

The image shows the cover of the ECMC Foundation 2017 Annual Report. The background is a photograph of several people's hands stacked together in a supportive gesture. The hands are of various skin tones, including dark brown, light brown, and white. The people are wearing different colored clothing: a dark blue sweater, a red shirt, a plaid shirt, and a light-colored jacket. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image. The ECMC Foundation logo is at the top, followed by the year 2017 and the words ANNUAL REPORT in large, bold letters.

ECMC
Foundation

2017
ANNUAL
REPORT

P.03 A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

P.04 A LETTER FROM THE ECMC FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR

P.05 DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

P.06 BREAKDOWN OF GRANT FUNDING

P.07 FOCUS AREA #1: COLLEGE SUCCESS

P.13 FOCUS AREA #2: CAREER READINESS

P.21 FOCUS AREA #3: TEACHER & LEADER DEVELOPMENT

P.28 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

P.29 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

P.31 OUR TEAM

P.33 REFERENCES AND NOTES

OUR MISSION

To inspire and to facilitate improvements that affect educational outcomes—especially among underserved populations—through evidence-based innovation.

NEW!

OUR VISION

All learners unlock their fullest potential.



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Peter J. Taylor

The United States has long put its faith in education as the great equalizer, the best way for individuals to change their socioeconomic circumstances and pursue their dreams. Yet, for many individuals from underserved backgrounds, educational pathways toward upward mobility are too often not accessible or even available. Students of color, those from low-income families and first-generation college students continue to face barriers on the way to completing academic degrees and credentials, limiting their ability to secure jobs with family-sustaining wages and advancement opportunities.

Today's family-sustaining careers can be accessed through diverse educational pathways. By 2020, the U.S. economy will grow from 140 million to 165 million jobs.¹ The majority of these jobs will require at least some education beyond high school: 35 percent of jobs will require at least a bachelor's degree and 30 percent will require postsecondary credentials or an associate degree. To meet the growing economy's needs, it is critical that our education system supports all learners in the career pathway of their choice.

ECMC Foundation's work addresses these challenges. By leveraging key points in postsecondary education, we support organizations and institutions that provide high-quality programs to students and learners from underserved backgrounds and increase the number of individuals reaching their educational and career goals. In our 2017 Annual Report, we are thrilled to share **ECMC Foundation's first-ever vision statement:**

All learners unlock their fullest potential.

We envision a future where deep issues of equity in education no longer exist. All learners—regardless of their socioeconomic background, which neighborhood or zip code they grew up in, or the color of their skin—have access to educational and career opportunities and the necessary support to succeed.

Through the work of our grantee partners, learners are engaged, prepared and empowered to make positive contributions to society. Organizations and institutions engage learners through educational and training experiences that are rigorous, real-world and relevant.

Learners are prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed both in postsecondary education and their career. And they are empowered with self-confidence and believe they can pursue any path of their choosing.

Learning is a lifelong practice. Degrees and certifications are essential stepping stones to success, but not the end of the road. As the economy evolves, new jobs emerge and the skill sets that are most in demand shift. Adopting a lifelong learning mindset and drive for continuous education and career development is essential.

Central to our vision is the idea that everyone has an innate ability to unlock their fullest potential, no matter what educational and career pathway they seek. With the right support, training and mentorship, all learners—emerging and continuing—have the power to reach their fullest potential, turning aspirations into realities.

I am confident that the investments we have made work toward our vision. In ECMC Foundation's 2017 Annual Report, we feature a number of grantee partners who are on the ground working to change the lives of learners of all ages and backgrounds. The report also features several research projects we funded. We believe research is critical to understanding what is and is not working. It helps us and the field at-large decide where to invest in the future.

To our partners in the field, THANK YOU for being part of such a great mission and moving the needle toward ECMC Foundation's vision of a better world—one where, *all learners unlock their fullest potential.*

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Roberta Ramo

An exciting year concludes for ECMC Foundation and our grantee partners. Working alongside President Peter Taylor and his team, the ECMC Group board approved \$27.5 million in grant funding across the Foundation's investment portfolios.

Grantees featured in the 2017 Annual Report highlight some of the Foundation's most exciting investments: from helping first-generation college students in the San Francisco Bay Area achieve the American Dream, to helping community colleges train displaced workers in Kentucky's post-coal world, to working with teachers and leaders in rural South Carolina.

In 2017, ECMC Foundation worked on and produced its vision statement—*all learners unlock their fullest potential*—released in January 2018 and presented in the Foundation's 2017 Annual Report. While the vision statement is new, the vision itself is not. We have always been working toward that goal, chipping away barriers and challenges that face students, especially those from underserved backgrounds.

When ECMC Foundation hired Peter Taylor in 2015 to lead its strategic grantmaking, the board of directors set an important expectation that carries us through our investments: We are not afraid of failure; it is a price of innovation. Taking risks is central to our mission and key to achieving our vision. While government funding is limited and tied to programs that exist, the Foundation is uniquely positioned to test new and innovative ideas—ones that have the opportunity to make a deep impact in the education community. In essence, we're in the business of high risks, high returns.

2017 is also a special year for me as a board chair. The end of the year marks a transition in the Foundation chair. Jack O'Connell, the former California state school superintendent and current ECMC Group board member, will chair the Foundation starting January 2018. We could not have a better chair than Jack, both a leader and a nationally recognized expert in public education.

Our financial resources are more than \$700 million as of December 31, 2017 and ECMC Group continues to support the Foundation's work with continuing contributions. I have been very honored with the trust given to me by the ECMC Group board as we began our work and I am happy to have the opportunity to continue to work with Jack O'Connell and Peter Taylor as we continue to make investments toward the Foundation's vision: *all learners unlock their fullest potential.*



DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS

In 2017, ECMC Foundation awarded \$27,487,725 to 170 unique grantee organizations. Approximately 90 percent of grant commitments were allocated to core grants and 10 percent to strategic initiatives.

CORE GRANTS

Focus Area	Dollars Committed	Number of Grants
College Success	\$5,444,057	17
Career Readiness	\$14,010,496	13 ⁱⁱ
Teacher and Leader Development	\$5,400,000	6
SUBTOTAL	\$24,854,553	36

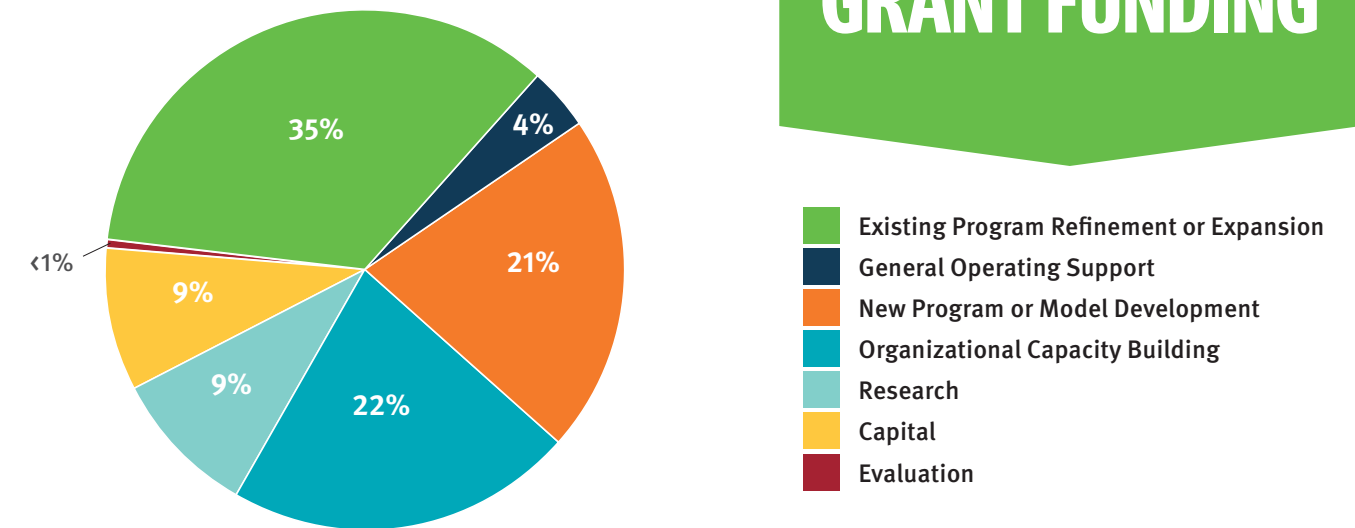
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Initiative	Dollars Committed	Number of Grants
GO! Program	\$1,450,000	72
Special Opportunities	\$1,183,172	72
SUBTOTAL	\$2,633,172	144

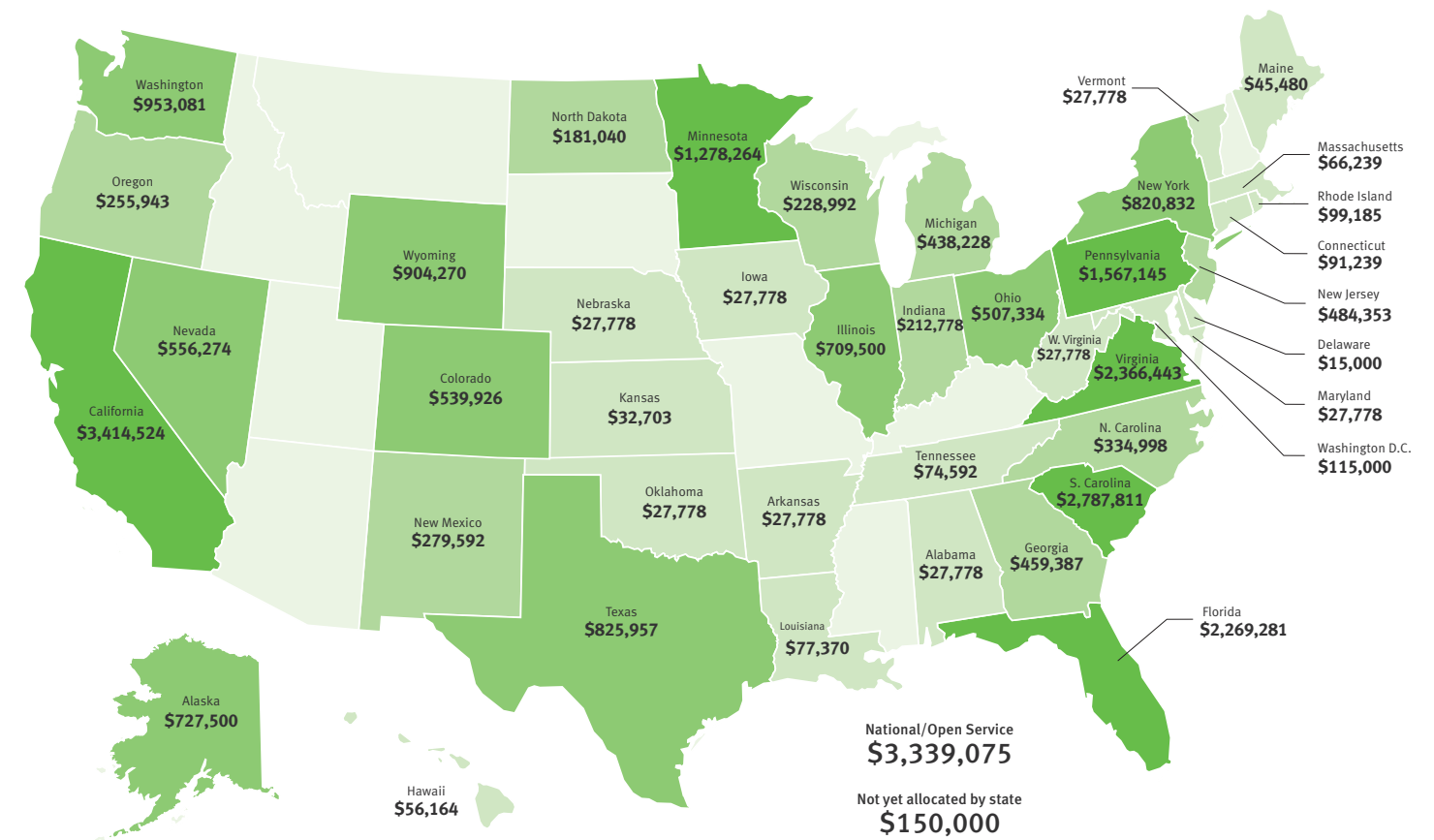
TOTAL	\$27,487,725 Committed	180 Number of Grants
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FULL BREAKDOWN OF FINANCIALS > www.ecmcfoundation.org/about-us/financial-information.html

BY CATEGORIESⁱⁱⁱ



BY STATE



2017 COLLEGE SUCCESS GRANT RECIPIENTS

Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program	\$600,000
Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund	\$300,000
California College Guidance Initiative	\$249,912
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching	\$500,000
College Promise Campaign	\$300,000
College Spring	\$75,000
Excelencia in Education	\$144,145
Genesys Works	\$400,000
Graduate NYC	\$275,000
Jobs for the Future	\$500,000
National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine	\$250,000
One Million Degrees	\$300,000
The Los Angeles Scholars Investment Fund	\$250,000
The Opportunity Network	\$400,000
The University Innovation Alliance	\$600,000
University of Southern California Pullias Center for Higher Education	\$300,000

\$5,444,057

FOCUS AREA #1

College Success

Why focus here?

By 2018, 63 percent^{iv} of U.S. jobs will require some college education, with 33 percent of jobs requiring a bachelor's degree or better, and 30 percent requiring some college or an associate degree.

This makes college degree attainment more important than ever. However, college achievement is skewed; students from underserved backgrounds (e.g., first-generation, low-income) face significant barriers enrolling in, attending and graduating from college.

As a result, while 70 percent^v of students from high-income families earn a bachelor's degree by age 25, only 10 percent of students from low-income families manage to do the same. Overwhelmingly, most low-income students begin their postsecondary education at community colleges. Yet, nationally of all students who begin at a community college, only 14 percent^{vi} transfer and complete a bachelor's degree within six years.

At ECMC Foundation, we aim to increase the number of students from traditionally underserved backgrounds who persist through and graduate from an institution of higher education with a four-year degree.

College Success invests in programs that:

- Improve students' transition to and persistence through college toward a bachelor's degree.
- Support on-time transfer from two-year to four-year institutions.
- Develop existing networks that cultivate institutional knowledge and reform in leadership, practitioner and cultural practice.
- Improve, align, and scale systems and supports to increase student success at institutions of higher education.

FEATURED GRANTEE

Genesys Works

Bay Area Student Unlocks Her American Dream with Help from Houston-Based Nonprofit



Genesys Works prepares first-generation, low-income students to succeed in college and career.

Kateryn Raymundo is a senior at San Francisco State College and an intern at Salesforce. She hopes to begin a communications/marketing career in the nonprofit field.

While the determined and ambitious young woman knows what she wants to do next, Raymundo wasn't always so confident about her future.



Kateryn Raymundo at her internship at Salesforce.

When she was eight years old, Raymundo left her home and moved 5,000 miles away from Guatemala. Her family settled in San Francisco, where they believed better opportunities existed for family-sustaining careers. While the promise of the American Dream brought them to the states, they were not completely sure how to achieve it.

Believing that attending a better-resourced high school was part of it, Raymundo's parents enrolled her into a school nearly two hours away by bus. Getting there required waking up at 5 a.m. and connecting to a second bus through downtown San Francisco.

The connection stop through the city center was where Raymundo first realized her career aspirations. Through the large windows of her bus, she saw men and women of all ages and backgrounds dressed in professional attire. Longing to join them one day, she wondered: "How do I become that person?"

She set her sights on entering the professional business world, but she didn't know how to get there. With more than 1,000 students at George Washington High School, where she attended, counselors did not have the capacity to provide in-depth one-on-one college and career advising for students.

Enter Genesys Works, a program that equips and empowers students with the knowledge and skills necessary to enroll into, persist through and graduate from college, ready to launch careers. Genesys Works achieves this mission through four-interlocking components: professional and technical skills training; a paid, year-long corporate internship; college and career coaching; and support through college and career. Established in Houston, Texas, in 2002, the organization has expanded to other regions, including the San Francisco Bay Area, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Chicago and the Washington, D.C. region.

Genesys Works staff walked into one of Raymundo's classrooms during junior year of high school and the rest was history.

"They presented a flyer; on one side of the flyer, there was a man in a fast food restaurant outfit and on the other, the same man was in a professional suit," Raymundo said. "I looked at the man in the suit and I said, 'That's going to be me.'"

Genesys Works helps students with college and scholarship applications. Every Monday night, Raymundo and other participants met with their Genesys Works program coordinator to work on applications.

"College applications are complicated and difficult, especially for someone who is a first-generation college student like me," she said. "Without Genesys Works, I don't know how I would have completed them."

Professional and technical skills training, along with a corporate internship, are also hallmarks of the Genesys Works program. The summer between her junior and senior year, Raymundo participated in an intense eight-week training that consisted of professional development workshops on resume writing, networking, professional etiquette and more. She also had IT training to prepare her for an internship at Salesforce.

Raymundo initially was nervous about entering a male-dominated field, but she said the internship helped her work through those fears.

"The team at Salesforce was very inclusive and welcoming," she said. "They taught me everything and showed me that I could excel. It was very empowering and made me believe in myself."

After high school, Raymundo joined the Genesys Works Alumni Program, which provides ongoing academic counseling services and professional development for program participants who complete the Genesys Works high school program. Through the alumni program students receive encouragement and support during their transition into and through college. The program also provides resume and cover letter writing assistance, internship placement, and career and networking opportunities. With the support of ECMC Foundation, Genesys Works was able to enrich the alumni program with additional support services and assistance to obtain more internships for college students.

When asked whether she would recommend the program, Raymundo replied, "Most definitely," then chuckled and added, "I made my brother go through the program—and he just started college."

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ECMC Foundation invested
\$400,000

to enhance ongoing support services and year-long internship opportunities for college students. This included funds to hire a national alumni manager and other additional staff.

Genesys Works serves
3,000 students

annually; there are currently 1,765 students in the Genesys Works Alumni Program.

Genesys Works Alumni Outcomes

(as of July 2017)

- 100% graduation rate from high school
- 93% postsecondary education enrollment
- 82% persistence through second year of college
- 71% of Genesys Works program alumni have graduated from college or are still pursuing a degree

FEATURED GRANTEE

Roadtrip Nation

Three Students
Discover Their Calling
with Help
from a Green RV

Roadtrip Nation sends learners on the road to navigate potential educational and career pathways.

Amidst the summer heat, three students hopped into a green RV for a cross-country adventure. Leaving from sunny Los Angeles, they traveled to and through cities, valleys, deserts and other terrain hoping to find answers to the same question: How can community college accelerate my education and career goals?

The trip was operated and run by Roadtrip Nation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping young people find career and life fulfillment by placing them on themed road trips to discover their passions. Fueled and funded by the College Success and Career Readiness portfolios at ECMC Foundation, the Community College Roadtrip was launched to expose prospective, current and recently graduated community college students on how community college can help them discover and pursue their career goals.

The three individuals all had burning questions about their next steps. To gain some insight, over 24 days and 3,300 miles, they had the opportunity to talk to community and industry leaders who jumpstarted their careers at community college. After soaking in wisdom and reflecting on what they heard, saw and experienced, each came home feeling more empowered, engaged and prepared to tackle the next steps of their journey.

MEET THE ROADTRIPPERS

MELANIE SCOTT

Brooklyn native Melanie Scott wants to help at-risk youth in her community. However, she began to feel discouraged and disengaged with her studies after not finding peers at school who shared her own interests.

After hitting the road with Roadtrip Nation and meeting other community advocates, Scott returned home inspired to look for opportunities and connections beyond her school's walls, and empowered to become a social activist in her community.

FULL STORY > www.ecmcfoundation.org/news/melanie-scott.html



“Roadtrip Nation put me in this mindset where I need to start taking my passion and hobbies seriously and find those organizations that have the same vision as mine.”

ARMAND BELTRAN

This San Francisco former nursing and IT student spent the last eight years in community college switching majors and interests. He wants to help people, but doesn't know which career pathway would be the best fit. This summer, thanks to Roadtrip Nation, Armand Beltran received advice to help him uncover his true calling. Beltran returned home ready to begin the process of uncovering the perfect career for him. Though he hasn't decided yet, Beltran knows he wants to help others unlock and “reach their fullest potential.”

FULL STORY > www.ecmcfoundation.org/news/armand-beltran.html



“I want to learn from different experiences and help other people reach their fullest potential.”

BECCA RODACK

Becca Rodack has had many twists and turns in her postsecondary education. Just one year into college, an unexpected disease and surgical operation forced her to halt her studies. But now that she is back in school, Rodack wants to find a fulfilling career that encapsulates her many interests and allows her to write. Rodack also deals with a lot of self-doubt about her goals and direction. Traveling with Roadtrip Nation this summer helped her gain more clarity and confidence to pursue her future career as a writer.

FULL STORY > www.ecmcfoundation.org/news/rebecca-rodack.html



“I talk myself out of a lot of things. I had a lot of doubts, but I realized I like writing and I should be doing that.”

2017 CAREER READINESS GRANT RECIPIENTS

College and Community Fellowship	\$150,000
Ilisagvik College	\$120,000
Innovate + Educate	\$615,000
Institute for Higher Education Policy	\$715,000
Jeremiah Program	\$500,000
LeadersUp	\$75,000
One Million Degrees	\$242,000
Public Policy Institute of California	\$626,456
So Others Might Eat	\$100,000
The Center for Occupational Research and Development	\$959,993
Vera Institute of Justice	\$750,000
World Education	\$149,930
Zenith Education Group	\$9,007,117

\$14,010,496

FOCUS AREA #2

Career Readiness

Why focus here?

Many adults from underserved backgrounds don't have the opportunity to succeed in postsecondary education, limiting their ability to access career pathways that allow for economic mobility and a family-sustaining wage.

In response, investments made as part of the Career Readiness focus area include targeted funding to:

- Build the capacity of institutions and organizations that provide and/or support adult students' postsecondary career and technical education advancement.
- Conduct research to improve the field and promote support for accredited career readiness programs.
- Develop postsecondary education experiences for adults that use a student-centered approach, incorporate academic and non-academic wraparound supports, and include industry-informed and accredited career pathways.

While not exclusive to these special interest groups, this portfolio places an importance on projects that improve educational outcomes for single mothers and currently and formerly incarcerated individuals.

FEATURED GRANTEE



Jobs for the Future

Preparing Workers for Emerging Careers in Kentucky's Post-Coal World

Jobs for the Future helps community colleges develop educational programs for under-skilled adult learners.

A man in his late 30s stood in front of a large bulletin board at a local community college. Looking at the many flyers about the programs offered at the campus, he felt lost. After being laid off from a disappearing industry in the region, he wondered what his future held.

For generations, men in his family worked in Kentucky's once-thriving coal mining industry. Its decline left behind a trail of unemployed adults with few skills for other careers. Since the 1980s, the coal industry has lost two-thirds of its jobs in the U.S.,^{vii} with eastern Kentucky taking the biggest hit. Today, there are only 3,896 workers employed by the industry in the region, down from 13,679 in 2011.^{viii} Some are migrating to different states, while others are considering potential career shifts.

In response, local community organizations, businesses and community colleges, including Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College (Southeast), began looking for innovative ways to transform the economy. The community

college felt uniquely positioned to support those displaced by the dying industry, noting that many good, family-sustaining careers can be accessed with sub-baccalaureate career and technical education (CTE) programs. But the campus also acknowledged that fewer than half of the students entering CTE programs complete and graduate,^{ix} often due to the fact that many students lack the English and/or math skills necessary to test out of remediation, let alone complete the technical course work. A lack of adequate academic and career advising and support services, often coupled with unclear and disconnected career pathways, also impacts persistence.

That's when Southeast decided to contact Jobs for the Future (JFF), a national nonprofit that works to ensure that all low-income young people and workers have the skills and credentials needed to succeed in our economy. Southeast's leadership was familiar with JFF's Accelerating Opportunity (AO) model, which features integrated instruction combining basic skills delivery with technical training, enhanced student supports, and stackable credentials that are aligned to labor market needs and lead to jobs with family-supporting wages.

Looking to build pathways into emerging careers in the region, Southeast applied to be part of the next phase of the successful program. Known as Accelerating Career and Technical Education (Accelerating CTE), the refined program is built on the core elements of the AO model,^x including team teaching between an academic skills instructor and a CTE instructor.

Through a competitive process, Southeast was selected as one of five community colleges in Kentucky and Kansas to participate in Accelerating CTE. In addition to team teaching, each college made a commitment to implement a variety of elements designed to improve student persistence beyond the first credential, such as stronger career advising, earn-and-learn strategies, flexible course schedules, improved access to financial aid, and working with employers to design and implement strategies that support working students as they balance employment with continued education and training.

"A number of factors have drained coal mining jobs, including the growth of renewable energy and tougher federal environmental regulations," said Sherri Clark, the college's director of workforce solutions. "To thrive, we must think toward the future. Where will jobs grow in the 21st century? And how can we help prepare Kentuckians?"

Southeast also addressed the issue of a changing regional economy by partnering with Kentucky WIRED, the largest infrastructure project in Kentucky. With guidance from JFF and in collaboration with Kentucky WIRED, Southeast launched a program that trains students in the latest fiber-optics technologies. The project with Kentucky WIRED will bring reliable and affordable internet to the state, which ranks lowest in the country for broadband access. It is expected to attract more jobs, grow local businesses and expand educational opportunities. To date, Southeast has trained more than 140 fiber optics professionals,^{xi} many of whom are former coal miners.

When Southeast President and CEO Dr. Vic Adams saw the 30-year-old man staring at the bulletin board at his campus, he encouraged him to enroll in the fiber optics program. That year, the student graduated with credentials and skills to begin his new fiber optics career. At his graduation ceremony, he told Dr. Adams the program "helped him find hope."

"I have seen an overabundance of under-skilled adults who face challenges that are insurmountable without assistance," said Dr. Adams. "It is rewarding to see apprehensive, scared and intimidated people, who after a short time [in our programs] excel, receive their credentials and have a life-changing experience."

In addition to the fiber optics training program, the campus launched several allied health programs. The decision to develop a new program is made only after a careful analysis of the local market. Dr. Adams says the campus works with Eastern Kentucky Concentrated Employment Program to "secure employer and market sector data." Southeast also has created critical partnerships with employers.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ECMC Foundation committed
\$950,000

over three years to launch Accelerating Career and Technical Education (Accelerating CTE) on five community college campuses in Kansas and Kentucky.

The goal of Accelerating CTE is to improve CTE course and credential completion rates by 10-15 percent.

Interim impact data shows that in Kentucky, Accelerating CTE increased the likelihood of credential attainment by 19 percentage points.

"We have formed alliances with businesses who hire our graduates," Dr. Adams says. "These relationships have helped us increase and fast-track student success."

In addition to Southeast, other colleges participating in Accelerating CTE are West Kentucky Community and Technical College, and Seward County, Hutchinson and Neosho Community Colleges in Kansas. These colleges are all committed to improving educational and economic opportunities for underprepared learners. Some of the integrated career pathways they are building include healthcare, welding and commercial driver's license, among several other in-demand programs.

Voices: Midwest Trailblazers

Leaders and instructors across several community colleges in Kentucky and Kansas that are participating in Accelerating CTE shared their thoughts about the project, its impact and their experience partnering with JFF.



David Heflin
Ed.D., Vice President of Academic Affairs
West Kentucky Community and Technical College

How have enhanced student supports helped your students persist and graduate?

“The quality of faculty and peer engagement within the teaching environment are critical to a student’s decision to stay or leave the institution. The multiple layers of student supports at West Kentucky Community and Technical College (WKCTC) allow students the opportunity to find early success in challenging subjects, build self-efficacy toward completing their program pathway and earn marketable credentials in employable careers. Belonging to a community of students who are working toward a common goal of completion, and having faculty and staff who understand the multiple and conflicting demands of our students, has helped them persist and graduate at WKCTC.”



Stan Ploutz
Program Coordinator of Adult Education
Hutchinson Community College

Why do you think this program model is important?

“Career and technical education is very important to our community college in Hutchinson, Kansas. We have been developing integration and accelerating strategies for five years to support students who need basic skills assistance in technical education. Funding support from ECMC Foundation, in collaboration with JFF, has given us the opportunity to explore and expand our project work. The investment supports faculty dialogue about systems of support tied directly to basic skills needs. The project focus is on student success rates for certificate and credential completion. Additional support for basic skills instruction and team teaching are showing positive results for students in the classroom. We are very much excited about the results to be achieved and hope to continue with accelerated opportunities.”



Heather Lyden
Instructor
Neosho County Community College

What do you think about the power of team teaching within the Accelerating CTE model?

“Team teaching is powerful in that the student gets the benefit of having the content explained in basic terms by the co-instructor. It provides reinforcement of content learning, which does not happen with traditional course learning, and takes the learning experience to a completely new level!”



Travis Combs
Dean of Industrial Technology and Continuing Education
Seward County Community College

What goals do you hope to achieve at the end of this project?

“As an institution of higher education, our mission is to provide opportunities that enrich and improve each of our student’s lives through a range of academic programs, including technical education and transferable degree programs. Our goals for this project are to create a quality, accessible educational experience for all students by increasing the number of team-taught courses on our campus, shortening our developmental education sequences, and creating meta-majors for students who have a general idea of what they are interested in, yet don’t know what they want to specialize in. Rather than develop new programs for targeted groups of students, we are really trying to rethink how we can ultimately shape a positive and rewarding future for all of our students by not only providing them with a direction, but a path to completion.”



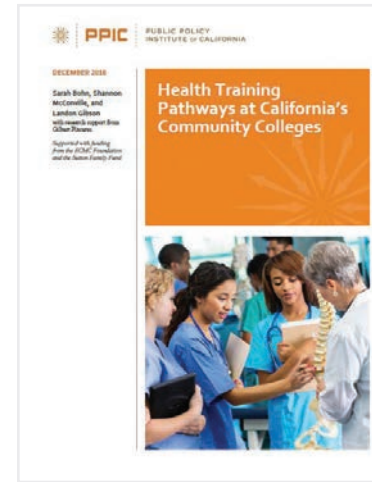
Dr. Vic Adams
President and CEO
Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College

What has been the impact of the program at your campus?

“I have seen an overabundance of under-skilled adults who face challenges that are insurmountable without assistance. It is rewarding to see apprehensive, scared and intimidated people, who after a short time [in our programs] excel, receive their credentials and have a life-changing experience. For these individuals, we serve as a beacon of hope.”

Research Spotlight

The Career Readiness portfolio supports research to improve the field and promote career readiness programs. New data, facts and trends inform us, our grantee partners and the field at-large about what is and is not working. These are highlights of research supported by the focus area.



PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA (PPIC)

“Health Training Pathways at California’s Community Colleges” examined the likelihood that students with shorter-term health credentials would return to school to earn a higher-level credential. Results show that less than 13 percent do and that factors, such as full-time attendance and access to financial aid, have a significant effect. The study suggests that increasing support for students, especially for those from underserved backgrounds, is critical to their success. Such efforts can include: increasing financial aid, providing additional course sections that allow flexible scheduling and increasing academic support.

PPIC used student data provided by the California Community College Chancellor’s Office, collected between 1993 and 2015.

[LEARN MORE > www.ecmcfoundation.org/evaluation-research/career-tech-credentials.html](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org/evaluation-research/career-tech-credentials.html)



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN’S POLICY RESEARCH (IWPR)

“Single Mothers in College: Growing Enrollment, Financial Challenges, and the Benefits of Attainment” looked at trends among single mothers enrolled in postsecondary education programs. The study found that while more single mothers are attending postsecondary institutions than ever before, few go on to earn a credential and/or degree. The discrepancy is caused by the unique set of obstacles facing single mothers in college, such as financial insecurity and time constraints due to obligations like child care and working.

Given the wealth of evidence pointing to the benefits of postsecondary attainment—including economic security, family well-being, better health outcomes—the report calls for state, federal, and institutional interventions and supports to improve postsecondary degree/certificate completion among single mothers. Recommendations include improving child care affordability and accessibility, increasing financial aid, and offering targeted scholarships for single mothers.

The study is part of a larger project examining the costs and benefits of increasing educational attainment among single mothers, which will be completed in 2018.

[LEARN MORE > www.ecmcfoundation.org/news/grantee-spotlight-iwpr.html](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org/news/grantee-spotlight-iwpr.html)



2017 TEACHER & LEADER DEVELOPMENT GRANT RECIPIENTS

Big Picture Learning \$1,085,391

Buck Institute for Education \$724,159

Da Vinci Schools \$356,457

EdVisions \$655,000

New Tech Network \$2,578,993

\$5,400,000

FOCUS AREA #3

Teacher & Leader Development

with a focus on deeper learning

Why focus here?

Deeper learning^{xii} instructional practices prepare students for college and career by integrating the mastery of academic content with the acquisition of key competencies, such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and effective communication, in real-world contexts.

In schools where deeper learning is the focus, students demonstrate higher levels of academic achievement, are more likely to attend and persist in higher education, and have the full range of skills desired by today's employers. While these practices are effective for students of all backgrounds, they have been shown particularly effective in bridging the achievement gap across students of varying socioeconomic backgrounds.

Teachers are often unprepared to implement deeper learning practices in their classrooms, in part because they have not personally experienced, been professionally trained in or do not work in an environment that is supportive of deeper learning practices.

To bridge this gap, our Teacher and Leader Development focus area includes targeted funding to:

- Support school networks and scale their deeper learning instructional models across the country.
- Develop and support training programs focused on deeper learning instructional practices for K-12 teachers, leaders and teacher education program faculty.

FEATURED GRANTEE



Jerolyn Murray with students.

New Tech Network | Transforming South Carolina's School Districts through Deeper Learning

Teachers and school leaders working with New Tech Network use evidence-based instructional methods to engage and empower learners across three South Carolina school districts.

The severe inequity of public schools in rural South Carolina along the I-95 corridor gained national attention in 2005 through the documentary *Corridor of Shame*. With some of the poorest counties in the country, this region has not had a sustainable local industry since the collapse of plantation agriculture. The crumbling schools and lack of support for both teachers and students shown in the film reflects decades of neglect stemming from historical inequities in this majority low-income, African American region. Because of the lack of resources, most students do not receive the education they need to succeed in college and career.

Jerolyn Murray, an instructional coach at Health Career Academy in the Colleton County School District, is among the many educators and leaders in South Carolina working to change this story for her community's young people. After years in the corporate sector, Murray left and returned home to the rural South Carolina region, where she began her career in education. When she first started, Murray was dismayed by how so little had improved since she was a student.

"I couldn't believe that what I experienced as a student was still the norm," she says. "I thought to myself, 'There has to be a better way to reach these kids.'"

Murray's efforts to transform the flawed system are guided and supported by New Tech Network (NTN), a leading deeper learning design partner for school transformation. NTN supports district leaders, principals, and classroom educators through training and coaching to implement deeper learning instructional practices. This model engages students in complex, authentic, project-based learning and requires them to demonstrate not only mastery of content knowledge but also communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving skills. There are currently 190 NTN schools across the country and the network-wide outcomes are impressive: the high school graduation rate is 92 percent, the growth in critical thinking skills is 52 percent and persistence through the second year in college is 82 percent.

This year, NTN received a \$2.5 million grant from ECMC Foundation to create the South Carolina Learning Network, a joint initiative with the Colleton County, Charleston County and Florence County school districts. The three-year investment provides customized school support, instructional coach development, and district support with the goal of spreading

and deepening the NTN school model and practices systemwide. Six new NTN schools (including the recently opened Health Career Academy) will be launched across the districts in the next three years, while the three existing NTN schools in the districts will receive support to improve their effectiveness. This integrated approach of working at multiple levels in each participating district ensures the continued spread and long-term sustainability of NTN's proven instructional model.

The initiative also involves a significant amount of cross-district learning and collaboration, a key strategic factor in supporting each district to sustain the innovative approaches to teaching and learning. The cross-district network creates a community of educators focused on the same goal of graduating all students with deeper learning skills and competencies.

Dr. Franklin Foster, superintendent at Colleton County School District where Murray teaches, says participating in the initiative and "collaborating with the other South Carolina districts is a huge shift. For the first time, people at the district and school levels are seeing themselves as part of a network of learners across the state and nation and finding great value in that. We have seen people excited about learning again."

Dr. Foster believes the effort will deliver positive outcomes. In 2013, with a U.S. Department of Education Investing in Innovation (i3) grant, the district partnered with NTN to open Cougar New Tech, the first NTN school in his district that now serves as a model for the entire network. There is "clear evidence that the approach works," he says, and that it "ensures that students leave ready, with skills needed in life."

For instructional leaders like Murray, it is much deeper than just preparing students for college and career. She wants to give all students the chance to unlock their fullest potential. Recently, when a student wasn't engaged in her classes, Murray leaned on the strong relationships NTN teachers have with students in their small school settings. She dug deeper to find out how to motivate the student. After uncovering his passion for basketball, she pushed him to apply himself and improve his academic performance in order to be eligible to play basketball for the school.

"This sparked a desire to work even harder," she says. "The odds were against him, but through perseverance and support, he beat the odds."

The student who almost failed high school went on to graduate and earn his diploma.

For Murray and many other teachers working with NTN, helping students is their passion. She says, "The student who comes to my classroom with the unrealized potential is the student that keeps me fighting."

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

ECMC Foundation invested
\$2,578,993

to support the launch of six NTN schools, develop instructional coach programs in each district to provide ongoing teacher support and increase the capacity of district leaders to support implementation of the school model systemwide.

NTN consists of 190 schools, serving
72,000 students
in 28 states and Australia.

Student outcomes for NTN schools

(as of April 2017)

- 92% graduation rate from high school
- 70% postsecondary education enrollment
- 82% persist through second year of college (four-year program)



Dr. Franklin Foster with other leaders at Colleton County School District.

Perspectives From the Field: Why Deeper Learning?

We asked our grantee partners:

“Why are deeper learning competencies critical for students to thrive in the 21st century?”



Toni Monfiletto
Director
The New Mexico Center for School Leadership

“Like an old house that hasn’t been updated for the times, education in the United States is out of date and leaves many students and communities with promise behind. That’s why we have made it our mission to advance the best education for the students who need it the most. By remodeling education from the community up, we can reengage students and prepare them for life in the 21st century. We create schools by asking our community what they want students to know and be able to do—they have asked for deeper learning competencies. Ultimately, investing in young people as assets through deeper learning will make our community healthier and more prosperous.”



Carlos Moreno
Executive Director
Big Picture Learning

“At the heart of the deeper learning core competencies is the belief that students are active participants in their own learning. This has been a fundamental component of Big Picture Learning since our first school—the Met High School in Providence, Rhode Island—more than 20 years ago. Indeed, not only are students active participants, they are the active designers of their own learning experiences. Walk into any of Big Picture Learning’s 65 network schools and you will find students and advisors collaborating as partners dedicated to communicating how authentic, real-world learning can strengthen communities, both inside and outside the walls of school. Ultimately, it is our vision that all students live happy and successful lives of their own design.”



Lisa Snyder
Executive Director
EdVisions

“The sustained focus in schools on the deeper learning competencies provides critical opportunities and experiences for our students. Relevant learning, in turn, provides students with the positive mindsets and skills necessary to succeed in a diverse and complex world. In the schools that EdVisions supports, students develop critical thinking skills through collaborative, student-driven projects that connect to the world around them. This authentic approach to learning focuses on mastery of content through deeper engagement and leveraging each student’s strengths, passions and career aspirations. The approach is gaining popularity in schools as a way to better align learning experiences to the defined needs, wants and desires of the individual in order to meet the needs of all learners. As a result, students are well-equipped to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing world.”



Roberto Padilla
Superintendent
Newburgh Enlarged City School District

“The Newburgh Enlarged City School District has a vision of inspiring our students to become tomorrow’s leaders beyond Academy Field. We recognize that learning does not end at the commencement of high school graduation. We also know that we are preparing our students for future jobs and careers that may not currently exist. In order for our students to thrive in the 21st century, every member of our school community works to prepare our students to think critically, be creative, work collaboratively and communicate effectively in all they do.

“We are currently implementing a strategic recruitment plan to ensure the most effective teachers, leaders and staff members are developing our young scholars. Through the work we do, we hope to inspire students to become lifelong learners and to leave their K-12 experience with more questions than they arrived with, questions that are thoughtful, questions that look at problems and issues through a multi-faceted lens, and questions to lead to deeper learning and deeper understanding of the complex issues that occur in our world today.”



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Outside of ECMC Foundation’s core focus areas, we also conduct grantmaking through the GO! Program and Special Opportunity grants. In 2017, the Foundation committed \$2,633,172, in these categories, which reflects 10 percent of total Foundation grant commitments for the year.

Strategy Shift

ECMC Foundation to Concentrate on Higher Education Initiatives and Close Out Teacher and Leader Development Focus Area

The Foundation’s mission from the onset has been built around the idea that we would take risks, stay nimble in our strategy and be open to new developments. We believe constant evaluation of our methods and strategy is critical to ensuring our investments are maximized, have the potential to disrupt the industry and positively impact the lives of students.

In 2017, we re-examined the Foundation’s grantmaking strategy and asked ourselves: How can we make the most impact so that students from underserved, underrepresented populations are able to break cycles of poverty, earn degrees and credentials and get jobs that lead to family-sustaining careers?

After careful consideration, ECMC Foundation made the difficult decision to close out the Teacher and Leader Development focus area, effective December 1, 2017. Moving forward, ECMC Foundation will direct funding into our two remaining areas of focus: College Success and Career Readiness.

This new direction aligns with the concentration of our parent company ECMC Group and all our affiliate companies on postsecondary education. We have the potential to make the greatest impact in students’ lives if we focus our resources, narrow our scope and dive deeper into the College Success and Career Readiness portfolios, which are directly related to postsecondary education.

The Foundation has established great partnerships in the field and we will continue to honor all existing grants in this focus area. Over three years, we made 23 grants in the Teacher and Leader Development investment portfolio, totaling \$13.2 million. As of December 1, 2017, \$10.2 million has been paid out and \$3.0 million remains. The final grant we have in the portfolio will close out in June 2020, marking the official end of all Teacher and Leader Development outstanding commitments.

As we shift in our direction, ECMC Foundation looks forward this coming year to focusing on our postsecondary initiatives and continuing to invest in programs and initiatives that help students succeed.

GO! PROGRAM: \$1,450,000

In 2017, \$1.45 million was awarded across 72 organizations in 19 states through the GO! Program. The program is designed to involve all employees across affiliates of the Foundation’s parent company, ECMC Group, in recognizing organizations that align with the Foundation’s mission of improving educational outcomes among underserved communities. Awards are granted to educational programs spanning from early childhood education through postsecondary education. All employees have the opportunity to nominate organizations they care about in their local communities. This year’s level of employee engagement was unprecedented: 264 nominations were received across 31 sites and nearly 2,000 employees voted to decide the nonprofit organizations that received grant funding. Examples of grant recipients include:



United Way of Central Indiana (Indianapolis, Indiana)

United Way of Central Indiana received \$25,000 to help at-risk fathers obtain the skills and training certifications needed to secure employment that has the potential for a living wage and growth opportunities. This grant recipient was nominated by Raneer Jones from ECMC Group’s Indianapolis, Indiana, office.



Avenues for Homeless Youth (Minneapolis, Minnesota)

Avenues for Homeless Youth received \$25,000 to employ an education support specialist who will work with homeless youth. This grant recipient was nominated by Sandy Probst from ECMC Group’s Minneapolis, Minnesota, office.



Fairytale Town (Sacramento, California)

Sacramento Adventure Playground received \$25,000 to build a “maker” lab where kids use real tools and raw materials to bring their ideas to life while keeping them out of harm’s way. This grant recipient was nominated by Leslie Naake from ECMC Group’s Mather, California, office.

SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES: \$1,183,172

Grants in ECMC Foundation’s Special Opportunities portfolio are awarded on a discretionary basis by the ECMC Foundation program team and Foundation president. Investments reflect a mix of education-related programs and initiatives.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

In 2017, ECMC Foundation worked with American Institutes for Research (AIR) to refine our grantmaking strategies, develop each focus area's evaluation framework and launch third-party evaluations of select individual grants. We will continue to build our capacity to strategically monitor and evaluate our investments with guidance from AIR in 2018.

Also this year, we worked closely with our partners at AIR and Fluxx Grants Management Software (Fluxx) to build a cloud-based grants management system. The new grantee portal is designed to streamline the grant process, and enable the Foundation to capture important qualitative and quantitative data.

The new grants management system provides the Foundation and our grantees with a comprehensive grants management solution that centralizes our grantmaking functions, including monitoring and evaluation from grant inception. Through this comprehensive model of philanthropy, ECMC Foundation is positioned to conduct more in-depth analyses and prepare evidence-informed learnings that can be shared widely with the field. We began migrating grantee partners to the new system in late 2017.

“ECMC's new Grantee Reporting Tool is a great example of a foundation working with their grantees to create a meaningful way to assess the impact of their work, capture critical information about the contexts and groups that they work with, and help create a culture of collaboration, transparency and learning. We at Fluxx were excited to have Trudy work with the ECMC Foundation staff to help build the tool and to continue to learn from our customer community to better understand their needs and challenges.”

We continue to refine our strategies and develop framework and systems to help us monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs we support.

What's in the Grants Portal?

• Data Collection

During the proposal development process, grantees establish goals or major accomplishments they intend to achieve during the lifetime of the grant. Grantees develop measures of success, outline metrics that indicate whether or not the grant is on track to achieve its established goals, and report against the progress of those measures on an annual basis. Measures of success are unique to a grant and allow the Foundation team to better assess the performance of individual grants.

• Insights from Participant Information

Through the new reporting tool and monitoring system, ECMC Foundation will capture characteristics and attributes about grant-funded program participants. By distilling participant information by key characteristics and demographics, ECMC Foundation will be able to garner deeper insights that will inform our work and help drive our strategy.

• Focus Area Outcome Tracking

Focus area outcomes are standardized and shared across a portfolio so that ECMC Foundation can track outcomes grantees are reaching in aggregate to better understand the impact of our work for participants within our portfolios.

David Goodman
Director of Impact, Fluxx Labs



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REFERENCES AND NOTES

- ⁱ Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl, *Recovery: Job Growth and Education Requirements Through 2020*, (Washington, DC, Georgetown University, 2013), available at: https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web_.pdf.
- ⁱⁱ In 2017, the Career Readiness portfolio committed 41 grants to Zenith Education Group. In this chart, Zenith Education Group is counted as one grant.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Grant Categories:
- **Organizational Capacity Building:** Strengthening an organization's efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability across all institutional or organizational areas by adding new positions, training staff, developing strategy or building out necessary institutional infrastructure.
 - **New Program or Model Development:** Developing the tools, curriculum, services and activities performed by the organization for a new program.
 - **Existing Program Refinement or Expansion:** Expanding or refining a program to reach more people and/or further develop an existing program to indicate financial and/or program effectiveness in order to scale and/or receive funding from other sources.
 - **Capital:** Purchasing equipment or constructing labs/facilities.
 - **Research:** Producing studies, white papers, and policy recommendations that provide valuable information to the field and/or set the groundwork for program implementation.
 - **Evaluation:** Involving an independent observation and assessment that is either conducted by a third party or internally that gathers evidence of specific program effectiveness.
 - **General Operating Support:** Supporting projects that tend to be smaller in dollar amount, generally made through the GO! Program and Special Opportunities funds.
- ^{iv} Anthony P. Carnevale, Nicole Smith, and Jeff Strohl, *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018*, (Washington, DC, Georgetown University, 2010), available at: <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/fullreport.pdf>.
- ^v Adela Soliz, *Increasing Community College Student Transfer Rates*, (Washington, DC, Brookings Institute, 2017), available at: www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2015/07/16/increasing-community-college-student-transfer-rates/.
- ^{vi} John Fink and Davis Jenkins, *Tracking Transfer: New Measures of Institutional and State Effectiveness in Helping Community College Students Attain Bachelor's Degrees* (Community College Research Center, the Aspen Institute and National Clearinghouse Research Center, 2016), available at: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/tracking-transfer-institutional-state-effectiveness.html>.
- ^{vii} Heather Long, "Coal Country's Message to Trump: We Want Jobs of the Future," CNN Money, (April 5, 2017), available at: <http://money.cnn.com/2017/04/05/news/economy/donald-trump-coal-jobs/index.html>.
- ^{viii} Bill Estep, "Kentucky Coal Report Shows No Sustained Job Rebound So Far under Trump," *Lexington Herald Leader*, (November 2, 2017), available at: www.kentucky.com/news/state/article182371386.html.
- ^{ix} Christine D. Bremer, Marisa Castellano and Amy S. Hirschy, (2011), "Career and Technical Education Student Success in Community Colleges: A Conceptual Model," *Community College Journal*, 39(3), 296-318, available at: www.nrccte.org/resources/external-reports/cte-student-success-community-colleges-conceptual-model.
- ^x At the core of Accelerating Career and Technical Education Opportunity model are four evidence-based Accelerating Opportunity model elements:
- **Team Teaching:** Course content is co-delivered by a CTE and basic skills instructor, an instructional model that accelerates and enhances the learning experience by integrating basic skills with technical instruction and provides targeted academic support for struggling students.
 - **Supplemental Instruction:** Additional contextualized basic skills courses to help students focus on non-technical skills, including academics and job-readiness.
- **Comprehensive Student Supports:** Academic and non-academic supports, including career guidance, case management and success coaching.
 - **Career Pathways:** With stackable credentials that are aligned to labor market needs and lead to jobs providing family-supporting wages.
- ^{xi} Southeast Kentucky Chamber of Congress, (September 19, 2016), *BSCTC President Speaks at Kentucky Wired News Conference at Capitol* [Press release], available at: <http://business.sekchamber.com/news/details/bsctc-president-speaks-at-kentucky-wired-news-conference-at-capitol>.
- ^{xii} Learn more about the deeper learning competencies and associated instructional practices as defined by the Hewlett Foundation: Hewlett Foundation, *Decoding Deeper Learning in the Classroom*, (Menlo Park, CA, Hewlett Foundation, 2013), available at: www.hewlett.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/DL-guide.pdf.

