

# Building Pathways from Corporate Training to Higher Education

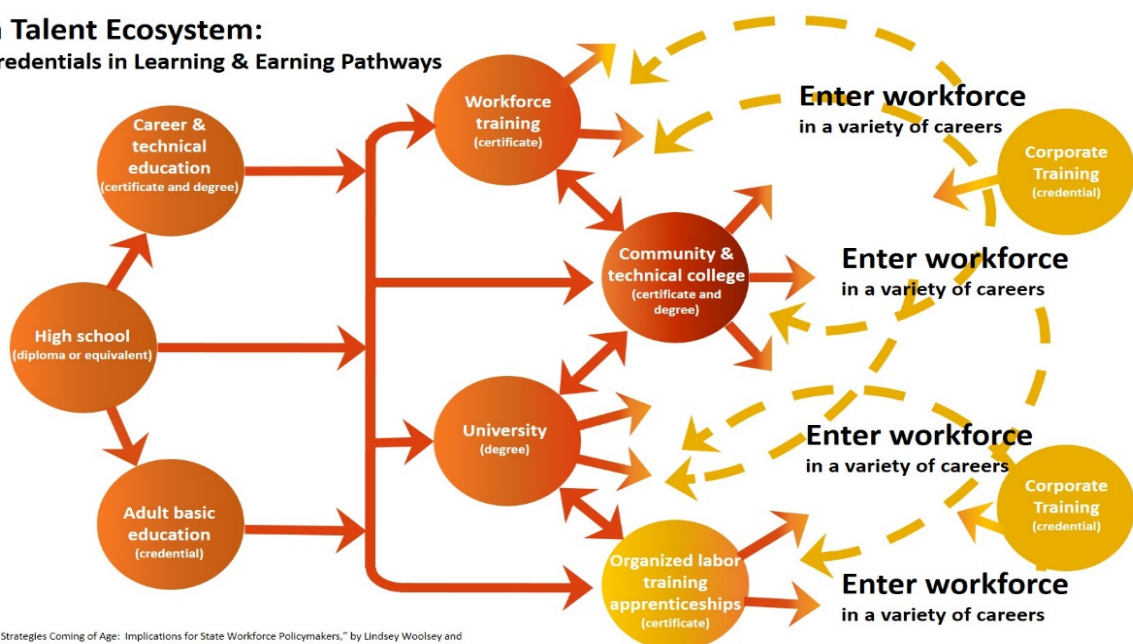
The rise of the knowledge economy is shifting the nature of work, as well as the talent ecosystems that prepare learners for careers. Institutions of higher education and employers are rethinking how, what, and where people learn. With the cost of attending college skyrocketing nearly 250 percent in the last four decades (Brown, 2016), learners are rethinking not only the how, what, and where, but when. The traditional path from high school to college or university is evolving into a privilege that is out of reach for many. For those individuals, the first stumbling block in their academic and career pathways may be during their efforts to acquire a high school diploma or GED. For others, learning English may be the challenge. Not surprising, about 40 percent of the student population in higher education in the United States are nontraditional learners who will enter and exit career and education pathways, as they are able (see Figure 1).

In this shifting environment, the link between education, training, and opportunity is blurred, and developing a talent ecosystem is critical to ensure organizations have access to the skilled labor they need to be successful. In response, many companies are partnering with colleges, universities, and K-12 schools, thus impacting the potential career and education pathways of traditional and nontraditional students. Companies are creating “learn and earn” programs, such as internships, apprenticeships, etc., to ensure employees and students are career ready.

This learn and earn project is designed to align corporate training with college credit to improve the accumulation of learning experiences for participants as they move in and out of education and career pathways throughout their careers. Beginning with the goal of aligning the corporate training of McDonald’s USA with community college credit, participating community colleges recommended expanding the reach to the entire retail and restaurant industry in Texas. Texas Department of Transportation joined, bringing a diverse set of curricula. Colleges are set on developing a system of “stackable credentials” to help ensure a more flexible and friendly approach for learners and earners in their lifelong pursuit of training and education.

**Figure 1**

**Building a Talent Ecosystem:  
 Leveraging Credentials in Learning & Earning Pathways**



Adapted from “State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policymakers,” by Lindsey Woolsey and Garrett Groves, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, National Skills Coalition and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Jan. 16, 2013.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Create seamless pathways between workplace learning/corporate training and higher education certificates and degrees to support working adults' lateral and upward career mobility.
2. Facilitate career and educational pathway entry and exit points so working adults can stop and restart their education and training as needed.

## PORTAL

<http://ntxccc.org/on-the-job-training>

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS	PARTICIPATING COLLEGES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Greater Houston Partnership Upskill Houston</li><li>2. Gulf Coast Consortium of Community Colleges</li><li>3. McDonald's Corporation</li><li>4. National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation</li><li>5. North Texas Community College Consortium</li><li>6. Texas Department of Transportation</li><li>7. Texas Food &amp; Fuel Association</li><li>8. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</li><li>9. Texas Retailers Association</li><li>10. Texas Retailers Association Education Foundation</li><li>11. Texas Restaurant Association</li><li>12. US Department of Labor</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Alamo Colleges</li><li>2. Amarillo College</li><li>3. Austin Community College</li><li>4. Blinn College</li><li>5. Central Texas College</li><li>6. College of the Mainland</li><li>7. Collin College</li><li>8. Dallas County Community College District</li><li>9. Del Mar College</li><li>10. Hill College</li><li>11. Houston Community College System</li><li>12. Howard College</li><li>13. Lone Star College</li><li>14. Midland College</li><li>15. North Lake College</li><li>16. Sam Houston State University</li><li>17. San Jacinto College District</li><li>18. South Texas College</li><li>19. Stephen F. Austin State University</li><li>20. Tarrant County College District</li><li>21. Temple College</li><li>22. Texarkana College</li><li>23. Trinity Valley Community College</li><li>24. Tyler Junior College</li><li>25. Weatherford College</li></ol>

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