



Apprenticeship Connections

A Resource for State Apprenticeship Expansion Grantees

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Apprenticeship Tools and Resources

[Funding for Registered Apprenticeship](#) - Are you looking for ideas on federal resources that can be leveraged to fund apprenticeship, or examples of state incentive and funding structures? Check out this new [page](#) on the ApprenticeshipUSA Community of Practice!



[Quarterly Performance Reporting Resources](#) - Do you have questions about reporting instructions or the correct template to use? This [resource page](#) on the ApprenticeshipUSA Community of Practice consolidates information on SAE Grantee Quarterly Performance Reports.

[Newsletters](#) - Miss an issue or searching for an article you read and want to share with a colleague? Now you can find all past issues of the Apprenticeship Connections newsletter [here](#) on the ApprenticeshipUSA Community of Practice.

Events

[SAE Grantee Conference](#) - Did you miss the SAE Grantee Conference or did you attend, but are looking for the agenda or handouts? Are you trying to find the name of a speaker, or a copy of the participant list? The ApprenticeshipUSA Community of Practice has all of the conference materials available [here](#).

Spotlight on Connecticut and Mississippi: Dispelling the Myths

Messaging that Works to Grow the Talent for Connecticut's Defense Contracting Sector. Connecticut Department of Labor (CDL) Apprenticeship Program Manager Todd Berch and his team proudly dispel apprenticeship myths every day as they work to grow the aviation mechanic and advanced manufacturing workforce needed by Connecticut's strong defense contracting sector. In the 1980s, the perception became that manufacturing was dying out and students should go to college.

However, Connecticut's manufacturing sector not only remained, but it grew more complex, while the workers needed to fill skilled jobs became scarce. As he works with young people, Mr. Berch tells them, "We're not the other 4-year degree. We're the original 4-year degree. Instead of debt, you'll have income and a career." It's working -

Connecticut's pre-apprenticeship programs and Advanced Manufacturing Centers within community colleges are at full capacity, helping defense contracting sector employers meet their demands for high skilled, entry-level workers.

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With employers, Mr. Berch's message is, "You have got to grow your own workforce, and we can help you achieve that with a registered apprenticeship program. The schools can't do it on their own. Look at the price if you don't." He describes apprenticeship very simply - as an OJT (on-the-job training) with a work schedule, which he calls "nothing more than a 'to do list' for all your employees for what they'll learn on the job in a certain timeframe." Because it's an agreement between the employer and the employee that describes the investments, the work schedule becomes a great recruiting tool. There is apprehension about apprenticeship - the old cliché of "I'm from the government and I'm here to help!" - but CDL proves its value with practical supports like bonding and wage subsidies funded through federal grants and state funds. Nonetheless, CDL Business Liaisons rely on peer-to-peer recruitment, targeting, for example, one company in each industrial park that will - after success - spread the word. For more information, check out [CDL's website](#) or contact Mr. Berch at todd.berch@ct.gov.

Importing Business Engagement Strategies from Germany to Mississippi.

Deeneaus "D" Polk was an education policy analyst with the Mississippi Economic Policy Center when he won a German Chancellor's Fellowship to study Germany's apprenticeship system. Today he is the Apprenticeship Business Coordinator for the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), where he imports principles he learned in Germany to build effective relationships with companies in Mississippi.



His message to business is all about the benefits of apprenticeship: a positive return on investment, improved retention, and a stronger, more productive workforce. He also emphasizes that MCCB is "here to support you" - as an advocate, sponsor, and/or curriculum developer. Industry meetings always include a community college partner to drive this message home.

How does he get in the door? MCCB's primary strategy is to get others - trusted partners or business peers - to generate enough interest that employers reach out to the Board. They tap existing opportunities to engage businesses such as University Educational Summits for various industries, Community College Quarterly Workforce Meetings, and regular Economic Development luncheons.

MCCB also set up the first in a series of Business Focus Groups, featuring a business leader as facilitator and a tour of Ingalls Shipbuilding. (Ingalls is the state's largest employer, an apprenticeship leader with 14 apprenticeship programs, and a partner in the Mississippi Apprenticeship Program that targets [transitioning veterans](#), women, communities of color, and other under-represented populations.) By facilitating conversation among companies new to apprenticeship and experienced companies with positive testimonies, MCCB was able to identify and dispel myths about apprenticeship being inflexible, limited to union shops, and controlled by the federal government. Companies left with a new appreciation for apprenticeship's flexibility and excited about the opportunity for a better trained workforce. For more information, you can reach Mr. Polk at dpolk@mccb.edu.

[Trump's Other Apprentices: Importing a Euro Model to Educate American Workers](#)

[Apprenticeship Programs Increasingly Put Workers on Track for Jobs in Finance](#)

[Apprenticeships Could Solve Tech's Diversity Problem](#)

[How Manufacturers Build Skills Through Apprenticeship, Industry Partnerships](#)



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