Expanding Quality Youth Apprenticeships to Rural Areas and Beyond

Presentation for Southern Leadership Conference

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About the Urban Institute

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The views expressed today are my own and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders.
Apprenticeship Portfolio

- Evaluation of grants/programs
- Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary
- Tech Apprenticeships
- Technical Assistance Center for USDOL on occupations and standards
- Michigan and Pennsylvania Projects
- Public Sector Apprenticeship Partnership with CSG
Apprenticeship expansion can help address part of our nation’s skills gap.

- Approximately 10.1 million jobs are unfilled.
- 2/3 U.S labor force will require additional training for their current jobs.
- Total American student debt surpasses $1.7 trillion. Average college student debt $37,000+.
- 9/10 executives or managers indicate they have a skill gap or expect to in five years.
A track record of producing strong results for both businesses and workers.

**Impressive Individual + Business + Public Benefits**

- **$300,000+** Apprentices Lifetime Earning Advantage
- **$72,000** Completers Earn Per Year On Average
- **$1.26** Return For Every Dollar Spent on Apprenticeship By Employers
- **$28** In benefits for every $1 invested by the Government.
- **92%** Of Registered Apprentices are employed upon completion
Core Components of Registered Apprenticeship

**Employer Involvement Is Integral**
Employer is the foundation for the RA program and must be directly involved and provider of OJT.

**Structured On-the-Job Training with Mentoring**
Minimum of 2,000 hours Structured and Supervised.

**Related Training and Instruction**
144 hours recommended per year
Parallel | Front-loaded | Segmented Options

**Rewards for Skill Gains**
Increases in skills brings about increases in earnings.

**National Occupational Credential**
Nationally recognized credential showing job proficiency. State or DOL certified.
Urban Institute as a Youth Apprenticeship Intermediary
Youth Apprenticeship
Intermediary Project

ABOUT

- Increase awareness, quality, and number of youth registered apprenticeships (age 16-21) in the US
- Advancing apprenticeships in IT, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Automotive, and Construction.

PROJECT STATUS

- Stimulated more than 700 new youth apprentices since the project began in 2019
- Funding incentivizes new programs and new apprentices
- National Effort: Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, Illinois, Florida, California
Rural Apprenticeships for Youth Report
Rural Apprenticeships for Young People Report

- Fill the gap in knowledge about rural apprenticeship programs
- Understand challenges faced by rural apprenticeship programs for youth and strategies they use overcome the challenges
- Discuss the economic and labor market landscape for youth and business in rural America
Rural Youth Apprenticeship Case Study Sites

- Maine – International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1253 (IBEW)
- Arizona – Tohono O’odham Community College
- Missouri – Four Rivers Career Center
- Mississippi – Double GG Farms
Benefits to Establishing Rural Youth Apprenticeships

- Creating a hometown talent pipeline
- Expanded economic opportunity
- Reduced “brain drain” and enriched communities
- Building the middle-skill workforce

Seth Ruther, welding apprentice, at SAHM Welding and Fabrication with his mentors
Common Challenges for Rural Youth Apprenticeship

- Traveling distance and lack of public transportation options
- Disparities in economy, safety, and health
- Lack of infrastructure especially broadband
- Small businesses and limited resources
Recommendations to Advance Rural Apprenticeships for Youth

- Establishing apprenticeship coordinators
- Advancing group (multiple employer) apprenticeships
- Addressing the digital divide
- Improving transportation (for youth) in the rural landscape
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Promising Youth Apprenticeship Initiatives
Iowa’s High School Apprenticeship Initiative

About Funding

- Iowa’s Apprenticeship Expansion Grant and Apprenticeship Act (statewide funds) provide over $4 million
- Coronavirus Relief Act Funds have continued to expand funding to start apprenticeship programs

Youth Structure

- Approx. 50 high schools as sponsors of Apprenticeship Programs with nearly 100 employers
- 1–2-year apprenticeships

Industry & Occupational Focus

- 20 occupational areas
- Manufacturing (welding, CNC)
- Healthcare (CNA)
- Child Care (ECE)
- IT (Computer Support Specialist)
Apprenticeship 2000 and the North Carolina Business Consortium Model

- Apprenticeship 2000 is a 25-year-old program delivering youth apprenticeships through employer consortia—promoting collaboration, economies of scale and innovation

- North Carolina scaled youth apprenticeship through the consortium model – representing 11% of all apprentices in the state

Pictured is Jordan Pounds – a high school student participating in a 4-year Mechatronics Apprenticeship
Recommendations for States
Youth Apprenticeship Roadmap for States

1. Form State Intermediary to Market and Organize Apprenticeships
2. Manage “Perceived Barriers” to youth Apprenticeship
3. Establish Apprenticeship Funding Incentives for Employers
4. Collaborate with USDOL or State Agency to Streamline Registration Process
5. Develop a Youth Apprenticeship Brand
6. Work with Business Champions to Expand Reach
7. Group Sponsor Model to Expand Business Adoption and Reach
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