

WELCOME

TO THE 2023 SKILLS IN THE STATES FORUM

Welcome to the 2023 Skills in the States Forum! You're joined by nearly 350 colleagues from thirty-seven states and one territory representing training providers, community colleges, state agencies, unions, businesses, community-based organizations, worker centers, advocates, and researchers – all focused on expanding access to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that people can have a better life, and local businesses see sustained growth.

We are excited to welcome you to network and exchange policy and advocacy ideas during this unique time. Much of the country's attention is focused on addressing pervasive job vacancies and retaining workers. Many of us want to ensure that governments, businesses, and organizations are providing workers with the education, skills, and supports they need to fulfill these vacancies and obtain careers that match their aspirations. Simultaneously, states have begun to spend historic federal infrastructure and clean energy investments which provide an awesome opportunity to help strengthen and diversify huge segments of our workforce.

The ability to fully leverage this attention on the workforce and these opportunities, however, is up to us.

Over the next two days we will discuss different ways we can meet this moment. We will talk about what workers want from skills training and good jobs; promising state strategies on leveraging historic infrastructure investments; investing differently and equitably under the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act; policies that propel equitable college access, credential completion, and connection to quality jobs; centering racial equity in policy and advocacy; creating a workforce system that serves and centers workers; how state advocates can respond to the high demand for digital skills and state efforts to measure and report on credential quality and learner outcomes.

Just as important as hearing about the state efforts in these discussions is the chance to strategize with one another on the coalition organizing, communication, and mobilization tactics that are needed to make these policies and equitable approaches a reality across more states.

We hope that you will use this Forum to tap into the collective expertise across states and organizations and that you will return to your respective states with new connections, strategies, policy ideas, and renewed enthusiasm for working in partnership to change skills policies that change people's lives.

Thank you for coming and for adding your energy, passion, and unique insights to this Forum!



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AGENDA

NOVEMBER 16-17, 2023
BALTIMORE, MD



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16

12:00 - 2:00 LUNCH & PLENARY

Key Ballroom 5 & 6

What Workers Want from Skills Training and Good Jobs

DISCUSSION 1

- Eli Allen, Senior Program Director, Civic Works
- Chrissie Powell, Chief Growth and Impact Officer, ByteBack
- Dominic Redmen, Worker Expert
- Michael Richardson, Director of Worker and Student Voices, NSC (*moderator*)
- Chantelle Williams, Worker Expert

DISCUSSION 2

- Janel Bailey, Co-Executive Director, Los Angeles Black Worker Center
- Dr. Ana Luz Gonzalez-Vasquez, Project Director, UCLA Labor Center, POWER in Workforce Development
- Sarah Miller, Principal Adviser, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity
- Rick Plympton, CEO, Optimax
- Brooke DeRenzi, Chief Strategy Officer, NSC (*moderator*)

2:00 - 2:15 BREAK

2:15 - 3:15 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

WIOA Today & Tomorrow: Investing More, Investing Differently, & Investing Equitably

Carroll

- Katie Gilbertson, Policy Analyst, Nevada Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation
- Drew Hubbard, Executive Director for DC Workforce Investment Council
- Yolanda Macklin Crewe, Ph.D. Director of Operations - Career Education and Workforce Programs, Virginia Community College System
- Julio Rodriguez, Deputy Director of the Office of Employment and Training, IL Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
- Nakeisha Ricks-Pettyjohn, Senior Fellow, Workforce Development, NSC (*moderator*)

Making College Work: Policies that Propel Equitable College Access, Credential Completion, and Connection to Quality Jobs

Key Ballroom 3 & 4

- Johntel Greene, Director of Legislative Affairs, Maryland Association of Community Colleges
- Dr. Girard Melancon, President/Founder Durango Works
- Dr. Ian Roark, Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development & Innovation, Pima Community College
- Kate Kinder, State Strategies Director (West), NSC (*moderator*)

Centering Racial Equity in Policy and Advocacy

Key Ballroom 1 & 2

- Debra Carr, Chief Executive Officer, Job Opportunities Task Force
- Edgar Castillo, Senior Manager, Workforce Development Systems & Policy, UNITE-LA
- Rebecca Kusner, Director, Ohio Workforce Coalition, Founder, R4 Workforce, LLC
- Erin Sheehan, State Network Manager, National Skills Coalition (*moderator*)

3:15-3:30 BREAK

3:30 - 4:45 NETWORKING PLENARY

Key Ballroom 5 & 6

- Melissa Johnson, Managing Director, State Strategies, NSC

4:45 - 5:15 CEO RECOGNITION

Join the NSC Board in a tribute to NSC's founding CEO Andy Van Kleunen followed by a reception in his honor. Andy will be leaving the organization at the end of 2023 after 23 years of leadership.

5:30 - 7:00 RECEPTION

Camden Yards

Camden Club, Oriole Park at Camden Yards
333 W. Camden Street Entrance
Forum badges required for entry



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

7:30 - 10:00 BREAKFAST & PLENARY

Key Ballroom 5 & 6

Seizing the Historic Opportunity: Promising State Strategies on Leveraging Infrastructure Investments

SPEAKER

- Portia Wu, Maryland Secretary of Labor.

PANEL DISCUSSION

- Jamal Jessie, Workforce Development Manager, Georgia Power
- Christopher Montgomery, Director, Syracuse Build
- Shana Peschek, Executive Director, Machinists Institute
- Randy Stamper, Associate Vice Chancellor, Career Education and Workforce Programs, Virginia Community College System
- Melissa Johnson, Managing Director, State Strategies, NSC (*moderator*)

10:00 - 10:30 BREAK

10:30 - 11:30 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Creating a Workforce System that Serves and Centers Workers

Key Ballroom 1 & 2

- Julie Parks, Dean & Executive Director of Workforce Training & Tassell M-Tec, Grand Rapids Community College
- Aquilina Soriano Versoza, Executive Director, Pilipino Workers Center of Southern California
- Marisol Tapia Hopper, Director of Strategic Partnerships & Funding, Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County
- Karina Paredes-Arzola, State Network Manager, NSC (*moderator*)

Digital Skills in High Demand: How State Leaders and Advocates Can Respond

Key Ballroom 3 & 4

- Cody Dorsey, Executive Director, Baltimore Digital Equity Coalition
- Crystal Griffith, Director of Workforce Development and Education, The Business Council of New York State
- Erin Macey, Executive Director, Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute
- Ze Min Xiao, Executive Director, Center for Economic Opportunity and Belonging
- Amanda Bergson-Shilcock, Senior Fellow, NSC (*moderator*)

Delivering on the Promise of Non-Degree Credentials: State Efforts to Measure and Report on Credential Quality and Learner Outcomes

Carroll

- Christine Barrow, Ph.D., Director, Education Strategy Group
- David Troutman, Ph.D., Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Renise Walker, Assistant Director of Systems Innovation, Colorado Workforce Development Council
- Lindsey Reichlin Cruse, Senior Fellow, Postsecondary Education, NSC (*moderator*)

12:00 - 2:00 LUNCH & CLOSING PLENARY

Key Ballroom 5 & 6

Doors open at 11:45