



Providing Meaningful Career Pathways Look Book

Co-chaired by:



California
Community
Colleges



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Collectively Advancing Opportunity and Prosperity for All

December 3, 2020

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MEETING AGENDA



2020 California Economic Summit
Providing Meaningful Career Pathways
Thursday, December 3, 12:30 to 2:30 PM

- 12:30 PM Welcome
Bill Allen, Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC)
- 12:35 PM CA Community Colleges Commitment to Career Pathways that Lead to Employment
Sheneui Weber, Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic Development, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO)
Marty Alvarado, Executive Vice Chancellor for Educational Services, CCCCCO
- 12:50 PM Presentation of a Regional and Scalable Prototype for Employer Engagement
Jessica Ku Kim, Senior Director of Workforce Development, LAEDC
- 1 PM Conversation Fire Starter on Regional Employer Engagement with Amazon Web Services (AWS) Educate
Mike Berman, Head of Academic Engagement, AWS Educate
Mariana Holliday, Program Manager, International, AWS Educate
Jessica Ku Kim, Senior Director of Workforce Development, LAEDC
- 1:20 PM Moderated Group Discussions for Feedback on Prototype Implementation
Jessica Ku Kim, Senior Director of Workforce Development, LAEDC
Kate Gallagher, Economic Development Manager, San Diego Regional EDC

2:20 PM Summary of Key Priorities and Next Steps
*Sheneui Weber, Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic
Development, CCCCCO*

2:30 PM Closing
Bill Allen, Chief Executive Officer, LAEDC

PROVIDING MEANINGFUL CAREER PATHWAYS WORKGROUP

Problem Statements

1. Community college students need access to quality work-based learning opportunities, defined by [Jobs for the Future's \(JFF\) Work Based Learning Framework](#), as experiences that go beyond the classroom to expand academic and technical learning and accelerate advancement along career pathways, **connected to and leading to placement in "middle skill" occupations that are both projected to grow and related to their training programs.**
2. The current pandemic environment has highlighted the need to implement and scale virtual versions of work-based learning programs and the technology required to do so.
3. Relationships between colleges, potential employers, and industry associations are strengthened to increase the availability of work-based learning and job placement opportunities for students.
4. Work-Based learning and job attainment is integrated within the California Community College Systems' ongoing work to integrate competency-based learning and credit for prior learning reforms across a range of training and education programs.
5. Better data is needed to direct the work and demonstrate the effectiveness of career education programs in preparing students for high demand, high road jobs.

Intended Outcomes

1. The development of a regional and scalable prototype for employer engagement that addresses systemic barriers to students accessing a variety of work-based learning and job placement opportunities.
2. Best practices for effective virtual work-based learning programs are identified. This include identifying opportunities for scaling successful programs.
3. Strengthen relationships between colleges and employers and industry associations.
4. Leverage ongoing work of the California Community College system to integrate competency-based learning and credit for past learning reforms to accommodate and support the diverse needs of students across a range of training and education programs.
5. Job-placement data gaps are identified and strategies to address those gaps are developed and implemented.

WORKING GROUP LEADERSHIP

Regional leaders play a key role in designing and achieving outcomes for the Providing Meaningful Career Pathways workgroup. For several months, the workgroup worked closely together under the stewardship of co-chairs to design the regional and scalable prototype for employer engagement that addresses systemic barriers to students accessing a variety of work-based learning and job placement opportunities. A special thank you to all those who participated in crafting and validating the recommendations shared today.

Co-Chairs

Bill Allen	Chief Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Marty Alvarado	Executive Vice Chancellor for Educational Services, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Jessica Ku Kim	Senior Director of Workforce Development, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Sheneui Weber	Vice Chancellor of Workforce and Economic Development, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

Working Group Participation

Anna Alvarado	Policy Director, California EDGE Coalition
Mike Berman	Head of Academic Engagement, AWS Educate, Amazon Web Services
Loreli Cappel	Senior Project Director, Economic Vitality Corporation
Dr. Sunity Cooke	Superintendent/President, MiraCosta Community College District
Zima Creason	Executive Director, California EDGE Coalition
Lisa Downey	Program Director for Environment and Stewardship, Morgan Family Foundation
Courtney Farrel	Project Manager, North State Planning & Development Collective
Kate Gallagher	Economic Development Manager, San Diego Regional EDC
Su Jin Jez	Executive Director, California Competes
Renee John	Project Leader 21 st Century Workforce, Valley Vision
Stewart Knox	Undersecretary of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, State of CA
Genelle Taylor Kumpe	Executive Director, San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance
Hayley Mears	Workforce Development Program Manager, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership

Evan Schmidt
Hayley Stone
Toni Symonds,

Chief Executive Officer, Valley Vision
Senior GIS Analyst, California State University, Chico
Chief Consultant, California State Assembly Committee
on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy

CAFWD Young Leaders Advisory Council Working Group Participation

Ashley Anderson
Aileen Arellano
Azusena Barrios
Malena McKaba
Julia Paccone

PROTOTYPE OUTLINE

Part 1: Preparing for the opportunity

1. Understand the workforce needs of regional industries and employers

a. Data:

- i. Be clear on the purpose of data. Are you asking the right questions to get the right data? Are you clear about what you intend to do?
- ii. Have a common process and agreement for collecting and communicating data.
- iii. Conduct the demand analysis. In addition to common metrics of demand analysis, are you also focusing on occupations with a skill and wage ladder?
- iv. Understand the trends impacting the occupation, sector and/or industry.
- v. Conduct regional supply analysis. Talent supply does not come from only one institution. Is the region undersupplying or oversupplying talent? Are there no pathways related to this occupation?

b. Employer Validation:

- i. Validate you have the right data and are aligned on industry trends.
- ii. Determine if your employer group is a representative sampling. Consider things such as size of businesses, equity and diversity, and geographic location when deciding on your employer group.
- iii. Consider job quality as a priority. Identify the career pathways, industry certifications, high road training partnerships, and other resources can align for increased employment outcomes.
- iv. Document employer input and ensure that it effects change.
- v. Calibrate talent supply investments for increases and decreases to employer demand.

c. Partner with the Centers of Excellence (COE) for Labor Market Research that provides workforce research and technical expertise to California Community Colleges. (www.coeccc.net)

- i. Conduct supply analysis across your region's community colleges.
- ii. Identify what related career pathways are in the region.
- iii. Work with COE to align data and business intelligence gathered to student learning outcomes.

2. Understand and build for your target audience

- a. Student characteristics – demographics, challenges to upskilling, resources for success, work-based learning and employment challenges, etc.
- b. Target employers – employers with living wage opportunities, growth industries, current or planned regional initiatives and investments already made by target employers/industry, recruitment/hiring seasons, and protocol

3. Obtain commitment including definition of roles, ownership and responsibilities

- a. Community college leadership:

- i. Leadership to institutionalize the investment and partnership
 - ii. Regional lead in ongoing work
 - iii. Data lead for collecting, analyzing, and providing feedback
 - iv. Career center and student support services
 - v. Student leadership that can come from the student body, clubs, etc.
 - vi. Faculty responsible for taking the information and aligning to curriculum and student learning objectives
- b. Employers – identify the right person within the companies to lead the conversation and participate. Be specific about the employer partnership expectations so that they can identify the right person to participate.
- c. Business and industry intermediaries – Partner with economic development corporations, industry associations, small business development centers, women and veteran business centers, etc. who bring industry expertise and business intelligence, are a trusted advocate for business and industry needs, and can help facilitate recruiting businesses.
- d. Stakeholders
 - i. **Workforce Development Boards and America's Job Centers of California (AJCC)** that have employer partners and resources like on-the-job training, paid work experience, transportation supportive services, work readiness and life skills training.
 - ii. Community based organizations that bring cultural awareness, resources, target underserved communities, and are trusted by the communities they serve

Part 2: Partnering from design

1. Regional intermediaries:

- a. Identify the regional designees for students, community colleges, employers and the entire partnership so that key points of contacts are clear for everyone.

2. Important topics for agreement:

- a. Clear expectations on purpose, partnership, roles, responsibilities, investment, and time
- b. Key metrics and data tracking
- c. Platform for data tracking and communication
- d. Method and protocols for virtual work-based learning especially in the current COVID-19 virtual environment
- e. Partnering for the long-term and the necessary goals for sustainability
- f. Feedback loop for continuous improvement and adapting to changing needs
- g. An equity focus – double checking for implicit bias, agreement to look backward and forward to ensure equity, removing barriers to employment

Part 3: Operating for student success

1. Supportive services to consider for student success:

- a. Counseling and mentorship to ensure ongoing support and long-term success of students into employment

- b. Ongoing validation of work-based learning, internship, and job experience that can often be captured in feedback surveys and performance evaluations. These should be reviewed in real time and necessary improvements made.
 - c. Soft skills and work readiness preparation and ongoing development
 - d. Partnering with stakeholders like AJCCs, community-based organizations and others for ongoing student support and resources like transportation supportive services
 - e. Paid internship and flexible scheduling student needs so that they can afford to participate and earn credits while continuing their education
 - f. A designed roadmap for student career success after completion of internships, work-based learning, or entry-level employment
 - g. Internet and technology support for remote internship, work-based learning and job needs
- 2. Supportive services and strategies for student success with employers:
 - a. Pre-screening
 - b. Targeted Recruitment
 - c. Interview and resume skills training
 - 3. Integrate competency-based learning, credit for past learning, and credit for internships
 - 4. Continue to build capacity and opportunities with industry experts for:
 - a. Students
 - b. Faculty

CA COMMUNITY COLLEGES



California
Community
Colleges

Collaborating for Success

California Community Colleges and Employer Partnerships

Recovering from COVID-19 and its impact on the California economy requires deep partnerships among California Community Colleges, employers and regional economic development stakeholders to swiftly improve regional workforce and economic outcomes.

The goal should not be to return to the previous status quo, but to create a more resilient, inclusive economy that addresses systemic barriers to employment and entrepreneurship. Because there is no one way to collaborate, the California Community Colleges developed a guide on key lessons and best practices to build productive and durable partnerships from across California, that includes:



Executive Leadership and Commitment of Employers, Key College Faculty and Administrators

The visible and vocal support of executive leadership is evident in every successful employer partnership we studied. The personal involvement of leadership, particularly in the early stages of the partnership, raises the confidence of skeptical stakeholders who are constantly asked to participate in multiple workforce development efforts to invest the time and attention to this effort.

Supply that meets the Demand

Understanding a region's anticipated workforce supply and demand is essential to developing pipelines with employers and recruiting students onto pathways that are right for them. Competency based Education coupled with career pathways can be an inclusive and effective approach in producing talent to close employment gaps and skills.

Understand the Workforce Needs of Regional Industries and Employers

Many employers are dealing with rapid changes in markets, technologies and other aspects of producing goods and providing services. Understanding macro trends to develop a detailed understanding of regional industry needs ensures all partners are working towards a common goal.



Partner with Regional Intermediaries

Every region and most communities have civic or business organizations acting as “intermediaries” to connect the multitude of efforts intended to reduce poverty, increase economic security and grow vibrant economies. Workforce is often a primary focus of these organizations, and they can be extremely helpful, particularly in large regions with multiple colleges, where it is difficult to determine who operates which programs and how to go about closing the gaps.

Successful partners also tap other institutional partners with more data and other resources, including: the California Workforce Investment Board, Economic Development Agencies/Councils, Employment Training Panel, Division of Apprenticeship Standards, Employment Development Department, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, and the California Department of Education.

Engage Employers Early and Engage Fully

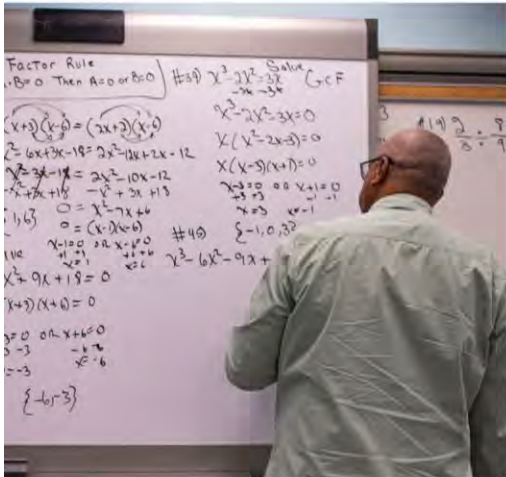
Developing deep partnerships that closely align curriculum, bring students into the workplace and teaching expertise into the classroom—the kinds of partnerships that help students develop workplace skills, focus on matching skills clusters taught to job skills clusters, earn industry recognized credentials in living wage careers - are the most successful.

Create Clear Expectations and Agreed Upon Metrics

Strong partnerships are predicated on common objectives that the partners can only produce by working together to solve industry problems, not just to provide training solutions. Partnerships grow and are sustained when those objectives are met. From the inception, partners need to clearly articulate and agree on the desired outcomes (such as job placement rates) and the contributions that each partner will make to the project.

Teach the Foundational Skills Throughout

Employers want graduates who have technical skills and foundational skills such as communication, teamwork and critical thinking. In addition, foundational skills includes basic digital literacy for almost all jobs today. Such employability skills are critical to be integrated into any education and workforce training program to benefit students and increase success in employment.



To learn more about the California Community Colleges career education practices or the Strong Workforce Program, visit: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Chancellors-Office/Divisions/Workforce-and-Economic-Development>

To learn more about the California Community Colleges Vision for Success, visit: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Vision-for-Success>

To learn more about the California Community Colleges Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, visit: <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/Vision-for-Success/diversity-equity-inclusion>



REPLICABLE AND SCALABLE STRATEGIES

- Advancing San Diego
- Center for a Competitive Workforce
- Monterey Bay Internships
- Valley Vision

Advancing San Diego

Agency Name	San Diego Regional EDC
Website	www.AdvancingSD.org
Strategy Focus	Preparing for the opportunity:

Advancing San Diego is a collaboration between economic development, workforce development, industry, and education partners to prepare San Diegans for high-demand jobs and expand access to diverse, qualified talent for San Diego companies. Advancing San Diego takes an employer-led, demand-driven approach to gather and communicate industry skills requirements, offer feedback to education partners on how to update & improve programs, and select Preferred Providers of Talent who are educating in alignment with industry expectations for high-demand jobs.

San Diego's innovation economy has experienced tremendous growth over the last decade, yet many San Diegans have not benefited from that growth. Advancements in technology are rapidly changing the way we work and going forward the innovation economy will rely on a diverse pool of qualified, local talent to remain competitive. This requires a concerted effort by economic & workforce development, industry, and education partners who all play a role in ensuring our local population is trained, and have access to, quality job opportunities.

Advancing San Diego starts with labor market data to understand workforce needs of the economy at-large. We recognize that labor market data comes with limitations, makes assumptions about workforce composition, significantly lags, and lacks detail about job skills requirements. Using labor market data as a starting point, we use a structured process for employer engagement called Talent Pipeline Management, developed by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Center for Education and Workforce, and modeled after supply chain principles. Clear communication from employers and more equitable access to industry insight is critical to our success. Over 5 months, employers develop skills-based criteria for high-demand jobs, review education programs that are training for those jobs, and designate programs as industry-approved Preferred Providers of Talent. Preferred Providers can be any education or training program, traditional or non-traditional. In addition to meeting skills-criteria through training, Preferred Providers are evaluated on their ability to reach and

serve a diverse student body, and a commitment to employer engagement. All findings from employer working groups are summarized in a Talent Demand Report and shared broadly.

The growing movement for racial equity has shed a bright light on employer's responsibility for creating a more diverse and equitable workplace. Through the Advancing San Diego process, employers play a more active role in developing our local talent pipeline, while also becoming more educated on San Diego's local education system and the students it serves. As a result, many employers are actively pursuing recruitment partnerships with schools they had not previously recruited from. Advancing San Diego partners continue to advocate for more equitable, skill-based hiring, and support larger employers looking to shift recruitment practices and increase diversity in at their companies.

Employer working groups are co-led by San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and San Diego Workforce Partnership (SDWP). As two key organizations with a common goal to prepare and connect San Diegans to quality job opportunities, EDC and SDWP have adopted Talent Pipeline Management as a shared method for employer engagement. Since the launch of Advancing San Diego in 2019, more than 40 employers have participated in working groups to clarify skills requirements for high demand jobs in software, engineering, and business; 37 programs have received feedback from industry, at least 4 programs have adapted their programs in response to industry recommendations; 13 programs have been recognized as Preferred Providers of talent. Going forward, Advancing San Diego will focus its attention on non-BA, middle skills jobs in manufacturing, healthcare, and life sciences.

In addition, Advancing San Diego fully funds remote internships in small businesses for students of Preferred Provider programs. This is an effort to remove barriers for small companies to access talent. To date, we have placed more than 50 students in 31 small companies. 70% of students are first generation college students, and more than half of the small companies identify as women, minority, veteran and/or disabled owned businesses.

For more information, contact Kate Gallagher at ksg@sandiegobusiness.org.

Center for a Competitive Workforce

Agency Name(s)	A partnership of Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, the Los Angeles Regional 19 community colleges, and the Center of Excellence at Mt. San Antonio College
Website	www.CompetitiveWorkforce.LA
Strategy Focus	<p>Preparing for the opportunity:</p> <p>The Center for a Competitive Workforce (CCW) was established in 2017 as a Strong Workforce Program regional project of the 19 community colleges in the Los Angeles region, in collaboration with the L.A./O.C. Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE), hosted at Mt. San Antonio College, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and its Institute for Applied Economics. This Strong Workforce Program Los Angeles regional project lead is Santa Monica College.</p> <p>CCW is focused on institutionalizing the regular engagement of and partnerships between our 19 community colleges in the L.A. region and employers from high-growth industry sectors (i.e. those with productive advantages, deep labor concentrations and projected growth of middle skill jobs). It is through the development, institutionalization and activation of these productive partnerships and real time feedback loops that colleges can adaptively attune their programs, courses and curricula to the workforce needs in a way that this truly responsive, demand-driven and future-forward, while also providing students with the very important real-world experiences that come from work-based learning opportunities such as internships. CCW has provided over 725 internship and job opportunities for the region's community colleges and continues to host regional work-based learning opportunities for students. Most recently, about 100 students from 18 of the region's 19 community colleges participated a regional work-based learning in accounting.</p> <p>CCW has published 15 regional labor market and occupational reports for L.A. and Orange County. These reports analyze labor supply and demand data for middle-skill occupations in high-growth industries to inform and influence the expansion of new or modified career education, and workforce development programs and curricula. CCW hosts regional program advisory meetings for faculty at multiple colleges with regional employers to get feedback on curriculum and training programs, and get their insights on workplace trends, new technology and the in-demand skills that will make students even more competitive for employment and work-based</p>

learning opportunities. CCW supports quarterly convenings for faculty, workforce, nonprofit, government, and industry leaders in three of the L.A. region's most highly concentrated and fastest growing industry sectors—advanced transportation, bioscience and digital media/entertainment— with the co-equal goals to strengthen industry engagement with faculty and connect students to meaningful work-based learning opportunities and employment.

This is one of the best ways to prepare them for the 21st century jobs and careers, in the fast emerging and rapidly changing knowledge-intensive industries that drive our regional economy. In partnership with the regional directors for employer engagement, CCW has hosted more than seven regional program advisory committee meetings to further strengthen regional alignment of, and ongoing connections between, faculty and industry. CCW has developed two online platforms: a Biosciences Industry Portal, and a regional Workforce and Education Partner Portal to increase the speed and richness of industry-college connections. The goal is to seamlessly access and deploy the economic intelligence gleaned through industry engagement, and to rapidly expand and scale the number of work-based learning and employment opportunities for career education students and graduates.

For more information, contact Jessica Ku Kim at jessica.kim@laedc.org.

Monterey Bay Internships

Agency Name(s)	Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, Community Foundation Santa Cruz County, Cabrillo College, UC Santa Cruz, Hartnell College, Santa Cruz County Business Council
Website	https://mbinterns.org/
Strategy Focus	<p>Partnering from design:</p> <p>In 2015, a steering committee consisting of the following members: Community Foundation Santa Cruz County , Cabrillo College , UC Santa Cruz , Santa Cruz County Business Council , and Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) agreed to oversee the development, launch, and management of Monterey Bay Internships. The partnership was formed to create a centralized web platform, Monterey Bay Internships (MBI), to connect employers to students, with the goal to provide equal access to all. The site (mbinterns.org) is free and accessible to students and employers and consolidates disparate internship listings into one comprehensive database. The site launched in February 2016 and has since doubled from January 2018 to July 2019 in the number of employers and students registered, internship postings, applicants, and internships filled. Since then, the site was developed with following enhancements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">o Created 'My Account' page for user-friendly account updating and easier navigationo Revised 'Submit a Resume' intake form prompting students to upload professional resumeso Revised 'Post an Internship' intake form prompting employers to describe internship responsibilitieso Created 'Manage Internships' dashboard for employers, allowing them to indicate internships filled via the site; ando Updated 'Employer Toolkit' with comprehensive information on best practices for internship programs.

Operating for student success:

In an effort to increase student engagement at each college campus, the partnership launched the Student Ambassador program in Spring 2019. The program is designed for college-level students to help educate students and employers about college and career resources offered on Monterey Bay Career Connect and Monterey Bay Internships. Student Ambassadors and a cohort of college students from each institution in our region are also invited to participate in our Regional Economic Summit and State of the Region events, which provide networking opportunities with employers, and our first ever

Industry-Education Counselor Summit, which hosted over 85 counselors and an employer panel with industry representatives from the following companies: Tanimura & Antle (Agriculture & Natural Resources), L. Kershner Design (Fashion & Interior Design), Dientes Community Dental (Health Science & Medical Technology), Seaside Company (Hospitality, Tourism & Recreation), Santa Cruz Warriors (Marketing, Sales, & Service), Monterey Bay Community Power (Energy & Utilities), Looker (Engineering & Design Industry), and Launch Brigade (Information Technology).

For more information, contact Hayley Mears at hmears@mbep.biz.

Valley Vision

Agency Name(s)	Valley Vision
Website	https://www.valleyvision.org/projects/capital-region-workforce-action-plan/
Strategy Focus	<p>Preparing for the opportunity and partnering from design:</p> <p>Valley Vision works with the Capital Region's four workforce boards as their official regional organizer through funding from the state workforce board provided through the Capital Region. In addition, Valley Vision receives funding from the Los Rios Community College District to convene industry and employer advisories in promising sectors. This co-investment strategy works well to provide regional support to convening the demand side while being efficient about employer/industry time commitments and reducing redundancy. During these advisories labor market, job posting/demand data, and demographic data from the Centers of Excellence at Los Rios is presented and vetted based on employer input. COE also presents career pathway information for the target sector for colleges within the region. Information is solicited from employers on current and projected demand, trends in the industry and specific skills training needed to fill in demand and hard to fill positions. Information gained is compiled in presentations and reports and shared with system partners. Diversification with funding from Adult Ed / K-12 would further strengthen the role with funding covering the deeper pipeline as workforce development efforts are more and more looking at marketing/outreach to middle and high schools to inform on promising career pathways to reduce the equity gap through exposure to a broader array of career opportunities at a younger age.</p>

For more information, contact Renee John at renee.john@valleyvision.org.

RESOURCES

- Amazon Web Services & California Cloud Project
- California & Local Workforce Development Boards
- Californians Deserve Credit
- Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research
- Cradle to Career Data System
- Jobs for the Future Work Based Learning Framework

Amazon Web Services & California Cloud Project

Agency Name(s) Amazon Web Services (AWS) and the California Cloud Project started by Santa Monica College

Website California Cloud Workforce Project:
<http://cacloudworkforce.com/>

Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform, offering over 175 fully featured services from data centers globally. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—are using AWS to lower costs, become more agile, and innovate faster. The term "cloud computing" refers to the on-demand delivery of IT resources via the Internet with pay-as-you-go pricing. Instead of buying, owning, and maintaining your own data centers and servers, organizations can acquire technology such as compute power, storage, databases, and other services on an as-needed basis. AWS Educate provides no-cost access to learning content and AWS services designed to build knowledge and skills in cloud computing. Through AWS Educate, students and educators have access to content and programs developed to skill up for cloud careers. AWS Educate also connects companies seeking cloud talent to qualified student job seekers with the AWS Educate Job Board. AWS Educate is used in more than 200 countries and territories by more than 2,400 institutions, over 10,000 educators, and hundreds of thousands of students.

The demand for cloud computing talent is tremendous and growing. Nearly every major industry across the globe is benefitting from the cloud, so it is no surprise that [LinkedIn has ranked cloud computing as a top in-demand skill since 2014](#). In California, that demand has been validated by research from regional Centers of Excellence in Los Angeles (LA) County and the Bay Area (demand for cloud skills extends to other parts of the state, which will drive future growth of this effort). In collaboration with a variety of education, government, and employer stakeholders, AWS has developed a regional approach to translate this demand for cloud talent into opportunity for students and economic growth for communities across the state and beyond. This case study describes key elements and lessons learned from the work AWS is helping to lead in two regions in the state.

Adopting a regional approach to workforce development enables impact at scale. Implementing a demand-driven program of study across a region promotes equity of opportunity, ensuring students have access to academic and workforce programming regardless of where they live. Importantly, a regional approach also allows employers access to a regional pool of talent, rather than having to build connections to individual schools and programs or recruit talent from other parts of the state or country. The aim is to build capacity, not reinvent the wheel. Leveraging existing infrastructure and collaborative relationships (e.g. transfer/articulation agreements) helps accelerate implementation at scale. Regional leaders, like regional directors for industry engagement and project managers for the Strong Workforce Program (SWP), play a

critical role in convening and coordinating stakeholders, and expanding the network of implementers.

In California, AWS Educate's model for regional engagement has grown out of our relationship with Santa Monica College (SMC). As part of our ongoing collaboration since 2014, the AWS Educate content team, with support from local tech professionals at AWS and our customers, helped faculty integrate AWS into a four-course introductory cloud certificate sequence, which launched in September of 2017. Based on overwhelming demand (the course filled in one day) and with support from the SWP, AWS Educate helped launch the [California Cloud Workforce Project](#) (CA Cloud), a regional effort to offer the certificate at all 19 community colleges in LA County. The collaborative efforts in LA County then expanded to include institutions in other parts of the state ([SF Bay area](#)), as well as ongoing work to offer dual/concurrent enrollment coursework to high school students and to build a full cloud associate's degree that transfers to bachelor's programs within the California State University system.

Program alignment to employer demands is critical; it's also more flexible. At Amazon, we work backwards from the needs of our customers. We help institutions adapt or modernize academic and workforce programs by embedding cloud concepts and learning experiences that align to the demands and expectations of employers. This competency-based approach also provides more flexibility, allowing institutions to build a variety of programs, which serve increasingly diverse student populations – including full degrees, updating existing programs for “non-tech” professionals, and more modular offerings for working professionals and those looking to re-enter the workforce.

We must engage all sectors in this work, not just education institutions. Education institutions can build academic and workforce programs, but the programs alone won't get students jobs at scale. Paving the way to high-demand careers requires engagement and support from multiple sectors, especially *employers*, who help validate in-demand skills, provide work-based learning opportunities, and ultimately hire grads. Additionally, *government leaders* provide leadership, bring stakeholders to the table, and enact policies that promote flexibility and stackability. We have also discovered the critical importance of economic development organizations like the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, Bay Area Council, and Silicon Valley Leadership Group, who can form the “connective tissue” between industry and education across regional economies.

For more information, contact Lindsay Hopkins at lhop@amazon.com.

California & Local Workforce Development Boards

Agency Name(s)	California and Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs)
Website	California's WDB: https://cwdb.ca.gov/ Local Workforce Development Boards: https://cwdb.ca.gov/local_boards/ Local Workforce Development Area Administrator Look Up: https://www.edd.ca.gov/jobs_and_training/Local_Area_Listing.htm
Strategy Focus	Partnering from design: Established by Executive Order in response to the mandate of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 (Public Law 105-220), the California Workforce Development Board assists the Governor in setting and guiding policy in the area of workforce development. The California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) is responsible for assisting the Governor in performing the duties and responsibilities required by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. All members of the Board are appointed by the Governor and represent the many facets of workforce development – business, labor, public education, higher education, economic development, youth activities, employment and training, as well as the Legislature. The Board meets on a regular basis and the public is encouraged to attend the meetings. Decisions are reached through a collaborative process. The statewide workforce development system is comprised of 49 Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Area), each with its own business-led Local Workforce Development Board (Local Board). These Local Boards work in concert with their local Chief Elected Official oversee the delivery of workforce services relevant to their local residents and businesses. Critical to their charge is their oversight of the local America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs) which are the hub of the statewide service delivery vehicle for workforce/education/business services. Workforce funds allocated to Local Boards support the job training, placement, and business services delivered through the AJCCs. These AJCCs, through partnerships with other local, state, and federal agencies, education and economic development organizations, provide access to job, skill development and business services vital to the social and economic well-being of their communities.

Californians Deserve Credit

Agency Name(s)	California EDGE Coalition, California Competes, and The Education Trust-West
Website	https://www.californiansdeservecredit.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CaliforniansDeserveCredit_Overview.pdf
Competencies Focus	<p>Efforts underway to highlight the need and expansion of credit for prior learning and competency-based education. California Competes, The California EDGE Coalition, and The Education Trust–West - three members of the California Higher Education Equity Coalition - have partnered and launched a statewide campaign. Together, they working to inform state leaders about Credit for Prior Learning and Competency-Based Education, which assess valuable knowledge and skills to accelerate the attainment of valuable postsecondary credentials. Creating a system where all learning county directly addresses systemic injustice and creates a more equitable workforce. It ensures that barriers – such as structural racism and access to financial aid – are removed in favor of a new approach that emphasizes knowledge and skills over ability to navigate an overly complex system. Credit for prior learning and competency-based education is an essential component of building a more fair and equitable economy, education and workforce system.</p> <p>Californians Deserve Credit will issue a series of reports outlining more detailed models, host listening sessions, and offer policy workshops to prompt urgent action on this important issue.</p>

For more information, contact Anna Alvarado at aalvarado@caedge.org.

Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research

Agency Name(s)	Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (submitted by Dr. Sunity "Sunny" Cooke, Superintendent/President, MiraCosta Community College District)
Website	http://www.coecc.net/About-Us
Strategy Focus	<p>Preparing for the opportunity:</p> <p>As grant-funded technical assistance providers, the seven Centers of Excellence across the state, located strategically to study the regional economies of California, support the community colleges by providing customized data on high growth, emerging, and economically-critical industries and occupations and their related workforce needs.</p> <p>Centers produce various reports and tools designed to enable community colleges to remain relevant and responsive in their offerings. Whether you are a community college, workforce or economic development professional, our products and our services can assist you in your mission to support California's businesses.</p> <p>For more information, please view their brochure here: http://www.coecc.net/COE/media/PDFs/COE-Brochure-2016.pdf.</p>

Cradle to Career Data System

Agency Name(s)	California Governor's Office, with support from WestEd (Shared by California EDGE Coalition)
Website	https://cadatasystem.wested.org/
Strategy Focus	<p>Preparing for the opportunity:</p> <p>The Cradle to Career data system, which sets out requirements for the development of a statewide data infrastructure, is currently in the developing stages and will play a key role in “understanding the audience”. This data system will ensure that educational, workforce, financial aid, and social service information is fully leveraged to address disparities in opportunities and improve outcomes for all students from cradle to career. Currently, the workgroup is in the process of approving and recommending to the legislature a document that outlines the data that would be available for public tools in the Cradle-to-Career Data system including the expected actions that various constituencies would be able to take after reviewing data produced by the data system, the specific content that would be visualized in the dashboard, and the types of questions that could be answered using the query tool. Specifically, it would also inform policy decisions about the workforce effect of graduation from high school, community college, and four-year postsecondary educational institutions. For example, how postsecondary course/program offerings and advising relate to employment and earnings outcomes to inform scheduling, program review, and recruitment efforts; highlight how outcomes vary by student characteristics; identify institutional variables that influence student outcomes; and support advocacy about the role of education in rebuilding the California economy. Additionally, it would highlight whether postsecondary institutions are providing a ladder to economic security for all populations; identify potential strategies for closing equity gaps, raising awareness, and developing policy proposals.</p>

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Work-Based Learning Framework

Work-based learning looks beyond the classroom to expand academic and technical learning and accelerate advancement along career pathways. Work-based learning is defined as a student or worker completing meaningful job tasks in a workplace that develop readiness for work, knowledge, and skills that support entry or advancement in a particular career field. Work-based learning supports a continuum of lifelong learning and skill development for a range of workers and learners—K-12 students, young adults, college students, adult jobseekers, and incumbent workers.



Visit JFF's Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning for more information: jff.org/center.