

OVAE CONNECTION

National Community College Initiatives Announced

On Oct. 5, 2010, at the White House Community College Summit, President Obama announced the Skills for America's Future initiative. The initiative is a partnership between community colleges and employers to assist students in developing job-based skills. Skills for America's Future is structured as a broad umbrella under which corporations, labor unions, community colleges and others can connect and identify opportunities for leveraging and scaling effective ideas. By working together, they can have a substantially greater impact than the training efforts of individual firms or community colleges. United Technologies Corporation, Accenture and the Gap have signed on as supporters of Skills for America's Future. For additional information about the Skills for America's Future initiative, visit:

www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2010/10/04/building-skills-america-s-future.

Also announced at the Summit was a \$1 million prize competition to recognize community colleges with outstanding academic and workforce outcomes. The Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence is a project of the Aspen Institute, in partnership with the Joyce Foundation, the Lumina Foundation for Education, Bank of America Charitable Foundation and the JP Morgan Chase Foundation, to exemplary community colleges. The first award will be made in the fall of 2011. The purpose of the prize is to honor excellence, stimulate innovation and clearly define success for community colleges. The prize will reward community colleges for outstanding performance and improvements over time, and should promote scaling of effective strategies for improved program completion, transition to four-year institutions and employment outcomes. For more information about the Aspen Prize, visit: www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/aspen-prize.

GEDTS Finds Positive Relationship Between Holding a GED and Enrolling in College

The GED Testing Service recently unveiled a new report, [Crossing the Bridge: GED Credentials and Postsecondary Educational Outcomes](#), indicating that more than 17,000 GED graduates from 2003 have since earned a college credential. The study found that adults with GED credentials enrolled in postsecondary education at a significantly higher rate than did non-passers. Study data show that, when given enough time, most GED Test-passers with postsecondary education goals (71.5 percent) followed up on those goals. The majority (77.8 percent) of postsecondary students who had passed the GED Tests enrolled in community colleges or similar institutions.

Programs in Workforce Development and Sustainable Programming at Gateway Technical College

Brenda Dann-Messier, OVAE's assistant secretary, visited [Gateway Technical College](#) in Burlington, Wis., this week to see state-of-the-art workforce development and sustainable programming efforts at the Transportation Technology Center, Advanced Propulsion Center, and Health & Emergency Responder Occupations (HERO) Center. Gateway is transforming education by providing innovative, up-to-date instruction in "green" energy programs, such as hybrid biodiesel and electricity as fuel sources, geoechange, wind technology and urban farming—all focusing on sustainable job creation and on addressing the current economic climate by providing green career pathways.

The center is also committed to building successful business partnerships. Their "green garage" initiative, in collaboration with Snap-on, Inc., raises environmental awareness in terms of tools, equipment, chemicals and methods of servicing large transportation vehicles. This initiative provides students with the opportunity to learn about the most advanced vehicles and equipment. One example is a dynamometer room that allows for examination of the diesel components of a vehicle and tests those components; a 5,000 square foot service bay that allows students to look at and work on vehicles up to the size of semi-trailers and semi-tractors; a hangar large enough for any of the center's three training planes to be viewed, worked on and stored; and a lab for hydraulics, alternative fuels, wind-based energy, and research and development. The lab is intended to allow students to better understand the composition of alternative fuels and propulsion methods and to observe research about and development of fuel mixes.

New LINCS Postings

Two final National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) publications are now posted on the [LINCS \(Literacy Information and Communication System\) website](#). *Making Sense of Decoding and Spelling: An Adult Reading Course of Study* is an evidence-based course written by Charles MacArthur and Judy Alamprese that is designed to teach low—intermediate level adult learners to decode and spell more accurately and more fluently. The materials were developed as part of a study jointly funded by OVAE, NIFL, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. The study investigated the effectiveness of adult literacy interventions for low-literate adults, including the role of decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension instruction in adult literacy and explicitness of instruction. The course includes a teachers' and administrators' guide, a learner activity book, and 30 scripted lesson plans. *Adult Literacy Development and Economic Growth*, by Steve Reder, from University of Portland, gives new insights into the relationship between changes in adult literacy skills and earnings, especially during periods of economic growth and recession. The paper analyzes literacy, earnings and employment data from the first five years of the [Longitudinal Study of Adult Literacy](#) (LSAL).