



New Sector Partnerships/Career Pathways Video

The Colorado Workforce Development Council is proud to introduce an excellent resource for sharing the story of sector partnerships and career pathways. Our newest video, "The Time is Now", illustrates how sector partnerships and career pathways are bringing together workforce development, education, economic development, industry, and state agency partners to develop Colorado's talent pipeline. After sharing this video with colleagues to solicit feedback, one commented, "In the five years I've been working on sector partnership initiatives, I've never heard an explanation as concise and accurate as this."

THE CWDC INVITES YOU TO SHARE THIS TOOL WITH THOSE WHO MIGHT BENEFIT FROM LEARNING MORE ABOUT SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS AND CAREER PATHWAYS IN COLORADO.



[Play Video](#)

A special thanks to the team at Crazy Good Marketing for helping us make this project a reality.

July & October Meetings Recap

The summer meeting of the Colorado Workforce Development Council was held in South Denver on July 17th & 18th. Discussions that took place included updates to the initiatives directly related to the CWDC strategic plan, the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act, carrying momentum forward within sector partnerships, the standardization of workforce center services to businesses, and a follow-up to May's "Tackling Poverty Together" luncheon. Council members also had the opportunity to tour the Centennial Airport, a major economic driver for the South Denver area, as well as the newly formed University of Colorado South Denver Campus. The facility, located inside The Wildlife Experience in Parker, offers classes in business, public health, education, engineering, and nursing.



[July Meeting Summary](#)

CWDC's fall meeting took place October 9th & 10th in Summit County and served as an opportunity for Council members to provide feedback on a number of pressing issues, such as the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (see below), the Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (see below), and the upcoming Talent Pipeline Report as required by the passing of Senate Bill 14-205 last spring. Council members were also able to hear a follow-up presentation on the continued streamlining of business services performance metrics, as well as an update on the employment data dashboard currently being utilized to track key metrics within the regional workforce centers. The Colorado Workforce Development Council would like to thank our gracious hosts in Summit County for hosting October's meeting.



[October Meeting Summary](#)

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Colorado Succeeds

Stephanie Steffens, Director of the Colorado Workforce Development Council, traveled to Washington, D.C. in September with Colorado Succeeds, a non-profit, non-partisan coalition of business leaders committed to improving the state's education system for workforce development and economic growth. During the course of this Business Leader Delegate Conference, attendees discussed high standards and aligned assessments around K-12 education, and will move the discussion forward on how these standards and assessments will serve as a platform for college and career readiness in Colorado. A very helpful one-pager from the affiliated www.futureforwardcolorado.org, an excellent community and business resource, can be found [here](#).



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NGA Policy Academy

The NGA Policy Academy: Aligning Education and Training to Meet the Needs of the Economy has begun. Colorado is one of nine states to have been awarded a grant of up to \$170,000 and comprehensive technical assistance. The Colorado Workforce Development Council is serving as the primary point of contact and project manager for this academy. Colorado's team (including the CWDC, the Department of Higher Education, the Department of Education, the Office of Economic Development and International Trade, the Department of Labor and Employment, the Office of State Planning and Budgeting, and the Governor's Office) attended the first academy work session. Work accomplished during the two-day academy included solidification of a strong action plan for the next 18 months, and development of strategies to incorporate existing work such as the creation of the Job Skills and Talent Pipeline Reports, sector partnerships, and career pathways. Additionally, the CWDC Director, Stephanie Steffens, was invited to share the Colorado Blueprint, Key Industry Networks, sector partnership, and career pathways strategies as a national model for other states. Next steps will include utilization of the cross-agency data alignment team and the Talent Pipeline Report (SB14-205) as a research project to set cross-agency priorities, and use of the technical assistance in implementation of those priorities.

A more comprehensive update on the NGA Policy Academy will be included in a supplemental update in January.

Sector Partnership Trainings

In response to requests to continue to dig deeper into the knowledge and training from *Sectors Summit II: Growing the Talent Pipeline* (held in May), the Colorado Workforce Development Council hosted three regional sector partnership trainings focused on convening and sustaining sector partnerships. Over 100 people representing workforce centers, local economic development organizations, and education institutions attended, along with Council staff and our contracted subject matter experts. "It's really affirming to hear we're following a proven national model," one participant said of the trainings.



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Three of the main takeaways to come out of the sustainability portion of the trainings were:

1. Identifying the right industry champions who are engaged in the sector partnership strategy.
2. Quick wins loom large for proving value and keeping momentum going. One of the most critical wins that can be easily accomplished, and just as easily overlooked, is good follow-up on meetings and tasks, and being a reliable partner when employers are looking to accomplish specific goals as a result of a sector partnership meeting.
3. A focus on the "long game," or, relaying to industry representatives that an investment of their time in the sector partnership now directly correlates to creating solutions later on down the road that will allow them to focus on other aspects of their business.

Regional site visits to conduct more focused coaching were also provided to sector partnerships in various stages. These site visits gave regions the opportunity to really dig in and provide exposure to best practices, and to motivate growth and movement within these partnerships. The CWDC plans to continue providing these types of large scale training opportunities in conjunction with the ongoing coaching provided to support the development of sector partnerships and career pathways.

Conversations About the Future of Learning (Next Gen Learning Event)

The Colorado Workforce Development Council, in conjunction with the Department of Higher Education, co-hosted an event, "Conversations About the Future of Learning" in Colorado. This gathering of educators, policy-makers, industry leaders, and students discussed the competencies that 21st century young adults will need to be successful in college, their careers, and their communities. There was also an in-depth look at the implications of these important competencies on classrooms, and on the state's accountability system and its role in creating successful contributors in both the workplace and communities. The event was attended by nearly 150 people, including Lieutenant Governor Joe Garcia, Representatives Bob Rankin and Dave Young, and Stanley S. Litow, Vice President of Corporate Affairs for IBM International. The conversations were so robust and well received that participants are already planning how to use the ideas that emerged to continue to broaden the conversation. Follow #FutureEdCO on Twitter to see highlights of the meeting and to engage with the next steps.

Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI)

The goal of the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative is to provide a unique public investment and new measurably improved outcomes to raise a state scholarship corpus for Colorado's future – imagine if everyone in Colorado who desired to go to college could afford to do so.

STEM Roadmap

On August 27th as part of the Colorado Innovation Network's annual summit, Governor Hickenlooper's administration, the Colorado Education Initiative, and the STEM Advisory Committee introduced the STEM Roadmap. The STEM

Roadmap is designed to:

1. Develop a state strategy to sustain and advance STEM education in Colorado,
2. Support all students in achieving STEM literacy, and
3. Solve the Colorado Paradox by putting a special emphasis on rural areas.

The Colorado Workforce Development Council was a critical partner and was recognized as a champion on the advisory council that developed the STEM Roadmap.



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This overarching goal will be accomplished in two phases. In October, a formal request for proposals was introduced that targets eligible nonprofit organizations, government entities, and community partnerships to distribute funding to increase the availability and implementation of effective student support services and associated programming to ensure success for Colorado students in postsecondary education and degree attainment. Approximately \$3.4 million will be awarded to successful grantees through July 2015 with additional funds potentially available to award recipients who demonstrate the benchmarks outlined in the grant. While COSI is still in the process of selecting grant winners, the RFP was a huge success with 103 letters of intent submitted from those interested in participating!

The second phase of COSI will focus on building the scholarship fund over the next two to three years to work in tandem with the programs developed as a result of the initial grant referenced above. These dollars, which will go directly to students, will be available by 2016 on a matching basis to act to incentivize additional scholarship giving throughout the state.

Members of the CWDC's Executive Committee serve as a portion of the advisory board to the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative, and you're encouraged to visit www.coloradoscholarshipinitiative.org for more information on this important program.

WIOA Update

The whimsical world of acronyms in which government often operates is in the midst of a refresh, with a new phrase being echoed across the state. WIOA, formally known as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, was signed into law in July 2014 and provides the most significant update to workforce legislation in 15 years. The new legislation guides the work of the CWDC and puts forth a powerful vision of an aligned system working together more closely to advance the lives of job seekers and employers. The first program year for WIOA starts on July 1, 2015, and activities are already underway to identify and implement positive changes.

The CWDC is currently raising awareness throughout the state about the changes that are coming with WIOA. By working with workforce centers, state level partners, businesses, and service providers, a shared level of understanding is being developed of what is to come. Specifically, WIOA calls for unified planning activities to take place between the four core programs defined in the law--Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; Adult Education and Family Literacy; Wagner-Peyser; and Vocational Rehabilitation. These programs are also required to report on the same performance accountability measures, or metrics, beginning on July 1, 2016.

As implementation activities get underway, we will share milestones in this newsletter and on our web site. For any questions regarding WIOA, contact [Lee Wheeler-Berliner](#), WIOA Project and Change Manager for the CWDC.

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Colorado Combined Campaign 5K

In August, the State hosted its 2nd annual 5K race to kick off and raise money for the Colorado Combined Campaign. If you're not familiar with the Colorado Combined Campaign, it is essentially the payroll giving initiative for state employees to pool small amounts of donations each month toward an employee's choice of charities. This year the fastest feet in state government belong to CWDC's very own Eric Mergens who finished 1st with a time of 20:36. Eric was also joined on the podium by two fellow staff members from the Department of Labor and Employment - a CDLE sweep! Way to go!