Transportation Workforce Summit Strategies

From Classroom to Workplace: Changing Roles for Colleges and Universities and their partners in Government and Industry

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Inability to respond to industry needs due to financial and institutional constraints (including mandate from State for community colleges to serve everyone); Lack of nimbleness

Strategy

- Matching community college programs to genuine industry needs

Action Steps

- Conduct transportation needs analysis to develop curricular and program priorities at regional level (data reliability)
- Seek investment from industry & government to fund programs that reward collaboration along the pathway from Career and Technical Ed to post-secondary to employer
- Establish Best Practices Clearinghouse (institutional arrangements, financial and partnership models) at national level that provides community colleges with more tools to respond to regional needs

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Degree, credit and certificate portability
- Difficulty of transferring credits between community colleges and from 2-yr to 4-yr institutions;
- Delayed response at 4 yr institutions in developing programs that align more flexibly with 2-year programs and allow community college grads to move forward in emerging fields
- Accrediting bodies create barriers to smooth pathway

Strategy

- Identify knowledge, skills and abilities based on transportation sector not by degree
- Standardize definitions of associate degree, certificate and Certification

Action Steps

- Depts. of Education, Labor and Transportation should cooperatively develop list of core competencies for transportation careers in conjunction with industry and have certifying groups align requirements with definitions so students can transition from state-to-state or up pipeline
- Modify funding programs to reward collaboration

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Unknown funding streams and unavailable financing for non-matriculated programs.

Strategy

- More flexible funding and streamlined information on financing opportunities

Action Steps

- Know who to partner with (industry actors, WIBs, non-profits)
- Funding flexibility and coordination (WIA, GI Bill, e.g.)
- Educate and create end-user funding map

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Lack of student readiness for the workforce

Strategy

- Define effective outcome performance measures to assess success of courses preparing students for transportation workforce.

Action Steps

- Employer engagement in development of national performance measures.
- Student exit exams to gauge success of existing programs in developing skills needed on the job
- Apply feedback to recalibrate program as needed.

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Branding: Community college seen as second best alternative

Strategy

- Job placement as “momentum point” in addition to graduation
- Rebranding of community college as key link on career pathway
- Better portability of community college credits (leading to university degree).

Action Steps

- Compile data for “return-on-investment” in order to market community college programs.
- Establish industry advisory group to help improve image and make courses/ curriculum relevant.
- Align career pathways to avoid duplication; Streamline curricula

From Classroom to Workplace

Challenge

- Lack of experiential learning opportunities in universities. Students do not have practical experience in transportation industry.

Strategy

- Better coordination and collaboration between governments, industry and universities.

Action Steps

- Design an internship program and pursue flexible federal and state funding (e.g. UTC funding for internship placements)
- Creation of hybrid certificate programs that have a mix of academic and practical components.
- Build on existing opportunities for students in transportation -related fields to take part in community engagement activities/service learning and work with municipal governments to address a local transportation problem. Relies upon broad based use of advisors