Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit

Career Pathways

for Adult Learners

Counseling to Careers was developed by Jobs for the Future. Sandy Goodman of the National College Transition Network adapted them for this Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit.

Prepared by Sandy Goodman of World Education for

Texas LEARNS

Funding for the Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project was made possible through the use of braided funding sources.

1. WIA Incentive Grant. Program Authority: Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title 1, Section 174, Title V, Section 503, Public Law 105-220, 20 U.S.C 9273; Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, 20 U.S.C 9211. Section 503 of WIA provides for states who exceed performance targets for workforce investment, adult education, and vocational education programs to receive incentive grants. Texas received an incentive grant for its performance in 2010. Grant funds from this source were used to implement Integrating Career Awareness, develop local program College and Career Readiness Plans, to implement career pathways pilots and to develop recommendations for revision of Texas Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks.

2. The Texas General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 35, 82nd Texas Legislature. The General Appropriations Act called for TEA to coordinate with the Higher Education Coordinating Board in efforts to develop and implement an action plan to align Adult Basic Education and post-secondary education and in the provision of data necessary to analyze performance outcomes. TEA addressed that mandate by granting funds to Harris County Department of Education (Texas LEARNS) for the express purpose of contracting with Jobs For the Future. The objectives of the JFF Contract were to

a) Strengthen student career guidance and connections to career pathways using a Counseling to Careers training approach;
b) Build local program knowledge in contextualizing adult education instruction to career pathways; and
c) Increase knowledge and adoption of effective GED to College models and strategies.

3. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Local programs and GREAT Centers contributed local program funds to increase the number of staff who could participate in the activities of this project and to intensify implementation within adult education regions and in local adult education programs.

Introducing the Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project

Purpose of the Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project

College, Occupational and Career Readiness are essential to the millions of undereducated adults who lack the credentials to seek employment with family sustaining wages. Without clear and effective pathways from ESL and ABE Classrooms to postsecondary education, Texas cannot achieve even marginal college-ready and career-ready outcomes that lead to employment for undereducated adults.

To address the need for clear pathways for transition, the **Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project** was designed to provide resources to advance the Texas adult education program structure and align it with postsecondary efforts as described in legislation (General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 35, 82nd Texas Legislature). This has been achieved by creating and implementing tools, support, and professional development to help local programs build student pathways to college and career readiness.

Components of the Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project

Beginning in the 2012-2013 program year, Texas LEARNS launched six inter-related components. These components, which are listed below, work together to provide local programs with the tools they need to help students make successful transitions to work and to college.

1. Integrating Career Awareness
2. Counseling to Careers
3. Contextualizing Instruction
4. GED to College Models
5. College and Career Readiness Plans
6. Texas Adult Education Content Standards Review

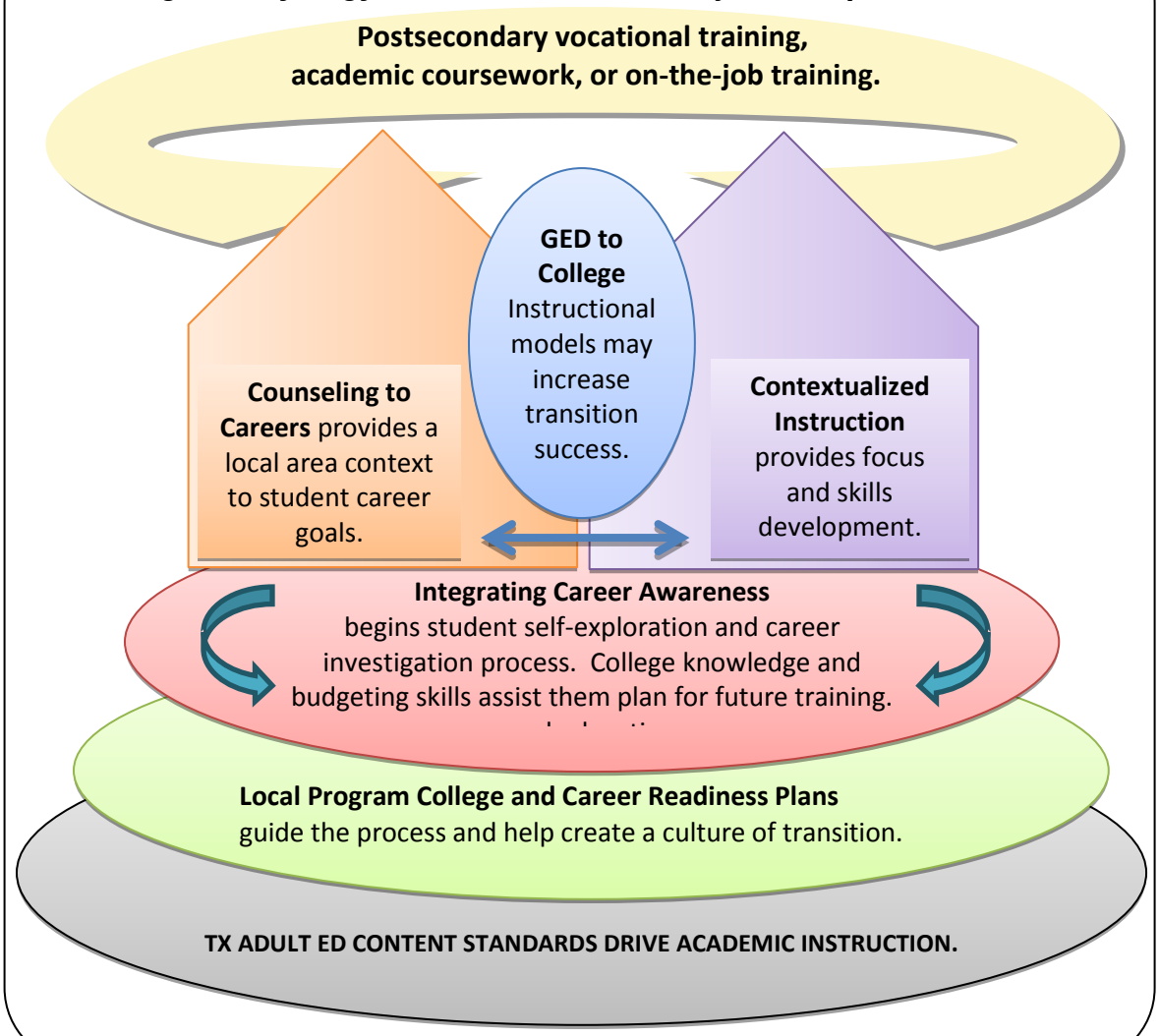
Figure 1 illustrates relationships between the various WIA Incentive Project components.

- The **Texas Adult Education Content Standards** drive instruction. These standards, however, have been reviewed and recommendations for revision have been made based on the new GED® 2014, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and

national College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education published in April 2013.

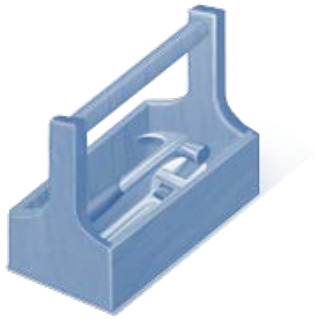
- Local program **College and Career Readiness Plans** help guide programs through the various components as they create a culture of transition for their students.
- **Integrated Career Awareness** has been added to adult education instruction, leading students to develop more informed career goals.
- **Counseling to Careers** provides even more information to students about best bets for career choices in their local communities.
- **Contextualized Instruction** can be used in a general sense, such as teaching and practicing academic skills using the context of employability skills or career awareness exploration. However, **Contextualized Instruction** can be much more focused on a particular industry group or even on a specific occupation.
- Finally, local programs may choose to offer transition classes using particular **GED to College Models** that incorporates contextualized instruction in a particular career area that has been proven a best bet career choice through the Counseling to Careers process.

Figure 1: Synergy of the WIA Incentive Project Components



Local Program Resources Created through Texas Adult Education Career Pathways Project

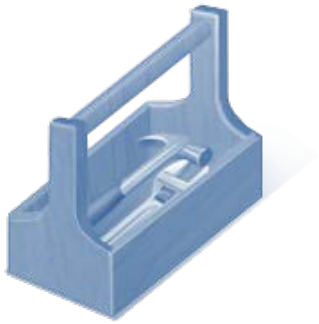
In an effort to provide training, support, and resources on transition strategies, the Toolkits described below have been created for local program teachers and/or administrators.



(#1) Counseling to Careers Program Toolkit

Audience: Adult education programs working as a team, with representation from program administrators, instructors, counselors/advisors.

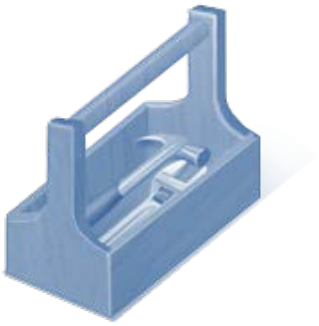
This *Toolkit* was commissioned by Texas LEARNS to make the Counseling to Careers intensive training materials and tools, developed by Jobs for the Future (JFF), available to all adult education programs throughout Texas. The CTC process is about identifying a range of *best bet* occupations and training programs that would be a good fit for a range of students. With up-to-date labor market information and interviews with local industry and training providers, adult education providers can better align program design and student guidance with real labor market opportunity. Instructors and advisors can then guide students to programs of study which align with their interests, aptitudes, and regional employment needs, leading to careers and high-growth employment.



(#2) Contextualization: Creating Career-Infused Classrooms - A Toolkit for Adult Education Instructors for Contextualizing Instruction to High Demand Careers

Audience: Classroom teachers and advisors and/or other staff who support student transition

This *Toolkit* provides programs with the tools needed to "infuse careers" throughout student learning plans. Specifically, the *Toolkit* focuses on how educators can contextualize instruction around the high demand jobs in an identified local service area. The *Toolkit* is designed to be distributed in conjunction with state or regionally sponsored professional development workshops. Prior to attending a workshop and receiving the *Toolkit*, participants will be asked to view the *Toolkit*'s accompanying online tutorial.



(#3) Contextualization: Creating a Support System for Contextualized Instruction - A Toolkit for Adult Education Program Managers for Supporting Career-Infused Classrooms

Audience: Local program administrators and counselors, advisors and/or other staff who support student transition

The primary purpose of this *Contextualization Toolkit* is to provide program managers a guided process for supporting contextualized instruction at the local level. The *Contextualization Toolkit* includes an overview on contextualized teaching, a look at various delivery models, and an examination of the responsibilities that program managers have in working as a team with instructors to ensure instruction applies knowledge and skills to occupations. A one-hour online *Introduction* accompanies the *Contextualization Toolkit*.

(#4) Creating a Career Contextualized Framework: An Introduction for Creating Career-Infused Classrooms

Audience: Local program teachers and counselors, advisors and/or other staff who support student transition

This 30-minute online tutorial serves as an introduction to workshops based on the *Contextualization: Creating Career-Infused Classrooms Toolkit.* The tutorial is designed to be viewed by participants prior to their attendance at workshops that are based on this *Contextualization Toolkit.*

(#5) Overview for Creating a Career Contextualized Framework – A Tutorial to Accompany the Creating a Support System for Contextualized Instruction Guide

Audience: Local program administrators and counselors, advisors and/or other staff who support student transition

This one-hour online tutorial, targeted for local administrative and transition support staff, accompanies the *Creating a Support System for Contextualized Instruction Guide.* The course is divided into eight short lessons that cover how administrators and transition support staff can ensure that curriculum development and teacher training result in effective contextualized classroom instruction.

TOOLKIT

Table of Contents

1. Introduction....3
2. How to Use This Toolkit....7
    - Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit Chapter Overview and Tools 10
    - Sample Counseling to Careers Team Action Plan.... 13
    - Counseling to Careers Team Action Plan.... 19
3. Best Bet Framework 21
    - Best Bet Checklist 25
    - Sample Best Bet Checklist for Welding—Seguin ISD Counseling to Careers Pilot Team 35
4. Understanding Your Local Labor Market to Identify Best Bets 45
    - Part A- Becoming Familiar with the Labor Market Terminology 46
    - Part B- Using TRACER to Identify Potential Best Bets.... 51
    - Part C-Using Career One Stop to begin an Occupational Profile 70
    - LMI Research Data Worksheet.... 77
    - Occupational Profile Worksheet 79
5. Community Mapping.... 81
    - Community Map.... 85
6. Building a More Complete Picture: Workforce and Industry Interviews.... 87
    - Workforce Solutions and Chamber of Commerce Interview Guide.... 93
    - Employer Interview Guide.... 97
    - Employer Interview Tracking Sheet 101
7. Building a More Complete Picture: Interviewing Postsecondary Training Providers.... 103
    - Postsecondary Education Interview Guide 109
    - Postsecondary Training Provider Interview Tracking Sheet.... 113
    - Apprenticeship and Civil Service Interview Guide 115
    - Sample Email to Institutional Research.... 117
    - Sample Interview Tracking Sheet—Welding.... 119
8. Tying it all Together 121
    - Sample Best Bet Checklist for Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) 123
    - Central Texas HVAC Score Card.... 131
    - Apartment Building Maintenance Technician.... 133
    - Administrative Assistant.... 135

Commercial Driver's License 139
Welding 141
9. Fostering Ongoing Employer and Industry Engagement to Inform Program Design 147
10. Informed Instruction and Advising using the CTC Process and Best Bet Framework 149
Using the Holland Code and Tools to Assess Student's Career Interests 155
Using Labor Market Information in Teaching and Advising 159
20 Ways to Use Career Pathway Maps (and Best Bet Profiles) 161
Best Bet Exploration Template 162
Additional Resources for Counseling to Careers 165
Labor Market 165
Career Planning 167
Postsecondary Education and Training 173
Transition and Reentry from Corrections Facilities 176
Glossary of Labor Market Terminology 178
Sample Best Bet Checklist: Apartment Maintenance 195
Sample Best Bet Checklist: Computer Support Specialist 203
Sterile Processing Technician 204
Nursing 204
Computer Support Specialist 204

1. Introduction

Overview of Counseling to Careers (CTC) Toolkit

This toolkit was commissioned by Texas LEARNS to make the Counseling to Careers intensive training materials and tools, developed by Jobs for the Future (JFF), available to all adult education programs throughout Texas. The Counseling to Careers training manual was written by Norma-Rey Alicea and Todd Weissman of Jobs for the Future, with contributions from other JFF staff. The CTC material was adapted by Sandy Goodman of the National College Transition Network for this Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit.

There is increasing attention to and acceptance of the economic reality that most jobs that will pay family sustaining wages require some postsecondary education and training. In response the adult education system has adopted many curriculum and program strategies to help adult learners shift their aspirations and prepare for next steps and transitions.

The CTC Toolkit is one of four transition strategies, Integrating Career Awareness, Contextualizing Instruction, and review of the Adult Education Content Standards that Texas LEARNS launched in 2012 to build student pathways to college and career readiness by creating and implementing tools, support, and professional development for the field. These initiatives strengthen the capacity of the ABE system to respond to challenges posed by the current and projected economic landscape in the region and the nation.

Challenges found in preparing adult learners for college and careers

While access to postsecondary education is critical, making informed career and education decisions to choose a path that promises a greater likelihood of success – completion, credentials that are valued by employers, employment with family sustaining wages - is even more critical:

- Fewer than half of all students who enter community college earn a credential (e.g., a degree or certificate) within six years.
- Those students who do graduate too often leave in debt and struggle to find decent-paying jobs.
- Research shows that the sooner students choose an academic or vocational program of study, the more likely they are to graduate.

While postsecondary education is critical, not all postsecondary education and training programs are equally beneficial to all students. Certain occupational pathways have higher returns on investment than others - and most adult education students have limited time and money to invest - and programs vary considerably in the levels of academic and social supports provided to help students persist once they enroll.

Too often, adult education students do not have clear and up-to-date information on colleges and career pathways to make informed choices about postsecondary programs of study. In addition, accelerated postsecondary programs that offer targeted student supports and lead to better-paying

jobs have typically been difficult to identify and access. Program staff and managers are not always up-to-date on their regions' employment forecast or the quality of postsecondary training programs and so can offer only limited guidance to students to make such important life decisions.

While more and more ABE centers include some career exploration and planning in their instruction and advising programming, the majority focus on locating career information available on the internet. Limited attention is given to gathering comprehensive, firsthand and in-depth information from local employers, industry experts and postsecondary training providers.

What is the Counseling to Careers (CTC) Process?

The CTC process and this toolkit build on the ongoing efforts of ABE providers, colleges and their community partners to facilitate an effective match between career opportunity, postsecondary program, and student interest and readiness.

The goal of the process isn't to track students wholesale into certain occupations or discourage them from pursuing their own unique interests, goals, and aspirations. But the point is to make our program staff more knowledgeable about local labor markets and training programs and adept at identifying questions and finding people with answers. Then educators will be better equipped as trusted translators of accurate information and guidance. Educators will also be better able to guide students through a similar process of inquiry to learn about occupations of interest to them.

Counseling to Careers is a multi-step process to gather and evaluate the most up-to-date information on postsecondary options and growth industries in your region. The CTC process is best achieved through the work of a team – adult education program managers, instructors, and counselors/advisors with the help of external stakeholders, such as employers from targeted industry and business sectors, postsecondary training providers, and regional workforce center staff. The process involves evaluating the information you've gathered to identify Best Bet occupations and training programs and develop Best Bet profiles that may be used in instruction and counseling activities.

The ultimate goal is to make comprehensive information about college and careers more transparent and accessible to students as you advise them through their own process of career and education planning. CTC ensures that ABE instructors and transition counselors will be well positioned to provide students and their families with the level of information necessary for them to make informed postsecondary decisions. It provides the critical link to help students choose the right postsecondary programs. By connecting students with these best bet programs, they are more likely to complete their programs, transition to college and then connect to jobs that lead to family-sustaining wages with career advancement potential.

The Toolkit guides adult educators through a process that involves these key steps:

1. Gather regional labor market data from TRACER
2. Identify some potential best bet occupations using a set of criteria related to median wages, projected openings, educational attainment required projected growth.
3. Interview regional employers and industry experts to confirm regional demand and identify related employment opportunities – what education/training, work experience do they require? What are the opportunities for advancement?
4. Investigate local postsecondary education and training programs associated with promising occupations. Do they offer the types of training and credentials valued by local employers?

What types of supports are available for nontraditional students? What's the track record on credential attainment and job placement in the field?

5. Analyze the information gathered using a set of *Best Bet* criteria (considerations of labor market data, local availability of training and jobs).
6. Develop written materials about best bet occupations and training program, such as a profile or brochure that can be used as an instructional and advising tool or recruitment for career pathway training programs.
7. Incorporate components of the CTC research process, and information gathered into program design, instruction, and advising/counseling activities to help students locate, analyze and weigh labor market, occupation and training information.

End Goal of CTC

The CTC process is about identifying a range of best bet occupations and associated training programs that would be a good fit for a range of students. With up-to-date labor market information and interviews with local industry and training providers, adult education providers can better align program design and student guidance with real labor market opportunity. Teachers and advisors can then guide students to programs of study which align with their interests, aptitudes, and regional employment needs, leading to careers and high-growth employment.

You may not find occupations in your region that qualify as best bets, based on the set of criteria used here. Further, your students may not be attracted to or appropriate for those occupations and training programs that do fit the criteria. There are myriad direct and indirect benefits to teams that undergo the CTC process:

- Outreach and interview process can develop and strengthen networks with local employers, workforce and industry experts, and postsecondary training providers. Over time, these networks might be further leveraged to develop more substantial collaborations.
- Process and research skills are transferable and builds staff (and student) capacity for stakeholder outreach, employer engagement, network development, and research.
- Best Bet profile can serve multiple purposes as a counseling/advising tool, lesson material (for example on analyzing data, internet research); student recruitment (for specific training program).
- ABE instructors and counselors will be better equipped to locate, analyze, and present labor market and postsecondary training information to inform instruction and counseling activities in order to guide students through well-informed career and education planning.
- Empowers students to become informed consumers of postsecondary programs and careers.
- Ability to design ABE, career pathways, and transition programs that are better aligned with regional labor market opportunities and bridges to appropriate postsecondary training.

Long term Benefits for All Stakeholders

- ABE programs that can provide up to date information on in-demand technical programming and ready students to enter these programs ready to succeed;
- Community colleges that improve their completion rates and strengthen community partnerships;

- Schools, workforce agencies, and other community partners that can access clearer pathways to careers with high-growth employment for their students/clients; and
- Students who have made informed decisions and are more likely to persist in earning college credentials that lead to high-quality employment.
- Regional employers are able to draw from a better prepared pool of potential employees.

Together, these outcomes have the potential to improve college graduation rates and help students along a path of economic self-sufficiency.

2. How to Use This Toolkit

This chapter suggests roles for adult education program team members and introduces each chapter topic and tools.

Tools: 1) Sample Team Action Plan
2) Blank Team Action Plan

This toolkit guides a team through the CTC process and provides tools and resources for planning, researching, evaluating, and documenting the process and outcomes. Each chapter describes a step in the process and includes tools that can be used and adapted for those steps.

The toolkit also includes references to additional resources that can be used to develop or enhance programming that complements or supports Counseling to Careers, such as how to build employer engagement, career advising, college navigation, helping ex-offenders through the career and education planning process.

Counseling to Careers Research Teams

Although the name of the process is called ***Counseling*** to Careers, the CTC process is not one that should be left to a counselor or instructor on their own. This toolkit is intended for adult education programs working as a team. It is strongly recommended that programs form teams that include program managers/coordinators as well as direct service staff – instructors, counselors/advisors, to the extent possible.

Jobs for the Future designed the CTC training for local teams, led by an adult education program administrator. Other team members are, typically, adult education instructors and/or counselors and representatives from workforce solutions centers, community colleges and other postsecondary college institutions, and community-based agencies. In addition to leveraging the local expertise these various stakeholders bring to the research, the process can forge collaborations that have value beyond the life of the action research project.

If you can engage stakeholders from workforce, postsecondary education, and other community based organizations in the planning and research process, their participation will strengthen your team. If not, then at the very least they can help you identify interview contacts and give input through interviews as well.

How you organize your team will depend to a great extent on your current resources and connections to potential stakeholders. If your program has strong connections to a postsecondary institution or workforce center that can be leveraged for the CTC research, then you will not need to do as much outreach to find potential interviewees. If you are identifying new industries and occupations where you have not yet developed networks and contacts, then this CTC research process is a perfect opportunity for you to begin to develop those contacts in the service of your research.

Most important is that the team has a leader who can help the group identify the steps to information gathering (including outreach to identify contacts and interview sources), a timeline, and keep the group on task.

Following are some suggestions for the roles that team members can play in the CTC research process. In the last two chapters of the Toolkit, we'll discuss how you can use the Best Bet information you gather after you've completed the research process.

Role of Adult Education Program Manager

The CTC research process takes outreach, persistence, and time to gather substantive, valuable information that you can't find by simply using the internet or making a phone call. Keeping a team on track and on task requires leadership, follow through, deadlines and shared accountability. The program manager or coordinator is in the best position to lead and facilitate the process among staff members and stakeholders. Similarly, the program manager is well situated to the outreach and networking with industry, workforce, employer and postsecondary leaders. Many managers are already members of various external committees and networking groups that will be helpful in generating contacts for the research interviews.

Lead the team

- Recruit team of staff and stakeholder partners who can realistically participate in the project (have the appropriate time, skill set, role, etc.)
- If training is offered on CTC process, attend as a team and share the information and materials with entire staff afterwards.
- Orient all staff to the project, whether or not they will contribute directly to the research team in the research project, so that everyone is aware, invested and thinking ahead to how they might engage students in the process or present the Best Bet information.
- Engage everyone – staff and, perhaps, students - in the community mapping activity.
- If your program has the staff capacity and instructional intensity, spend time thinking about how/whether students could be involved in the research process as a program-wide project.
- Promote the short and long term benefits, such as transferable research skills, industry contacts, better grasp of labor market and career planning process, that the program/staff (and students) will gain from the process.

Lead Outreach and Interviews with Workforce, Employers, and Postsecondary Contacts

- Play a key role in gathering the Best Bet information and making it accessible to instructors and staff.
- Take the lead in reaching out to industry, workforce, employer and postsecondary contacts, but include a teacher or advisor, if possible, if the interview will advance their work. For example, if you're interviewing a college instructor, then this might be a good opportunity for a GED teacher to learn more about college course work. If you're interviewing an employer, a transition coordinator or work readiness teacher, could benefit.
- Do not rely on part time staff whose duties are primarily direct instruction or counseling to find time to get out and schedule the bulk of the interviews.

- Bring stakeholders together to validate the data and advise the program and staff on the regional realities.
- Use the interviews to establish a foundation for developing an ongoing contact with industry, workforce, employer, and postsecondary institutions. Establishing the partnerships and nurturing them.

Role of Instructors

- Contribute to the community mapping process.
- Engage students in the community mapping process. They may have ties to people in the targeted occupations. If not, the lesson on networking and the *strength of weak ties* is helpful to their own networking and job search interests.
- Consider student interests when narrowing down initial list of potential Best Bets to research further. Ask which they'd be more interested in learning about, if you're not sure which from the list to choose.
- Teach students labor market terminology.
- Teach students how to interpret labor market information using graphs, charts, and mathematical concepts like percentiles, mean, and median.
- Use ICA lessons that mirror the CTC process
- Have students do preliminary internet research on potential best bets , e.g. occupational profiles, as foundation for industry, employer, and postsecondary interviews that CTC team members will conduct
- Have students do preliminary web research on postsecondary training programs as foundation for postsecondary interviews that CTC team members will conduct.

Roles of Advisors/Counselors

- Contribute to the community mapping process.
- Invite guest speakers from the targeted occupations to speak to your students.
- Participate in interviews with employers and training partners, as time allows and appropriate to role. For example, an instructor could learn more about college level expectations in interview with training faculty, while advisor/counselor might benefit more from interview with admissions officer or career center staff.
- Advisors should participate in employer and workforce interviews to the extent possible (with administrator) because the information gleaned will be key to counseling students on work readiness and careers.
- Use the experience conducting CTC interviews, to coach students on informational interviewing and the benefits of getting firsthand information, exposure and networking.

Sequence of Chapters, Tools, Activities

In most cases, it will make sense to follow the sequence of activities as they're presented in the Toolkit chapters and Sample Team Action Plan. However, reality and opportunity may offer a different sequence. It is important that you look at Labor Market Information before you select an occupation to research in greater depth. However, it's not that important that you talk to employers before training providers or vice versa.

Talk to whomever you can get to first – employers or trainers – once you identify your focus. If you're having trouble identifying employer contacts, then PSE interviews may be easier to get and they may be able to help you ID employers or other industry experts. What's really important is that you do advanced research (primarily online) about the industry, company, occupation, program of study prior to each interview. That way you can use the interview time to learn from them firsthand about the types of details you can't find online.

Texas Counseling to Careers Toolkit Chapter Overview and Tools

Chapter Title		Overview	Tools
1	Introduction	Overview of the Counseling to Careers rationale, process and end goals and benefits.	N/A
2	How to Use	Suggests roles for adult education program team members and introduces each chapter topic and tools.	• Sample Team Action Plan • Blank Team Action Plan
3	Best Bet Framework	Introduces the Best Bet framework and criteria for evaluating potential Best Bet occupations and training programs.	• Best Bet Checklist • Sample Best Bet Checklist for Welding
4	Using Labor Market Information (LMI) to Identify Potential Best Bets	a) Defines labor market terminology and data used to identify potential Best Bests. b) Demonstrates step-by-step process for using TRACER to gather key data. c) Begins development of Occupational Profile(s).	• LMI Research Data Worksheet • Occupational Profile Worksheet
5	Community Mapping	Introduces community mapping process to help your team identify key research contacts.	• Community Map
6	Building a More Complete Picture: Workforce and Industry Interviews	Outlines steps for conducting additional industry research, identifying workforce, industry and employer contacts and sample interview questions.	• Best Bet Checklist (review) • Workforce Solutions Interview Guide • Employer Interview Guide • Employer Interview Tracking Sheet
7	Building a More Complete Picture: Interviewing Postsecondary Training Providers	Outlines steps for conducting additional research, identifying postsecondary interview contacts, and sample interview questions.	• Best Bet Checklist (review) • Postsecondary Education Interview Guide • Postsecondary Interview

Chapter Title		Overview	Tools
			Tracking Sheet • Apprenticeship and Civil Service Interview Guide • Sample email to Institutional Research Department
8	Tying it all together	Revisits the Best Bet criteria, and presents examples of how to pull all the research together into a written brochure, flyer, or Best Bet Profile.	• Sample Best Bet Checklist: LVN • Sample Scorecard for HVAC • Sample Best Bet Profiles: ▪ Apartment Maintenance ▪ Administrative Assistant ▪ Commercial Driver's License ▪ Registered Nursing ▪ Welding
9	Fostering Ongoing Employer and Industry Engagement to Inform Program Design	Presents strategies for managers to leverage the CTC employer outreach to foster ongoing employer and industry engagement in program.	
10	Informed Instruction and Advising	Presents strategies and curriculum resources for instructors and counselors/advisors to use to enhance student career exploration and planning activities.	• Self-Assessment Tools • LMI Teaching Tool • How to Use Career Pathway Maps • Best Bet Exploration Template
11	Appendix	Provides supplemental resources.	• Additional Resources List • Glossary of Labor Market Terminology • Additional Sample Best Bet Checklists: ▪ Apt Maintenance ▪ Computer Support Specialist • Additional Sample Best Bet Profiles & Brochures: ▪ Sterile Processing ▪ Nursing ▪ Computer Support Specialist

Sample Counseling to Careers Team Action Plan

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
GOAL: Develop a final list of 1-3 occupations for our team to research.			
Use TRACER to locate information on Wages, Education, Openings, Growth. Record data on the top 5-10 occupations in the LMI Research Sheet.	• *Toolkit Chapter 4 (Part B)* • LMI Research Data Worksheet • *TRACER* http://www.tracer2.com/		
Review the data as a team to decide which 1-3 might be potential best bets to research further.	• *Toolkit Chapters 3 & 4* • *LMI Research Data Worksheet* • *Best Bet Checklist*		
Develop basic occupational profiles of selected occupations to prepare for industry, employer, and postsecondary interviews.	• *Toolkit Chapter 4 (Part C)* • Career One Stop http://www.careeronestop.org/ • *Occupational Profile Worksheet*		
GOAL: Identify people who can help your team with outreach to workforce, employer and postsecondary contacts.			
Engage staff, CTC partners, Board members, and students, in Community Mapping activity.	• *Toolkit Chapter 5* • *Community Map*		
GOAL: Collect information on our targeted occupations from workforce, employers and other industry experts.			
Identify employers in companies aligned with the targeted	• *Toolkit Chapter 6* • *Workforce Solutions and*		

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
occupations, that is, those that can inform you about hiring practices, preferred training, opportunities for advancement, etc. in targeted occupation.	*Chamber of Commerce Interview Guide* • *LMI Research Data Worksheet*		
Contact each employer on the list to set up a phone, email, or face-to-face interview.	• *Toolkit Chapter 6* • *Employer Interview Guide and Sample Phone/Email Script*		
Do thorough background research on the company and targeted occupation in advance of the interviews, using employer website (e.g., job listings, company/organization descriptions) and industry and LMI data.	• *Toolkit Chapter 6* • *Employer Company Website* • *Career One Stop (Occupational Profile)* • *Business and Trade Associations* • *Employer Interview Guide and Sample Phone/Email Script* • *Tracking Sheet for Employer Interviews*		
Conduct interviews with industry and employer representatives.	• *Employer Interview Guide and Sample Phone/Email Script* • *Tracking Sheet for Employer Interviews*		
For <u>each</u> industry or employer interview make an initial assessment of the likelihood that occupation will be a best bet.	• *Tracking Sheet for Employer Interviews* • *LMI Data Worksheet* • *Best Bet Checklist*		

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
GOAL: Collect information on <u>postsecondary education and training programs</u> (community colleges and other types of training) that offer training in the targeted occupations.			
Develop an outreach plan that maximizes the contacts and networks identified through the community map activity.	• *Community Map*		
Identify community college programs that offer training locally in the targeted occupations.	• *Toolkit Chapter 7* • Texas State Training Inventory http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/sti/select_report.asp • Industry and employer interview feedback		
Identify training programs for the targeted occupations that are offered by other local institutions (e.g. trade apprenticeship programs, proprietary schools) if not offered by the community college. Follow the same steps for researching below.	• *Toolkit Chapter 7* • Texas State Training Inventory http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/sti/select_report.asp • Industry and employer interview feedback		
For each of the targeted occupations, identify a program representative (e.g., the program coordinator, department chair, etc.) to contact for an interview.	• *Toolkit Chapter 7* • *Postsecondary Interview Guide and Sample Phone/Email Script*		
Learn as much as possible about the college and targeted programs as possible in advance of the interviews. Use the *Tracking Sheet for Postsecondary*	• *Toolkit Chapter 7* • *College website* • *Course and program catalogues* • *Postsecondary Interview Guide and*		

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
Interviews as a research guide.	*Sample Phone/Email Script* • *Institutional Research Department (and sample email request)* • *Postsecondary Interview Tracking Sheet*		
Conduct interviews (in person or over the phone) with college and training program managers, coordinators, and/or faculty.	• *Postsecondary Interview Guide and Sample Phone/Email Script* • *Postsecondary Interview Tracking Sheet*		
For <u>each</u> program, make an initial assessment of the likelihood that it will be a best training and occupation.	• *Postsecondary Interview Tracking Sheet* • *Best Bet Checklist*		
GOAL: Evaluate the information gathered and determine which of the targeted occupations is a Best Bet, Potential Best Bet, or Not a Best Bet.			
Review all of the information gathered: LMI; Occupational Profile; Interviews with Training Providers; Interviews with Employer and Industry.	• *Toolkit Chapters 3 & 8* • *Best Bet Checklist* • *LMI Data Worksheet* • *Occupational Profile Worksheet* • *Employer Interview Tracking Sheet* • *Postsecondary Interview Tracking Sheet* • *College website*		
Complete the Best Bet Checklist.	• *Toolkit Chapters 3 & 8* • *Best Bet Checklist*		

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
GOAL: Create Best Bets flyers for at least 1 researched area.			
Share all collected information to collectively choose at least one area for development of marketing materials.	• *Toolkit Chapter 3 & 9* • *Completed Best Bet Checklist* • *LMI Data Worksheet* • *Occupational Profile* • *Interview Tracking Sheets* • *Sample Best Bet Profiles & Brochures*		
Create draft marketing material and send for group input.	• *Sample Best Bet Profiles & Brochures*		
Contribute feedback.	•		
Incorporate input from all group members to create second draft of marketing materials.	•		
Beta test marketing materials with students	•		
Incorporate student feedback to prepare final material and send to group.	•		
GOAL: Use the CTC Research Process and Best Bet data to enhance career pathway planning instruction and counseling/advising activities.			
Continue building networks with industry, workforce and employer contacts to identify potential for ongoing collaboration (e.g. career fairs, mock interviews, job shadowing).	• *Toolkit Chapter 9* • *Completed Best Bet Profile or Brochure*		
Develop coordinated approach for instructors and counselors to	• *Toolkit Chapter 10* • *LMI Teaching Tool*		

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
enhance career exploration and planning activities with CTC process and Best Bet Profiles.	• *Assessment Tools* • *Using Career Pathway Maps* • *Completed Best Bet Profile or Brochure* • *Toolkit Appendix – Additional Resources*		

Counseling to Careers Team Action Plan

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
GOAL:			
GOAL:			

Action Steps	Tools & Resources	Staff Lead on This Step	By When?
GOAL:			
GOAL:			

3. Best Bet Framework

This chapter introduces the Best Bet Framework and criteria for evaluating potential Best Bet occupations and training programs.

Tool: 1) Best Bet Checklist
2) Sample Checklist for Welding

The CTC process is not just about gathering information. Even more importantly, the process provides a framework and a set of criteria for analyzing and evaluating the labor market, occupational, and postsecondary information that you gather.

As important as career planning and transition programming is, not all occupational and educational choices are equally accessible, achievable or sufficiently linked to and valued by local job market. The process of applying the Best Bet criteria can ensure that we are asking the right questions about which occupations and trainings programs are the best fit LOCALLY and for which students.

A *Best Bet* is an occupation and associated training program that:

- has a clear connection to growing sectors of the regional economy with projected growth in job openings (100 per year).
- pays family sustaining wages (near the regional median wage) and provides the potential for career advancement.
- aligns with individual student interest, skills, and aptitudes.
- requires a one- or two-year credential that is valued by local employers.
- is designed to meet employers' needs and shows evidence of high job placement with career advancement potential.
- provides high levels of academic and social supports and opportunities for accelerated and compressed learning.

Identifying Best Bets is particularly important for adult education students with limited time and means to invest in postsecondary education. For them, it is even more imperative they choose training programs that are equipped to support adult learners and that they develop skills that can lead directly to employment.

The Best Bet framework isn't meant to track students into particular occupations or training programs, nor will you find a Best Bet that is appropriate or accessible to all of your students. This process doesn't replace individual career exploration and research, it simply enhances it. Once adult educators have been through the process of identifying and researching a Best Bet, they will be equipped with the

research tools and confidence to undertake a similar process for other occupations and better guide students through their own career exploration and research.

Other things to consider when choosing which occupations and programs to research further:

Variety of Occupations
Aim for variety in the types of industry occupations you research in order to suit different student's interest and skills. For example, if a direct care occupation such as nursing is one of the choices, consider investigating something that is not direct care, such as construction or another trade.

Variety of Credentials
Aim for occupations that require less than a Bachelors' degree or at least research some that require associates and occupational certificate training programs. Ideally, the coursework and credentials can build toward a bachelors' degree in the future, if desired.

Accessibility
Consider programs that do not have waitlists as well as those that are offered on schedules that accommodate adults. In addition, be sure to investigate at least one occupation and program that doesn't disqualify people with certain types of criminal convictions.

Update
It's important to re-evaluate best bets, approximately every two years, because of possible changes in a region's labor market trends, its postsecondary program offerings (and characteristics), and the needs of regional employers.

Let's look here at the types of questions you'll answer in order to identify training programs that meet the Best Bet criteria. These come from the Best Bet checklist a template included at the end of this chapter.

1) IS THE OCCUPATION ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TRAINING PROGRAM A BEST BET? WHAT DO THE LOCAL LABOR MARKET INFORMATION AND INDUSTRY EXPERTS INDICATE?
    a. An entry level position can be obtained with an occupational certificate or associate's degree.
    b. Employers in your region will hire recent program graduates with limited or no work experience in the industry or occupation.
    c. The median wage paid in your region (for this occupation) is close to the average median wage (for all occupations) paid in your region.
    d. There are local and regional job openings for this occupation.
    e. The occupation is projected to grow in your region over the coming years and/or the occupation exists within an industry sector that has high projected growth.

f. Occupation has well-defined steps (career ladder) to advancement and higher wages or provides opportunities for transferable skills that enable mobility within other industries.

2) IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?
   a. Can a credential (certificate, associate's degree) be earned in one-two years (full-time)?
   b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs:
      - Has the program curriculum been evaluated by industry representatives?
      - Is the curriculum aligned to teach the types of hard and soft skills valued in employees by the industry?
      - Does the program prepare graduates for any industry certifications or licensure required to enter the targeted occupation? (Do at least 50% of program graduates pass the required licensing exams?)
   c. Program provides opportunities for hands-on experience that prepares students for work:
      - Do the instructors use a hands-on approach that models (as much as possible) the work environment, conditions, and types of tasks required in the occupation.
      - Does the program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum?
   d. Can the program manager/coordinator give examples of companies that have recently hired graduates? Do they know the starting wages offered the graduates?
   e. What percentage of program graduates have found jobs in the occupation and industry for which they trained? (Performing programs have an average of 75% hired over a three-year period.)
   f. Does the program/college provide job placement assistance to students?
   g. Does the program offer a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree?
      - Does the program have an articulation agreement with a local 4-year college?
      - At what do graduates of the program transfer to a four-year college? (30% transfers is a good target).

3) IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO PEOPLE LIKE YOUR STUDENTS – NONTRADITIONAL COLLEGE STUDENTS, WORKING ADULTS JUGGLING MULTIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES?
   a. Is the campus and location of internships or practicum accessible to students without cars or with limited resources and time for transportation (i.e. not too far away, on a public transportation route)?
   b. Does the program have a waiting list for enrollment? Any wait longer than a year could be a major deterrent.
   c. Can students enroll in the program part time? Are any of the required classes available in the evening, online, or over the summer?
   d. What is the level of academic rigor required by the program?

- What are the prerequisite English, math, science, lab courses?
- What are the placement test cut-off scores?
- Are there other tests, besides college placement required for acceptance into the program of study?
- Does the program of study allow part time students?

e. Do the rigors of the program match the skills, persistence, abilities, goals you observe in your students?
f. Is a criminal record check required to enroll in the program of study? What sort of record (e.g. felony conviction over a period of time) disqualifies someone from enrolling?
g. Are immunizations required to enter the program of study?
h. What are the total costs of tuition, fees, books, supplies (e.g. equipment, tools, and uniforms)? What is the median debt burden carried by students who complete the program?

4) ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A STRONG TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS (NONTRADITIONAL ADULT LEARNERS)?
   a. How do the program's administrator and/or faculty support and accommodate nontraditional adult students? Examples of the types of supports offered:
      - commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles?
      - extra effort to reach out, engage, get to know students and student's lives?
   b. Is there evidence of strong student persistence in the program of study? Programs that are considered high-performing have:
      - Retention rate of 75% students returning from one semester to the next.
      - 65% completion rate for students enrolled in certificate programs
      - 55% completion rate for students enrolled in associate's degree programs.

The Best Bet framework requires that you gather a lot of information from a variety of sources and in greater detail than you may be accustomed to in your typical program activities. If you are helping individual students with career planning, then you are gathering some of this information already. The BB criteria helps process and evaluate all the information gathered. In the long term, it can help everyone ask better questions and make well-informed decisions.

You don't have time to do indepth research on every occupation, or even the top 25 Hot Jobs that may be posted by your regional Workforce Solutions office. Instead, you'll start by selecting 1-3 occupations (depending on time, resources, purpose) that you want to research further to identify some potential best bests.

You'll use Labor Market Information (LMI) to start your research using the best bet criteria to identify 1-3 occupations to research further. You'll narrow your search with a focus on 10-year projections for occupational growth, job openings, wages, and education and training typically required.

Best Bet Checklist

Use this tool to record and analyze the information you gathered from your research and interviews with postsecondary training programs and employers. It walks you through the Best Bet framework and criteria to evaluate the occupation and associated training program you researched.

[Note: The sequence and format of this version is slightly different than the completed checklist samples for welding and Licensed Vocation Nursing, but the content is identical.]

IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, YOU'LL USE YOUR RESEARTH DATA TO ANSWER FOUR KEY QUESTIONS:

1) Is the occupation associated with this training program a Best Bet?
2) Is this training program designed to meet industry needs? Does it have a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry?
3) Is this training program accessible to your students (or at least a subset of them)?
4) Are students likely to succeed in this training program? Does it have a track record of supporting and graduating students like yours?

ON THE LAST PAGE YOU'LL REVIEW THE CRITERIA AND DETERMINE WHETHER THE OCCUPATION CAN BE CATEGORIZED AS A *BEST BET*, *POTENTIAL BEST BET*, OR *NOT A BEST BET*.

Further, you'll describe which type of students for whom this is more likely a Best Bet.

Occupation title, industry and you researched _____

_____

Employer name(s) and location(s) you researched and interviewed _____

_____

Postsecondary training program(s) that you researched and interviewed _____

_____

Holland Interest Code (RIASEC) for this Occupation _____

*To find the interest code, go to O*NET Online* ***http://online.onetcenter.org****. Use the "Occupation Search box" to enter the name of the targeted occupation. Click on the correct occupation from the list that is generated to retrieve a Summary Report. Scroll to the section on Interests to find the associated Holland code and interpretation, for the occupation.* ***See the Self-Assessment Tool in Chapter 10 (Informed Instruction and Advising) for resources and guidance on using Holland Code-based self-assessments.***

1. IS THE OCCUPATION ASSOCIATED WITH THE TRAINING PROGRAM A BEST BET?

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from LMI, occupational profile research, and interviews with workforce, industry, and employers.

Occupational Characteristics	
a. Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g., occupational certificate, associate's degree) to access an entry-level job.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
b. Local/regional employers will hire people with limited or no industry-related work experience. **If not, how much work experience do employers say they require/prefer here:**	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
c. Occupation's regional median wage pays close to the region's median wage (80%).	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
d. Occupation has job openings in the city/town/region. (Employer interviews are needed to verify city/ town/regional openings.)	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
e. Occupation and/or associated industry sector is projected to grow in the region.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
f. Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs or transfer skills to another occupation).	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS OCCUPATION?

☐ **A Best Bet:**	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:**	☐ **Not a Best Bet:**
• Occupation is in demand in the region • accessible with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience • offers competitive wages and career advancement opportunities.	• Occupation may or may not be in demand in the region, • may or may not be accessible with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience • may or may not offer competitive wages and career advancement opportunities. I have the following reservations:	• Occupation does not appear to be accessible to my students and/or does not lead to employment or advancement opportunities—at least at this time.

2. IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from industry research, college websites and interviews with postsecondary training providers and employers.

Best Bet Training Components:	
a. Compressed program that leads to a credential **Length of Training (Please check off one):** ☐ <6 months ☐ 6 mos. - 1 year ☐ >1 year - 2 years ☐ >2 years - 3 years ☐ >3 years **Total # of Courses: _____** **Credential Earned (Please check off one):** ☐ Certificate ☐ Associate's Degree ☐ Other _____	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs (including hard and soft skills) Key Indicators include: • Program curriculum has been evaluated by industry representatives and is revised on an ongoing basis to reflect industry needs.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
• Program prepares students to achieve industry certifications and licensure (and demonstrates at least a 50% passing rate for these exams).	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
c. Program offers hands-on experience that prepares students for work Key Indicators include: • Courses use a hands-on approach that mimics (as much as possible) the conditions and requirements of the occupation for which students are training.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
• Program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum for students.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know

d. Program coordinator can name more than one company/organization that has recently hired program graduates and the typical starting wages in those jobs.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
e. At least 75% of program graduates are able to gain jobs in the industry (average over the last 3 years to account for the recession).	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know

f. Program provides job placement services/assistance to students.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
If applicable **g. The program serves as a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree.** Indicators include: • The program has an articulation agreement with a 4-year college. • The program can demonstrate that 30% or more of its students transfer to a 4-year college.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
COMMENTS:	

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☐ **A Best Bet:** Program is highly aligned with industry needs and has evidence of high job placement or transfer to 4-year college.	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** Program is fairly well aligned with industry needs and has little or no evidence of job placement or transfer. I have the following reservations:	• **Not a Best Bet:** Program does not appear to be aligned with industry needs and does not result in sufficient job placement or transfer.

3. IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO YOUR STUDENTS (OR AT LEAST A SUBSET OF THEM)?

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from college websites and interviews with postsecondary training providers.

.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Program location (including internship placements) is accessible to your students.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
b. Program does not have a waitlist or has a waitlist that is no longer than 1 year.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
c. Program is offered part time and offers flexible schedule and formats (such as evening, weekend, online courses).	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
d. How rigorous is the academic program? *Low Rigor* • Program is accessible to students enrolled in developmental education. • Part-time enrollment is an option. *Medium Rigor* • Testing at college-level skills and/or completed all developmental courses. • 1-2 lab science/upper-level math courses. • Part-time enrollment is an option. *High Rigor* • 3 or more lab science/upper-level math courses. • Requires college-level prerequisites in math, science, or English. • Requires full-time enrollment.	☐ Low Rigor ☐ Medium Rigor ☐ High Rigor
e. My students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy the program prerequisites and succeed in the training program. Which students might be ready to succeed? What sort of targeted assistance would those who are almost ready need?	☐ YES, all or most ☐ Yes, some do ☐ No, but some could with targeted assistance ☐ NO

f. A criminal record check is required to enter the program.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
g. Immunizations are required to enter the program.	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know

h. Program Cost:

Type of Expense (per	**Cost**	**Comments**
Tuition		
Fees		
Approximate costs of books		
Approximate cost of supplies		
Median loan debt incurred by students who complete the Program (total)		

COMMENTS:

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☐ **Very Accessible:** Program is accessible to all or most of my students.	☐ **Somewhat Accessible:** Program is accessible to at least some of my students. Describe those for whom it's accessible:	☐ **Could be Accessible with additional supports.** Program is accessible some my students with these supports in place:	☐ **Not Accessible:** Program is not accessible to the majority of my students.

4. ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS?

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from college websites and interviews with postsecondary training providers.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Evidence of strong student support Key Program Indicators include: • Demonstrated commitment to engaging multiple learning styles • Demonstrated commitment to supporting nontraditional students • Program is popular among students	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
b. Evidence of strong student persistence Key Program Indicators include: • Minimum retention rate of 75% from one semester to the next • High rate of program completion; (over 65% for a certificate program, over 55% for an associate's degree program)	☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, Don't Know
COMMENTS:	

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☐ **Strong Record of Supports and Success:** • Program offers a great deal of support reflected by a high rate of retention and completion.	☐ **Some Support and Record of Success:** • Program offers some supports and demonstrates some success in retention and completion. I have these reservations:	☐ **Could Be Successful with Additional Supports:** • Program offers little formal support but my students could succeed with these types of supports in place:	☐ **Few Supports, Low Rate of Retention and Completion:** • Program is not supportive enough to serve my students and does not demonstrate a high rate of program retention or completion.

5. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS IN EVALUATING AN OCCUPATION

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from occupational profile research and interviews with workforce and industry employers.

Is the occupation a good fit <u>for any</u> of your students' career interests and personal strengths?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO
- ☐ N/A, D/K

Is a criminal record check, credit check, or drug test typically required as part of the job application process?

- ☐ Criminal record check
- ☐ Credit check
- ☐ Drug test

Is a driver's license and a car typically required for this occupation?

- ☐ YES (driver's license / car)
- ☐ NO (driver's license / car)
- ☐ N/A, D/K

Can employers in your area identify at least one local training program from which they recruit and/or hire students?

- ☐ YES, employers identified the following training program(s)
- ☐ NO
- ☐ N/A, D?K

What is the typical work schedule? (full time, part time, night and/or weekend shifts)

What is the typical work environment and setting? (e.g., outdoors, indoors, small business, large corporation/organization, loud, quiet, flexibility to work from home)

What types of benefits are typically offered by local employers?

- ☐ Health Insurance
- ☐ Paid leave time
- ☐ Tuition remission or reimbursement
- ☐ In-house Training
- ☐ Retirement
- ☐ Other Benefits _____

Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors

☐ YES, the skills used in this occupation are transferable to the following other occupations and/or industry sectors:

_____

☐ NO
☐ N/A, D/K

6. EVALUATING BEST BET OCCUPATIONS AND ASSOCIATED TRAINING PRORGRAMS

Complete this section based on the information you gathered from occupational profile research and interviews with workforce and industry employers.

☐ **A Best Bet:**	☐ **A Potential Best Bet:**	☐ **Not a Best Bet:**
▪ This occupation and its associated training program satisfy all or most of the Best Bet criteria.	▪ This occupation and its associated training program satisfy all or most of the Best Bet criteria. However it has limited benefit for my students because:	▪ This occupation and its associated training program do(es) not satisfy one or more key aspects of the Best Bet criteria, because:
Matching students with Best Bets: who can benefit most from this type of training and occupation?		
For which students is this training program/occupation a Best Bet? Which type of students would benefit most?	**For which students could this training be a Best Bet if the appropriate supports were in place? What would students need in order to benefit?**	**Which of the Best Bet criteria does this occupation and training occupation *NOT* satisfy**?

Sample Best Bet Checklist for Welding—Seguin ISD Counseling to Careers Pilot Team

IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, YOU EVALUATE A SERIES OF "BEST BET" CRITERIA UNDER FOUR KEY QUESTIONS:

Is this training program designed to meet industry needs? Does it have a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry?

Is this training program accessible to your students (or at least a subset of them)?

Are students likely to succeed in this training program? Does it have a track record of supporting and graduating students like yours?

Is the occupation associated with this training program a best bet?

STEP 1: If you researched . . .

. . . **a postsecondary training program** (through postsecondary interviews), please write its name *and* location here:

- **Alamo Colleges Central Texas Technology Center (online & interview);**
- **St Phillips (online research only);**
- **Greater Kerrville Center (online research only)**

Next, complete the blue sections under questions 1, 2, and 3. To fill out the last section, see instructions in the green box below.

. . . **an associated occupation** (through employer interviews), write the occupation title, industry, *and* employer name(s) and location(s) you discussed here: **Welding – talked Aerotec; tried talking to 9 other employers. Two said they would follow-through, seven never called back. The two who said they would follow-through did not despite 2 follow-up calls/emails.**

Next, complete the green sections (2 pages) under question 4. Finally, proceed to Step 2 below.

STEP 2:

Once you've completed all four sections (blue and green), please return to this cover page. Use your answers to the four key questions at the top of this page to categorize the training program *and* its associated occupation as (please select one):

X A Best Bet: ▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria.	**☐ Potentially a Best Bet:** ▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria, but are not currently accessible to my students.	**☐ Not a Best Bet:** ▪ This training program and/or its associated occupation do (es) not satisfy one or more key aspects of the best bet criteria.

Student Match: For which students is this training program/occupation a best bet? **Good for students who are working on their GED or studying English to being classes that are non-credit. Those 5 classes can transfer to St. Phillips if they wish to pursue a Level 1 Certificate or A.A.S. degree.**	**Student Match:** For which students could this training program be a best bet? What supports or preparation could you and/or your organization provide to make this a best bet?	Which of the best bet criteria does this training program/occupation *NOT* satisfy?

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Compressed program that leads to a credential -- Training program is no longer than two years and results in a credential such as an occupational certificate, associate's degree, etc. **Length of Training (Please check off one):** ☐ <6 months **X 6 mos. - 1 year** **X >1 year - 2 years** ☐>2 years - 3 years ☐>3 years **Write Total # of Courses:** **CTTC – 5 courses; 10 weeks each; 4 hours week per course. Can take all but Intro course simultaneously (16 hours/week); Greater Kerrville Center – 2 courses but compressed into an 80 hour session. Alamo – certificate has X courses; AAS has X courses** **Credential Earned (Please check off one):** **X Level I Certificate (St. Phillips) - really takes 46 hours (31 hours plus 4 welding and 1 math pre-requisite)** **X Associate's Degree** **X Other Certificate of attendance from CTTC or Greater Kerrville Center (non-credit)**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs (including hard and soft skills) Key Indicators include: • Program curriculum has been evaluated by industry representatives and is revised on an ongoing basis to reflect industry needs **St Phillips is accredited and reviewed; CTTC and Greater Kerrville have not. However, the instructor at CTTC taught at St. Phillips prior to beginning the program at CTTC. The instructor assists with regional competitions for student welding.**	☐ YES ☐ NO **X N/A, DON'T KNOW**
• Program prepares students to achieve industry certifications and licensure (and demonstrates at least a 50% passing rate for these exams) **Do not know passing rate on exams. Most students do not take exams directly after courses. In welding, students must work first to get the skills they need to take the tests. Many companies send them to industry exam only if required for the work they do.**	☐ YES **X NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Program offers hands-on experience that prepares students for work Key Indicators include: • Courses use a hands-on approach that mimics (as much as possible) the conditions and requirements of the occupation for which students are training.	☐ **X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum for students **St. Phillips certificate and AAS include one semester internships.** **CTTC and Greater Kerrville do not.**	**X YES** **X NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T
d. Program coordinator can name more than one company/organization that has recently hired program graduates and the typical starting wages in those jobs **John at CTTC can name 3 of his students who have recently been hired. Entry level is $12/hour. Pipe fitting student in oil fields told him he was getting $40/hour. Senior Flexonics hires the most consistently but through Aerotek temp agency.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. At least 75% of program graduates are able to gain jobs in the industry (average over the last 3 years to account for the recession) **Many students are sent by companies to learn welding in addition to what they already do. Other students are in construction but want to learn welding so they do not have to hire welders on jobs. Students who pass at least the intro course and one additional course are easily able to be hired.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
f. Program provides job placement services/assistance to students **St. Phillips – yes through the college, not the program;** **CTTC and Greater Kerrville not officially but companies call instructors for referrals.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
g. The program serves as a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree Indicators include: • The program has an articulation agreement with a 4-year college. **ONLY FOR NON-WELDING COURSES** • The program can demonstrate that 30% or more of its students transfer to a 4-year college **NO**	☐ YES **X NO** ☐ DON'T KNOW

COMMENTS: **Most advancement in welding tends to come from working in the industry. Going through a welding certificate program and getting an A.A.S does guarantee higher salary more quickly. However, those who work their way up in an industry will also eventually get to the salary if they are good employees and learn all of the welding techniques required at the industry. A lot of success in welding depends on the type of employee – those who are reliable, dependable, easy to work with, and dedicated to practice at work and take advantage of opportunities that come up at work will move up. In general, welding is not the quickest route into engineering because there are many courses that will not transfer to 4 year programs. The highest paying job that welding is the most direct route to be Welding Inspector. These types of jobs do not usually require engineering or other 4 year degrees, but they require several years of work experience, experience working with quality assurance, coursework provided by the American Welding Society, and examinations.**

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

X A Best Bet: • Program is highly aligned with industry needs and has evidence of high job placement (or transfer to 4-year college). **High job placement in local area, Texas and nation. Many industries use welders. Welders able to work in many industries.**	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Program is fairly aligned with industry needs and may or may not have evidence of job placement (or transfer to 4-year college), and I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Program does not appear to be aligned with industry needs and does not result in sufficient job placement (or transfer to a 4-year college).

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO YOUR STUDENTS (OR AT LEAST A SUBSET OF THEM)?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Program location (including placements for internships and practicums) is accessible to your students (i.e., not too far from home, accessible by public transportation, car, etc.) **Students can choose which campus to attend of the three. Some are closer than others depending on where they live. Also, they will choose depending on how much money they can spend, if they can get financial aid, etc.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program either does not have a waitlist or its waitlist is no longer than 1 year	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program is offered part time and/or includes weekend, evening, summer, or online courses **Part time option at CTTC (evenings 5 – 9 pm twice weekly for 10 weeks). Greater Kerrville (2 weeks full time and it is over). Can complete all 5 courses at CTTC in less than a year if they take 2 courses at the same time (400 hours). St. Phillips is full time to complete in 2 years, excluding summers, if no DE math is needed.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. How rigorous is the academic program (i.e., what level of skill does the program require for entry, persistence, and completion)? Low Rigor – **CTTC and Greater Kerrville** • Program is accessible to students enrolled in developmental education • May offer a part-time study option Medium Rigor –**St. Phillips.** • Testing at college-level skills and/or completed all developmental courses • 1-2 lab science/upper-level math courses • May offer a part-time study option High Rigor • 3 or more lab science/upper-level math courses • Requires college-level prerequisites in math, science, or English • Requires full-time study	**X Low Rigor @ CTTC & Kerrville** **X Medium Rigor @ St. Phillips** ☐ High Rigor
e. My students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy the program prerequisites and succeed in the training program **Almost all students (high intermediate ESL or low intermediate ABE and up could attend the continuing ed courses at CTTC or Greater Kerrville.** **Most GED graduates could attend the St. Phillips program. They have to place in college level math or take developmental math.**	**X YES, all/most of my students do** ☐ Yes, some of my students do (please specify which ones): ☐ No, but with targeted prep, they could ☐ NO

f. A criminal record check is required to enter the program	☐ YES **X NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
g. Immunizations are required to enter the program **At St. Phillips, but not at the other 2 centers.**	**X YES St. Phillips** **X NO CTTC/Kerrville** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

h. Program cost: Median loan debt incurred by students who complete the programN/A

Component	Dollar Amount	Comments
Tuition		
$3100 CTTC for 400 clock hours (15 credit hours)		
$1120 Kerrville for 80 hrs (6 credit hours)		
St. Phillips: $10,768 for 2 year A.A.S with 61 credit hours; Certificate would be $8,120		
Fees	**N/A**	
Typical cost of books per semester	**at CTTC or Kerrville is $50 for all courses**	
Typical cost of books per semester	**St Phillips about $300/semester books**	
Typical cost of supplies per semester	**$80 one-time fee for personal equipment**	

COMMENTS: **If student qualifies for full FASFA award ($5,000), then it can be affordable to attend St. Phillips full-time for 1/12 – 2 years (3-4 semesters) for the certificate and/or AAS degree.**

Otherwise, it is more affordable to take the 5 welding courses offered at CTTC, getting a job in the industry after the first or second course and taking the classes in the evenings.

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

X Very Accessible: • Program is accessible to all/most of my students	☐ **Somewhat Accessible:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students (specify which subset below):	☐ **Could Be Accessible with Additional Supports:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Accessible:** • Program is inaccessible to the majority of my students.

ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Evidence of strong student support Indicators include: • Program demonstrates a commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles • Program coordinator demonstrates a commitment to supporting "nontraditional" students • Program coordinator and/or program faculty develop(s) close relationships with students • Program is known as a "hit" among students **This is evident at CTTC. I would recommend most students to start there unless they wanted to attend college full-time.**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Evidence of strong student persistence Key Indicators include: • Program has a minimum retention rate of 75% from one semester to the next **This is not applicable for CTTC or Kerrville**	☐ YES ☐ NO **X N/A, DON'T KNOW**
• Program coordinator can demonstrate a high rate of program completion; over 65% for a certificate program, over 55% for an associate's degree program	☐ YES ☐ NO **X N/A, DON'T KNOW**
COMMENTS: **I was unable to get good information regarding the welding program retention and completion at St. Phillips.**	

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☐ **Very Supportive and a Proven Success:**	☐ **Somewhat Supportive and Successful:**	☐ **Could Be Successful with Additional Supports:**	☐ **Not Supportive Enough and/or Does Not Demonstrate a High Rate of Retention and/or Completion:**
• Program offers a great deal of support to help students like mine, and it demonstrates a high rate of program retention and completion.	• Program is somewhat supportive and demonstrates success in retaining and completing students like mine (please specify which subset of students would be best served by the program):	• While the program may not formally support students like mine, my students could complete the program if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	• Program is not supportive enough to serve my students and does not demonstrate a high rate of program retention or completion.

IS THE OCCUPATION (ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TRAINING PROGRAM) A BEST BET? (Note: The program may prepare/train students for more than one occupation, but the section below covers one occupation only. To help analyze whether an additional occupation tied to the training program is a best bet, it is recommended that you make copies of this page and the following page, fill them both out, and then staple them to the back of this document.)

Please complete this section if you researched an occupation (through employer interviews). Labor market information (from your Regional Labor Market Profile, your state LMI office, and/or www.careeronestop.org) can be helpful in answering sections a, c, and e below, but employer interviews should be your primary source for completing *all* of the sections below.

OCCUPATION CHARACTERISTICS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g., occupational certificate, associate's degree) to access an entry-level job	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Local/regional employers will hire new/ recent program graduates with limited to no industry-related work experience **If not, please write how much work experience employers say they require/prefer here:**	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Occupation's regional median wage pays *close to the region's median wage (at minimum)*	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Occupation has job openings in the city/town/region (Labor market data is helpful for a statewide view, but employer interviews are needed to verify city/ town/regional openings.)	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. Occupation is projected to grow in the state/region in coming years and/or is within a growing industry sector (Percent change between a base year and projected year is positive.)	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
f. Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs) or requires skills that can transfer to a different occupation with advancement potential	**X YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS OCCUPATION?		
X A Best Bet: • Occupation is in demand in the region, accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and offers competitive wages and career advancement opportunities.	☐ Potentially a Best Bet: • Occupation may or may not be in demand in the region, it may or may not be accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and it may or may not offer competitive wages and career advancement opportunities. I have the following reservations:	Not a Best Bet: • Occupation does not appear to be accessible to my students and/or does not lead to career advancement opportunities—at least at this time.

Additional Things to Consider When Evaluating an Occupation
(space for comments within each category)

Is the occupation a good fit for any of your students' career interests and personal strengths?

X YES
☐ NO
☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Write the occupation's interest code here: **51-4121.06**

Is a criminal record check, credit check, or drug test typically required as part of the job application process?

YES – all companies require drug testing and criminal background checks for employees, even for temps.

Can local/regional employers identify at least one local/regional training program from which they recruit and/or hire students?

YES, they identified the following training program(s): CTTC was identified by Aerotek. However, many people who are placed have had some experience in the past and learned from family or friends in small shops, especially in Mexico.

Work schedule (full time, part time, night and/or weekend shifts)

Usually full time shifts, sometimes Saturdays, some are night but not many.

Work environment/setting (e.g., outdoors, indoors, small business, large corporation/organization, loud, quiet, flexibility to work from home)

In the local area, it is inside industry in shops. They are loud, have good ventilation, not as comfortable as office environments but more comfortable than outside.

Benefits typically offered (e.g., health insurance, tuition remission, retirement plans, bonuses)

No benefits for temp workers; once hired on usually get health insurance at a minimum. Some companies will pay for courses either directly or through reimbursement but only if the person contracts to continue to work with them.

Is a driver's license typically required to do this work (and does one need a car)?

NO but reliable transportation is imperative to get to work on time. Someone needs a car to get the employee to work as there are no busses available in the local area.

Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors? (Please check off one):

] **X YES, the skills used in this occupation are transferable to the following other occupations and/or industry sectors: Can apply to drafting, engineering technology/mechanical engineering, welding inspectors, sales, and management.**

4. Understanding Your Local Labor Market to Identify Best Bets

This chapter defines Labor Market Information used to identify potential Best Bets, demonstrates how to use TRACER to locate key data, and begins development of Occupational Profile(s).

Tools: 1) LMI Research Data Worksheet
2) Occupational Profile Worksheet

Your Counseling to Careers research starts with locating Labor Market Information (LMI) online. Once you have a broad picture of the labor market in your region, you'll use four filters to identify 1-3 potential Best Bet occupations to research further.

This chapter is divided into three parts, because there are a lot of steps to gathering labor market data:

Part A Becoming Familiar with Labor Market Terminology

This section introduces the four filters (wages, educational level, openings, and growth) that you'll apply to your regional LMI in order to narrow down potential Best Bets.

Part B Using TRACER to Identify Potential Best Bets

This section guides you through a step-by-step process for using TRACER (Texas Rapid Access to Career and Economic Resources) to locate and sort your regional LMI. Once you've sorted the data using the four LMI filters, you'll identify 1-3 potential Best Bets to research further.

Part C Using CareerOneStop to begin an Occupational Profile

Before you begin outreach to employers, industry experts, and postsecondary training providers you'll need to gather basic occupational information about the potential Best Bets you've identified. This section guides you through the process of using CareerOneStop to develop a preliminary occupational profile.

Part A Becoming Familiar with the Labor Market Terminology

What is a labor market?

Where does the LMI come from?

The Bureau of Labor Statistices (BLS) serves as a statistical resource for the U.S. Department of Labor. BLS is the principal federal agency charged with gathering data for the broad field of labor economics and statistics.

The BLS provides the public with employment and wage estimates for over 800 occupations. Each May, the BLS releases current employment and wage esitmates for the US, individual states, and metropolitan areas.

Every two years, BLS updates it 10-year projections for occupational growth. For example, the 2010-2020 projections were released in February, 2012. States typically release their own 10-year projections within 9 months after the national projections are available. Together, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and state LMI offices provide a snapshot of national, state, and regional labor markets

In this toolkit, we'll focus on Texas labor market information that is found through using TRACER developed by the Labor and Market Career Information (LMCI) Department of the Texas Workforce Commission.

First we'll review the occupational characteristics of a Best Bet (from section 1 of the Best Bet Checklist) and identify the data sources for each.

Best Bet Criteria	**Data Sources**
Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g. occupational certificate, associate's degree, to access an entry –level job.	• TRACER data • Employer and industry interviews
Local/regional employers will hire new/recent program graduates with limited to no industry-related work experience.	• Employer and industry interviews • Training providers
Occupation's regional median wage pays close to the region's ovreall median wage (that is,	• TRACER data • Employer and industry interviews

at least 80% of the overall regional median wage) in order to ensure a family sustaining income in that region.	
There are job openings for this occupation in your city, town, or region (ideally, at least 100 jobs projected per year).	• TRACER data (to identify occupations) • Employer and industry interviews • Job posting sites, help wanted ads • Workforce Solutions office
The occupation is projected to grow in your region in the coming years and/or is an occupation found in a growing industry sector.	• TRACER • Employer and industry interviews
The occupation has a well-defined career ladder, that is, opportunies for career and wage advancement (or skills and experience are transferable to another occupation with potential for growth and advancement).	• Employer and industry interviews • Trade Unions • Trade/professional associations • Training providers (to confirm training pathways are available)

Four Key Data Points

The key types of LMI data we'll examine for each occupation you consider are:

Wages – percentile and median wage
Openings – total job openings for an occupation
Education – training and/or work experienced typically required or preferred by employers
Growth – the projected growth of an occupation

Jobs for the Future offers this mnemonic to help you remember : ***We Offer Excellent Guidance!***

Wages, Openings, Education, and Growth are very broad categories. Following, you'll find the specific type of Labor Market Information you'll use to narrow your search of potential best bet occupations. Then you'll select 1-3 occupations using the data criteria and explore them in greater depth.

Wages

There are three figures to consider when analyzing wage information for an occupation. Always look for the most recent year for which wages are reported and available:

1) **Overall regional median wage (50th-percentile wage or 50 PCT)** indicates a wage that is right in the middle of the range of wages earned for all occupations in the region. That is, half (50%) of

the working population earns below the median and the other half (50%) earns above the median.

2) **Median wage for specific occupation (50th percentile wage or 50 PCT)** indicates the median wage for someone in a specific occupation. This wage is typically used to reflect the wage that someone would earn after a few years in the job. The median occupational wage is right in the middle of the range of wages earned by people in that occupation in the region. That is, half (50%) of workers in that occupation earns below the median and the other half (50%) earns above the median.

   You'll be comparing the median occupational wage with the overall median wage in your region in order to identify occupations for which the specific occupational median wage is close to (or at least 80% of) the overall regional median wage.

3) **10th percentile wage for specific occupation (entry level wage)**. Since most new hires do not start at the median, this figure will give you an idea of what the starting wage for someone with little or no experience in a given occupation. The 10th percentile wage means that 10% of people working in the occupation earn below the 10th PCT wage and 90% earn above it. When the 10th percentile wage is not provided (as in case of TRACER) the 25th PCT may be used.

Don't use the mean (average) wage as a valid indicator of typical wages. It doesn't give an accurate picture of how many people earn a sort of wage because the outliers – very high and very low earners – are figured in.

Always use caution when analyzing the data and resist using it as the last and final word on your regional labor market. Use it only as a starting place for your research. Use interviews with industry experts in your region to validate or correct the data with a more accurate account of what the labor market reality is on the ground. For example, though local employers may pay wages lower than those reported in the LMI, perhaps they offer a good benefits package or potential for advancement to compensate.

Total Job Openings

Look at the average annual number of openings within a 10-year period for the most current period for which projections is available. This will tell you how many jobs are available now and how many are projected to be open on average, per year, in a state or region. ***The general recommendation is that a potential Best Bet occupations project a minimum of 100 job openings per year in your region***. But this will depend on the size of your region and the type of industry sectors that are thriving there. As you counsel students, it will be important that they understand that there will be greater competition among job seekers for occupations with fewer annual openings. Again, the projected openings should

be a starting place to gauge the direction of your research. It should not be the basis of a career decision, and it should be validated by industry experts in your region.

The total job openings is the figure you'll look at, but it may be helpful to understand that there are actually two figures that make up the total openings:

1) The number of openings due to growth (i.e., "new jobs") is the positive change (increase) in employment from one year to the next projected year. If employment declines, or remains static, then there are no job openings due to growth.
2) The number of openings due to replacement needs (i.e., "replacements" or "replacement openings") is the number of workers leaving an occupation who will need to be replaced.

According to BLS, replacement needs are projected to account for 67 percent of the approximately 50.9 million job openings between 2008 and 2018; therefore, even occupations that are projected to experience slower-than-average growth or are considered to be in decline may offer many job openings over the next decade. This is how it's possible to have zero or negative growth (in new jobs) and still have a positive number of job openings due to replacement jobs.

Education and Training

With the Best Bet criteria in mind***, aim to identify occupations that require shorter-term training (e.g. 1-2 year certificates and degrees) that will prepare students for family-sustaining careers***. By attaining a shorter-term credential, students can gain valuable skills and experience that can lead to entry-level employment as well as the confidence and momentum to pursue higher credentials (e.g., a bachelor's degree or additional certifications) that lead to further career advancement in the future, if they choose.

The educational categories on which to focus your search are:

- *High school diploma or equivalent* (However, it's unlikely that occupations requiring only high school will meet the Best Bet wage criteria.)
- *Some college, no degree*
- *Postsecondary non-degree award* (certificate or other award that is not considered a degree)
- *Associate's degree*

Furthermore, look for occupations that do not require significant prior work experience and offer internships or on the job training to new hires and new entrants to the occupation.

Detailed definitions of the educational, training, and prior work experience categories used by BLS and TRACER can be found at http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_definitions_edtrain.pdf.

The level of education or training required for jobs will likely vary from region to region and employer to employer. For example, in areas where there are high numbers of college graduates and high unemployment, jobs that once required less a certificate or associate's degree can now be filled by people with bachelor's degrees (or even higher). An occupational profile may list an associate's degree as a requirement when in reality employers are only hiring people with bachelor's degrees and significant experience. This is why it will be so important to verify the educational requirements of an occupation with local industry experts.

Growth

Here you are looking for the projected annual rate of growth over a 10 year period indicating whether and how much the occupation is expected to grow. This will be a percentage (the projected number of jobs/the current number of jobs). The rate may be positive, negative, or zero.

Occupational growth can be considered in two ways and it is important to differentiate between the two:

1) Rate of growth (i.e., "employment change percent")
2) Number of new jobs created by growth.

High growth doesn't always mean that there are many more jobs available in an occupation. An occupation that is declining (showing negative or little growth) may still offer opportunity.

Some occupations have both a fast growth rate and create a large number of new jobs. However, an occupation that employs few workers may experience rapid growth, although the resulting number of new jobs may be small.

For example:

- A small occupation that employs just 1,000 workers and is projected to grow 50 percent over a 10-year period will add only 500 jobs.
- By contrast, a large occupation that employs 1.5 million workers may experience only 10 percent growth, but will add 150,000 jobs.

As a result, to get a complete picture of employment growth, both measures must be considered.

Growth (or expected increase in jobs) can be driven by a number of factors, including changes in technology and business practices, trends in laws and government regulations, and increases in

research and development expenditures. Declining occupational employment stems from falling industry employment, technological advances, changes in business practices, and other factors. The larger the negative percent change in employment, the faster employment is declining. Industry growth or decline will affect demand for occupations. At the same time, job growth can vary among major occupational groups.

It's helpful to know an occupation's projected growth rate, but you should focus more on its total job openings because occupations with negative percent growth may still have lots of job openings for your students.

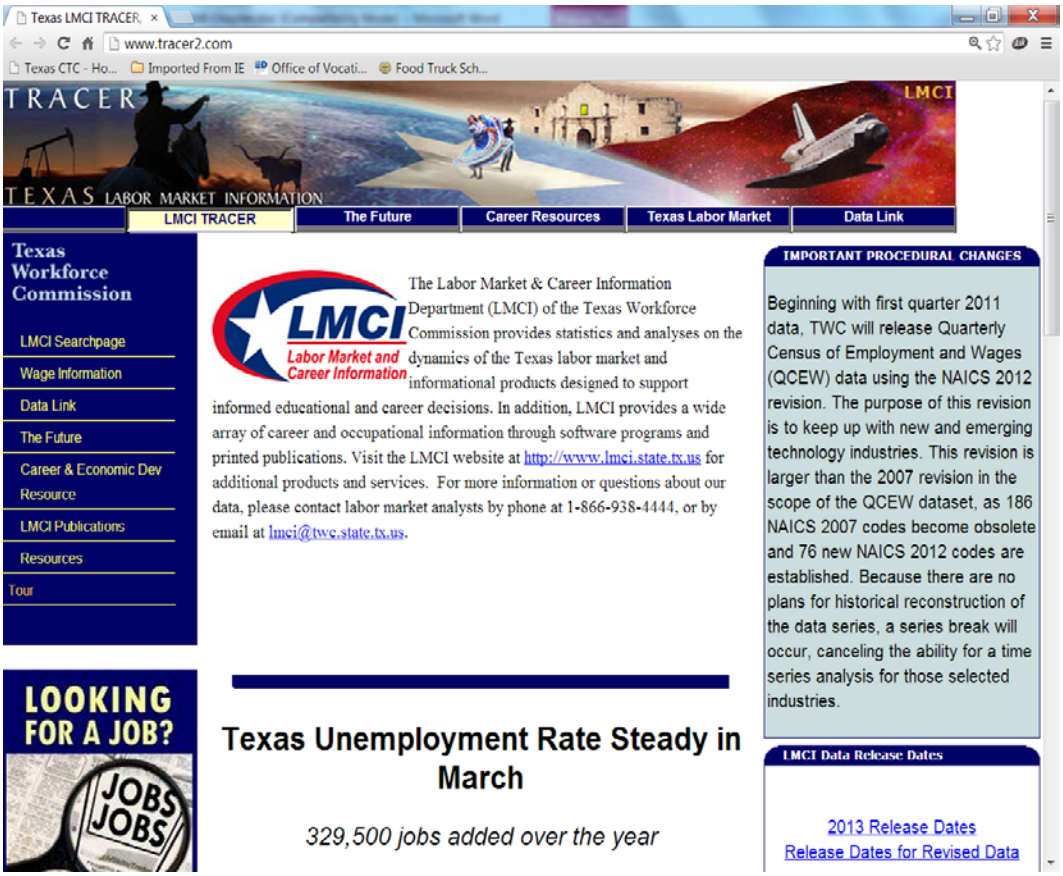
Part B Using TRACER to Identify Potential Best Bets

Your regional Workforce Solutions office posts a list of "hot" or " in demand" jobs. To find the website for the Workforce Solutions office n your region, go to regional workforce http://www.twc.state.tx.us/dirs/wdbs/wdbweb.html and click on Web Sites for links to all of the regions. Check to see what data is available there.

Not all Workforce Solutions websites post the data on wages, openings, education, and growth with their list of *Hot Jobs,* which is why we'll walk you through TRACER here.

Following are step by step instructions for using TRACER to locate the wage, education, openings, and growth rate for any region in Texas. You'll use this data to narrow down the list of what are considered high growth or high demand occupations in your region and select 1-3 potential Best Bets.

1. The step by step instructions for using TRACER begin here http://www.tracer2.com/ .

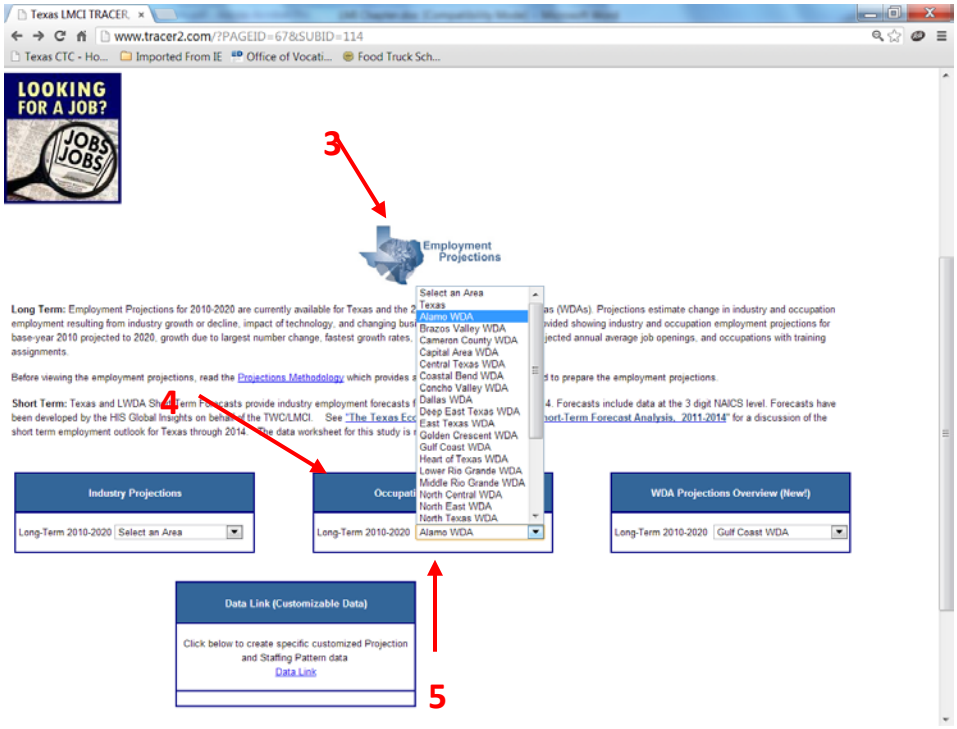


2. We're focusing on projections, so start by clicking the tab "The Future" on the left hand side.

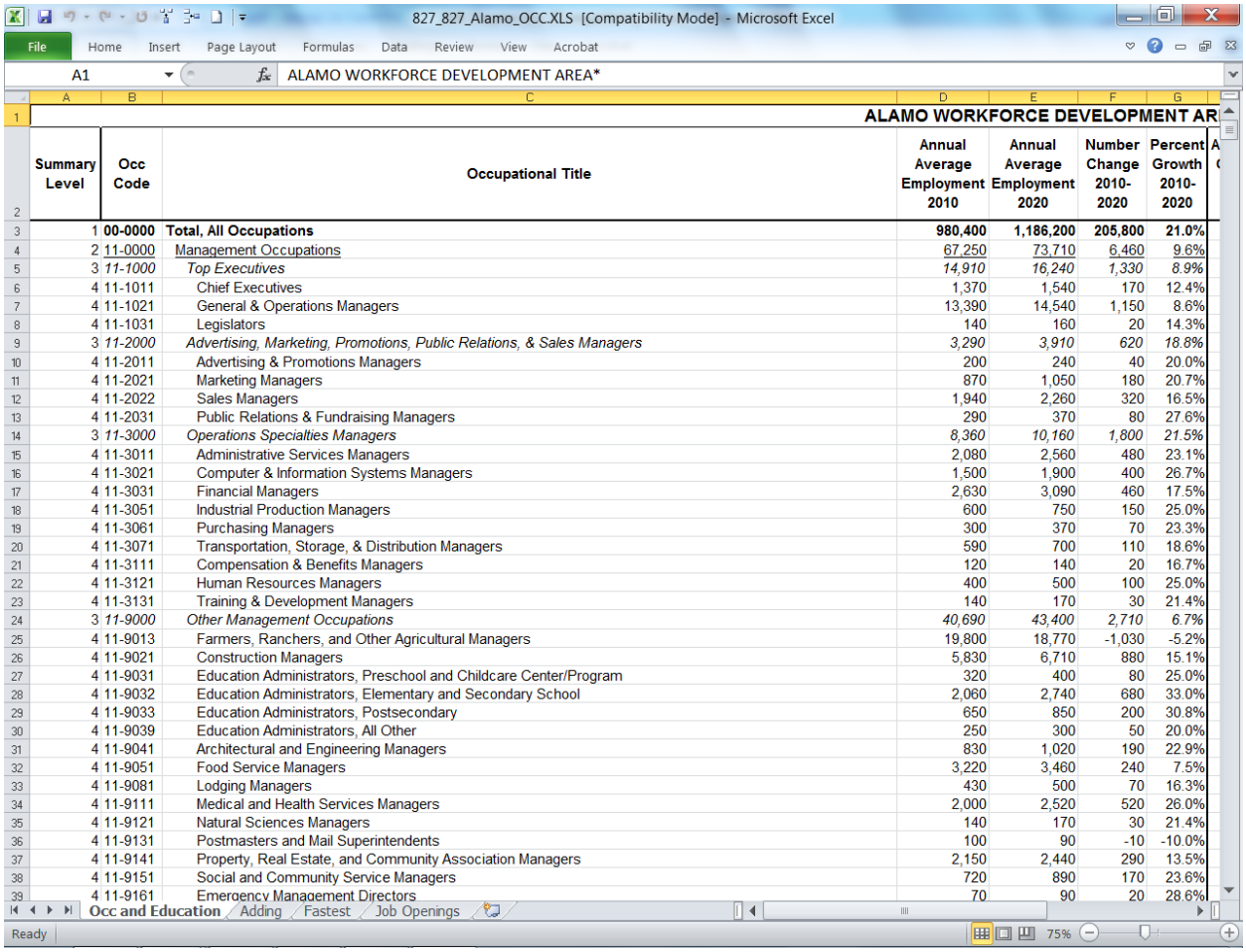
3. Scroll down what first appears as a blank page to “Employment Projections”.

4. Go to “Occupational Projections (Long Term)”.

5. Select your regional Workforce Development Area (WDA) from the menu. You will be directed to a new page, where you can download the publication.



6. Download the publication, which will be an excel spreadsheet with multiple tabs. Save it to your own computer, so you can move the data around without losing it.



827_827_Alamo_OCC.XLS [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Acrobat

A1 ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA*

ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AR

Summary Level	Occ Code	Occupational Title	Annual Average Employment 2010	Annual Average Employment 2020	Number Change 2010-2020	Percent Growth 2010-2020
1	00-0000	**Total, All Occupations**	**980,400**	**1,186,200**	**205,800**	**21.0%**
2	11-0000	Management Occupations	67,250	73,710	6,460	9.6%
3	*11-1000*	*Top Executives*	*14,910*	*16,240*	*1,330*	*8.9%*
4	11-1011	Chief Executives	1,370	1,540	170	12.4%
4	11-1021	General & Operations Managers	13,390	14,540	1,150	8.6%
4	11-1031	Legislators	140	160	20	14.3%
3	*11-2000*	*Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, & Sales Managers*	*3,290*	*3,910*	*620*	*18.8%*
4	11-2011	Advertising & Promotions Managers	200	240	40	20.0%
4	11-2021	Marketing Managers	870	1,050	180	20.7%
4	11-2022	Sales Managers	1,940	2,260	320	16.5%
4	11-2031	Public Relations & Fundraising Managers	290	370	80	27.6%
3	*11-3000*	*Operations Specialties Managers*	*8,360*	*10,160*	*1,800*	*21.5%*
4	11-3011	Administrative Services Managers	2,080	2,560	480	23.1%
4	11-3021	Computer & Information Systems Managers	1,500	1,900	400	26.7%
4	11-3031	Financial Managers	2,630	3,090	460	17.5%
4	11-3051	Industrial Production Managers	600	750	150	25.0%
4	11-3061	Purchasing Managers	300	370	70	23.3%
4	11-3071	Transportation, Storage, & Distribution Managers	590	700	110	18.6%
4	11-3111	Compensation & Benefits Managers	120	140	20	16.7%
4	11-3121	Human Resources Managers	400	500	100	25.0%
4	11-3131	Training & Development Managers	140	170	30	21.4%
3	*11-9000*	*Other Management Occupations*	*40,690*	*43,400*	*2,710*	*6.7%*
4	11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	19,800	18,770	-1,030	-5.2%
4	11-9021	Construction Managers	5,830	6,710	880	15.1%
4	11-9031	Education Administrators, Preschool and Childcare Center/Program	320	400	80	25.0%
4	11-9032	Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	2,060	2,740	680	33.0%
4	11-9033	Education Administrators, Postsecondary	650	850	200	30.8%
4	11-9039	Education Administrators, All Other	250	300	50	20.0%
4	11-9041	Architectural and Engineering Managers	830	1,020	190	22.9%
4	11-9051	Food Service Managers	3,220	3,460	240	7.5%
4	11-9081	Lodging Managers	430	500	70	16.3%
4	11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	2,000	2,520	520	26.0%
4	11-9121	Natural Sciences Managers	140	170	30	21.4%
4	11-9131	Postmasters and Mail Superintendents	100	90	-10	-10.0%
4	11-9141	Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	2,150	2,440	290	13.5%
4	11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	720	890	170	23.6%
4	11-9161	Emergency Management Directors	70	90	20	28.6%

Occ and Education | Adding | Fastest | Job Openings

Ready 75%

Worksheets

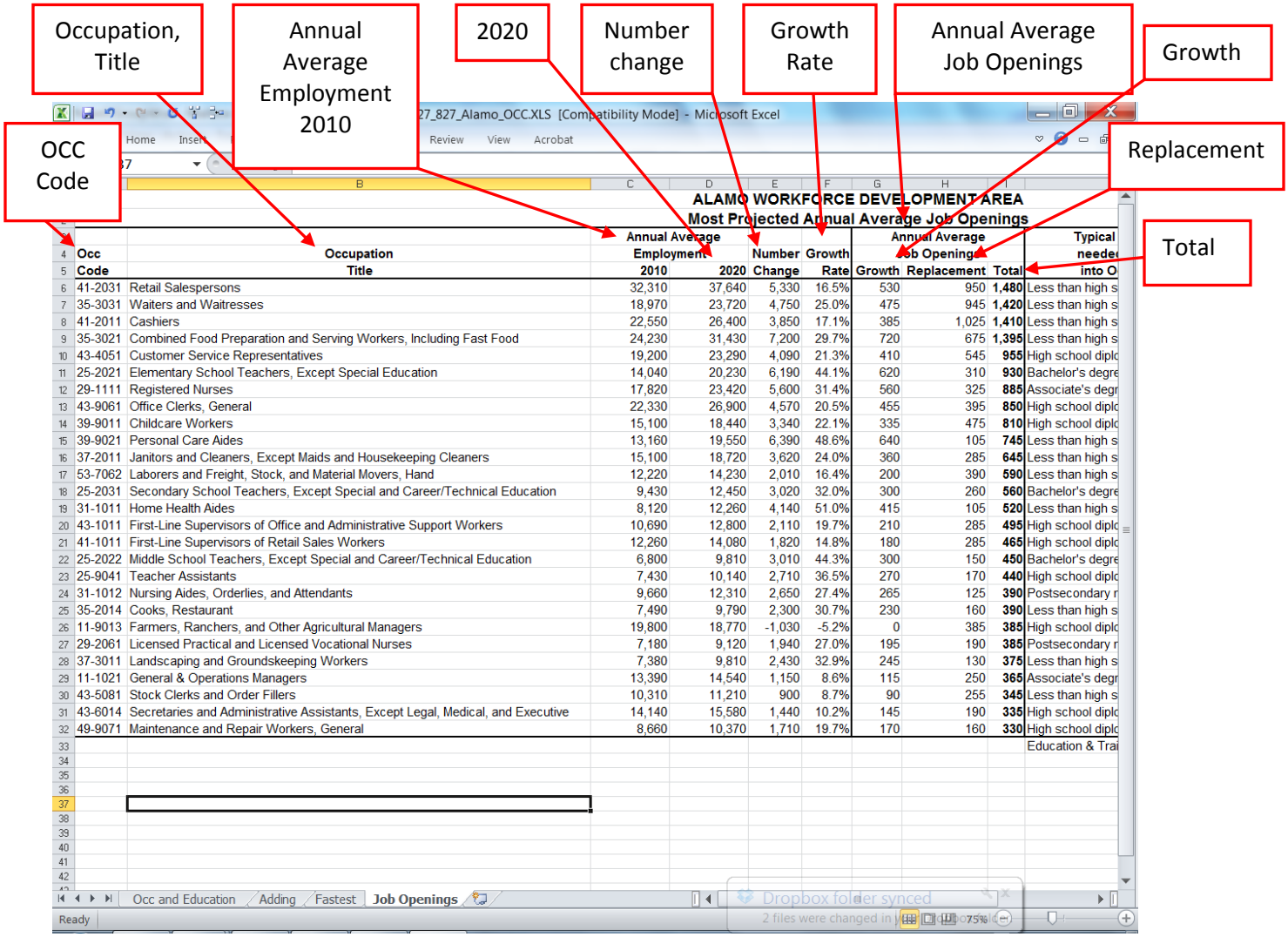
The worksheet titled ***Occupation and Education*** represents all of the occupations in your region, you can ignore this tab for now, since your aim is to narrow down the occupations based on the wages, openings, education, and growth criteria first. There are other worksheets in this document that will be more helpful to you because they start the filtering process already.

Each of the remaining worksheets – ***Adding, Fastest, Job Openings*** - looks at the same type of data but through a slightly different lens (applying slightly different filter).

We will focus on the ***Job Openings*** worksheet, because this will give us the broadest long term view of the types of occupations projected to have the most and reflect a steadier trend (found in the Fastest worksheet, for example) over a 10-year period. In addition, we are interested in total openings, including those caused by replacement, and not just positions that are projected to be added (reflected in the Added worksheet).

Job Openings Worksheet

Now let's look at the data that is found in the ***Job Openings*** Worksheet. You'll find that the column headings mirror those that we described earlier, for example, *growth rate* and growth due to *replacement*.



ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA
Most Projected Annual Average Job Openings

Occ Code	Occupation Title	Annual Average Employment 2010	2020	Number Change	Growth Rate	Annual Average Job Openings Growth	Replacement	Total	Typical needed into O
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	32,310	37,640	5,330	16.5%	530	950	1,480	Less than high s
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	18,970	23,720	4,750	25.0%	475	945	1,420	Less than high s
41-2011	Cashiers	22,550	26,400	3,850	17.1%	385	1,025	1,410	Less than high s
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	24,230	31,430	7,200	29.7%	720	675	1,395	Less than high s
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	19,200	23,290	4,090	21.3%	410	545	955	High school diplo
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	14,040	20,230	6,190	44.1%	620	310	930	Bachelor's degre
29-1111	Registered Nurses	17,820	23,420	5,600	31.4%	560	325	885	Associate's degr
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	22,330	26,900	4,570	20.5%	455	395	850	High school diplo
39-9011	Childcare Workers	15,100	18,440	3,340	22.1%	335	475	810	High school diplo
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	13,160	19,550	6,390	48.6%	640	105	745	Less than high s
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	15,100	18,720	3,620	24.0%	360	285	645	Less than high s
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	12,220	14,230	2,010	16.4%	200	390	590	Less than high s
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	9,430	12,450	3,020	32.0%	300	260	560	Bachelor's degre
31-1011	Home Health Aides	8,120	12,260	4,140	51.0%	415	105	520	Less than high s
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	10,690	12,800	2,110	19.7%	210	285	495	High school diplo
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	12,260	14,080	1,820	14.8%	180	285	465	High school diplo
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	6,800	9,810	3,010	44.3%	300	150	450	Bachelor's degre
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	7,430	10,140	2,710	36.5%	270	170	440	High school diplo
31-1012	Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	9,660	12,310	2,650	27.4%	265	125	390	Postsecondary n
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	7,490	9,790	2,300	30.7%	230	160	390	Less than high s
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	19,800	18,770	-1,030	-5.2%	0	385	385	High school diplo
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	7,180	9,120	1,940	27.0%	195	190	385	Postsecondary n
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	7,380	9,810	2,430	32.9%	245	130	375	Less than high s
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	13,390	14,540	1,150	8.6%	115	250	365	Associate's degr
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	10,310	11,210	900	8.7%	90	255	345	Less than high s
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	14,140	15,580	1,440	10.2%	145	190	335	High school diplo
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	8,660	10,370	1,710	19.7%	170	160	330	High school diplo
									Education & Trai

Occupational Code (aka Standard Occupational Code or SOC)

These 6-digit coding system classifies jobs into occupational categories to provide a standardized way for federal agencies and labor economists collect and share their data. Detailed occupations group together workers with similar skills performing similar tasks.

The SOC is not so significant to our CTC research, but we can use the codes to make sure we're comparing the same occupations when moving across LMI data bases (for example, between TRACER and O*NET) comparing the openings and wage data and looking for narrative descriptions and profiles of occupations.

Typical education needed for entry into

Work experience in related occupation

Typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the occupation

827_827_Alamo_OCC.XLS [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Acrobat

B37

ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

Most Projected Annual Average Job Openings

Average yment 2020	Number Change	Growth Rate	Annual Average Job Openings Growth	Replacement	Total	Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation	Work Experience in a related Occupation	Typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the Occupation
37,640	5,330	16.5%	530	950	1,480	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
23,720	4,750	25.0%	475	945	1,420	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
26,400	3,850	17.1%	385	1,025	1,410	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
31,430	7,200	29.7%	720	675	1,395	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
23,290	4,090	21.3%	410	545	955	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
20,230	6,190	44.1%	620	310	930	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
23,420	5,600	31.4%	560	325	885	Associate's degree	None	None
26,900	4,570	20.5%	455	395	850	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
18,440	3,340	22.1%	335	475	810	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
19,550	6,390	48.6%	640	105	745	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
18,720	3,620	24.0%	360	285	645	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
14,230	2,010	16.4%	200	390	590	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,450	3,020	32.0%	300	260	560	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
12,260	4,140	51.0%	415	105	520	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,800	2,110	19.7%	210	285	495	High school diploma or equivalent	1 to 5 years	None
14,080	1,820	14.8%	180	285	465	High school diploma or equivalent	1 to 5 years	None
9,810	3,010	44.3%	300	150	450	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
10,140	2,710	36.5%	270	170	440	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,310	2,650	27.4%	265	125	390	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
9,790	2,300	30.7%	230	160	390	Less than high school	Less than 1 year	Moderate-term on-the-job training
18,770	-1,030	-5.2%	0	385	385	High school diploma or equivalent	More than 5 years	None
9,120	1,940	27.0%	195	190	385	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
9,810	2,430	32.9%	245	130	375	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
14,540	1,150	8.6%	115	250	365	Associate's degree	1 to 5 years	None
11,210	900	8.7%	90	255	345	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
15,580	1,440	10.2%	145	190	335	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
10,370	1,710	19.7%	170	160	330	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Education & Training categories are assigned by the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

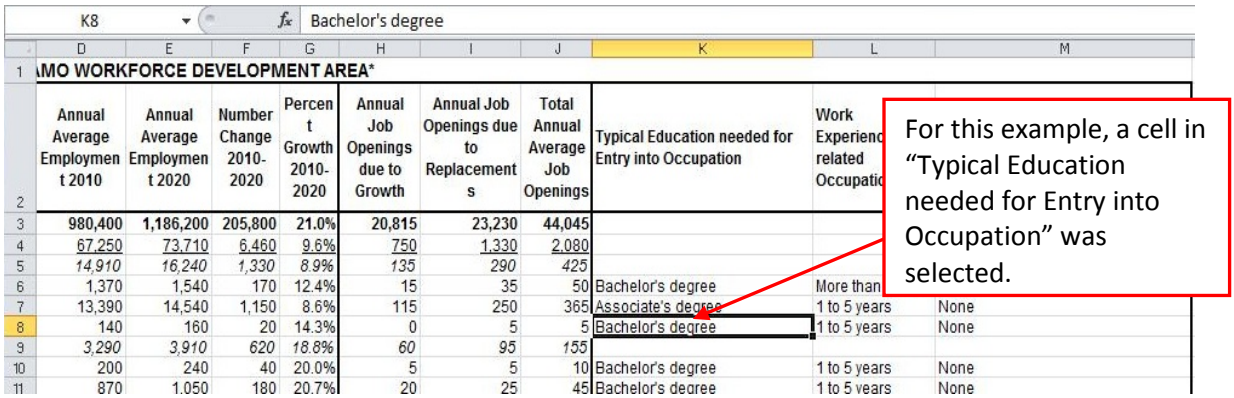
Occ and Education | Adding | Fastest | Job Openings

Ready 75%

Sort by Typical Education Needed for Entry

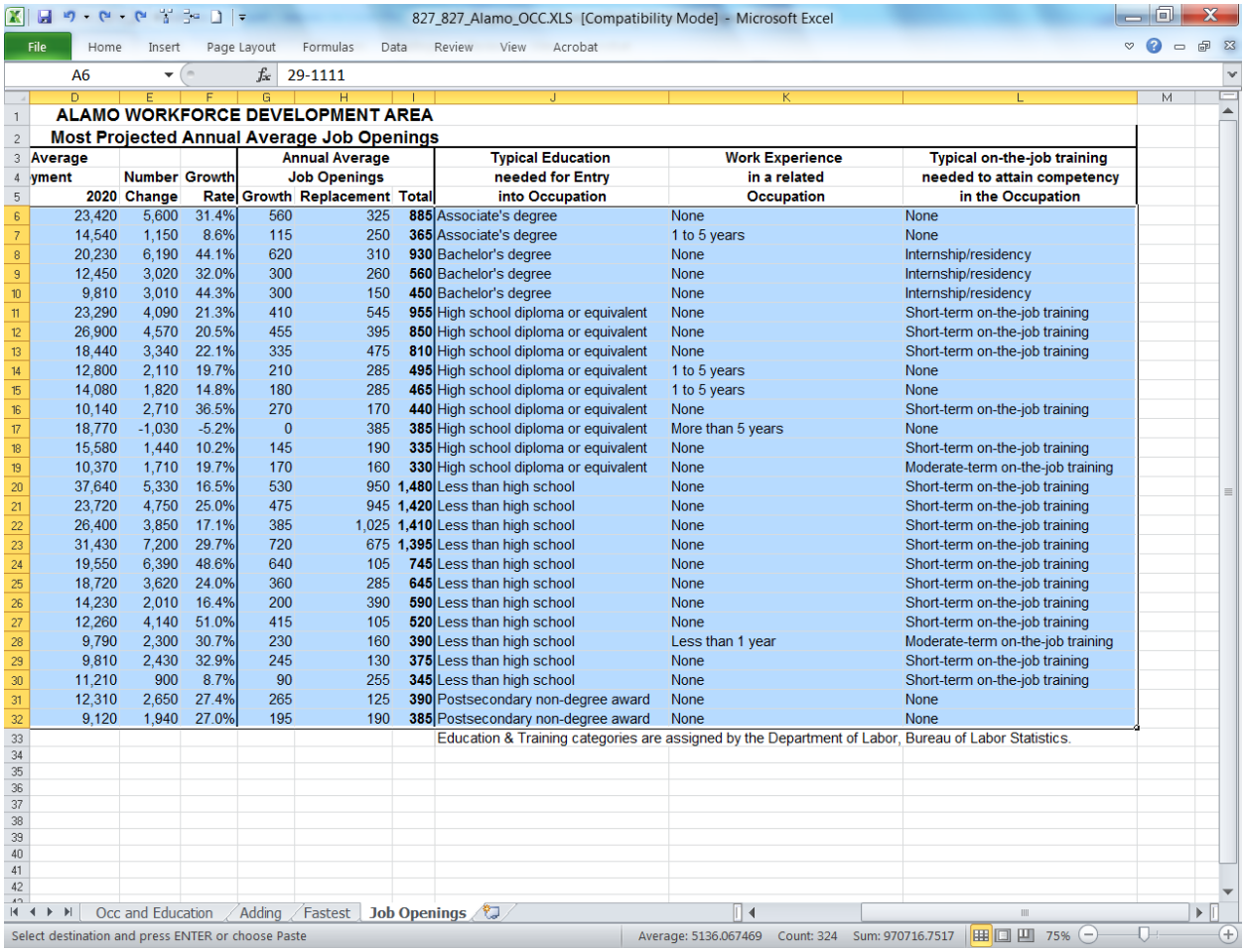
To sort the information in this spreadsheet you should follow these steps.

1. Start by selecting a cell in the column that you'd like to be sorted. In this example, we are selecting a cell in the "Typical Education Needed for Entry" column.



2. Next select "Sort & Filter" on the upper right hand.

3. When clickling "Sort & Filter" a drop down menu will appear. To sort from low numbers to high numbers or from in alphabetical order from A to Z, select "Sort A to Z". To sort from high numbers to low numbers or from Z to A, select "Sort Z to A".



827_827_Alamo_OCC.XLS [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Acrobat

A6 29-1111

ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

Most Projected Annual Average Job Openings

Average yment 2020	Number Change	Growth Rate	Annual Average Job Openings Growth	Replacement	Total	Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation	Work Experience in a related Occupation	Typical on-the-job training needed to attain competency in the Occupation
23,420	5,600	31.4%	560	325	**885**	Associate's degree	None	None
14,540	1,150	8.6%	115	250	**365**	Associate's degree	1 to 5 years	None
20,230	6,190	44.1%	620	310	**930**	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
12,450	3,020	32.0%	300	260	**560**	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
9,810	3,010	44.3%	300	150	**450**	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/residency
23,290	4,090	21.3%	410	545	**955**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
26,900	4,570	20.5%	455	395	**850**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
18,440	3,340	22.1%	335	475	**810**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,800	2,110	19.7%	210	285	**495**	High school diploma or equivalent	1 to 5 years	None
14,080	1,820	14.8%	180	285	**465**	High school diploma or equivalent	1 to 5 years	None
10,140	2,710	36.5%	270	170	**440**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
18,770	-1,030	-5.2%	0	385	**385**	High school diploma or equivalent	More than 5 years	None
15,580	1,440	10.2%	145	190	**335**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on-the-job training
10,370	1,710	19.7%	170	160	**330**	High school diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate-term on-the-job training
37,640	5,330	16.5%	530	950	**1,480**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
23,720	4,750	25.0%	475	945	**1,420**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
26,400	3,850	17.1%	385	1,025	**1,410**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
31,430	7,200	29.7%	720	675	**1,395**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
19,550	6,390	48.6%	640	105	**745**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
18,720	3,620	24.0%	360	285	**645**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
14,230	2,010	16.4%	200	390	**590**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,260	4,140	51.0%	415	105	**520**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
9,790	2,300	30.7%	230	160	**390**	Less than high school	Less than 1 year	Moderate-term on-the-job training
9,810	2,430	32.9%	245	130	**375**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
11,210	900	8.7%	90	255	**345**	Less than high school	None	Short-term on-the-job training
12,310	2,650	27.4%	265	125	**390**	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None
9,120	1,940	27.0%	195	190	**385**	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None

Education & Training categories are assigned by the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Occ and Education | Adding | Fastest | **Job Openings**

Select destination and press ENTER or choose Paste Average: 5136.067469 Count: 324 Sum: 970716.7517 75%

Now that you've sorted by education you'll narrow the list further by eliminating those occupations whose educational requirements don't fit the CTC criteria for which we're aiming.:

- Eliminate those that require Bachelors degree of higher
- Eliminate those that require less than a high school diploma.
- Keep Associate's Degrees
- Keep Postsecondary non-degree award (certificates)

Give an eye towards the amount of experience and OJT needed as well, but it will be more important to get this information directlty from employers and industry experts in your area.

Why eliminate the jobs needing less than HS Diploma? - It's important to know about these jobs for your students who need jobs now, no question. But once we look at wages and think about the goals and criteria of a Best Bet and long term potential for economic advancement and sustainability these jobs won't meet the criteria. So they are great options for students now, but not the focus of the in-depth research that is the goal of the CTC process.

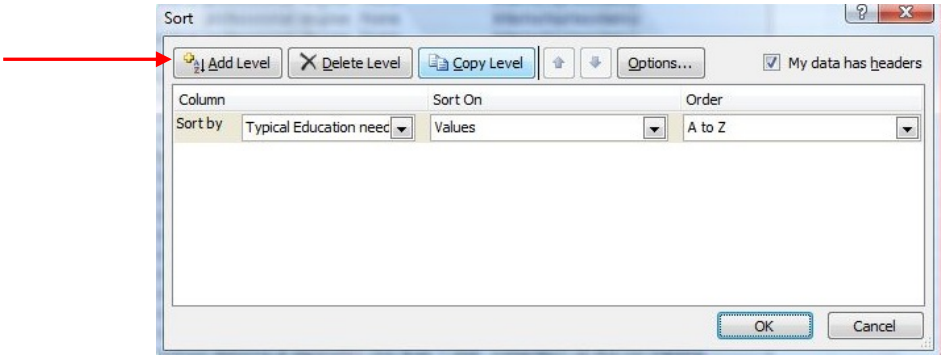
Sort by Total Number of Openings

Once you've sorted for typical education level, and eliminated the occupations with educational requirements that don't fit our criteria, you'll sort by total number of openings. To do this, you should create a "Custom Sort".

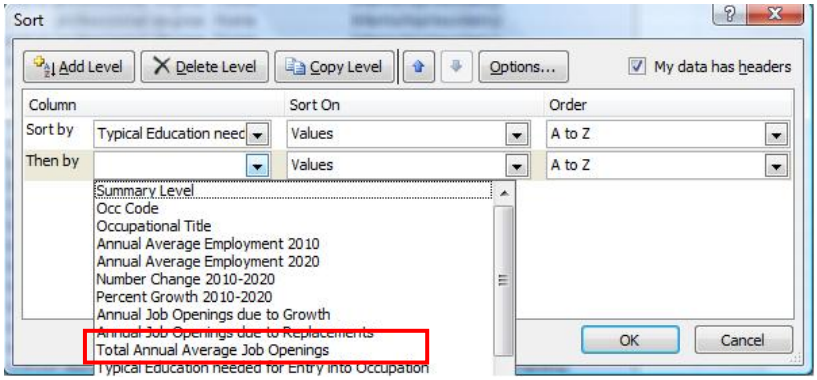
1. Next select "Sort & Filter" on the upper right hand.

2. When clickling "Sort & Filter" a drop down menu will appear. Select "Custom Sort".

3. In the new window you should see "Sort by" followed by "Typical Education Needed". This is because your spreadsheet is currently sorted that way. Next, you should select "Add level"



4. In the “Then by” row select “Total Annual Average Job Openings”. Next press “Ok”.



Your spreadsheet will now be sorted by typical education needed followed by average job openings.

TRACER provides the current employment number (the first year in the 10-year range). It also projects the total number of job openings over a 10-year period and averages the openings out evenly over the 10 year period (the total 10- year projected openings ÷ 10). This data does not reflect the current number of positions open in the occupation.

Sorting by Wages

Now you'll want to know about the wages associated with these positions and how they compare to the statewide median wage overall.

1. Return to TRACER and click on "LMCI Searchpage".

2. Scroll down to “Frequently Requested Data”.

3. Scroll down and click on “Detailed Occupational Wages (Hourly/Annual) for each MSA, WDA, TX, National”.

4. Find your region under the LWDA (Labor and Workforce Development Area) heading. Download and save this excel spreadsheet.

Now let's look at what data it provides – we'll only focus on the data that we'll be using for this activity. Data in this spreadsheet is actual data for that year. It is not projected.

Estimated Employment-current number of positions in the occupation.

PCT 75 Wage- Typically reflects wage of workers with more experience in the occupation. Note how it compares to the Experienced Wage.

Summary Levels- feature of the SOC, which we'll ignore.

Alamo LWDA Wages, Occupational Employment Statistics Program, 2011
Source: Labor Market & Career Information Department, Texas Workforce Commiss
Ratetype: Hourly - Only occupations reporting hourly wages are shown Annual - Only occupations reporting annual wages are shown

Rate Type	Occup. Code	Summary Levels	Occupational Title	Estimated Employment	Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage	PCT25 Wage	PCT 50 Median Wage	PCT75 Wage
Hourly	00-0000	Major	All Occupations	875,260	19.44	8.82	24.76	9.61	14.33	24.13
Hourly	11-0000	Major	Management Occupations	36,220	45.64	22.47	57.22	27.57	40.08	56.08
[illegible]	11-1011	Detail	Chief Executives	840	83.95	41.35	105.24	51.35	80.46	-
	11-1021	Detail	General and Operations Managers	12,120	49.35	23.68	62.18	28.73	41.47	60.27
	11-2011	Detail	Advertising and Promotions Managers	110	34.44	16.50	43.40	19.01	29.82	45.40
	11-2021	Detail	Marketing Managers	770	61.65	35.97	74.49	43.41	58.29	74.83
	11-2022	Detail	Sales Managers	1,700	48.45	23.19	61.08	27.80	42.13	61.91

Rate Type- Hourly versus annual wages listed

Entry Wage- sometimes known as PCT 10.

PCT 25 Wage- Typically reflects a wage at or slightly higher than entry level.

PCT 50/ Median Wage- The PCT 50 is the median wage for the occupation. A Best Bet occupation is one where the median occupational wage is close to (@ 80%) of the overall regional median wage. We'll

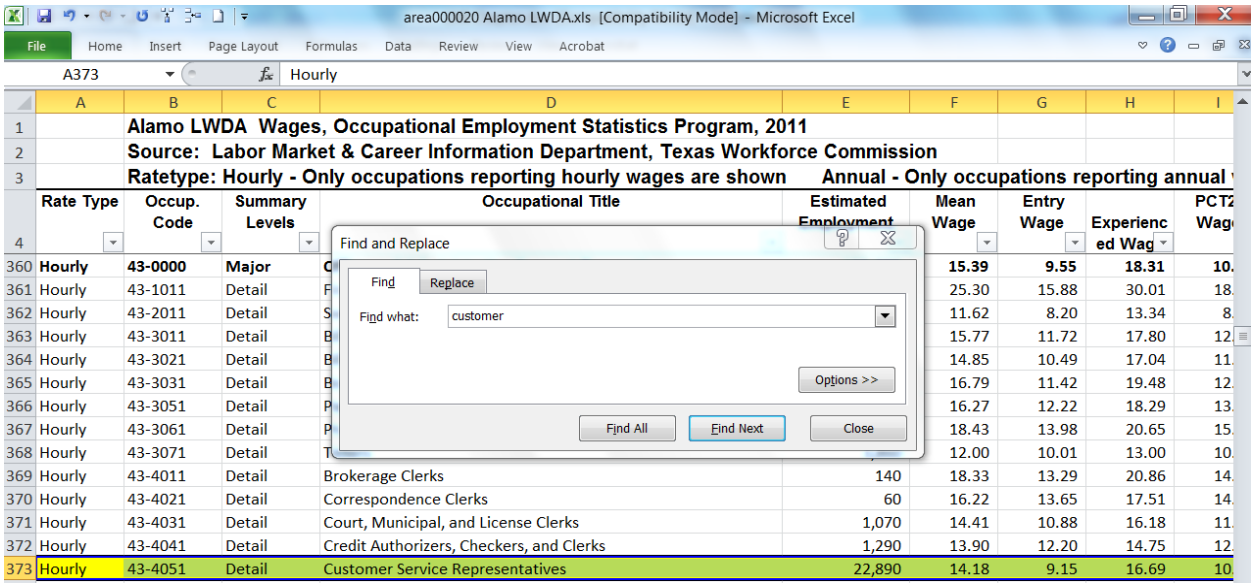
Matching the Wages to the Job Openings

Now return to your sorted job openings spread sheet.

1. Choose just 5-10 of the occupations with the highest total number of openings (after eliminating high and low educational range).

Summary Level	Occ Code	Occupational Title	Annual Average Employment 2010	Annual Average Employment 2020	Number Change 2010-2020	Percent Growth 2010-2020	Annual Job Openings due to Growth	Annual Job Openings due to Replacements	Total Annual Average Job Openings	Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation
4	29-1111	Registered Nurses	17,820	23,420	5,600	31.4%	560	325	885	Associate's degree
4	11-1021	General & Operations Managers	13,390	14,540	1,150	8.6%	115	250	365	Associate's degree
4	11-9021	Construction Managers	5,830	6,710	880	15.1%	85	40	125	Associate's degree
4	25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Spe	2,160	2,740	580	26.9%	60	55	115	Associate's degree
4	29-2037	Radiologic Technologists and Te	1,500	2,010	510	34.0%	50	25	75	Associate's degree
4	23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	1,330	1,760	430	32.3%	45	20	65	Associate's degree
4	29-2012	Medical and Clinical Laboratory T	1,370	1,670	300	21.9%	30	25	55	Associate's degree
4	29-2021	Dental Hygienists	1,080	1,430	350	32.4%	35	20	55	Associate's degree
4	29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	930	1,260	330	35.5%	30	20	50	Associate's degree
4	17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engine	860	1,010	150	17.4%	15	15	30	Associate's degree

2. Locate them in the wage spreadsheet by searching either by occupation code or occupation title.



3. Next copy the title headings “Entry Level Wage”, “PCT 50” and “PCT 25”. Paste these headings next to the last column of your job openings spreadsheet.

Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation	Entry Wage	PCT 50 Wage	PCT 25 Wage
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			

4. Copy and paste the “Entry Level Wage”, “PCT 50”, “PCT 25” median wages for each occupation in your job openings spreadsheet. You should paste this information in the new columns you created. Make sure when transferring wage info you note whether it’s annual or hourly.

Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation	Entry Wage	PCT 50 Wage	PCT 25 Wage
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree	9.15	16.69	10.04
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			
Associate's degree			

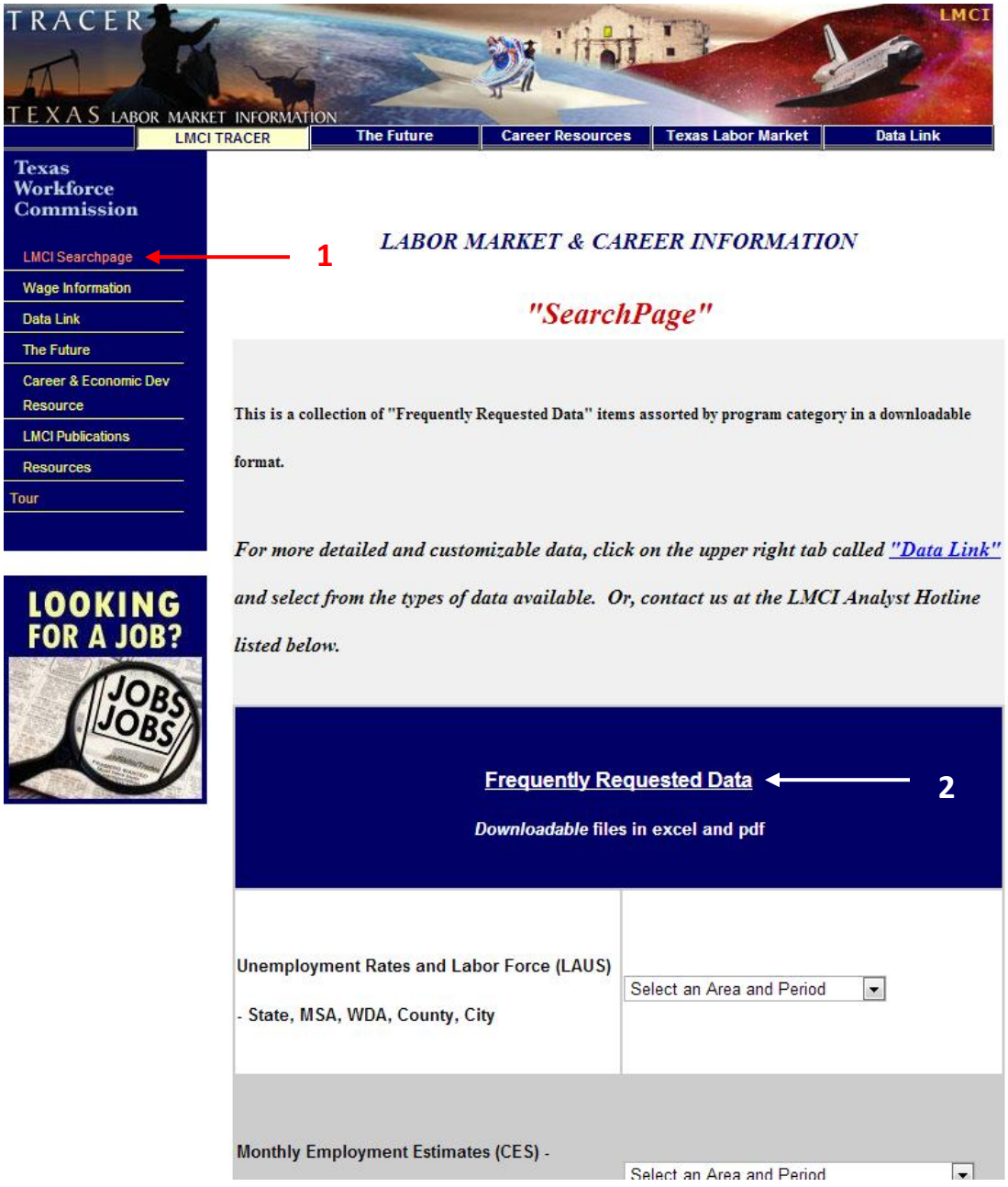
Now follow the step four for each occupation. Soon you'll be able to see this wage data alongside your job opening data.

ALAMO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA*									
Summary Level	Occ Code	Occupational Title	Annual Job Openings due to Growth	Annual Job Openings due to Replacements	Total Annual Average Job Openings	Typical Education needed for Entry into Occupation	Entry Wage	PCT 50 Wage	PCT 25 Wage
4	29-1111	Registered Nurses	560	325	885	Associate's degree	24.16	31.07	42.59
4	11-1021	General & Operations Managers	115	250	365	Associate's degree	23.68	28.73	41.47
4	11-9021	Construction Managers	85	40	125	Associate's degree	22.74	27.09	33.75
4	25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	60	55	115	Associate's degree	9.09	9.71	11.39
4	29-2037	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	50	25	75	Associate's degree	19.65	21.79	25.84
4	23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	45	20	65	Associate's degree	13.55	16.12	21.29
4	29-2012	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	30	25	55	Associate's degree	11.45	12.57	15.34
4	29-2021	Dental Hygienists	35	20	55	Associate's degree	20.35	26.80	32.39
4	29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	30	20	50	Associate's degree	20.88	22.82	25.35
4	17-3023	Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	15	15	30	Associate's degree	20.97	24.38	28.57

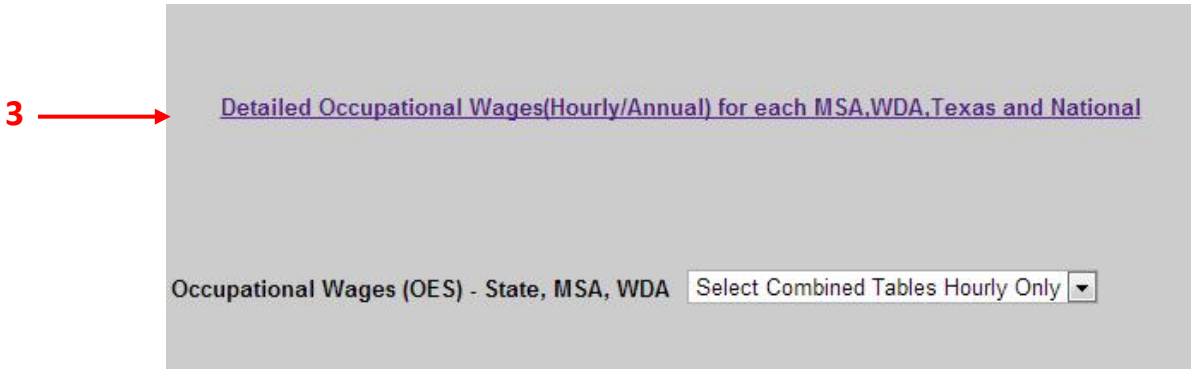
Comparing to State Median Wage

How does the median wage of the occupations on your narrowed down list compare to the state median wage?

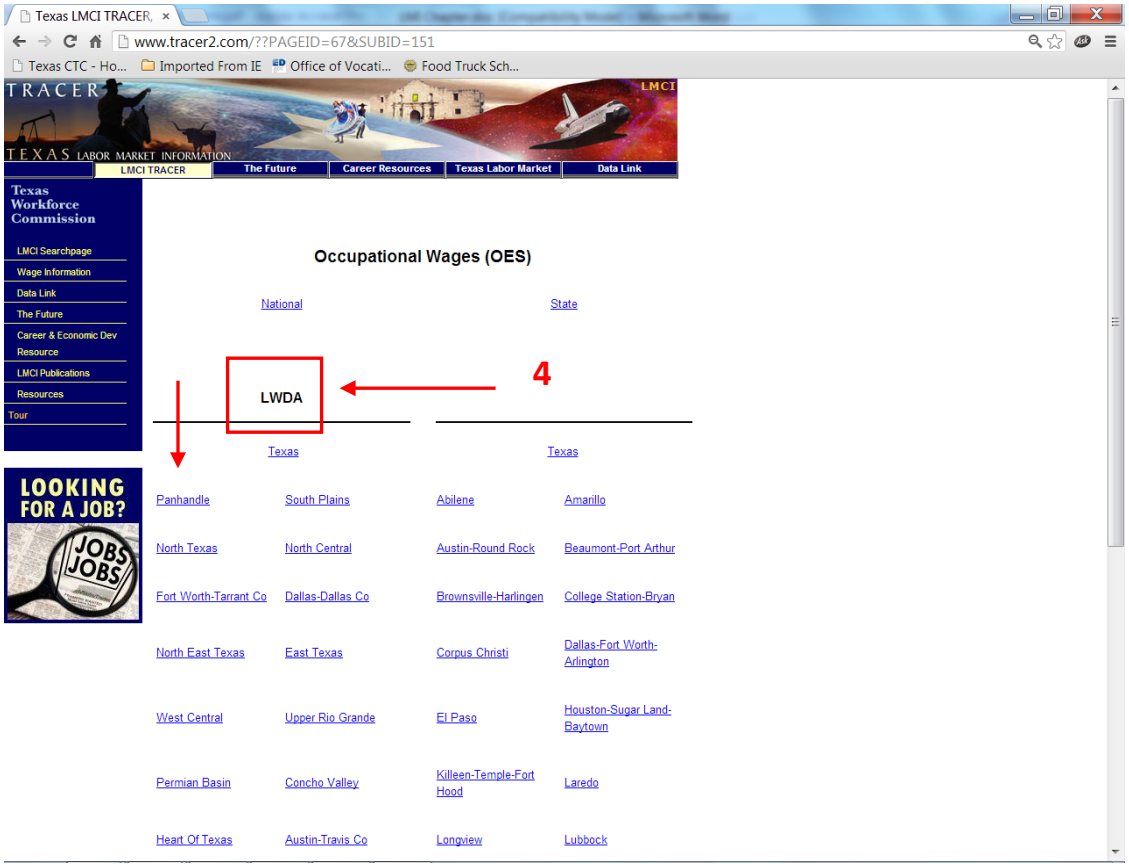
1. Return to TRACER and click on “LMCI Searchpage”.
2. Scroll down to “Frequently Requested Data”.



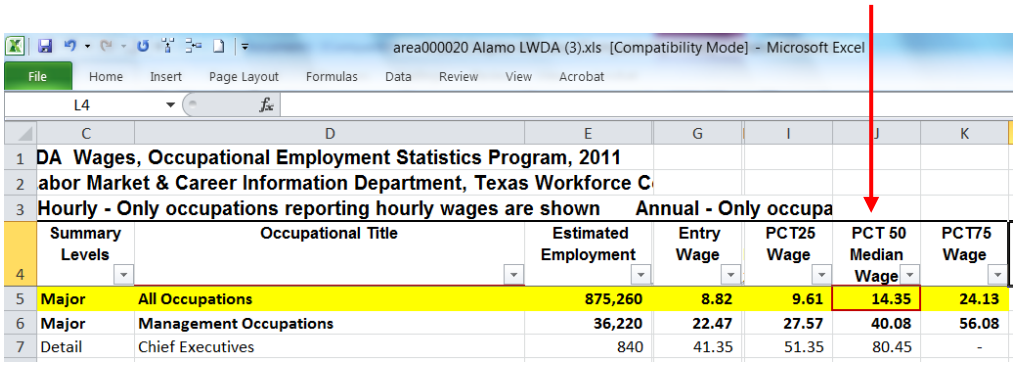
3. Scroll down and click on “Detailed Occupational Wages (Hourly/Annual) for each MSA, WDA, TX, National”.



4. Select the “Occupational Wages” sheet for your LWDA.



5. Download the spreadsheet for your LWDA. Find the regional median wage for "All Occupations" on the top line. **The regional median wage (in 2011) is $14.35/hour.**



area000020 Alamo LWDA (3).xls [Compatibility Mode] - Microsoft Excel

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Acrobat

L4

	C	D	E	G	I	J	K
1	DA Wages, Occupational Employment Statistics Program, 2011						
2	abor Market & Career Information Department, Texas Workforce C						
3	Hourly - Only occupations reporting hourly wages are shown			Annual - Only occupa			
4	Summary Levels	Occupational Title	Estimated Employment	Entry Wage	PCT25 Wage	PCT 50 Median Wage	PCT75 Wage
5	Major	All Occupations	875,260	8.82	9.61	14.35	24.13
6	Major	Management Occupations	36,220	22.47	27.57	40.08	56.08
7	Detail	Chief Executives	840	41.35	51.35	80.45	-

6. Compare the **overall** regional median wage ($14.35/hour) with the **regional median wage for the specific occupations** that you've filtered (by education and wage).

	B	C	D	F	G	I	J
1	Alamo LWDA Wages, Occupational Employment Statistics Progra						
2	Source: Labor Market & Career Information Department, Texas W						
3	Ratetype: Hourly - Only occupations reporting hourly wages are shown					Annual - (	
4	Occup. Code	Summary Levels	Occupational Title	Mean Wage	Entry Wage	PCT25 Wage	PCT 50 Median Wage
5	00-0000	Major	All Occupations	19.44	8.82	9.61	14.35
6		Detail	Registered Nurses	33.07	23.68	26.56	31.93
7		Detail	General and Operations Managers	49.35	23.68	28.73	41.47
8		Detail	Construction Managers	37.22	22.74	27.09	33.75
9		Detail	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	14.87	9.09	9.71	11.39
10		Detail	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	26.02	19.65	21.79	25.84
11		Detail	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	23.66	13.55	16.12	21.29
12		Detail	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	16.13	11.45	12.57	15.34
13		Detail	Dental Hygienists	30.18	20.35	26.80	32.39
14		Detail	Respiratory Therapists	24.92	20.88	22.82	25.35

In this case, most of the regional median wages for the occupations listed are higher than the overall regional median wage. Wages for preschool instructors fall below the regional median, and wages for medical and clinical laboratory technicians pay only slightly above. This does not mean that you would.

Selecting Potential Best Bets

Now you have a narrowed down list of occupations. Here are some suggestions for how to choose 1-3 to research in greater depth as potential Best Bets.

- Review the Best Bet criteria and your data.
- Consider what you know about the local labor market reality (from regional and local economic info, workforce and adult education priorities, etc.).
- Consider what you already know about available training programs available and accessible to your students.
- Speak with someone from your Workforce Solutions program or state office of Labor Market Information to get their impressions of the potential Best Bet occupations in the region.
- Search local postsecondary training programs to confirm that there are viable programs available locally that offer training for the occupations you're considering researching further.

Once you've selected your potential Best Bets:

- Identify the availability of training providers in your region
- Plan outreach to employers, industry, training providers in order to verify, flesh out the LMI and provide you with the in depth firsthand information about the reality of this occupation in your region.
- Read the basic occupational profiles that describe the general occupational skills, daily tasks, work environment, education and training required, etc.

In the section that follows, you'll explore CareerOneStop, a website where you can start your occupational research.

Part C Using Career One Stop to begin an Occupational Profile

Once you narrow down your potential Best Bets to 1-3 occupations, you can continue your research on the internet, in order to prepare for contacting and interviewing local industry and training experts.

Let's take a tour of some tools to find a basic occupational profile. An occupational profile provides a basic picture of the daily tasks and responsibilities, knowledge, skills and abilities required, tools and technology used, education and training required, and transferability to related occupations. The profile also includes the labor market information and outlook. Since we've explored the labor market outlook previously, we'll focus primarily on the day-in-the-life aspects of building a profile now.

The occupational profile will be an important career advising tool and it will also ensure that you understand at least the basic occupational information when you speak with industry and training representatives. They will be able to tell you if what you find online is valid and relevant to their companies and educational programs.

CareerOneStop is a U.S. Department of Labor–sponsored Web site that offers career resources and workforce information to job seekers, students, businesses, and workforce professionals to foster talent development in a global economy.

CareerOneStop's features include Career Exploration Tools, Education and Training Information, Resume, Interview, and Job Search Guidance, Salary and Benefits Information, and Career Ladder Steps, Transition Resources for Veterans.

In this chapter, we're going to focus on the occupational information. Follow the instructions below to use the CareerOneStop Web site to explore occupations, including learning about the tasks performed and skills used on the job, and important data on wages, growth, job openings, and education/training and work experience commonly required. We've chosen the occupation 'Computer Support Specialist' here as just one example of the numerous occupations you can explore through the Web site.

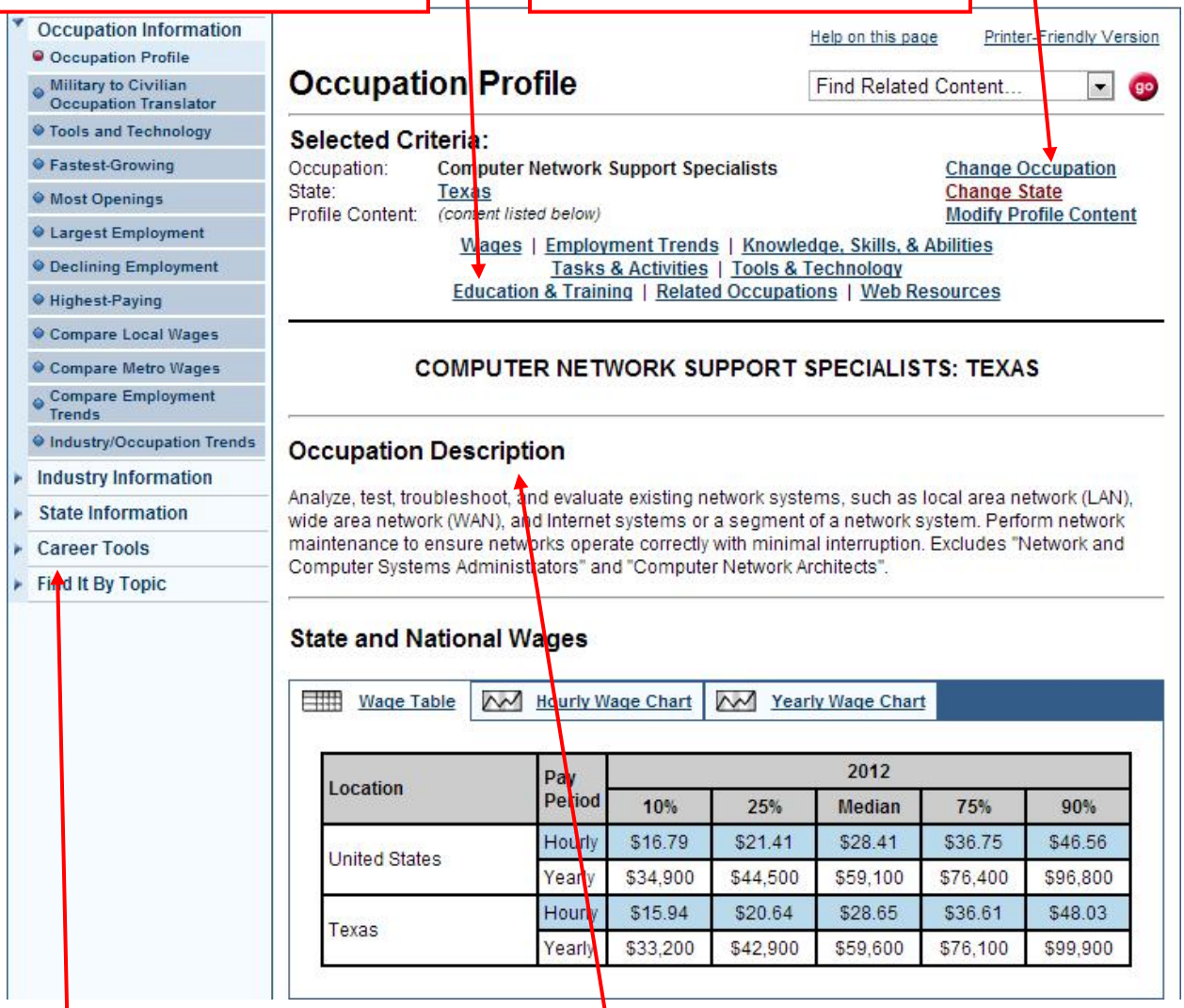
Use the Occupational Profile Worksheet to record the key information.

1. Go to the CareerOneStop http://www.careeronestop.org. Click on "Browse Occupations".

2. In the keyword search box, type "Computer Support Specialist" and then click "Search". A box of relevant occupations will appear on the next screen. Highlight the one you want (if not already highlighted) and click "Continue". If the occupation you want is not listed, click "New Search". (Alternatively, you can look for an occupation within the occupation groups listed below the keyword search box.)
3. Once you've selected the occupation you want, you will be guided to select a state. Once you have done so, click "Continue".
4. You should now see an Occupation Profile for the occupation and state you selected. This profile contains generalizable information about the occupation and information specific to the state you selected (e.g., wage and employment figures).

Links under Profile Content will take you directly to specific sections on this page, also found by scrolling down the page.

Use these links to either change the occupation while remaining on your state, or change the state while remaining on the occupation.



Tools for career exploration and planning, including self-assessments, an 'Employer Locator,' a 'Résumé Tutorial,' 'Career Resource Library,' and much more.

All Occupational Profiles begin with an occupation description. Many also have Career Videos that show real people on the job. Click on this link to find additional video resources, including Spanish language videos.

The next page contains detailed information about some of the resources that can be found when you scroll down the Occupation Profile.

As you either scroll down the page or select links under “Profile Content”, you will find information about the selected occupations:

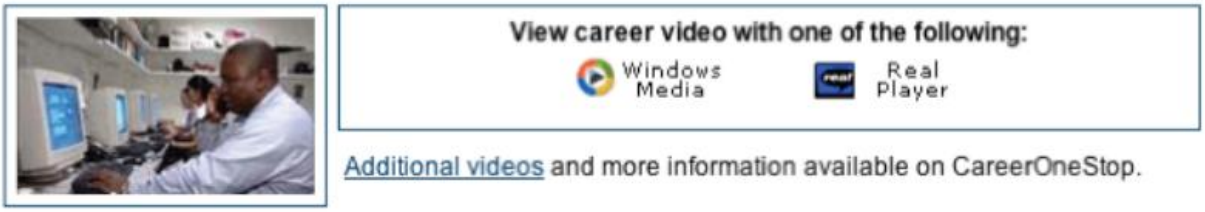
- **State and National Wages** (plus a link to **Wages by Metropolitan Areas**)—This section includes hourly and yearly wage ranges for the occupation.
- **State and National Wages**—Employment trends focused on job growth and job openings figures.
- **Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**—A list of the occupation's most important knowledge, skills, and abilities. (Note: To find the occupation's interest code, click on the “Source” link at the bottom of this section. This should bring you to the occupation's O*NET OnLine “Summary Report”. Click on “Interests” to find the “interest code” for the occupation. In this case, the interest code for Computer Support Specialists is RIC.)
- **Tasks and Activities**—A list of occupation-specific tasks and the most important generalized work activities for the occupation.
- **Tools and Technology**—A list of machines, equipment, tools, and software that workers may use in the occupation.
- **Education and Training**—Use this information as an indication of how much education/training/work experience a person may need for this occupation (remember that this may vary by region and employer). This section includes information on the most common educational/training level for the occupation and a table showing the occupation's distribution of educational attainment (for the U.S. only). In addition, under the table, you'll find links to 'colleges, training schools and instructional programs' for the occupation, a “Short-Term Training Finder”, “Education Resources”, a “Financial Aid Advisor”, and a “WIA Eligible Training Provider List”.
- **Related Occupations**—Links to occupations with similar skill requirements. Note that these occupations may be in different industries.
- **Web Resources**—Links to online resources related to the occupation's occupational group.

TIPS

- To get general information on work experience typically needed to access an occupation, go to the section in the Occupation Profile titled “Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities”. At the end of the section, you should see a “Source” link to the “Occupational Information Network”. Click on the link. You should now see a “Summary Report” for the occupation. Click on “Job Zone” and look at the section “Related Experience”. Conversations with employers will also help to give you an idea of the work experience they prefer or require for a given occupation.
- Under the “Distribution of Educational Attainment” table, you'll find links to:
  - **Colleges, Training Schools, and Instructional** Programs for the occupation
  - **Short-term Training Finder** (education and training programs where one can earn a certificate, diploma, or award in less than 2 years)
  - **Education Resources**
  - **Financial Aid Advisor** (to help find funds for financing education)
  - **WIA Eligible Training Provider List**

5. In some occupational profiles, you'll find career videos that show real people on the job. Career videos include text for those who are hard of hearing. A link to "Additional videos" provides Spanish language videos, industry videos, and more. These are great resources for your research and for use in classroom and career counseling activities.

Career Video



Keep exploring CareerOneStop's features! Click on as many sections and links as you can to find additional information/resources not included here. You can also print out printer-friendly versions of Occupation Profiles and other CareerOneStop resources/tools for you and your students.

LMI Research Data Worksheet

REGION _____

REGIONAL MEDIAN WAGE (FOR ALL OCCUPATIONS) : _____ 80% OF REGIONAL MEDIAN WAGE: _____
(NOTE HOURLY OR ANNUALLY)

OCCUPATION # 1:						
25TH PERCENTILE WAGE	MEDIAN WAGE (50PCT)	TYPICAL EDUCATION & TRAINIING	AVERAGE ANNUAL JOPENINGS	GROWTH RATE	ASSOCIATED POSTSECONDARY PROGRAM(S)	ASSOCIATED EMPLOYER(S)
OCCUPATION # 2:						
25TH PERCENTILE WAGE	MEDIAN WAGE (50 PCT)	TYPICAL EDUCATION & TRAINIING	AVERAGE ANNUAL JOPENINGS	GROWTH RATE	ASSOCIATED POSTSECONDARY PROGRAM(S)	ASSOCIATED EMPLOYER(S)

OCCUPATION # 3:						
25TH PERCENTILE WAGE	MEDIAN WAGE (50 PCT)	TYPICAL EDUCATION & TRAINIING	AVERAGE ANNUAL JOPENINGS	GROWTH RATE	ASSOCIATED POSTSECONDARY PROGRAM(S)	ASSOCIATED EMPLOYER(S)
OCCUPATION # 4:						
25TH PERCENTILE WAGE	MEDIAN WAGE (50 PCT)	TYPICAL EDUCATION & TRAINIING	AVERAGE ANNUAL JOPENINGS	GROWTH RATE	ASSOCIATED POSTSECONDARY PROGRAM(S)	ASSOCIATED EMPLOYER(S)

Occupational Profile Worksheet

http://www.careeronestop.org/ExploreCareers/ExploreCareers.aspx

Once you've analyzed TRACER data and selected 1-3 potential Best Bet occupations to research further, prepare for interviews with industry experts, employers, and training providers by familiarizing yourself with the basic occupational profile. Record your findings here.

1. Knowledge, Skills, Abilities

What types of knowledge are required of someone in this occupation?

_____

_____

_____

What types of skills are required of someone in this occupation?

_____

_____

_____

What types of abilities are required of someone in this occupation?

_____

_____

_____

2. Tasks and Activities

What are examples of the occupation-specific tasks?

_____

_____

_____

What are examples of the generalized work activities (not specific to the occupation)?

_____

_____

_____

3. Tools and Technology

What types of tools* and technology are used in this occupation?

_____

_____

*be sure to ask training providers and employers and training providers if students/employees have to buy their own tools, and approximate costs.

4. Education and Training

What percentage of workers* in the field have:

_____ less than high school

_____ high school diploma or equivalent

_____ some college (no degree)

_____ Associate's degree

_____ Bachelor's degree

*CareerOneStop posts education attainment data on employees in the field between the ages of 25-44. Does this information confirm or contradict what you found in the TRACER data? It will be critical to verify with employer and industry experts in your region.

1. **Occupations with Similar Skills Requirements** (helpful in thinking about transferability of skills and (re)training).

   _____

   _____

2. **Wages (Use TRACER Data)**

   25 PCT _____ 50 PCT_____

3. **Projected Openings (over 10 year period)**

   _____

5. Community Mapping

This chapter guides you and your team through a process to map that prepares you for the extensive outreach to industry experts, employers, and training providers that the Counseling to Careers research process entails.

Tool: 1) Community Map

A central task of identifying possible Best Bets for your students is your ability to create valuable connections – connections with community organizations, postsecondary institutions, employers, and even state agencies. These resources help to inform about a wealth of information – from what's happening in the labor market to what postsecondary training programs could be a good fit for which students.

Gaining knowledge and familiarity with a new industry sector includes developing new sets of contacts and networks, which will be one of the goals and positive byproducts of engaging in this process.

Who do you and your team members, program colleagues and students already know who can help you in your outreach efforts? Do you know people, who know people who have connections to people who work in the targeted occupations and training programs that you want to research?

Let's say you meet a friend of a friend at a party or play softball with someone who works directly or indirectly in advanced manufacturing. You never gave it much thought before. Now you might count them as someone you could call for information and guidance on how to approach the industry. You might think, "but I don't even really know that person."

Those people you don't really know, and those outside of your daily circle of friends and family, may be your best sources of networking contacts. Sociologist Mark Granovetter[1] argued that when it comes to finding out about new jobs—or, for that matter, gaining new information, or looking for new ideas—weak ties tend to be more important than strong ties. This is because the people closest to you move in similar circles as you and know similar people and places. So you want to reach beyond your normal circles for new information. To capture this apparent paradox, Granovetter coined a phrase: "the strength of weak ties." The most important people in your life are, in certain critical realms, the people who aren't closest to you, and the more people you know who aren't close to you the stronger your position becomes.That's the potential power of what's been called "weak ties."

[1] Malcolm Gladwell, Annals of Society, "Six Degrees of Lois Weisberg," *The New Yorker*, January 11, 1999, p. 52

Through development of community maps, you'll brainstorm who you know – keeping in mind the potential of your far-reaching weak ties. Then you and your team members will share your notes and connections and develop strategies for reaching out to and beyond your networks to identify industry and employer experts and postsecondary training contacts, professionals in workforce development and labor market information agencies, and community based organizations.

How to use the Community Map

If your organization has an Advisory Board or Board of Directors, engage them in the process described below during a Board meeting.

1. Gather as many of your program staff together. Include as many staff as possible, whether or not they'll be working directly on the CTC research.

2. Give each person a copy of the Community Map.

3. Explain why you want to brainstorm the connections, weak and strong ties that you have among you collectively.

4. Ask everyone to take a few minutes to think about who they might know in the different categories. Remind them that they want to think broadly about who they might know (the strength of weak ties).

5. Ask them write notes on their own Community Map.

   For each category:

   - Whom do they know? Name and specific role at the organization, company, or school.
   - How do they know this person? What/who is their connection to them?
   - How can each person help with your CTC research project?
   - Do they have firsthand knowledge themselves?
   - Are they contacts who can help you reach other industry and training contacts?

6. Now gather that team back together and compare notes. Build a single Team Community Map compiled from the individual maps.

7. Discuss:
   - In which areas are your connections strongest?
   - Where are the gaps in the map – where are you lacking connections?
   - In what areas do you need to devote your outreach and networking?

8. Make note of who knows whom so that you can assign the appropriate people to reach out to their contacts and weak ties, once you begin planning your research approach.

9. As you begin to turn your attention to this research you may begin to tune in differently when you meet acquaintances and come up with some additional contacts – so revisit your maps periodically.

Ultimately, community mapping serves as the foundation for the development of your CTC research and team action plan. It allows you to identify the connections that you have and that you still need. These connections are important because the team begins to see that you already have some connections to start the action research phase. As you move through the CTC research process, you can use your team's community map to identify the networks that you have and those you still may need to build.

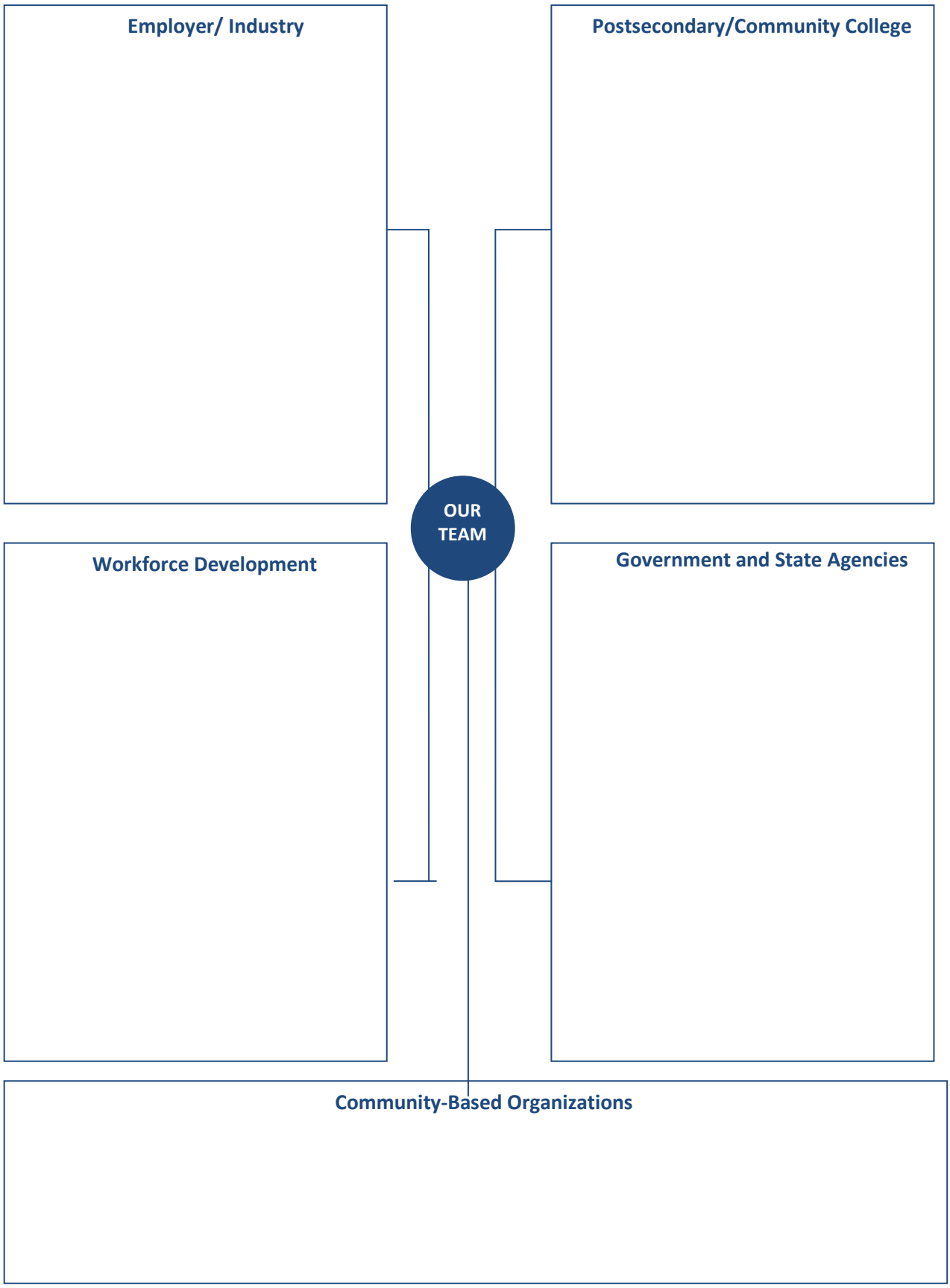
Note to Instructors and Advisors:

Community mapping is a great activity to bring into the classroom to engage students in the CTC process.

Consider visiting some of your classes to see if students have any contacts. Explain that you are beginning a research project to learn more about some industries and occupations and want to brainstorm. Students may be able to help. And even if they don't know anyone in the targeted occupations now, then can also use the process to think about networking for other sorts of information gathering, such as searching for jobs, childcare, housing.

Create a reading lesson using the article about the strength of weak ties (Six Degree of Lois Weinberg). It can be used to teach reading comprehension, diagraming, and to teach job readiness skills, such as networking and informational interviewing.

Community Mapping



6. Building a More Complete Picture: Workforce and Industry Interviews

This chapter outlines steps for conducting additional research on targeted industries, identifying workforce, industry and employer contacts and sample interview questions.

Tools: 1) Best Bet Checklist (review)
2) Workforce Solutions Interview Guide
3) Employer Interview Guide
4) Employer Interview Tracking Sheet

Once you've located your regional data on wages, openings, educational requirements, and growth you'll want to get much more detailed information about 1-3 of the potential Best Bets that rise to the top of the list.

The only way to verify the labor market data is to speak directly with experts who have firsthand knowledge – employers and other industry representatives. Local workforce and industry experts can confirm whether or not the LMI you find online is valid for your region. Industry experts and employers can give you a real picture of the opportunities for entry level work and advancement. They can tell you what they look for in employees, and what sort of training and from which training providers they value and look to when recruiting new hires. This is why interviewing regional workforce staff, employers and industry representatives is a critical component of the CTC research process.

Review – what is a Best Bet occupation?

An occupation is a potential Best Bet if it:

- ✓ An entry level position can be obtained with an occupational certificate or associate's degree.
- ✓ Employers in your region will hire recent program graduates with limited or no work experience in the industry or occupation.
- ✓ The median wage paid in your region (for this occupation) is close to the average median wage (for all occupations) paid in your region.
- ✓ There are local and regional job openings for this occupation.
- ✓ The occupation is projected to grow in your region over the coming years and/or the occupation exists within an industry sector that has high projected growth.
- ✓ Occupation has well-defined steps (career ladder) to advancement and higher wages or provides opportunities for transferable skills that enable mobility within other industries.

We'll focus first on what sort of information you want to gather and where you can find first hand sources of information. At the end of this unit, we'll also discuss how the interviewing process can be a first step in engaging employers in your program, the benefits of building employer relationships, and strategies for engagement.

It's important to note now, however, that the purpose of the information gathering here, is to get firsthand understanding of the local labor market, such as demand for specific jobs, opportunities to advance, and the skills, experience, credentials that employers value most. The purpose is not to ask for assistance with internship or job placement.

Where should you start? How can you identify employers and other industry experts?

Use your community map and work through your contacts. Rather than start cold calling companies think through how to work most efficiently and through other business and training networks

Be sure to leave yourselves plenty of time for the employer and industry outreach. If you don't surface connections to experts in the targeted industry through your community mapping process, then it will require persistence and tenacity to find someone who knows someone…. That is, you'll need to start with making contact with the workforce and industry organizations that follow and then pursue the contacts they recommend. This may take several weeks, even months (including phone tag, email overload, etc.)

Think first about the industries that you've chosen to research in more depth:

- What are the larger companies that represent the industry in your region?
- Do you or anyone in your program have any contacts at those companies?
- What are some other organizations that can provide you with first hand industry information and contacts to local companies?

The following types of regional workforce organization can verify the labor market information, help you build a more complete picture of what's happening in your region as well as refer and introduce you to industry experts and employers in your area.

Even if you already have contacts with employers in the industries you're researching, you may at least want to meet with Workforce Solutions to discuss the regional labor market data, before narrowing down the occupation you choose to research.

Workforce Development Boards (Workforce Solutions)

- Each community is represented by a Workforce Development Board mandated to implement a system of services that help employer access the skilled workers they need in order to remain competitive.
- Comprised of leaders from business, organized labor, educational institutions, CBOs, and state and local entities.
- To find the Workforce Solutions office website in your region, go to regional workforce http://www.twc.state.tx.us/dirs/wdbs/wdbweb.html and click on Web Sites for links to all of the regions.
- Look for the Board membership and the types of industries and companies represented there.
- Speak to career counseling staff and business services representatives for insights into labor market and employer contacts.
- If there are career or job fairs scheduled, attend in order to network with employers.

Chambers of Commerce

- Membership organizations of the business community in which members can range from small.
- Represent their members through economic development initiatives and public policy advocacy.
- Provide opportunities for networking and information sharing among local members, events, and support services to members.
- In some communities, strong connection with WIBs.
- To find your local Chamber of Commerce, go to Texas Association of Business and click on Directories/Local http://www.txbiz.org/ .
- Search the local membership directory for relevant company contacts.

Community based organizations and education programs often overlook the value and networking potential these types of organizations offer. Considering joining or attending free events on a regular basis to build a network of contacts. Some education programs set up tables at Chamber events or offer to give presentations on a education and workforce topic of interest to the Chamber.

Industry/Trade Associations and Certifying Organizations

- Trade associations and certifying organizations can help you identify and meet industry contacts in your area.
- They may offer local networking events that you can attend.
- Career and Technical Education and training program within the industry can advise you on the relevant trade associations.
- You can also do a national search and then look for a local chapter or member directory. Try http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_industry_trade_groups_in_the_United_States or

http://www.planningshop.com/associations/ for lists of national trade and industry associations.

- Even at a national or state level these organizations can help you flesh out the picture of an occupation and industry

Career and Technical Education Local Advisory Committees

Each CTE program offered is required to convene local advisory committees

- Assist educators in establishing, operating, and evaluating programs which serve the needs of students, business and industry
- Provide expertise to the program by reviewing curriculum, facilities, budget, student competencies, and student placement in related occupations
- Some college websites list the members of the CTE Advisory Committees for each occupational program.
- Request an interview with the CTE dean or coordinator of the occupational program of study. Enlist their help in contacting industry and employer representatives for an interview or to attend a committee meeting.

Postsecondary Training Providers

In the chapter on Postsecondary contacts, we'll discuss the type of information you want to gather from training programs. Training providers may also be able to assist you in verifying the labor market data and in identifying additional employer and industry experts to contact.
Later we'll discuss outreach to:

- Community college business or workforce division
- Labor unions
- Apprenticeship programs
- Coordinators and faculty in Career and Technical Education

Local Newspapers (including online media)

Look for articles on local employers, workforce trends, and workforce development initiatives; see sections with titles like "Business" and "Jobs;"
Speak with local business reporters to ask for employer connections.

Job-related Web sites (e.g., Monster.com)

Look at job postings, company profiles for companies actively hiring in the targeted industries.

Temporary Placement Agencies ("Temp" Agencies)

You may discover through your workforce contacts, want ads, or directly from employers in the targeted industry that all hiring is done through a temp agency. If that's the case, then find out which agency they use and request an interview. Ask about their recruitment, screening, and placement practices: What do they look for from applicants in the targeted occupations? What are the requirements for prior experience and education? In which companies do they see the most placements for the targeted occupation? How long is the average placement and how frequently are their temporary placements hired permanently?

Industry Employers

Developing networks and engagement with employers is essential to building career opportunities for students and to ensuring that programs are viable and sustainable. Employers within the industries you're researching can:

- Confirm labor market need for specific occupations
- Describe career pathways within the industry
- Identify skills required or preferred for occupations
- Discuss preferred training programs for entry level workers

Who should you speak to?

To some extent, the answer is: "speak to whomever will give you an interview".
You don't need to speak to a decision maker for this interview, as you would if engaging employer for longer term project. But the person should have knowledge of the specific occupational tasks and responsibilities as well as in-depth knowledge of broader industry concerns and projections.

If the company has a human resource department or training department, then that would be a good place to start. They will know about the entry level requirements, opportunities for ongoing training and advancement, wages and benefits, etc.

A manager or supervisor in the targeted occupation, especially if they screening, selecting, and training new hires is part of their job, would also likely be able to tell you a great deal about the occupation and the company's hiring and training preferences. Depending on the scope of their role and how long they've been in the industry and the company, they may not be able to give you as much of the big picture projections.

Prior to Interviewing Employers and Other Industry Experts

It can be intimidating to reach out to company representatives and private employers, non profits and public institutions can feel like invisible poor relations. But there are some things to keep in mind:

- **Before contacting the employer, do some research on the organization—this increases your credibility with the employer and can save interview time. Check their website, business news, recent job postings, etc.**
- Be persistent. Don't give up if you can't get a call back write away. See if you can get some industry allies to make a call of introduction for you. And keep trying.
- Aim to speak with at least three employers for each occupation you're researching to get a broader perspective and input from both large and small employers.
- Whenever possible, find someone to introduce or refer you, for example, from the Chamber of Commerce, CTE program coordinator, etc. to avoid cold calling whenever possible.
- Review the Best Bet Checklist ensure that you key interview questions address the Best Bet criteria.
- Organize and focus your questions. Try to keep your interview to 5-10 main questions. It's better to get detailed answers to a few key questions than to get incomplete answers to lots of questions.
- Email interview questions in advance. Once someone agrees to an interview, email him or her your most important questions in advance.
- It is most appropriate for your program administrator to reach out to employers as their role already should involve community outreach and industry relationship building. Where possible and appropriate ask if you might bring a teacher and counselor along as it's good for them to get firsthand exposure. But don't expect instructors or counselors to take the lead on this type of outreach on top of their day-to-day duties.
- Most people enjoy the opportunity to talk about their work and their company. Remember that you both have something to gain from the interview.
- You'll be surprised to find out how much just one conversation with an employer can tell you about your local labor market trends—which jobs are hot (or not), what employers are looking for in job candidates, etc.

During and After the Interview

- Mention the person that referred you again during the interview.
- Assure interviewees that you will not publicly share their direct comments without their stated permission.
- Be mindful of time. An employer interview can be completed in 30 minutes if you have a tight script with clear questions. Some people will have less time to talk and others will have more, so adapt your questions as needed.
- Review and organize your interview notes immediately after each interview.
- Send a thank you email or note to each interviewee.
- Create a list of next steps that will help you finish gathering the information you seek.

Workforce Solutions and Chamber of Commerce Interview Guide

To prepare for the interview:

- If the company has a website, learn about the company/organization.
- See which types of jobs are posted, if any.
- Look through job postings to find information about each job: job duties, qualifications, salary and benefits, full-time or part-time status, shift, etc.
- Notice which (if any) job titles appear more than once.
- Use the *Tracking Sheet to record what you learn from the website and interview*.

Recommended Interview Questions

1. I've been looking at some data from our regional labor market. It seems like for new graduates with less than a bachelor's degree, the following industries and occupations—[list some of the industry occupations that remained on your TRACER Job Openings spreadsheet after you filtered by education and wages]—pay [insert a figure] and have a lot of job openings. **Does this align with what you see happening in the region? What in-demand, well-paying occupations in our local/regional labor market provide career advancement opportunities and are accessible to *new graduates* with less than a bachelor's degree?**
2. Are there any industries and occupations we haven't discussed that you think I should explore further?
3. In interpreting the labor market data, what are the most important considerations I should make or be aware of?
4. What publications, tools, or Web sites do you think I should use to learn more about these kinds of jobs in the region?
5. What issues should I be thinking about in trying to identify training programs that meet the needs of regional employers with these kinds of jobs?
6. Given the kinds of information I'm trying to collect and validate, who else would you recommend I contact in [insert town/city/region here] and the state? Would you be willing to share their contact information with me? May I use your name as a reference?
7. Once I consult these resources and start to develop a list of occupations that seem like good bets for my students, may I contact you again (or someone else in your office) to discuss my findings and ask questions about the data?

Additional Workforce Solutions Interview Questions

8. Which regional employers have these kinds of jobs? With which industries and employers does your office work closely or have connections? Would you be willing to connect me to them—to provide me with their contact information (and any specific contact names)? May I use your name as a reference?
9. Which employers are recruiting through you center? Whom should I contact there to learn more about this and other employer activities at the Career Center?
10. Whom else in the region should I contact to learn about job opportunities for my students and to connect me to employers with these jobs?
11. In your work with your education partners, what postsecondary/training programs (community colleges, technical schools, apprentice programs, etc.) do you know about in this region that prepare people for these jobs? Have you heard about any specific programs that are especially effective at placing older youths/young adults in good first jobs? Do you have contacts in these postsecondary/training programs that you'd be willing to share with me?

Sample Phone Script for Outreach to Workforce Solutions; Labor Market or Industry Experts

Hello [name of contact, if you have one]. My name is _____, and I'm a [your title] for [name of your organization]. My job is to [brief description of your mission/work]. I typically work with students who are [describe your students' ages, educational backgrounds, etc.]. I'd like to learn more about our regional labor market to help steer them towards successful careers.

I've been looking at some data from the regional labor market. My goal is to identify occupations that provide advancement opportunities and are:

- In-demand (have job openings);
- Well-paying [insert a figure here that's at least 80% of your region's median wage]; and
- Accessible to recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree.

I've identified some industries and occupations that seem to meet these criteria. **I'm calling you because I'd like to speak with you to get some feedback on my list. I also want to make sure that I haven't missed any occupations and industries that you think may be good options for my students.**

Would you be willing to schedule a phone call with me to talk about my research? I'd really appreciate some guidance on this work. With your help, I'll have a better understanding of regional labor market opportunities for my students so I can advise them in making more informed career decisions. This kind of information can also help me to narrow the list of postsecondary training programs to which I refer them.

[Add any closing comments.]

Thank you very much!

Employer Interview Guide

To prepare for the interview:

- If the company has a website, learn about the company/organization.
- See which types of jobs are posted, if any.
- Look through job postings to find information about each job: job duties, qualifications, salary and benefits, full-time or part-time status, shift, etc.
- Notice which (if any) job titles appear more than once.
- Use the *Tracking Sheet to record what you learn from the website and interview*.

Sample Script

Hello! Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me. Before I begin with my main questions, I'd love to hear a little bit about your company/organization [ask about its mission, the services/products it offers, years in operation, number of employees, location(s), etc., but try to keep it to a few minutes only]. Thanks, that was very helpful background.

I thought it might also be helpful for me to tell you a little about my work, the research I'm doing, and what I'm hoping to learn from our discussion today. As I mentioned before, I work for [name of your organization] and our mission is to _____. My students/clients are [brief description of your students' educational backgrounds, ages, etc.]. As part of my work, I do my best to steer my students/clients towards postsecondary training programs that are a good match for their interests and skills and that will get them good jobs.

I appreciate any information and advice you can offer. [Mention that you plan to ask several questions about *each* job named. Proceed with your interview questions.]

Initial Questions

I've been looking at some data from our regional labor market. The data indicates that people with [training and credential] might be able to enter your industry as [occupation] and that that this [occupation] is projected to grow in our region by [number of openings per year]. TRACER data also indicates that the entry level wage for this occupation is around [insert a figure].

Does this fit with what you're experiencing in your own company? Does it align with what you see happening in the region?

(If so, then go ahead and start asking the questions below for the targeted jobs)

(If not, then ask):

What jobs in your company/organization do fit this criteria?

- In-demand (have job openings);
- Well-paying [insert a figure here that's at least 80% of your region's median wage]; and
- Accessible to people without much on the job experience with less than a bachelor's degree (e.g. certificate or associate's degree?

Once the employer answers, let him/her know that you'd like to ask several questions about each job (see questions 1 through 10 below).

Recommended Interview Questions About Each Job of Interest

Recruitment

1. What are the **requirements for applying** to this job, and what does your **screening process** involve (e.g., educational credentials, min. yrs. of work experience, industry certification, background check, drug testing, driver's license, immunizations)?
2. What **special qualities do you look for in an applicant** (e.g., communication skills, teamwork, problem solving skills, work experience, self-initiative, bilingual skills)?

Job Characteristics and Trends

1. What is the **typical education/training level** (e.g., certificate, associate's degree, and years of related work experience) **of** your **employees in this job**?
2. What is the **wage range for this job** (entry-level to experienced)? What **benefits does it offer** (e.g., health care, retirement plans, tuition remission) and when do they take effect? *[NOTE: If the employer is national, make sure to ask for regional figures.]*
3. What are some of the **things with which employees new to the job struggle**? How could they be better prepared for the job so they're more qualified when applying and more likely to do well once on the job?
4. What are the **three most important things you think an applicant should know about working in this job** (e.g., schedule may include night shifts, travel requirements, physical demands)?
5. What are the **names of the schools and/or other training organizations that typically supply your job candidates and employees**? For those schools/training programs that you think are most effective, what are they doing right? In your opinion, what can other schools/training programs do to better prepare their students for jobs in your company/organization? *[NOTE: If you are a counselor at a college program, and the employer does not identify your college, ask for feedback on ways in which your program(s) could better meet employer needs.]*

6. Is your company's **current hiring status for this job representative of what's happening in the industry these days, or is it unusual** in any way? What's the **outlook for this job in your company/organization over the next 1-2 years**? Do you think it will change in any meaningful way?

Career Advancement Opportunities

1. **Can/do employees in this job typically advance to higher positions** in your company/organization? If so, what are the titles of these higher positions? How long does it typically take to be promoted and what wage gains are associated with this?

Partnerships

1. If my **students** are interested in learning more about this and other jobs you offer and about your company/organization in general, what are **some ways they can be connected?** *[NOTE: For example, would you be willing to talk to my students/clients on the phone or in person by hosting a small group of us at your site? To visit our program to talk about your company/organization and what it takes to get a foot in the door—and ultimately succeed in these jobs? Does your company/organization provide internships (paid or unpaid), volunteer positions, or other career exploration opportunities?]*

Other

1. Would you say that your experience is similar to what you've observed/hear from other companies in your industry in our region?
2. Whom else should I contact to learn more about what my students need to get a foot in the door in this occupation/industry (e.g., other employers, industry associations, labor organizations)?
3. Is there any additional information not covered in this interview that you'd like to share?
4. Would you or someone else at your company/organization be willing to be my point of contact if I have questions in the future?

Sample Phone/Email Script for Outreach to Employers

Hello _____,

My name is _____, and [name of reference, if you have one] of [name of organization/company for which your reference works] kindly referred me to you. I am a [your title] for [name of your organization]. My job is to [brief description of your mission/work]. I typically work with students who are [brief description of your students' ages, educational backgrounds, etc.]. One of the challenges I face in my work is making sure that I'm steering my students towards postsecondary training programs that are a good match for their interests and skills and that will get them good jobs in the region.

I'm contacting you because I'd like to learn about jobs at [name of employer] that are in-demand and accessible to recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree (for example, an occupational certificate, an associate's degree, or apprenticeship). I've been doing some research on the [name of your city/region] labor market and it indicates that your company [or organization, if not a company] may have some jobs that meet these criteria, that pay at least [insert a figure here that's at least 80% of your region's median wage] per hour, and that offer advancement opportunities. [If you looked at job postings on the employer's Web site or elsewhere, mention in one sentence what you found/ noticed here (for example, job titles posted more than once, jobs that you think may meet the best bet criteria outlined in this training).]

Would you be willing to schedule some time for a phone call or brief meeting so I can learn more about jobs that may be a good fit for my students and what you're looking for in prospective employees? If you'd like, I'd be happy to email you my questions in advance.

[Add any closing comments.]

Thank you very much!

[Your Name]

[Your Phone Number]

Employer Interview Tracking Sheet

Interview Date:
Company/Organization Name:
Interviewee Name and Title:
Address:
Phone:
Email and Company Web Site:

****

Job title	
Education/training level of typical employee (e.g., vocational certificate, Associate's degree)	
Entry-level wage/salary and benefits	
Career advancement opportunities	
Three most important things applicants should know about the job	
Schools/training programs employer typically turns to	
Screening requirements	

Special qualities employer seeks in applicants	
Things new employees struggle with	
Hiring status and outlook for job in next 1-2 years—typical across the industry or exceptional?	
Internships and related opportunities for learning about the job	
Additional information	

Initial Evaluation of the Occupation

Select the box if you feel that the occupation meets the criteria of a "best bet."

- ☐ Local/regional employers will hire people with less than a bachelor's degree and limited to no industry-related work experience.
- ☐ There are job openings in the region.
- ☐ Entry-level jobs pay at or near the regional median wage (or have realistic opportunities to quickly approach that wage).
- ☐ Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs) or requires skills that can transfer to a different occupation with a career ladder.

- ☐ I think this occupation may be a best bet.

7. Building a More Complete Picture: Interviewing Postsecondary Training Providers

This chapter outlines the process of researching postsecondary education and training programs, using the Best Bet criteria to guide your information gathering.

Tools: 1) Best Bet Checklist (review)
2) Postsecondary Interview Guide
3) Postsecondary Interview Tracking Sheet
4) Apprenticeship and Civil Service Interview Guide
5) Sample Email to Institutional Research Department

Similar to the process of speaking with local employers and industry experts to validate regional labor market data with firsthand, expert, local perspectives, you'll want to do the same thing with the educational programs. You can only glean so much from a college website and catalogue of courses and programs of study, even when the websites are clear and easy to navigate - and they rarely are. But in order to feel confident that a program might be the right fit for students, you'll want to know more about the details, firsthand.

Review – what is a Best Bet postsecondary training program?

A program is a potential Best Bet if it:

- ✓ Prepares students for occupations that align with the occupations found to fit the Best Bet criteria for market information (remember: wages, openings, education, growth).
- ✓ Offers compressed or accelerated instruction that enables lower skilled adults needing academic remediation to maintain momentum to progress more quickly towards a credential.
- ✓ Provides schedule flexibility, and variety of services and supports to help lower skilled adults juggle school, work, and family responsibilities.
- ✓ Demonstrates strong student retention and certificate and degree completion rates.
- ✓ Demonstrates evidence of high job placement (ideally through collaborative networking with employers).

Why are compressed or accelerated programs preferable?

Forty percent of all community college students require at least one remedial (developmental) education class. Many students leave before attaining a certificate or degree because it simply takes too much time, money, and persistence to spend a year or more in courses that don't contribute to a credential. Students who do not enter a program of study within a year of enrollment are far less likely to ever enter a program or complete a credential. Fast-track program models that connect pre-college or developmental academic skill building to career-technical coursework can aid college success. For

examples of the types of programs that serve non traditional college students best, see pgs 12-13 of Ohio Stackable Certificates: Models for Success
http://www.communityresearchpartners.org/uploads/publications/Ohio_Stackable_Certificates_Models_for_Success.pdf

Why look for programs that offer extra supports for adults?

Research also shows that college persistence and completion rates are improved when attention is given to accommodating the complex life circumstances of adult learners. College that provide academic and non academic support on campus and in collaboration with community organizations are better equipped to help adults succeed. In addition flexible time frames for enrollment, registration and program participation, including evening and weekend classes and campus services also support adult learners' success.

Why look for Postsecondary training programs that are connected to employers?

- Curriculum is more likely aligned with the technical and professional skills employers seek
- Faculty with real-time and hands-on industry experience may be recruited from companies.
- Collaborating employers may provide clinicals, internships, and other work-based learning opportunities to program participants, which can lead to a more streamlined job placement process for program graduates and employers
- Data sharing agreements enable partners to track employment outcomes, the earning power of program graduates, and wage gains associated with increased training
- Programs can better demonstrate to students the connection between education and labor market payoffs
- Employers invested in the training program may offer financial support or provide college with state-of-the-art equipment and labs

Where Should You Start? Identifying Training Programs Aligned with Potential Best Bet Occupations in Your Region

Once you've reviewed the labor market information and identified some potential Best Bet occupations, you'll want to learn more about the postsecondary training programs in your area. Which educational institutions provide training for this occupation locally? First we'll look at how to search for postsecondary training programs in your area and then we'll discuss the type of information you want to gather, and how to get it, in order to determine whether the program (and thus the occupation) is a good fit and potential Best Bet for your students.

Use your own knowledge of your region, community, and adult learners (and, for example, access to cars, public transportation, geographic comfort zone) to determine what's a realistic geographic radius to search for educational programs. Is it 25 miles, 100 miles?

Texas Workforce Commission

There are a number of career and college navigation websites where you can search for a postsecondary education or WIA training program based on occupation, field of interest, and location. You'll find a variety of them through the TWC website here. http://www.texasworkforce.org/customers/jsemp/training-education.html and the Texas State Training Inventory http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/sti/select_report.asp

Many are concerned about proprietary (private for profit) technical and career training providers. TWC also provides a number of resources to help prospective students assess credibility and value when deciding among providers. http://www.texasworkforce.org/svcs/propschools/career-schools-colleges.html

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)

College Navigator http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ - This website allows you search college data using the name of the college or searching based on your state, zip code, programs of study/major, type of institution (public, private, 2 or 4 year), and type of credential (certificate, associates, etc.).

Contacting Community Colleges

Who should you speak to at a Community College?

Again, use your community map and network contacts. Ideally, you'll speak to more than one person representing the specific program and the overall college. The Program Coordinator or Department Chair may be someone who is close enough to the classroom to describe the training but also has a perspective on what the entire college has to offer and is also connected to the industry and companies in the area. In some cases the program faculty will know more about the job placement record (and may be assisting students personally with placement). In other cases, Career Services may be tracking placements:

- Program Coordinator of the targeted occupation (may also be faculty in the department)
- Faculty in the targeted program (if not also the Program Coordinator)
- Department heads and/or deans
- Career Services
- Internship/Co-op Placement
- Institutional Research Department (for data on demographics and degree completion for entire college).

Prepare for Interviewing Postsecondary Administrators, Coordinators, Faculty

Use the Internet to Gather Postsecondary Training Information

You can find information such as, programs of study, prerequisites, cost of tuition, and overall college demographics and degree completions from a variety of websites. This way, you can use the interview time to gain a firsthand perspective on the program.

Review the Best Bet Checklist to ensure that your interview questions address the Best Bet criteria. Focus your interview question on obtaining a level of detail about pedagogy, student supports, industry engagement, type of students who do well, employment prospects, etc. that you can't find on the website.

Although the focus of the Best Bet criteria is primarily at the program level, it is also helpful to know about the college's overall performance.

Individual College Websites

- Each college organizes its website differently, to better or worse effect. Use the college website to help you identify the specific program, departments and contacts.
- Spend some time reading about the particular programs aligned with the targeted occupations you're researching and also about the overall college.
- You may have to search a little to find the overall college's completion and graduation rates of students seeking certificates or degrees (public posting required by the 1990 Student Right to Know Act). Look for it in the information geared towards "Prospective" or "Future" students, or under Admissions or Institutional Research (IR). If you can't find it on the website, contact Admissions or IR.
- **Gainful Employment Disclosures** requires institutions to disclose to prospective students specific information on training outcomes, for each of their eligible non degree and certificate programs funded under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (providing training leading to gainful employment). Try searching "gainful employment disclosure" and the name of the college to find:
    - the Standard Occupational Code (SOC) of the occupation;
    - the on-time graduation rate for students completing the program;
    - tuition and fees;
    - typical costs for books and supplies;
    - job placement rate for students completing the program;
    - median loan debt incurred by students who completed the program .

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/apps/resumes/
Online Resumes for Public and Private Institutions allows you search by institution type and name of school to view a report on overall college enrollments, degrees completed, student demographics.

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)

College Navigator http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ - This website allows you to search college data using the name of the college or to search based on your state, zip code, programs of study/major and type of credential (certificate, associates, etc.). You'll find information about student demographics (admissions); estimated cost of attendance (tuition, fees), amount and types of financial aid used, retention and graduation rates in aggregate (not program specific).

Contacting Other Types of Training Providers

Apprenticeships

If your regional labor market data indicates that apprenticing trades, such as electricians or carpenters, are potential Best Bets, then you'll want to learn more about apprenticeship training for those occupations. Start by determining whether the training involves an apprenticeship by looking at the list of Officially Recognized Apprenticeable Occupations from the Texas Workforce Commission http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/apprentice/apprenticeship-program-overview.html.

Then contact the state apprenticeship office to ask information and contacts for local apprenticeship programs and unions. Contact the training directors in the local trade union associated with the occupation.

Apprenticeships vary by state and region: There are generally annual requirements for the number of on-the-job training hours (and often classroom hours) in which apprentices work; The duration of apprenticeships vary according to trade—they're generally between one and five years; The type of status attained by an apprentice at the conclusion of his or her program also varies by trade and industry; generally the professional designation of journeyperson, mechanic, or mentor is achieved.

Labor Unions

Unions can provide information on training and apprenticeship programs. They can also provide firsthand information about the labor market projections, entry level training requirements and advancement potential of the targeted industries (if their union members include people in these occupations).

Civil Service

A number of occupations in the fields of law enforcement, criminal justice, corrections, public safety, firefighting, that require prospective employees to pass a civil service exam. Many will also require a physical fitness test as part of their selection criteria. If your regional labor market data indicates that civil service jobs appear to be potential Best Bets, then contact your city's human resources department or the training department of the state Department of Corrections or Office of Public Safety for information and referrals to the appropriate person who can give you information about the training and exam requirements.

Before the Interview

Email interview questions in advance. There may be questions about the overall college that the Program Coordinator or faculty can't answer. They'll need advance time to contact Institutional Research and Admissions departments, for example to have the information ready for you.

After the Interview

- Review and organize your interview notes immediately after each interview.
- Send a thank you email or note to each interviewee.

Postsecondary Education Interview Guide

Thank you so much for speaking with me. I appreciate your willingness to talk with me about your program. Before I begin with my questions, I thought it might help to provide you with some information about my organization, the research I am doing here at [name of postsecondary institution] and what I am hoping to learn from our meeting today.

I am from [name of your organization]. Our mission is to [describe organizational mission and structure]. We have had a strong record of success in [e.g., preparing students to earn their GED/high school diploma, job placement, postsecondary placement, etc. Feel free to brag about your organization and your successes!].

We have recently begun an initiative to support our students as they progress beyond a GED/high school diploma and pursue additional postsecondary opportunities. A majority of our graduates are low-income, first-generation college students, and they require a great deal of support to successfully complete a postsecondary program.

The challenge that we are faced with as counselors is identifying which postsecondary programs will be the right fit for our graduates. Since our students face so many challenges, we know we must be very thoughtful in how we match them to postsecondary programs. We also know that there is great variation in the opportunities available to students with different Associate's degrees or certificates. Different programs will open different doors for our students and provide different levels of support to help them earn a degree.

I am meeting with as many program coordinators and community college staff as possible to learn about these programs so that I may best counsel my students to the right fit for their interests and needs. I appreciate any information and advice you can offer.

Program Basics

1. Can you describe your program for me? What will students know and be able to do at the end of the program (e.g., technical skills, content knowledge, soft skills)?
2. Can you describe the style of instruction used in the program? How many classes involve hands-on learning? Are many of the courses lecture-based? Online? What kinds of assessment do instructors generally use (e.g., tests, papers, lab reports, presentations)?

Entering and Succeeding in the Program

1. How many students enroll in the program each cycle? *[If the program uses a cohort model, where all students enrolled are in the same courses as a cohort, find out the size of the cohort. If they do not have cohorts, find out how many students are enrolled in the program at a given time.]*
2. Is there a waitlist for the program (or for the required courses within the program)?
3. How do students qualify for the program (e.g., minimum ACCUPLACER/COMPASS scores, TEAS test scores, prerequisite courses and/or work experience)?
4. For students to be successful in this program, what academic, technical, or social knowledge or skills must they possess when coming into the program? Are there other characteristics that tend to determine students' success? *[If applicable, what math skills and content knowledge must the students know well? What other academic expectations does the program expect (e.g., research ability, familiarity with multiple-choice tests, skill with memorization, and certain writing proficiency)?]*
5. What kind of support does your program and/or department provide to help students succeed in the program—particularly for students with lower skills and challenging life circumstances?

Alignment with Employer Requirements

1. In what ways does your program help students prepare for industry certifications and licensures?
2. Does your program offer internships or related opportunities for learning about the job?
3. What job does this program prepare students for? Are there other jobs accessible to people with this credential? What jobs do you expect students to get as a result of earning this certificate/Associate's degree? What is the starting wage for graduates?
4. What opportunities are there to advance from the entry-level job, and what steps must students take to advance in this career?

Program Outcomes

1. What credentials do most students receive at the end of the program (certificate, associate's degree, etc.)?
2. What is your retention rate (semester to semester and/or year to year)? What percentage of students (first-time, or transfer) who start the program complete with a certificate or Associate's degree? *[If the cohort starts in the fall, how many return for the spring semester? How many complete the program in one year? How many complete the program in eighteen months for a 1-year program, or in three years for 2-year program?]*
3. Is it easy for students to transfer to a 4-year college from your program?
4. How long does it typically take to complete the program? For those who don't complete, what are the most common reasons why? What do students find most difficult—what trips them up?
5. What employers or companies have hired program graduates in the past? How many graduates have they hired? Is there someone I can contact at that company to talk about the employer's experience with program graduates?
6. Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors?

Sample Phone/Email Script for Outreach to Postsecondary Program Coordinators

My name is _____, and I am a [your title] for [name of your organization]. My job is to [brief description of your mission/work]. I typically work with students who are [describe your students' ages, educational backgrounds, etc.]. Many of them are interested in exploring careers in [insert industry, such as business and health care].

I am hoping that I can schedule a meeting or phone call with you to talk about [name of program]. I have been doing some research in the labor market in [your region], and people continue to mention [name of industry/occupation] as a growing need in the area. I would love to speak with you to learn more about your program and how it may help my students enter that field.

I think this program could be a great connection for my students, and I would love to learn more.

Thanks so much!

[Your Name]

[Your Phone Number]

Postsecondary Training Provider Interview Tracking Sheet

Interview Date:

Postsecondary Institution/Organization and Program Name:

Interviewee Name and Title:

Interviewee Email and Phone Number:

****

Program description and intended outcomes for students (e.g., technical, professional, soft skills students will learn)	
Number of students enrolled per cycle; waitlist for the program or its required courses	
Entry qualifications	
Student Success Factors	
Style of instruction	
Student supports	

Retention/completion rate	
Typical length of time to complete the program – and most common reasons why students do not complete	
Jobs the program prepares students for, along with starting wage and opportunities for advancement	
Companies/employers that have hired program graduates and contact information	
Additional information	

Initial Evaluation of the Postsecondary Program

Select the box if you feel that the program meets the criteria of a "best bet."

- ☐ This program is grounded in a growing sector of the economy. It is designed to meet industry needs and has a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry.
- ☐ This program is accessible to many of the students I work with (e.g., minimal waitlist, students meet the eligibility requirements and can handle the academic rigor, etc.).
- ☐ This program provides the level of support that many of the students I work with need, and there is evidence that students graduate.

- ☐ I think this program may be a best bet.

Apprenticeship and Civil Service Interview Guide

To prepare for the interview:

- If the company has a website, learn about the company/organization.
- See which types of jobs are posted, if any.
- Look through job postings to find information about each job: job duties, qualifications, salary and benefits, full-time or part-time status, shift, etc.
- Notice which (if any) job titles appear more than once.
- Use the *Tracking Sheet to record what you learn from the website and interview*.

1. Are you accepting new applicants? Do you expect this to change in any meaningful way in the coming months or years?
2. I'd like to get a better sense about the application process. Are there minimum requirements or a screening process (e.g., age, education, criminal background, drug testing, and driver's license)?
3. Can you walk me through what the application process looks like?
4. How many prospective applicants typically apply for any given position? What qualifications does the ideal candidate have (e.g., academics, work experience, passion for the job, teamwork skills)?
5. How diverse are applicants (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity)? Has this changed in recent years, or do you see it changing in the coming years?

Apprenticeships

1. How long is the apprenticeship/training program?
2. Typically, what percentage of people who begin your apprenticeship/training program persist? What does it take to succeed? What are the biggest challenges?
3. What's the starting salary? Does it increase as apprentices/trainees progress? At what point, if any, do they begin to get health benefits?
4. Would you be willing to talk to students about the job—what it's like, what kind of training they can expect, what it takes to succeed, etc.? Would you be willing to come to our site, and/or could a group of students go to you?
5. Is there anything else you think would be important to know about the industry or about becoming an apprentice?

Civil Service Jobs

1. At what point in the training do candidates take the civil service exam? What kind of support, if any, is offered to prospective candidates who take it?
2. How often is the civil service exam offered? Is there anything counselors can do to help students interested in becoming police officers, fire fighters, or corrections officers in an off-cycle?

Sample Phone/Email Script for Outreach to Apprencieship Training Directors Or Training Division of Civil Service Fields

Hello,

I'm hoping to learn a little more about [apprenticeships/training] for [name the trade]. My name is _____, and I am a [your title] for [name of your organization]. My job is to [brief description of your mission/work]. I typically work with students who are [describe your students' ages, educational backgrounds, etc.]. A number of my students are interested in exploring careers in [apprenticing trades/civil service fields such as yours].

I think this program could be a great connection for my students, and I would love to learn more. I am hoping that I can schedule some time for a brief meeting or phone call to learn more about what it takes to succeed in your profession—and what you're looking for in prospective apprentices.

Thanks so much!

[Your Name]

[Your Phone Number]

Sample Email to Institutional Research

Dear _____,

My name is _____, and I work at [your organization]. [Your institutional contact or guide] suggested I get in touch with you.

At [your organization], I advise and counsel students interested in going to college and to help support them as they earn a certificate or Associate's degree. I have been working with [your institutional contact] to research the Associate's degree and certificate programs at [name of postsecondary institution] to help identify which programs will be the best fits for my at-risk students. I have spoken with a number of program coordinators, and they have given me some very useful information on their programs and how they may benefit and challenge my students. However, I do not have much concrete data on student retention in these programs, and it is hard to truly understand the student experience without this kind of data.

My understanding is that, through the reporting you do for Perkins loans, your institution may have access to some data on student retention and program completion within specific programs. While I understand this data has limitations, it would be incredibly helpful to me and my students to have some sense of the retention and completion data for a few programs: [list programs here].

In particular, I'm looking for any of the following data points:

1. Program enrollment: How many people enroll in a given Associate's or certificate program?
2. Fall-to-spring retention: Of those that enroll in a certificate program in the fall, how many return in the spring?
3. Fall-to-fall retention: Of those that enroll in a certificate or Associate's degree program, how many return the following fall?
4. Program completion: Of those that enroll in a certificate or Associate's program, how many complete the degree in 1.5 times the length of the program (i.e. a certificate in 1.5 years an Associate's degree in 3 years)?
5. Also, any other data that you think could help me understand a program and how my low-income and first-generation college students may fare in it.

Again, any help you could provide would be greatly appreciated. If it would be helpful, I'm more than happy to connect over the phone to give you some more context to the work I do and why I've reached out to you and some of the program coordinators on your campus.

Many thanks. I look forward to hearing from you.

[Your Name]

Sample Interview Tracking Sheet—Welding

Interview Date: 6/19/2013
Postsecondary Institution/Organization and Program Name: Alamo Colleges Central Texas Technology Center
Interviewee Name and Title: John Lange, Welding Instructor
Interviewee Email and Phone Number: 830-660-7579; langemaryandjohn@yahoo.com

****

Program description and intended outcomes for students (e.g., technical, professional, soft skills students will learn)	Welding program with a purpose of making students employable as welders with a decent job, even at entry level. They need to get the skills they need and also get counseling from the teacher on soft skills about how they need to act on the job. Appearance, attitude, being on time, not missing work are very important.
Number of students enrolled per cycle; waitlist for the program or its required courses	Currently there is no wait list but it is expected that enrollment will increase and may create waitlists. Currently the center is looking to hire an instructor who could teach mornings and afternoons. The program now meets from 5pm – 10 pm Monday – Thursday. Pipe welding is in the greatest demand – so Intro, Arc welding, and then Pipe welding. That requires them to move but they pay is very good and there is a great demand. Some skills transfer to plumbing.
Entry qualifications	Students must be 17 years old. They don't need to have a GED or H.S. diploma. They need to speak some English (high beginner minimum) and they need to read and write at least a 7th grade level in English. However, no test is given to test these levels. They also math skills at about Read a ruler, add, subtract, multiply and divide whole numbers, integers and fractions. If they are weak, they are paired with other students or work one on one with the instructor.
Keys to success	Come in no knowledge but can leave with good welding skills. They become employable. To do well in the class, students need to be interested and invested in the class. Need to be on time and attend regularly. When in class, they must follow instructions and follow procedures carefully, especially with clean-up at the end of class. This is what will make them employable. They need to be paying attention to the instructor. It boils down somewhat to natural ability, so if a student does not have some ability with hand eye coordination and ability to be stable when welding.
Style of instruction	First, the instructor addresses safety procedures for the whole class in a lecture and then uses demonstration. The instructor works one on one with the student, helping him/her with the welding and then letting go so the student can complete the weld. The class is extremely hands-on after the basic instruction on safety is completed. They also learn by watching the instructor and each other. Teacher will work students to make up missed class time (only 4 classes are allowed).
Student supports	Secretary assist them with registration and general information. The student support specialist is available for students if they have.

Retention/completion rate	They are tracked by grades (pass or fail). Jenny Moya at Palo Alto keeps track of retention/completion.
Typical length of time to complete the program – and most common reasons why students do not complete	About 10 – 11 weeks; 8 hours per week, but they can double up and go 16 hours except for Intro. Sometimes the travel time and work schedules are too much of a barrier. Sometimes they say their car breaks down; major illness of the student or a family member.
Jobs the program prepares students for, along with starting wage and opportunities for advancement	Basic composition welding at the entry level; those who continue with advanced coursed can go into XYZ welding. Taking all of the courses helps them pass the state certification. Most are not interested in further education; they just want to get jobs. Career pathway for welding is pipefitting!
Companies/employers that have hired program graduates and contact information	Senior Flexonics Pathways; Aerotek temp agency; Tank Partners; Outfitters; Semi remodeling (does not know the name of the company) CMC Steel; San Antonio Wastewater send employees to get trained (they are already employed)
Additional information	Level 1 Certificate- Intro Level 2 Certificates – Advanced courses (each course gets a Level 2 Certificate) They can convert classes into credit coursework if they enter the credit side of the college and work towards a degree. Most need Intro and at least one advanced class to pass the state class. Those who come in with welding courses from high school can pass a state test more easily. Most of the time, companies give the candidates a welding test before hiring. It is important for candidates to know what kind of tests they will need to do before they go in.

Initial Evaluation of the Postsecondary Program

Select the box if you feel that the Select the box if you feel that the program meets the criteria of a "best bet."

- ☐ This program is grounded in a growing sector of the economy. It is designed to meet industry needs and has a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry.
- ☐ This program is accessible to many of the students I work with (e.g., minimal waitlist, students meet the eligibility requirements and can handle the academic rigor, etc.).
- ☐ This program provides the level of support that many of the students I work with need, and there is evidence that students graduate.

- ☐ I think this program may be a best bet.

8. Tying it all Together

This chapter revisits the Best Bet criteria, and presents examples of how to pull all the research together into a written brochure, flyer, or Best Bet Profile.

Tools: 1) Best Bet Checklist (review)
2) Sample Best Bet Checklist for LVN
3) Sample Score Card for HVAC
4) Apartment Maintenance Profile
5) Commercial Drivers' License Profile
6) Welding Profile

Gather your team and all of your notes from your interviews and internet research. Together, revisit the Best Bet criteria and checklist. For an alternative format to the Best Bet Checklist, see the Sample Score Card for HVAC.

Consider these questions:

- In what ways does the occupation meet or come close meeting the Best Bet criterion?
- In what ways doesn't the occupation meet or come close to meeting the Best Bet criteria?
- For which type/group of students is this occupation best suited?
    - Why?
    - What are the advantages?
- For which type/group of students is this occupation not well suited?
    - Why?
    - What are the disadvantages or barriers?

You don't have to disregard those occupations that don't meet all the criteria. Depending on the economy of your region, it may be the case that very few or none of the occupations meet much of the criteria at all.

What's most important is that you use what you've learned to ensure that students have comprehensive and transparent information about occupations available to them and assistance and tools for making well informed decisions about how they invest their time and money in order to make realistic and attainable personal, financial, and career goals.

Creating a Best Bet Profile

To use the occupational information you've gathered as a tool for instruction, advising, student recruitment, career planning and decision making, you'll need to put it in a format that is user-friendly for staff and students. In Counseling to Careers terminology this is referred to as a *Best Bet Profile.*

Some examples are featured in the Toolkit to give you ideas of different approaches and formats. Ultimately, the content and format of your team's profile will be determined by the resources, time, and design choices of your team. Your profile doesn't have to be elaborate or professionally designed, but your team has put a lot of work and time into the research so don't let all of that good work go to waste by leaving the information sitting in your notebooks at the end.

<u>Key Features of a Profile:</u>

Basic Flyer

- Potential employment opportunities in region (LMI, types of companies)
- Training required and available in the region
- Wages – starting wage and opportunities for advancement (experienced wages)

Detailed Brochure

- Potential employment opportunities in region (LMI, types of companies)
- Training required and available in the region
- Wages – starting wage and opportunities for advancement (experienced wages)
- Personalized occupation description (photo, "what I do")
- Occupational profile – skills, aptitudes, interests
- Training program requirements – courses, credits, pre-requisites, assessment, criminal record prohibitions.
- Career pathway map and opportunities for advancement

Now we'll discuss how managers, counselors and advisors can use the outcomes of the CTC process in ongoing program design and delivery.

Sample Best Bet Checklist for Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)
Seguin ISD Counseling to Careers Pilot Team

IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, YOU EVALUATE A SERIES OF "BEST BET" CRITERIA UNDER FOUR KEY QUESTIONS:

5) Is this training program designed to meet industry needs? Does it have a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry?
6) Is this training program accessible to your students (or at least a subset of them)?
7) Are students likely to succeed in this training program? Does it have a track record of supporting and graduating students like yours?
8) Is the occupation associated with this training program a best bet?

STEP 1:

If you researched . . .

. . . **a postsecondary training program** (through postsecondary interviews), please write its name *and* location here:

St. Phillips College Central Texas Technology Center campus in New Braunfels, TX

Next, complete the blue sections under questions 1, 2, and 3. To fill out the last section, see instructions in the green box below.

. . . **an associated occupation** (through employer interviews), write the occupation title, industry, *and* employer name(s) and location(s) you discussed here:

Kirkwood Manor, Eden Hill Communities, Christus Santa Rosa hospital, Hope Hospice, Dabas Cancer Institute

Next, complete the green sections (2 pages) under question 4. Finally, proceed to Step 2 below.

STEP 2:

Once you've completed all four sections (blue and green), please return to this cover page. Use your answers to the four key questions at the top of this page to categorize the training program *and* its associated occupation as (please select one):

☐ **A Best Bet:** ▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** ▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria, but are not currently accessible to my students.	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** ▪ This training program and/or its associated occupation do(es) not satisfy one or more key aspects of the best bet criteria.
Student Match: For which students is this training program/occupation a best bet?	**Student Match:** For which students could this training program/occupation be a best bet? What supports or preparation could you and/or your organization provide to make this a best bet? **Students who are very strong, placing high on all GED tests. They must also be extremely motivated and have good study habits. Students who have high school CNA or other healthcare related courses**	Which of the best bet criteria does this training program/occupation *NOT* satisfy?

	(anatomy/physiology) would do better.	

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Compressed program that leads to a credential -- Training program is no longer than two years and results in a credential such as an occupational certificate, associate's degree, etc. **Length of Training (Please check off one):** ☐ <6 months ☐ **6 mos. - 1 year: However it** is strongly recommended that students complete Anatomy & Physiology before beginning program. If students do this, it adds another semester. ☐ >1 year - 2 years ☐ >2 years - 3 years ☐ >3 years **Write Total # of Courses: 20 courses for a total of 47 credit hours.** **Credential Earned (Please check off one):** ☐ **Certificate** ☐ Associate's Degree	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs (including hard and soft skills) Key Indicators include: • Program curriculum has been evaluated by industry representatives and is revised on an ongoing basis to reflect industry needs	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program prepares students to achieve industry certifications and licensure (and demonstrates at least a 50% passing rate for these exams)	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Program offers hands-on experience that prepares students for work Key Indicators include: • Courses use a hands-on approach that mimics (as much as possible) the conditions **Clinicals are required**	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum for students **Students take clinicals at health care facilities off main campus**	☐ YES ✓ **NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

d. Program coordinator can name more than one company/organization that has recently hired program graduates and the typical starting wages in those jobs **Students have been hired in nursing homes and other health care facilities in the area.**	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T
e. At least 75% of program graduates are able to gain jobs in the industry (average over the last 3 years to account for the recession) **Jobs are very plentiful in the local program area.**	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T

f. Program provides job placement services/assistance to students	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
If applicable **g. The program serves as a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree** Indicators include: • The program has an articulation agreement with a 4-year college **YES** • The program can demonstrate that 30% or more of its students transfer to a 4-year college **NO; supervisor could not quantify the percentage of students who move on but said that "many" do.**	✓ **YES** ✓ **NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):

.

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☐ **A Best Bet:** • Program is highly aligned with industry needs and has evidence of high job placement (or transfer to 4-year college).	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Program is fairly aligned with industry needs and may or may not have evidence of job placement (or transfer to 4-year college), and I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Program does not appear to be aligned with industry needs and does not result in sufficient job placement (or transfer to a 4-year college).

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO YOUR STUDENTS (OR AT LEAST A SUBSET OF THEM)?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Program location (including placements for internships and practicums) is accessible to your students (i.e., not too far from home, accessible by public transportation, car, etc.)	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program either does not have a waitlist or its waitlist is no longer than 1 year	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

h. Program cost:

Component	Dollar Amount	Comments
Tuition	**$6,300**	**$2,100 per semester**
Fees	**$200**	
Typical cost of books per semester	**Up to $500**	
Typical cost of supplies per semester	**Up to $500 total across semesters**	**Uniform, shoes, stethoscope, bandage scissors, pen light, and other "nursing tools" must be purchased.**
Median loan debt incurred by students who complete the program	**Unknown**	

c. Program is offered part time and/or includes weekend, evening, summer, or online courses	☐ YES ✓ **NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. How rigorous is the academic program (i.e., what level of skill does the program require for entry, persistence, and completion)? Low Rigor • Program is accessible to students enrolled in developmental education • May offer a part-time study option Medium Rigor • **Testing at college-level skills and/or completed all developmental courses** • **1-2 lab science/upper-level math courses** • May offer a part-time study option High Rigor • 3 or more lab science/upper-level math courses • Requires college-level prerequisites in math, science, or English • **Requires full-time study**	☐ Low Rigor ☐ **Medium Rigor** ☐ **High Rigor**
e. My students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy the program prerequisites and succeed in the training program **Some of my students do (please specify which ones):** **ONLY A FEW VERY BRIGHT, MOTIVATED STUDENTS WITH HIGH GED SCORES**	☐ YES, all/most of my students do ✓ **Yes** ☐ No, but with targeted prep, they could ☐ NO
f. A criminal record check is required to enter the program	☐ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
g. Immunizations are required to enter the program	☐ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):			
BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?			
☐ **Very Accessible:** • Program is accessible to all/most of my students.	✓ **Somewhat Accessible:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students (specify which subset below): The cost of this program is not feasible for students unless they are able to get financial aid through FASFA. o Some courses will be difficult for the majority of GED students. o Most GED students will need DE math and some will need reading and/or writing which will add to the cost and time. o The anatomy and physiology courses that are	☐ **Could Be Accessible with Additional Supports:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Accessible:** • Program is inaccessible to the majority of my students.

ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Evidence of strong student support Indicators include: • Program demonstrates a commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles • Program coordinator demonstrates a commitment to supporting "nontraditional" students • Program coordinator and/or program faculty develop(s) close relationships with students • Program is known as a "hit" among students **Program does demonstrate a commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles.**	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Evidence of strong student persistence Key Indicators include: • Program has a minimum retention rate of 75% from one semester to the next **Program retention is only 40% for the current academic year. This is due to academic difficulties and personal student issues/barriers.**	☐ YES ✓ **NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program coordinator can demonstrate a high rate of program completion; over 65% for a certificate program, over 55% for an associate's degree program	☐ YES ✓ **NO** ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?	

☐ **Very Supportive and a Proven Success:**	☐ **Somewhat Supportive and Successful:**	☐ **Could Be Successful with Additional Supports:**	☐ **Not Supportive Enough and/or Does Not Demonstrate a High Rate of Retention and/or Completion:**
• Program offers a great deal of support to help students like mine, and it demonstrates a high rate of program retention and completion.	• Program is somewhat supportive and demonstrates success in retaining and completing students like mine (please specify which subset of students would be best served by the program):	• While the program may not formally support students like mine, my students could complete the program if my organization can provide the following preparation and support: **Rigorous college prep as well as follow-up with students while they are in the actual program. Current adult ed funding policy and amount makes this impossible. THECB funding of a bridge program WITH follow-up might make it a possibility.**	• Program is not supportive enough to serve my students and does not demonstrate a high rate of program retention or completion.

IS THE OCCUPATION (ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TRAINING PROGRAM) A BEST BET?

(Note: The program may prepare/train students for more than one occupation, but the section below covers one occupation only. To help analyze whether an additional occupation tied to the training program is a best bet, it is recommended that you make copies of this page and the following page, fill them both out, and then staple them to the back of this document.)

Please complete this section if you researched an occupation (through employer interviews). Labor market information (from your Regional Labor Market Profile, your state LMI office, and/or www.careeronestop.org) can be helpful in answering sections a, c, and e below, but employer interviews should be your primary source for completing *all* of the sections below.

OCCUPATION CHARACTERISTICS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g., occupational certificate, associate's degree) to access an entry-level job	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Local/regional employers will hire new/ recent program graduates with limited to no industry-related work experience **If not, please write how much work experience employers say they require/prefer here:**	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Occupation's regional median wage pays *close to the region's median wage (at minimum)*	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Occupation has job openings in the city/town/region (Labor market data is helpful for a statewide view, but employer interviews are needed to verify city/ town/regional openings.)	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. Occupation is projected to grow in the state/region in coming years and/or is within a growing industry sector (Percent change between a base year and projected year is positive.)	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
f. Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs) or requires skills that can transfer to a different occupation with advancement potential	✓ **YES** ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS OCCUPATION?	

☐ **A Best Bet:**	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:**	☐ **Not a Best Bet:**
• Occupation is in demand in the region, accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and offers competitive wages and career advancement opportunities.	• Occupation may or may not be in demand in the region, it may or may not be accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and it may or may not offer competitive wages and career advancement opportunities. I have the following reservations:	• Occupation does not appear to be accessible to my students and/or does not lead to career advancement opportunities—at least at this time.

Additional Things to Consider When Evaluating an Occupation

(space for comments within each category)

Is the occupation a good fit for any of your students' career interests and personal strengths?

☐ **YES**

Write the occupation's interest code here: _____

Is a criminal record check, credit check, or drug test typically required as part of the job application process?

If yes to any, please circle which above. BOTH

Can local/regional employers identify at least one local/regional training program from which they recruit and/or hire students?

☐ YES, they identified the following training program(s):

St Phillip's College (CTTC) program and Victoria College (in Gonzales, TX)

Work schedule (full time, part time, night and/or weekend shifts)

They are sometimes required to lift patients and deal with situations that many people would find stressful. They do shift work, and my be asked to work nights as well. Their shifts often change, and they may be asked to work double shifts. They do not often work in local area hospitals, which are now requiring R.N.'s.

Work environment/setting (e.g., outdoors, indoors, small business, large corporation/organization, loud, quiet, flexibility to work from home)

LVN's normally work in a nursing home, clinic, doctor's office, or rehabilitation facility.

Benefits typically offered (e.g., health insurance, tuition remission, retirement plans, bonuses)

Health insurance, sick days, holiday pay, and vacation days are typical.

Is a driver's license typically required to do this work (and does one need a car)?

No, but they need to have someone with a car who can get them to and from work reliably.

Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors? (Please check off one):

✓ **YES, the skills used in this occupation are transferable to the following other occupations and/or industry sectors: Registered nurse, nurse specialty; supervisory/management positions in healthcare.**

Central Texas HVAC Score Card

	Austin Community College	Central Texas AC and Refrigeration School	Skillpoint Alliance Gateway Program	Victoria College
Cost/Tuition	$3,500 (includes tools)	$2,260 (TWC Certified Training provider)	Free	$2,075 (Add $465 if student wants to buy textbooks)
Eligibility and Pre-requisites	College Placement Exam (Compass)	High school diploma or GED	Special Pops. (Ex-Offender, Veteran, Jurisdiction), 9th grade reading level (GAIN)	No pre-requisites, High School or GED diploma Expected
Course Length	Two Years or longer	2 .5 weeks full time, 12 weeks part time (nights or weekends) 130 hours	8 weeks, M-F, 8:30 to 4:30	Two years or Longer
Type of Instruction	Lecture and Hands On, must complete college algebra, English Composition, Speech Communication, NCCER	Lecture and Hand On. "Every day students must explain what they learned the day before"	Lecture and Hands On, NCCER	Lecture and Hands On, NCCER
Training Outcome	AA Degree	HVAC Certification	One Year Apprenticeship Certificate, NCCER Credential Level One	Certificate of Completion and NCCER Card
Employment Outlook	Local Employer Validated Job Placement Likely	2013 TWC Annual Report, 79.22% Employment Rate 61-77 employed in field within year	Local Employer Validated Graduates employed within 45 days, Placement services.	Not Known. Employer Involvement Weak

Information about Licensing, Criminal Background Check, and Drug Screening

Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installer is a Licensed Profession in Texas. A criminal background check is a required component of the licensing process. Training Providers indicate that a criminal background is not necessarily a "deal breaker". Director of ACC program noted that Licensing has an appeal process and that candidates can be successful through an honest and sincere "young and dumb defense". Skillpoint Alliance helps clients with criminal backgrounds prepare by completing a questionnaire for each offense and by providing letters of recommendation. People can work as helpers without a license and reapply for license.

Most employers in the field will perform both criminal background checks and drug screenings at time of hire. One employer indicated that a criminal background does not always disqualify one from working at his company. He referenced a belief in second chances. Another employer reported that his company (a residential and commercial HVAC firm) is regulated by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation which requires employees to have no misdemeanors for the last ten years and no felonies for the last twenty years. He stated if a customer complaint or other event triggered an investigation by Department of Licensing and Regulation and the employee was found to have a record for drug use, the consequences are particularly severe. He never hires people with a criminal background "even though the State licenses people with criminal backgrounds".

Employers in the "in home" construction industry (as opposed to new construction) will definitely not hire a person whose criminal background involves a crime that inflicted bodily harm.

Employment and Career Outlook

Our research indicates that the job market for people who complete HVAC training is and will continue to be healthy in Central Texas, statewide, and nationally. A well trained HVAC technician especially with a few years of experience can make a good living anywhere in the country, probably the world. Furthermore, there is a far greater variety of occupations than we thought. In addition to installation and repair of AC, heating, and refrigeration units in residences and commercial establishments, HVAC training can prepare individuals for work in large industrial and manufacturing companies that have large scale heating, cooling, and ventilation operations that are essential to their production processes. Individuals can also go into sales, work in parts stores and distribution centers, apartment and building maintenance and repair, etc. The skills and knowledge gained through training and work experience have a high value in diverse employment contexts.

Wages and Salaries: According to our interviews with training providers and employers, the entry level wage for a certified HVAC technician in the greater Austin area is anywhere from $10 to $16. [2] Experience counts for a great deal in the sector and workers in the area can earn easily as much as $18 to $20 within the first year. The owner of a very small heating and AC business in San Marcos stated that he paid one of his technicians nearly $30 per hour. Employers in the sector value troubleshooting skills, the ability to keep proper inventory on trucks, and interpersonal skills. Persons who demonstrate those skills are highly valued. Interviewees stated that experienced Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers can make up to $80,000. Advancement is quicker in larger commercial and industrial settings that typically hire only experienced technicians. One training provider stated that graduates of its two year Associates degree program averaged $42,000 in their first year of employment. There are a host of EPA and OSHA licenses and certifications that individuals can earn to increase their value as well.

[2] We interviewed the owner of a traditional "retail" heating and air conditioning company in San Marcos with about 8 employees and the owner of a Green Building company that has three work crews and less than 20 employees in Austin.

Apartment Building Maintenance Technician

What Do I Do?

- Maintain and repair machines, mechanical equipment, and buildings
- Troubleshoot and fix faulty electrical switches
- Inspect and diagnose problems and figure out the best way to correct them
- Do routine preventive maintenance
- Assemble and set up machinery or equipment
- Do general cleaning and upkeep of buildings and properties
- Order supplies from catalogs and storerooms
- Meet with clients to estimate repairs and costs
- Keep detailed records of my work

What Makes This A Hot Job?

Short-term training:

- ACC's CBFM 1000 Building Maintenance Skills Program is less than 6 months long.
- Program graduates receive a Certification for Apartment Maintenance Technicians, accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), good for an entry-level job in Apartment Maintenance.

Solid Growth

- In Central Texas, this job is expected to grow 19% from 2012-2022.
- There are currently 176 job opening in Central Texas.

Good Pay

- Entry Level Wage: $21,500 annually
- Median Level Wage: $34,730 annually
- Experienced Level Wage: $56,009 annually

Good Benefits

- Medical insurance
- Onsite discounted rent
- Paid holidays, vacation and sick leave

Important Qualities

- ***Computer skills.*** Many new buildings have automated controls. You must be able to navigate a centralized computer system to adjust and monitor the controls.
- ***Customer-service skills.*** You will interact with customers on a regular basis. You need to be friendly and able to address customers' questions.
- ***Dexterity.*** Many of your tasks, such as repairing small devices, connecting or attaching components, and using hand tools, require a steady hand and good hand-eye coordination.
- ***Troubleshooting skills.*** You will have to find, diagnose, and repair problems. So, you will need to do tests to figure out the cause of problems before fixing equipment.

Administrative Assistant

What I do:

Administrative assistants oversee the essential activities that allow businesses to operate efficiently. Using computer technology, administrative assistants may manage appointments and travel, office files and correspondence, equipment and supplies, printing and reproduction, among other duties. Administrative roles vary, depending on the type of employer. Some administrative assistants opt to specialize in medical or law offices.

My tasks include:

- Prepare invoices, reports, memos, letters, financial statements and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheets, databases, or presentation software.
- Answer phone calls and direct calls to appropriate parties or take messages.
- Conduct research, compile data, and prepare papers for consideration and presentation by executives, committees and boards of directors.
- Attend meetings to record minutes.
- Greet visitors and determine whether they should be given access to specific individuals.
- Read and analyze incoming memos, submissions, and reports to determine their significance and plan their distribution.
- Perform general office duties, such as ordering supplies, maintaining records management database systems, and performing basic bookkeeping work.
- File and retrieve corporate documents, records, and reports.
- Open, sort, and distribute incoming correspondence, including faxes and email.
- Make travel arrangements for executives.
- Maintaining the organizations website.

What makes my job in demand?

Short-term training

Training for this program ranges from two months to two years. The programs tend to be flexible and provide you with opportunities to take classes online.

High growth and many job opportunities

Texas Workforce indicates that this job is expected to grow and there is a high demand for employees. However, within the local area there are a lot of qualified candidates.

Good Pay

Salaries for administrative assistants vary, depending on experience, specialty, and type of employer. Salaries may range from $22,000 to $28,000 for an administrative assistant and $36,000 to $48,000 for an office manager.

What employers are looking for in the Austin area

Employers in the Austin area include:

Local school districts	State offices
Doctors/Hospitals	Private sector
IRS	Temporary agencies

Hard and Soft Skills Employers Typically Seek (in addition to the job's main duties):

- Expertise in business-related technology and software
- Ability to establish effective relationships with many different people
- Analytical, detail-oriented, and flexible skills
- Ability to coordinate several activities at once
- Understanding written sentences, effective communication, ability to read and write work related documents
- Active listening
- Talking to others to convey information effectively

Typical Job Application Requirements Include:

Academic/training credentials

- High school Diploma or GED
- Certificate or Associates preferred, but not required

Work Experience

- Most employers prefer 1 year of customer service work experience
- Most employers require the following knowledge prior to hire:
  Data entry

  Microsoft office

  Oral and written communication skills

  Word processing

Other employer requirements/preferences may include:

- Criminal background and sex offender check (depending on the industry sought for employment)

Certificates and Degrees Available at Austin Community College (ACC)

Associate of Applied Science Degrees and three-semester Certificates are available in the following areas:

- Administrative Assistant
- Legal Administrative Assistant
- Medical Administrative Assistant

ACC offers one to three semester Certificates in these areas:

- Office Assistant
- Software Applications Specialist
- Medical Office Assistant

This program offers several different instructional styles, so that your education interferes less with daily living responsibilities.

ACC Continuing Education, also offers a certificate in Administrative Assistant

- Offers a two month certificate program that covers courses in office procedures, duties, and responsibilities applicable to an office environment.

Program	Type of Program	Skills	Education prior to admission	Assessments	Other
Austin Community College (Academic Credit)	Certification: Administrative Assistant Legal Administrative Assistant Medical Administrative Assistant	30 words per minute keyboarding speed. Familiarity with a PC. Keyboarding classes are offered but are not included in the cost.	High School diploma or GED		
	Associates of Applied Science	30 word per minute keyboarding speed. Familiarity with a PC. Keyboarding classes are offered but are not included in the cost. Must satisfy TSI requirements.	High School diploma or GED	TSI complete	Completion of 15 hours of general education coursework. Completion of 42 credits of core curriculum. 210 internship hours required for degree
Austin Community College: Continuing Education	Certification	Keyboarding skills and familiarity with a PC.	No GED or high school diploma required		

Program Requirements and Cost

Program costs (2013)

Program	Tuition In-District Resident	Tuition Out of District (does not pay ACC taxes)
Austin Community College	$62 per credit hour + $16 in fees =$78 total per credit hour	**$62 per credit hour +$178 in fees=$240 per credit hour**
ACC Continuing Education	**$1445.00 total certificate cost**	**$1445.00 total certificate cost**

Cost does not include classroom expenses such as: books, computer access and/or programs

Types of Financial Aid Available

Private and Institutional Scholarships, Federal Pell Grants, Federal Loans, Work-study

http://www.austincc.edu/info/office/ http://www.austincc.edu/admin_ce/

512.223.4222

Commercial Driver's License
Midland College offers

Professional Truck Driving

Four weeks to earn your Commercial Driver's License (CDL).
Available in Midland and Ft. Stockton. ***www.midland.edu/transportation***

How about making $18,000+ a year and complete your education in 4 weeks!

Truck Drivers make good money and need limited time in the classroom.

General Job Description

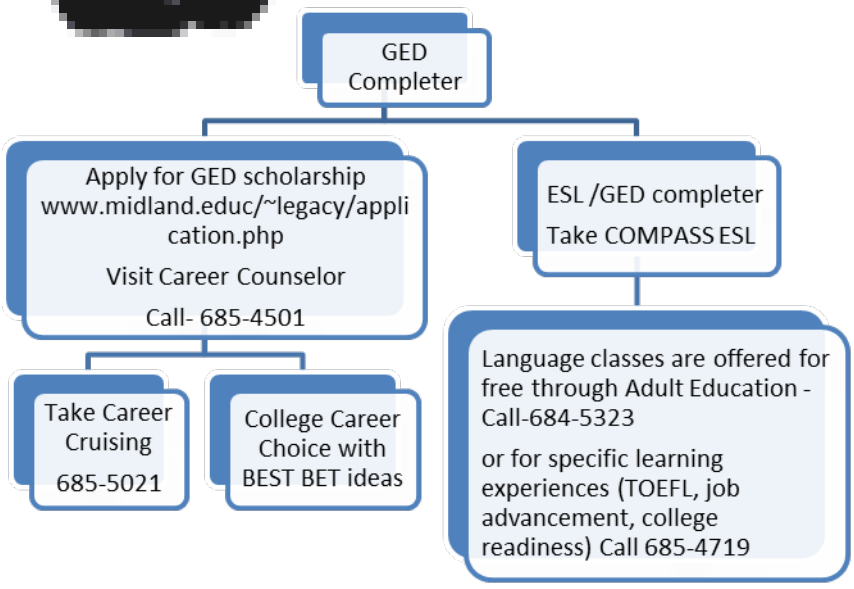
Drive a tractor-trailer combination or a truck with a capacity of at least 26,000 pounds Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW). May be required to unload truck. Requires commercial drivers' license.

Method of Entry

Typically requires the completion of high school or an equivalent program resulting in the award of a high school diploma or an equivalent, such as the General Educational Development (GED) credential.

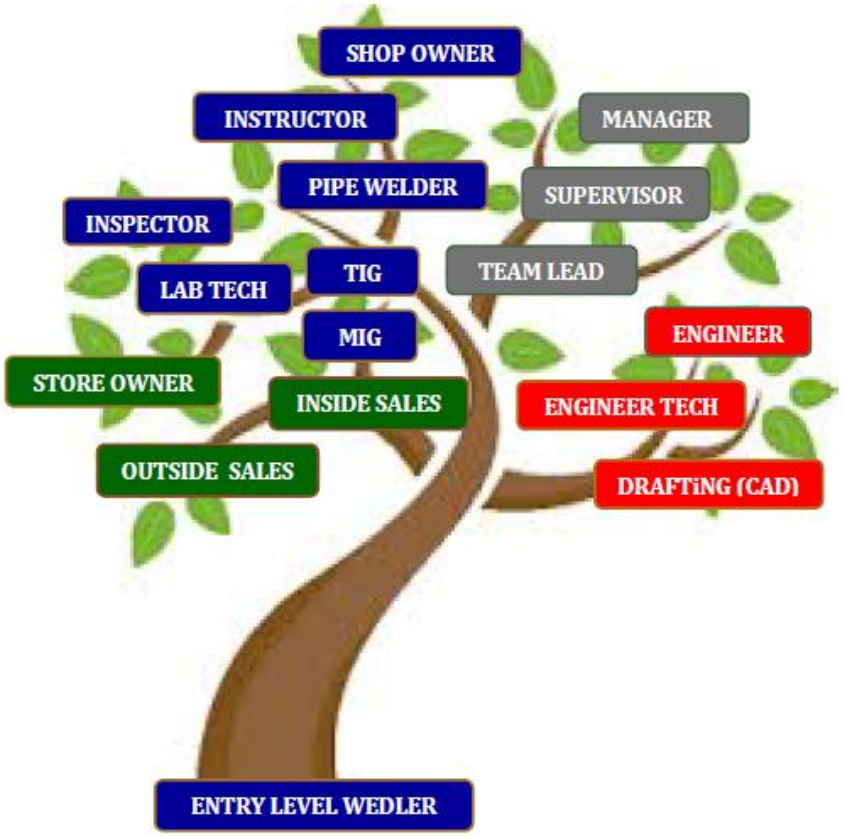
Midland College will give you the help you need!

Questions? Call or visit us at:
www.midland.edu/transportation



Welding Career Pathways

Because so many industries use welders, there are many different options. Many welders continue in welding. As their skills increase, their pay does too! However, there are many options for an entry level welder to take. Below is a career pathways tree full of possibilities.



Seguin ISD Adult Education Cooperative
1221 E. Kingsbury | Seguin, Texas 78155
phone: (830) 379-1220 | fax: (830) 379-8117

Welding
A Best Bet Career Choice!

This material was created by Seguin ISD Adult Education Cooperative to assist our adult education students in Comal, Guadalupe & Kendall Counties with choosing productive careers.

Table of Contents

What is Welding? 3

Why Choose Welding? 4

Is Welding A Good Fit for You? 5

Women in Welding 6

Getting Your Foot in the Door 7

Learning to Weld 8

Training Locations 10

Welding Career Pathways 12

Driving times to St. Phillips, one way	
From Boerne	38 minutes
From Bulverde	35 minutes
From Comfort	50 minutes
From Marion	34 minutes
From New Braunfels	41 minutes
From Schertz	30 minutes
From Seguin	42 minutes
From Welfare	45 minutes

Greater Kerrville Center

Scan or click for interactive map-

1012 Barnett St.

Kerrville, TX 78028

(830) 896-0049

Driving times to St. Phillips, one way	
From Boerne	37 minutes
From Bulverde	65 minutes
From Comfort	22 minutes
From Marion	74 minutes
From New Braunfels	85 minutes
From Schertz	86 minutes
From Seguin	98 minutes
From Welfare	34 minutes

Training Locations

Central Texas Technology Center (CTTC)

Scan or click for interactive map

2189 FM 758

New Braunfels, TX

(830) 609-2100

http://www.alamo.edu/cttc

Driving times to CTTC, one way	
From Boerne	63 minutes
From Bulverde	41 minutes
From Comfort	69 minutes
From Marion	21 minutes
From New Braunfels	13 minutes
From Schertz	28 minutes
From Seguin	16 minutes
From Welfare	66 minutes

St. Phillips Southwest Campus

Scan or click for interactive map

800 Quintana Rd.

San Antonio, TX 78211

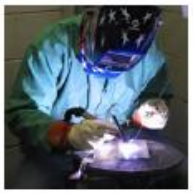
(210) 486-7000

What is Welding?

Most typically, welding is the process of joining together two pieces of metals, glass or plastics using heat and a joining liquid. The majority of welding, however, is done using metals. The heat is administered using a flame, which can be quite large or quite small depending on the size and types of the materials to be joined.

The most common type of welding is called shielded metal arc welding. It is often called "stick welding. " This is the first technique that most welders learn.

Another type of welding is gas metal arc welding, or MIG. This technique is similar to "stick welding" but uses a gas to protect metals from contamination.



A third type of welding is gas tungsten arc welding, or TIG. This method takes more skill and practice but is usually less physically demanding.

Pipe welding is in demand in the oil fields in Texas! It is one of the most difficult types of welding and usually requires certification, but tends to pay very well.

Why Choose Welding?

It's in high demand

Welding has been and continues to be one of the top 25 most in demand career in the San Antonio-New Braunfels area. Welding is a growing demand as well across Texas, with 2,255 jobs expected annually through 2020. Nationally, 14,070 job openings per year are predicted through 2020. So whether you stay in this area or move, you will be in demand if you are a welder. [1]

It has good earning potential

In 2012, the median wage for welders in the San Antonio-New Braunfels area was $15. 39 per hour. This means that half of all welders in this area reported making less $15. 39 per hour, while the other half report making more.

In 2011, entry level welding positions paid an average of $11. 13 per hour while experienced welders averaged $16. 64[2]. Statewide and nationally, welders earn more than they do in our local area. For example, the median hourly wage for welders nationally is $17. 05. In Texas, it is $17. 01 and locally, it is $15. 39[1].

It requires limited postsecondary training

You can get an entry level job in welding after attending approximately 40 hours of training at Central Texas Technology Center or St. Phillips College's Southwest Campus. However, the more education you get, the better your chances at landing a good job and moving up in pay quickly.

[1] National Bureau of Labor Statistics
[2] Texas Workforce Commission Socrates

Central Texas Technology Center

Located in New Braunfels, the CTTC campus offers one introductory and 4 advanced welding courses. Each course runs 10 weeks, meeting twice weekly from 5 PM – 9 PM.

Certificates of completion are given, but classes do not count as college credit.

Students must be 17 or older and do not need to have completed high school or have a GED. Intermediate English Language Learners may also enroll.

Cost per each 80-hour course is $620. Equipment and books add approximately $80. No federal financial aid is available.

Greater Kerrville Center

Located in Kerrville, Texas, the Greater Kerrville Center offers two- week sessions that run 8 hours daily for a total of 80 hours. Sessions cover ARC and MIG welding. These courses are considered continuing education. A certificate of completion is given, but classes do not count as college credit.

Students must be 17 or older and do not need to have completed high school or have a GED. Intermediate English Language Learners may also enroll.

Cost for the 80 hour course is $1,150. Books and equipment add approximately $80.

Learning to Weld

Three Alamo College campuses offer courses in welding. In all programs, at a minimum you can learn about the types of metals and their reaction to heat as well as the amount of heat you need to create a strong weld; the different positions and angles that you need to use to join metal together; and the safety requirements that welders need to follow. Following are brief descriptions of the welding courses that are offered at each of the three campuses.

St. Phillips Southwest Campus

Located in southwest San Antonio, the St. Phillips welding program prepares students to work in in manufacturing, maintenance shops, steel construction sites, ship building, oil field operations and other types of industries.

Graduates of this program can complete a Certificate in Inert Gas GTAW/GMAW Welder (MSGW) after **31 hours** or continue with all **62 hours** of coursework to receive an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Welding/ Welding Technologist.

Students must be admitted as a regular college student, which requires high school transcripts or a GED and college placement testing.

Out of district students (on Bexar-county residents) pay $1,138 for up to six hours in a semester. Each additional hour in a semester adds $168. Books add $75 or so per course. Personal equipment adds a one-time cost of about $80. **Federal financial aid and/or student loans are available for qualifying students.**

Is Welding A Good Fit?

Do you have

- ☐ Excellent hand-eye coordination?
- ☐ Steady hands and arms?
- ☐ Good spatial relation skills, such as visualizing what something will look like after it has been put together?
- ☐ Good manual dexterity, such as the ability to quickly grasp and accurately move objects?
- ☐ The ability to sequence tasks and follow directions?
- ☐ The ability to concentrate carefully on a task?
- ☐ The ability to work in physical positions that may be uncomfortable?
- ☐ The ability to follow safety procedures?

Can you work in an environment that

- ☐ Requires you to wear specialized protective headgear and clothing?
- ☐ May be noisy?
- ☐ May be outside?
- ☐ May be colder or warmer than typical offices or classrooms?

Women in Welding

Women can and do make great welders. Here are a few YouTube videos that feature women welders. One video actually introduce welding gear that has been designed just for women! *Please note that these videos are from around the United States, so what you hear about programs, scholarships and wages is not necessarily what you will find in this area of Texas.*

If you have a smartphone with Internet, you can scan the QR barcodes below using an app to go directly to the videos. If you have access to an Internet-enabled computer, it is easiest ti gi www. youtube. com and type in the name of the video title in the YouTube search bar. If you are viewing this document online, then you can just click on the blue links.

1. Women in Welding
   http://www. youtube. com/watch?v=ECAtTvfkcr8

2. NWTC Hosts Welding Bootcamp for Women
   http://www. youtube. com/watch?v=hQH8ozoLAs

3. Liliana - Woman Welder - Episode 3
   http://www. youtube. com/watch?v=jg99LxQkxX

4. Welding Gear for Women
   http://www. youtube. com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=OBZX3p0jy3k#at=102

Getting your Foot in the Door

Almost everyone starts out their first welding job in an entry level position, so your first job may pay around $12 per hour.

In general, companies in this area contract entry level welders through temporary agencies such as Hawkins and Aerotek.

When you arrive at a temporary job placement, you will most likely be given a welding test. This hands-on test will require you to perform one or more welding techniques. If you pass this test, you will probably be offered a temporary position with the company.

This is when you have the opportunity to shine! You can show the company your skills at welding and impress them by being a **GREAT** all-around great employee. This includes showing up to work every day on-time, following directions, and having a positive attitude.

If you are asked to become a permanent employee, the company may even pay for you to take additional classes in welding techniques. They may want you to become certified by the American Welding Society in one or more specific welding techniques, and will often pay for these performance-based exams.

9. Fostering Ongoing Employer and Industry Engagement to Inform Program Design

This chapter presents strategies for program managers to leverage the CTC employer outreach to foster ongoing employer and industry engagement in program.

Your outreach to local employers for your CTC research can lay a foundation for ongoing engagement with employers, who can be an asset to your program and students in a variety of ways. In addition to providing you with their perspective on real world labor market information and occupational employment opportunities, they might offer assistance with:

- Program design and curriculum review
- Marketing to employees as potential student recruits for your programs
- Career talks and career fairs - visiting your program to speak about job readiness, occupational information
- Mock job interviews
- Informational interviews
- Job shadowing or site visits
- Short or long-term internships
- Mentoring students on job readiness skills, and attaining career and education goals

In the long term, employers and industry representatives might be partners in designing and implementing a joint career pathway training program. They might offer workplace experience for students and provide employees (include hires from your program) direct tuition assistance and help you too in identifying funding for program sustainability.

In return, there are many ways in which adult education programs can assist employers with concerns about underprepared job applicants or new hires, by:

- Incorporating work readiness skills training (e.g. resumes and interviewing skills) and other foundational and soft skills, such as problem solving, teamwork. Punctuality.
- Using an effective intake process that helps training programs to identify and address common student challenges/barriers
- Acting as an intermediary to recruit, screen, and provide work readiness preparation and thereby helping reduce recruitment costs and increase employee retention.
- Advancing the basic skill level of employees, this can improve quality and safety.

It's important to publicize any contribution (of time, attention, financial and other resources) that any employer makes to your program.

Additional Resources: Designing Career Pathways Programming with Employer Engagement

As discussed, identifying Best Bets through the CTC research process can enhance adult education programming by equipping staff with better tools and information to help students with career and education information. The intention of the process is not to convert all general adult education into specific career pathways programs. However, some of the most useful and transferable tools for developing educational programming that is better informed by and connected to workforce and employer partners can be found in the career pathways planning guides that follow.

- *Strategic Employer Engagement: Building Dynamic Relationships in Teen and Young Adult Employment Programs.* Geared towards recruiting employers to provide youth with real work experience through internships, there are a number of tools that are very relevant to adult education programs, such as the Employer Engagement Program Assessment (pgs. 7-10) and Menu of Participation Activities (pg. 37). http://commcorp.org/resources/detail.cfm?ID=990.
- *How to Build Bridge Programs That Fit Into Career Pathways*: *A Step by Step Guide Based on the Careras en Salud Program in Chicago.* This guide offers strategies and tools for collaborating with employers and other community partners to design comprehensive career educational programming. http://www.iccb.org/pdf/shiftinggears/instituto2010_howtobuildbridgeprograms.pdf
- *Bridges to Careers for Low-Skilled Adults* is another program guide that offers tips and tools for employer engagement, such as Employer Meeting Discussion Guide and agenda topics (pg.37) http://www.womenemployed.org/sites/default/files/resources/BridgeGuide.FullReport.2005.pdf
- *Career Pathways Toolkit: Six Key Elements for Success* is published by the US Department of Labor. Section 2 (pg. 60) is written as a how-to guide for team leaders to facilitate the planning process. It includes tools like the Occupational Credential Worksheet (pg. 73) to map the educational and career pathway, including stackable credentials to employment. http://www.workforceinfodb.org/PDF/CareerPathwaysToolkit2011.pdf

10. Informed Instruction and Advising using the CTC Process and Best Bet Framework

This chapter presents strategies and curriculum resources for instructors and counselors/advisors to use to enhance student career exploration and planning activities.

Tools: 1) Self-Assessment Tools
2) LMI Teaching Tool
3) Using Career Pathway Maps
4) Best Bet Exploration Template

The CTC process and Best Bet framework is a tool you can use to give students clear and high-quality information – grounded in labor market data and relationships with postsecondary programs and regional employers. It's about giving them options, talking to them about opportunities and hurdles, and explaining to them the importance of setting short-term and long-term goals. It's about matching students to strong, employer-valued postsecondary programs that are supportive of their needs, programs that you believe they have a good chance of completing, and that lead to good jobs.

Some may be concerned that with a focus on counseling students about Best Bets, they will unintentionally pressure students to set career goals or enroll in occupational training programs that aren't right for them. But with the knowledge and skills developed through CTC research process, and the information gleaned through the Best Bet profiles, counselors/advisors are better equipped to help students aim for career goals and training programs that are right for them and hold promise of employment and advancement. After all, one key criterion of a Best Bet is that aligns with each student's unique interests and skills.

Here are some advising tips to ensure that the CTC research and Best Bet criteria and profiles are used appropriately and to their maximum potential and benefit:

Communicate across roles (instructors and advisors) to get full picture of a student's academic strengths and challenges, accomplishments and career goals. Coordinate career and college exploration activities with instructors so that you can build on each other's efforts, rather than duplicate (or miss key steps by assuming the other has covered them).

Coordinate across roles and share information gleaned from CTC research such as interviews with industry experts and employers to present firsthand, real world local labor market information and to recruit potential guest speakers to classes or counseling workshops.

Balance positivity with reality. Be supportive and encouraging and point out students' strengths, accomplishments, persistence and efforts. At the same time, help students proactively consider

possible hurdles to develop realistic goals and timelines. For example, a student who struggles with math may need to factor in more time for math remediation or pre-requisites when considering occupations that require math coursework. It doesn't mean that they shouldn't do a math-based program, but that they may need more time to build their skills in that area and consider whether they can make that kind of commitment to improving their math skills.

Use your research to identify occupations that do not require a bachelor's degree or that can stack/build towards a bachelor's degree over time. For example, if employers in your region don't hire nurses with Associate degrees, and you have students who are interested in nursing, help them research other direct care positions that can be attained with an associate's degree. This way, a student may gain the confidence and the momentum to enter, persist through, and complete these programs – and to pursue higher credentials down the road, if they so choose.

Discuss financial considerations early on, such as budgeting and financial aid applications. Get to know Financial Aid officers at neighboring colleges as well as organizations who offer financial literacy education to low income residents and host them as workshop presenters at your site. Introduce the concept of returns on their educational investment and how to weight the costs (time, money, effort) and benefits (wages/benefits, entry level job market, opportunities for advancement, etc.)

Take time to show students (individually or in groups) how to use career websites like CareerOneStop. Guide them through the steps to find labor market information and occupational profiles and teach them how to interpret the data (e.g. 10^{th} percentile wage as a good indicator of entry level wages). These websites are really valuable tools, but don't assume students have the internet research skills or confidence to use them on their own without initial instruction or guidance.

Help students identify key questions in order to carefully explore the details provided in the occupational profile:

- In what ways does it line up or not with your student's personal interests and strengths?
- Are there application requirements, such as criminal record checks, credit checks, drug screen tests, driver's license and driving record check, which might exclude some students from this particular occupation?
- What sort of work hours are required – e.g. full time, part time, night and weekend shifts?
- What is the environment and setting? For example is the work done indoors, outdoors, noisy, quiet? Is it a desk job or does it require a great deal of standing?
- Are the skills developed and used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and industry sectors? Which types of skills transfer and to what types of industries?

Don't let students rely solely on labor market information from the internet to make decisions about their careers. Use your firsthand experience with CTC research to assist students in making contacts with people who work in the field for informational interviews before they make a decision or investment of time and money in training.

Make sure the advice you give is grounded in facts about the opportunities for and hurdles to career and training options in your area. You can't know everything about every occupation or training program. But you can use this toolkit to guide yourselves and your students through a fact-finding process to inform your counseling sessions. For example, you can verify whether a training programs' retention, completion, and job placement rates and whether employers in your area value the credentials and hire graduates with them.

Additional Career Exploration Tools for Teachers and Advisors

Integrating Career Awareness into the ESOL & ABE Classroom (ICA) curriculum guide
http://collegetransition.org/publications.icacurriculum.html

The GREAT Centers have been offering face-to-face and online training to adult educators throughout the state on using the ICA curriculum guide and most adult educators in Texas are familiar with at least some ICA lessons. Here are some lessons that guide students through a process similar to the CTC research process.

- Using the Internet to Learn About Occupations
- Labor Market Trends and Information
- Informational Interviews
- Job Fairs/Career Fairs
- Career Ladders
- College Vocabulary 101
- Smart Consumer of Education
- Navigating College: Speaking with College Representatives
- Career and Education Planning

Adult educators from Texas and some other states have been modifying ICA career planning lessons and developing new ones that specifically address instruction for English Language Learners.

- Selected *Integrating Career Awareness* lessons adapted for English Language Learners by Central GREAT Centers https://sites.google.com/site/icaintexas/
- Selected *Integrating Career Awareness* lessons adapted by Nevada Adult Education for a variety of ESOL levels from beginning to advanced , as well as for Adult Secondary Education http://www.nevadaadulteducation.org/Educators/Content_Standards_and_Curricula/Integrating_Career_Awareness_into_the_ABE_and_ESOL_Classroom.html,

- Lessons on identifying skills and job preferences developed for English Language Learners by Pennsylvania Adult Basic and Literacy Education http://www.paadultedresources.org/english-as-a-second-language.html

Aspirations Toolkit

The Aspirations Toolkit is a set of counseling and instructional practices and tools contributed by adult educators around the country. Contributors implement these lessons and activities with adult learners in various class types (e.g. ESOL or GED) and at a range of skill levels to foster aspirations, goal setting habits and to inspire them to begin planning for next steps along their education and career pathway. It features videos of career advisors sharing strategies they use to help students identify skills and gain real world exposure to occupations.
http://collegetransition.org/resources.aspirationstoolkit.html

Pennsylvania Career Pathways Resources – 20 Ways to Use Career Pathway Maps

This handout is a great tool for instructors, counselors/case managers, and students. It provides great ideas for how to use career pathway maps (or, for example, a Best Bet Profile or brochure) as an instructional and counseling tool.
http://www.paadultedresources.org/program-resources.html

Ohio ABLE Career Awareness Toolkit provides reading, communication (writing, speaking, listening) and math lessons that contain career awareness and career planning content. The toolkit includes a Career Assessment Matrix with information about a variety of career assessment – cost, format, audience, time needed, etc. http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka/EDR/5/Career%20Awareness%20Toolkit.pdf

Supporting Skilled Immigrants: A Toolkit for ESL Practitioners provides essential information, resources and guidelines they can use to offer more effective support to their skilled immigrant students. This manual will help equip practitioners with an understanding of how to more effectively help skilled immigrants navigate the complex educational system and career pathways to success in the U.S.
http://www.globaltalentbridge.org/toolkit/pdf/SupportingSkilledImmigrantsToolkit.pdf

Additional College Navigation Tools for Teachers and Advisors

Best Bet occupations typically require some postsecondary training, often based in a (community) college. Teachers and advisors can help students navigate college as they research potential training programs, undertake the complex admissions, financial aid, enrollment, and assessment. The *College Navigator* is a role that is gaining momentum in many adult education and workforce development initiatives. The work of someone in the Navigator role is focused on helping low-income (usually first-in-family to go to college) chart a path to success in postsecondary education and obtain a living-wage job.

Given limited resources, adult education instructors and counselors often fulfill at least some of the functions of a Navigator, in the absence of a full time Transition Coordinator or Navigator.
In addition to the *ICA* curriculum guide, which offers some lessons on navigating college, there are many helpful guides for College Navigators that will be helpful to instructors and advisors.

Colorado SUN Navigator Manual is a collection of promising practices and tools for intake, assessment, career planning, team building, and course selection used by Navigators from the College Connection intensive college transition program to prepare adult students for postsecondary education. http://www.cccs.edu/Docs/Foundation/SUN/navigator/NavManual.pdf

The ABC's of College Navigation Guide from the Seattle Jobs Initiative is divided into five steps: 1) Preparation - Setting expectations and readying the participant for the rigors of college and placement tests; 2) Program Selection - Helping the participant make the best choice for a college program; 3) Enrollment - Helping the participant through the multi-step enrollment process; 4) Persistence - Working to ensure the participant persists to credential completion and a living-wage job; 5) Career - Helping the participant identify a career pathway and prepare for employment during and after http://www.seattlejobsinitiative.com/wp-content/uploads/SJI_CollegeNavGuide_vFINAL_5.10.12.pdf

Coaching for College and Career is a toolkit developed by a peer group of College and Career Coaches working in Skillworks career pathway partnerships in Boston. They share their best practices and set of tools and processes that they've used in their work coaching adults transitioning to postsecondary education. http://www.skill-works.org/documents/SkillWorksCoachingToolkit_WebOnly.pdf

Resources for Reentry from Corrections Facilities

Too often, students with criminal records have difficulty finding work and are barred from certain occupations (depending on the class of conviction and how long in the past it was). Therefore, it's critical that instructors and advisors are knowledgeable about the types of organizations who can best guide ex-offenders through any issues that will impact their career and educational planning in order to open as many doors as possible. Following are some resources specifically geared towards ex-offenders.

Federal Interagency Reentry Council MythBusters Fact Sheets

Reentry MythBusters are fact sheets designed to clarify existing federal policies that affect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families in areas such as public housing, employment, parental rights, Medicaid suspension/termination, voting rights and more.
http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/projects/mythbusters/

Back to School: A Guide to Continuing Your Education After Prison

This guide from the Prisoner Reentry Project at John Jay College is designed for to help ex-offenders take the first steps towards continuing their education, whether that means learning English, working towards a GED, learning an occupation, or building on college credits already earned.
http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/backtoschoolsummer2010revision.pdf

Going to Work with a Criminal Record: Lessons from the Fathers at Work Initiative

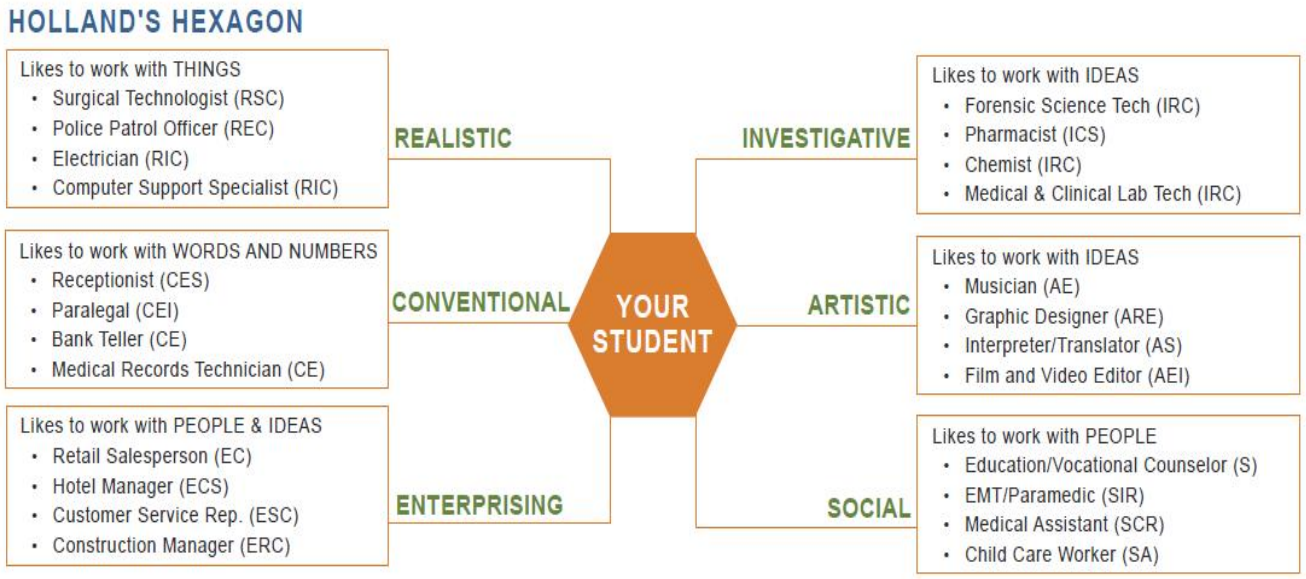
Based on the experience of organizations taking part in the Fathers at Work initiative, *Going to Work with a Criminal Record* offers fundamental lessons on connecting people with criminal records to appropriate jobs and employers, as well as tools to organize your efforts. It outlines how to avoid mistakes and how to develop important relationships, including with employers, parole officers and the local child support enforcement agency.
http://nationalassembly.org/Publications/documents/ppv.org/238_publication.pdf

How Felons Can Get Jobs

A blog that offers helpful advice for how previously court-involved people looking for jobs. Some of the questions and answers are interesting, and you may find some new resources. Also, it may be something to look at as a resource to develop within your organization: would it be helpful to some of the students you work with to read weekly blog posts, or be able to write into a Q & A site, even if they are not participating directly in your program anymore?

The Appendix contains a list of additional resources for career exploration, college navigation, and working with ex-offenders. http://www.howfelonscangetjobs.com/

Using the Holland Code and Tools to Assess Student's Career Interests



NOTE: Each personality type above points to typical occupations associated with it. Next to each occupation, in parentheses, is its "interest code." This code represents the occupation's dominant interest areas, in descending order of preference. The personality types closest to each other in the hexagon (e.g., Social and Artistic) are more alike than those that are farther away.

WHAT IS THE HOLLAND MODEL?

In the 1970s, American psychologist John Holland developed a theory of how people choose careers. His model is one of many developed to date to help people identify which occupations may be best suited to their skills and interests. Holland's model divides jobseekers into the following six work personality types (acronym RIASEC) *(Click on a personality type to be directed to sample occupations within that type.)*:

REALISTIC occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Some of these occupations require working outside. *A person with this work personality can often be described as: practical, hands-on/tool-oriented, physical, and persistent*.

INVESTIGATIVE occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally. Investigative individuals often prefer to work alone. *A person with this work personality can often be described as: analytical, precise, scientific, and curious*.

ARTISTIC occupations frequently involve working with forms, designs, and patterns. They often require self-expression, and the work can be done without following a clear set of rules. Artistic individuals tend to prize independence. *A person with this work personality can often be described as: creative, independent, original, and idealistic.*

SOCIAL occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others. They also require strong verbal and teamwork skills. *A person with this work personality can often be described as: helpful/supportive/healing, cooperative, persuasive, and patient.*

ENTERPRISING occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading and persuading people, and making many decisions. Sometimes they require taking risks and often deal with business. These occupations require strong communication skills. *A person with this work personality can often be described as: ambitious, sociable, persuasive, and adventurous.*

CONVENTIONAL occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow. A person with this work personality can often be described as: detail-oriented, organized, efficient, and methodical.

WHAT IS A HOLLAND/RIASEC CODE AND WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH CAREER CHOICE?

After answering a series of questions about your skills, self-perceptions, and preferences for work environments and outcomes, a Holland Code assessment will assign you a Holland/RIASEC Code. This code, which typically consists of two or three letters in sequence, indicates your dominant work personality types. Your code is associated with occupations with the same or a similar "interest code."

Example: Your student takes a Holland Code assessment online and is assigned a Holland/RIASEC Code of "**RSC**". This means that his/her dominant work personalities are Realistic, Social, and Conventional, in descending order of preference. According to Holland's model, RSC people will seek out occupations with the same interest code (RSC). The idea is that RSC occupations (e.g., surgical technologist) may suit RSC people best in terms of their skills and interests. In addition to researching RSC occupations, your student should research occupations with a similar interest code (e.g., RCS, SRC, SCR) for possible good fits.

WHY DO PERSONALITY TYPES MATTER?

Working in an environment similar to your personality type makes it more likely that you'll be satisfied with and successful in your job.

HOW DO I FIND AN OCCUPATION'S INTEREST CODE (TO SEE IF/HOW IT ALIGNS WITH MY HOLLAND CODE)?

1. Go to O*NET Online at **http://online.onetcenter.org**. Search for any occupation by typing it in the "Occupation Search box" and clicking "Search." Next, click on the occupation to retrieve its "Summary Report."
2. In the "Summary Report," look under the section titled "Interests" to find the occupation's "Interest Code."

WHERE CAN I FIND FREE ASSESSMENTS BASED ON HOLLAND'S MODEL?

- Take a quick Holland Code Quiz at **www.roguecc.edu/counseling/HollandCodes/test.asp** .

- Use Career Zone's online career exploration and planning system at **https://jobzone.ny.gov/views/jobzone/guesttools/qa.jsf;jsessionid=8127a5f1ae04854460b9d1fa3073**.
- Download the free O*NET Interest Profiler at **www.onetcenter.org/IP.html**.

THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT CAREER ASSESSMENTS

- Career assessments are widely based on generalizations, so they may not always point to careers that are exact fits. Students should do research to learn about which occupations may suit them best. They should consult a career counselor and take advantage of internships and other opportunities to get experience in occupations of interest.
- Career assessments often don't include questions about a person's background, which can affect his/her ability to apply for and work in certain jobs. It's important that students know about the typical screening processes required by regional employers for occupations of interest and strategies for addressing employer concerns about an applicant's background (e.g., lack of work experience, criminal record).

OTHER FREE, PRINTABLE CAREER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS AND TOOLS

- Visit the College for Adults website at **http://www.collegeforadults.org/career/self.html** for career assessment tools to help your students identify: the work they've done with people, data, and things (*see Things I Have Done Worksheet*); the communication, number, people and other skills they have (*Skills Identification Worksheet*); their job values (*Job Values Inventory Worksheet*); and their interests (*see O*NET Interest Profiler link in the section above*).
- Once they've completed these worksheets, encourage them to research at least two occupations of interest (**http://www.mynextmove.org** is a student-friendly website) and fill out the Occupational Exploration Worksheet at **http://www.collegeforadults.org/career/occupation.html**. Tip: When looking up an occupation's wage figures, tell your students to look for the occupation's 1) "10th percentile" wage (often a good indicator of a typical entry-level wage, and 2) the "median" or "50th percentile" wage (the "middle" wage, often the wage of someone who has several years of experience in the occupation).
- Students can use the information gathered from the above tools to complete a *Career and Educational Planning Worksheet* at **http://www.collegeforadults.org/career/self.html** .

SOURCES: ***CareerOneStop, Career Zone, College for Adults, O*NET OnLine, Rogue Community College***

Using Labor Market Information in Teaching and Advising

Different types of information address different aspects of the career planning and job search process. Help students identify the information they need and the different source of information using a chart like this.[3]

Career and Education Planning Activity	**Types and sources of LMI to use**
How to get started? What are different types of occupations?	• Occupational profiles • Industry profiles • Employment trends by industry • Occupational trends – projected openings and growth • Industry and occupation profiles
How can different types of training and skills expand my opportunities in the future (rather than limit them)?	• Related occupations • Similar job titles • Employment requirements • Stackable credentials and career pathways
What do I need to know in order to develop a realistic career and education plan?	• Job requirements for entry level and experienced positions • Working conditions • Local labor market outlook/ trends • Wages for entry level and experienced positions • Education, employment and skills requirements • Job duties, tasks • Identify potential local employers • Employers who are hiring • Available labor force for that job/occupation – is there a shortage or too many people already qualified? • Informational interviews with people working in the field
What are my prospects for employment in this field in my region?	• Potential employers in the area • Employers who are hiring • Skills required by employers • Hiring rates from training programs • New businesses; expansion of business • Current local employment opportunities • Occupation trends/outlooks • Employment trends by industry • Classified ads • Online job banks

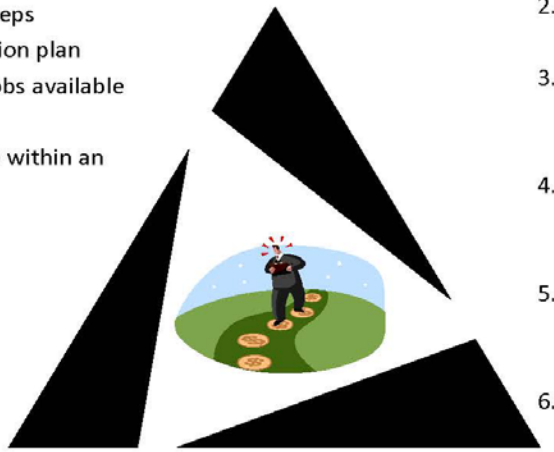
[3] Adapted from *The Effective Use of Labour Market Information with Clients: A Guide for Career and Employment Information Professionals*, Forum of Labour Market Ministers http://www.flmm-lmi.org/english/tmintro.asp?x=0

	• Social networking sites (Linkedin)
Which are the potential employer in my region for the occupation I'm considering?	• Companies who hire • Business directories • Professional and Trade Associations • Postsecondary training faculty, program coordinators, career placement services • Worforce Solutions • Unions • Classified ads • Online job banks • Face-to-face and online Social Networking • Community Mapping (the strength of weak ties)
What are the best bet training programs in my region?	• Training and education requirements • Graduate placement surveys • Hiring rates from training programs • Available training programs in private training institutes or community colleges
What are the wages, working conditions and hours of work?	• Informational interviews • Job postings • Occupational profiles

20 Ways to Use Career Pathway Maps (and Best Bet Profiles)

Case Managers can...

1. Help students set goals and identify next steps
2. Help students develop a career and education plan
3. Work with students to research different jobs available with an employer
4. Explain the variety of occupations available within an industry
5. Explain the process of bidding on jobs
6. Inform the classroom instruction



Teachers can...

1. Interview local employers to identify knowledge and skills required for entry level jobs
2. Connect academic skills to a variety of entry level jobs in an industry
3. Create a classroom activity where students match and order educational requirements to occupations beginning at entry level
4. Connect the academic skills taught in the classroom to the occupations on student career pathway maps
5. Explain the importance of networking and interpersonal relationships needed to move along a career path
6. Explain the transference of skills and knowledge from one occupation to another

Students can...

1. Complete pathway maps of occupations held by family members
2. Complete pathway maps of their own past jobs and compare contrast the skills, knowledge and tasks among those jobs
3. Create a career path from entry level to Master's degree level of occupations that fit into one of the occupations identified on an Interest Assessment
4. Plan out next step options then compare and contrast the effort involved in moving along different paths
5. Focus on the educational requirements and certifications needed to move along a career path
6. Identify all relevant information needed to make a decision about pursing a particular career path (e.g., salary, certifications, OJT, openings, job growth)
7. Complete the map while listening to a guest speaker
8. Complete the map while performing a job shadowing experience

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, Penn State, 2013
The development of this resource was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education. However, it does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred.

Best Bet Exploration Template

Staff at Seguin ISD developed this tool to accompany the Best Bet profiles.
Students use the template to locate important information contained in the Best Bet profiles.

YOUR NAME **OCCUPATION EXPLORED**

SECTION I: WHAT IS WELDING?

In the space below, describe the occupation in some detail. View page 3 in the Welding Best Bet Profile for an example.

SECTION II: WHY CHOOSE WELDING?

In the spaces below, fill in the requested information. View page 4 for an example.

	# jobs in San Antonio-New Braunfels area through 2020
	# jobs in Texas through 2020
	# jobs in U.S. through 2020

	% expected increase in jobs in San Antonio-New Braunfels area through 2020
	% increase in jobs in Texas through 2020
	% increase in jobs in U.S. through 2020

	$ 2012 median hourly wage in San Antonio-New Braunfels area
	$ 2012 median hourly wage in Texas
	$ 2012 median hourly wage in U.S.

	$ 2011 entry level hourly wage in San Antonio-New Braunfels area
	$ 2011 entry level hourly wage in Texas
	$ 2011 entry level hourly wage in U.S.

For **full time students**, approximately how long in weeks, semesters or years would it take to become trained to work in this occupation as an entry level employee?

SECTION III: IS THE OCCUPATION A GOOD FIT?

Include the skills needed and the typical working environment for this career, including possible physical environments and hours. View page 5 for an example.

SECTION IV: TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

View pages 8-9 for an example.

Option #1:

Name	
Address	
Phone #	

Typical time in hours or credits needed for training. This might be # hours to complete in a continuing education/technical program or the # of college credits needed for a certificate and/or associate degree.

Typical time in weeks, months, or years if attending full-time.

Describe the cost the training program. This is typically for the completion of the entire program, including tuition, books, and other fees.

Describe the availability of PELL grants or other grants/scholarships/loans for the program.

Describe the availability of flexible class times, such as part-time attendance, evening or Saturday classes, and/or online classes.

Describe options to earn certificates while working towards an associate degree and/or options to earn an associate degree to continue on to a 4 year degree.

Option #2:

Name	
Address	
Phone #	

Typical time in hours or credits needed for training. This might be # hours to complete in a continuing education/technical program or the # of college credits needed for a certificate and/or associate degree.

Typical time in weeks, months, or years if attending full-time.

Describe the cost of the training program. This is typically for the completion of the entire program, including tuition, books, and other fees.

Describe the availability of PELL grants or other grants/scholarships/loans for the program.

Describe the availability of flexible class times, such as part-time attendance, evening or Saturday

classes, and/or online classes.

Describe options to earn certificates while working towards an associate degree and/or options to earn an associate degree to continue on to a 4 year degree.

SECTION V: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you find other information as you do your research that you feel would be important to include on a "Best Bet Profile" flyer, brochure or pamphlet, include this information below. See pages 6-7 and 10-11 for examples of additional information included for welding.

SECTION VII: SAMPLE CAREER PATHWAY OR CAREER LATTICE

Copy and paste an image of a career pathway below or attach a sample career pathway graphic for this occupation as a separate document.

Additional Resources for Counseling to Careers

Labor Market

How the Workforce System prepares the youth pipeline
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=2WhioIr0nMs)
This video was produced by the Brockton Area Workforce Investment Board and showcases how to work with your regional WIB.

An Examination of the Information Technology Job Market: A Credentials That Work Research Brief
(http://txctc.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/8/9/5589059/ctw_examinationinfotechnjobmarket_071212_0.pdf)
This brief examines changes in the numbers of IT-sector jobs since the recession began in late 2007. It utilizes job posting data to examine four types of data.

Vendor Product Review: A Consumer's Guide to Real-Time Labor Market Information
(http://txctc.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/8/9/5589059/vendorproductreview_041712.pdf)
JFF reviewed the products of multiple vendors of real-time LMI to assist individuals and institutions considering the adoption of this innovative technology.

A Growing Jobs Sector: Health Informatics: A Credentials that Work Report from Burning Glass Technologies and Jobs for the Future
(http://txctc.weebly.com/uploads/5/5/8/9/5589059/ctw_burning_glass_publication_052912.pdf)
Using real-time data analytics, this report looks at a specific occupation, Health Informatics, and details implications of real-time data for education and training.

Launch Event—Help Wanted: Jobs and Education 2008-2018
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=bFaEgDC9S_A)
The Center on Education and the Workforce has released Help Wanted: Projecting Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018. The report predicts that by 2018, the nation will have a shortage of 3 million workers with the required postsecondary degrees to fill those jobs. Video showcases selected clips from the webcast.

What Is Happening to America's Less-Skilled Workers? The Importance of Education and Training in Today's Economy
(http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/1202_jobs_greenstone_looney.aspx)
This article explores how American workers continue to face difficulties in the labor market despite overall job creation improving in the last few years.

Most Americans See College as Essential to Getting a Good Job
(http://www.gallup.com/poll/149045/Americans-College-Essential-Getting-Good-Job.aspx)
An analysis of a survey conducted by Gallup and Lumina Foundation for Education.

What's It Worth?
(http://cew.georgetown.edu/whatsitworth/)
This report from the Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University looks at the relationship between major and salary.

Career Planning

Adult Student.com
(http://www.adultstudent.com/)
Offers resources for students and practitioners. The student side contains links to support services, useful websites, and tools for improving study skills and developing goals. The practitioner side contains links to articles in order to better understand adult learning and research.

America's Virtual OneStop
(http://www.americasvos.com/)
Offers fast access to a complete set of tools for searching for a new job, continuing one's education, researching labor market information, finding a new career, and more. It allows jobseekers to search for any job posted online anywhere in the country. Check out the website's "Career Explorer" tools.

Brain Track
(www.braintrack.com)
A higher education and career resource featuring a directory of the world's universities and colleges with over 10,000 institutions listed from over 190 countries. The site is the oldest (since 1-6) and largest directory of universities and colleges on the Web intended to help visitors make better decisions about their education and careers.

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Career Information
(http://www.bls.gov/k12/)
Click on a subject or area of interest to learn about related careers.

Career Coach
(www.womenemployed.org/index.php?id=38)
This online program helps users learn about good careers, set career goals, and make plans to reach them. Users can also download Strategies for Success in Career Development: The Career Coach Curriculum Guide (2008) (http://www.womenemployed.org/index.php?id=143), a resource to help jobseekers develop skills and produce tools (e.g., career plans, educational plans, portfolios) that they can use to gain employment.

Career Cruising
(http://www.careercruising.com/)
An industry-leading online career guidance and planning system. People of all ages use its tools to find the right career, explore education and training options, and build their own portfolio.

CareerTV.com

(http://careertv.com/)
For students and young professionals researching and planning their careers. It features employer videos and company profiles.

CityTownInfo.com
(http://www.citytowninfo.com/employment)
Provides information and analysis on careers, colleges, and more. Details on hundreds of careers, including salary data by occupation and city, required educational levels, career videos, career stories from people currently on the job, and original career overview articles.

Communicating at Work
(http://aaca-boston.org/caw)
A free website for immigrant adults by the Asian American Civic Association in Boston, Massachusetts. It's highly interactive and features dialogues, scenarios, and quizzes to help adult learners improve their English communication skills with supervisors, coworkers, and customers.

DegreeDirectory.org
(http://degreedirectory.org/)
A higher education learning resource designed to educate prospective and current college students. Students can find information on any college degree programs and discover accompanying career and salary information for occupations.

ExploreHealthCareers.org
(http://www.explorehealthcareers.org)
A free, multi-disciplinary, interactive health careers website designed to describe the array of health professions and provide easy access to students seeking information about health careers.

The Futures Channel
(http://www.thefutureschannel.com/index.php)
Provides real-world online movies about a variety of fields, including sports, transportation, architecture, and design. The website was developed to interest users in the sciences, as well as the engineering and technology sectors.

GadBall
(http://www.gadball.com)
Offers career exploration, job search, and job matching features. Career tools include "Work Genius" career assessments and videos, an interview center, and a cover letter center. Login is required.

GCF Global Learning
(http://www.gcflearnfree.org)

Offers free online classes and tutorials on the use of computers. Tutorials include Computer Basics, Windows, Email Basics, Internet 101, Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Internet Safety, Facebook 101, using Office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Office, Outlook, Publisher), and Life Skills tutorials (math, money, career development, and workplace development). Click on "Spanish" on the home page to use the Spanish version of the website.

GED: Beyond the Basics
(http://www.floridatechnet.org/GEDBeyond/)
This project is designed to assist programs in the transition of adult education students to employment and postsecondary education and training. Click on "Lesson Plans" for 24 lesson plans covering basic writing, reading, mathematics, decision-making, problem-solving and critical thinking skills needed to be successful in today's workplace.
Though no longer funded, public access to the tools continues to be available.

GED Career Bridge to Hospitality Curriculum
(http://www.valrc.org/publications/hospitality/)
Includes a 400+ page curriculum resource by Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC). It prepares students for the GED credential while providing important background information, skill instruction, and practice within a hospitality career context and career pathway model.

Jobitorial.com
(http://www.jobitorial.com/)
Anonymous employee job reviews for thousands of companies. Contributors must follow several guidelines or their reviews will be removed.
Note: The information on these kinds of websites is largely based on users' individual perceptions/ opinions, and not on fact. Individuals should use multiple strategies for learning about a company's/organization's culture.

JobTitled
(http://jobtitled.com)
A free resource focused on helping users make better career decisions through the use of analytics. Users can learn more about their career paths and other career options. JobTitled uses career trend statistics—built by analyzing millions of résumés and job histories—to calculate trends including how people get into a position, where they go, when they leave, and what degrees they have.

Key to Career Success
(www.CareerOneStop.org/militarytransition)
Provides career information and links to work-related services that help veterans and military service members successfully transition to civilian careers.

Monster Career Benchmarking
(http://my.monster.com/Career-Assessment/Dashboard.aspx)
Enables users to compare themselves to others in the job market. Information includes salary and compensation, work-life balance, education, and benefits.

mySkills myFuture
(www.mySkillsmyFuture.org)
Helps laid-off workers and other career changers find new occupations to explore. Users can identify occupations that require skills and knowledge similar to their current or previous job, learn more about these suggested matches, locate local training programs, and/or apply for jobs.

My Next Move
(http://www.mynextmove.org/)
An interactive tool for job seekers and students to learn more about their career options. This student-friendly site has tasks, skills, salary information, and more for over 900 different careers.

Literacy Information Communication System (LINCS)
LINCS Resource Collections (see "Workforce Competitiveness")
(http://lincs.ed.gov/professional-development/resource-collections/search)

Occupational Outlook Handbook
(http://www.bls.gov/oco/)
A nationally recognized source of career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. Revised every two years, the Handbook describes what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, earnings, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations. As a companion publication to the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Career Guide to Industries (go to http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/) discusses careers from an industry perspective.

O*NET OnLine
(http://online.onetcenter.org/)
Use this site to download the O*NET database (English and Spanish language versions), career exploration tools, job analysis questionnaires, employer guides, and technical reports. The O*NET database contains information on hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation. Information from this database forms the heart of O*NET OnLine, an interactive application for exploring and searching occupations and the nation's primary source of occupational information. The database also provides the basis for a number of Career Exploration Tools (http://www.onetcenter.org/tools.html).

OptimalResume.com
(https://www.optimalresume.com/)
An all-in-one online career center to help jobseekers through every aspect of the career development process. It includes tools to assess one's strengths, conduct career research, develop job search materials, practice for interviews, etc. See the site's free résumé samples for a wide range of industries.

Pennsylvania Career Guide
(http://www.paworkstats.state.pa.us/gsipub/index.asp?docid=405)
Developed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Department of Labor and Industry, this Career Guide is full of helpful career tools and tips. Though much of its content is targeted toward traditional high school students, many of its features (e.g., information about today's workforce, and résumé, cover letter, interview tips) are helpful in advising students of any age. Educators conducting career development classes may wish to consult the Resource Guide for assistance planning activities.

Quick Resume for Adults
(http://www.careerkids.com/resumeadult.html)
Developed as an easy way to see how your experiences and skills can be translated into job skills. After filling in the information, you will see a personalized résumé, which you can print, save as a PDF, or even email to yourself or someone else.

The Riley Guide
(http://www.rileyguide.com/)
One of the oldest directories of career and employment resources available online. Provided for free to all users, it guides users through all aspects of a job search, including where jobs are listed online, where to look for employers, and what other options exist for you when your current job or career field is on the decline.

Vocational Information Center
(http://www.khake.com/)
A resource guide for vocational education, including myriad links to career exploration, job market, workforce development, employment skills, trade and technical schools, occupation-related reference sites, and more. See http://www.khake.com/page98.html for "Career Counselor and Special Education Resources."

YouTube career videos
(www.youtube.com)
YouTube offers a variety of career-oriented videos produced by training institutions and students/trainees. Some of these videos feature training programs and occupations in an informative, creative, and entertaining way, but some can contain inappropriate content. Note: Screen videos in

advance to make sure that they provide accurate and appropriate content on the featured training program and/or occupation.

Enter the name of an occupation and hit "Search." Below are two examples:

- We're Bringing Nursing Back" video—A funny music video featuring nursing students. Lyrics mention nursing shortage, job duties, pay, and more: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5kVv2aqnEjs
- Men in Nursing" video—This video features men in nursing from different California nursing schools. It helps to debunk the myth that nursing is a "woman's occupation.": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rBEkKDc-2c&feature=related

"What Can I Do with a Major In...?" Online Resources
(http://www.rcc.edu/services/careercenter/major.cfm)
(http://www.myplan.com/majors/what-to-do-with-a-major.php)
(http://www.mscd.edu/~career/informationA3/major.shtml)
(http://www.ashland.edu/content/pages/major-sheets-0)
These websites can help students connect college majors to career titles and career planning.

Postsecondary Education and Training

Supporting Skilled Immigrants: A Toolkit for ESL Practitioners
(http://www.globaltalentbridge.org/toolkit/)
Developed by Global Talent Bridge, this toolkit is for ESOL practitioners working with foreign-educated and skilled immigrants trying to transfer their expertise and credentials to employment in the US. It presents the various barriers facing skilled immigrants as they seek to integrate into academic and professional settings in the U.S. and identifies key challenges that educators face when working with highly-skilled students in mixed classroom settings. It introduces best practices from the field and a directory of successful programs dedicated to serving the needs of skilled immigrants.

Debt / Salary Wizard
(http://mappingyourfuture.org/paying/debtwizard/)
An interactive calculator that helps you decide how much students can afford to borrow in student loan funds based on future expected earnings. It also helps students calculate a salary required to make payments on current debts.

Income-Based Repayment
(http://www.ibrinfo.org/calculator.php)
An interactive calculator that helps students determine if they might qualify for Income-based Repayments (IBR).

25 Q & A Sites about Community College
(http://www.aasdegree.org/25-q-a-sites-about-community-colleges/)
AAS Degree has compiled the most commonly asked questions about community college. Among the topics they explore are affirmative action, tuition and fees, federal work-study, financial aid and loans, and transferring credits.

Getting the Most From the Job Market
(http://visual.ly/getting-most-job-market)
Today, we take for granted the idea that higher education equals higher earning power. But does a college degree necessarily mean you'll make more money? Visual.ly, a startup that promotes data visualizations, developed an infographic that takes a look at the numbers behind education and earning power.

What Makes Kids Drop Out of College?
(http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2006/05.04/13-dropout.html)
This article explores the question “Why do high school graduates become college dropouts, and what can we do about it?” The article looks at varying ways in which educators, administrators, and policy makers can make the dramatic changes required to reduce the number of college dropouts.

The Completion Arch: Measuring Community College Student Success
(http://completionarch.collegeboard.org/)
The Completion Arch is a web based tool that provides quick and easy access to national, state and initiative-level data that describe the progress and success of community college students.

Coaching College Freshmen So They Don't Drop Out
(http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-04-19/coaching-college-freshmen-so-they-dont-drop-out)
By exploring the stories of non-traditional students, Business Week explores how *coaching freshmen reduces undergraduate dropout rates and ultimately saves millions of dollars for colleges.*

Pathways to College: College Planning Resources
(http://www.pathwaystocollege.net/collegeplanningresources/CPCHome.aspx?id=129)
This online directory is composed of resources for use in helping potential students and their families plan and prepare for college.

Campus Explorer
(http://www.campusexplorer.com/)
This searchable database includes information on over 8,000 2-year and 4-year schools.

Vocational Training Schools by State
(http://www.rwm.org/rwm/)
RWM provides a database of Private Postsecondary Vocational Schools in 50 states. It is organized first by state, then by Training Occupation. Included are private schools that offer certificates, diplomas, associate (junior college) degrees, and bachelor (college) degrees in various Business, Trade and Technical disciplines.

The National College Transition Network (NCTN)
(http://www.collegetransition.org)
NCTN provides publications, training, and technical assistance to adult education programs, professional development providers, and policymakers to enable adult learners to succeed in postsecondary education that leads to jobs with family sustaining wages. Materials contain promising practice briefs, toolkits, and other curriculum and design resources to help educators and program managers plan for the needs of students interested in pursuing postsecondary education and training.

College for Adults
(www.collegeforadults.org)
Designed to help adults who are going to college for the first time, this site helps with career planning, college selection, and the application process. It also suggests ways to find money to pay for college

and directs users to resources to help prepare for college- level work. Under “Career Planning,” see the “Occupational Information” section to find topics, including information for ex-offenders and people who are incarcerated (“How To Get Your Criminal Record, Interpret It, and Clear It Up”).

Get With the Program: Accelerating Community College Students' Entry into and Completion of Programs for Study
(http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Publication.asp?UID=885)
This paper tracks the progress and outcomes of first-time college students over five years, using data from an anonymous sample of community colleges, in order to analyze patterns of student entry into programs of study and the relationship between program entry and completion. The analysis shows that students who do not enter a program within a year of enrollment are far less likely to ever enter a program and therefore less likely to earn a credential.

The Cost of Dropping Out
(http://www.npr.org/2011/07/24/138508517/series-overview-the-cost-of-dropping-out)
National Public Radio looks at the drop-out crisis through the stories of five people.

Transition and Reentry from Corrections Facilities

National H.I.R.E Network
(http://hirenetwork.org)
The National **H**elping **I**ndividuals with criminal records **R**e-enter through **E**mployment Network is both a national clearinghouse for information and an advocate for policy change. The goal of the National H.I.R.E. Network is to increase the number and quality of job opportunities available to people with criminal records by changing public policies, employment practices and public opinion. The National H.I.R.E. Network also provides training and technical assistance to agencies working to improve the employment prospects for people with criminal records.

Federal Interagency Reentry Council MythBusters Fact Sheets
(http://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/projects/mythbusters/)
Reentry MythBusters are fact sheets designed to clarify existing federal policies that affect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families in areas such as public housing, employment, parental rights, Medicaid suspension/termination, voting rights and more.

Back to School: A Guide to Continuing Your Education After Prison
(http://www.jjay.cuny.edu/backtoschoolsummer2010revision.pdf)
This guide from the Prisoner Reentry Project at John Jay College is designed for to help ex-offenders take the first steps towards continuing their education, whether that means learning English, working towards a GED, learning an occupation, or building on college credits already earned.

Going to Work with a Criminal Record: Lessons from the Fathers at Work Initiative
(http://nationalassembly.org/Publications/documents/ppv.org/238_publication.pdf)

Based on the experience of organizations taking part in the Fathers at Work initiative, *Going to Work with a Criminal Record* offers fundamental lessons on connecting people with criminal records to appropriate jobs and employers, as well as tools to organize your efforts. It outlines how to avoid mistakes and how to develop important relationships, including with employers, parole officers and the local child support enforcement agency

How Felons Can Get Jobs
(http://www.howfelonscangetjobs.com/)
A blog that offers helpful advice for how previously court-involved people looking for jobs. Some of the questions and answers are interesting, and you may find some new resources. Also, it may be something to look at as a resource to develop within your organization: would it be helpful to some of the students you work with to read weekly blog posts, or be able to write into a Q & A site, even if they are not participating directly in your program anymore?

Youth Represent

(http://www.youthrepresent.org/)

Youth Represent is a New York-based youth defense and advocacy non-profit organization. Their motto is "Justice from Courtroom to Community". Resources on this site include: Know Your Rights: Understanding Juvenile and Criminal Records and Their Impact on Employment in New York State, by Laurie Parise (Executive Director of Youth Represent) - This booklet was written to educate young people who have been involved in the criminal justice system, and those that work with them, on the challenges they might face when seeking employment and what can be done to lessen barriers.

Legal Action Center

(http://www.lac.org/)

The Legal Action Center is the only non-profit law and policy organization in the United States whose sole mission is to fight discrimination against people with histories of addiction, HIV/AIDS, or criminal records, and to advocate for sound public policies in these areas.

The American Civil Liberties Union

(http://www.aclu.org/racial-justice/criminal-justice)

The ACLU works to reform the criminal justice system and make the promise of fair treatment a reality for all people. The ACLU Women's Rights Project provides resources and information on this website. (http://www.aclu.org/womens-rights/employment-discrimination-against-women-criminal-convictions)

Glossary of Labor Market Terminology

The following terms are commonly used in connection with labor market information and workforce development. Definitions were drawn from several sources, including the LMI offices of California, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Ohio, and Rhode Island; and the Web sites of ACTE (Association for Career and Technical Education), the Bureau of Labor Statistics, CareerOneStop, the International Economic Development Council, Jobs for the Future, NAHETS (National Association of Heavy Equipment Training Schools), National Council for Workforce Education, National Institute for Literacy, Ohio Stackable Certificates Initiative (Ohio Board of Regents' University System of Ohio), *Pennsylvania Career Guide 2008-2009* (PA Dept. of Labor & Industry), the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL), the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Workforce Strategy Center.

A

apprenticeship

Trains an apprentice in a skilled profession (e.g., carpentry, auto mechanics, welding). Working under the direct supervision of an experienced worker, apprentices receive on-the-job training supplemented by classroom instruction. Their sponsors—including employers, employer associations, and joint labor-management organizations—provide apprentices with instruction that reflects industry needs. Apprenticeships generally last about four years but can range from one to six years. Apprenticeship training programs are usually registered with DOL or a State Apprenticeship Agency and provide training under conditions specified in a written apprenticeship agreement.

B

benefits

Nonwage compensation provided to employees. Benefits include paid leave (e.g., vacations, holidays, sick leave); supplemental pay (including premium pay for overtime and work on holidays and weekends, shift differentials, and non-production bonuses); insurance (life insurance, health benefits, short-term disability, and long-term disability insurance); retirement and savings plans (defined benefit and contribution plans); and legally required benefits (such as Social Security and Medicare, Workers' Compensation and Unemployment Insurance). Excluded from employee benefits are such items as payment-in-kind, free room and board, and tips.

bridge program

Helps adult students obtain the necessary academic, technical, and employability skills they need to enter and succeed in post-secondary education and training programs. They are often the first rung on the way to career-path employment in high-demand, middle- and high-skill occupations. Bridge

programs are generally aimed at adults who have reading and mathematics skills at or below the ninth-grade level, who may or may not have a high school diploma or GED. Most will have been out of school for a significant amount of time. Those who complete bridge programs typically move on to college-level education and training in the targeted field; however, sometimes they gain sufficient career-focused skills to obtain an entry-level skilled job. However, because bridge programs can provide both credentials and links to transparent education pathways, completers can return to education to advance to a higher-skilled position in the field. Bridges can be offered through many avenues, including adult basic skills/GED, English as a Second Language, developmental education, adult vocational/technical education, or WIA-supported programs.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

The principal fact-finding agency for the federal government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. BLS is an independent statistical agency that collects, processes, analyzes, and disseminates essential data to the American public, the U.S. Congress, other federal agencies, state and local governments, and business and labor leaders. It also serves as a statistical resource to DOL by collecting, processing, analyzing, and disseminating data relating to employment, unemployment, the labor force, productivity, prices, family expenditures, wages, industrial relations, and occupational safety and health.

C

career and technical education (CTE)

Highly specialized, technical training in a specific field, linked to academics. CTE schools offer training in health care, automotive, construction, horticulture, engineering, computer technology, business, and many other fields. CTE has a long and rich history in the United States. Today's CTE has evolved from a limited number of vocational programs available at the turn of the 20th century into a broad system that encompasses a variety of challenging fields in diverse subject areas which are constantly evolving due to the changing global economy. Today's CTE provides students with: academic subject matter taught with relevance to the real world; employability skills, from job-related skills to workplace ethics ; career pathways that link secondary and postsecondary education; second-chance education and training; and education for additional training and degrees, especially related to workplace training, skills upgrades and career advancement. Each state administers CTE in a different manner. In many cases, state and local CTE programs are "leading the way" with regard to important public policy issues such as high school reform and secondary-postsecondary transition.

career ladder/lattice

Shows how a worker can build a career by moving up into positions with more responsibility. By acquiring additional knowledge and skills through education, training, or work experience, a worker can follow a career ladder within one organization or across several organizations. One example of a

career ladder would be the path on which one can rise from lawyer in a law firm to partner to managing partner.

career pathway

A series of connected education and training programs and support services that enable individuals to both secure employment within a specific industry or occupational sector, and to advance to higher levels of education and employment in that sector. Each step on a career pathway is designed to prepare workers for their next level of employment and education. Career pathways focus on easing and facilitating student transition from: high school to community college; developmental to credit postsecondary coursework; and community college to university or employment. Career pathways target jobs in industries of importance to local economies. Their purpose is to create avenues of advancement for current workers, jobseekers, and future labor market entrants, and to provide a supply of qualified workers for local employers. They help to strengthen the “supply chains” that produce and update a region’s knowledge workforce.

certification

Certification serves to document the competence of an individual on a set of predetermined qualifications or performance standards of an industry group, agency, or association. Its purpose is to confirm that a person is able to competently complete a job or set of tasks, usually by the passing of an examination. It is issued to an individual by an external organization. Certification is voluntary but may be required by some employers in some occupations (e.g., nursing assistants, financial advisors). Some kinds of professional certification are valid for a lifetime, once the exam is passed. In other cases, individuals have to be recertified after a certain period of time. Also, certifications can differ within a profession by the level or specific area of expertise. Certification does not refer to the state of legally being able to practice or work in a profession. That is licensure. Usually, licensure is administered by a governmental entity for public protection purposes and certification by a professional association (e.g., Licensed Practical Nurse). However, they are similar in that they both require the demonstration of a certain level of knowledge or ability.

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

The world's largest business federation, representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations. More than 96 percent of U.S. Chamber members are small businesses with 100 employees or fewer. Its principal activity is developing and implementing policy on major issues affecting business. Although all chambers can work with all levels of government, they tend to concentrate their efforts on specific levels: local chambers of commerce tend to focus on local issues; state chambers on state issues; and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce focuses on issues at the federal government level. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is not a governing body, chartering agent, or a regulatory agency for chambers of commerce, and has no say in how chambers decide to run themselves. Any community can organize and support a chamber of commerce. Local chambers of commerce are membership organizations of

the business community whose members can range from small businesses to large corporations, and can include education and health care institutions. These chambers deliver programs (e.g., business networking events) and provide support services to their members, while representing them through economic development initiatives and public policy advocacy.

criminal background check

Record requests made by some employers during pre-employment screening to discover any possible criminal history. For some jobs, employers request criminal background checks on job candidates, especially on those seeking positions of trust or those that require high security, such as within a hospital, airport, school, financial institution, or government entity. These checks are traditionally administered by a government agency for a fee, but can also be administered by private companies.

D

U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

A cabinet-level U.S. agency that enforces laws protecting workers, promotes labor-management cooperation, sponsors employment and training placement services, oversees the unemployment insurance system, and produces statistics on the labor force and living conditions. DOL administers a variety of federal labor laws including those that guarantee workers' rights to safe and healthy working conditions, a minimum hourly wage and overtime pay, freedom from employment discrimination, unemployment insurance, and other income support.

E

economic development

The entire array of activities intended to expand the economy of a designated area to increase the number of jobs available to the population of that area. Some of these activities are conducted by government, and some by the private sector, often in partnership with government.

employment change (number)

The numerical change in employment measures the projected number of job gains or losses in a given period of time (e.g., the difference between a base year and a projected year in number of jobs). For example, if an occupation had 1,000 jobs in 2006, and it's projected to have 1,500 jobs in 2016, the employment change (number) is 500. In this case, the occupation is showing positive growth and is considered a growing occupation. However, if an occupation had 1,000 jobs in 2006, and it's projected to have 800 jobs in 2016, the employment change (number) is -200. This negative growth shows that employment is declining. Also referred to as "net change in employment." The formula for numerical employment change is:

employment change number = # of jobs in projected year - # of jobs in base year

employment change (percent)

The percent change in employment measures the projected rate of change of employment in an occupation. A rapidly growing occupation usually indicates favorable prospects for employment. However, even modest employment growth in a large occupation can result in many more job openings due to growth than rapid employment growth in a small occupation. In addition, an occupation with declining employment (one that shows a negative percent change) may still provide a sizable number of job openings due to replacement needs. This number is sometimes given for a 10-year period (e.g., 2008-2018). Also referred to as “percent change,” “growth rate,” or “growth percent.” For an occupation, percent change in employment is calculated using the following equation:

*employment change percent = employment change number/base year number of jobs * 100*

employment and training administration (ETA)

This agency of the U.S. Department of Labor administers federal government job training and worker dislocation programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. These services are primarily provided through state and local workforce development systems.

entry-level job

A non-managerial, non-supervisory job for which employers hire workers with little or no previous work experience or with relatively minimum training or education. May require job specific skills that can be learned while on the job. Occupations that require more education or training may have specific entry-level classifications such as apprenticeship or internship.

G

growth rate (projected for an occupation)

Occupational growth can be considered in two ways and it is important to differentiate between the two: by the rate of growth (i.e., "employment change percent") and by the number of new jobs created by growth. Some occupations both have a fast growth rate and create a large number of new jobs. However, an occupation that employs few workers may experience rapid growth, although the resulting number of new jobs may be small. For example, a small occupation that employs just 1,000 workers and is projected to grow 50 percent over a 10-year period will add only 500 jobs. By contrast, a large occupation that employs 1.5 million workers may experience only 10 percent growth, but will add 150,000 jobs. As a result, to get a complete picture of employment growth, both measures must be considered. Growth (or expected increase in jobs) can be driven by a number of factors, including changes in technology and business practices, trends in laws and government regulations, and increases in research and development expenditures. Declining occupational employment stems from falling industry employment, technological advances, changes in business practices, and other factors. The larger the negative percent change in employment, the faster employment is declining. Industry

growth or decline will affect demand for occupations. At the same time, job growth can vary among major occupational groups.

H

Holland codes

A set of personality types described in a theory of career choice formulated by psychologist John L. Holland. Holland's six personality and work environment types are: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. The acronym for these personality types is RIASEC, which is why some use the terms "Holland codes" and "RIASEC codes" interchangeably. This model has been adopted by the DOL for categorizing jobs relative to interests.

I

industry

A group of establishments that produce similar products or provide similar services. For example, all establishments that manufacture automobiles are in the automotive industry. A given industry, or even a particular establishment in that industry, might have employees in dozens of occupations. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is used to categorize industries.

industry sector

A group of firms that share some commonality, such as the product, the inputs, or the skill sets of employees.

internship

A structured program in which an individual gains supervised practical experience in an occupation. May be paid or unpaid.

J

job opening

According to BLS, a specific position of employment to be filled at an establishment. Conditions include the following: there is work available for that position; the hired employee could start within 30 days; and the employer is actively recruiting for the position. In reviewing projections for a 10-year period (e.g., 2008-2018), look to see if the job opening data represent this 10-year figure or an annual average.

job openings due to growth and replacement needs

The projected number of job openings for an occupation (generally for a 10-year period such as 2008-2018). The number of openings due to growth (i.e., "new jobs") is the positive employment change from a base year to a projected year. If employment declines, then there are no job openings due to growth. The number of openings due to replacement needs (i.e., "replacements" or "replacement openings") is the net number of workers leaving an occupation who will need to be replaced. According to BLS, replacement needs are projected to account for 67 percent of the approximately 50.9 million job openings between 2008 and 2018; therefore, even occupations that are projected to experience slower-than-average growth or to decline in employment still may offer many job openings.

job openings due to growth and replacement needs = new jobs + replacement openings

If employment change is negative, job openings due to growth (i.e., new jobs) equal zero and total job openings equal replacement openings.

NOTE: If you are researching in-demand occupations for your students, "total job openings" is generally the most useful statistic for projecting the number of openings in a given occupation. BLS focuses on this number rather than on "net job openings" because replacement openings have already been adjusted for projected employment declines.

job shadowing

Allows one to directly observe another person at work. One can observe firsthand the day-to-day activities he/she would be performing in a particular job and learn what skills are needed to obtain that job. Acting as a shadow also gives one a chance to ask any questions he/she might have about the job and how to prepare for it.

L

labor market

The market in which workers compete for jobs and employers compete for workers.

labor market analysis

The measurement and evaluation of economic forces as they relate to the employment process. There are many variables affecting labor, geography, and supply-demand relationships, including population growth and characteristics, industrial structure and development, technological developments, shifts in consumer demands, the volume and extent of unionization and trade disputes, recruitment practices, wage levels, and conditions of employment and training opportunities.

Labor Market Information (LMI)

Each state and territory in the U.S. has a Labor Market Information (LMI) office that produces statistical information in cooperation with BLS. State LMI offices collect, analyze, and provide the public with information on their states' respective labor market. Statistics include employment levels,

unemployment rates, wage and earnings data, estimates of available labor, employment projections, business staffing patterns, career planning information, etc. These statistics are available for geographies such as the state, workforce development regions, metropolitan areas (MA), counties, select cities, and Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) areas. Employers, career counselors, educators, economic developers, job placement personnel, training program planners and policymakers use these data. LMI offices produce their statistics using the same procedures and methodologies. This allows for comparisons across different geographies, and for the collected statistics to be aggregated for use in national estimates. Each state's LMI office produces statistics for BLS, but they each operate independently, usually as a part of a state agency. (For example, in Nebraska, this office is a part of Nebraska Workforce Development–Department of Labor. In Alabama, it is a part of the Department of Industrial Relations.) Perhaps the most important reason for directly contacting LMI offices is that they often produce more detailed, local, and current information than what is required to support BLS in order to better serve local needs. LMI offices are also familiar with local conditions and can direct people to data for regions or metro areas within their state. In addition, they may conduct special studies, analyses of local conditions, and customized reports for local governments, state agencies, businesses or economic development entities. Some LMI offices serve as "test" or R&D sites to produce new statistical products and services. For example, Nebraska's LMI Center conducts surveys pertaining to job vacancy, job turnover, and employee benefits—surveys that are not yet conducted by all states.

labor supply

The number of persons employed and unemployed, plus those that would seek employment if they believed jobs were available. Generally, this term has been applied to those who are unemployed.

M

mean wage

An average occupational wage estimate calculated by summing the wages of all the employees in a given occupation, and then dividing that total by the number of employees.

median wage

The estimated 50th percentile of the distribution of wages based on data collected from employers in all industries. The "median" is the middle value of an ordered set of values wherein half of the numbers lie below and half lie above its value; 50 percent of workers in an occupation earn less than the median wage, and 50 percent earn more. The median wage is the same as the 50th-percentile wage. The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) branch of BLS produces employment and wage estimates for more than 800 occupations.

metropolitan area or metropolitan statistical area (MSA)

A geographic entity defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for use by Federal statistical agencies in collecting, tabulating, and publishing Federal statistics. A metropolitan area contains a core urban area (a large population nucleus) of 50,000 or more population. Each metropolitan area consists of one or more counties and includes the counties containing the core urban area, as well as any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration (as measured by commuting to work) with the urban core. Often, workers can readily change jobs within a metropolitan area without changing their place of residence.

N

net change in employment

The net difference in jobs from one period of time to another. Also referred to as "employment change number."

net change in employment = # of jobs in projected year - # of jobs in base year

net job openings

The net change in employment and replacements. This number is always less than or equal to total job openings. There is no comparable national statistic for "net job openings."

net job openings = net change in employment + replacement job openings

new jobs

This number only represents positive employment change from a base year to a projected year (if employment change is negative, "new jobs" is zero). For example, if an occupation had 500 jobs in 2006, and it's projected to have 700 jobs in 2016, the number of new jobs equals 200. However, if an occupation had 500 jobs in 2006, and it's projected to have 400 jobs in 2016—a net change of -100—this is negative employment change, so the occupation's "new jobs" value is zero. BLS does not publish "new jobs" numbers, but it refers to" "new jobs" as "job openings due to growth."

new jobs + replacement openings = total job openings

O

occupation

A set of activities or tasks that employees perform. Employees that perform the same tasks are in the same occupation, whether or not they are in the same industry. For example, "cafeteria worker" is a service occupation found in many different industry sectors, including services (schools, hospitals, businesses), the trade sector (eating establishments, department stores), and manufacturing industries. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries; other occupations are found in many industries. In some cases, people differentiate occupations from jobs by defining a job as paid work at a specific organization.

Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Program

A federal/state cooperative program that produces employment and wage estimates for more than 800 occupations. The OES survey is a semi-annual mail survey of non-farm establishments. BLS produces the survey materials and selects the establishments to be surveyed. The sampling frame (the list from which establishments to be surveyed are selected) is derived from the list of establishments maintained by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs) for unemployment insurance purposes. Establishments to be surveyed are selected in order to obtain data from every metropolitan and non-metropolitan area in every state, across all surveyed industries, and from establishments of varying sizes. The SWAs mail the survey materials to the selected establishments and make follow-up calls to request data from non-respondents or to clarify data. The collected data are used to produce occupational estimates at the national, state, and sub-state levels.

Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)

The OOH is a nationally recognized source of career information designed to provide assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. Revised every two years by BLS, the OOH provides information on job duties; working conditions; employment; training, advancement, and other qualifications; job outlook; earnings; related occupations; and sources of additional information for more than 250 different occupations covering 9 out of 10 jobs in the economy.

on-the-job training

Supervised real-life practice in a current job, usually conducted at the worksite.

One-Stop Career Center

One-Stop Career Centers provide jobseekers with a full range of assistance under one roof and work with employers to build a competitive workforce. Established under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), One-Stops operate in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, offering training referrals, career counseling, job listings, and similar employment-related services (e.g., résumé writing classes). The typical One-Stop Career Center serves thousands of individuals who are seeking employment, changing jobs, reentering the workforce, or learning new skills. They also help businesses find the qualified workers they need. Depending on the capabilities and priorities of the local area, they can offer businesses electronic job orders and job fairs, use of private interview space, background checks and customized screening, and regular referrals of qualified candidates. Many businesses work with One-Stop Career Centers to find diverse candidates including youths, older workers, and individuals with disabilities. The One-Stop Career Center system is coordinated by DOL's Employment and Training Administration (ETA). To search for One-Stop Career Centers by city or zip code , visit http://www.servicelocator.org/.

Occupational Information Network (O*NET)

The nation's primary source of occupational information, replacing the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). It provides comprehensive occupational descriptions and data for use by jobseekers, workforce development offices, human resources professionals, students, researchers, and others.

Central to O*NET is the O*NET database, containing information on hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation. Information from this database forms the heart of O*NET OnLine, an interactive application for searching occupations. The database also provides career exploration tools, a set of assessment instruments for workers and students looking to find or change careers. O*NET is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) through a grant to the North Carolina Employment Security Commission.

P

percentile wage

Shows the percentage of workers in an occupation that earn less than a given wage and the percentage that earn more. For example, a 25th-percentile wage of $15.00 indicates that 25 percent of workers (in a given occupation in a given area) earn less than $15/hr.; therefore, the remaining 75 percent earn more than $15/hr. Often shown as 10th, 25th, 50th (or median), 75th, and 90th-percentile wage estimates.

postsecondary awards

Awards signifying completion of an educational program beyond the high school level, including postsecondary vocational awards (e.g., an occupational certificate); Associate's degrees; Bachelor's degrees; bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience; Master's degrees; Doctoral degrees; and first professional degrees. Postsecondary institutions such as community colleges, technical colleges, universities, colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees and higher, and private technical schools offer these awards. Students are often taught in traditional classrooms and/or via distance learning facilities.

NOTE: Each of the occupations for which BLS publishes projections data is assigned one of these seven education categories or one of its four training categories (see the categories under "work-related training"). Taken together, BLS uses these 11 education and training categories to describe the most significant education or training pathway to employment for each occupation. Occupational analysts assign a single category that best describes the education or training needed to become fully qualified in a given occupation. However, for any given occupation, it is important to ask employers if this education level accurately reflects what they require or prefer in a job applicant or employee.

projected need for employees

See "total job openings."

projection

A prediction or estimate of an actual value in a future time period. They are based on information available at the time the projections were made, such as past industry employment trends, population trends, and anticipated industry developments. Economic conditions change in ways that cannot be

predicted, so projections must be updated periodically. Because projections are estimates based on imperfect information and are updated frequently, they should be used only as a guide for evaluating training and education needs. Local information must be taken into account when thinking about national and state-level employment projections. Employment projections are less accurate for small areas because employment levels for small areas tend to fluctuate more than for large areas. For example, it is possible for industry employment to decrease nationally, but increase locally—and vice versa. Long-term projections are intended to anticipate major structural changes in employment patterns. The focus on structural changes makes long-term projections more appropriate than short-term projections for planning training and education programs. BLS updates long-term employment projections every two years (e.g., 2006-2016, 2008-2018, etc.). These 10-year projections of industry and occupational employment, labor force, and economic growth are widely used in career guidance, education and training program planning, and for studying long-range employment trends. The projections provide information to individuals who are making decisions regarding education and training, entering the job market, or changing careers. States make independent employment projections with the support of the national office.

public workforce system

A network of federal, state, and local offices that function to support economic expansion and develop the talent of our nation's workforce. To meet the challenge of the 21st century global economy the public workforce system works in partnership with employers, educators, and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities in regional economies. This system exists to help businesses find qualified workers to meet their present and future workforce needs. Although the public workforce system is federally funded, most of the services for businesses are available at the state and local levels. Under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, each state establishes a state Workforce Investment Board (WIB), which determines strategic priorities, identifies high-growth industries, develops a workforce investment budget, and establishes local workforce investment areas across the state. Each state must also create a strategic plan, which is publicly available and can provide insight into business opportunities.

Q

quartile

The value of the boundary of the 25th, 50th, or 75th percentile of a frequency distribution divided into four parts, each containing a quarter of the population.

R

regional median wage

The median wage for a metropolitan area across all occupations in a given year (e.g., the median wage for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA NECTA Division was $22.40/hr. in May 2010). Please note that this is different from a specific occupation's median wage in a selected metropolitan area in a given year (e.g., the median wage for a plumber in the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA NECTA Division was $28.70/hr. in May 2010).

replacement openings

The number of job openings expected to arise from the need to replace workers. These openings result from people leaving occupations and are created by retirements, promotions, transfers, disabilities, and other turnover. They are an important source of job opportunities. According to BLS, replacement needs are projected to account for 67 percent of the approximately 50.9 million job openings between 2008 and 2018; therefore, even occupations that are projected to experience slower-than-average growth or to decline in employment still may offer many job openings. In most occupations, replacement openings account for many more job openings than employment growth does. Replacement needs are calculated from monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) data. Also referred to as “replacements,” “number of openings due to replacement needs,” “replacement needs,” or “net replacement needs.”

NOTE: there is no comparable national statistic for “net job openings.”

new jobs + replacements openings = total job openings

net change in employment + replacement openings = net job openings

S

stackable certificates

Represent the continuum of credentials available to youths and adults, including but not limited to high school diplomas, GEDs, technical certificates, work readiness credentials, two- and four-year degrees, apprenticeship credentials, etc. These credentials are meant to serve as evidence of a student's academic competencies and or/college and work readiness for postsecondary institutions and employers. The system of stackable certificates serves to clearly connect pre-college academic work to credit-bearing career and technical coursework that leads ultimately to a college degree. Local programs may develop and award stackable certificates. For example, the Ohio ABLE program created the Basic and Advanced Skills Certificates and the Oral Communication Certificate, which are awarded through local ABLE programs to qualified adults.

soft skills

Soft skills refer to a cluster of personal qualities, habits, attitudes, and social graces that help an employee perform well on the job as an individual and as part of a team. Soft skills include: communication skills; problem solving skills; flexibility; strong work ethic; leadership qualities; a positive attitude; the ability to handle criticism; time management; and teamwork. Employers from all industries value soft skills because research experience show that they can be just as important an indicator of job performance as hard skills.

T

total job openings

The projected number of job openings for an occupation (generally for a 10-year period such as 2008-2018). The number of openings due to growth (i.e., "new jobs") is the positive employment change from a base year to a projected year. If employment declines, then there are no job openings due to growth. The number of openings due to replacement needs (i.e., "replacements") is the net number of workers leaving an occupation who will need to be replaced. According to BLS, replacement needs are projected to account for 67 percent of the approximately 50.9 million job openings between 2008 and 2018. Thus, even occupations that are projected to experience slower-than-average growth or to decline in employment still may offer many job openings. Comparable to "job openings due to growth and replacement needs" or "projected need for employees."

NOTE: If you are researching in-demand occupations for your students, "total job openings" is generally the most useful statistic for projecting the number of openings in a given occupation. The BLS focuses on this number rather than on "net job openings" because replacement openings have already been adjusted for projected employment declines.

total job openings = new jobs + replacements openings

transferable skills

Skills, personal qualities, and attributes that a worker can transfer to other occupations. A person acquires these skills through a range of life activities—jobs, classes, parenting, etc.

U

underemployed

Persons who are employed in positions that do not utilize their skill or educational level, or who desire a full-time job but are only working part-time because of economic conditions.

unemployed

Individuals, aged 16 years or older, who are not working but are able to work, available for work, and seeking either full-time or part-time work.

W

wage

Money paid to an employee. The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) branch of BLS produces employment and wage estimates for more than 800 occupations. Wages for the OES survey are categorized as straight-time, gross pay, exclusive of premium pay. The collection of wage data includes: base rate; cost-of-living allowances; guaranteed pay; hazardous-duty pay; on-call pay; tips; and incentive pay, including commissions and production bonuses. Excluded from the wage data are: back pay; jury duty pay; overtime pay; severance pay; shift differentials; nonproduction bonuses; and tuition reimbursements. Wages can be reported on an hourly or annual basis. For example, in the Occupational Outlook Handbook compiled by BLS, jobs that are typically salaried show annual wages; jobs that are normally hourly show hourly wages.

NOTE: OES normally releases both annual and hourly wages for all occupations. However, check any notes on the data to find exceptions to this (e.g., occupations whose wages are adjusted for the lack of summer employment). In some cases, hourly wages can be converted to annual wages (and vice versa) using the following formulas (again, check any notes on the data to see if these formulas apply):

hourly wages = annual wages/2080

*annual wages = (hourly wages) * (2080)*

workforce development

All programs that prepare people for work, whether operated by public, private, and/or nonprofit entities. Workforce development and training refer to community efforts to train individuals for specific jobs or industries. Training may cover basic skills (e.g., literacy, numeracy), soft skills (e.g., work ethic, attitude, getting to work on time), and/or specific job skills (e.g., carpentry, Web site development). Community workforce efforts may also include job placement assistance, résumé writing, interview skills, and retention services such as legal advice and child care, all of which can help people stay in a job once placed there. The goal of workforce training programs is to improve individuals' skill sets, to place them in jobs, and help businesses find employees in line with their needs. A good workforce training program serves two types of customers: individuals and businesses. The U.S. public workforce system is a network of federal, state, and local offices that function to support economic expansion and develop the talent of our nation's workforce. In order to meet the challenge of the 21st- century global economy, the public workforce system works in partnership with employers, educators, and community leaders to foster economic development and high-growth opportunities in regional economies.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

Comprehensive reform legislation that supersedes the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and amends the Wagner-Peyser Act, signed into law on August 7, 1998 by President Bill Clinton. This federally funded employment and training program provides the framework for a unique national workforce

preparation and employment system, the most important aspect of which is its focus on meeting the needs of the nation's businesses for skilled workers and the training, education, and employment needs of individuals including career development services for adults, youth and for individuals employed, underemployed, and unemployed. Key components of WIA enable customers to easily access information and services they need through One-Stop Career Centers; empower adults to obtain the training they find most appropriate through Individual Training Accounts; and ensure that all state and local programs meet customer expectations. WIA provides the framework for the publicly funded workforce development system. Title I of the legislation authorizes the Workforce Investment System; Title II reauthorizes adult education and family literacy programs; Title III amends the Wagner-Peyser and related acts; Title IV reauthorizes Rehabilitation Act programs; and Title V contains general provisions.

workforce investment board (WIB)

Public/private partnerships located in each state that have several important functions in the public workforce system, including determining how many One-Stop Career Centers are needed in their area, where they will be located, and how they will be operated. WIBs also analyze workforce information to identify targeted industries and plan for future growth. They include representatives from business, organized labor, economic development, community-based organizations, education, workforce program managers, etc. Although the public workforce system is federally funded, most of the services for businesses are available at the state and local levels. Under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, each state establishes a state workforce investment board that determines strategic priorities, identifies high-growth industries, develops a workforce investment budget, and establishes local workforce investment areas across the state to ensure that the workforce system is focusing on the regional economy. Each state is divided into one or more workforce areas, controlled by a local WIB. By law, more than 50 percent of each WIB must be made up of employer representatives from its community. While each state has a state WIB and local WIBs, the number of local WIBs can vary greatly from state to state. For example, California has almost 50 local WIBs, while Alabama only has 3. In addition, it is important to note that WIBs can also vary by name (e.g., the Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board, the Boston Private Industry Council, Nevada works in Reno). To search state and local workforce investment boards, visit www.servicelocator.org/wibcontacts/.

work readiness certificate

A certificate intended to serve as a signal to employers that a person has the basic skills needed to perform, at minimum, entry-level work across sectors. Employers generally use the term "work ready" to describe someone who possesses a baseline of hard skills (e.g., reading and math proficiency, computer literacy, using office equipment) and soft skills (e.g., customer service, problem solving, reliability, cultural competence, leadership, teamwork). In many cases, employers view this combination of skills as transferable from one position to another, across industries. Work readiness certificate programs come in many different forms, each with its own purposes, target populations, and competencies assessed. Some programs focus more on hard or soft skills, but the most prominent

models incorporate both. Some target low-literate adults, who lack the kinds of credentials commonly accepted by employers as representative of a certain level of educational or professional preparation (e.g., high school or college diploma, steady work history, apprenticeship training). Others cover a range of people, from youths entering the job market to adults seeking to move up a career ladder. Some work readiness certificates are acquired by completing a training program that culminates in certification testing. Others can be acquired solely by passing a test that measures a specified set of employability competencies. In some cases, work readiness certification programs are managed by state agencies and conducted only in that state, while others lead to credentials that are designed to be portable across state lines.

work-related training

Typically, a range of training that includes: work experience in a related occupation; long-term on-the-job training (12+ months of on-the-job training, or combined work experience and formal classroom instruction, including formal or informal apprenticeships that may last up to 5 years); moderate-term on-the-job training (1 to 12 months of combined on-the-job experience and informal training); and short-term on-the-job training (1 month or less of on-the-job experience or instruction). Individuals often receive this kind of work experience or training through apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training, mostly conducted at worksites.

NOTE: Each of the occupations for which BLS publishes projections data is assigned one of these four training categories or one of its seven education categories (see the categories under "postsecondary awards"). Taken together, BLS uses these 11 education and training categories to describe the most significant education or training pathways to employment for each occupation. Occupational analysts assign a single category that best describes the education or training needed to become fully qualified in a given occupation; however, for any given occupation, it is important to ask employers if this training level accurately reflects what they require or prefer in a job applicant or employee.

Sample Best Bet Checklist: Apartment Maintenance

This tool can help you evaluate the information you gathered from your interviews with postsecondary training programs and employers. It provides a framework for you to determine whether the training program and associated occupation you researched—taken together—can be categorized as *a best bet, potentially a best bet,* or *not a best bet.* Since there is no best bet for everyone, the tool also asks that you briefly outline the characteristics of students who would be a good match for each best bet you identify.

IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, YOU EVALUATE A SERIES OF "BEST BET" CRITERIA UNDER FOUR KEY QUESTIONS:

9) Is this training program designed to meet industry needs? Does it have a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry?

10) Is this training program accessible to your students (or at least a subset of them)?

11) Are students likely to succeed in this training program? Does it have a track record of supporting and graduating students like yours?

12) Is the occupation associated with this training program a best bet?

STEP 1:

If you researched . . .

. . . **a postsecondary training program** (through postsecondary interviews), please write its name *and* location here:

Training Program: CBFM 1000 Building Maintenance Skills at Austin Community College. (SOC 49-9071.00 - Maintenance and Repair Workers, General)

Next, complete the blue sections under questions 1, 2, and 3. To fill out the last section, see instructions in the green box below.

. . . **an associated occupation** (through employer interviews), write the occupation title, industry, *and* employer name(s) and location(s) you discussed here:

Job Title: Apartment Building Maintenance Technician. **BLS Industry:** Lessors of Real Estate. **Employer:** Members of The Austin Apartment Association. **Location:** Great Austin Service Area—Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, and Caldwell.

Next, complete the green sections (2 pages) under question 4. Finally, proceed to Step 2 below.

STEP 2:

Once you've completed all four sections (blue and green), please return to this cover page. Use your answers to the four key questions at the top of this page to categorize the training program *and* its associated occupation as (please select one):

☒ **A Best Bet:**	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:**	☐ **Not a Best Bet:**
▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria.	▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria, but are not currently accessible to my students.	▪ This training program and/or its associated occupation do(es) not satisfy one or more key aspects of the best bet criteria.

Student Match: For which students is this training program/occupation a best bet? •No pre-requisites for this course •Fundamental knowledge of maintenance and safety •Good written and oral communication	**Student Match:** For which students could this training program/occupation be a best bet? What supports or preparation could you and/or your organization provide to make this a best bet?	Which of the best bet criteria does this training program/occupation *NOT* satisfy?

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Compressed program that leads to a credential -- Training program is no longer than two years and results in a credential such as an occupational certificate, associate's degree, etc. **Length of Training (Please check off one):** ☒ <6 months ☐ 6 mos. - 1 year ☐ >1 year - 2 years ☐ >2 years - 3 years ☐ >3 years **Write Total # of Courses: 3** **Credential Earned (Please check off one):** ☒ Certificate ☐ Associate's Degree ☐ Other _____	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs (including hard and soft skills) Key Indicators include: • Program curriculum has been evaluated by industry representatives and is revised on an ongoing basis to reflect industry needs. o This is a Customized Training Program Developed for The Austin Apartment Association.	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program prepares students to achieve industry certifications and licensure (and demonstrates at least a 50% passing rate for these exams)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Program offers hands-on experience that prepares students for work Key Indicators include: • Courses use a hands-on approach that mimics (as much as possible) the conditions and requirements of the occupation for which students are training	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

• Program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum for students	☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Program coordinator can name more than one company/organization that has recently hired program graduates and the typical starting wages in those jobs	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. At least 75% of program graduates are able to gain jobs in the industry (average over the last 3 years to account for the recession)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
f. Program provides job placement services/assistance to students Networking opportunities with Austin Apartment Association and Texas Apartment Association.	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
If applicable **g. The program serves as a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree** Indicators include: • The program has an articulation agreement with a 4-year college • The program can demonstrate that 30% or more of its students transfer to a 4-year college	☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A, DON'T KNOW
COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section): This is a new offering so no statistics are available.	

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **A Best Bet:** • Program is highly aligned with industry needs and has evidence of high job placement (or transfer to 4-year college). • High job placement	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Program is fairly aligned with industry needs and may or may not have evidence of job placement (or transfer to 4-year college), and I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Program does not appear to be aligned with industry needs and does not result in sufficient job placement (or transfer to a 4-year college).

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO YOUR STUDENTS (OR AT LEAST A SUBSET OF THEM)?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Program location (including placements for internships and practicums) is accessible to your students (i.e., not too far from home, accessible by public transportation, car, etc.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program either does not have a waitlist or its waitlist is no longer than 1 year	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Program is offered part time and/or includes weekend, evening, summer, or online courses	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. How rigorous is the academic program (i.e., what level of skill does the program require for entry, persistence, and completion)? Low Rigor • Program is accessible to students enrolled in developmental education • May offer a part-time study option Medium Rigor • Testing at college-level skills and/or completed all developmental courses • 1-2 lab science/upper-level math courses • May offer a part-time study option High Rigor • 3 or more lab science/upper-level math courses • Requires college-level prerequisites in math, science, or English • Requires full-time study	☐ Low Rigor ☒ Medium Rigor ☐ High Rigor
e. My students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy the program prerequisites and succeed in the training program	☐ YES, all/most of my students do ☐ Yes, some of my students do (please specify which ones): ☐ No, but with targeted prep, they could ☐ NO
f. A criminal record check is required to enter the program	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
g. Immunizations are required to enter the program	☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A, DON'T KNOW

ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK

h. Program cost:

Component	Dollar Amount	Comments
Tuition	**$850.00**	
Fees		
Typical cost of books per semester		

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):

Not PELL certified

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **Very Accessible:** • Program is accessible to all/most of my students.	☐ **Somewhat Accessible:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students (specify which subset below):	☐ **Could Be Accessible with Additional Supports:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Accessible:** • Program is inaccessible to the majority of my students.

RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Evidence of strong student support Indicators include: • Program demonstrates a commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles • Program coordinator demonstrates a commitment to supporting "nontraditional" students • Program coordinator and/or program faculty develop(s) close relationships with students • Program is known as a "hit" among students	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Evidence of strong student persistence Key Indicators include: • Program has a minimum retention rate of 75% from one semester to the next	☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program coordinator can demonstrate a high rate of program completion; over 65% for a certificate program, over 55% for an associate's degree program	☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A, DON'T KNOW

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):

New course offering so data is not available.

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **Very Supportive and a Proven Success:** • Program offers a great deal of support to help students like mine, and it demonstrates a high rate of program retention and completion.	☐ **Somewhat Supportive and Successful:** • Program is somewhat supportive and demonstrates success in retaining and completing students like mine (please specify which subset of students would be best served by the program):	☐ **Could Be Successful with Additional Supports:** • While the program may not formally support students like mine, my students could complete the program if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Supportive Enough and/or Does Not Demonstrate a High Rate of Retention and/or Completion:** • Program is not supportive enough to serve my students and does not demonstrate a high rate of program retention or completion.

IS THE OCCUPATION (ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TRAINING PROGRAM) A BEST BET?

(Note: The program may prepare/train students for more than one occupation, but the section below covers one occupation only. To help analyze whether an additional occupation tied to the training program is a best bet, it is recommended that you make copies of this page and the following page, fill them both out, and then staple them to the back of this document.)

Please complete this section if you researched an occupation (through employer interviews). Labor market information (from your Regional Labor Market Profile, your state LMI office, and/or www.careeronestop.org) can be helpful in answering sections a, c, and e below, but employer interviews should be your primary source for completing *all* of the sections below.

OCCUPATION CHARACTERISTICS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g., occupational certificate, associate's degree) to access an entry-level job	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Local/regional employers will hire new/ recent program graduates with limited to no industry-related work experience **If not, please write how much work experience employers say they require/prefer here:**	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Occupation's regional median wage pays *close to the region's median wage (at minimum)*	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Occupation has job openings in the city/town/region (Labor market data is helpful for a statewide view, but employer interviews are needed to verify city/ town/regional openings.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. Occupation is projected to grow in the state/region in coming years and/or is within a growing industry sector (Percent change between a base year and projected year is positive.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
f. Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs) or requires skills that can transfer to a different occupation with advancement potential	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS OCCUPATION?

☒ **A Best Bet:** • Occupation is in demand in the region, accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and offers competitive wages and career advancement opportunities.	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Occupation may or may not be in demand in the region, it may or may not be accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and it may or may not offer competitive wages and career advancement opportunities. I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Occupation does not appear to be accessible to my students and/or does not lead to career advancement opportunities—at least at this time.

Additional Things to Consider When Evaluating an Occupation

(space for comments within each category)

Is the occupation a good fit <u>for any</u> of your students' career interests and personal strengths?

☒ YES

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Write the occupation's interest code here: RCI

(INSTRUCTIONS FOR FINDING AN OCCUPATION'S INTEREST CODE: On the O*NET OnLine website, this is the two- or three-letter code that represents the dominant interest areas associated with an occupation. Go to O*NET Online at **http://online.onetcenter.org**. Search for any occupation by typing it in the "Occupation Search box" and clicking "Search." Next, click on the occupation to retrieve its "Summary Report." In the "Summary Report," look under the section titled "Interests" to find the occupation's "Interest Code.")

Is a criminal record check, credit check, or drug test typically required as part of the job application process?

If yes to any, please circle which above. Yes, drug test and criminal record check.

Can local/regional employers identify at least one local/regional training program from which they recruit and/or hire students?

☒ YES, they identified the following training program(s): CBFM 1000 Building Maintenance Skills at Austin Community College

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Work schedule (full time, part time, night and/or weekend shifts)

Jobs listed by apartment management companies are for full time employees but job openings that are posted through staffing agencies are for part-time and temporary workers. Most workers work full time. Some work evening, night, or weekend shifts or are on call for emergency repairs.

Work environment/setting (e.g., outdoors, indoors, small business, large corporation/organization, loud, quiet, flexibility to work from home)

Often carry out many different tasks in a single day. They could work at any number of locations, both indoor and outdoor. They may work inside a single building, such as a hotel or hospital, or be responsible for the maintenance of many buildings, such as those in an apartment complex or college campus. May have to stand for long periods or lift heavy objects. These workers may work in uncomfortably hot or cold environments, in uncomfortable and cramped positions, or on ladders. The work involves a lot of walking, climbing, and reaching.

Benefits typically offered (e.g., health insurance, tuition remission, retirement plans, bonuses)

Apartment management companies are offering benefits—reduced onsite rent, health. No benefits are listed for staffing agencies.

Is a driver's license typically required to do this work (and does one need a car)? Typically No, however it is required if the job is with a large apartment complex or on a college campus.

Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors? (Please check off one):

YES, the skills used in this occupation are transferable to the following other occupations and/or industry sectors: electricians; carpenters; heating, air-conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers; and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters.

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Sample Best Bet Checklist: Computer Support Specialist

This tool can help you evaluate the information you gathered from your interviews with postsecondary training programs and employers. It provides a framework for you to determine whether the training program and associated occupation you researched—taken together—can be categorized as *a best bet, potentially a best bet,* or *not a best bet.* Since there is no best bet for everyone, the tool also asks that you briefly outline the characteristics of students who would be a good match for each best bet you identify.

IN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, YOU EVALUATE A SERIES OF "BEST BET" CRITERIA UNDER FOUR KEY QUESTIONS:

13) Is this training program designed to meet industry needs? Does it have a track record of placing graduates in jobs in a related industry?

14) Is this training program accessible to your students (or at least a subset of them)?

15) Are students likely to succeed in this training program? Does it have a track record of supporting and graduating students like yours?

16) Is the occupation associated with this training program a best bet?

STEP 1:

If you researched . . .

. . . **a postsecondary training program** (through postsecondary interviews), please write its name *and* location here:

Training Program: PC Technician Series at Austin Community College. (SOC 15-1151.00 - Computer Support Specialists)

Next, complete the blue sections under questions 1, 2, and 3. To fill out the last section, see instructions in the green box below.

. . . **an associated occupation** (through employer interviews), write the occupation title, industry, *and* employer name(s) and location(s) you discussed here:

Job Title: Computer Support Specialists. **BLS Industries:** IT, Education, Government, Healthcare. **Employer:** Multiple IT, Education, Government, Healthcare. **Location:** Great Austin Service Area—Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, and Caldwell.

Next, complete the green sections (2 pages) under question 4. Finally, proceed to Step 2 below.

STEP 2:

Once you've completed all four sections (blue and green), please return to this cover page. Use your answers to the four key questions at the top of this page to categorize the training program *and* its associated occupation as (please select one):

☒ **A Best Bet:**	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:**	☐ **Not a Best Bet:**
▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria.	▪ This training program and its associated occupation satisfy all or most of the best bet criteria, but are not currently accessible to my students.	▪ This training program and/or its associated occupation do(es) not satisfy one or more key aspects of the best bet criteria.

Student Match: For which students is this training program/occupation a best bet? Must have a basic knowledge of internet browsers and navigating computer file structures. Must have a basic understanding of computer components—monitor, mouse, keyboard, speakers. Must be able to type at least 35 words per minute. Proficient in reading, writing, and following verbal and written directives.	**Student Match:** For which students could this training program/occupation be a best bet? What supports or preparation could you and/or your organization provide to make this a best bet?	Which of the best bet criteria does this training program/occupation *NOT* satisfy?

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM DESIGNED TO MEET INDUSTRY NEEDS? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF PLACING GRADUATES IN JOBS IN A RELATED INDUSTRY?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Compressed program that leads to a credential -- Training program is no longer than two years and results in a credential such as an occupational certificate, associate's degree, etc. **Length of Training (Please check off one):** ☒ <6 months ☐ 6 mos. - 1 year ☐ >1 year - 2 years ☐ >2 years - 3 years ☐ >3 years **Write Total # of Courses: 3** **Credential Earned (Please check off one):** ☒Certificate ☐ Associate's Degree ☐ Other _____	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program curriculum is aligned with industry needs (including hard and soft skills) Key Indicators include: • Program curriculum has been evaluated by industry representatives and is revised on an ongoing basis to reflect industry needs.	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program prepares students to achieve industry certifications and licensure (and demonstrates at least a 50% passing rate for these exams)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

c. Program offers hands-on experience that prepares students for work Key Indicators include: • Courses use a hands-on approach that mimics (as much as possible) the conditions and requirements of the occupation for which students are training	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program offers at least one semester of an internship or practicum for students	☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Program coordinator can name more than one company/organization that has recently hired program graduates and the typical starting wages in those jobs	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. At least 75% of program graduates are able to gain jobs in the industry (average over the last 3 years to account for the recession)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
f. Program provides job placement services/assistance to students	☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
If applicable **g. The program serves as a transfer pathway to a bachelor's degree** Indicators include: • The program has an articulation agreement with a 4-year college • The program can demonstrate that 30% or more of its students transfer to a 4-year college	☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ N/A, DON'T KNOW
COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):	

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **A Best Bet:** • Program is highly aligned with industry needs and has evidence of high job placement (or transfer to 4-year college). • High jobs placement	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Program is fairly aligned with industry needs and may or may not have evidence of job placement (or transfer to 4-year college), and I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Program does not appear to be aligned with industry needs and does not result in sufficient job placement (or transfer to a 4-year college).

IS THIS TRAINING PROGRAM ACCESSIBLE TO YOUR STUDENTS (OR AT LEAST A SUBSET OF THEM)?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Program location (including placements for internships and practicums) is accessible to your students (i.e., not too far from home, accessible by public transportation, car, etc.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Program either does not have a waitlist or its waitlist is no longer than 1 year	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Program is offered part time and/or includes weekend, evening, summer, or online courses	☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. How rigorous is the academic program (i.e., what level of skill does the program require for entry, persistence, and completion)? Low Rigor • Program is accessible to students enrolled in developmental education • May offer a part-time study option Medium Rigor • Testing at college-level skills and/or completed all developmental courses • 1-2 lab science/upper-level math courses • May offer a part-time study option High Rigor • 3 or more lab science/upper-level math courses • Requires college-level prerequisites in math, science, or English • Requires full-time study	☒ Low Rigor ☐ Medium Rigor ☐ High Rigor
e. My students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to satisfy the program prerequisites and succeed in the training program	☐ YES, all/most of my students do ☐ Yes, some of my students do (please specify which ones): ☐ No, but with targeted prep, they could ☐ NO
f. A criminal record check is required to enter the program	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
g. Immunizations are required to enter the program	☐ YES ☒ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

h. Program cost:

Component	Dollar Amount	Comments
Tuition	**$1,700.00**	
Fees		
Typical cost of books per semester	**$60.00**	

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):

Not PELL certified

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **Very Accessible:** • Program is accessible to all/most of my students.	☐ **Somewhat Accessible:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students (specify which subset below):	☐ **Could Be Accessible with Additional Supports:** • Program is accessible to at least some of my students if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Accessible:** • Program is inaccessible to the majority of my students.

ARE STUDENTS LIKELY TO SUCCEED IN THIS TRAINING PROGRAM? DOES IT HAVE A TRACK RECORD OF SUPPORTING AND GRADUATING STUDENTS LIKE YOURS?

Please complete this section if you researched a postsecondary training program.

BEST BET TRAINING PROGRAM COMPONENTS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Evidence of strong student support Indicators include: • Program demonstrates a commitment to engaging multiple learners and learning styles • Program coordinator demonstrates a commitment to supporting "nontraditional" students • Program coordinator and/or program faculty develop(s) close relationships with students • Program is known as a "hit" among students	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Evidence of strong student persistence Key Indicators include: • Program has a minimum retention rate of 75% from one semester to the next	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
• Program coordinator can demonstrate a high rate of program completion; over 65% for a certificate program, over 55% for an associate's degree program	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

COMMENTS (You can use this space for any comments or details related to the information in this section):

ACC assists students who are facing skill and life challenges. The assistance is provided both in a group setting or one-on-one. They provide GED and CompTIA Strata classes prior to a student enrolling into the PC Technician Series. The instructors work one-on-one with any student who has learning difficulties by slowing down and adjusting the style of presenting the course material. All students who attend class and participate in the learning process will get their certification.

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS TRAINING PROGRAM?

☒ **Very Supportive and a Proven Success:** • Program offers a great deal of support to help students like mine, and it demonstrates a high rate of program retention and completion.	☐ **Somewhat Supportive and Successful:** • Program is somewhat supportive and demonstrates success in retaining and completing students like mine (please specify which subset of students would be best served by the program):	☐ **Could Be Successful with Additional Supports:** • While the program may not formally support students like mine, my students could complete the program if my organization can provide the following preparation and support:	☐ **Not Supportive Enough and/or Does Not Demonstrate a High Rate of Retention and/or Completion:** • Program is not supportive enough to serve my students and does not demonstrate a high rate of program retention or completion.

IS THE OCCUPATION (ASSOCIATED WITH THIS TRAINING PROGRAM) A BEST BET? (Note: The program may prepare/train students for more than one occupation, but the section below covers one occupation only. To help analyze whether an additional occupation tied to the training program is a best bet, it is recommended that you make copies of this page and the following page, fill them both out, and then staple them to the back of this document.)

Please complete this section if you researched an occupation (through employer interviews). Labor market information (from your Regional Labor Market Profile, your state LMI office, and/or www.careeronestop.org) can be helpful in answering sections a, c, and e below, but employer interviews should be your primary source for completing *all* of the sections below.

OCCUPATION CHARACTERISTICS:	CHECK OFF ONE:
a. Requires less than a bachelor's degree (e.g., occupational certificate, associate's degree) to access an entry-level job	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
b. Local/regional employers will hire new/ recent program graduates with limited to no industry-related work experience **If not, please write how much work experience employers say they require/prefer here:**	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
c. Occupation's regional median wage pays *close to the region's median wage (at minimum)*	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
d. Occupation has job openings in the city/town/region (Labor market data is helpful for a statewide view, but employer interviews are needed to verify city/ town/regional openings.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
e. Occupation is projected to grow in the state/region in coming years and/or is within a growing industry sector (Percent change between a base year and projected year is positive.)	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW
f. Occupation has a well-defined career ladder (opportunities to advance to higher-paying jobs) or requires skills that can transfer to a different occupation with advancement potential	☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

BASED ON THE CRITERIA IN THIS SECTION, HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY THIS OCCUPATION?

☒ **A Best Bet:** • Occupation is in demand in the region, accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and offers competitive wages and career advancement opportunities.	☐ **Potentially a Best Bet:** • Occupation may or may not be in demand in the region, it may or may not be accessible to new/recent graduates with less than a bachelor's degree and limited work experience, and it may or may not offer competitive wages and career advancement opportunities. I have the following reservations:	☐ **Not a Best Bet:** • Occupation does not appear to be accessible to my students and/or does not lead to career advancement opportunities—at least at this time.

Additional Things to Consider When Evaluating an Occupation

(space for comments within each category)

Is the occupation a good fit <u>for any</u> of your students' career interests and personal strengths?

☒ YES

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Write the occupation's interest code here: RIC

(INSTRUCTIONS FOR FINDING AN OCCUPATION'S INTEREST CODE: On the O*NET OnLine website, this is the two- or three-letter code that represents the dominant interest areas associated with an occupation. Go to O*NET Online at **http://online.onetcenter.org**. Search for any occupation by typing it in the "Occupation Search box" and clicking "Search." Next, click on the occupation to retrieve its "Summary Report." In the "Summary Report," look under the section titled "Interests" to find the occupation's "Interest Code.")

Is a criminal record check, credit check, or drug test typically required as part of the job application process?

If yes to any, please circle which above. Yes. Drug Test, Criminal Record Test

Can local/regional employers identify at least one local/regional training program from which they recruit and/or hire students?

☒ YES, they identified the following training program(s): PC Technician Series at Austin Community College

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Work schedule (full time, part time, night and/or weekend shifts)

Most computer support specialists have full-time work schedules; however, many do not work typical 9-to-5 jobs. Because computer support is important for businesses, support specialists must be available 24 hours a day. As a result, many support specialists must work nights or weekends and travel is often required.

Work environment/setting (e.g., outdoors, indoors, small business, large corporation/organization, loud, quiet, flexibility to work from home)

Faster computer networks are making it possible for some support specialists, particularly help-desk technicians, to work from a home office. However, specialized help-desk technicians may have to travel to a client's location to solve a problem. They work in many different industries, including information technology (IT), education, finance, health care, and telecommunication. Many help-desk technicians work for outside support service firms on a contract basis and provide help to a range of businesses and consumers.

Benefits typically offered (e.g., health insurance, tuition remission, retirement plans, bonuses)

Corporations, Government, Finance and Healthcare companies are offering benefits. However, staffing agencies and other contract job openings do not offer benefits.

Is a driver's license typically required to do this work (and does one need a car)? A driver's license is required if the job is for a specialized help desk technician who is required to travel. However, if the job is for a general help desk within an office then a driver's license is not required.

Are the skills used in this occupation transferable to other occupations and/or industry sectors? (Please check off one):

YES, the skills used in this occupation are transferable to the following other occupations and/or industry sectors: Computer and Information Systems Managers, Computer Programmers, Computer Systems Analysts, Database Administrators, Information Security Analysts, Web Developers, Network and Computer Systems Administrators and Software Developers.

☐ NO

☐ N/A, DON'T KNOW

Sterile Processing Technician

WHAT I DO: I am a medical professional who sterilizes and sets up supplies and equipment needed for surgery, physical exams, and other medical procedures.

My tasks include:

- Receiving used surgical instruments, supplies, and equipment from operating rooms and other areas of a hospital/medical facility
- Disassembling, inspecting (to set aside any rejects), cleaning, reassembling, and sorting contaminated supplies and equipment
- Loading, monitoring, operating, and maintaining different kinds of cleaning and sterilization equipment
- Identifying, documenting, and reporting equipment in need of repair
- Organizing and assembling instrument trays required for specific surgical cases (for example, total knee replacement, sinus surgery, or gall bladder surgery), and filling special requests as needed
- Maintaining records of all equipment and supplies (for example, scissors, screws, and drapes) and ordering supplies as needed

WHAT MAKES MY JOB HOT?

Short-term training:

- Training programs are typically 2-5 months long, including both lecture and lab/clinical practice. Programs prepare students to take a professional certification exam.
- Program graduates often receive a *Certificate of Completion in Central Processing*, which—along with professional certification—can get them an entry-level job as a Sterile Processing Tech.

Solid growth:

- In Massachusetts, this job is expected to grow 10% from 2008-2018.

Good pay (Boston 2010 figures):

- Typical entry-level wage: $13.73/hr.
- Median wage: $18.31/hr.
- Experienced-level wage: $24.96

Typical job benefits include:

- Medical & other insurance
- 401(k) retirement savings plan
- Tuition and certification fee reimbursement

Room for advancement:

- A Sterile Processing Tech can move up to become a Sterile Processing Tech II, then III, and can then advance to become a Supervisor or Manager.

My job is a good fit for someone who is:

- ✓ Hands on and comfortable with performing routine tasks
- ✓ Organized and detail-oriented
- ✓ A problem solver
- ✓ A good communicator

For more info about this job:

CareerOneStop — See the Occupation Profile for "Medical Equipment Preparers"
http://www.careeronestop.org/

Sources: CareerOneStop; Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics Survey; Massachusetts Wage Information; MA Department of Workforce Development; America's Career InfoNet (O*NET OnLine) • Photo Credits: *The Bay State Banner,* Oct. 14, 2010, Vol. 46, No. 10 (leftmost photo); World photos by Don Seabrook (middle photos); Healthcare Purchasing News (rightmost photo).

Getting a Foot in the Door: What Employers are Looking For

Typical work settings include: Hospitals, surgical centers, physician and dental offices, biotech and veterinary hospitals and clinics

Employers may also refer to me as a(n):

- Central Processing & Distribution Technician (CPD Tech)
- Central Processing Technician (CPT)
- Central Sterile Processing Technician
- Central Sterile Supply Technician (CSS Tech)
- Instrument Technician
- Sterile Processing & Distribution Technician (SPD Tech)

Employers in the Boston area include:

- Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Brigham & Women's Hospital
- Children's Hospital
- Faulkner Hospital
- Massachusetts General Hospital
- Tufts Medical Center

Typical Job Application Requirements Include:	
Academic/training credentials	• High School Diploma or GED • Short-term training—Coursework in Sterile Processing (often through a community college) to achieve a Certificate of Completion in Sterile Processing *or* on-the-job training directly through a hospital program. Training program clinicals may require a criminal background and sex offender check.
Work experience	• For an entry-level Sterile Processing Tech I position, some employers hire new graduates, but others prefer or require that job applicants have a few months to 1 year of work experience in a health care setting. *TIP:* If you are a new graduate, find out if an employer would count clinical practice (for a training program) as work experience.
Other employer requirements/ preferences may include:	• Criminal background and sex offender check • Professional certification in Sterile Processing (or working towards it). See the following Web sites for organizations that offer professional certification exams: ➢ Certification Board for Sterile Processing and Distribution (CBSPD) http://www.sterileprocessing.org/ ➢ International Association of Healthcare Central Service Material Management (IAHCSMM) http://www.iahcsmm.org/ • Night, weekend, &/or holiday shifts—Technicians new to the job may get these shifts at first.

Hard and Soft Skills Employers Typically Seek

(in addition to the job's main duties):

- Reading, writing, and basic arithmetic skills
- Basic computer skills
- Ability to follow detailed instructions and organizational skills
- Problem solving skills
- Communication and customer service skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team in a fast-paced environment
- Patience to perform routine tasks
- Skill to work with small parts
- Physical stamina to stand and walk for extended periods of time, and strength to frequently move 20+ lbs. of equipment

Photo Credits: Photo of Sterile Processing Technician at St. Mary's of Michigan by Jeff Schrier, *The Saginaw News,* Nov. 29, 2010 (top photo); Photo of Sterile Processing Technician from

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN CENTRAL PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY
Fictional Community College

Jane Doe, Program Coordinator
Office A, Room 123, 123.456.7890, abcdef@college.edu

STEP 1: Learn about the program and make sure it's a good fit for your interests, goals, needs, and schedule.

- XYZ's Central Processing Technology Program is a 16-week course offered every semester. This one-semester course consists of 4 hours of theory each week, and 24 hours of clinical practice each week. Clinical is graded Pass/Fail.
- Students who successfully complete the program receive a *Certificate in Central Processing Technology.*

Wait List	
☐ Yes	☑ No

Attendance Options	
☐ Full Time	☑ Part Time

Classes Are Offered		
☑ Day	☑ Evening	☑ Summer

STEP 2: Find the cost of the program and make sure it's a good fit for your wallet.

- Tuition and Fees: **$2,579** (based on the cost the college charges a student for completing the program within normal time)
- Books and Supplies: $800 per semester
- Median Loan Debt: **$1,650** (based on those students who complete the program)

STEP 3: Apply to the college and complete all college admissions requirements (ALL requirements MUST be completed before applying to the program).

- Submit an application and proof of a High School Diploma or GED
- Complete additional enrollment requirements including submitting a Financial Aid Application and an Immunization Form
- Register--and it is strongly recommended that you attend the college's orientation session

STEP 4: Complete prerequisite courses (if applicable) and other program admissions requirements.

- No prerequisite courses, but a mandatory health program information session

---

CONGRATULATIONS – YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM!

STEP 5: Complete successfully all courses and other program requirements.

- The Central Processing Technology Program consists of the following course:

Course Sequence Program Length: 16 weeks total (1 semester only) Number of Courses: 1			
Course No.	Course Title	Credits	Minimum grade needed to pass the course?
CP 101	Central Processing Technology	4	C

This course introduces students to the field of Central Service. It focuses on: Decontamination; Disinfection; Sterilization; Instrumentation; Sterile Packaging and Storage; Regulations and Standards; Quality Assurance and Inventory Management and Tracking; and more. Course content also includes: History of Central Service Technology; Legal, Ethical, and Moral Issues; Communication Skills; Introduction to Microbiology; Infection Control; Medical and Surgical Terminology; and Anatomy and Physiology.

- Prior to starting the required clinical component of this course, you must submit a Report of Medical History and other forms, and you must clear a criminal background and sex offender check (results are confidential). Some clinical facilities may require additional screening such as drug testing.

CONGRATULATIONS – YOU NOW HAVE A CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION IN CENTRAL PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY!

STEP 6 (Strongly recommended): Take a professional certification exam.

- This program prepares students to take the international professional certification exam, offered by the International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management (IAHCSMM).

- It is recommended that you become professionally certified (by passing the exam) prior to applying for a job. Many employers require/prefer professional certification or expect that you work towards it once hired.

Moving on Up!: Grow Your Career and Your Salary

STEP 7: Use your certificate to start working *or* continue your studies.
Land a job as a Sterile Processing Technician 1 ***or*** pursue a Certificate in Central Services and Materials Management through the community college (3 semesters over 1 yr., including summer).

The *sample career ladder* below shows how a Sterile Processing Tech I can move up into higher positions in Sterile Processing. It illustrates how you can progress from entry-level positions in the field to higher levels of pay, skill, and responsibility. Each step contains position-specific information on the typical level of education/training and/or work experience regional employers require/prefer; professional certification; and a typical starting wage in the Greater Boston area. The orange box shows options for transferring some of the skills you've acquired in Sterile Processing to pursue training in other well-paying careers. Regardless of the path you take, it really pays to move up!

Note: The starting wage figures in the orange box below are based on BLS figures (for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA NECTA Division, May 2010). The wage figures in each step of the career ladder is based on conversations with regional employers about a typical starting wage for the position in 2010.

Sample Career Ladder in Sterile Processing

STEP 5
Manager
- Bachelor's degree preferred (e.g., Bachelor's of Science in Nursing, Bachelor's in another health care-related field or in business)
- Professional certification required
- 5+ yrs. experience
- Typical starting wage: **$35+/hr**.

Or, after some experience as a Sterile Processing Technician, consider pursuing training to become a:

- Surgical Technologist, $14+/hr. (starting wage); or
- Radiologic Technologist, $25+/hr. (starting wage); or

STEP 4
Supervisor
- Some college credits or Associate's degree not required but preferred (e.g., in a health care-related field)
- Professional certification required
- 3+ yrs. experience preferred
- Typical starting wage: **~$25/hr.**

STEP 3
Sterile Processing Tech III
- 2-3 yrs. experience as a Tech I/II
- Professional certification preferred
- Typical starting wage: **~$18/hr**

STEP 2
Sterile Processing Tech II
- 1-2 yrs. experience as a Tech I
- Professional certification preferred
- Typical starting wage: **~$15/hr.**

STEP 1

Types of Financial Aid Available

- Federal Pell Grants
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
- State need-based scholarships and grants
- Institutional need-based scholarships and grants
- Private need-based scholarships and grants

Contact Information:

Midland College
3600 North Garfield St.
Midland, TX 79705
(432) 685-4500
http://www.midland.edu/

A registered nurse job is a good fit for someone who is:

- concerned for people's well-being
- able to calm people who are scared or in pain
- a good communicator and decisive
- able to accept responsibility and supervise others

Employers of RNs in Midland/Odessa include:

Midland Memorial Hospital
Medical Center Hospital
Permian Basin Community Centers
Corinthian Health Services
Health Solutions

Advancement Opportunities

Once you receive your Associate of Applied Science in Nursing, you may want to apply for a Bachelor's in Nursing at a four-year college. Having a bachelor's degree can give you even more job opportunities. With more experience and education/training, you can move up and become a Nurse in Charge, a Nurse Anesthetist, or a Nurse Practitioner.

REGISTERED NURSE

What I do:

Assist doctors and care for patients in hospitals and other health care settings.

My tasks include:

- Performing physical exams and collecting patient information
- Providing medical treatment to patients, such as bandaging wounds or giving medication
- Monitoring results of treatments
- Keeping patients informed
- Maintaining records and charts, and supervising other nurses and health support staff

RN Job Description

Registered nurses, also known as RNs, are the most well-known of the various types of nursing professionals. They require more education than licensed practical nurses and usually take on a wider range of responsibilities.

Many registered nurses are involved in providing direct patient care. However, their work might also include a variety of other duties. For example, they may present health information to large groups of people, perform urgent procedures in an emergency department, manage and instruct 100 other nurses in a large teaching hospital, or teach and do research at a college.

Their work with patients can be divided into four general duties. First, they assess patients' physical, mental, and emotional health status. This involves collecting information on patients' personal, family, and community background; taking blood pressure, temperature, and other vital signs; and performing basic physical exams.

Next, nurses help design and carry out treatment plans for patients. This could mean bandaging a wound, giving medications or injections, coordinating treatments with other health care professionals, or referring a patient to another caregiver.

Third, nurses monitor the results of treatments to see if the medical problem has been taken care of and to make sure that the patient is satisfied. Finally, nurses keep patients and their families informed about their medical options and educate them about health issues like nutrition, personal hygiene, and lifestyle choices.

Work Conditions

- Employed in hospitals, nursing homes, walk-in clinics, prisons, schools, and other medical settings
- The work can be physically and emotionally demanding
- Most work 35 to 45 hours a week
- May work nights, weekends, &/or holidays
- Contact with patients who have infectious diseases

What Makes My Job Hot?

✓ **Short-term training:** You can get a job as a nurse with a 2-year degree.

✓ **High growth and many job opportunities:**
Between 2008 and 2018 in Texas, registered nurse jobs are expected to *grow 32%* and to have *over 8,000 annual job openings*.

✓ **Great pay (2011 Midland, TX figures):**

Experience Level	Hourly	Annual
Entry-level	$19.78	$41,100
Middle-level	$26.57	$55,300
Experienced	$36.26	$75,400

✓ **Benefits:**
- Health coverage
- Paid vacation and paid sick days
- Many employers provide child care and offer flexible work schedules

Sources: Texas Workforce Commission, Labor market and Career Information Department and CareerOneStop.org

Midland College's Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Nursing Program

Midland College offers a 2-year nursing program leading to an associate of applied science degree. Satisfactory completion of the program prepares you to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) for licensure as a registered nurse.

Program Requirements

1) Must have a high school diploma or GED
2) Satisfy Texas Success Initiative requirements
3) Current Certified Nurse Aide (C.N.A.) certification
4) Pass Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS)
5) Complete BIOL 2401 (Anatomy and Physiology I), BIOL 2402 (Anatomy and Physiology II), BIOL 2421 (Microbiology for Science Majors), and HPRS 1106 (Essentials of Medical Terminology) with a grade of "C" or above.
6) To ensure consideration for the Fall Nursing class, all admission criteria must be completed and all documentation submitted by May 25.
7) To ensure consideration for the Spring Nursing class, all admission criteria must be completed and all documentation submitted by August 25.
8) Criminal background check prior to clinical

Program Costs (2013)

	Tuition	Fees	Books	Room & Board	Total
District	$1,890	$400	$1,059	$3,900	$7,249
In State	$2,610	$400	$1,059	$3,900	$7,969
Out of State	$3,600	$400	$1,059	$3,900	$8,959

Turn over for more info on Midland's program →

Computer Support Specialist

What Do I Do?

- Pay attention to customers when they describe their computer problems
- Ask customers questions to properly diagnose the problem
- Walk customers through the problem-solving steps
- Set up or repair computer equipment and related devices
- Train users to use new computer hardware or software, including printing, installation, word processing, and email
- Give information to others in the organization about what gives customers the most trouble and other concerns customers have

What Makes This A Hot Job?

Short-term training:

- ACC's PC Technician Training is less than 6 months long
- Program graduates receive Industry Certifications for each of the three courses in the program of study

Solid Growth

- In Central Texas, this job is expected to grow 18.9% from 2012-2022
- There are currently 110 job openings in Central Texas

Good Pay

- Entry Level Wage: $29,000 annually
- Median Level Wage: $46,260 annually
- Experienced Level Wage: $76,970 annually

Good Benefits

- Medical, Dental, Vision insurance
- Retirement Plan (401k)
- Paid holidays, vacation and sick leave

Important Qualities

- ***Interpersonal skills.*** You must be patient and sympathetic. You will often help people who are frustrated with the software or hardware they are trying to use.
- ***Listening skills.*** You must be able to understand the problem your customer is describing and know when to ask questions to clarify the situation.
- ***Problem-solving*** skills. You must identify both simple and complex computer problems, analyze them, and provide a proper solution.
- ***Speaking skills.*** You must describe the solution to a computer problem in a way that a nontechnical person can understand.
- ***Writing skills.*** Strong writing skills are useful for preparing instructions and email responses for employees and customers.

OVERVIEW ONLINE TUTORIAL

SUFFERING FROM INITIATIVE FATIQUE?

Lesson Plan Templates

Content standards

CONTEXTUALIZED INSTRUCTION

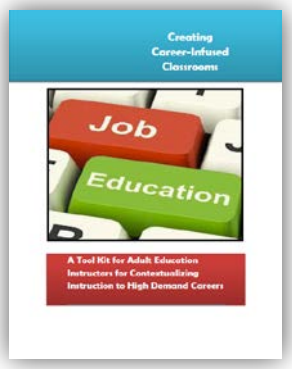
Integrating Career Awareness

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Career Pathways

How about an initiative that will put all of the pieces together?

CREATING AND SUPPORTING CAREER-INFUSED CLASSROOMS



Instructors

- 15 minute online overview on creating career contextualized classrooms
- Career Contextualized Toolkit loaded with sample instructional maps, frameworks, and online resources that integrate what you are already doing
- Train the Trainer workshops planned for 2014

Program Managers

- 45 minute online tutorial for creating a support system for contextualized instruction
- Support Toolkit packed full of resources, strategies, sample checklists, and processes for supporting dynamic and engaging career-infused classrooms