Elevating the Visibility, Relevance, and Value of Certifications to Help Close the Pandemic Divide
CURRENT STATE OF THE WORKFORCE
Civilian Unemployment Rate

Aug. 2020: 8.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
More than 55 Million Americans Filed for Unemployment Benefits

Source: https://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims.asp

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of individuals in the workforce believe they will need additional education and skills to find comparable employment if they lose their job.


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35% of adults are planning to change careers if they lose their jobs.

Some College, No Degree

36 million people hold some postsecondary education and training, but did not complete and are no longer enrolled.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse: https://nscresearchcenter.org/some-college-no-degree-2019
Certifications in the Current State of the Workforce

The pandemic has created an economic and social divide that disproportionately affects workers in industries that may not bounce back to previous employment levels.

Certifications can assist workers in finding jobs.

There is an opportunity for certification bodies to help both individuals and employers.
ROLE OF CERTIFICATIONS
The Certification Community Often Acts as a Planet Unto Itself
Credentialing Ecosystems

- Badges
- Certifications
- Degrees
- Micro-Credentials
- Continuing Education
- Certificates

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Workers with certifications are more likely to see their job as a career [54%] than those without certification [37%].

Workers with certifications are more likely than those without certifications to say they are expected to be creative or innovative in their jobs [58% versus 43%].

### Adults Without a Degree Who Hold a Certificate or Certification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment rates</td>
<td>Have higher full-time employment rates than their peers with no credentials (85% versus 78%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Have a median annual income of $45,000, compared to $30,000 for those without a credential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of education paths</td>
<td>Perceive their education paths as more valuable and are more likely to recommend them to others than are those without a credential.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Certified Value, When do Adults without Degrees Benefit from Earning Certificates and Certifications?, [https://www.stradaeducation.org/report/certified-value](https://www.stradaeducation.org/report/certified-value)*
What Workforce Issues Should the Certification Community be Paying Attention to?

- Confusion about terminology
- Equity
- Fast pathways to employment
- Unbundling of credentials
- Regionally accepted credentials
- Employability and soft skills
- Upskilling
- On-going and systemic feedback from employers
The Future Will Hold Increased Demand for Integrated Models of Learning

- Degrees embedded with certifications
- Work-based learning
- Boot camps

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• With the emergence of many different types of credentials, including badges, certificates, and micro-credentials, there is a growing need to understand the value or ROI of certifications.

• Workcred is engaging more than 30 certification bodies in discussions around the value of sharing their data so the information about their credentials can be better understood by policymakers, funders of research, state officials, consumers of certifications, and education and training providers.
Minimum Data Elements Needed for Data Sharing

- Credential Name
- Last Name
- First Name
- Birthdate
- Credential Award Date
- Credential Purpose

Willing | Inclined | Receptive | Uninclined | Unwilling | N/A or Already Collect
Additional Data to Support Data Matching
Additional Data to Support Data Matching Cont’d
Optional Data Elements for Additional Insights

- Military Status
- Race/Ethnicity
- Gender
- Disability Status
- Date of Last Recertification or Maintenance

Legend:
- Willing
- Inclined
- Receptive
- Uninclined
- Unwilling
- N/A or Already Collect

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ALIGNING AND EMBEDDING CERTIFICATIONS IN BACHELOR’S DEGREES

OPPORTUNITY
To convene certification bodies and universities to explore how students can earn both degrees and certifications as part of their four-year degree program

PROBLEM
Insufficient opportunities for students to earn certifications with labor market value and build those credentials toward a degree

PROJECT PARTNERS

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Key Themes from the Project

Certification bodies and universities gained knowledge and better understand each other;

Fostered an emerging community of practice between universities and certification bodies;

Developed a framework that identifies certification-degree pathway examples, challenges, and opportunities associated with building these pathways;

Identified value propositions for students, certification bodies, universities, employers, accreditors, and society as a whole; and

Discovered examples of partnerships between certification bodies and universities.
In follow up to the first report, Workcred and partners are now conducting a research study to better quantify the return on investment of credentials in manufacturing.

Will result in better understanding of how credentials can serve as an important resource in identifying skilled workers.
### Recommendations

| Develop standardized definitions of the different types of non-degree credentials. | Understand and access the quality of credentials. | Ensure that non-degree credentials are accepted as college credit and embedded into degree programs. |

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THE FUTURE IS NOW
A Call to Action!

Join the Workcred projects

Work with universities

Reach out to industry beyond the job analysis

Establish relationships with state officials

Apply to be on states’ eligible training provider lists

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