Welcome to the Apprenticeships: Closing the Skills Gap (CSG) Grants Connection!

This is the first edition of this CSG Connection newsletter, which is a quarterly technical assistance resource for CSG grantees. CSG grantees can expect to learn more about their fellow grantees, information about best practices, new resources, and news of interest in apprenticeship and workforce, as well as upcoming important dates.

Make sure to check out our new Community of Practice (CoP)! The CoP is designed to provide grantees with relevant information to support CSG programs. It is also a space to access prior events and grantee resources. Come see what’s there!

In this issue of the CSG Connection you will find:
- Grantee Spotlight - Alamo Colleges District (Texas)
- Apprenticeships: CSG Program Office Announcements
- Technical Assistance Dates to Remember
- Performance Snapshot
- Apprenticeships: CSG Grantee Quick Links

Grantee Spotlight

Alamo Colleges District Makes Strides with Closing the Skills Gap Grant

The Alamo Colleges District has partnered with Methodist Healthcare for their patient care technician apprenticeship program through their U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) Apprenticeships: Closing the Skills Gap grant. To date, Alamo has enrolled five cohorts of 53 apprentices into the
Several media outlets have featured the Patient Care Technician Apprenticeship program at Methodist and also how the Alamo Colleges apprenticeship program helps launch health care careers.

The Alamo Colleges’ Healthcare Apprenticeship Partnership focuses on creating apprenticeships within nine healthcare occupations including: patient care technicians, certified nursing assistants, surgical technicians, pharmacy technicians, medical records technicians, medical billing and coding, medical assistants, community health workers, and radiology technicians.

To learn more about Alamo Colleges District apprenticeships visit: www.alamo.edu/apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships: CSG Program Office Announcements

WIOA Participant Information Records Layout (PIRL) for H-1B Grants
The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) recently approved the Employment and Training Administration’s request to renew the Information Collection Request (ICR) for data collection using the Workforce Integrated Performance System (WIPS). As a result of this renewal, CSG grantees will be required to report against the PIRL 2021 schema for the reporting quarter ending September 30, 2021.

SA/CSG 2021 Amended PIRL Webinar
This webinar, held on August 25, 2021, provided information on updated performance reporting requirements to improve performance reporting for apprenticeship grantees. The webinar recording is available on the event registration site on Workforce GPS.

Performance Reporting Reminder
September 30, 2021 marks the end of the first quarter of year two in CSG grantees’ period of performance. CSG grantees should have seen the Quarterly Performance Reporting (QPR) Guidance email in the first week of October. The email includes QPR tips and reminders and dates of the CSG grantees’ Performance Reporting Office Hours.

Upcoming H-1B Performance Office Hours
As part of our technical assistance, grantees are invited to attend the upcoming Performance Reporting Office Hours. Three Outlook invitations with the link and call-in number for Microsoft Teams will be sent. We encourage you to please accept at least one of the upcoming Outlook invites scheduled for:
- Thursday, October 28, 2021 / 2:00 – 3:00 PM EST
- Thursday, November 4, 2021 / 2:00 – 3:00 PM EST
- Thursday, November 11, 2021 / 2:00 – 3:00 PM EST
We encourage grant program staff such as data entry and IT personnel, case managers, program managers, and directors of H-1B grant programs who are responsible for tracking participant records, creating grantee data files, uploading data files, and submitting quarterly progress reports to attend these calls.

**Credentials: What They Are, Where to Find Them, and What Counts for Performance**

Credentials play a key role in workforce development. For employers, credentials can assist in identifying qualified workers, upskilling their current workforce, and competing in the marketplace. For job seekers, obtaining credentials can improve employability and lead to career advancement and higher wages.

This [webinar](#) discussed the characteristics of quality credentials and the types of relevant credentials available. Speakers highlighted resources and tools to use to determine what credentials may count towards grant performance outcomes.

**Apprenticeships: CSG Performance Snapshot**

CSG grantees finished the first year of the grant during the quarter ending March 31, 2021. The graphs below represent performance outcomes for this first year. The targets are from the grantees' statement of work. The first two graphs showcase the Top 5 performers 'Total Participants Served' and 'Total Began Education/Job Training Activities.' The third graph is a representation of these same metrics in aggregate for all CSG grantees.
Top 5 Grantees
Total Participants Began Education/Job Training Activities

\[
\begin{array}{l|c|c|c|c|c}
\hline
\text{Percentage} & 111\% & 103\% & 86\% & 71\% & 66\% \\
\end{array}
\]

Closing the Skills Gap
Year 1 Performance Outcomes

\[
\begin{array}{l|c|c}
\text{TOTAL PARTICIPANTS BEGAN ED/JOB TRAINING} & \text{Target} & \text{Actual} \\
4296 & 10112 \\
5663 & 10899 \\
\end{array}
\]
**CSG Grantee Quick Links**

**Past Webinars**
- Advancing IT/Cybersecurity Apprenticeships
- Employer Engagement Part One
- Employer Engagement Part Two
- SA/CSG 2021 Amended PIRL Webinar

Explore the one-stop site for apprenticeship information at [Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov).

Apprenticeships: Closing the Skills Gap Grantees Policy [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/faq) shares answers to questions about technical support provided to grantees.

Find all the reference materials you need for reporting on the [Performance Technical Assistance Resources](https://www.apprenticeship.gov/technical-assistance) page on the Community of Practice.

**Addressing the Digital Skills Gap**
For more information on DOL’s efforts to support digital skills and competencies, visit the [Competency Model Clearinghouse](https://www.dol.gov/asp/competency). You can also check out their most recent event recording, “Assessing and Developing the Soft Skills of Today's Workforce.”

**2021 State of the Workforce Report**
The 2021 State of the Workforce Report from the National Association of Workforce Boards, focuses on how the workforce agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands responded to assist American workers through one of the worst economic downturns our country has experienced. See the full report as well as the individual state profiles [here](https://www.nawb.org).
Provide content for future e-newsletters!
Do you have a featured news story, recommendations for items to feature, or other feedback? We’re here to share and help! Reach out to your coach or let us know at closingskillsgap@dol.gov

You can find all CSG Connections here!

Disclaimer: This publication was developed by Safal Partners for the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), Employment and Training Administration (ETA) as part of the funding for the Apprenticeships: Closing the Skills Gap Program Grants Management and Technical Assistance contract BPA contract# 1630DC-18-A-0005 and TO# 1605C2-21-F-00008. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, DOL ETA or the U.S. Government.