

# Fresh Finds

The Collaborative on Economic Mobility Newsletter

June 2025

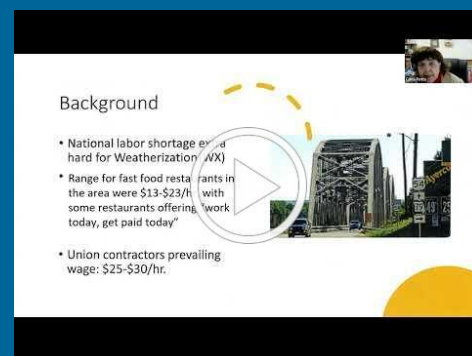
## Lessons Learned: *Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development*

*Explore the Collaborative on Economic Mobility's recent webinar training series and uncover any insights you may have missed!*



### Part 1 - Pre-Apprenticeships

This webinar training focused on Pre-Apprenticeship as a pathway to prepare for education and employment opportunities. It highlights the example of a “Leap to Teach” program in Detroit, Michigan that addresses the impact of the nationwide teacher shortage for their local community by preparing individuals for a career in Early Childhood Education.



### Part 2 - Registered Apprenticeships

This webinar training focused on Registered Apprenticeships as a workforce development opportunity that not only helps to fill in-demand job vacancies but also creates career pathways for individuals and contributes to the prosperity of the local community. This webinar features the example of an energy and weatherization apprenticeship program in Missouri.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## PRE-APPRENTICESHIPS WEBINAR COMPANION GUIDE



This guide is designed to accompany the webinar on Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development focusing on Pre-Apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeships as pathways to economic mobility. These programs are key to shaping a brighter future not only for individuals but for the entire community.

In today's rapidly evolving job market, workforce development is key to building strong, resilient families and fostering long-term economic growth. It goes beyond simply filling job vacancies, it's about creating meaningful career pathways that drive long-term economic growth. By investing in education and training, we empower individuals to:

- **Increase Earning Potential:** Skilled workers command higher wages, improving financial stability.
- **Enhance Job Security:** In-demand skills provide resilience in an ever-changing job market.
- **Contribute to Community Prosperity:** A skilled workforce attracts businesses, driving growth and strengthening local economies.
- **Break Cycles of Poverty:** Access to quality training creates opportunities for upward mobility.

### WEBINAR HIGHLIGHT

Discover the latest trends and promising strategies for advancing economic mobility through innovative workforce development by watching the recording of *Innovative Approaches to Workforce Development Pt. 1!*

[WATCH HERE](#)

To accompany the webinar recording, the slides are available below.

[VIEW HERE](#)

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## NEW! Webinar Companion Guides

Each webinar is accompanied by a supplemental guide to support the learning and increase knowledge-building. Dive deeper into Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeships as innovative pathways to economic mobility. Explore the Webinar Companion Guides to enhance understanding, identify action steps, and discover resources to support implementation efforts in the context of your local community.

[Click here](#) to access **Part 1: Pre-Apprenticeships**

[Click here](#) to access **Part 2: Registered Apprenticeships**

[Access the Webinar Series](#)

## Additional Resources: Workforce Development & High-Quality Education

### [New Funding Opportunity!](#)

Jobs for the Future has launched the National Apprentice Fund (NAF), a \$2 million initiative aimed at reducing financial barriers that hinder Apprenticeship completion. Supported by Google, the NAF will provide 750 apprentices with one-time awards of \$2,800 each. The program prioritizes Apprentices in emerging sectors such as healthcare, technology, and advanced manufacturing. By assisting with costs related to tools, transportation, childcare, and housing, the NAF seeks to improve school retention, completion, and job placement outcomes for participants.

[Click here](#) to learn more.



With support from  
Google.org

### [The National Apprentice Fund](#)

*Supporting Apprentices on Their Journeys  
Toward Quality Jobs*

[Learn more at www.jff.org/NAF](http://www.jff.org/NAF)



### [Video: Breaking Educational Barriers for Working Learners](#)

This video from Jobs for the Future highlights an innovative strategy to dismantle educational barriers for working learners. Bunker Hill Community College's apprenticeship degree program integrates on-the-job training with academic credentials, enabling parents and caregivers to gain in-demand skills while supporting their families. This program addresses the need for flexible, modular education systems that accommodate adult learners balancing work and family commitments. The program recognizes prior learning and expands access to career pathways, helping more individuals advance and succeed in the workforce.



[Click here](#) to watch the video.

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## **ApprenticeshipUSA**

ApprenticeshipUSA serves as a comprehensive resource for individuals seeking to enter or advance in skilled trades through registered apprenticeship programs. It provides tools to search for opportunities, understand the benefits of apprenticeships, and access resources for employers looking to build a skilled workforce. The site emphasizes earning while learning and gaining industry-recognized credentials that lead to successful careers.



[Click here](#) to learn more.

## **Emerging Trends: Artificial Intelligence**

### **WATCH: Applying AI to Rebuild Middle Class Jobs**

In this video, economist David Autor explores how artificial intelligence (AI) can help rebuild the middle class by empowering workers to perform more complex tasks traditionally done by highly trained professionals. He explains that AI's strength lies in pattern recognition and decision support, rather than task replacement, making an ideal tool for extending human expertise. Autor emphasizes that AI can empower people with foundational training to take on high-value roles in fields like healthcare, law, and education. This shift could revitalize the middle-skill labor market and rebuild pathways to upward mobility that have been underutilized by past waves of automation and globalization.



[Click here](#) to watch the video.

### **READ: Building an AI Education Ecosystem with Community Colleges Across America**

This article highlights how community colleges are partnering with tech companies across the U.S. to create AI education and training programs. The article features a local example in Grand Rapids, Michigan as well as the example of a statewide initiative in Mississippi. These programs are preparing the future workforce by helping students build competency and gain valuable skills in emerging technologies.



[Click here](#) to read the article.

## Emerging Occupations: Behavioral Health

Research demonstrates a clear connection between economic mobility and mental health. Community Action Agencies seeking strategies to advance economic mobility through workforce development and educational pathways, may want to consider emerging occupations, such as behavioral health, that can also impact the growing mental health crisis. This article from Seattle Jobs Initiative highlights the importance of behavioral health as an emerging occupation and as a way to address mental health challenges. This article provides examples of local, state, and national organizations that uniting together and investing resources to support this approach.



[Access the Article](#)



### Highlighted Initiative: *Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist*

Community Action Marin launched the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist two years ago. Participants develop 17 core behavioral health skills in a 12-week, 80-hour program leading to state certification (and a steppingstone to a mental health career).

[Click here](#) to learn more.

## Family Focus: Two-Generation & Whole Family Approaches

*Dig into the latest tools and resources to support the implementation of a Whole Family Approach. This framework is designed to increase economic*

***mobility by strategically and intentionally working with children and the adults in their lives simultaneously through integrated services.***

## **Advancing Two-Generation Approaches: Integrating Data to Support Families**

This report explores the challenge of data integration that organizations often face when implementing a Whole Family Approach. The process of developing an effective integrated data system requires careful consideration and planning, the full commitment of all staff from various levels of the organization, clear and consistent definition of key terms, and continual training to ensure data remains secure and confidential. Learn how organizations have worked to strengthen and improve data collection efforts to better serve children and parents at the same time.

[Click here](#) to access.



## **Funding Opportunity: Community-Asset Building**

***Learn more about upcoming funding opportunities to advance opportunities for economic mobility!***

### **Community Economic Development (CED): New Funding Opportunity on the Horizon!**

Each year, the Office of Community Services (OCS) awards Community Economic Development (CED) grants that **create jobs, spark business growth, and drive economic transformation** in communities facing persistent poverty and high unemployment. As of FY 2024, active CED grant recipients have **created 3,621 jobs and 531 businesses**, and these numbers continue to rise!

While the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has not yet been released, OCS is sharing information now to prepare for the upcoming grant cycle. OCS will periodically share updates and resources throughout the grant competition. Please feel free to use these materials to promote CED through your channels—whether through your listservs, newsletters, or social media platforms.

CED can help spark job creation and business growth in your community or the communities of your partners if you help spread the word about the program. Your outreach can help ensure that more organizations and communities learn about and benefit from this opportunity.

To learn more, visit the [CED website](#). Stay tuned – more information about the upcoming CED grant opportunity is coming soon.

[Watch this video](#) to see CED's impact in action!



## Upcoming Learning Opportunities

*Don't miss out on these upcoming learning opportunities available from the Collaborative on Economic Mobility!*

### **Webinar Series: *Building and Sustaining Strategic Partnerships***

**Wednesday, June 18, 2025 at 2pm ET | 1pm CT | 12pm MT | 11am PT**

**Wednesday, July 16, 2025 at 2pm ET | 1pm CT | 12pm MT | 11am PT**

This webinar series will highlight Community Action Agencies who are leveraging strategic partnerships to advance innovative economic mobility initiatives. Participants will have the opportunity to gain insights from the experiences of other Community Action leaders who have built and sustained trusted working relationships with cross-sector partners in the areas of Workforce Development, High-Quality Education, and Community-Asset Building. Through intentionality and collaboration, Community Action Agencies can coordinate and enhance services to improve outcomes for individuals and families.



[Click here](#) to register.

## [ACT Summit: Connecting K-12, Higher Ed, and Workforce](#)

July 15-17, 2025 | Nashville, TN



Join other education and workforce development leaders to share innovative ideas, best practices, and actionable strategies for better collaboration across these inter-connected sectors. This is an opportunity to engage with peers and gain insight help shape future education and workforce development opportunities.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

## [2025 Annual Convention](#)

August 27-29, 2025 | Detroit, MI

Join Community Action Agencies and other human services providers from across the country to share innovative approaches and access proven strategies to move families and communities forward – with topics ranging from education to job training that assists the whole family to advance together.



[Click here](#) to learn more.

## [Webinar: Financial Education and Wealth Generation Strategies for Economic Mobility](#)

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 2pm ET | 1pm CT | 12pm MT | 11am PT

Join the Collaborative on Economic Mobility for a webinar designed to equip Community Action Agencies with tools and resources to help families set financial goals, identify wealth-building opportunities and make informed decisions for financial stability and growth. Participants will learn from Community Action Agencies who are implementing innovative approaches to address the financial challenges of families and communities. Gain insight and actionable strategies to help start or strengthen financial education and wealth generation programs that support economic mobility.



[Click here](#) to register.

**We Want to Hear From You!**



## Peer Sharing & Learning

Does your agency, tribe, state, or region have an innovative and efficient program, service, or approach you would like to share with your peers? Let us know more about it and have the opportunity to be featured in an upcoming newsletter!

[Share Your Innovations!](#)

## Evaluation

Was this newsletter helpful for you? Please take the time to complete this brief evaluation form to let us know your feedback. We value your opinion to help make improvements moving forward.

[Share Your Feedback!](#)

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If you have any questions, contact us  
at: [cem@communityactionpartnership.com](mailto:cem@communityactionpartnership.com).

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