



AGENDA

NOVEMBER 3-4, 2022 • NEW ORLEANS, LA

#SSF22

THE SKILLS IN THE STATES FORUM IS MADE POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF:



The **James Irvine**
Foundation



JPMORGAN CHASE & Co.

GENERAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

REGISTRATION:

Wednesday, November 2

9:00 am - 5:00 pm. *The District*

Thursday, November 3

8:00 am - 3:00 pm. *The District*

JOIN THE CONVERSATION:



@skillscoalition



@nationalskillscoalition

#SSF22

NEED HELP? Stop by the registration desk for assistance during the event.



Welcome to the 2022 Skills in the States Forum! You're joined by approximately 200 colleagues from thirty-four states representing training providers, community colleges, unions, businesses, community-based organizations, researchers, advocates, and state agencies - all focused on expanding access to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that people can have a better life, and local businesses see sustained growth.

We're gathered here at the most pivotal of times. Our country is emerging from the most devastating economic crisis since the Great Depression. During the past couple of years, Congress has made billions of dollars in investments that have given states the opportunity to support and strengthen the workforce through skills training. With the implementation of historic investments on the horizon (and already underway in some cases), it is critical that we prepare advocacy and implementation strategies for these workforce development investments that do not repeat the mistakes of the past and, instead, promote an inclusive vision of the future.

Over the next two days, we'll discuss strategies for advancing racial equity in our work; leveraging new federal Digital Equity Act and infrastructure funding; improving equitable access to postsecondary financial aid and supports; promoting a transformative, more inclusive workforce system; elevating worker voices; building career pathways; and strategically using data to build a more inclusive economy.

At the same time, we'll have the chance to reflect on the lessons learned from recent investments in workforce development and strategize with one another on coalition organizing, communication, and mobilization tactics that are needed to build long-lasting, workforce development policies more equitable than those of the past.

We hope that you will use this Forum to leverage the collective expertise across states and organizations and that you will return to your respective states with new connections, strategies, and renewed enthusiasm for working in partnership to expand access to inclusive, high-quality skills training.

Thank you for coming and for adding your voice and unique insights to this Forum!

WHY WE ARE HERE

We need skills training policies that reflect people's career aspirations and their desire to succeed in the economy.

Every day, in communities coast to coast, working people, students, and families are looking for opportunities to get ahead. Jobs that require skills training beyond high school are the backbone of the American economy.

Many people want to learn an **in-demand skill**, but they can't afford the training they need to step into a better career.



More than **93% of voters** support increasing investment in skills and technical training.



Skills training can also boost local businesses.



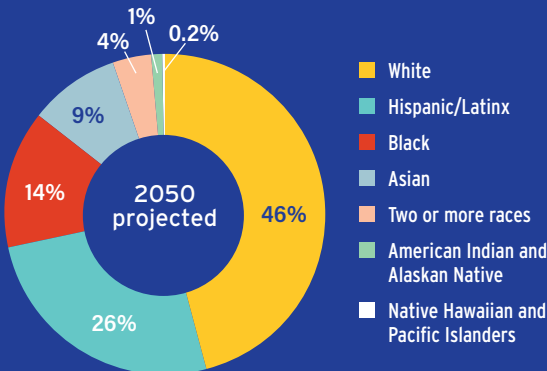
Three-quarters of small and mid-sized business leaders say that more investment in skills training would help their businesses.

We are fighting for an inclusive economy

An inclusive economy is one where workers and businesses who are most impacted by economic shifts, as well as workers who were (and continue to be) held back by structural barriers of discrimination or lack of opportunity, are empowered to equitably participate in – and benefit from – a growing economy.

Investments in inclusive skills policy can begin to address the disproportionate impact of economic shifts on workers of color, immigrants, and workers with a high school diploma or less; the essential role of small businesses who hire locally and invest in their people; and the moral and economic imperative to dismantle structural racism within workforce education and training.

By 2050 most U.S. workers will be people of color.



State policymakers can adopt skills training policies that support the assets and aspirations of all workers and ensure that everyone has a fair shot at achieving economic success.

AGENDA

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

- 12:00 - 5:00** **PRE-CONFERENCE MEETINGS & RECEPTIONS (INVITATION ONLY)**
- 12:00 - 3:00** **SkillSPAN pre-meeting**
Jackson
- 3:00 - 5:00** **SkillSPAN / BLU joint pre-meeting**
Jackson
- 5:00** **SkillSPAN / BLU reception**
Gordon Biersh Brewery Restaurant, 200 Poydras Street
- 5:00** **State Technical Assistance Initiatives Reception**
Grand Isle, 575 Convention Center Blvd

Thursday, November 3, 2022

- 8:30 - 11:30** **PRE-CONFERENCE MEETINGS (INVITATION ONLY)**
State Policy Technical Assistance Initiative Meeting
Jackson
- 12:00 - 2:00** **WELCOME, LUNCH, AND PLENARY DISCUSSION**
St James Ballroom
- 12:00** **Lunch**
- 12:30** **Welcome**
Brooke DeRenzis, Chief Strategy Officer, National Skills Coalition
- Keynote**
Clair Minson, Founder & Principal Consultant, Sandra Grace LLC

Unpacking Racial Equity and Inclusion in Workforce Development

Workforce development policies and practices can maintain or dismantle systemic inequities. This opening plenary will unpack what it means to advance racial equity and inclusion in a state's workforce development ecosystem. We will hear from workers and learners, who will share with us the challenges they've experienced navigating the workforce system and the opportunities that could be scaled to create an ideal workforce system. Clair Minson, a leading expert on the intersection of racial equity and workforce development, will offer a keynote on the manifestations of systemic and institutional racism in workforce policies, practices, and cultural

messaging, along with strategies for dismantling and creating more equitable and inclusive systems. A panel of workforce leaders will react and illustrate what this ongoing work looks like in practice, pointing to the possibilities in all states.

Panel 1: Workers and Learners

MODERATOR:

- Rashida Govan, Executive Director, New Orleans Youth Alliance

PANELISTS:

- Khaija Faulk
- Shamonique “Shammie” Crawford
- David Palacios

Panel 2: Partners and Stakeholders

MODERATOR:

- Clair Minson, Founder & Principal Consultant, Sandra Grace LLC

PANELISTS:

- Davante Lewis, Director of Public Affairs and Outreach, Louisiana Budget Project
- Kenyatta Lovett, Managing Director for Higher Education, Educate Texas, Communities Foundation of Texas
- Laurie Kierstead-Joseph, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Pima Community College

2:00 - 2:30

BREAK

2:30 - 3:30

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Coalition-Based Advocacy: Organizing and Mobilizing a Coalition for Policy Wins

Royal

Engaging with a broad and diverse coalition can propel state advocates to a win. However, the process of organizing and mobilizing a coalition of varying interests, priorities, and levels of engagement is not without its challenges. This session will feature discussions with state advocates on how they successfully built and organized their coalition with equity and inclusion at the forefront and highlight how each state coalition mobilized to push their policy priorities over the finish line.

MODERATOR:

- Erin Sheehan, State Network Manager, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- Anna Alvarado, Policy Director, California EDGE Coalition
- Emma Kallaway, Senior Consultant, Kinetic West
- Chaer Robert, Legislative Director, Colorado Center on Law and Policy
- LaShon Sawyer, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Towards Employment

Advancing Equitable Access to Postsecondary Financial Aid

Magazine

This session will focus on making college work by examining state approaches to enhancing the affordability, accessibility, and quality of postsecondary education and training programs. Learn how states are elevating holistic approaches to equitable student success through financial aid and access to nontuition support services, including for students pursuing non-degree credentials. Panelists will share successes, challenges, and lessons learned in this interactive discussion.

MODERATOR:

- **Jennifer Stiddard**, Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Collin Callaway**, Senior Policy Director, Arkansas Community Colleges
- **Randall Stamper**, Associate Vice Chancellor, Career Education and Workforce Development, Virginia's Community Colleges
- **Nicole Washington**, Principal, Washington Education Strategies

Capitalizing on New Federal Digital Equity Act Funding to Better Serve Workers and Businesses

Jackson

New federal funding has just begun flowing to every state to help develop workers' digital skills and invest in the workforce required to build new broadband internet access. Learn how you can get involved in your State Digital Equity Planning process and make sure this roadmap for new investment reflects your coalition's priorities for workers and small businesses. Find out how advocates are using local data to help illuminate digital skills inequities and opportunities, including for workers of color, women, low-income individuals, and other marginalized groups. Get ideas for how to ensure that your state's Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) funding invests in workforce development programs that provide equitable pathways to good jobs.

MODERATOR:

- **Amanda Bergson-Shilcock**, Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Catalina González**, Senior Technical Advisor, World Education Ed Tech Center
- **Katherine Keegan**, Director, Office of the Future of Work, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment
- **Burt Lum**, Broadband Strategy Officer, Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, Hawaii Broadband & Digital Equity Office

Meeting the Moment for Transformation: Policies to Advance an Inclusive and Equitable Workforce System

Commerce

Equitable, inclusive workforce systems require intentional decisions around who is being served and the investments being made in partnerships and programs. This session will elevate NSC's recommendations to improve access to and outcomes of the public workforce system, with an emphasis on centering racial equity. Attendees will participate in a collaborative activity to apply these recommendations to their state's workforce system and identify key levers of change that can be advanced with partners.

MODERATOR:

- **Nakeisha Ricks**, Senior Fellow, Workforce Development, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Dr. William Arnold**, Senior Director Office of Reentry, TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- **Reetika Dhawan**, Vice President of Workforce Development and CTE, Arizona Western College
- **Nina Pande**, Executive Director, Skills for Rhode Island

3:30 - 4:00

BREAK

4:00 - 5:00

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Building a Collective Voice: A Blueprint for a Winning Communications Campaign

Royal

Being an advocate for skills training means turning model policies, best practices and all your on-the-ground knowledge into a winning communications campaign aimed at the audiences that matter. Join this interactive session to learn how to transform policies into digestible messages across multiple digital platforms. Session attendees will work in groups to analyze state campaign examples while using a national communications blueprint and will walk away with practical next steps to be used in their state.

MODERATOR:

- **Tina Posterli**, Managing Director of Communications, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Brittany Cannady**, Digital Media Manager, National Skills Coalition
- **Nicky Lauricella Coolberth**, Senior Editor, National Skills Coalition
- **Marc Goldberg**, Owner/Principal, Skills Strategy Consulting
- **Tianna Montgomery**, Communications Associate, National Skills Coalition

Lessons Learned: Elevating Worker Voice to Advance Worker Equity and Transform Workforce Partnerships, Systems, and Policies

Magazine

As states look to create an inclusive economy, it becomes imperative to transform the public workforce development system to advance racial, gender, and worker equity. Centering the voices and expertise of workers is essential for changing systems and developing equitable workforce policies and programs. Hear how some states transforming their workforce systems through initiatives that bring together cross-sector leaders and advocates from state agencies, worker centers, nonprofits, community colleges, labor unions and labor-management partnerships, local workforce boards, and workers and learners to ensure those closest to the work and directly impacted by the issues are designing the solutions. Hear scalable and replicable strategies and lessons learned in the Worker Equity Initiatives in California and New Mexico, as well as other state technical assistance projects.

MODERATOR:

- **Karina Paredes-Arzola**, State Network Manager, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Simon Lopez**, Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- **Amanda Bergson-Shilcock**, Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition
- **Dr. Ana Luz Gonzalez-Vasquez**, Project Manager, UCLA Labor Center

Paving the Way: Leveraging Transportation Funding to Build the Infrastructure Workforce

Jackson

Over the last year, significant long-term investments in infrastructure have been signed into law with the potential to create hundreds of thousands of jobs, creating the need for additional investments in workforce training. Successfully meeting our infrastructure workforce needs in a manner that is equitable and inclusive of underrepresented populations will require workforce advocates to partner with state and local transportation agencies. In this session, find out more about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, learn what it takes to create successful working relationships with state and local transportation agencies, and strategize with other attendees on ways to create similar relationships to leverage funding in the long-term.

MODERATOR:

- **Megan Evans**, Senior Government Affairs Manager, National Skills Coalition

PANELIST:

- **Christopher Dews**, Senior Policy Advocate, Job Opportunities Task Force

FACILITATOR:

- **Caroline Treschitta**, Policy Analyst, National Skills Coalition

Solving the Parent-Learner Dilemma: Improving Child Care Access through State and Local Interventions

Commerce

Student parents face unique challenges in continuing their education, while also providing for their family's needs. One of those challenges is access to reliable, high-quality, and affordable childcare. More than one fifth of all college students are parents. These student parents, who are disproportionately women of color, are less likely to complete their degree programs, in large part due to barriers such as childcare needs. Therefore, addressing the childcare needs of student parents is an equity imperative. This session explores state and local interventions to provide quality childcare to student parents and considers how state advocates can organize around this issue.

MODERATOR:

- **Lindsey Reichlin Cruse**, Senior Fellow, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Dr. Arnel Cosey**, Strategy and Impact Officer, Kingsley House
- **Jessica Fraser**, Director, Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute
- **Ray Khalfani**, Policy Analyst, Worker Justice and Criminal Legal Systems, Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
- **Matt Williams**, Director of Research, Mississippi Low Income Child Care Initiative

5:00 - 6:30

RECEPTION

Mulate's, 201 Julie Street, New Orleans, LA

Friday, November 4, 2022

8:00 - 8:40

BREAKFAST

St. James Ballroom

8:40 - 10:00

OPENING PLENARY

St. James Ballroom

Advancing Job Quality & Equity through Sector Partnerships: State Policies that Can Place All Workers on Pathways to Good Jobs

Industry partnerships between employers, unions and worker organizations, education and training providers, and community-based organizations are a proven strategy for connecting workers to high-quality skills training and helping local businesses meet talent needs. But these partnerships also can and should improve workers' access to quality jobs, disrupt occupational segregation, and influence equitable industry practices. Public policy is key to supporting and scaling industry partnerships in playing this role. This session explores how state policies can cultivate and expand equity-centered industry partnerships and what coalition partners can do to advocate for such policies.

MODERATOR:

- Brooke DeRenzis, Chief Strategy Officer, National Skills Coalition

PANELISTS:

- Bishara Addison, Director, Job Preparation, The Fund for Our Economic Future
- Robert Espinoza, Executive Vice President of Policy, PHI
- Victoria Johnson, Global Equity Director, HDR
- Aleece Smith, Director of Inclusion and Sector Strategies, KentuckianaWorks

10:00 - 10:30

BREAK

10:30 - 11:30

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Lessons from the States Since 2020: Making the Most of a Federal Funds Boost to Strengthen the Workforce

Royal

In the last two years, the federal government provided states with trillions of dollars in relief funding in order to combat the health and economic implications of COVID-19. In this session, we examine lessons on state workforce investments, as well as uplift investment models that support workforce training, social services, and underserved populations. With those takeaways, we'll explore ways in which your states can replicate and broaden these initiatives using remaining federal relief dollars.

MODERATOR:

- **Katie Spiker**, Managing Director, Government Affairs

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Chytania Brown**, Chief Executive Officer, Employ Milwaukee Workforce Development
- **Amanda Klein**, Manager of Advocacy and Government Relations, United Way of Southeastern Michigan
- **Jason Perkins-Cohen**, Director, Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED)

Harnessing SNAP E&T to Build Career Pathways and Shift the Narrative Surrounding Opportunity and Resource Gaps

Magazine

SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) is a powerful and frequently underutilized program that states can leverage to build career pathways systems that increase postsecondary enrollment and completion, provide supportive services, and connect individuals to quality jobs. Through partnerships between community colleges, human service agencies, community-based organizations, adult education providers, state agencies, and workforce partners, states can harness SNAP E&T to dismantle systemic inequities. SNAP E&T can also be a tool to shift the narrative surrounding resource gaps, illuminating the root causes as structural and reframing the focus to the failures and faults of inequitable systems and not individuals or communities. Hear what's possible and how states are leveraging SNAP E&T funding and programming to create career pathway, close opportunity gaps, and advance racial and economic equity.

MODERATOR:

- **Kate Kinder**, State Strategies Director, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **James André**, Director of Operations, Career Education and Workforce Development, Virginia's Community Colleges
- **Brandee Davis**, Director, Economic & Financial Mobility, United Way of Greater Nashville
- **Elizabeth Guzman Arroyo**, Statewide Director of STEP and Pathways to Opportunity, Portland Community College

Beyond the City: Organizing in Rural and Suburban Communities to Build Power and Advance Equitable Skills Policies

Jackson

Suburban, exurban, and rural communities are often left out of policy conversations driven by urban organizers. However, in many cases, these less-densely populated areas hold outside legislative influence, making relationships with rural and suburban legislators a priority for advocacy campaigns. At the same time, these communities, traditionally thought to be disproportionately white, are growing increasingly diverse. Thus, it's all the more necessary to build relationships and engage with new advocates beyond the city center. Despite the challenges of organizing in rural and suburban communities, building strong relationships with advocates in these areas is a necessary component to developing inclusive and equitable advocacy agendas and achieving policy wins. This session explores how workforce advocates can form new relationships and build power in the suburbs, exurbs, and rural communities.

MODERATOR:

- **Erin Sheehan**, State Network Manager, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Pedro Ramirez**, President/Co-Director, Central Valley Workers Center
- **Logan Rockefeller Harris**, Senior Policy Analyst, North Carolina Budget & Tax Center
- **Dave Stone**, Advocacy Officer, United Way of Central Iowa

Demystifying the Path to an Inclusive Economy Using Data

Commerce

Data is essential to achieving an inclusive economy. Without access to the right information at the right time, policymakers, advocates, employers, practitioners, and individuals are all making decisions in the dark. This session will showcase policies that states can advance to ensure data is collected, disaggregated, reported, and used to better serve learners, workers, and employers. Attendees will examine which data policies are most needed in their state to support equitable workforce outcomes and learn more about the advocacy strategies that can advance them.

MODERATOR:

- **Yasmin Fallahkhair**, State Network Manager, National Skills Coalition

PEER DISCUSSANTS:

- **Alex Carmadelle**, Director of Workforce Policy at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
- **Stephanie Keinath**, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Melinda Mack**, Executive Director, New York Association of Training and Employment Professionals (NYATEP)
- **Rachel Vilsack**, Strategic and Policy Engagement Manager, Credential Engine

11:35 - 12:30

NETWORKING SESSIONS

In these sessions, attendees will have the opportunity to reflect on and have further conversations about this year's Skills in the States Forum content as well as connect with fellow Forum participants from their states and regions. Stick around for this interactive session to continue discussions, ask additional questions, and follow up on potential connections.

Northeast Networking Session

Royal

Midwest Networking Session

Magazine

South Networking Session

Jackson

West Networking Session

Commerce

12:30 - 1:30

LUNCH & CLOSING REMARKS

St. James Ballroom

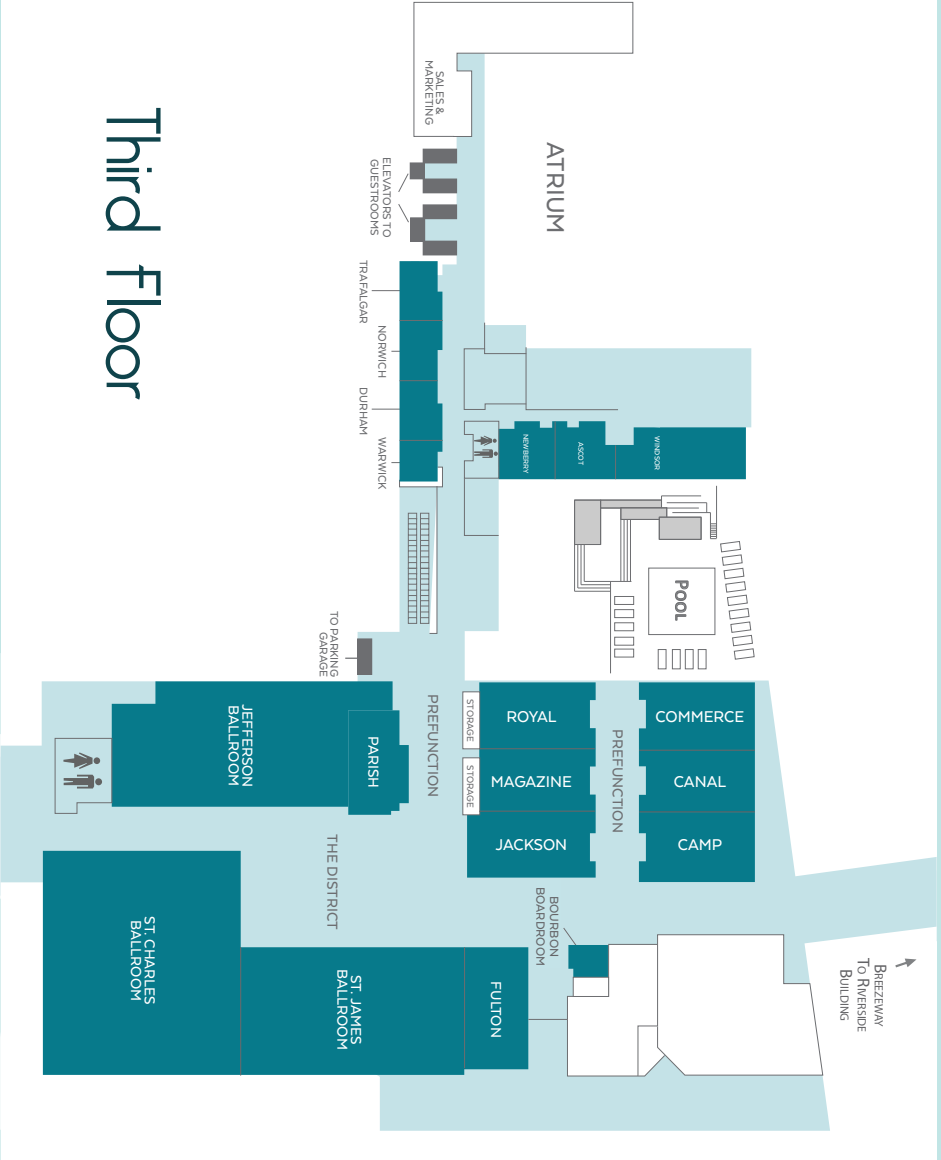
Closing Remarks

Melissa Johnson, Managing Director, State Strategies, National Skills Coalition



CONFERENCE MAP

Third Floor





**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**SKILLS
SUMMIT**

**May 1-3, 2023
Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington DC**