship programs critical to shipbuilding. The school also offers advanced programs and postsecondary degrees in partnership with Thomas Nelson Community College and Tidewater

NORTHROP GRUMMAN

Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding
The Apprentice School

Business Imperative: Need to counter retiring workforce trends and build a pipeline of skilled workers for shipbuilding

Best Practices Implemented:

- Established the apprenticeship program in 1919
- Employees are employed fully to assure retention in the program

Outcomes:

- Proven succession planning: over 14 percent of total workforce are graduates
- Strong career mobility with 240 graduates serving in leadership positions, 70 percent of which are VP's
- Higher retention rates: 80 percent after five years, 70 percent after 15 years
- 2,700 postsecondary journeymen credentials earned
- Graduates earn a minimum of \$50,000 base salary

²³ The Apprentice School was founded and operated originally by Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia. It was then purchased by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and most recently sold to Huntington Ingalls Industry who is still running the school.

Community College. More than 32 percent of a recent class of completing apprentices earned an associate degree at a local community college as part of the program. The local community colleges gain increased completions from being involved in Learn and Earn partnerships. Additionally, college offerings better match local labor market needs.

Industries from Across Sectors and Geographic Locations

The Learn and Earn models surveyed are found within small, medium and large companies, and throughout diverse industries and sectors, including retail, manufacturing, healthcare, energy, nuclear energy, audit, professional services, wholesale food and automotive.

While all of these businesses are located in the United States, about half are global corporations with operations across the world. More than half of the companies highlighted are headquartered on the East Coast, but best-practice companies are found across the United States from Cincinnati to Seattle to Dallas. Businesses range from small companies, such as [ASI](#), a small high-tech firm with 22 employees in Eugene, Oregon (see p. 22), to [Walmart](#) (see p. 20) headquartered in Arkansas with 1.4 million employees in the United States alone. For more information on where these companies are located, their size and industry, please see *Graphic 5*.

Local Economies Are Fueled by Skilled Talent

Learn and Earn models, found regionally across the United States, support the development of local talent and build a skilled and educated talent pool. Learn and Earn partnerships produce individuals with competencies necessary to fill the talent needs of regional employers.

[UPS](#), the world's largest package delivery company, was considering relocating its Next Day Air hub from Louisville, Kentucky, to other locations due to an unstable and inadequate workforce pool. City, county and state officials realized the economic imperative to keep UPS in Louisville. Jefferson Community and Technical College, the University of Louisville, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Louisville Metro Government and UPS formed a partnership, Metropolitan College, to meet UPS' workforce requirements. Metropolitan College, not a traditional brick and mortar college, provides career and academic planning as well as financial and support services vital to motivating and keeping working students engaged. The students take classes through a local education provider and earn a degree or certificate in a field that meets their educational and career goals. UPS was able to reduce a turnover rate exceeding 70 percent to less than 20 percent in its overnight workforce through the Metropolitan College partnership, and the local community is building a skilled and educated talent pool to meet the needs of all regional employers.



UPS

Metropolitan College



Business Imperative: Need to stabilize its part-time workforce and reduce turnover to avoid relocation

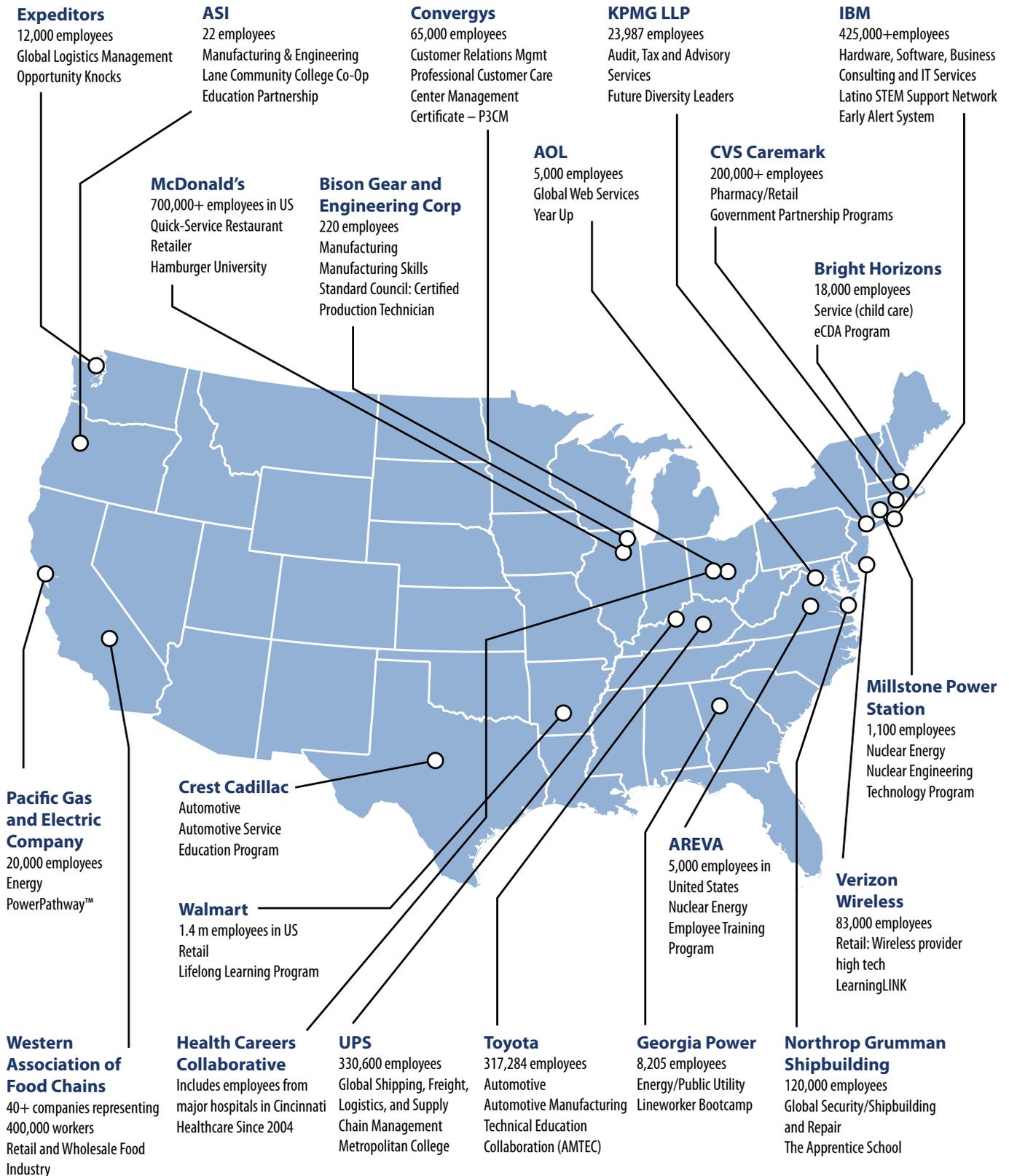
Best Practices Implemented:

- Public and private partnership that offers staffing support for its overnight operations
- Tuition-free postsecondary education
- Career navigation and mentoring opportunities

Outcomes:

- Relocation avoided; operations expanded
- Turnover rate reduced from over 70 percent to less than 20 percent
- Strong talent development pipeline
- 2,500 postsecondary credentials earned
- Successful public and private partnership
- Develop regional talent pool

Graphic 5. Learn and Earn Partnerships Map (Company Name, Location, Number of Employees, Industry/Sector, Learn & Earn Partnership)



What Are The Challenges and Opportunities to Creating Learn and Earn Partnerships?

An honest assessment of the Learn and Earn field must consider common challenges and obstacles. While they certainly exist, research demonstrates there are practical and ready solutions for employers committed to the effort. For example:

- Large employers serving multiple locations can find it difficult to implement local solutions. A range of collaborative models detailed below can overcome common barriers.
- Cultivating willing partners can be difficult, but partnerships provide a valuable source of talent.
- Measuring success can also be challenging, but business decisions are data driven.

Challenges of Local Implementation for Large National Employers Can be Overcome through Innovative Collaborations

For large, national or global employers serving multiple markets, creating local or even regional Learn and Earn models is challenging. Because these partnerships are often forged on the strength of deep working relationships, they tend to be more successful when businesses take a leadership role and come to the table regularly. That is more difficult for a large national or global company, unless the relationships are owned by local, regional branches of a company.

Even then, business leaders often struggle to create consistent learning outcomes in multiple locations with multiple education providers. One model that is showing promise for overcoming this challenge is the [Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative](#) (AMTEC) initiative. Under AMTEC, a consortium of high-tech auto manufacturers is working with a consortium of community colleges to deliver standardized programs of study and learning outcomes. It is a model that promises scalability.

The AMTEC collaborative was formed in 2005 when the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) partnered with Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky to create a program that teaches the fundamentals needed in manufacturing maintenance—math, basic electricity, hydraulics and more. Because these foundational



TOYOTA

Toyota and AMTEC

Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative



Business Imperative: Seeking operational efficiencies in training and education for manufacturing plant

Best Practices Implemented:

- Public and private partnership collaborative to tap the college system to teach fundamentals needed in manufacturing
- Standardizes learning outcomes endorsed by industry

Outcomes:

- National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education Program
- Industry and education partnership
- Industry-endorsed maintenance certification assessments
- Creates operational efficiencies

skills are needed across the auto industry, Toyota and KCTCS formed a consortium of 12 community and technical colleges and 18 automotive manufacturing companies from eight states to aggregate the learning outcomes and create efficiencies for auto manufacturers. AMTEC continues to build a multi-state education model that promotes a flexible career pathway tied to competency-based education and certifications and the sharing of best practices and education models. The collaborative AMTEC model assures consistent learning outcomes across multiple education providers. And, with the deep engagement of leading auto manufacturers, it delivers the in-demand skills required by today's domestic and even global automotive manufacturing industry.

Establishing Industry Standards that Create Consistent Learning Outcomes

Creating and supporting credentials recognized across a sector or industry is a scalable practice that overcomes the challenges of local implementation for global employers. Under the leadership of the Center for Energy Workforce Development (CEWD), the energy sector has united to establish standardized learning outcomes tied to the Energy Competency Model, an industry-recognized matrix of skills needed at multiple levels within energy. CEWD has helped launch more than 25 state consortia that are promoting awareness of career opportunities within the sector. In most states, the consortium works with community and technical colleges to deliver credentials that prepare individuals to meet the skills requirements of energy employers.

Another industry-driven credential gaining acceptance in multiple states was established by the Manufacturing Institute, the research and education affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM). The NAM-Endorsed Manufacturing Skills Certification System, also founded on a multi-tiered competency model, promotes learning outcomes tied to demonstrated attainment of skills. This standardization, expressed in a series of credentials, provides employers with consistency in hiring and advancement. It also establishes value and portability for individuals obtaining these credentials.

AMTEC, CEWD and the Manufacturing Institute provide industry-based Learn and Earn model partnership examples that, if replicated by other sectors, would contribute to scalability that serves entire industries. The ability of education providers to deliver consistent learning outcomes across multiple states and regions requires committed business leadership. The return for participation in these Learn and Earn partnerships is the establishment of large-scale, appropriately skilled talent pools that will serve national and global employers.

Cultivating Willing Partners Can be Difficult but Establishing Successful Partnerships Provides Valuable Source of Talent

While many successful Learn and Earn models are built on previously established partnerships with education providers, cultivating and creating deep partnerships is often a challenge. The education and business sectors have not, historically, overlapped. In fact, they are often seen as a relay whereby education hands off individuals to business for employment upon completion or graduation. However, that understanding or model no longer serves an economy that requires continuous, lifelong learning in order to ensure a competitive workforce.

As revealed within the Learn and Earn series, employers and educators who are willing to reach across silos to build lasting partnerships make substantial investments of time and effort to understand and respond to each other's cultures. True partnerships are built on communication, trust and credibility. As one education partner stated, "Building these partnerships is



a high-touch activity, requiring personal contact via phone and face to face.”²⁴ Providing ample time for relationship building is a challenge at a time when all resources are constrained.

To facilitate the process of building these partnerships, Corporate Voices published *Business and Community College Partnerships: A Blueprint* (see p.25). The blueprint offers guidance that can be adapted by most business-education partnerships, and promotes an understanding of the value both partners bring to a successful relationship.

Until business and education come to a common understanding of the value each brings to the other and are willing to reach into the other’s culture, it will be difficult to create Learn and Earn partnerships on a national scale.

Measuring Success Can Be Complex But Business Decisions Are Data Driven

As referenced throughout this report and widely known otherwise, business leaders care about results. They know that what is measured is managed. In order to determine the value and return of Learn and Earn partnerships, it is vital for business leaders to identify and capture metrics that will inform business decisions and investments.

Currently, only a small percentage of companies measure their learning investments against organizational goals. This represents a critical opportunity to expand efforts to track real returns on investment—and to establish conclusively that these talent development efforts can make a lasting contribution to a company’s bottom line. For more information on businesses that are successfully measuring the return on their investment, please see p. 9.

²⁴ Beheler, Dr. Ann. Conversations with Dr. Ann Beheler, Principal Investigator, Convergence Technology Center, Collin College. 2012.

Looking Forward

If the profound economic dislocations of the last few years have taught us anything, they have shown us that the old ways of doing business no longer apply. The pressures of globalization and heightened competition from other nations present one set of challenges to the entire business community. The rapid transformation of the economy and sweeping demographic changes in the American workforce present others. Static wages, dwindling household net worth and a long, slow recovery from recession have made demand slack, and presents a third set of challenges. Together, they spell a hard reality for employers and workers in the early 21st century: those who do not adapt quickly will be left behind.

For more than a decade, Corporate Voices and its partners have understood that the competitiveness of American business is tied to the quality and skills of a workforce that is shaped and nurtured in a lifelong talent development pipeline. That talent can be shaped and nurtured in many ways. As this report demonstrates, Learn and Earn partnerships between employers and education providers offer one very effective way to advance this important goal.

The aggregated lessons of Learn and Earn partnerships called out in *A Talent Development Solution* provide a strong foundation for creating a new and adaptive national understanding of ways in which business and education can partner. This study of best-practice business models is a start that points to encouraging and hopeful outcomes.

First, innovative Learn and Earn partnerships work. With relatively modest effort from employers, these initiatives can yield a range of demonstrable returns above and beyond their key benefit: a better educated, more highly skilled workforce.

They work for employees by supporting the education and career aspirations of individuals—many of them lower-income young adults whose lifelong prospects would be otherwise limited without a postsecondary degree or credential. Learn and Earn collaborations work for the education providers associated with them. By partnering with employers, educational institutions gain valuable private-sector perspective and insight into regional labor markets. For community colleges focused on degree completion, business input can help fulfill their mission of educating and graduating students with marketable skills and strong career prospects.

Moreover, these partnerships work for a broad spectrum of employers across sectors and geographic regions. From multinational corporations like [McDonald's](#) and [IBM](#) to small companies with a single inspired executive backing the effort, Learn and Earn commitments are paying off in higher retention rates, enhanced job performance and other business imperatives. It is noteworthy that many companies sustain their commitment even when the returns are less tangible. Contributing to company diversity, gaining brand recognition and other drivers also motivate best-practice companies.

Even so, establishing direct impacts of these investments to the bottom line is the highest form of confirmation. To that end, Corporate Voices encourages continuing progress in the ability of employers to measure and track returns on their Learn and Earn programs, and on general investments in talent development. Establishing processes for leveraging current workplace benefits like tuition assistance to better serve companies' strategic goals is quickly emerging with the growing talent analytics field and being utilized by early adopter companies. Corporate Voices will continue to research and promote practices that provide the ability to determine talent development returns in solid metrics.

The American business community currently spends \$485 billion every year on training and development, and it will continue to spend billions in developing the skilled talent it needs to compete in the 21st century. The sheer size of this investment exceeds public investment in higher education, reflecting employers' vested interest in a first-rate workforce. This investment

automatically makes the business community participants in any discussion about education and training. Yet business' investment remains scattered and uncoordinated, and it remains to be seen whether employers will begin to apply the efficiencies and business processes they reflexively bring to other areas of competency to their education and training efforts. For leading businesses, Learn and Earn programs represent an opportunity to take proactive roles in finding solutions to their talent needs and our national workforce challenges. Corporate Voices is committed to expanding knowledge of the value of Learn and Earn partnerships and to challenging employers to adopt policies and practices that support this effective talent development solution. Corporate Voices is strategically positioned to promote and support a growing network of Learn and Earn partnerships.

As Corporate Voices' ongoing research suggests Learn and Earn partnerships offer a promising model for a small but growing number of companies and the education providers associated with them. *A Talent Development Solution* provides a real path forward for employers eager to establish meaningful partnerships that support their talent development goals.

Appendix A: Glossary Of Terms

Accredited Corporate Training: companies go through a rigorous process of assessment of internal training offerings in order to establish college credit recommendations from service organizations such as the American Council on Education or directly from partnered education providers

Accelerated Learning: the ability to speed-up skills acquisition and move learners more quickly than standardized academic time frames to credentials based on industry-confirmed competency requirements

Contextualized Learning: the ability to apply classroom instruction through hands-on experience in the workplace

Education Provider: an organization of higher learning that awards postsecondary credentials including public and private, not-for-profit and for-profit, community and technical colleges and four-year colleges and universities

Emerging Leader: workers who, with skills acquisition, possess the talent to rise from entry-level to managerial positions

Entry-Level Employee: point of employment entrance varies across industries; for many sectors, employees enter with minimum skills and usually as hourly workers

Learn and Earn: partnerships between business and education providers that bridge the skills gap for employers while encouraging and supporting current and future employee's attainment of postsecondary credentials with labor market value

Lifelong Learning: the continuous building of skills and knowledge throughout the life of an individual

Open Source Learning: education and learning offerings that are free to all users; delivered online, they hold great potential for education equity

Postsecondary Credential: bachelor's degree, associate degree, trade certificate, or other competency attainment validation beyond a high school credential

Prior Learning Assessments: attainment of academic credit for experience and knowledge gained outside a classroom

Programs of Study: align education classes and curricula to help working students attain industry-recognized credentials that earn "stackable" college credit toward a postsecondary degree

Stackable Credentials: industry-recognized credentials obtained within a clearly defined program of study that link and build upon each other to the attainment of an academic degree²⁵

Talent Desert: situations where employers are challenged by limited access to the skilled talent needed to grow healthy and vibrant companies and needed to contribute to a robust economy

Working Learner: individuals who are both working and attending school

²⁵ Center for Energy Workforce Development and Council for Adult Experiential Learning. *Get Into Energy*.

Appendix B: Learn and Earn Employer References

Company	Program / Partnership	Description	Pages Referenced
AOL	Year Up / Northern Virginia Community College	Year Up, a nonprofit, provides guaranteed successful intern matches to AOL at a fixed price, offering a cost-competitive opportunity to explore entry-level talent on a risk-free trial basis, while the interns earn college credit.	6, 13, 18, 21, 22, 29
Applied Scientific Instrumentation	Cooperative Education Program / Lane Community College	Offering relevant work experiences to students within a community college cooperative education program provides a small technology firm with the opportunity to "hand pick" a successful team and decrease recruitment costs.	6, 21, 22, 28, 29
AREVA	Employee Training Program / Central Virginia Community College	AREVA, in partnership with Central Virginia Community College, hires high school graduates and provides them with the opportunity to earn an associate degree, creating a pipeline of skilled and educated workers and ensuring AREVA is an employer of choice in the central Virginia region.	6, 12, 15, 17, 21, 27, 29
Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation	Manufacturing Skills Standard Council: Certified Production Technician / Education Providers in Illinois	Investments in training that lead to an industry-endorsed, postsecondary skills certification produce a 23 percent increase in performance indicators and a 31 percent productivity gain.	6, 10-11, 17, 21, 29
Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC	eChild Development Associate (eCDA) Program / Nationwide Network for Public and Private Universities	Bright Horizons' online training program helps its teachers acquire their Child Development Associate credential, professionalizing the field of early education and achieving greater center accreditation, the industry standard of excellence.	6, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 25, 27, 29
Convergys	Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate – P3CM / Bellevue University	Partnering with Bellevue University, a responsive, flexible education provider, Convergys has improved its management succession bench by 25 percent with little initial investment.	6, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 27, 29
Crest Cadillac	Automotive Service Education Program / Brookhaven College	Automotive training program leads to postsecondary credentials, increasing technician efficiency and dealership retention rates.	6, 21, 24-25, 29
CVS Caremark	Public and Private Partnership Programs	By partnering with public workforce systems to source and train job candidates, and by tapping Work Opportunity Tax Credits, CVS Caremark generates significant returns relative to costs.	6, 17, 21, 29
Expeditors	Opportunity Knocks	Vision, leadership and passion for developing young, raw talent changes individual lives, grows future talent, impacts an organization and benefits this global logistics company.	6, 13, 19-20, 21, 29
Georgia Power	Electrical Lineworker Bootcamp / Technical College System of Georgia	Developed in partnership with Technical College System of Georgia, the Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate increases the quality of applicant pool and decreases hiring costs for Georgia Power.	6, 11, 21, 29

Company	Program / Partnership	Description	Pages Referenced
Health Careers Collaborative	Health Careers Collaborative / Cincinnati State Technical and Community College	Employer-led consortium collaborates to increase the skills and education level of entry-level workers, creating a shared talent pool and setting best-practice business standards.	6, 15, 17, 21, 29
IBM	Latino STEM Support Network Early Alert System / Queensborough Community College	To grow the future STEM workforce, IBM partners with Queensborough Community College to create an early warning system to identify Latino students at risk of dropping out.	6, 13, 18, 21, 29, 33
KPMG LLP	Future Diversity Leaders / Historically Black Colleges and Universities	Through close partnership with postsecondary institutions and by providing internships, tuition support and mentors, KPMG can hire more diverse, better skilled and ready workers.	6, 13, 21, 26, 29
McDonald's	Hamburger University / University College Alliance	Committed to being the world's "best talent developer," McDonald's obtains college credit recommendations through the American Council on Education CREDIT® review process for its corporate training through its innovative Hamburger University.	6, 17, 21, 25, 29, 33
Millstone Power Station	Nuclear Engineering Technology Program / Three Rivers Community College	Nuclear power station's investment in its future workforce delivers increased retention rates and a solid return on investment for future on-the-job training and licensure.	6, 15, 21, 24, 27, 29
Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding	The Apprentice School / Thomas Nelson Community College & Tidewater Community College	More than 2,700 current employees of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding are graduates of The Apprentice School, which provides a reliable source of skilled talent and future leaders in shipbuilding and repair. Some 240 serve in leadership jobs-- including 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers. ¹⁸	6, 21, 27, 29
Pacific Gas and Electric	PowerPathway™ / Community Colleges	Time-to-productivity gained through PG&E's PowerPathway™ program—a collaboration between business, the public workforce system and higher education—creates a skilled, "ready now" and diverse pool of talent with a return on investment of over 3-to-1.	7, 8-9, 17, 21, 29
Toyota	Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative / Kentucky Community and Technical College System	Toyota lends leadership to community college – industry partnership, AMTEC (a National Science Foundation grantee), in order to scale advanced manufacturing technician offerings for industry and to assure education and learning outcomes are consistent across multiple education providers.	7, 21, 29, 30-31
UPS	Metropolitan College / Jefferson Community and Technical College & University of Louisville	Workforce turnover rate decreases from 70 percent to less than 20 percent among part-time, overnight employees participating in Metropolitan College partnership.	7, 21, 28, 29
Verizon Wireless	LearningLINK / Education Provider Network	The program reduces turnover by 50 to 60 percent, while 55 percent of participants in LearningLINK program said tuition assistance program influenced their employment decision.	7, 10, 13, 17, 20, 21, 25, 27, 29
Walmart	Lifelong Learning Program / American Public University	Partnering with online higher education provider American Public University, Walmart builds an educated and skilled pipeline while offering entry-level workers the opportunity to earn college credits for prior and on-the-job training and to continue postsecondary education.	7, 17, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 29
Western Association of Food Chains	Retail Management Certificate Program / Community College Partners	The Retail Food Industry Association creates a competency-based certification in partnership with community colleges that establish career pathways and develop emerging leaders.	7, 13, 15, 17, 21, 29

26 The Apprentice School was founded and operated originally by Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company in Newport News, Virginia. It was then purchased by Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding and most recently sold to Huntington Ingalls Industry who is still running the school.

Appendix C: Learn and Earn Micro-Business Case Series

AOL



Business Outcomes

- Successful entry-level recruitment strategy
- Reinforce diversity strategy
- Pipeline of vetted skilled talent source
- Risk-free talent exploration

Student/Employee Impact

- Gain corporate experience
- Earn college credit and stipend

Year Up™

- Corporate internship
- Technical training
- Career entry opportunity
- Nearly 2000 participants
- 29% of graduates enrolled in postsecondary education

Diverse and Productive Entry-Level Talent Accessed at Competitive Cost AOL and Year Up™

The Year Up Organization provides guaranteed successful intern match to the company at a fixed-price, offering cost competitive opportunity to explore entry-level talent on a risk-free trial basis.

Celebrating their 25th anniversary this year (2010), AOL, like so many corporations in the current economic climate, has experienced contraction in the past two years. However, it remains a leading global web services company, including a network of premium and niche content sites, and an extensive offering of world-class tools and platforms. With the imperative to provide innovative products and valuable services to multiple customer lines, AOL looks for skilled talent to join their workforce of over 5,000—particularly among technically savvy youth. Since partnering with the outside organization, Year Up, AOL has been able to draw from a pool of vetted, enthusiastic, trained, and diverse young people who come to them first as interns.

High-Tech Companies Need Technically Skilled Talent Pool

One of the difficult challenges for many employers is finding skilled entry-level talent. According to AOL Senior Technical Director, Todd Alston, they “go through quite a few candidates before finding young people with applicable abilities and the will to succeed.” Since 2007, AOL has partnered with Year Up and the new Chief Technology Officer, Alex Gounares, is the executive sponsor for the engagement. AOL has recognized the opportunity to access a pipeline of future talent.

AOL contracts for a fee with Year Up annually for a specific number of interns based on organizational needs. When the young people show up for their six-month internship they have already completed six-months of rigorous classroom training that includes essential technical skills needed to meet basic skill requirements of AOL. They step into entry-level positions with the expectation that further internal training will quickly make them productive, contributing members of a

technology team in areas such as IT, network operations, desktop support, or operations analysis. AOL supervisors find Year Up interns to be “smart people who want to work,” and they vie for incoming candidates.

PERSONAL STORY

At 23 Colby Reece was working a dead-end retail job, having withdrawn from Morgan State College after two years. The pressures of both work and school were too much. When he heard that Year Up offered the opportunity to earn college credits and gain a corporate internship while receiving training and a stipend, he applied and was accepted into the program in northern Virginia. After six months of classroom instruction with Year Up, Colby was matched with AOL. At the end of his internship, Colby was offered a full-time entry-level position with the AOL Search Engine Optimization (SEO) team. With AOL for nearly two years, he credits Year Up with instilling in him the professionalism required to “get in the game,” and, he is thankful to AOL for continuous mentoring and training. Colby is now back in college at Northern Virginia Community College, with the intent of earning a bachelor’s degree, made possible by the flexible work schedule and living wage at AOL.

Leveraging the Investment

Once interns are on board, AOL makes strategic investments in these young people that mirror the Year Up experiences of, “High Support, High Expectation.” AOL created the “Year Up Success Program” that taps managers to provide interns with a range of developmental experiences along three well-defined pillars: mentoring, training, and consistent feedback.

Contact Peggy Walton with Corporate Voices to learn more about this learn and earn program or join the “Learn & Earn” Business Leadership Team at 202-467-8137 or pwalton@corporatevoices.org

The internship period allows AOL to observe both the hard and soft skills of the interns and to determine if there is a good fit within the organization. AOL considers the per intern fee of approximately \$21,000 to Year Up a fixed price, cost-competitive training and entry level talent exploration.

At the end of the internship period, interns who prove to be a good match for available openings are offered entry-level positions with annual salaries beginning at \$35,000. As regular, full-time employees, the young people gain access to AOL's online training portal, AOL University, which provides instructor-led training and thousands of learning resources, and to AOL's tuition assistance program to support completion of postsecondary credentials.

AOL has extended the Year Up partnership to their New York City office and are currently fielding inquiries from their Mountain View, CA office.

■ A Partnership that Serves Multiple Constituencies

In the partnership with Year Up, AOL has found a diverse pool of skilled and highly-motivated young people, who are proving to be a source of vetted, entry-level workers. This comes at no risk beyond the one-time fee as Year Up "guarantees" employers a successful intern match. Year Up maintains close communications with AOL. Early on AOL noted that interns needed basic skills in LINUX systems and Year Up quickly integrated the LINUX training into the curriculum. To date, AOL has converted many interns to full-time employees and plans to continue that practice.

During the first six months of rigorous classroom training at Year Up, National Capital Region, interns are co-enrolled at Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), earning 18 hours of college credits. Interns also earn a weekly stipend to off-set living expenses during the entire year. Considering that most

interns come from difficult life situations, the majority make the most of their Year Up to develop the skills and connections needed to embark on a path to economic self-sufficiency.

"Students come in with some technical skills and a proven desire to succeed. These are sharp students that we can train [further]."

— Todd Alston
Senior Technical Director
AOL

■ Partners

Year Up is a one-year, intensive training program that provides urban young adults 18-24, with a unique combination of technical and professional skills, college credits, an educational stipend and corporate internship. Year Up operates in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, National Capital Region, New York City, Providence, and the San Francisco Bay area. They partner with a post secondary institution to award 18 college credits to interns for work accomplished during the six-month classroom training period. In the National Capital Region, Year Up partners with **NVCC** and **The Community College of Baltimore County** to create an on-campus learning experience for interns. Nearly 2000 young adults have completed the Year Up experience with 85% obtaining a job earning \$30,000/ year within four months of completing the program. Approximately 29% of Year Up graduates are enrolled in post secondary institutions.

For more information about Year Up, visit www.yearup.org

For more information about Northern Virginia Community College, visit www.nvcc.edu

For more information about The Community College of Baltimore County, visit www.ccbcmd.edu

For more information about AOL, visit www.aol.com

SECTOR: Global web service provider

EMPLOYEES: 4,500+

HISTORY: 25+ years

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Northrop Grumman
- Expeditors
- Yum Brands, Inc.
- Accenture
- Marriott International
- UPS

Applied Scientific Instrumentation



Small, High-Tech Company Finds Talent Source at Community College

Applied Scientific Instrumentation

Offering relevant work experiences to students within a community college cooperative education program provides a small technology firm the opportunity to “hand pick” a successful team and decrease recruitment costs.

At Applied Scientific Instrumentation (ASI) the operating motto is “We Create Solutions.” The small, high-tech firm of 22 full-time employees, and annual sales of \$8-10 million, specializes in creating both the imaging hardware and the electronic, automated systems required for complex biological experiments. Because much of their product line serves the neuroscience research community, ASI maintains high standards for the caliber of employee it seeks to join its staff of engineers and technicians.

According to John Zemek, Founder and Executive Director of ASI, the nature of the work within the company requires employees with multiple skills including the abilities to analyze and solve problems and to work independently. It also requires the specialized technical competencies needed in mechatronics, which includes mechanical and electronic engineering in addition to software, systems design, and control engineering. Through a strong cooperative education partnership with Lane Community College (LCC) in Eugene, Oregon, where ASI is located, the company has secured a reliable source of talent to meet its skilled workforce needs.

Co-op Internships Provide Value

When Zemek established ASI in 1990, he was thoroughly knowledgeable of the LCC cooperative (co-op) education program, having completed an associate degree at LCC and returned as an instructor in the Electronic Technology Division after earning a B.S. in both management and finance from the University of Oregon. Knowing the rigor and relevance of the LCC co-op program,

Zemek naturally tapped the LCC interns as new incoming talent to grow his high-tech company. In the ensuing years, ASI has provided internships to 55 students and, in 2007, received the LCC Cooperative Education Employer of the Year Award.

The co-op program at LCC, in existence since 1970, is the largest program west of the

PERSONAL STORY

When the plywood mill where he had worked since high school closed, Cliff Turpin decided to go back to school in 1998 at age 48. Although he had never been unemployed, Cliff had no computer skills and the thought of getting through the writing classes was daunting. Taking advantage of a U.S. Department of Labor retraining opportunity for trade agreement impacted sectors following NAFTA, Cliff enrolled in the Electronic Engineering program at Lane Community College (LCC). With the supports offered through LCC and by ASI, he graduated two and a half years later with a 3.89 grade point average, an Associate Degree in Electronic Engineering and an offer of full-time employment from ASI, at which he had completed his co-op assignments.

Employed since June 2000 with ASI, Cliff has worked his way around the growing firm and currently purchases parts and supervises assembly as well as the LCC co-op intern program. According to Cliff, “Wages are good and the company provides benefits and bonuses.”

Business Outcomes

- 70 percent of full-time employees recruited
- High-performance talent sourced
- Decreased recruitment costs
- High quality customer support and satisfaction

Student Impact

- College credit earned
- Relevant work experience gained
- 65 percent of LCC co-op interns employed full time

Lane Community College Cooperative Education Program

- Work experience earning college credit
- 92,584 students served
- Over 7,500 regional businesses served
- Cover worker's compensation expenses when necessary

Mississippi with over 2,000 co-op students integrating on-the-job, work experience with academic studies. Students earn college credits while working full- or part-time in positions related to their career and academic goals, gaining relevant work experience and opportunities to apply classroom instruction. LCC provides a direct faculty coordinator with industry knowledge to each employer in order to assure that appropriate student matches are made, to develop measurable learning objectives for the placement period, to assess work progress, and to determine grade assignment based on employer evaluation. The LCC co-op program serves over 800 local employers per year and has engaged over 7,500 employers since its inception. With over sixty-five percent of all LCC co-op students retained by employers as permanent employees after graduation, the program funnels qualified employees to regional businesses.

Hand-picking Talent Benefits Small Business

For a small business with the need for a highly-skilled, technical workforce that operates in teams, Zemek sees the advantage of being able to evaluate an individual over the three month period that constitutes the college semester. He observes not only skills and technical abilities but also the way in which the student interacts with other employees and fits into the team and culture of ASI. The process has enabled the company to “hand pick a winning team.” ASI maintains that this successful partnership with LCC’s co-op program accounts for the fact that 70 percent of its 22 full-time employees are graduates, or have been students at LCC. Although ASI invests a great deal of time to develop meaningful work experiences and to provide oversight and mentoring for its student interns, much of those costs are recouped in decreased staff recruiting expenses.

According to Zemek, supporting the cooperative education program has been both a socially responsible thing for ASI and a very sound business decision. The growth of the

business and the high quality of customer support and satisfaction are all linked directly to ASI’s employees. Understanding this business imperative for skilled and educated employees further upholds the company’s commitment to continuing education. In addition to offering average salaries of more than \$50,000, profit sharing and other benefits, ASI provides tuition assistance to full- and part-time employees in order to encourage higher education achievement.

“The co-operative education program at LCC is a two-way street. Not only do the students get real world work experience, but the employer also gets a chance to evaluate a potential employee.”

- John Zemek

Founder and Executive Director
Applied Scientific Instrumentation

Co-op Education Programs Exemplify Learn and Earn

In some cases, cooperative education work placements are paid by employers, generating income that is often critically needed by community college students. However, the current economic climate creates challenges to this practice, particularly for small businesses.

According to Andrea Newton, Executive Dean, Career and Technical Education, LCC, ninety percent of Oregon employers are small businesses. Currently, the college finds it difficult to have employers pay student interns when they have recently laid-off employees. When students are not paid, LCC covers worker’s compensation expenses for their time on the work site, thereby alleviating that burden for employers. Although there is no promise of a job, with over sixty-five percent of LCC co-op students employed through a co-op placement, the program provides a substantial Learn and Earn pathway.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- PG&E
- Walmart
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

For more information about ASI, please visit www.asiimaging.com.

For more information about LCC, please visit www.lanecc.edu/cooped/.

ANNUAL SALES: \$8 to \$10 million

SIZE: 22 full-time employees

LOCATION: Oregon

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

AREVA



Nuclear Energy Supplier Creates Critical Talent Pipeline

AREVA

AREVA, in partnership with Central Virginia Community College, hires high school graduates and provides them the opportunity to earn an associate degree, creating a pipeline of skilled and educated workers and ensuring AREVA is an employer of choice in the central Virginia region.

AREVA is a global company whose U.S. branch provides services, fuel, and engineering support to nuclear plants worldwide. Its more than 5,000 U.S. and Canadian employees work every day to make AREVA a responsible industrial player helping to supply ever cleaner, safer and more economical energy to the greatest number of people. The company requires a workforce that is educated and continuously trained to meet the demands of the nuclear industry at a time when the older generations of seasoned workers are retiring. One of AREVA's plants in central Virginia recognized a gap between the skills it was seeking in its entry-level workers and the candidates it received through general recruitment strategies. Simultaneously, AREVA wanted to contribute to the growth of the regional economy by recruiting and hiring locally and by expanding local students' interest in the nuclear field. Partnering with Central Virginia Community College (CVCC), it developed the Employee Training Program (ETP), which provides AREVA with a customized recruitment and training solution creating a pipeline of skilled and educated workers, boosting the local economy and ensuring that AREVA is an employer of choice in the local workforce.

AREVA and undergo an extensive interview process. On average, AREVA hires eight full time employees into the ETP twice a

Business Outcomes

- Create talent pipeline of skilled and educated workers
- Flexible strategic partnership grounded in accountability
- Successful entry-level recruitment model
- Recognized employer of choice within region

Employee/Student Outcomes

- Paid tuition and books for associate degree
- Paid work experience
- Full benefits, including health care
- Earn academic credits through on-the-job training

Employee Training Program

- Partnership with Central Virginia Community College
- Earn while learning model
- Tuition assistance and paid work time
- 144 hired and 76 graduated ETP

PERSONAL STORY

John Hoffmeister, the son of a career Marine, learned a strong work ethic early in his life, and started in the workforce when he was just 15 years old. While employed at a local cable company in central Virginia, a friend told him about AREVA and the Employee Training Program (ETP). He was intrigued at the possibility of being able to complete his postsecondary degree while earning a wage in a highly competitive industry. He had previously taken a few classes at a local community college but never finished due to time and financial constraints. John applied and was accepted into the ETP. John said, "six months into the program, I was standing on top of a nuclear reactor in Florida, assisting highly trained coworkers complete a high profile task. It was a big life change in a short amount of time." John applauds the support he received from his managers as well as the senior executives at AREVA, who supported his need to study to receive his associate degree. John graduated from ETP in 2007 and currently serves as a Metrology Services Technician. John looks forward to progressing at AREVA and hopes to pursue a bachelor's degree. "Since graduation, my career has led me on a path that includes international travel, an exciting work environment, and the opportunity for growth in a stable, expanding and environmentally friendly industry," summarized John.

■ Growing the Local Nuclear Workforce

AREVA, demonstrating its commitment to the local workforce, identifies, recruits, and hires high school graduates and those currently in the workforce to join its company as full time employees, providing them salaries with earned increases and other benefits, such as health insurance. Prospective employees and ETP candidates apply online to work at

year. For typical ETP participants, it takes two and a half to three years to complete the program and graduate with an Associate Degree in Nuclear Support Technologies in one of several focus areas, including robotics, repair technology (machining, welding), non-destructive testing, radiation protection or quality assurance, while working.

AREVA, in order to support ETP participants, provides pre-paid tuition for the associate degree, along with the cost of books. During the summer and winter, participants take accelerated learning classes at CVCC, earning up to 10 academic credits for five weeks of classes. AREVA places these participants in the field at nuclear sites in the spring and fall, allowing them to earn up to six academic credits for the fieldwork. Additionally, participants earn 12 academic credits for AREVA-based technical on-the-job training taught directly by company trainers. In order to meet AREVA's business needs, CVCC is extremely flexible, and offers classes during academic off time - in the summer and winter. The entire curriculum for the ETP is developed jointly by AREVA and CVCC, and in response directly to the current needs of the company.

Strengthening Local Economy Through Partnership

When AREVA partnered with CVCC to establish and found the ETP in 2003, it was part of a one million dollar contribution to CVCC's Major Gifts Campaign. AREVA invested in the campaign to ensure that it remained a national leader in the nuclear technologies program through the construction and outfitting of CVCC's new Manufacturing Technology Building. Three elements comprised the investment:

- a yearly cash contribution;
- a contribution consisting of an adjustment to the current tuition paid through the ETP; and
- and a contribution of tools and equipment for the new Manufacturing Technology Building.

In addition to the partnership with CVCC, AREVA is committed to growing the central Virginia workforce by broader participation in programs throughout the local education system. Specifically, AREVA works with local high schools supporting career exploration, summer apprenticeship programs for high school upperclassmen, and the development of a high school curriculum around nuclear programs. AREVA's strategic partnerships with CVCC and through local high schools strengthens the local economy by providing students with information that encourages them to grow into regionally based careers and by providing a means of attaining the skills needed to be successful.

"The AREVA/CVCC Employee Training Program not only filled a significant gap we had starting in 2002 for finding new entry-level talent but it also provided us an unexpected benefit of a deep pool of new field leaders."

- George Beam, Senior Vice President,
Installed Base Business Unit
AREVA

Meeting a Business Need

Since the beginning of the ETP and the partnership with CVCC, 144 workers have been hired into the program and 27 are currently enrolled. To date, 76 have graduated from the program. AREVA's managers strive to recruit the ETP participants and graduates due to their outstanding reputations for knowledge and field experience. While still completing the program, many ETP participants are immediately put in task lead positions, thereby, increasing their competency and skills level quicker than off-the-street hires. The partnership with CVCC directly addresses AREVA's business need to recruit qualified and skilled employees, and ensure that AREVA is an employer of choice in central Virginia, while providing the local workforce with economic and career opportunities in the nuclear industry.

For more information about AREVA, please visit www.aveva.com.

For more information about CVCC and ETP, please visit www.cv.cc.va.us.

REVENUE: In 2010, 9.1 billion globally

EMPLOYEES: 5,000 in U.S. and Canada, 48,000 globally

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

**LEARN & EARN
MICRO-BUSINESS CASE**

**Bison Gear &
Engineering Corporation**



Business Outcomes

- 23 % gain in performance measures
- 31 % gain in productivity
- Competency clarification
- Employee skills development

Employee Impact

- 10 earned credential with labor market value
- 64 employees continuing education/training

**Manufacturing Skills
Standard Council: Certified
Production Technician**

- Manufacturing Technician Career and Education Pathways
- Foundation to continuing education

Performance Indicators and Productivity Improve with Training

Bison Gear & Engineering Corporation

Investments in training that lead to an industry-endorsed, post-secondary skills certification produces 23 percent increase in performance indicators and 31 percent productivity gain.

Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation, celebrating its 50 year anniversary in 2010, designs and manufactures fractional horsepower electric motors, gearmotors and gear reducers used in industrial and commercial OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturers) applications worldwide. Bison Gear's sales volume has more than quadrupled in the past 20 years. As chairman of Bison, Ron Bullock has expanded the company's overall product line and established a research and development center. Specializing in custom gearmotor solutions, Bison Gear currently supplies power transmission equipment to the global marketplace and its products are used on all seven continents.

With an unwavering commitment to the manufacturing value of continuous improvement, Bison Gear has invested consistently in employee education and training founded in the understanding that "smarter people make the organization better."

Customized Training Develops Manufacturing Talent

Located just outside Chicago in St. Charles, Illinois, Bison Gear taps regional community colleges to deliver customized, contract training primarily for its technical workforce. With over 30 engineers and approximately 143 shop personnel, the training needs at Bison run a gamut from soft skills training and English as a Second Language to the more technical requirements of blueprint reading, 5S and safety. Bison partners with Elgin Community College, College of DuPage, and Waubesa Community College to provide continuing education for its workforce and regularly brings in Elgin Community College to deliver

various trainings fundamental to lean manufacturing practices.

PERSONAL STORY

Just out of high school, Monte Wade was working in a pizza place when he applied to Bison Gear. He passed the company's assessment of applied math, and was hired on the paint line in 2004. In the years since, he has moved up in both responsibility and income. Encouraged by his parents and grandparents to go to college, Monte "just pushed it off." Now, newly wed and a home owner, he has committed to continuing his education with the encouragement of his wife and employer. Monte is taking Bison Gear up on its policy to pay all expenses for employees seeking the MSSC Certified Production Technician certification. He has passed two of the four courses, earning a \$100 bonus with each. Using the tuition assistance program at Bison, he is also completing courses at College of DuPage (IL). While building motors on the line, Monte determined to become the person creating the blueprints from which he worked. The Bison Gear education support policies are empowering his commitment.

Credential Clarifies Competencies

Working in alignment with the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)-Endorsed Skills Certification System, Bison Gear prefers to hire new, entry-level workers

who have earned the ACT National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC) because the credential gives the company a clear picture of the applicant’s work readiness. The NCRC is a three-part foundational skill assessment in: 1) Reading for Information; 2) Applied Mathematics; and 3) Locating Information. At a minimum, the company requires applicants to pass the Applied Math portion of the NCRC as a pre-employment qualifier. Applicants are encouraged to go to regional community colleges that offer WorkKeys® to improve skills in order to pass the NCRC.

The next step in the certification system is the Manufacturing Skills Standard Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT) certification. Bison Gear has long had a policy of supporting continuing education and training, offering its employees up to \$7,500 assistance for tuition and books for studies that align with company business objectives. However, in December 2008, they ramped up a program encouraging shop employees to complete the MSSC CPT certification. Bison pays 100 percent of the cost for on-line studies and examinations for the CPT. Employees execute on their own time and Bison pays a \$100 bonus when they earn each certificate of the 4-part certification. Sixty-four employees are participating in the MSSC training; 10 have completed and received the MSSC certification to date.

Production and Performance Measures Stabilize and Trend Upward

To determine return on investment in the training program, management has tracked two key performance measures to the MSSC launch—productivity and the “Bison Pride” rating—a compilation three of metrics that management has determined is key in measuring great performance for its customers: on-time shipment rate; how often the company says yes to customers requested delivery date; and, in-field warranty return rate to assess product reliability.

The “Pride rating” was trending down from 1/08 to the point of the MSSC training launch in 12/08. It quickly bumped from 62% to 90% by 02/09 and has currently level off at a consistent 85% , a gain of 23%. Productivity increased by 31% from launch to the current level. The productivity response to training has been a “lagging” indicator, but is showing signs of continuing upward movement. Given that other factors impact these numbers, it is clear that the training intervention is successful in stabilizing and creating an upward trend in productivity and performance indicators that were previously unpredictable and trending down, creating a significant contribution in these economic times.

“Elgin Community College is flexible and responsive to our needs, delivering cost-effective training in house on our production floor.”

— Sylvia Wetzel,
Chief Learning Officer, Bison Gears

Through the MSSC and other education and training programs, Bison Gear has established a corporate culture that values learning with over a third of its employees involved in some type of continuing education or training. Bison has 32 Greenbelts within the organization, and cultivates a Lean Six Sigma Culture, focusing on continuous improvements, by understanding the customers’ needs, analyzing business process and instituting proper measurement methods. Their average on the job training hours per employee in the last three years is 11 hours. Bison’s G.E.A.R. (Growth Education and Results) Program provides employees the opportunity to further their post secondary education. Currently taking advantage of their tuition assistance policy are six employees who are attending one of the regional community colleges to obtain an associate’s degree, while six others have moved from an associate’s to a bachelor’s degree and several engineers are pursuing master’s degrees.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Expeditors
- UPS
- Northrop Grumman
- KPMG
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

For more information about Bison Gear and Engineering Corporation, visit www.bisongear.com

SECTOR: Manufacturing (engineering and design)

EMPLOYEES: 220 employees serving global market

HISTORY: over 50 years

**LEARN & EARN
MICRO-BUSINESS CASE**

**Bright Horizons Family
Solutions LLC**



Business Outcomes

- Meet industry excellence benchmark
- Credentialed professional workforce
- Increase quality of care provided
- Contributes to lower turnover rate
- High quality child care centers

Employee Outcomes

- 5% increase in salary upon completion
- Professional development opportunity
- Flexible online delivery model
- Credit hours translated into associate degree at numerous postsecondary institutions

eCDA Program

- Online program to prepare employees to gain the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential
- 1,200 completed the program
- 600-700 candidates involved currently



Online Education Program Helps Meet Industry Excellence Benchmark Through Credentialing **Bright Horizons Family Solutions LLC**

Bright Horizons provides a blended e-training program to help teachers acquire their Child Development Associate credential, professionalizing the field of early education and achieving greater center accreditation, the industry standard of excellence.

Founded in 1986, Bright Horizons Family Solution LLC (Bright Horizons) is the world's leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education and work/life solutions. Conducting business in the United States, Europe, India and Canada, Bright Horizons has created employer-sponsored child care and early education programs for more than 700 clients, including more than 90 of the Fortune 500. Consistently named as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" by FORTUNE magazine, it manages child care centers for many of the world's leading corporations, hospitals, universities and government agencies. Bright Horizons is committed to meeting the industry standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a professional organization that promotes excellence in early childhood education.

In order for a Bright Horizons' child care center to be accredited through NAEYC, 75 percent of the teachers employed there must have been awarded the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or be working toward or possess an associate or bachelor's degree. The CDA credential is a critical first step on the career pathway and the professional development of early childhood teachers. Partnering with Teaching Strategies, Inc., an educational publishing company, Bright Horizons developed its own eCDA Program, which provides a high-tech, e-learning venue for its teachers to prepare to obtain the credential. Through the development and implementation of eCDA, Bright Horizons is able to aid the child care centers in meeting the requirements of NAEYC, increase the quality of early child care services provided at its centers, meet the demands of its highly educated and savvy consumers, and help its teachers earn a

stackable entry-level postsecondary education credential and professionalize its workforce.

Developing & Administering an Online Solution

When considering how best to incent and encourage its child care teachers to obtain the CDA credential, Bright Horizons knew that

PERSONAL STORY

In 2007, Martha Echevarria's child care center director asked if she was interested in joining the first cohort of Bright Horizons' eCDA (Child Development Associate) training program. Martha said yes because she had enrolled in college-level classes before but found it difficult to balance the demands of work and school. She thrived in the program utilizing the flexibility of online learning and the curriculum, which encouraged her to practice what she had learned within the workplace. Martha said, "The eCDA program gave me the confidence to be able to answer questions from other staff. I became the 'go-to' staff member." In 2008, she graduated from the eCDA program, received her credential, and has since been promoted twice. Martha recently earned her associate degree from Northampton Community College and reaped the benefits of utilizing a Bright Horizons education partner that includes reduced tuition, credits earned toward her degree, and tuition assistance. Now an assistant director of a child care center in New Jersey, Martha is working towards a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Administration and wants to become a center director.

Contact Peggy Walton with Corporate Voices to learn more about this learn and earn program or join the "Learn & Earn" Business Leadership Team at 202-467-8137 or pwalton@corporatevoices.org

the solution needed to fit into the work and life demands of its working learners. Bright Horizons invested in the development of the eCDA, an online and interactive program, which allows child care teachers to learn at a flexible pace and as their schedules allow. Bright Horizons incents its employees to obtain the credential by rewarding a 5 percent increase in salary upon completion, in addition to regular annual pay increases.

To administer the eCDA, candidates are grouped into cohorts of 20 and guided through the 13 modules by a facilitator employed by Bright Horizons. Five full-time facilitators handle a case load of approximately 125 candidates each at any given time. On average, the 600 -700 candidates in the program take approximately 13 months to complete the online training. Candidates are required to participate in monthly calls as a cohort with their facilitator, in at least one individual call with their facilitator per month, and in an online blog where they are required to interact and report their progress. Bright Horizons covers all costs associated with the eCDA Program, with the small exception of the introductory materials from the CDA Council.

■ Building on a Stackable Credential

Once a child care teacher has received the CDA credential, Bright Horizons offers support services to encourage and to focus the employee on continuing postsecondary education. Bright Horizons provides tuition reimbursement, up to 75 percent of tuition costs per academic year, to full-time or part-time employees working more than 20 hours per week, and who have been employed for more than six months. Bright Horizons has formed a nationwide provider network of private and public universities that provide discounted tuition costs and recognize the CDA credential which translates into academic credit hours earned. Through a partnership with Northampton Community College (NCC) in Pennsylvania, Bright Horizons' employees can enroll in the college's online associate degree program,

take advantage of in-state tuition regardless of their location, and receive a discounted tuition rate. NCC also recognizes the CDA credential and honors 9 academic credit hours toward the associate degree. To date, a small percentage of students move from the CDA credential completion to further postsecondary education; however, the numbers are increasing and Bright Horizons continues to support and facilitate this progression.

“We are proud to provide our employees with the tools and knowledge they need to obtain an industry credential. Our investment in eCDA helps assure the highest quality child care for our clients.”

- David Lissy

Chief Executive Officer

Bright Horizons Family Solutions

■ Meeting Industry Standards

Bright Horizons upholds and builds high quality child care centers with professional teachers credentialed to provide the best care and education possible as a result, in part, of the eCDA program. More than 1,200 staff have completed the training and over 1,050 credentials have been awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition since the program's inception in 2006. Center directors report positive employee behavior changes and seek out those who have completed the eCDA program and received the credential. Although the average turnover rate across the child care industry is 50 percent, Bright Horizons' turnover rate averages between 20-25 percent. The company recognizes the eCDA professional development opportunity as one contributing factor to the reduced turnover rate. As a result of the eCDA and Bright Horizons' investment in talent development, this pioneering company receives a credentialed professional workforce that delivers high-quality care and meets the demands of savvy consumers, while aiding child care centers in their goals to meet or maintain NAEYC accreditation.

For more information on Bright Horizons, please visit www.brighthorizons.com

FOUNDED: in 1986

LOCATION: United States, Europe, Canada and India

EMPLOYEES: 18,000

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

Convergys



Business Outcomes

- Improved management succession bench by 25%
- Cost neutral customized education program
- Developed student pipeline of 350+ potential learners

Employee Impact

- 83 employees gaining meaningful skills and competencies and earning college credits

Professional Customer Care Center Management Certificate--P3CM

- Collaboratively developed using industry subject matter experts
- Budget neutral business impact with measurement and analysis
- Productivity sensitive – off hours/opt-in
- Encourages online peer network

Cost Neutral Customized Education Grows Middle Manager Pipeline

Convergys

Partnering with a responsive, flexible education provider, Bellevue University, Convergys has improved its management succession bench by 25 percent with little initial investment.

Convergys is a global leader in relationship management serving half of the top 50 Fortune 500 companies. With nearly 65,000 employees (24,000 located in the U. S.), and annual revenues of \$2.1B, Convergys has been named a Fortune Most Admired Company for nine consecutive years. The company commits to improving business performance for their clients through innovative technologies and excellent management of their clients' relationships with their customers. With over two million interactions everyday, the success of Convergys as a "people business" is dependent on employees with consistent technical and customer relations skills. When Convergys needed a customized industry specific program to develop middle managers in their customer care operations, they turned to Bellevue University for support of their working learners.

Custom-designed Curriculum Created in Collaboration

There is a challenging dichotomy at the center of Convergys' talent development strategy. While 80 percent of the company's current managers have been promoted from within, Convergys deals with an industry turnover rate of 85 percent among customer care center agents. The company's goal is to retain top talent and to help those top performers grow professionally into the next cadre of managers. Convergys needed a plan to develop people within current cost constraints-- a challenge under the best conditions. Convergys was further challenged with a domestic workforce of 24,000 that is spread throughout the nation— with at least 2,000 home based agents. Their goal was to first create an education-based career development opportunity and, then, to recruit representation into the program from

each customer contact center based on the projected management talent needs at each location. After looking at four other educational institutions, Convergys partnered with Bellevue University, a private not-for-profit university founded in 1966 in Bellevue, Nebraska to serve adult learners at a local Air Force Base. [www.corporatelearning.com]

PERSONAL STORY

Marie Duque, a wife and mother of four, joined Convergys four years ago as an Agent, moved up to Team Leader, and aspires to become an Operations Manager. With support of the company scholarship, she enrolled in P3CM courses, entering without prior college credit. She finds the online delivery fits into her working mom schedule, doing her assignments while her children complete their homework. She says, "The program connects my studies to my real work, allowing me to grow and become more valuable to the company."

One "critical factor" for Convergys' leadership choosing Bellevue was the University's willingness to bear the cost of custom-designed curriculum development. With Convergys contributing 360 hours of subject matter experts' (SME) time, Bellevue University moved swiftly to collaborate with the SMEs and develop a series of 12 courses, tailored directly to the company's operations. The courses lead to a Bachelor of Science degree in Professional Customer Care Center Management (P3CM). Bellevue University also funds 100% of the outreach and employee communications plus business impact measurement and analysis, resulting in budget neutral start-up investment for the company.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- UPS
- Northrop Grumman
- KPMG
- TTX Companies, Inc.
- AOL

Scholarship-based Tuition Assistance Program With Employee Investment

A goal of Convergys is to pilot a program that tests if, by targeting the top 25 percent of employees based on performance criteria, the group will produce higher retention rates than the general workforce population. In an innovative approach, the Bellevue University program was moved out of the company’s traditional tuition assistance program (TAP) to a specifically developed “scholarship” program. The recruitment process encourages employees to submit an application against selection criteria. They are to be in good standing on attendance and behavior and in the top 25 percent on call scorecard performance.

Another goal of the company is to test if by requiring participants to have “skin in the game” a higher completion rate might be established than the completion rate in the general TAP. A scholarship of \$5,000 is awarded toward the annual tuition requiring participants to invest the difference—which many cover by applying for financial aid through Bellevue University. The program engenders support from the Convergys leadership team because the investment outlay for the organization falls below the \$5,250 federal tax exclusion for employer provided tuition assistance.

In order to meet talent development objectives, the goal is to have 200 people in the program at all times in increments of 50. Bellevue University promotes the program through webinars, brochures, hosted “lunch and learns” at sites, and more. With their long history of serving working adults through on-line-learning, they are adept at creating “collaborative learning environments” within small groups of 15 to 20 employees from different parts of the country. Because all courses are delivered asynchronously on-line and exclusive to Convergys employees, Convergys is able to meet targeted regional talent development needs. Course content drawn from Convergys operations meets adult learn-

“We do things differently from industry peers and it was important to capture that in the learning process. Bellevue was willing to use our subject matter experts and create curricula based on Convergys’ learning needs.”

— Dan Montgomery,
Senior Director of Learning
Consulting & Curriculum,
Convergys

ers’ need for relevance while the particular learning is beneficial to professional development since it is built on internal case studies. It is notable that students with no college credit may enter their major courses FIRST in the P3CM courses. Bellevue University achieves this innovative degree sequencing by providing an Online Student Success Program (OSSP) for free to Convergys students. The OSSP is a 4-week, 2-credit hour course that prepares students to be successful learners in online college-level learning. Upon completion of the 12 P3CM Courses, individuals earn 36 college credit hours that can be credited toward a bachelor’s degree and receive a certificate of completion of the P3CM program. Bellevue University further supports employees toward degree completion by helping them attain college credit for training and work/life experience.

P3CM Program Supports Professional Progress

In addition to the 82 learners enrolling in the program, Convergys has approximately 63 of the 300 plus approved scholarship recipients currently in the enrollment process. The Convergys customer care center agent population is made up largely of 18-to-25 year old minority females. The P3CM program is designed to support the professional progress of this population throughout the organization. P3CM completers have greater earning potential with the opportunity to move into supervisory positions with salary ranges of \$35,000 to \$60,000 following education/training.

For more information about Convergys, visit www.convergys.com

SECTOR: Customer Relations Management

EMPLOYEES: Nearly 65,000 globally; 24,000 domestic

ANNUAL REVENUE: \$2.1B

Crest Cadillac



Cooperative Education Program Produces Skilled Automotive Technicians

Crest Cadillac

Automotive training program leads to postsecondary credentials, increasing technician efficiency to 140 percent and dealership retention rates to 90 percent.

Crest Cadillac, a leading automotive dealership in the Dallas metro area, provides superior value and customer service to its client base. The business specializes in sales and is committed to outstanding service of Cadillac and General Motors (GM) brands, which requires its technicians to be highly trained and to have specialized knowledge of maintaining and repairing those brands.

When GM entered the Dallas market, its product service training division struggled to find the appropriate talent it needed in the area. It recognized the need to create a skilled talent pool of service technicians, and therefore established a partnership with Brookhaven College of the Dallas County Community College District to grow its own specialized workforce to meet its unique product knowledge and skill requirements. General Motors created the dealership sponsored Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) to provide its dealers nationwide with a source of trained professionals. Based on a robust set of educational and workplace supports, ASEP helps the business maintain strong operational performance, high customer satisfaction ratings and improved employee retention in a highly competitive labor market. Crest Cadillac saw the value of this program and immediately joined it after the dealership opened in 1984.

Cadillac recently worked with Brookhaven College to offer students scheduling flexibility in order to facilitate combining work with school, which helps students maintain financial stability. ASEP requires students to take four courses called “cooperative work experience” which constitutes their internship, for which they are paid and earn up to 12 credits toward their associate degree. During their internships, students work with a senior technician, who offers mentoring and career navigation support, a practice which is encouraged by management. In addition to the

Business Outcomes

- Increases retention rates from 50 to 90 percent
- Increases efficiency to 140 percent
- Improves GM Customer Satisfaction Scores
- Enhances technician skill levels

Employee Impact

- Full factory training
- Paid internship with flexible scheduling
- Tuition reimbursement for associate degree attainment
- Competitive salaries available and lower student debt; bonuses available

Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP)

- Nationally recognized cooperative degree program
- Paid ASE training and certification
- Curriculum meets industry needs
- Similar Dallas partnerships graduated 530 from 2006-2009 and realized a 92 percent job placement rate

PERSONAL STORY

Jeff Steger had no college aspirations when he graduated high school. Had his uncle, who worked for General Motors, not told him to enroll in ASEP at Brookhaven, he would not have considered any college program. Steger enrolled, graduated with his Associate Degree in Automotive Technology, and shortly afterward started working for Crest Cadillac. He has been with the company for 21 years. As a roadside technician, Steger focuses on technical roadside and customer service, and is currently working toward his ASE master certification. He said that the program “put him miles ahead” of people that did not go through the same rigorous training. Without the support from school and work the program provided, Steger would not have completed his postsecondary education. “It was life-changing for me—I feel like I have more options in the job market, and I am making a better living.” Steger now mentors youth finishing the program and thinks it is a life-saver for young people that are technically inclined but have no college plans.

Industry Co-op Partnership with Community College

The Automotive Service Education Program (ASEP) is a nationally recognized, dealership sponsored cooperative associate degree program in automotive technology that has been operating for over 30 years. Through ASEP, working learners combine a paid, part-time internship at the Crest Cadillac dealership with part-time school during the week. Crest

paid internship, the dealership provides tuition reimbursement based on grade performance, and offers students a secured position at the company upon graduation from the two-year program. New graduates are then assigned to a senior technician to begin an informal apprenticeship period.

Crest Cadillac also pays for costs associated with training and tests to obtain Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certifications, the industry-recognized credential often pursued after automotive technicians earn associate degrees. The company offers bonuses to technicians that earn the ASE master technician status. Technicians can also take advantage of web-based training sponsored by GM, and scheduling flexibility and paid school time to support continued training and learning.

“ASEP provides brand-specific, highly-trained and qualified technicians at the end of the two-year program.”

- James Freel
Service Director
Crest Cadillac

To further support the partnership, the director of Crest Cadillac has served on Brookhaven’s ASEP Advisory Board for 15 years to provide feedback on curriculum development. Having employer input is critical to ensure that the program continues to meet local industry needs. The Board also sees that the curriculum meets the standards of the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF), so that the degree program is nationally recognized and certified.

Similar Industry Partnerships Across Dallas

Crest Cadillac’s partnership with Brookhaven College is one of nine similar automotive industry partnerships supported throughout the county by the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD). GM, Honda, Ford, Nissan and Bridgestone/Firestone have all played a role in customizing automotive degree programs through Learn and Earn part-

nerships across the District’s campuses. These business-led partnerships have produced over 530 graduates from 2006 to 2009, with a 92 percent successful placement rate, and have strengthened workforce and economic development in the region.

Competitive Talent Pool and a Loyal Workforce

ASEP directly contributes to Crest Cadillac’s human capital and talent management outcomes by making graduates of the program better able to achieve high GM Customer Satisfaction Scores, to increase their areas of expertise and to “clear tickets” at the dealership—an important factor affecting the dealership’s operational efficiency. Given the high-quality, technical nature of ASEP and its specificity to GM products, graduates can hit the ground running and provide high value client service, operating at 130 to 140 percent efficiency. This is in contrast to graduates of other area trade schools, with a more generalized knowledge of GM products, who operate at 110 percent efficiency. The GM-specific nature of the ASEP curriculum is a critical factor vital to the program’s success.

ASEP graduates record a 70 to 90 percent ability to “clear a ticket” with 6 to 8 areas of expertise, while non-ASEP graduates show a 40 to 50 percent ability to “clear a ticket” with 2 to 4 areas of expertise, demonstrating a true value added. The program has also had a positive impact on the dealership’s employee retention rates, with a low turnover in a competitive labor market contributing a measurable benefit to the company. Retention rates for ASEP graduates average 80 to 90 percent, compared with 50 percent for non-ASEP graduates. There is a high loyalty factor, with some technicians continuing employment for 20 years or more.

Through ASEP, Crest Cadillac receives highly-educated technicians with current GM training and the ability to meet specific business needs. The partnership forged between Brookhaven College and the automotive industry in Dallas provides individuals with relevant work experience and postsecondary credentials that lead to career opportunities, while meeting local labor market demands.

For more information about Crest Cadillac, please visit www.crestcadillactx.com

HISTORY: Since 1984

SECTOR: Automotive

SERVES: Dallas metro area

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

CVS Caremark



Business Outcomes

- 48,000 hired, trained and retained
- 30 % higher retention rate
- Turnover rate reduced by 50%
- 179% return on WOTC relative to costs
- Three times higher customer satisfaction ratings by RLC trained workers

Employee Impact

- 80,000 off public assistance
- Defined career pathways
- 1,500 entry-level and incumbent workers trained annually at 6 sites

Government Partnership Programs

- Taps unconventional talent source
- Partners with state and federal workforce development entities
- Use of Work Opportunity Tax Credits

Recruiting and Training Through Public Workforce System Produces Strong ROI CVS Caremark

By partnering with public workforce systems to source and train, and by claiming Work Opportunity Tax Credits, CVS Caremark generates 179 percent return relative to costs.

As one of the country's largest pharmacy benefits managers, CVS Caremark provides access to a network of more than 64,000 pharmacies, including over 7000 CVS/Pharmacy retail stores. Ranked 19th on the Fortune 500 for 2009 and reporting annual revenues of over \$87 billion, CVS Caremark employs more than 200,000 in 43 states. To support the exponential growth accomplished by CVS Caremark over the past ten years, the company needed a wide source of entry-level talent and a way of developing that talent into high-growth/high need positions. By partnering with public workforce development entities, the company tapped unconventional talent sources while creating the unforeseen benefit of a profit center for CVS Caremark.

Regional Learning Center Partnerships Produce Valuable Employees

What began over twenty years ago as the Government Programs department within human resources of CVS is now the corporation's Workforce Initiatives program that oversees six Regional Learning Centers (RLC) across the nation, the highly successful Pathway to Pharmacy program and relationships with a multitude of state and regional public workforce entities.

The goal of the original pilot program was to move Welfare recipients off of public assistance, through a training process, to entry-level jobs within retail pharmacies. The program gained acceptance among CVS executives and operations managers by demonstrating that, with proper support and

training, individuals hired from disadvantaged populations proved to be valuable employees. CVS has since teamed with state and federal workforce agencies in high-unemployment communities to provide employment services and training to underserved populations to recruit and retain talent. Now, through six RLCs co-located in public labor department One-Stop Career Centers, training is delivered to over 1,500 entry-level and incumbent workers annually at each site for CVS Caremark. The public entities assume operation cost of the learning centers and CVS Caremark assumes costs of training, staff and equipment. Additionally, the partners tap training dollars available through federal and state WIA legislation to support programming.

PERSONAL STORY

Veronica Vergara began her CVS career as an intern via Pathways to Pharmacy and progressed to pharmacy sales associate, then to certified pharmacy technician, her current position. Veronica, whose parents did not graduate from high school, is now a junior at the University of Illinois at Chicago with plans to go on to a four-year pharmacy school when she graduates.

Since 1996, over 80,000 entry-level workers have been hired out of the public assistance population and recent research shows that CVS retail stores retain 60 percent of employees referred from RLCs compared to 30 percent retention among regular employees.

Stability in the workforce leads to higher customer satisfaction and higher profit margins. Store managers see further impact to their bottom line through the application of Work Opportunity Tax Credits when they hire from populations targeted by the tax credit. Participants in RLCs score three times as high as their peers on service evaluations and by hiring from the communities they serve, CVS Caremark engenders customer loyalty.

■ Career Pathways Support Talent Development

In order to support growth and expansion of the company, the Workforce Initiatives team created the CVS Career Path to articulate opportunities that enable low-skilled workers to advance from entry-level to a number of in-demand, skilled positions within the organization. Awareness of the CVS Career Path is promoted through the Pathway to Pharmacy program that has multiple elements which encourage young people, including low-income young adults, to consider careers in pharmacy.

“Our investments in training and in workforce development have helped us meet the need for good jobs in the communities we serve while also meeting our own need for colleagues who can deliver the best customer service in our industry.”

— Lisa Bisaccia,
Senior Vice President and
Chief Human Resources Officer
CVS Caremark

Progression along the path is accomplished by taking advantage of on-the-job training, customized training through the RLCs, mentoring, and continuing education at local community colleges and/or universities. Many come into the program through summer youth internships offered during junior or senior years, follow by part-time employment

For more information about CVS Caremark, visit www.cvs.com.

SECTOR: Pharmacy/Retail

EMPLOYEES: Over 200,000 in 43 states

ANNUAL REVENUE: Over \$87 billion in 2009

opportunities combined with continuing education. Employees can pursue continuing education, which leads to national certification as pharmacy technicians or higher education leading to a degree in pharmacy supported by tuition assistance—both are high-priority needs for CVS Caremark. By targeting underserved youth, 16 to 17, the summer youth internship program costs are offset by earning Work Opportunity Tax Credits.

■ Return on Investment

The CVS Caremark Workforce Initiatives team comprises a significant investment in talent development in addition to the cost of training and equipment. However, the corporation offsets the expense by partnering with state and federal workforce development entities and community colleges to apply for grant opportunities targeted at recruiting underserved individuals, offering them training and education, and advancing them along career pathways.

The company shows a respectable return on that investment through the leading business practice of claiming Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC). By hiring from twelve groups targeted for WOTC, CVS Caremark receives the following credits:

- \$1,200 for each new summer youth hire (16-17);
- \$2,400 for each new adult hire;
- \$4,800 for each new disabled vet hire; and
- \$9,000 for each new long-term family assistance recipient hired over a two-year period.

The Government Program/Workforce Initiatives program earned a place on the corporation's P&L statement where it generated a return relative to costs on WOTC of 179 percent. CVS Caremark further benefits through lower turnover rates and higher customer satisfaction generated by the training.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- AOL
- Marriott International
- KPMG
- Bon Secours

Expeditors



Business Outcomes

- Established high school recruitment program
- Talent exploration
- Creates community connections
- Mentoring opportunity for employees

Employee Impact

- Professional development,
- Gain full-time job with benefits
- Stable work history
- Postsecondary opportunity

Opportunity Knocks

- Professional skills development
- Part-time to full-time employment
- Support for continuing education

Developing Entry-level Talent Through Youth Professional Improvement Expeditors – Opportunity Knocks

Vision, leadership, and passion for developing young, raw talent changes individual lives, grows future talent, and impacts an organization.

Expeditors, a Fortune 500 company, delivers global logistics management solutions for all aspects of supply chain management to other organizations including customers such as Walmart, General Electric, Cisco Systems, and Target. Expeditors marked their 30th anniversary in 2009 with over 12,000 employees in 60 countries and \$4.1 billion in annual revenue. Celebrating a culture of organic growth and a history of promoting from within, Expeditors faced the recent economic downturn by implementing a “no layoffs” policy, choosing to cut costs through a hiring freeze and attrition. It is this focus on employee relations and commitment to maintaining the highest caliber of employees that Expeditors Chairman and CEO, Peter Rose, believes will stand the company in good stead as the economy turns around. Their focus on building long-term stability has grown a domestic workforce of 3,616 in 57 offices in the U. S. It was into this corporate ethic and future-focused strategy that Expeditors launched “Opportunity Knocks,” a programmatic commitment to change the lives of marginalized youth and grow future talent.

Giving back through Opportunity Knocks

Opportunity Knocks seeks out high school students who are not currently considering going on to higher education for reasons such as lack of motivation or lack of financial capacity. The students are offered a part-time job with the opportunity to obtain a full-time job with benefits upon meeting or exceeding expectations of the position and graduating high school. Students are strongly mentored to develop marketable jobs skills and establish

a stable work record in a professional environment. The program, designed to identify aptitude and recruit undeveloped talent, established a formal high school recruiting program that was needed and formally lacking at Expeditors.

PERSONAL STORY

Muhamed Manhsour’s parents are immigrants from Cambodia and Vietnam. Although his parents stressed the importance of education, Muhamed’s friends “were into violence” and he felt torn between these two paths. He came to Opportunity Knocks through the Youthforce program at his alternative high school. Muhamed has been part of the program for over 2 years and is now working part-time while taking classes at Seattle Central Community College. He earned a raise, which is helping him pay tuition, and was given night hours to accommodate his class schedule. Expeditors is encouraging him to complete a 4 year degree.

The concept for Opportunity Knocks is based on the personal experience of Senior Vice President, Dan Wall, who began entry-level employment with Expeditors at 18 years old and worked his way to his current position. Crediting the mentors and professional development support he received within the organization, Wall created Opportunity Knocks to formalize the experience in a way that allows it to be replicated throughout Expeditors and serve as a skilled talent source for the company. Wall seeks to prove

his hypothesis that investing in an employee creates loyalty to the company—particularly when the individual begins with few prospects of success and a lack of personal career and/or educational direction. Expeditors is establishing comparative metrics to determine efficacy of Opportunity Knocks.

■ “Hire for Attitude, Train for Skill”

The program began in Expeditors’ Corporate Headquarters in Seattle, WA where leaders went to youth-serving, community-based organizations like Youth Force and the Boys and Girls Club to identify and recruit participants, with a focus of offering the opportunity to those youth who needed the most professional development. It was reasoned that these students are at the lower end of interviewing skills and most in need of support. If they showed an attitude of commitment, skills could be taught, exemplifying the Expeditor motto, “Hire for Attitude, Train for Skill.” Initially, temporary summer employment was offered with the stipulation that defined performance benchmarks must be met in order to continue part-time employment while completing a high school diploma during the school year. For those participants who met expectations and graduated, a full-time position with a Fortune 500 company was waiting. Early in the program it was clear that in order to succeed the students would need structure and strong mentoring. A formalized process of development opportunities with the company was constructed for participants, clarifying responsibilities of managers and mentors including discussing options for continuing post secondary education. The template has now been further codified in the form of a detailed manual that is being used to roll out Opportunity Knocks to other branch offices of Expeditors.

■ Emerging Learn and Earn Best Practice

Opportunity Knocks is in the early, formative stage with 14 students having gone through or currently participating in the program. Several of the students have gone on to college with one student who was in the program over a year, receiving a scholarship to Howard University and a send off from Expeditors with a new laptop. One has accepted full-time employment with the company while several others continue to work part-time while attending college. The program has been picked up in the Dallas and Seattle - Airport offices of Expeditors with the expectation that Atlanta and San Diego will soon adopt it as well.

“I was like these kids—from a working class family trying to make ends meet. My father was and still is a truck driver and my mother worked as a waitress. There were no expectations for college as none of my family had ever gone. I am a first generation college grad. Now I have started a different cycle with my kids who are expected to go to college and Expeditors is extending that to others through Opportunity Knocks.”

— Dan Wall,
Senior Vice President, Expeditors

While the program provides a small beginning of a talent stream, it is also proving to have a profound effect on managers/mentors who take pride in making a difference in the lives of at-risk youth. As Opportunity Knocks grows across Expeditors, it is a practice to watch for multiple Learn and Earn characteristics: significant impact upon young people; the role of an internal champion; the talent contribution made to the organization; and the impact on incumbent staff of this people-focused corporation.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- Northrop Grumman
- TJX Companies, Inc.
- UPS
- KPMG
- AOL

For more information about Expeditors, visit www.expeditors.com

SECTOR: Global logistics management over 30 years

EMPLOYEES: Over 12,000 employees/over 3,600 in 57 U.S. offices

ANNUAL REVENUE: \$4.1 billion in 2009

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Georgia Power



Business Outcomes

- Hiring ratio decreased to one hire for every three applicants from 1:42
- 18% increase in retention rate to 94%
- Decreased hiring costs by more than half

Employee Impact

- 144 hired at Georgia Power
- Career tracked in apprentice program
- Earning income while training

Lineworker Bootcamp

- 900 graduates earn Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate
- Eligible for apprentice program

Hiring Ratio and Hiring Costs Decreased Through Technical College Partnership Georgia Power

Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate increases quality of applicant pool, decreases hiring costs. Program developed in partnership with Technical College System of Georgia.

Georgia Power is the largest subsidiary of Southern Company, one of the nation's largest generators of electricity. The company is an investor-owned, tax-paying utility with rates well below the national average. Georgia Power has provided electricity to the state for over 100 years and currently serves 2.3 million customers in all but four of Georgia's 159 counties

Georgia Power has received numerous awards for contributions to the state's economic development. Credited with playing a key role in pulling almost \$2 billion in new capital investment projects and more than 10,400 new jobs into Georgia in 2009, Georgia Power's Community and Economic Development organization was ranked as one of the best in the world for the 11th year in a row by Site Selection magazine.

Electrical Lineworkers Bootcamp Produces Skilled Entry-Level Workers

In August, 2007 the National Energy Skilled Workforce Summit was held in conjunction with the Southern Governors Association and included the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration and over 350 industry leaders. The executives were asked to discuss issues and concerns about future energy workforce. The number one issue for Georgia was the struggle to hire linemen. The practice of simply "hiring from the street" resulted in a hiring ratio of 1-in-42 for Georgia Power. This meant the company went through 42 applicants to hire one qualified lineworker. After recruiting, selecting and training, they still suffered poor retention rates, resulting in excessive recruiting and hiring costs.

In a quest for a better applicant pool, Georgia Power and other industry partners developed an entry-level lineworker training program with the Technical College System of Georgia in 2005. At start-up, employers worked closely with the college system to assure that training met skills and competency requirements of the industry. Employers continue to support the program, now located in four technical colleges around the state, by providing equipment, materials, curricula input, and trainers who administer abilities testing for the program. The 8-week course, referred to as

PERSONAL STORY

Andre Person, a senior in high school the spring 2007 in the Atlanta area, was frustrated with the job search process. He was repeatedly told that he needed experience to get a job. Andre tested into the Skilled Labor Summer Internship program and upon graduation worked full-time, earning a paycheck as well as a slot in the 8-week bootcamp at SGTC. After completing the program and earning the Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate, Andre was hired by Georgia Power. The opportunity was timely for Andre and his family as his mother lost her employment when the Ford plant closed and she and Andre's younger brother lived with him for some time. Now, well into an apprentice program, Andre considers himself on a career track with opportunities to move up, which keep him encouraged to stay with the company and motivated to keep progressing.

“Electrical Lineworker Bootcamp” is designed to convey required mechanical abilities, general electrical safety skills, and positive work ethics to participants as well as an understanding of the physical demands of the position.

Graduates earn the Electrical Lineworker Apprentice Certificate (ELAC) which prepares them to compete for an entry level lineworker position. Once successfully hired by one of the Georgia energy companies, they enter a registered apprenticeship program with an average wage of \$15 to \$16 per hour, putting them on the path to journeyman with salary closer to \$25 per hour. According to the Georgia Department of Labor, the state is home to over 5,000 power lineworkers and repairers, of which 50 percent are eligible to retire today, creating a strong demand for qualified candidates.

For Georgia Power and other utility employers, the program has eliminated a great deal of hiring risk that previously existed. If ELAC students are not a good fit for line work, they generally self-select out of the course, avoiding a “bad fit” hire for the companies. Those who complete the course receive a clear understanding of the rigors of the job as the program includes one week observation-based training within one of the utility partner companies. The program has created a pipeline of qualified apprentice candidates providing Georgia Power a substantially better hiring ratio of 1-in-3 and has increased retention rates from 76 percent to 94 percent. Current recruiting and hiring costs have decreased by more than half from the 2005 level.

■ Focus on High-Need Atlanta Area

Attracting lineworkers who live and want to stay in the Atlanta area is a challenge for Georgia Power. Through a partnership between Georgia Power, South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) and the DeKalb Department of Labor, a Skilled Labor Summer Internship program was created to introduce students to the energy sector, targeting linework. Students from metro Atlanta high

schools were nominated, with 14 selected the first year (2007) from fairly rigorous criteria. The students spent 8 weeks earning a salary while working with an operating crew at Georgia Power. Eight students successfully completed the internship and were sent to the 8-week bootcamp at SGTC. All eight successfully completed the bootcamp and were offered full-time apprentice lineworkers jobs, with five continuing employment.

“Through a collaborative effort between the Georgia Energy and Industrial Construction Consortium and the Technical College System of Georgia, we have developed a successful certificate program for training linemen. This program has improved recruitment and retention efforts and provided a cost-effective benefit to our company when hiring these candidates.”

Leslie Sibert, Distribution VP,
Georgia Power and Georgia Energy and
Industrial Construction Board Chair

■ Education Partner

The innovative ELAC program originally launched at South Georgia Technical College. In partnership with Technical College System of Georgia, it has grown to four locations strategically placed around the state and has produced over 900 graduates, 144 of which have been hired by Georgia Power. Participants, whose average age is 26, are able to cover costs of the program through the Georgia HOPE grant if eligible and can apply for additional funds if applicable from Department of Labor.

This highly successful program has garnered national attention from the energy sector and from educational institutions searching for exemplary industry partnerships. The Lineworker Bootcamp was recently identified by the Center for Energy Workforce Development as a workforce readiness model to be replicated. Plans are in place to initiate the program in North Carolina, Ohio and Washington states with others considering implementation.

For more information about Georgia Power, visit www.georgiapower.com.

SECTOR: Energy/Public Utility

EMPLOYEES: 8,205

HISTORY: 100+ Years

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- Expeditors
- Bon Secours
- Convergys
- Pacific Gas & Electric

Health Careers
Collaborative



Employer-led Collaborative Creates Skilled and Credentialed Talent Pool

Health Careers Collaborative

Employer-led consortium collaborates to increase the skills and education levels of entry-level workers, creating shared talent pool and setting best practice business standards.

UC Health (formerly Health Alliance) and Cincinnati Children's Hospital, two of the largest health care employers in Cincinnati, Ohio, were struggling and competing against each other to hire talented professional employees, while experiencing high turnover rates in entry-level positions. In 2004, these health care employers met with Cincinnati State Technical and Community College (Cincinnati State), and educational partner, Great Oaks Career Campuses, and discussed innovative solutions to the shortage of professional health care employees and ways in which they could work together to "grow their own" talent pool of skilled and diverse workers. These organizations founded the Health Careers Collaborative (HCC) of Greater Cincinnati, a business-led consortium providing employers with skilled, credentialed, loyal and diverse workers, while providing entry-level workers with educational opportunities leading to career mobility.

HCC Produces Skilled and Credentialed Employees

HCC successfully created a career pathway with multiple entrance and exit points for incumbent, low-skilled, entry-level hospital workers to advance, as well as for unemployed and disadvantaged individuals to complete education and training that positions them to fill entry-level work opportunities created as incumbent workers advance. To date, 3,000 credentials have been earned by participants, one-third of whom are minorities. Pathway participants are identified by the health care employers or local community organizations, and then assessed with WorkKeys upon entrance and at various points along the career pathway. Based on assessments, 90 percent of incoming students to Cincinnati State's associate's degree program require developmental

education classes, for which employers have agreed to pay tuition.

After completing the developmental classes, these working learners are grouped in learning community cohorts and enrolled in one of five current associate's degree programs: nursing, respiratory care, occupational therapy assistant, clinical lab technician, and surgical technician. The cohort structure helps create strong bonds with fellow working learners facing similar challenges.

Employers agree to prepay tuition for entry-

PERSONAL STORY

Barbara Schwab was motivated - she wanted to pursue her postsecondary degree and start a career, but she could not pay for school. After working at a doctor's office for many years, she took a full-time job with TriHealth in their Insurance Verification department because they provided tuition assistance. In 2008, she entered the *School at Work*® program and took general education courses to refresh her education. In 2009, her *School at Work* mentor told her about HCC and she applied and entered with the first TriHealth HCC cohort. She finds the support from TriHealth, Cincinnati State and her peers in her cohort to be extremely beneficial and essential to her success. In February 2013, Barbara will earn an associate's degree in nursing. Barbara plans on staying with TriHealth after receiving her degree, thankful for the company's support of her education. By receiving her nursing degree, Barbara says, "I will be able to help someone and care for them, and if I can do that for one person, I think I will have done a whole lot in my lifetime."

Business Outcomes

- 11.9% ROI (UC Health)
- 85% retention rate
- 90% transition to finish bachelor's degree
- Credentialed and skilled talent
- Diverse workforce

Employee/Student Impact

- Prepaid postsecondary tuition
- Job coach and career navigation
- Workplace flexibility
- Informal and formal supports

Health Careers Collaborative

- Business-led model
- Establish professional health care talent pool
- Contextualized curriculum
- Career pathway for entry-level workers

level workers directly to Cincinnati State, recognizing that typical tuition reimbursement benefits create a barrier to continuing education for low-wage workers. Job coaches provided by employers and community partners mentor participants, help them develop work-ready and interview skills, and promote understanding of health career pathway opportunities. Curriculum, 30 percent of which is online, is developed and updated jointly by the health care employers and Cincinnati State.

Community partners, including Dress for Success Cincinnati, Mercy Neighborhood Ministries, Inc., and Superjobs Center, play important roles by identifying potential low-income and unemployed workers from the community who might participate in HCC, assessing applicant skill levels and providing additional supports to increase odds of success.

Setting Standards for Employer Participation

Employer partners are held to best practice standards in order to join the consortium based on lessons learned and their understanding of the needs of working learners. Employers in the consortium take responsibility for paying tuition for non-credit developmental courses to prepare working learners for collegiate level classes. HCC employers also agree to move beyond simple tuition assistance and prepay tuition directly to Cincinnati State, reducing the burden on their employees. Employers encourage their managers to work with the participants around flexible work scheduling in order to make time for education. Each employer also offers a retention specialist or career navigation coach to help working learners overcome barriers while progressing through the career pathway. TriHealth piloted the use of *School at Work*® programs, which includes contextualized academic refresher courses for incumbent workers, and is now adopted by all employers.

HCC is piloting the use of the National Career Readiness Credential and Profile Plus assessments to offer pathway participants enhanced career exploration and guidance. Setting these standards and holding all employers respon-

sible ensures that only best practice companies, deeply committed to “growing their own” professional workforce, join the collaborative.

“HCC demonstrates that when business, higher education and community organizations collaborate they can create a more skilled and ready workforce and provide the employer with a positive return on their investments in training and education.”

— Alan R. Jones, HCC Chair
Corp. VP of HR and Public Safety, (Ret.)
UC Health

Return on Investment and Outcomes Reported

The key to this successful model, according to the employers, is that it is business-led and that the education and community organizations are willing and trustworthy partners. The early findings indicate a 11.9 percent return on investment for UC Health, measuring retention, absenteeism and performance scores. Since 2004, more than 3,000 HCC participants have entered the pathway and earned a credential, and nearly 200 have enrolled in the associate’s degree program; 23 have graduated to date. Of the two most recent graduating associate’s degree classes, 90 percent went on to pursue bachelor’s degrees. For the entry-level health care certificate training, there is an 88 percent completion rate and an 82 percent job placement rate for unemployed certificate graduates, with starting salaries of more than \$12 an hour. Those incumbent workers who progressed through the career pathway held an average GPA of 3.24 and an 85 percent retention rate with their current employer, compared to 35 percent among non-pathway participants. The collaborative is jointly creating and expanding the pathways and curriculum available to students with a recent focus on long-term health care and health information technology. New health care employers continue to be recruited, most recently, Mercy Health Partners, and each contributes to evolving HCC’s best practices and student success.



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

For more information about HCC, please visit www.hccgc.org

COLLABORATIVE SECTOR: Health Care
COLLABORATIVE HISTORY: Since 2004

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

IBM

EMERGING BEST
PRACTICE



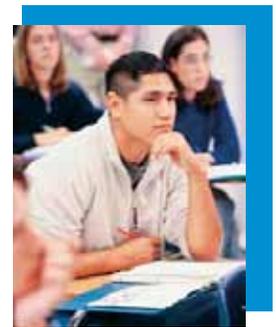
Corporate Investment Supports Latinos in STEM Education

IBM

To grow the future STEM workforce, IBM partnered with Queensborough Community College to create an early warning system to identify Latino students at risk of dropping out.

In 2008, IBM held a two-day summit to explore the opportunities and challenges inherent to the growing Latino student and workforce population. While acknowledging the increasing number of careers IBM and the general economy is creating in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields, summit participants recognized that Latino students have the lowest level of enrollment in postsecondary STEM programs and that 1-in-3 Latino college students drop out during their first year in higher education. To foster a general and diverse STEM talent pool, IBM determined the need to support college completion among this fastest growing subset of the American population.

Historically, IBM has operated from the philosophy that to achieve enduring success, you have to manage for the long term; and you must evolve meaningful and sustainable solutions. Approaching the Latino college dropout challenge from this perspective, IBM has committed two of its strengths—technology and talent—to resolving the dropout problem. Because IBM believes that direct action and collaboration is the path to real change, it partnered with Queensborough Community College (QCC), a constituent campus of City University of New York (CUNY), to create a tool that will early identify Latino STEM students most at risk of dropping out in order to support them to college completion. In the spring semester of 2011, the Latino STEM Support Network (LSSN) Early Alert System was piloted, with a subsequent tiered rollout currently in process.



Business Outcomes

- Developing Latino STEM talent pool

Student Impact

- 8 percent higher C+ grades
- 7 percent lower F-to-C grades

Latino STEM Support Network (LSSN) Early Alert System

- Systematic flagging of high drop out risk students
- Faculty/classroom input
- Academic intervention
- Community-based organization support for non-academic hurdles

Creating a Business - Community College Partnership

Following the 2008 summit, IBM solicited requests for joint proposals from higher education and non-profit community-based organizations to partner on a \$250K technology and services grant that would offer support services to Latino students enrolled in STEM education. It received a strong proposal from QCC, located in Queens, New York, which is home to one of the most ethnically diverse communities in the nation, including a large Latino population.

The college had recently created “Freshman Academies” in several academic disciplines, including STEM, designed to provide early academic support in order to move more students to college completion. One of the challenges of the Freshman Academies is the large number of students that must be identified as at risk of failing or dropping out, and who must then be monitored regularly in order to target direct services and interventions as early as possible. The IBM technology and services grant targeted first-year Latino students in the STEM Academy and established the LSSN Early Alert System for those most at-risk. Although the solution focused on Latino students, all freshmen in the STEM Academy benefited from the early alert system.

System Founded Using Business Expertise and Faculty “Buy-In”

As part of the grant, IBM deployed a technology team to work with QCC in developing the system.

The risk factors for dropping out were identified utilizing the QCC-CUNY advisory committee. Seven risk factors were identified; four of the factors are “fixed” and do not change throughout the academic year, and three are founded in classroom activity. IBM created an integrated database to identify individuals expressing the seven risk factors without creating additional reporting burdens for instructors or further system redundancies.

The IBM project manager and education subject matter expert leveraged the existing college information system, CUNYfirst, to identify the four high-level risk factors that are established as part of students’ college admission process: remedial placement; academic standing; external risk factors; and, academic support connection.

“IBM’s goal in partnering with QCC on the LSSN was to strengthen the career prospects of young people eager to participate in the growth of the economy and contribute to their communities, while ‘ priming the pump’ for the talent we’ll need to maintain our leadership positions in the industry. We think it’s a win-win.”

- Stanley S. Litow, Vice President, Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs, IBM, and President, IBM International Foundation

However, in order to create a more time-sensitive report that facilitates early intervention, the remaining three risk factors would need to be flagged by classroom instructors—attendance issues, performance problems, and course failure risk. The IBM project manager accessed the existing classroom management system and created a simple process for instructor input of the three classroom-centric risk factors.

By enlisting instructors who participated in the pilot to input the needed

data, a dashboard report was auto-created weekly through the reporting tool and integrated database. The dashboard report was provided to the STEM Academy for early intervention, starting with the first week of school. This created an automatic report of information that previously might have taken up to seven weeks via the original intervention process and would have been too late to intervene on behalf of the at risk students. Mastering the data input process took less than twenty minutes even for those instructors with limited technical expertise, a process that gained unanimous support from the pilot group once it became evident that students were benefiting from the system.

Promising Early Results of LSSN

The LSSN Early Alert System was piloted spring semester, 2011, in ten freshman STEM classes and the “College Life” class required of all first year students. The weekly report provided the STEM Academy Coordinator a list of the most high-risk students, including any flagged-classroom issues. The coordinator was able to provide appropriate academic interventions as well as information to their community-based organization partner, Queens Community House, which provides needed support services for non-academic hurdles such as child care, transportation, and other issues.

The pilot generated an eight percent higher rate of C or better grades than students in other classes. There was also a decreased number of students who registered but did not attend classes. The LSSN will expand to 60 professors and 100 classes at QCC fall semester, 2011, with the potential to expand it system-wide. Although designed to specifically target Latino STEM students, the LSSN Early Alert System is adaptable and will be scaled for wider application when IBM casts a larger net for other higher education partners in order to create a larger and more diverse talent pool.

For more information about IBM, visit www.ibm.com.
 For more information about QCC, visit www.qcc.cuny.edu.
IBM REVENUE: \$99.9 billion
IBM SIZE: 425,000+ employees

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC
 Phone: 202-467-8130
 Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com
 Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org
 Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- Walmart
- AOL

The case study was funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

KPMG



Talent Pipeline Developed with Diverse and Prepared Employees

KPMG

By working closely with postsecondary institutions, KPMG hires more diverse, better skilled, prepared and ready workers by providing internships, tuition support and mentors.

KPMG LLP, the U.S. audit, tax and advisory services firm, operates from 87 offices with more than 21,000 employees and partners. Headquartered in New York City, KPMG turns knowledge into value for the benefit of its clients, its people and the capital markets. In 2011, KPMG was recognized by *DiversityInc.*'s Top 50 Companies for Diversity for the fourth consecutive year, and as one of FORTUNE magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" for the fifth consecutive year. Diversity and inclusion are business imperatives for KPMG, aligned with its strategic priorities, and key to its commercial success. Given the reality of workforce shortage projections and the importance of attracting and retaining a diverse talent pool, KPMG recognizes that there is a war for top talent. To help address these issues, KPMG created a recruitment program that is aligned with its corporate responsibility platform, with a goal of developing a diverse and inclusive workforce that contributes to the sustainability of its enterprise.

Diverse and Talented Workforce Provides Competitive Edge

Businesses that rely on intellectual capital tend to have a competitive advantage when they have a diverse workforce. Through the launch of the Future Diversity Leaders (FDL) program four years ago, KPMG began to identify and develop a pipeline of culturally diverse and talented students interested in pursuing a career in public accounting, with the goal of inviting them to build a career with the firm. In partnership with faculty members at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other higher education

institutions across the country, the FDL program seeks to provide diverse, high potential students with opportunities for mentoring, professional development, scholarships, and multi-year internships. Through this strategic learn and earn investment, the students are

PERSONAL STORY

During her sophomore year at Howard University in Washington, D.C., Dominique Nettles' professor and mentor recommended that she apply for KPMG's Future Diversity Leaders (FDL) program. She was interested in entering the program because she saw an opportunity to improve her skills and prepare for workforce entry while earning a degree. Through FDL's conference networking experiences, and two paid summer internships at a KPMG office, she quickly realized that FDL was giving her a "head start" in life as well as her career. When asked about her experience with FDL, Dominique said the most valuable benefits were the opportunity to establish relationships with KPMG professionals, and become acclimated to corporate culture. Upon graduation from Howard and while completing a master's program at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Dominique was offered a job as a first-year tax associate. She credits FDL with putting her "ahead of the curve" as she entered the workforce, as compared to her classmates. Dominique looks forward to building her career at KPMG, and hopes to be promoted to senior associate in 2012.

Business Impact

- Increase workforce diversity
- Pipeline of vetted skilled talent
- New entry-level recruitment model
- Acknowledgement of best practice company

Student/Employee Impact

- Gain corporate experience
- Earn tuition scholarship support
- 91% receive paid internship
- Acquire mentors
- Gain full-time positions with benefits

Future Diversity Leaders

- Targets expanding the diversity of workforce
- Helps cultivate entry-level talent
- Internship and scholarship support
- Support of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

exposed to professional services, gain valuable hands-on learning experiences, and are able to apply classroom knowledge to the work environment -- all of which help to position them as strong candidates to receive full-time offers with KPMG.

■ Recruiting and Building the Diverse Talent Pipeline

KPMG selects the top business and accounting postsecondary institutions, including HBCUs, to promote its FDL program. It focuses on freshmen and sophomore-level students, who have an interest in pursuing a career in business. Through the collaborative efforts of designated FDL campus faculty advisors and KPMG recruiters, 50-60 diverse business students are selected each year to attend a three-day firm-sponsored conference that helps them enhance their leadership and networking skills.

In the four years since the program was introduced, 60 percent of participants have been African American, 26 percent Hispanic and 9 percent Asian. To date, approximately 95 percent of participants have successfully completed the conference, with over 90 percent returning as interns the following summer. During the internship, participants earn a competitive salary while supporting KPMG's internal teams, including marketing, operations, finance, human resources and recruiting. KPMG's investment is extended further to provide each participant with a tuition scholarship after successful completion of the conference and subsequent summer internships - providing them with as much as \$6,000, depending on the number of years they are eligible to participate. For many students, the tuition scholarship provides the support they need to complete college.

Throughout the process, KPMG also encourages mentor/student relationships. KPMG professionals serve as mentors and help participants with cultural acclimation, workplace questions, and provide a connection to employee resource groups. The FDL campus faculty advisor establishes a mentoring relation-

ship and provides additional support and guidance related to the students' academic progress. The culmination of these opportunities have a single goal of providing participants with a full-time job offer prior to graduation and to ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed.

“The FDL program is an excellent investment for the firm to develop a robust, diverse talent pipeline that is workforce ready - ensuring a rich recruiting pool and ideally, new hires that are fully acclimated to our high performance culture.”

— Latoria Carroll
National Director,
Diversity and Corporate Responsibility

■ Forecasted Business Benefits

Through targeted recruitment efforts and an early investment in its future workforce, KPMG is leveraging its diversity and corporate responsibility strategy to respond to the issues of today's business environment. Now that the FDL program is four years old, KPMG is reaping its benefits, as the first full FDL class will be fully integrated into the firm this year. KPMG expects they will be up to speed much more quickly because they have a better understanding of KPMG's culture, internal resources and protocols in comparison to their peers. As with any employee initiative, KPMG's goal is to create a compelling value proposition for employees and the firm alike, one that demonstrates a meaningful return on its investment. The FDL program represents the best of an emerging trend -- businesses engaging with postsecondary institutions to provide paid work experience, tuition assistance, and mentoring support to participants. By combining a learn and earn model that identifies and nurtures talent with recruitment efforts among a diverse population on college campuses, KPMG has immediate access to technically skilled, workforce-ready talent that recognizes KPMG is a great place to build their career.

For more information about KPMG visit www.kpmg.com/us

SECTOR: Audit, tax and advisory services

SIZE: 23,897 serving U.S.

HISTORY: Since 1910

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Northrop Grumman
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

McDonald's



Business Impact

- Stronger pipeline of future company leaders and owner/operators
- More effective restaurant leaders
- Increased restaurant profitability
- Utilized as a retention incentive
- More educated workforce

Employee Impact

- Transferable college credits earned
- Tuition support
- Work-based skills and professional development

Hamburger University

- Founded 1961
- 80,000+ graduates to-date
- Educates 5,000+ managers annually through a global network of campuses
- College credit recommendations obtained through the ACE CREDIT® review process
- Partners with 15 higher education institutions through University College Alliance

Corporate Training Earns College Credit Recommendation McDonald's Hamburger University

Committed to being the world's "best talent developer," McDonald's obtains college credit recommendations, through the American Council on Education CREDIT® review process, for its corporate training through its innovative Hamburger University.

As the leading global foodservice retailer, McDonald's spans 117 countries with more than 32,000 restaurants serving more than 64 million people every day. To feed its hunger for talented managers worldwide, McDonald's established a global training and leadership development infrastructure. Its epicenter: the highly recognized Hamburger University (HU), and its network of 22 regional training centers and seven additional HU campuses around the world. Since it opened its doors fifty years ago, HU has graduated more than 80,000 restaurant managers, mid-managers, and owner/operators, and continues to cultivate more than 5,000 executives yearly.

Understanding the importance of an educated, professional and credentialed domestic workforce and wanting to create a stronger pipeline of talent, McDonald's participated in the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service (CREDIT®) that evaluated its workforce training for potential college-level equivalencies. Through the ACE credit recommendations, its partnerships with higher education institutions and tuition support, McDonald's realizes increased performance and profits from employees that have attended HU, successfully translated their training to a postsecondary degree, and continue to work at McDonald's today.

Model for Training Excellence

HU had its start in the basement of a McDonald's restaurant in suburban Chicago in 1961. In the 1980s, the company invested in a \$40 million training facility at its corporate headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois. That campus boasts teaching classrooms, kitchen labs, a state-of-the-art service training lab, and more.

In the years since, McDonald's has supplemented this flagship campus with satellite campuses internationally. All of the campuses apply HU's "Global Learning Approach," which allows training materials to be integrated into diverse cultures and taught in as many as 28 different languages.

The University's full-time faculty has expertise in a wide range of restaurant operations functions, including business management,

PERSONAL STORY

Having started her career as a restaurant manager, Shelly Hicks balanced work and family demands to earn a bachelor's degree using credits earned in McDonald's training program and courses completed at an accredited university. Hicks, the single parent of an adopted son, applied credit received from her McDonald's Hamburger University (HU) courses toward a bachelor's degree in business management.

"At best, I was a 'C' student in high school; certainly not the smartest apple in the bunch . . . I remember learning being tough because my memory skills were weak, my reading was slow, and I had to work really hard to achieve the 'C' that I earned. College did not look like an option after high school. I got a job at my local McDonald's and quickly learned that McDonald's was a great company to work for," said Hicks. "They provided professional training classes to improve my leadership and business skills. Not only was this fun, but McDonald's seemed to understand the adult learner and I found myself loving the newfound knowledge."

Continuing her education, Shelly has since received a master's degree in adult education from Penn State University and is now a professor at HU.

hospitality, and food safety. They help design and deliver the program's core curriculum through a combination of classroom instruction, hands-on lab activities, computer e-learning modules, and self-study. They also align the training curriculum to advance specific career paths within the restaurant chain.

Restaurant Managers first attend one of the regional training centers to study Shift Management, Systems Management, and more. Upon completion, they enroll in HU for further coursework in the skills they need to run a multi-million dollar restaurant. The Executive Development learning path helps reinforce ongoing business and leadership skills for top management, offering courses, such as supporting employees and sales growth.

■ Advancing College Credit Attainment & Lifelong Learning

HU currently provides 27 courses with ACE credit recommendations, which can be applied toward an associate or bachelor's degree from two- or four-year institutions that accept its credit recommendations. The credit recommendations validate the quality training McDonald's provides and motivates many employees to earn a postsecondary degree. ACE has recommended a total of 50 college credits for the University's restaurant management and mid-management curricula. The company's typical restaurant manager has completed the equivalent of approximately 23 credit hours of college-level learning through McDonald's training, translating to more than one semester of college credit.

In order to help its employees succeed, McDonald's partners with 15 higher education institutions to create a University College Alliance. The institutions that are part of this Alliance agree to accept at least 75 percent of the credit hours earned through HU and to offer McDonald's tuition discount. These college credits provide employees with a piece of a portfolio they can supply to higher education institutions, along with work experience and recommendations from their supervisors.

Today, McDonald's is one of only twelve Fortune 500 companies to receive college credit for the training it provides its employees.

"Each employee's personal and professional success equals success for the organizations . . . We're all in this together, and we work hard to make the Golden Arches a golden opportunity for every employee."

— Diana Thomas
Vice President US Training
McDonald's

For McDonald's, training begins the moment an employee is hired and never stops. The company is committed to establishing a "professionalized" career pathway for all interested employees. In addition to its flagship HU initiatives, McDonald's continues to help eligible employees pursue their postsecondary goals through its global educational assistance program. Employees may be reimbursed for 90 percent of eligible expenses, up to \$5,250 a year (\$2,000 a year for part-time employees), for grades "C" and above.

■ Business Imperative for HU

With McDonald's restaurants averaging \$2.4 million in sales annually and employing a diverse workforce of some 45 associates per location, the role of a restaurant manager is complex and demanding. The capacity of the managers to lead a multi-million dollar business requires world-class training that is equivalent to, and paves the way for, continued higher education. Providing this level of leadership opportunity is also an advantage in attracting and retaining high-quality managers in a competitive retail market. Through its generous investments in education and training and its model partnership with ACE's credit recommendation program, McDonald's builds a pipeline of educated, skilled and effective leaders - leaders prepared to advance their own careers, and equipped to increase profits for their restaurants alike.

For more information about McDonald's and Hamburger University, visit:
http://www.aboutmcdonalds.com/mcd/careers/hamburger_university.html

SECTOR: Quick-service Restaurant Retailer

EMPLOYEES: McDonald's & its independent franchisees employ 700,000+ in the U.S.

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

Millstone Power Station



Business Outcomes

- Developed pool of educated and highly capable employees
- Successful entry-level recruitment strategy
- Lower recruitment costs
- Higher retention rates
- 100% of graduates, who participate, complete the NRC Reactor Operator License training

Student/Employee Impact

- Paid internship
- Tuition assistance for associate degree
- Flexible class schedules
- On-the-job work experience

Nuclear Engineering Technology Program

- Nuclear internship program
- Partnership with Three Rivers Community College
- Receive an associate degree with work experience
- 222 graduates received full-time job offers

Community College Partnership Generates Skilled Nuclear Workforce

Millstone Power Station

Nuclear power station's investment in its future workforce delivers increased retention rates and a solid return on investment for future on-the-job training and licensure.

Millstone Power Station (Millstone), located in southeast Connecticut generates, 2,097 megawatts from its two operational units, enough electricity to power 500,000 homes. Acquired by Dominion Power in 2001, the nuclear power station currently employs 1,100 workers. In 1983, in response to Three Mile Island, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) required that employees in the control rooms of nuclear power plants possess engineering expertise, credentials and federal licensure. As a result, Millstone partnered with Three Rivers Community College and provided their incumbent employees with a Nuclear Engineering Technology Program required to meet these new standards. Over the years, Millstone expanded the program and continued its investment, meeting its business needs and realizing: higher retention rates among graduates of the program; a pool of ready, skilled and educated workers who are committed to lifelong careers in the nuclear field; and a quantifiable return on investment in future, on-the-job training and licensure.

Investing in Future Talent

Building on the strength of the business and community college partnership, in 1985, Millstone expanded the original program that was initially intended to aide shift managers in meeting the new NRC requirements. The expanded program was developed to produce a broader pool of skilled nuclear workers. Millstone began to recruit high school seniors and, eventually, those interested in a mid-career change, who wanted to work at a nuclear plant and pursue an Associate Degree in Nuclear Engineering Technology. On an annual basis, approximately 10 working learners, including at least two minority students, receive scholarships and are welcome

into the two-year TAC ABET (Technology Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology) accredited program.

The Millstone scholarship covers in full the cost of tuition for the associate degree and books at Three Rivers Community College, (TRCC) and offers a small stipend to cover incidental expenses. Additionally, Millstone provides the participants a 12-week paid internship between the first and second years

PERSONAL STORY

At 35, Sandra Goddard was employed by a local cable company when she heard about the Nuclear Engineering Technology Program. A native to the New England area, she was immediately attracted to it because it provided her the opportunity to prove herself, and to potentially receive a future job in a stable industry near her hometown. She understood that the program "was not just about a grade but that it equated to a future and career opportunities." She cites the internship experience at Millstone Power as extremely beneficial because it helped her translate the classroom learning in the workplace. In 2008, she graduated with honors from the program, and was hired immediately by Millstone Power, and in March 2011, she earned a Bachelor's Degree of Science Nuclear Engineering Technology, for which Millstone Power paid in full. Sandra said it best, "This is a male dominated business and here I am a female and an older student. Yet, I was given the opportunity to prove myself. I am lucky that Millstone took a chance on me - that I can and wanted to learn."

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC
Phone: 202-467-8130
Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com
Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)
www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

of classes, and pays the interns an hourly wage of approximately \$17 per hour. The internship presents Millstone the opportunity to evaluate program participants for future hire and provides the students with on-the-job training and work experience at a nuclear facility.

During the length of the program, Millstone calls on promising students to fill part-time positions during refueling outages, which are particular busy times of the year; TRCC allows working learners the flexibility to complete classroom work during this time. At the end of the program, dependent on job demands, participants may be asked to enter the nuclear plant's job force immediately earning salaries with a range from \$30,000 to \$48,000, while other students move onto further postsecondary education at one of the 22 nuclear programs across the country. Both are measured as success by Millstone and TRCC.

Utilizing the Strengths of the Education Partner

Through the partnership, Millstone relies on TRCC to recruit qualified participants, expand curriculum based on business need, and run the program. TRCC conducts recruiting for the program from established connections with high school counselors, in newspapers, and through job and science fairs. TRCC evaluates applications in order to make scholarship recommendations taking into consideration: high school grade point average; class rank; SAT scores; demonstrated skills, aptitudes and experience; extracurricular activities; written essays; and personal interviews. In order to build the curriculum and run the program, TRCC created an Advisory Board consisting of business, industry and education partners to ensure business demands are met.

Return on Investment for Model Program

Due to the high caliber education received through TRCC, graduates of the nuclear internship program are immediately targeted for the NRC Reactor Operator License job track, which

is an 18 month program of classroom and simulator training for one of the toughest jobs at the nuclear plant. On average, the license job track costs the company approximately \$350,000 for each worker to receive the license. Throughout the nuclear industry, as well as at Millstone, the dropout rate for this training is 20 percent for regular hires. However, 100% of the TRCC graduates with the Associate Degree in Nuclear Engineering Technology complete the training and receive the operator license. Millstone considers their investment in these TRCC graduates a hedge against the 20% dropout rate that has proven a solid investment for the company to date.

"As a graduate of the nuclear internship program, it is clear to me and Millstone that its investment provides high-caliber, educated and eager workers who excel through difficult on-the-job training requirements and in their careers in the nuclear field."

- Trad Horner
Supervisor in Training
Millstone Power Station

Since the beginning, 222 graduates of the nuclear technology program have worked at Millstone and more than 110 graduates currently work at the plant as shift managers, unit supervisors, reactor operators, plant equipment operators, health physics technicians, chemistry technicians and electricians. Millstone also realizes higher retention rate amongst these graduates compared to "off the street" hires due to their commitment to live in the local area and their interest in the nuclear field as a career. The partnership with TRCC evolved over time and adeptly responded to evolving demands, including the new security requirements after September 11, 2001 events. The partnership and program have been held up as a best practice model for the industry and, looking forward, Millstone is considering allowing other Dominion-owned power plants to access the graduates.

For more information about Millstone Power Station, please visit www.dom.com.

HISTORY: Since 1970

EMPLOYEES: approximately 1,100

LOCATION: Connecticut

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Northrop Grumman



Business Outcomes

- Proven succession planning: over 14% of total workforce are graduates
- Strong career mobility with 240 graduates serving in leadership positions, 70 of which are Vice Presidents
- High retention rates through growing you own: 80% after 5 years, 70% after 15 years

Employee Impact

- 2700 Postsecondary credentials earned: Journeyman
- Graduates earn a minimum of \$50,000 base salary
- Professional development and mentoring for incumbents

The Apprentice School

- Continuous operation since 1919
- Source of pipeline talent and career progression

The Apprentice School Ensures Skilled Talent Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding

More than 2,700 current employees of Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding are graduates of The Apprentice School with 240 serving in leadership jobs including 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers.

Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding (NGSB) part of **Northrop Grumman Corporation**, a leading global security company with annual revenues of \$33.8 billion and 120,000 employees spanning five business sectors is the world's leading military shipbuilder and the largest industrial employer in Virginia, with more than 19,000 employees at NGSB's Newport News Operation.

As the sole designer, builder and maintainer of the U.S. Navy's nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, the NGSB's "Yard" requires a highly skilled, technical workforce. To ensure the availability of this workforce, particularly in light of the number of retiring skilled workers, NGSB has made, and continues to make, significant investments in The Apprentice School, co-located at the Yard.

Educated & Skilled Talent Development Through Apprentice Model

In continuous operation since 1919, The Apprentice School fills the "mission critical" role for NGSB of providing a reliable source of skilled talent and future leaders in shipbuilding and repair. The Apprentice School starts with a rigorous application process requiring not only a high school diploma or GED but also U.S. citizenship and the ability to obtain a security clearance. The result in 2009 was that from a diverse applicant base, only 1 in 16 applicants were selected for participation.

However, the rewards of acceptance are remarkable, particularly in the current economic climate. New apprentices are employed by NGSB with full benefits for their entire four- and five-year programs assuring retention in the program. The starting hourly wage progresses on a schedule by term

completion and graduate earnings begin at \$50,000 base salary. Enrollment as of February 2010 was 770 with 39 percent minority and over 20 percent female, contributing to diversity goals of the NGSB.

Through its World Class Shipbuilder Curriculum, The Apprentice School offers academic instruction in 19 registered apprenticeship programs critical to shipbuilding. Apprentices can choose from in-demand careers such as pipefitter, heavy metal fabricator, maintenance electrician, welder and more. All Programs are registered with the Virginia Apprenticeship Council, recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship. Apprentice School graduates receive state government-issued journeyman credentials in their chosen crafts/trades.

PERSONAL STORY

Jerketa Holmes, 24, graduated from The Apprentice School after five years. She is now a professional industrial measurement technician, with three children, all born during her apprenticeship. Holmes was able to support herself and her children while completing her education. "It would not have been possible," she says, without The Apprentice School.

Apprentices are supported by a multilayered mentoring and development program, which is woven into the classroom and on-the-job training instruction. At the same time, apprentices enjoy many of the opportunities of academic life, including student organizations; intercollegiate sports; and professional societies, such as the Society of Manufacturing Engineers, the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, and the U.S. Jaycees.

Contact Peggy Walton with Corporate Voices to learn more about this learn and earn program or join the "Learn & Earn" Business Leadership Team at 202-467-8137 or pwalton@corporatevoices.org

■ Academic Partnerships

The school also offers six optional advanced programs critical to NGSB in Marine Design, Modeling & Simulation, Nuclear Test, Production Planning, Cost Engineering, and Advanced Shipyard Operations. Conducted in partnership with **Thomas Nelson Community College** and **Tidewater Community College**, the advanced programs result in an associate of science degree in engineering, an associate of applied science degree in engineering technology (mechanical or electrical), or an associate of science degree in business administration. Impressively, more than 32 percent of a recent class of completing apprentices earned associate degrees as part of their apprenticeship experience.

For more information on The Apprentice School, visit www.apprenticeschool.com

For more information on Thomas Nelson Community College, visit www.tncc.edu

For more information on Tidewater Community College, visit www.tcc.edu

“The shipyard needs to hire about 10,000 workers over the next seven years to replace its aging workforce.”

— Bob Leber, Director of Education and Workforce Development, Northrop Grumman

■ Business Imperative for The Apprentice School

The stated mission of The Apprentice School includes “[t]o provide the Company with a continuous supply of journeypersons who possess the skills, knowledge, and pride of workmanship which have traditionally distinguished the shipbuilding craftsman.” This

For more information about Northrop Grumman, visit www.northropgrumman.com

SECTOR: Global Security/Shipbuilding and Repair
EMPLOYEES: 120,000 with 19,000 in Newport News, VA
ANNUAL REVENUE: \$33.8 Billion

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

mission becomes critical as the nation experiences retirement eligibility of between 50 and 70 percent of current trade and craft workers in the next 10 years. According to recent research from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University, by 2018, the U. S. will need at least 4.7 million new workers with postsecondary certificates. Clearly, the baby boomers are leaving the workplace and taking with them the skills and competencies required in highly complex, technical workplaces like NGSB.

Replacing a retiring shipbuilding workforce and training employees equipped for the escalating technological challenges of nuclear-powered shipbuilding is the business imperative that justifies NGSB’s investment of more than \$100,000 per student at The Apprentice School. With 80 percent of graduates still employed after five years and 70 percent still employed after 15 years, more than 2,700 graduates of the school are currently among the 19,000 employees of NGSB’s Newport News operation. Graduates of The Apprentice School continue to move through career lattices within NGSB, serving in 240 different leadership jobs with more than 70 vice presidents, directors and senior managers in waterfront operations, engineering and design.

■ Longstanding “Earn-While-You-Learn” Model

While The Apprentice School boasts the graduation of fifth-generation shipbuilders within families, it also has a substantial number of participants who are the first generation to attend and complete college and/or journey-level certification.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- UPS
- Marriott International
- KPMG
- Verizon Wireless
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark

Pacific Gas and Electric



Business Impact

- Over 3-to-1 return on investment due to accelerated time to productivity
- 4.6 out of 5.0 hiring satisfaction
- 60% average diversity of applicant pool
- Accelerated career progression
- Leverages public/private partnership

Student Impact

- Receive work readiness training and skills relevant to energy sector jobs
- Prepare to effectively compete for job opportunities in the high-growth energy field

PowerPathway™

- Customizes workforce training through higher education institutional partners
- Cultivates career pathways to strengthen the talent pool of skilled workers in communities across California
- Improves access to jobs in high-growth energy field for underserved communities and military veterans
- Fosters public/private partnership with WIBs and education

Collaboration with Workforce System and Education Creates Skilled Applicant Pool Pacific Gas and Electric Company

Time-to-productivity gained through PG&E's PowerPathway™ program, a collaboration between business, the public workforce system and higher education, creates a skilled, "ready now" and diverse pool of talent with a return on investment of over 3-to-1.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is one of the largest combination natural gas and electric utilities in the United States. Based in San Francisco, the company employs approximately 20,000 associates who carry out PG&E's primary business – the transmission and delivery of energy. The company provides natural gas and electric service to approximately 15 million people throughout a 70,000-square-mile service area in northern and central California. Like many in the energy industry, PG&E is concerned about the disconnect between the company's workforce demands and the availability of work-ready applicants.

At the same time, new green energy technologies are emerging and incumbent workers, as well as new job applicants, are not prepared with the skills needed for the industry. PG&E needed to increase awareness of its good union-wage jobs and help individuals in its surrounding communities understand and acquire the skills required to work in these jobs. In order to build a strong candidate pool of "ready now" skilled and diverse workers, to improve supervisor satisfaction with new hires, and to enhance time-to-productivity, PG&E launched the PowerPathway™ program—with a combination of education, government, labor and industry partners—cultivating career pathways that strengthen community access to and employee progression into new energy jobs.

Collaborating with Industry and Higher Education Partners

Due to the shortage of skilled applicants and the acceleration of incumbent skilled workers retiring, PG&E aggressively built internal

buy-in at the company across departments and within the C-Suite leadership for the PowerPathway™ concept, which was to create a network of educational programs designed to build capacity to produce skilled workers.

PERSONAL STORY

Sayphong Moua, a first generation Hmong-American, had been working for eight years in the meat department at a food retailer when he learned about the PG&E PowerPathway™ training program. As someone who likes to work with his hands and enjoys being outside most of the time, he leapt at the chance to train for a career in utilities. In 2008, Sayphong was accepted into one of the first PowerPathway™ Bridge to Utility Worker programs at Fresno City College. The program gave him a better understanding of how the company operated, and gave him exposure to climbing poles safely and other demands of the job. Most importantly, he learned it all from people who were already inside the company. After completing the program in the fall, Sayphong was hired by PG&E as a utility worker in the Gas Department Service Center in Rocklin, California. He has since moved up into the apprentice program at PG&E and today is an Apprentice Electrician in PG&E's Hydro Department based in Auberry, California. Sayphong has discovered an industry he is excited about and is encouraged by the support he receives from supervisors and others who work closely with him to help him achieve journey-level status and advance his career.

With an understanding of the public workforce system, PG&E created a partnership with the Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and community colleges that leveraged their assets to serve not only the company but also the broader employer community. Pre-employment services are supplied by the public workforce system, and the community colleges provide customized skilled craft training.

When it launched PowerPathway™ in 2008, PG&E's initial goal was to fill 70 vacant positions and graduate three cohort classes of 25 applicants each from three different locations. PG&E received more than 4,000 applications when the program was first posted. Applicants, generally from local, underserved communities and with at least tenth grade level math and English skills, apply to the program through PG&E's PowerPathway™ website (www.pge.com/powerpathway).

“It takes many years of training to operate and maintain our gas and electric facilities. PowerPathway allows us to partner with schools and communities to ensure we have a qualified pool of candidates for our workforce.”

— Chris Johns
President
Pacific Gas and Electric Company

The WIBs then screen, pre-test, advise and support potential applications to PG&E. Three local community colleges provide 10-to-12-week training courses, developed and customized jointly by PG&E and the community college leadership. General coursework for the training classes runs from math and reading to physical conditioning, industry awareness, and compliance with Occupational Health and Safety Administration guidelines.

Once applicants are signed up for classes, they receive Individual Training Account funds from the WIB to support their education.

Upon successful completion of the program, graduates receive a certificate of completion from the college, a certificate of completion from the PowerPathway™ program, and, most importantly, are considered work ready and competitive candidates for career opportunities within the energy sector.

Producing Competitive Applicants

Recognizing the need for qualified applicants not only within PG&E but also across California's extended energy industry, PG&E invited other energy employers to tap the talent pool by considering those who have completed all prerequisites and coursework to be work ready, and to be competitive job applicants. Though there is never a guarantee of a job, graduates of PowerPathway™ fare much better in the hiring process than typical applicants. From 2008-2010, the PowerPathway Skilled Crafts Training Network trained over 160 individuals across seven Bridge to Pre-apprentice/Utility Worker programs; 104 have been hired into industry-related positions, including 88 at PG&E. Wages earned range from \$19.50 to \$35 an hour. Of those PG&E supervisors who have hired and worked with graduates, 100% said that they would hire other PowerPathway™ graduates and rated their hiring satisfaction a 4.6 out of 5.0. PG&E is also seeing PowerPathway™ hires advance on average six months ahead of their peers when it comes to their apprenticeship progression.

Calculated Return on Investment

PG&E calculated its return on investment by determining that a PowerPathway™ hire who progresses six months ahead of peers in his/her apprenticeship equates to roughly a \$30,000 savings in time-to-productivity, based on salary alone. Currently, with 28 employees meeting that criteria, the return is over 3-to-1 on the investment. PowerPathway™ also engenders significant intangible benefits in the form of community goodwill and increased diversity.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC
Phone: 202-467-8130
Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com
Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- CVS Caremark
- AOL

For more information about PG&E, please visit www.pge.com

For more information about PowerPathway, please visit www.pge.com/powerpathway

Sector: Energy. Serving 15 million within 70,000 square mile service area

Employees: Approximately 20,000

Toyota / AMTEC

EMERGING BEST
PRACTICE

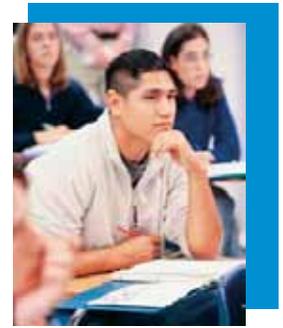


Intensive Partnering is Required to Establish Industry Certification

Toyota / AMTEC

Toyota lends leadership to community college-industry partnership in order to assure education and learning outcomes serve business needs, as well as individuals

It was 2005 when Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky (TMMK) and Toyota Motor Engineering and Manufacturing North America leaders were approached by Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to bring industry leadership to a nascent collaboration forming to explore the viability of a multi-state education model for automotive manufacturing. At that time, the Georgetown, KY, plant was going on twenty years old and leadership was seeking operational efficiencies in training and education. TMMK already had a strong history of partnering with Bluegrass Community and Technical College, a KCTCS college, and saw this request for deeper engagement as an opportunity to tap the college system to teach the fundamentals needed in its manufacturing maintenance workforce—math, basic electricity, hydraulics, and more. This would allow Toyota's new regional center (North American Production Support Center or NAPSC) to focus resources on advanced training specific to Toyota. Additionally, because the collaboration was to be a multi-state entity, it had the potential of creating standardized learning outcomes not only in all regions in which Toyota operates, but might also offer Toyota-level training and education to the corporation's supply chain, driving further efficiencies.



The approach taken by KCTCS of making industry partnerships an essential requirement from the beginning resonated with the Toyota philosophy of "customer first," according to Caren Caton, General Manager, Toyota NAPSC "It doesn't do any good to design a car without talking to the customers who drive them." Because the automotive manufacturers and their suppliers would be the key customers/drivers of this new automotive manufacturing technician education model, KCTCS considered it critical to gain employer participation and leadership in the collaboration. Toyota became instrumental in bringing meaningful involvement of automotive manufacturers and suppliers to the collaboration.

AMTEC is Created

In April 2005, with support of the National Science Foundation, KCTCS held a meeting to which community and technical colleges from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee, Indiana, and Texas were invited with the requirement that each bring at least one automotive manufacturing employer partner. The outcome of the meeting, at which 27 college representatives and 28 business representatives were in attendance, was acknowledgement that there was a national economic imperative to cooperate to better prepare skilled workers for the automotive manufacturing sector. A core partnership was formed between 12 lead community and technical colleges and 18 automotive manufacturing companies from 8 states. By August 2005, the Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC) was created with a mission and vision developed and primary goals and outcomes stated.

Partnering Deeply is Challenging

The organization began holding meetings with multiple colleges and their industry partners called "academies" at which the work of identifying a common set of competencies and a common

Contact Peggy Walton with Corporate Voices to learn more about this learn and earn program or join the "Learn & Earn" Business Leadership Team at 202-467-8137 or pwalton@corporatevoices.org.

Automotive Manufacturing Technical Education Collaborative (AMTEC)

- Creates operational efficiencies
- Standardizes learning outcomes endorsed by industry
- Founded in 2005
- National Science Foundation Advanced Technology Education Program
- Industry and education partnership
- Create industry-endorsed maintenance certification assessments

curriculum was undertaken. However, according to Annette Parker, AMTEC Executive Director, attendance was strongly weighted toward academics and was lowly attended by industry. Getting industrial competitors to come together and share education and training needs was a challenge. Recognizing that success was not possible without employer leadership, AMTEC approached the employer partners to exercise a stronger employer leadership position within the collaborative. Toyota accepted the challenge and in February 2007, hosted an AMTEC academy at NAPSC that became a catalyst for employer engagement. Calling on other automotive manufacturers to become part of the solution, Caton posited that, “Working together the companies could accomplish much more than any of them might do individually.”

Building trusting relationships in order to facilitate sharing among competitors is a time consuming process. Multiple academies, which continue today, were held in which employer representatives, working with academic partners, negotiated the skills and competencies required for all the employers to be able to endorse the learning outcomes. The time investment paid off as BMW, Ford, General Motors, Toyota, and many of their major suppliers agreed on fundamentals common to all automotive manufacturing that can be standardized and taught across multiple colleges, regions, and states. The process leverages curriculum development and delivery option for use across the industry including offering suppliers the same education as OEMs at reasonable costs.

Public/Private Investment

Initially, AMTEC applied for and received a planning grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), followed by a two-year NSF project grant. Subsequently, AMTEC applied to the NSF Advanced Technology Education (ATE) Program to become a National Center of Excellence for Automotive Manufacturing, a designation that was bestowed in September 2009 along with a \$5.5 million five-year grant. Toyota and other leading automotive manufacturers are leveraging this public investment in building a highly skilled workforce, by contributing their leadership, knowledge, expertise, education and training requirements, [and other input] to assure that learning outcomes strengthen the competency and global competitiveness of the automotive manufacturing and service industry.

“Working together the companies could accomplish much more than any of them might do individually.”

Caren Caton
General Manager, NAPSC
Toyota

As the ATE National Center for Excellence in Manufacturing, AMTEC works with colleges and industry partners to create industry-endorsed maintenance certification assessments and to validate college curriculum aligned to industry-endorsed skills standards. The collaborative promotes a flexible career pathway tied to achievement of competency-based education and certifications, sharing best practices and education models. In effect, it is building a skilled workforce pipeline that serves not only Toyota, but the entire automotive manufacturing industry.

Global Application Delivers Value

Participation in AMTEC continues to grow in value for global companies as AMTEC joined a consortium that includes automotive manufactures, educators and the German Ministry to create the Global Automotive Technical Education Network. This global structure of collaboration enables participants to benchmark against best strategies for implementation and continuous improvement of educational and credentialing processes. It provides a structure for developing research-based data to address current and future global workforce competencies. The return to Toyota, as well as other industry partners, for the significant investments it makes in AMTEC continues to grow with the expanding influence AMTEC exerts in assuring a highly-skilled technical workforce for the future of global automotive manufacturing.

For more information about Toyota, visit www.toyota.com.
For more information about AMTEC, visit www.autoworkforce.org.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation’s economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC
Phone: 202-467-8130
Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com
Twitter: @corporatevoices
www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org
Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- Walmart
- AOL

UPS



Business Outcomes

- Relocation avoided-Operations expanded
- Turnover rate reduced from over 70% to less than 20%
- Strong talent development pipeline

Employee Impact

- 2,500 postsecondary credentials earned: certificate, associate, bachelor and/or masters degrees
- 74% of graduates could not have afforded college without Metropolitan College

Metropolitan College

- Successful public/private partnership between business/education and government
- Second largest state employer retained in region
- Regional talent pool developed through increased postsecondary attainment

Public/Private Partnership Stabilizes Overnight Operations UPS and Metropolitan College

Workforce turnover rate decreased from over 70 percent to less than 20 percent among part-time, overnight employees participating in the Metropolitan College partnership.

UPS, a \$45.3 billion corporation, is the world's largest package delivery company and a global leader in supply chain and freight services. In the late 1990s, UPS needed to expand its Next Day Air hub operation in Louisville, Ky. However, the company was experiencing an extremely high turnover rate of over 70 percent among part-time employees that staffed the hub from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m.

Seeking to stabilize its part-time workforce, UPS helped create a public/private partnership that offered staffing support for its overnight operation in Louisville while contributing to the overall educational attainment in the region and state.

Development of Public/Private Partnership

As UPS was considering expanding its Next Day Air hub to other locations-due to an unstable workforce pool - city, county and state officials realized the economic imperative to keep UPS in Louisville. Together with UPS they joined to create an intermediary solution. Jefferson Community and Technical College, the University of Louisville, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Louisville Metro Government, and UPS formed a partnership to meet the workforce demands of UPS' Next Day Air operation and provide eligible Kentucky residents access to a tuition-free postsecondary education.

That partnership, Metropolitan College (MC), is not a traditional brick and mortar college. MC provides career and academic planning as well as financial and support services vital to motivating and keeping working students engaged.

Representatives of MC are on site at UPS to offer guidance for students, translating into employee/student retention. MC participants employed at UPS' Next Day Air hub are eligible for payment of up to 100 percent of their full-time undergraduate Kentucky resident-rate tuition. UPS funds 50 percent of the tuition, a fraction of the relocation and tuition cost. The public partners match 50 percent of the tuition and infrastructure costs. In addition, UPS funds 100 percent of book reimbursement and academic bonuses paid at semester completions, credit hour milestones and graduation.

PERSONAL STORY

Louisville native Nicole Fields did not expect to find educational benefits when discussing employment with the UPS recruiter who explained the Metropolitan College program benefits and requirements to her.

While an employee at UPS and a Metropolitan College student, Nicole earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Louisville. She credits the program with giving her the opportunity to pursue her goals. "The Metropolitan College program provided me with free college tuition, bonuses and a program mentor."

Without the benefits of Metropolitan College, Nicole says it would have been more of a challenge to complete her degree in a timely manner. Nicole says the program offered motivation through financial reward. *continued on next page*

continued from previous page

“The Metropolitan College program offers more benefits to students than most educational programs. Not only is your tuition covered at 100 percent, but bonuses offset the additional costs students incur,” she says.

She now works for Girl Scouts of Kentuckiana, Inc. as an outreach director. She earns a family sustaining wage and is helping to support her family and the economy of Louisville

Academic Partnerships

Metropolitan College students are free to pursue certificates and/or degrees in any discipline offered by **Jefferson Community and Technical College** or **University of Louisville**. The certificate or degree need not align with positions or careers at UPS.

From inception through spring semester 2009, more than 2,500 individuals have earned certificates, associate degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and/or master’s or other advanced degrees through participation in MC. The majority of participants are the first in their families to complete college and otherwise may not have achieved this success due to financial barriers.

For more information on Metropolitan College, visit www.metro-college.com

Business Imperative for Joining Public/Private Partnership

UPS recognizes that college students are a good match for its Next Day Air operation. Part-time evening hours make class scheduling easier, and students tend to be more consistent employees for UPS.

For more information about UPS, visit www.ups.com

SECTOR: Package delivery and global supply chain and freight services

SIZE: Founded 1907, now \$45.4B corporation

SERVES: 200 countries and territories worldwide

Joining the MC consortium has helped UPS stabilize its workforce, decreasing its over 70 percent turnover rate to less than 20 percent. UPS continues to look to MC for recruitment of new employees/students. Awareness and recruitment programs now extend across the state. As an added return, many students who enter the UPS workforce through the Next Day Air operation continue with the company, excelling in career pathways and providing valuable skilled talent in multiple divisions.

“Business, education, and government must work together as equal partners to find solutions to our workforce development challenges and we must do it now!”

— Dave Adkisson
President and CEO
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce

Win/Win/Win

The MC partnership is a winning strategy for all participants. UPS gains a stable, skilled workforce in the part-time next day air operations-as well as long-term career pathways. The city, region and state retain a major economic engine and a more educated populace. Education providers enjoy committed, economically sustained students. And individuals achieve academic goals and career successes that lead to personal fulfillment and family-sustaining wages.

The UPS program offers educational attainment to individuals who have few other options. In fact, of the students who completed the Graduation Plan Survey in 2009, 74 percent said they could not have afforded college if not for MC benefits.

This nationally acclaimed partnership could be replicated throughout the country where similar workforce requirements exist. The model seems to be a good fit for overnight operations in the transportation, distribution and logistics sector.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org
Team Members include:

- CVS Caremark
- Convergys
- Verizon Wireless
- KPMG
- Yum Brands, Inc.
- Expeditors

Verizon Wireless



Business Outcomes

- Strong succession planning: career mobility increased by 20%
- Key talent development strategy: 20% of workforce participate in LearningLINK
- Turnover rate reduced by 50%
- Recruitment: 55% cite tuition assistance as decision factor
- 96% of participants intended to stay with Verizon for at least two years after degree

Employee Impact

- 600+ earned associate's, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees
- Graduation recognition program
- 71% of supervisors report improved job performance

Tuition Assistance Program: LearningLINK

- Work with over 1,800 colleges and universities across the US
- 17,000+ participants in 2009

Talent Retention and Development through Postsecondary Attainment

Verizon Wireless

Fifty-five percent of participants in the Verizon Wireless LearningLINK program said the tuition assistance program influenced their employment decision and the program reduced turnover by 50 to 60 percent.

Verizon Wireless employs more than 83,000 people in 49 states, 80 percent of whom are “front-line” employees engaged in retail and customer service — entry-level positions that historically suffer high turnover rates. Verizon Wireless is leveraging its comprehensive tuition assistance benefits program to accomplish strategic organizational goals of increasing retention, performance and productivity of employees while offering them opportunities for educational attainment and career advancement.

Corporate Culture of Continuous Learning

From day one of employment, Verizon Wireless' new hires are encouraged to think about their career pathways. The new hire orientation is called Launch Your Success Story. They also are introduced to Plan Your Career, a course that allows employees to complete online skills and abilities assessments to benchmark themselves against job opportunities within the company. The course enables employees to chart a plan of competency attainment that might encompass targeted experience, technical training and/or enrollment in academic programs.

Verizon Wireless supports academic attainment by providing full- and part-time employees (working a minimum of 20 hours per week) 100 percent prepaid tuition, textbooks and certain fees to take courses related to their current position or other career opportunities within Verizon Wireless through the LearningLINK program. Full-time employee benefits are up to \$8,000 per year in prepaid or reimbursement of tuition while part-time employee benefits are up to \$4,000; neither

requires tenure to participate. Through diligent measurement techniques, it has been shown that turn-over cost savings cover LearningLINK expenses and generate additional savings to the business.

Through a strong recognition program, participants are supported and encouraged throughout their academic journey. Supervisors and managers take internal training programs that include coaching their direct reports on career development. Informal mentoring programs also exist throughout the organization. In addition, a college graduation recognition program includes a gift and card from the vice president of human resources. Graduation photos and testimonials from LearningLINK participants are featured on the Web site and in the LearningLINK program brochure given to all new hires.

PERSONAL STORY

Shawna VanDraska of Overland Park, KS, now a full-time marketing consultant for Verizon Wireless, said: “I recently graduated with my bachelor's degree in business administration, and I have Verizon Wireless to thank. The tuition assistance program is so generous, easy to use and such a blessing. I am fortunate to be working for a company that is willing to invest in its employees. While several of my classmates are now struggling to pay off their student loans, I am buying a new house! Thank you Verizon Wireless!”

Academic Partnerships

Partnering with community colleges and universities, Verizon Wireless arranges for on-site delivery of classes leading to college degrees in most of its 30 call centers and other corporate office locations. These programs support a full-time university academic dean on site as well as a part-time university enrollment counselor.

Employees benefit from the “purchasing power” of a corporation the size of Verizon Wireless, which includes articulation agreements or contracts that have been negotiated with national education providers such as Strayer University and Bellevue University along with almost 100 local education providers, leading to a flexible, blended learning system.

To help speed degree acquisition, Verizon Wireless also promotes prior learning assessment and accreditation of experiential learning. It makes available *Earn College Credit for What You Know*, a book that walks employees through the process of obtaining credit for life experiences. Verizon Wireless also is participating in a universal pilot project to launch a national online platform for obtaining college degree credit for prior learning experience.

Business Imperative for the Tuition Assistance Program

More than 17,000 employees, 20 percent of its workforce, participated in the LearningLINK program in 2009. More than 600 earned associate, bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees.

Verizon Wireless sees this as a valuable recruiting tool — 55 percent of participants said the tuition assistance program was a factor in their decision to accept employment at the

company. Internal metrics indicate that the program also serves as a strong retention tool because it reduces the turnover rate by 50 to 60 percent among LearningLINK participants and graduates. In addition, participants and graduates show a higher rate of job transfers and promotions than the company’s general employee population with career mobility increasing by 20%.

“By having a well-educated workforce, our employees are able to do a better job of meeting customers’ needs.”

— Dorothy Martin, LearningLINK,
National Program Manager,
Verizon Wireless

Verizon Wireless managers reported improved job performance and behavior among the LearningLINK participants. Verizon Wireless has created a comprehensive measurement process that reports dollar-based returns on investments in LearningLINK for corporate leaders. According to LearningLINK National Program Manager Dorothy Martin, the key to winning continuous support for this comprehensive tuition assistance program is the ability to measure and quantify for corporate leaders the contribution it makes to Verizon Wireless’ overall strategic goals. In addition, Martin provides managers a quarterly summary that details the bottom line return on investment for their particular program, earning enthusiastic support from the field.

Even in the current difficult economic conditions, Verizon Wireless continues to invest in the postsecondary educational attainment of its employees because it is a winning talent development, recruiting and retention strategy.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we improve the lives of working families by developing and advancing innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: [@corporatevoices](https://twitter.com/corporatevoices)

www.corporatevoices.org

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. “Best practice” talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Pacific Gas & Electric
- UPS
- Marriott International
- KPMG
- TJX Companies, Inc.

For more information about Verizon Wireless, visit www.verizonwireless.com.

SECTOR: Retail: Wireless provider-high tech

EMPLOYEES: 83,000+ in 49 states

CUSTOMERS: 92M+

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Walmart



Building a Retail Talent Pipeline with PLAs and Online Education Partner Walmart

Partnering with online higher education provider American Public University, Walmart creates an educated and skilled pipeline of workers and offers entry-level workers the opportunity to earn college credits for prior and on-the-job training and to continue postsecondary education.

Walmart serves customers and members more than 200 million times per week at more than 9,005 retail units under 60 different banners in 15 countries. With fiscal year 2010 sales of \$405 billion, Walmart employs 2.1 million associates worldwide. For its 1.4 million domestic associates, Walmart committed to supporting the completion of postsecondary degrees in order to grow the corporate talent pipeline and to offer career advancement opportunities to associates. In order to follow the Walmart business model and culture of using scale to lower costs, the company spent a year and a half developing an alternative to traditional tuition assistance programs. In 2010, Walmart established the Lifelong Learning Program, which meets the following four company goals:

1. To help associates advance their careers at Walmart and beyond;
2. To grow Walmart's talent pipeline;
3. To foster the understanding that "retail jobs create career opportunities" by demonstrating the value of transferable skills that associates learn; and
4. To position Walmart as a leading, best practice company contributing to America's goal of regaining the position of highest percentage of postsecondary attainment among 25-34 year olds by 2020.

The Lifelong Learning Program, a partnership between Walmart and American Public University (APU), provides associates the opportunity to earn college credits for prior, on-the-job training while building a portfolio of work and education experience. The effort is creating a more skilled and educated workforce, while positioning Walmart as a leading company in talent development.

Overcoming Barriers to Lifelong Learning

Walmart surveyed its associates to determine if college access is important to them and to understand what program elements would increase the likelihood of participation. Associates responded by overwhelmingly indicating a strong interest in continuing education, but cited affordability and accessibility as the top two barriers. Associates voiced an interest in studying a variety of different subjects, broader than those related to just their

PERSONAL STORY

James Buskell started working as a "cart pusher" with Walmart 15 years ago and has worked his way up to Assistant Manager. When he was 18 or 19 years old, he began pursuing a postsecondary degree but, in his words, "[At the time] I did not have the focus or drive to finish." James jumped at the opportunity to participate in Walmart's Lifelong Learning Program because the timing was finally right to finish his degree, and he wants to set a great example for his children. American Public University online courses allow him the flexibility to balance family, life, work and school demands, and he likes that he is able to earn college credits for what he has learned during his career. James said, "My career at Walmart has shown me that there are opportunities for those who are willing to work hard. The Lifelong Learning Program and the ability to learn no matter where you are in life is one of those opportunities." James is working toward a Bachelor's degree in Management with a Retail concentration.

Business Impact

- Create skilled and educated talent pool
- Develop career pathways
- Credit for on-the-job training decreases tuition costs

Employee Impact

- Earn college credits
- Credit for on-the-job training boosts academic completion
- Flexible online learning opportunities
- 15% tuition grant

Lifelong Learning Program

- Partnership with online American Public University
- Earn college credit for on-the-job training - 450,000 in positions identified as college credit eligible
- Ability to create an education, work-based learning portfolio
- Block transfer agreements with 42 community colleges

jobs at Walmart. They also indicated the need for flexible class scheduling to accommodate work schedules and busy lives. In fact, 72 percent of survey respondents said they preferred studying online to attending a brick and mortar school. With these insights into associates' needs, Walmart evaluated 81 colleges and universities before selecting APU as its preferred education partner. APU, a leading online university with a strong history of service to America's military personnel, fit Walmart's business model by collaborating to lower tuition costs for employees, making the program more affordable. By choosing an online university, employees are able to begin educational programs at their discretion and to flex classes based on the needs of their jobs and lives. This flexibility also serves Walmart in a way that standard classes do not. Scheduled to begin with the fall semester, they conflict with the retail company's busiest season.

■ Earning College Credit for On-the-Job Training

Walmart's Lifelong Learning Program launched in June 2010 and immediately generated interest from associates. In the first six months, more than 550 retail associates registered for college and are attending classes. It has three components: 1. APU offers all Walmart employees a 15 percent tuition grant; 2. Walmart employees can earn college credit at APU for their qualified on-the-job training; and 3. Walmart will be investing up to \$50 million to further reduce tuition costs for participating employees. Walmart and APU are working closely to document and review on-the-job learning in a number of critical positions within the company.

To date, more than 450,000 associates are in positions identified as college credit eligible. For the positions reviewed to date, associates can earn from 3 to 30 college credits, and those who have held more than one of these positions over the past 10 years can earn multiple credit grants. In total, associates can earn up

to 45 percent of the credit required for either an associate's or a bachelor's degree, based on what they have learned on the job and their choice of degree to pursue. The APU degrees that most closely align to credit for Walmart job learning are the Associate's in Management and the Bachelor's in Management, both with a concentration in Retail Management.

"I see . . . education, training and involving our associates as being the major advantage for Walmart."

- Sam Walton,
Founder, Walmart

However, associates can choose among any degree APU offers and in cases where an associate chooses a different degree, usually some credit from their on-the job learning can be applied toward degree electives. APU has also committed to negotiate in good faith with any community college interested in establishing an articulation agreement. Currently APU has established block transfer agreements with 42 community colleges, giving those students who wish to study in a classroom or transfer prior credits to APU's program another affordable option.

■ Refining and Growing

Walmart committed to investing up to \$50 million at the launch of the Lifelong Learning Program and is currently studying additional ways to fulfill this commitment. Since program launch, Walmart has paid the costs for all Lifelong Learning Review Courses associates take at APU, which help associates demonstrate their subject-matter mastery and place out of college courses through final exams that are similar to CLEP tests. As it considers additional investments in associates' education, Walmart is guided by its overarching goal of increasing enrollment in and adherence to the Lifelong Learning Program.

For more information about the Lifelong Learning Program, see Walmart's 2011 Global Responsibility Report at <http://walmartstores.com/Sustainability/7951.aspx>

INDUSTRY: Retail

FOUNDED: 1962

EMPLOYEES: 1.4 million domestic associates in U.S.

About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- UPS
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- Georgia Power
- KPMG

WAFC



Business Impact

- Foster emerging leaders
- Fill succession pipeline
- Elevate industry skills level
- Identify core competencies for success
- 600 certificate holders

Employee Impact

- 44% RMC survey respondents earn associate's degree
- 21% RMC survey respondents earn bachelor's degree + higher
- College credit attainment
- Career/education pathway navigation
- Indication of accelerated promotion/wage increase

Retail Management Certificate Program

- 10 defined college courses
- Industry endorsed credential
- Professional designation
- Open source textbooks available

Competency-based Education Fills Talent Development Niche

Western Association of Food Chains

Retail Food Industry Association creates a competency-based certification in partnership with community colleges that establishes career pathways and develops emerging leaders.

The Western Association of Food Chains (WAFC) is a nonprofit business organization whose board comprises senior executives from the retail and wholesale food industry. The 40-plus companies represented employ well over 400,000 workers and account for sales exceeding \$200 billion in 14 western states. Participants include large corporations such as Kroger, Safeway and SuperValu/Albertsons, as well as a number of regional companies and independent stores.

Historically, the retail grocery industry has seen only 14-20 percent of employees attaining postsecondary certificates or degrees, a reality that hampers the sector as the workplace becomes more sophisticated and technologically challenging. Management positions in the grocery industry increasingly require technical skills and use of complex systems to manage millions of dollars in revenue and hundreds of employees. However, the low educational attainment associated with the sector, in part, drives the mistaken perception that the food industry does not provide viable pathways to family-sustaining wages and meaningful careers. Founded in 1921, WAFC's sole mission is to build education depth throughout the food industry.

Career Pathway & Industry-Endorsed Credential

In order to provide employers with a more educated and high-performing workforce, and to establish a defined career pathway aligned with educational attainment, WAFC established the Retail Management Certificate (RMC) Program, beginning with community college partners in California. Launched in 2000, the program has expanded dramatically in the past decade and is now operational in over 150 community college locations in 12 western states and online nationally. Early research

conducted by an industrial psychologist identify the core competencies required for success in supervisory and management positions within the grocery industry. WAFC and partner companies built upon these to develop learning objectives for the RMC. These competencies received further validation when they subsequently aligned with the Retail Model that was established by the U.S. Department of Labor.

PERSONAL STORY

Tim Marsh started out like many in the retail food industry - "pushing carts" as a young person. By the end of his second year with Foods Co., a Kroger company, he was a Head Clerk, closing their largest volume store. Now, ten years into a flourishing career, Tim is halfway through the WAFC Retail Management Certificate. His company's support of the certificate and tuition reimbursement program were key motivators in his decision to return to school. Tim knows that much knowledge of the business is gained through experience, but admits that higher education "really shows you how everything ties together." Working full-time, 45 to 54 hours per week, and maintaining a 3.7 GPA, he hopes to become a Store Director and then advance to a district staff position.

Working collaboratively with community college and industry leaders, WAFC "mapped" these competencies and learning objectives to existing course offerings within community college systems. They identified partners willing to modify curriculum to assure specific learning outcomes required to gain the WAFC endorsement were met. One of the strengths of the certificate is the fact that it is, essentially,

pulled from standard academic course work offered by most community colleges. Ten college courses now comprise the RMC certificate program. Employers are able to leverage career advancement interest and more deeply engage participating employees because curriculum content is closely tied to real work experience.

W AFC has worked further with community colleges to make earning the RMC achievable for full-time, as well as part-time, employees by assuring that all classes are provided online and in accelerated formats. Upon successful completion individuals receive not only the W AFC certificate, but also a community college certificate and 30 semester/45 quarter credit hours toward an associate's or a bachelor's degree. W AFC strongly encourages the colleges to utilize open source textbooks as well in order to assure free or low cost classroom materials.

From Incumbent Workers to Emerging Leaders

The retail grocery industry serves as a point of entry into the workforce for a large number of individuals, many beginning their work experience at ages 16 to 18. These entry-level workers often do not pursue higher education for both cultural and situational reasons. However, the industry has a history of promoting from within, offering career opportunities to those sincerely engaged in the various occupations required by this complex sector. At a time when the workplace is becoming more high-tech and key leaders are retiring, it is critical for the industry to encourage educational development among the younger workforce. A recent survey of the RMC graduates indicates that 44 percent of the respondents have also achieved an associate's degree while 21 percent have gone on to a bachelor's and higher.

While W AFC bestows a cash honorarium to RMC recipients, all W AFC companies promote the RMC as valuable and prestigious, and as a pathway to career opportunities. Most offer some type of tuition assistance and recognition for participating. Many of the companies celebrate graduates by holding award ceremonies to recognize certificate attainment and to publicly award monetary bonuses.

For more information about W AFC, visit www.wafc.com

HISTORY: Since 1921

W AFC COMPANIES: 40+ representing 400,000 workers and \$200+ billion sales

Funded, in part, by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

RMC Considered Essential: Expansion Planned

There is solid understanding among W AFC companies of the value contributed by participating in the RMC. According to Jack H. Brown, CEO, Stater Bros. Supermarkets, a regional grocery chain of 167 stores, "The W AFC RMC plays an important role in the professional development of our Stater Bros. 'family' members. It has made a real difference and gained our strongest support as evidenced in our large number of graduates."

"The W AFC Retail Management Certificate Program is an effective program for developing the foundational business skills that expand employees' capabilities on the job."

— **Bruce Everett**
Executive Vice President
Safeway Inc.

The RMC Program is poised for significant growth among the W AFC companies. In the Fall of 2011, W AFC challenged the companies to offer their qualified employees the opportunity to enroll in one RMC class at an approved college with no out-of-pocket tuition expense. The challenge was designed to foster greater uptake of the certificate program, by creating broader awareness of the program and overcoming employee resistance based on financial constraints. The challenge was accepted by most W AFC companies and they campaigned heavily to generate encouraging results.

Participating companies saw a 25% increase in enrollment over the previous semester, of which 68% were either new students or non-completers who re-enrolled. Conversely, companies that did not offer the incentive saw a 32% drop in the same semester.

Building wider penetration within W AFC for the RMC will generate a pipeline of workers transitioning to emerging leaders. Their elevated competencies will assure a competitive workforce for the retail grocery industry and position individuals on career pathways.



About Corporate Voices

Corporate Voices is the leading national business membership organization shaping conversations and collaborations on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, we are a unique voice, and provide leading and best-practice employers a forum to improve the lives of working families, while strengthening our nation's economy and enhancing the vitality of our communities.

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: 202-467-8130

Fax: 202-467-8140

Blog: corporatevoices.wordpress.com

Twitter: @corporatevoices

Find Out More

Corporate Voices is committed to identifying and spotlighting businesses supporting postsecondary completion while making significant contributions to internal company goals. "Best practice" talent development models that increase access to career opportunities through education and training are being examined for characteristics that are transferable and replicable to other employers. This research is being conducted with the guidance of the Corporate Voices Learn and Earn Business Leadership Team consisting of business executives leading promising models and those interested in peer-to-peer learning. If you are interested in joining, contact Peggy Walton at pwalton@corporatevoices.org. Team members include:

- Verizon Wireless
- Northrop Grumman
- CVS Caremark
- Convergys
- Expeditors
- AOL



1020 19th Street, NW, Suite 750
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202-467-8138
www.corporatevoices.org