

# Designing Career Pathways for Adult Learners

September 27, 2023



# About CORD

A national nonprofit organization

## Core tenets:

1. Connecting the classroom to the workplace through contextual and cross-disciplinary instruction
2. Designing seamless pathways from secondary to postsecondary to career
3. Facilitating industry-education collaboration to prepare technicians for work of the future

The logo for CORD.org, featuring the word "CORD" in a large, black, serif font, followed by ".org" in a smaller, italicized, black, serif font. The background of the slide is a vertical gradient from light blue at the top to dark purple at the bottom, with a faint silhouette of mountains in the middle.

CORD.org

*Providing innovative changes in  
education to prepare students  
for greater success in careers  
and higher education*

CENTER FOR OCCUPATIONAL  
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

# Workshop Toolbox



[cord.org/nc-sept-27-2023](https://cord.org/nc-sept-27-2023)



# Workshop Toolbox

September 27, 2023

## Designing Career Pathways for Adult Learners

*Debbie Davidson, Hope Cotner, and Jennifer Jirous Rapp, Facilitators*

### Workshop Handouts

- [Slide Deck \(PDF\)](#)
- [Self-Check 1](#)
- [Connections & Contacts Table](#)
- [ACCP Action Plan Template](#)
- [Self-Check 2](#)
- [Self-Check 3](#)
- [Holistic Supports Inventory](#)

<https://www.cord.org/nc-sept-27-2023/>

### Additional Resources

- [Stackable Credentials Toolkit](#)
- [Employer Engagement Toolkit](#)
- [NCCCS Credit for Prior Learning Policy](#)
- [NC Careers Workforce Credentials](#)
- [Guide for Adult Learners, 2nd Edition, Belk Center](#)

# Evolving Workplace

- Nature of work changing at unprecedented speeds
- Technology advancements in machine learning, AI, IoT, and robotics eliminating some jobs, creating others
- Technicians sit at the center of much of this disruption
- Career paths are continuously evolving
- Education must keep up

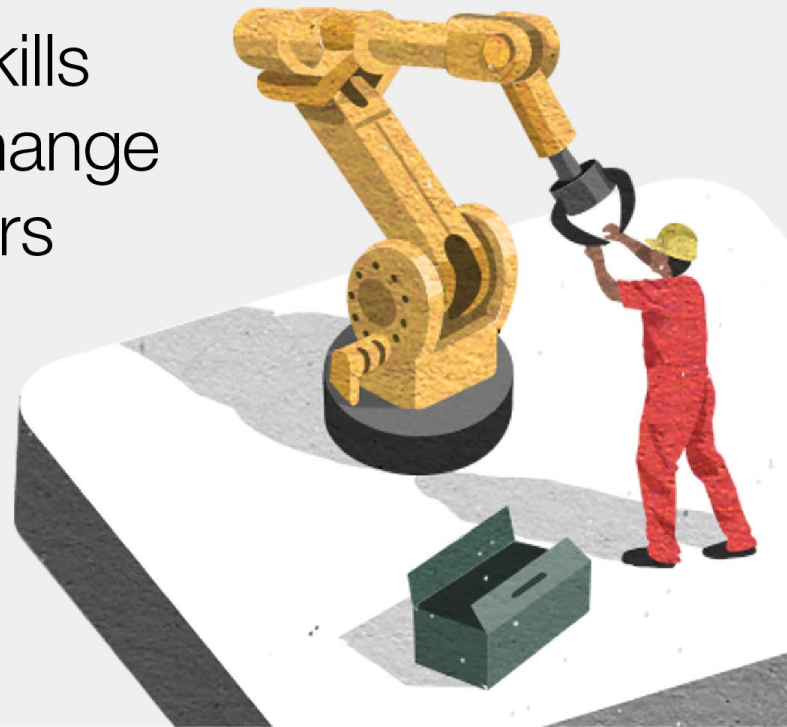


Preparing Technicians for the  
**FUTURE OF WORK**

## Reskilling needs

44%

of workers' core skills  
are expected to change  
in the next five years



**Source:** World Economic Forum,  
*Future of Jobs Report 2023.*

# Top 10 skills of 2023

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1.  <b>Analytical thinking</b>                 | 6.  <b>Technological literacy</b>                |
| 2.  <b>Creative thinking</b>                   | 7.  <b>Dependability and attention to detail</b> |
| 3.  <b>Resilience, flexibility and agility</b> | 8.  <b>Empathy and active listening</b>          |
| 4.  <b>Motivation and self-awareness</b>       | 9.  <b>Leadership and social influence</b>       |
| 5.  <b>Curiosity and lifelong learning</b>     | 10.  <b>Quality control</b>                      |

## Type of skill

 Cognitive skills    Self-efficacy    Management skills    Technology skills    Working with others

## Source

World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2023.

## Note

The skills judged to be of greatest importance to workers at the time of the survey



# Fastest growing vs. fastest declining jobs

## Top 10 fastest growing jobs

1.	<b>AI and Machine Learning Specialists</b>
2.	<b>Sustainability Specialists</b>
3.	<b>Business Intelligence Analysts</b>
4.	<b>Information Security Analysts</b>
5.	<b>Fintech Engineers</b>
6.	<b>Data Analysts and Scientists</b>
7.	<b>Robotics Engineers</b>
8.	<b>Electrotechnology Engineers</b>
9.	<b>Agricultural Equipment Operators</b>
10.	<b>Digital Transformation Specialists</b>

## Top 10 fastest declining jobs

1.	<b>Bank Tellers and Related Clerks</b>
2.	<b>Postal Service Clerks</b>
3.	<b>Cashiers and ticket Clerks</b>
4.	<b>Data Entry Clerks</b>
5.	<b>Administrative and Executive Secretaries</b>
6.	<b>Material-Recording and Stock-Keeping Clerks</b>
7.	<b>Accounting, Bookkeeping and Payroll Clerks</b>
8.	<b>Legislators and Officials</b>
9.	<b>Statistical, Finance and Insurance Clerks</b>
10.	<b>Door-To-Door Sales Workers, News and Street Vendors, and Related Workers</b>

### Source

World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs Report 2023.

### Note

The jobs which survey respondents expect to grow most quickly from 2023 to 2027 as a fraction of present employment figures



# OCTAE: Pathways to Credentials



## Three Essential Components:

1. Engaging employers in strategic and sustainable ways
2. Building career pathways based on industry-validated stackable credentials
3. Supporting completion through non-credit/credit alignment

# Advancing Credentials THROUGH Career Pathways



# Advancing Credentials THROUGH Career Pathways

## Framework essential components:

1. **Strategic Employer Engagement** through an industry-led model that yields workforce intelligence at a depth and with a frequency to facilitate continuous program improvement and innovation
2. **Seamless Career Pathways** supporting learners of all ages and skill levels, built on stackable credentials aligned to in-demand skills and employment opportunities, and collaboratively developed by educators and employers
3. **Support for Credential Completion** that recognizes “all learners as learners” by providing credit for prior learning, course schedules and delivery modes that accommodate the needs of working adults, and efficient program design that accelerates credential attainment



# Common Vision

- Programs that match the **economic development needs** of your community
- Graduates that possess the skills to ensure a **high-quality workforce**
- A **community of lifelong learners**



# Info Sharing

**Presenters:** Share an example career pathway and include these parameters:

- *How you ensure **alignment of available resources** across the college and community when designing pathways (internal and external collaboration)*
- *How adult learners **transition** into pathways*
- *How individuals learn about **pathway opportunities***

**Listeners:** Take your own notes on each college's approach (index cards)

- *What stood out to you?*
- *What do you want to learn more about?*
- *Did you hear anything you want to try?*
- *What did you hear that's different from what you're doing?*

# Challenges



# Action Plan Overview





# Where We're Headed

## 1 Partnerships and Employer Engagement

- Check-up
- Content/Examples, Tools & Resources
- Action Plan Part 1

## 2 Career Pathways

- Check-up
- Content/Examples, Tools & Resources
- Action Plan Part 2

## 3 Supporting Completion

- Check-up
- Content/Examples, Tools & Resources
- Action Plan Part 3

4 **Wrap-up:** Share and discuss draft action plans

## Local Action Plan

Goal, Objective, Priority: <i>What do we want to achieve?</i>	Action Steps: <i>How will we achieve it?</i>	Lead: <i>Who is responsible?</i>	Intended Results: <i>Measurable outcomes?</i>	Timeline: <i>By when?</i>	Notes:
<b>Partnerships</b>					
<i>Gaps and Opportunities</i>					
<b>Employer Engagement</b>					
<i>Gaps and Opportunities</i>					
<b>Stackable Credentials/Career Pathways Program Design</b>					
<i>Gaps and Opportunities</i>					
<b>Supporting Completion</b>					
<i>Gaps and Opportunities</i>					

# Workshop Toolbox



[cord.org/nc-sept-27-2023](https://cord.org/nc-sept-27-2023)



# Self Check #1

Partnerships that  
Support Career  
Pathways

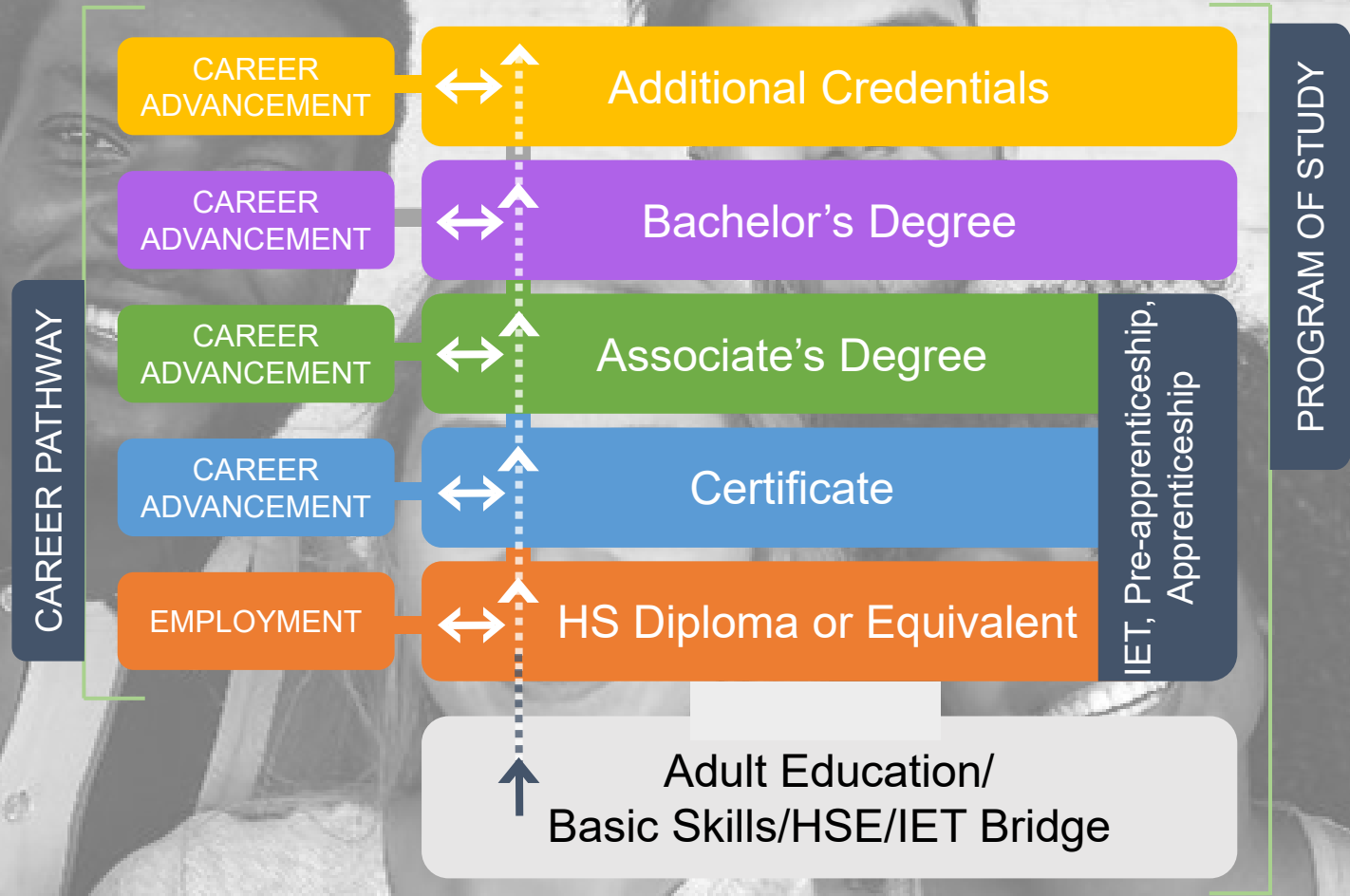
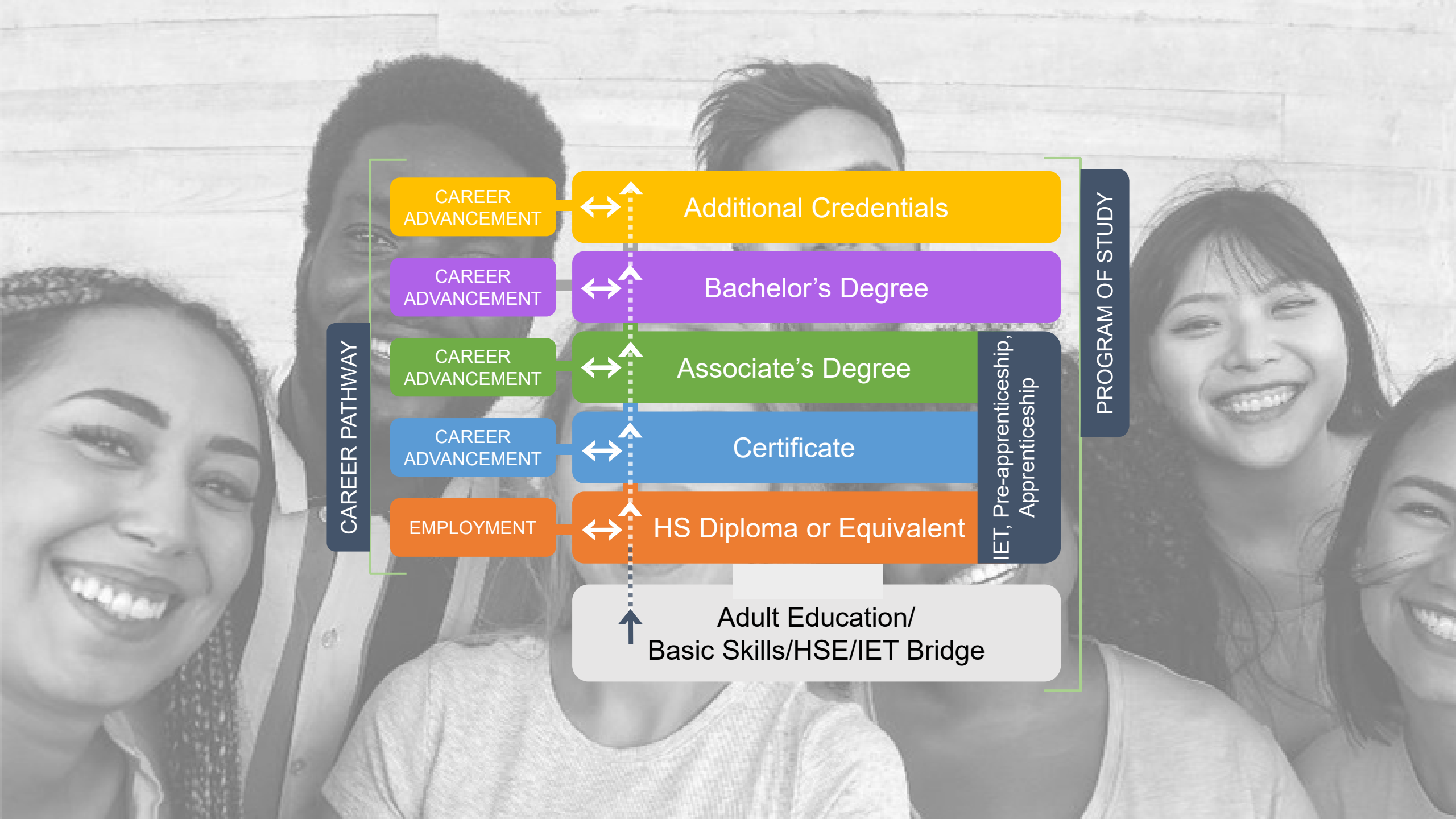


# Paving a Seamless Pathway



Align	Prepare	Support	Educate/Train	Organize	Enable	Help
Align with the skills needed by industries in the state or regional economy;	Prepare individuals to succeed in a range of education options, including apprenticeships;	Include counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual's education and career goals;	Include, as appropriate, concurrent education and training opportunities for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;	Organize education, training, and support services to meet individual needs and accelerate educational and career advancement;	Enable individuals to attain a high school diploma or equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential;	Help individuals enter or advance within an occupation or occupational cluster.

# Career Pathway Definition (WIOA/Perkins/HEA)





# Advancing Credentials THROUGH Career Pathways



# Across the Ecosystem

- *We can't know it all.*
- *We can't do it all.*
- We need partners across the community to collaborate in new ways...

to prepare us all for the journey ahead.





# Partnerships Are Key

- Leverage each other's resources and knowledge
- Connect disconnected systems
- Strengthen/build partnerships to support *your* community

# Partnerships to Support the Ecosystem

- **Employer** – across sectors; collaborate as a team on everything from curriculum to work-based learning experiences; build your community's talent pipeline
- **Organizational** – school districts and postsecondary institutions, workforce boards; align, accelerate, advance; remove barriers
- **Instructional** – academic, CTE, and Adult Education faculty as content development partners: interdisciplinary connections, real-world context, employability skills across curriculum
- **Community** – government and community organizations provide an array of holistic supports to aid students in completion.

# Clarify Partner Roles

- Establish a shared vision, mission, and set of goals.
- Define the roles and responsibilities of all partners.
- Develop a work plan and/or Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership.
- Strengthen and sustain partnerships through frequent, scheduled interactions

# ACTIVITY

## Connections & Contacts





## A close-up, high-angle view of several rolled-up architectural blueprints. The blueprints are white with black lines and text, showing various technical drawings and dimensions. The rolls are arranged diagonally across the frame, with some partially unrolled to reveal detailed plans. The background is a light, textured surface.

- Strategic employer engagement drives innovation
- Career pathway mapping reveals barriers to seamless progression and alignment to industry needs

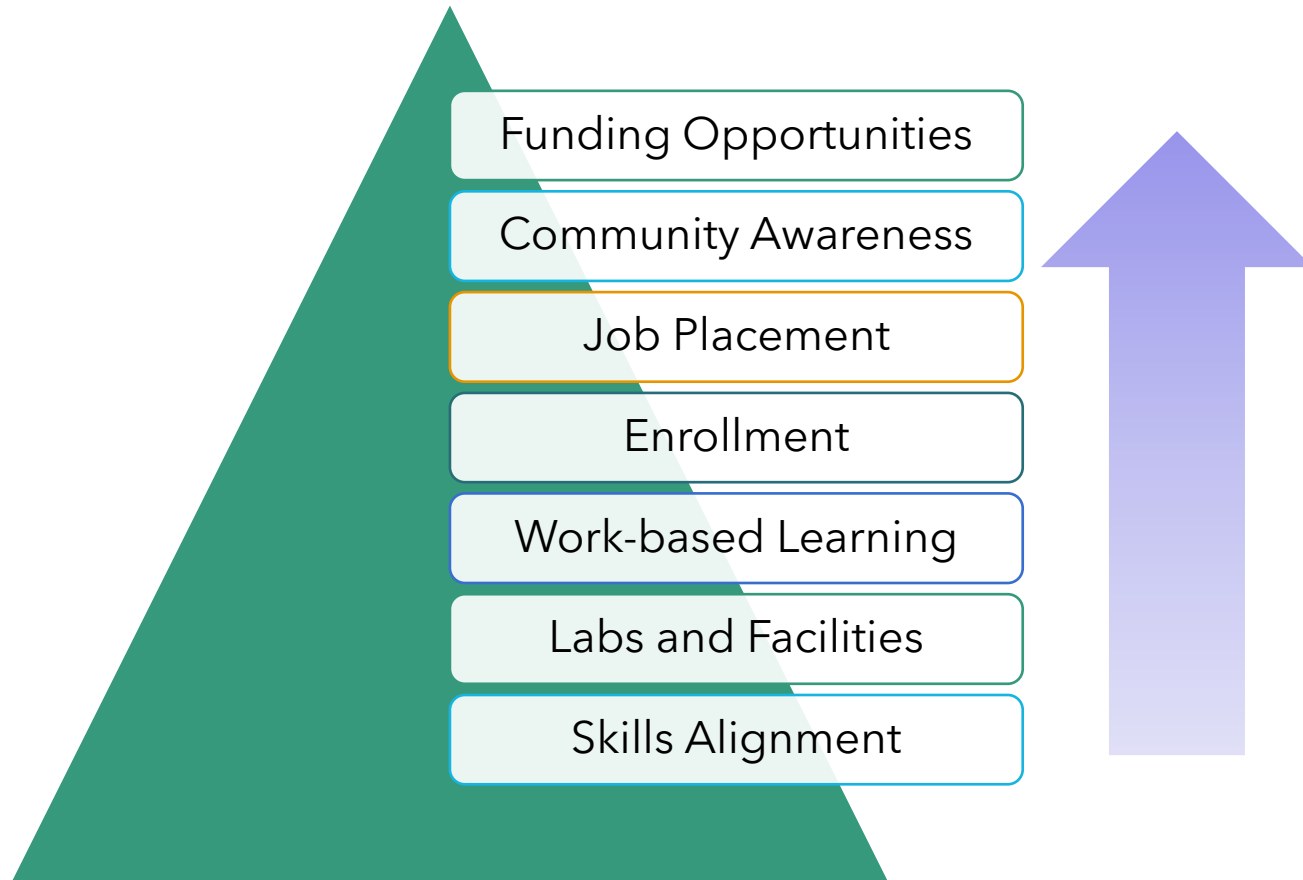


# What is Employer Engagement?

- A **strategy** to identify and integrate employer input and feedback into your institution's programs and activities.
- A working **relationship** where employers and institutions view each other as strategic partners.
- A **methodology** to:
  - keep your programs fresh and relevant
  - place your career-ready graduates into jobs
  - increase your enrollment
  - garner financial and other support
  - join voices for program advocacy



# Benefits of Strategic Employer Engagement



# Employer Engagement Toolkit



# The Process Starts Internally

Identify Your Goals

Identify the Industry Sector

Identify Internal Connections

Create an Outreach Plan

Continuing Outreach

Find the Fit for Each Employer

# Knowing Your Audience

- Who hires the graduates/completers?
- Who provides intel on evolving needs of businesses in the region?
- Who assists in building industry-informed programs?
- Do you know who provides outreach to employers?
- Do you know how information from employer outreach is gathered and shared?



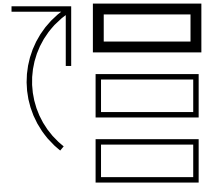


## Business & Industry Leadership Team Model



1. A Business Advisory Council  
**“on steroids”**
2. A **structured, repeatable process** that can be used  
for any technical program
3. A model that puts employers  
in a **co-leadership role** that  
greatly increases their  
engagement with your  
program

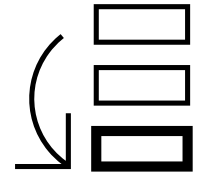




FREQUENCY

SPECIFICITY

DEPTH OF INPUT

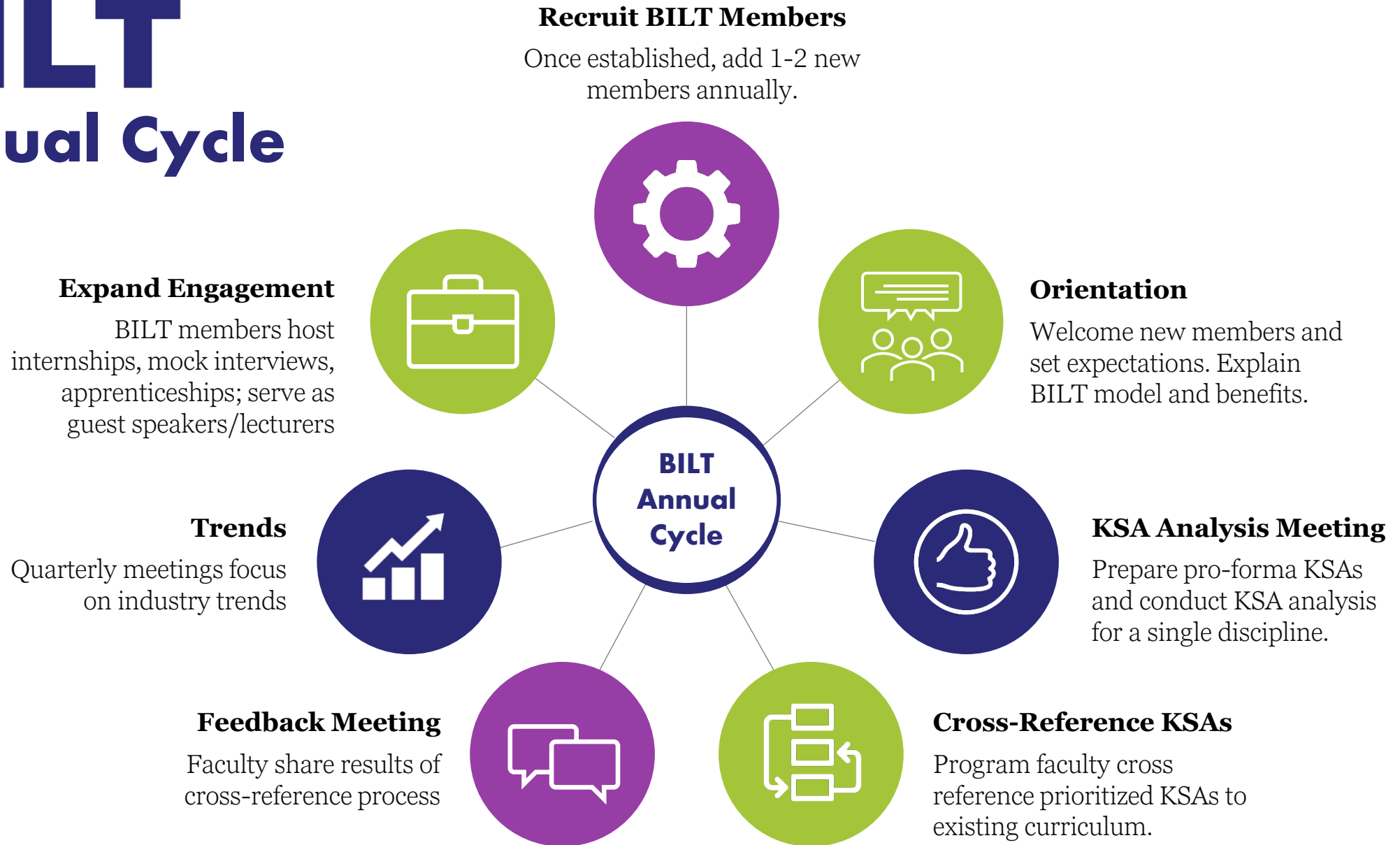


INDUSTRY-LED



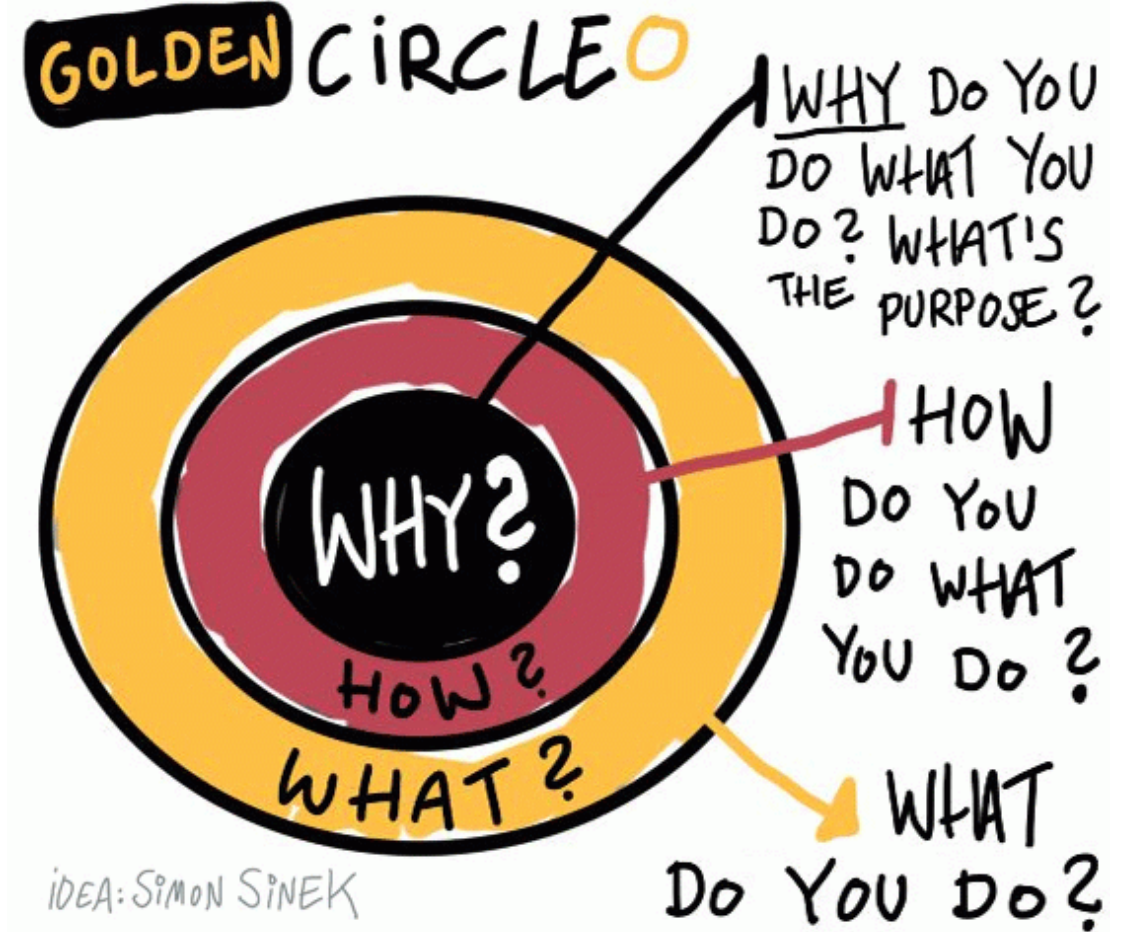
# BILT

## Annual Cycle

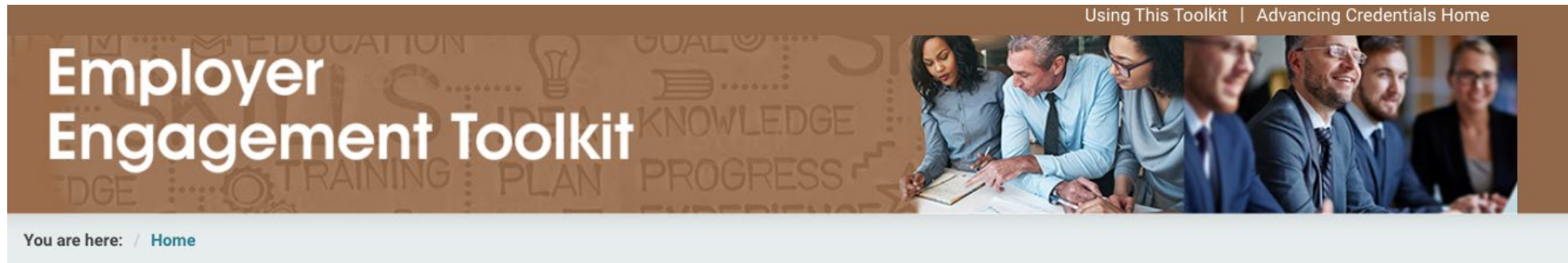


# Communicate the Why

- Approach potential partners with your value proposition
- Lead with the outcome and benefits for the community and the partner, not for you
- Golden Circle principle



# Comprehensive Resource:



Home

Using This Toolkit

Knowing Your Audience

Developing Your Program

Mining for Deeper Engagement

Generating Support

Joining Voices

Contact Us

## Introduction

In a time when information is critical to success and budgets are tied to outcomes, the need for strategic employer engagement with colleges has never been greater. No longer can programs thrive with limited input from local employers. All community and technical colleges must stay informed of—and respond to—industry-specific trends that impact skill sets, national standards, and credentials.

<https://www.advancingcredentials.org/toolkit/>



# Action Planning



# Lunch





Advancing Credentials  
THROUGH Career Pathways



# Self Check #2

## Designing Career Pathways





# Career Pathways Embedded with Stackable Credentials



Provide flexibility for **students**



Meet the evolving skill needs of **employers**



Improve the ability of **educational institutions and communities** to increase credential attainment



Give **educational institutions** tools for continuous upskilling

# Why Pathway Maps?



- To help learners of all ages **understand the opportunities** available to them to learn, earn, and realize success in the career path of their choice
- To identify entry points and exit points aligned to **credential** attainment and advancing levels of **employment**
- To convey that a **seamless pathway** of stackable credits and credentials is not only possible, but critical to success in today's labor market

# Mapping Career Opportunities & Economic Mobility



- You're creating a visual story depicting the pathway
- What career opportunities does it comprise?
- What postsecondary credentials can you earn?
- What industry certifications will the pathway prepare you for?



# Who Benefits from Pathway Maps?

## **Students**

- Provides information students need for guided learning pathways – on and off ramps
- Identifies program outcomes relative to potential employment opportunities and wages, as well as program duration and stackable credentials
- Depicts career growth alongside education path

## **Employers**

- Identifies multiple entry points for existing employees to upskill
- Validation of skills by industry means graduates are prepared to meet employer needs

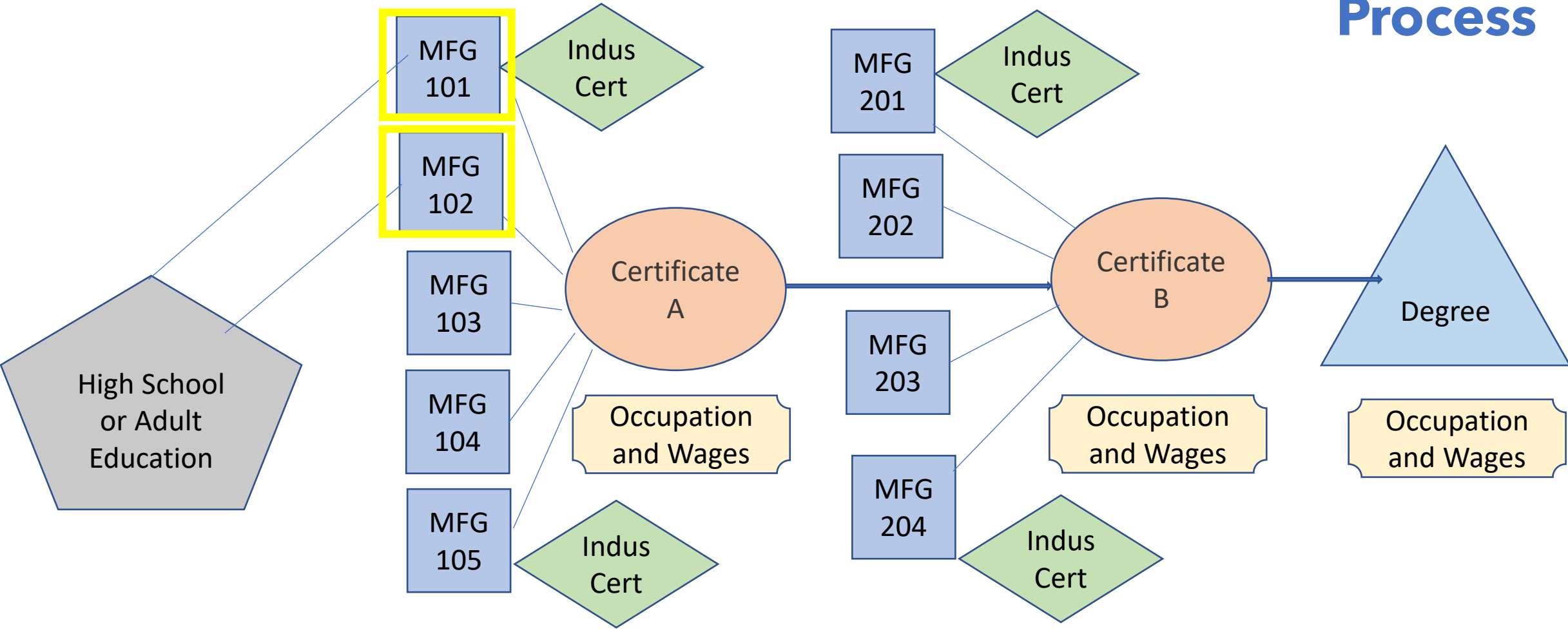
## **Faculty**

- Program and career information in one place – at-a-glance
- Employer-validated pathways relative to occupations and wages
- Clear depiction of completion options (certificates, diplomas and degrees) within a pathway

# Employer Engagement

- Work with employer partners to:
  - Define job requirements
  - Map the structure of jobs to certificates and degrees
  - Identify related industry certifications
  - Identify career advancement levels within the pathway  
(i.e. Certificate A = Job Title X, Certificate B = Job Title Y,  
Degree = Job Title Z)
- Gather wage data for each job title
- Repeat process annually

# The Mapping Process



# What to Include

Academic Credentials  
Within the Pathway  
(certificate, diploma,  
associate degree)  
and # of Credits

Program Duration of  
Each Credential

Related Industry  
Certifications

Employment  
Opportunities at  
Exit Points  
Job Titles /  
Wage Range

Credit for Prior  
Learning (all types)

Articulated 4-year  
Programs



# Who Should Participate?

Employers

Advising and  
Counseling Staff

Registrar

Staff responsible  
for High School  
and University  
Articulation

Adult Educators

Program Faculty

Recruitment  
Office

Workforce  
Development  
Staff

Marketing  
Department Staff





# Career Pathways

## Health Service Management Associate in Science

Prior Credit High School Career Pathways Certificate	Prior Credit Technical College Certificate	College Credit Certificate	College Credit Certificate	Associate Degree	Bachelor Degree
Administrative Office Specialist	Accounting Operations	Medical Information Coder/Biller (37 credit hours)	Medical Office Management (34 credit hours)	Health Services Management (60 credit hours)	Strategic Leadership (120 credit hours)
Allied Health Assisting	Administrative Office Specialist	<b>Industry Certifications</b>	<b>Career</b>	<b>Industry Certifications</b>	<b>Career</b>
Applied Cybersecurity	Medical Assisting	CCA; CCS; CCS-P; CPC	Average Cost of Program	CAHIMS; CMM	Average Cost of Program
Applied Information Technology	Practical Nursing	<b>Career</b>	\$3,750.00	<b>Career</b>	\$7,200.00
Business Management & Analysis	<b>Industry Certifications</b>	Average Cost of Program	Typical Starting Positions	Average Cost of Program	Typical Starting Positions
Digital Design	Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA)	\$4,100.00	Medical Secretary, Medical Receptionist, Insurance Clerk, Billing Clerk	\$6,600.00	Medical Practice Manager, Health Services Department Manager, Revenue Cycle Supervisor/Manager, Human Resource Specialist, Entrepreneur
International Business	Registered Medical Assistant (RMA)	Typical Starting Positions	Average Starting Salary	Typical Starting Positions	Average Starting Salary
Legal Administrative Specialist		Medical Records/Health Information Technicians, Insurance/Billing Specialist, Coding Specialist, Coder/Biller, Insurance Specialist	\$15.67 hourly	Medical Office Manager, Health Services Department Supervisor, Billing Supervisor, Revenue Cycle Analyst	\$25.66 hourly
Nursing Assistant		Average Starting Salary		Average Starting Salary	
Web Development		\$15.67 hourly		\$18.00 hourly	
<b>Industry Certifications</b>					
Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA)					
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)					

Learn more at [www.LSSC.edu/academics](http://www.LSSC.edu/academics)

# CORD Pathway Planner

## ABE/IET/Bridge

The First Step on Your Career Pathway Journey



## Credential 1

You've reached the next milestone on your journey and are moving to higher levels of employment in your chosen career field.

## Credential 2

You've reached the next milestone on your journey and continue to advance in your chosen career field. You're one step away from a degree!

## Credential 3

Congratulations! You've reached the first milestone on your journey to a degree and are ready for your first job in your chosen career field.

## Associate Degree

Continued career success and lifelong learning



# Pathway Planner Demo



## Career Pathway Instructions

[Create Path](#)

### Welcome To The Career Pathway Mapping Tool.

You will be entering information on several pages. This information will populate a template which will show the pathway map for your program.

[Learn More](#)

### Please provide your credential. At least 2 required and

Add Sub-Credentials

+ Add

Bachelor of Science (Associate's Degree)  
45 Credits hours - 2 weeks

List of courses

Programming Fundamentals   Computer Architecture   Operating Systems   Computer Networks

Aligned Industry Certifications

certified Public Accountant   Project management professional   Systems Security professional

### Highest Level Credential

Please provide information about the highest level of degree, certificate, or any other credential.

[View Instructions](#)

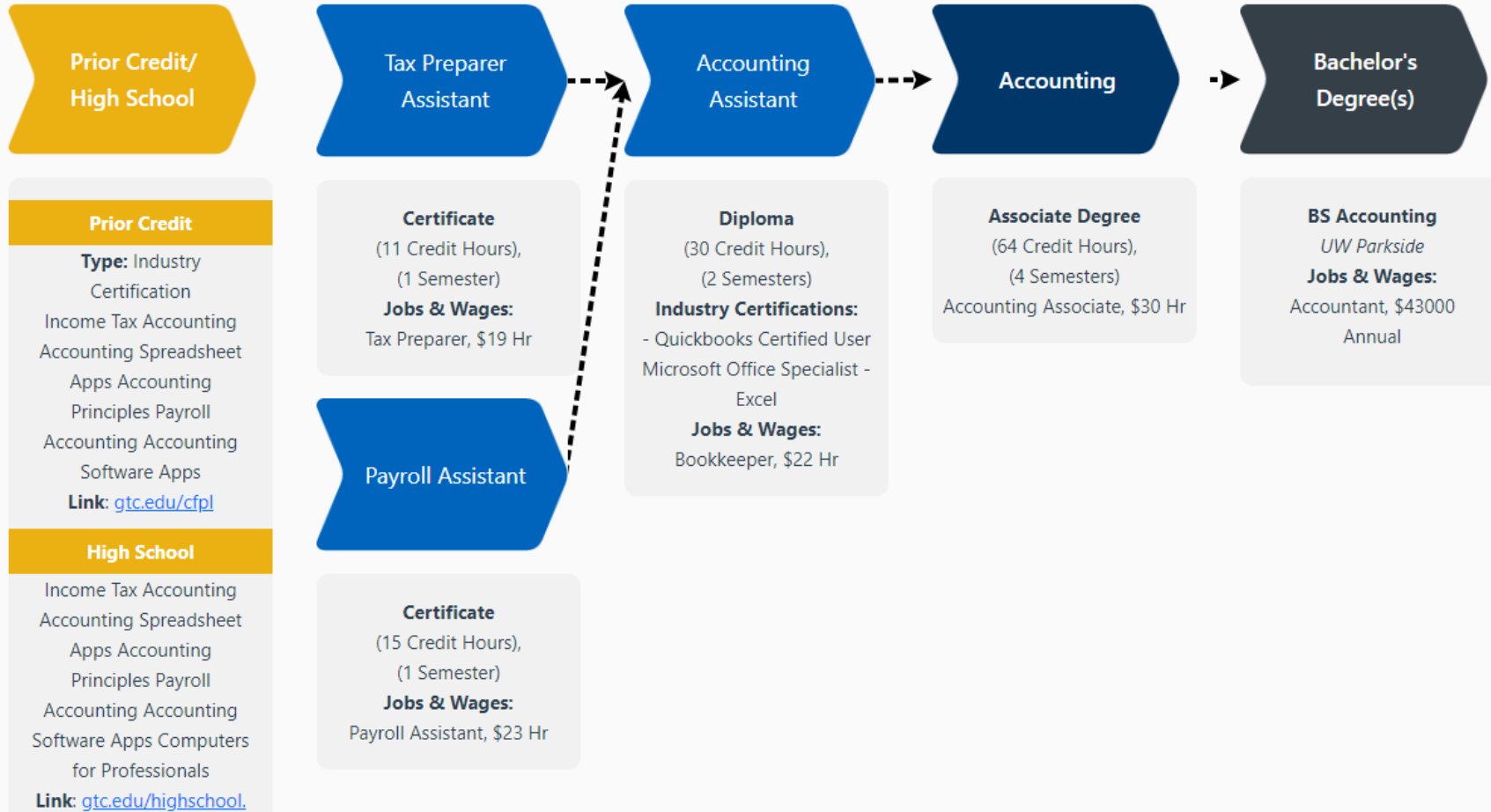


# Accounting

[www.gtc.edu/accounting](http://www.gtc.edu/accounting)

Download PDF

Students are prepared to enter their career field at any point along the pathway and advance as they complete higher-level credentials.



## ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Users can:**

- Create a new program for your organization
- View, edit, copy, archive/unarchive, delete and add comments to programs your created

### **Organizational Users can:**

- View dashboards for your organization's programs
- View, edit, comment on and approve all programs for your organization
- View and edit users in your organization

# Current State vs. Desired Pathway

Consider the gaps moving from one credential or institution to the next:

- What needs to be done to address the gap?
- Is it a barrier related to process or policy?
- Who needs to be at the table to discuss the gap?
- What are the opportunities that haven't been mapped yet?





# Action Planning



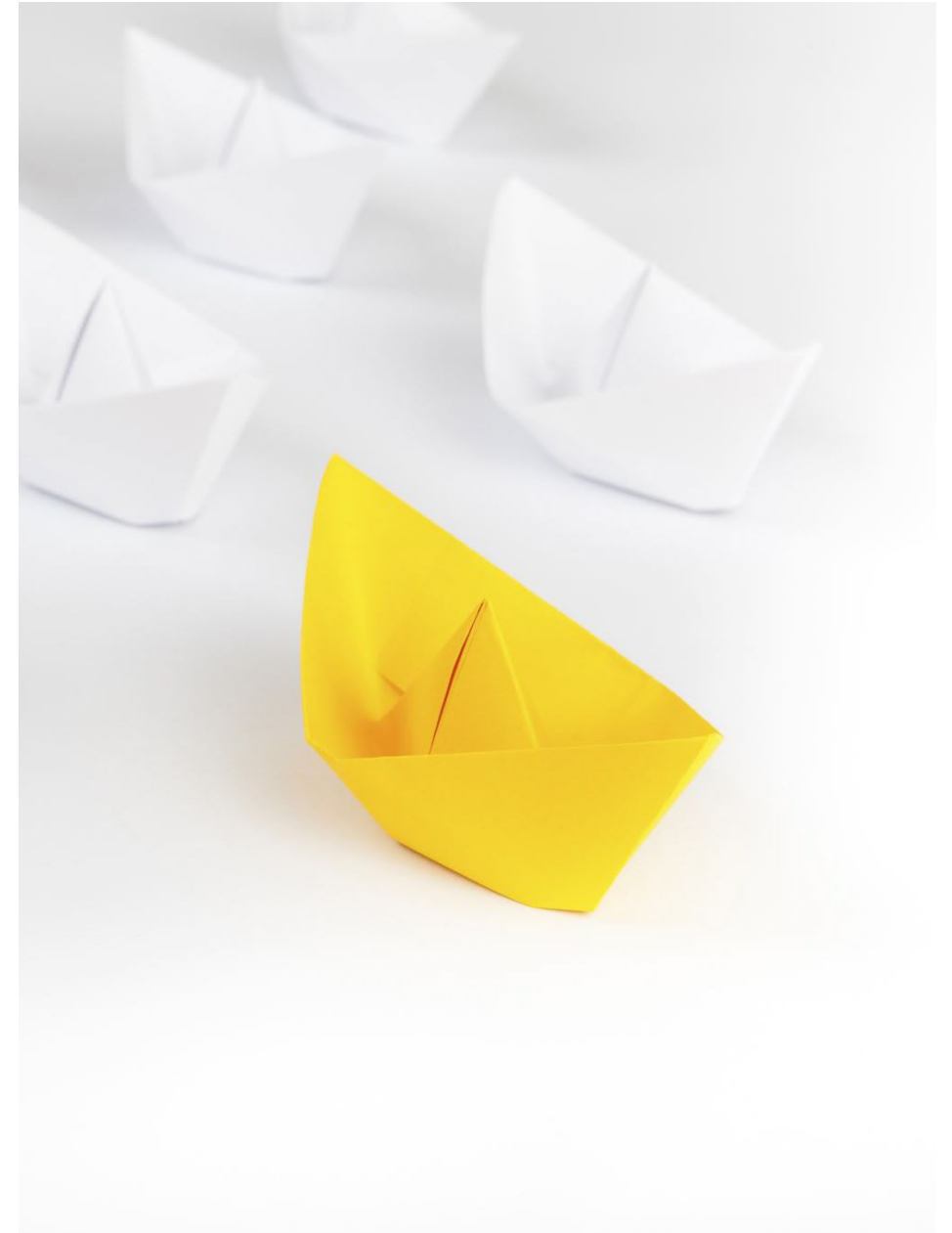
# Self Check #3

Supporting  
Student  
Completion

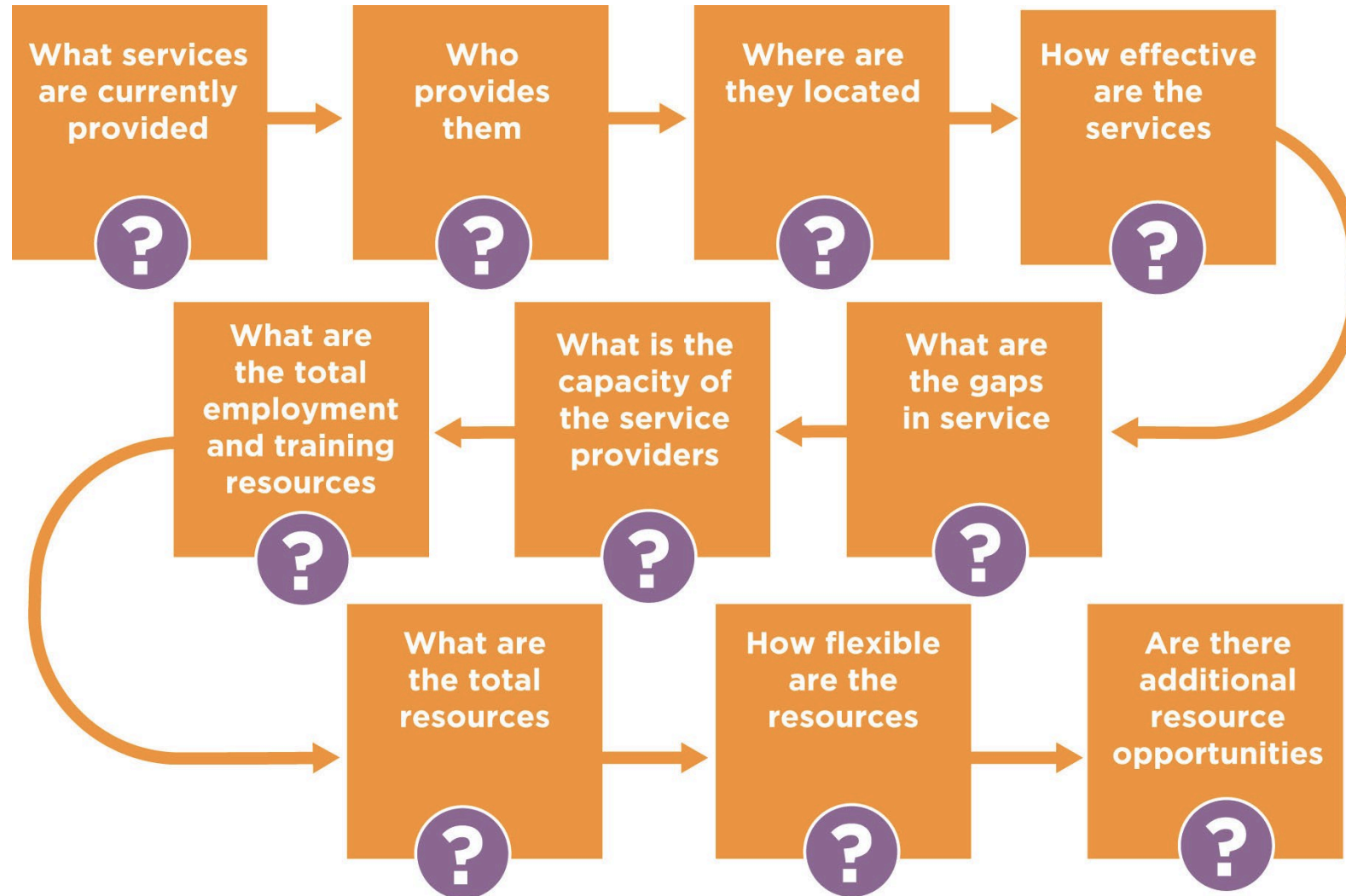


# Types of Holistic Support

- **Academic** - help learners successfully complete the program and transition to a job or postsecondary education.
- **Financial** - address barriers such as tuition, textbooks and materials that may impact learner ability to afford the training
- **Personal** - focus on individual needs such as mental and physical health, childcare, and transportation.



# Holistic Support Journey





# Holistic Supports



## Academic

- Aligned to local needs
- Industry credentials
- Credit for Prior learning (CPL)
- Flexible class offerings
- Tutoring
- Cohort Learning

## Financial

- Grants (Pell)
- Scholarships
- Book/Materials
- Industry Certification fees
- Basic needs assistance

## Personal

- Student-centered success coaching
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Mental Health services

# Credit for Prior Learning




Credit for prior learning, or CPL, is a term for various methods that colleges, universities, and other education or training providers use to evaluate learning that has occurred outside of the traditional academic environment. It's also sometimes called prior learning assessment (PLA).



It is used to grant college credit, certification, or advanced standing toward further education or training. Other common terms for this process include prior learning assessment (PLA), recognition of prior learning, and recognition of learning.

Source: Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)



# Types of Credit for Prior Learning

- Registered Apprenticeships
- Industry Certifications and Licensures
- High School to Community College Articulation Agreement
- Military Education and Training
- Standardized Examinations
- Challenge Examinations/Proficiency
- Portfolio Assessment
- Internal Articulation of Non-credit to Credit



# Benefits of Credit for Prior Learning

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE	INSTITUTIONAL PERSPECTIVE	EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVE
▪ Accelerates Completion	▪ Attracts New Students ▪ Increased Enrollments	▪ Clarifies Pathway
▪ Reduces Duplication of Learning	▪ Promotes Retention and Higher Persistence Levels with CPL Students	▪ Recognized Industry Credentials
▪ Lowers Education Costs	▪ Results in More Institutional Credits	▪ Reduces Employee Time to Degree
▪ Reduces Student Debt	▪ Strengthens Employer Partnerships	▪ Lowers Investment of Business and Higher ROI
▪ Increases Likelihood of Graduation	▪ Enhances the Ability to Stay Competitive with Higher Education Institutions	

**Source:** *Credit for Prior Learning Guide:  
A Practical Guide for Community Colleges*

# Examples of Holistic Supports



## Academic

- Aligned to local needs
- Industry credentials
- Credit for Prior learning (CPL)
- Flexible class offerings
- Tutoring
- Cohort Learning



## Financial

- Grants (Pell)
- Scholarships
- Book/Materials
- Industry Certification fees
- Basic needs assistance



## Personal

- Student-centered success coaching
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Mental Health services

# Basic Needs Insecurity

#REALCOLLEGE Survey	2-year Colleges (2020)	4-year Colleges (2020)
Food Insecurity	39%	29%
Housing Insecurity	52%	43%
Homelessness	14%	14%



**61%** of community college students reported some basic needs insecurity in the last year.

*(Temple University's HOPE Center)*

# Federal Financial Support

## Pell Grant

- Must have already received a high school diploma or (G.E.D.) certificate
- Capped at \$6,895 per year
- Cannot be used for more than 12 full-time or equivalent terms over an individual's lifetime

## Ability to Benefit

- Available to adult education students without a high school diploma or equivalent
- Students must prove their "ability to benefit," such as by passing a test

Source: [Laboratories of Affordability](#), *Inside Higher Ed*, 2023



# Examples of Holistic Supports



## Academic

- Aligned to local needs
- Industry credentials
- Credit for Prior learning (CPL)
- Flexible class offerings
- Tutoring
- Cohort Learning



## Financial

- Grants (Pell)
- Scholarships
- Book/Materials
- Industry Certification fees
- Basic needs assistance



## Personal

- Student-centered success coaching
- Childcare
- Transportation
- Mental Health services

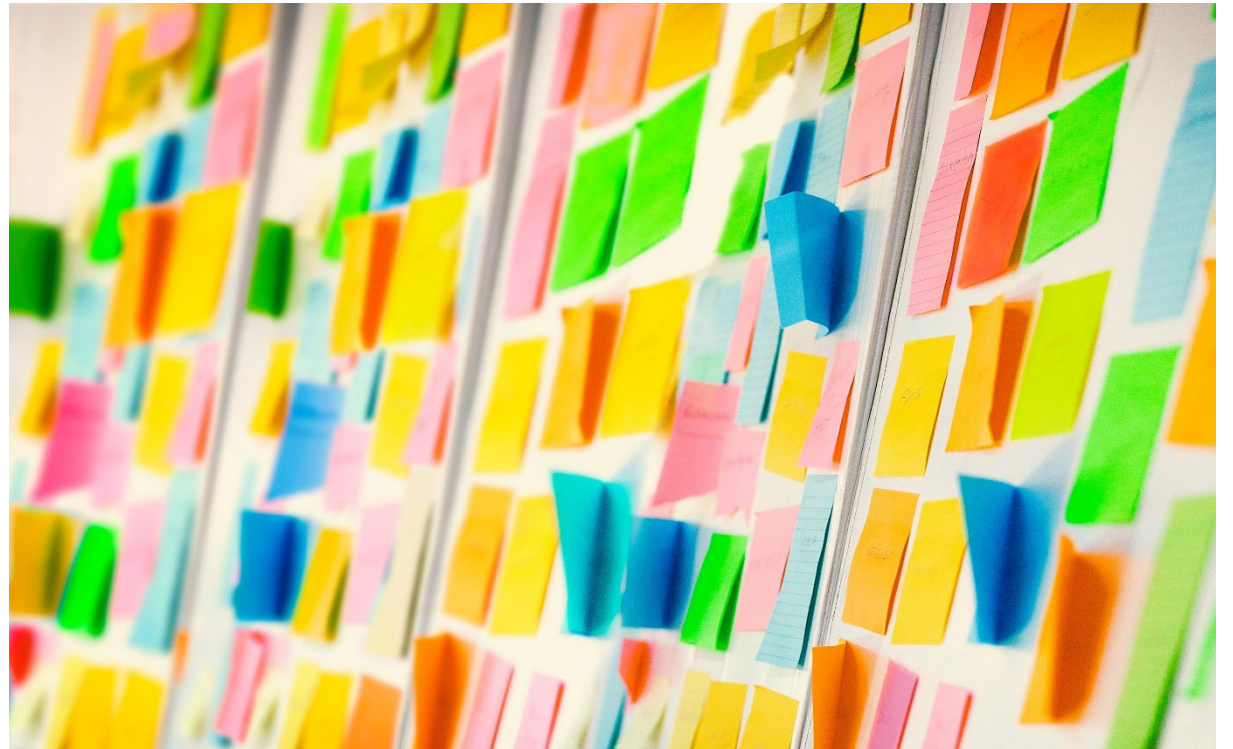
# Access to Benefits

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE		VETERANS BENEFITS		CHILD TAX CREDIT	
SNAP FOOD STAMPS		EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT		TRADE ACT	SSI
AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT	CHIP			SNAP 50/50 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	
CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES		HOUSING VOUCHERS			
		VETERANS BENEFITS			
SOCIAL SECURITY		WIC		BENEFIT ACCESS = COLLEGE ACCESS	



# ACTIVITY

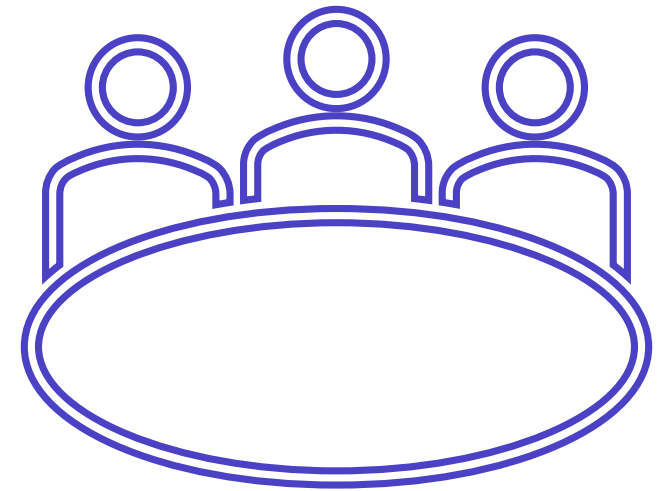
## Holistic Supports Inventory



# Action Planning



# Share and Discuss



# Goal Reflections and Next Steps

