



# SKILLS IN THE STATES

POLICY ■ ADVOCACY ■ IMPACT

## WELCOME TO THE SKILLS IN THE STATES FORUM

Welcome to **Skills in the States: A Cross-State Forum for Policy, Advocacy, and Impact**. You're joined by workforce advocates, researchers, practitioners, and philanthropic partners from 20 states and D.C. Each participant is working to advance skills policies in their home state.

We're all aware of the challenge in front of us: although skills are crucial to economic opportunity, too few among us have access to the kinds of postsecondary education and training demanded by today's labor market. But with our help, states can adopt policies that expand access to skills, credentials, and family supporting careers, particularly for those who have faced barriers to economic opportunity.

National Skills Coalition is hosting this convening to provide an opportunity for us to tap into each other's policy knowledge and advocacy savvy. Over the next two days, we'll discuss actionable skills policies with peers from across the nation. We'll also share experiences and insights on how to work with partners in our own states to move those policies forward when we return home.

**Thank you** for coming to Detroit to lend your voice to the discussion on skills policy, advocacy, and impact in the states.

*The Skills in the States Forum Steering Committee,*

**Andrew Bradley**  
Indiana Institute for Working Families

**Julie Brown**  
Dan River Region Collaborative

**Melissa Johnson**  
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute

**Alice Pritchard**  
Connecticut State Colleges and Universities

**Carrie Thomas**  
Chicago Jobs Council



NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION  
Every worker. Every industry. A strong economy.

## MONDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2016

8:00 A.M. - 8:30 A.M.     **PRE-FORUM MEETING BREAKFAST (INVITATION ONLY)**

8:30 A.M. - 11:30 A.M.     **PRE-FORUM MEETINGS (INVITATION ONLY)**

Woodward B, 2nd Floor

Woodward D, 2nd Floor

- Advocating for Skills-Based SNAP E&T
- Making Workforce Data Work

12:00 P.M. - 1:45 P.M.     **LUNCH AND WELCOME**

Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

### **PLENARY DISCUSSION – STATE POLICIES FOR SKILLS EQUITY**

Although skills are critical for economic opportunity, not all people have access to education and training required by today's labor market. States need better policies to ensure that everyone can build skills that lead to credentials and family supporting careers. During this plenary session, three advocates will discuss policies that expand access to skill building and why they matter for advancing equity for underserved populations in their state.

- **Emily Price** Chief Program Officer, Center for Employment Training at So Others Might Eat, District of Columbia
- **Sarah Labadie** Senior Policy Associate, Women Employed, Illinois
- **Corey Wiggins** Director, Hope Policy Institute, Mississippi

MODERATOR: **Brooke DeRenzis** Senior State Policy Analyst, National Skills Coalition

1:45 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.     **BREAK**

2:00 P.M. - 3:15 P.M.     **ROUND 1 CONCURRENT PEER-TO-PEER SESSIONS ON STATE POLICIES**

During these peer-to-peer sessions, participants will discuss a state skills policy issue and strategies for advancing it.

Woodward C, 2nd Floor

**SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS:** Sector partnerships bring together multiple employers in an industry with education, training, labor, community-based, and other organizations to address that industry's local skill needs. States can adopt policies that support local sector partnerships through funding, technical assistance, and/or program initiatives.

PEER LEADS: **Julie Brown** Dan River Region Collaborative (VA); **Rebecca Kusner** New Growth Group (OH)

NSC LEAD: **Bryan Wilson**

FACILITATOR: **Jessie Hogg Leslie** National Skills Coalition

Woodward D, 2nd Floor

**INTEGRATED EDUCATION AND TRAINING:** Integrated education and training teaches basic literacy, numeracy, and/or English language skills concurrently with and in the context of occupational skills. State policies can require implementation of or provide funding for integrated education and training programs.

PEER LEADS: **Carrie Thomas** Chicago Jobs Council (IL); **Frank Waterous** The Bell Policy Center (CO)

NSC LEAD: **Amanda Bergson-Shilcock**

FACILITATOR: **Brandon Roberts** Working Poor Families Project

Woodward B, 2nd Floor

**JOB-DRIVEN FINANCIAL AID:** States can provide job-driven financial aid to students in middle-skill training, including those enrolled in short-term occupational programs and those enrolled less than half time due to work and family obligations.

PEER LEADS: **Andrew Bradley** Indiana Institute for Working Families (IN); **Pat Steele** Central Iowa Works (IA)

NSC LEAD AND FACILITATOR: **Rachel Unruh**

3:15 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

**BREAK** WOODWARD FOYER, 2ND FLOOR

3:30 P.M. – 4:45 P.M.

**ROUND 2 CONCURRENT PEER-TO-PEER SESSIONS ON STATE POLICIES**

During these peer-to-peer sessions, participants will discuss a state skills policy issue and strategies for advancing it.

Woodward D, 2nd Floor

**WORKFORCE DATA POLICIES:** States can adopt policies to create aligned, inclusive, and market-relevant data systems. With good workforce data, students and workers can tell which programs do the best at helping people land a job and advance in the labor market, and policymakers can tell which education and training pathways produce the best outcomes for people with different skill needs.

PEER LEADS: **Marybeth Campbell** SkillWorks: Partners for a Productive Workforce (MA); **Rona Sherriff** California EDGE Coalition (CA)

NSC LEAD: **Jenna Leventoff** Workforce Data Quality Campaign

FACILITATOR: **Rachel Zinn** Workforce Data Quality Campaign

Woodward C, 2nd Floor

**SKILLS-BASED TANF AND SNAP E&T PROGRAMS:** States can set policies to increase access to education, training, and support services for participants of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T).

PEER LEADS: **Melissa Johnson** Georgia Budget and Policy Institute (GA); **Hannah Halbert** Policy Matters Ohio (OH)

NSC LEAD AND FACILITATOR: **Brooke DeRenzis**

Woodward B, 2nd Floor

**STACKABLE CREDENTIALS AND OTHER CTE POLICIES:** Stackable credentials are a sequence of credentials that articulate toward a higher-level certificate or associate degree. Stackable credentials allow students to earn an industry-recognized credential in short order so they can find skilled work while continuing to prepare for the next step in their career without losing credit for prior education. States can use career and technical education (CTE) policies to require or promote stackable credentials and other forms of job-driven training.

PEER LEADS: **Alice Pritchard** Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CT); **Cheryl Hay** JobsOhio (OH)

NSC LEAD: **Bryan Wilson**

FACILITATOR: **Brenda Dann-Messier** CCSSO

5:15 P.M. – 6:15 P.M.

**RECEPTION** VENETIAN BALLROOM, 4TH FLOOR

6:15 P.M. – 8:00 P.M.

**DINNER AND PLENARY DISCUSSION – DETROIT: THE STATE-LOCAL SKILLS CONNECTION**

Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

With Detroit's economic recovery underway, government, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropy are working together to help residents get the skills they need to succeed in the region's growing labor market. City and state leaders will discuss new skill-building initiatives in the city of Detroit, why they are key to developing an inclusive regional economy, and the important role that state policies play in helping Detroit close the skill gap.

OPENING REMARKS: **Andy Levin** Levin Energy Partners, LLC and National Skills Coalition Board Member

- **Jason D. Lee** CEO, Focus:HOPE
- **Jeff Donofrio** Detroit's Director of Workforce Development and Executive Director, the Mayor's Workforce Development Board
- **Wanda Stokes** Director, Michigan Talent Investment Agency

MODERATOR: **Chauncy Lennon** Managing Director & Head of Workforce Initiatives, Global Philanthropy, JPMorgan Chase

## TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2016

8:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M. **BREAKFAST** VENETIAN BALLROOM, 4TH FLOOR

9:00 A.M. - 9:15 A.M. **OPENING REMARKS & REVIEW OF THE DAY**  
Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

9:15 A.M. -10:15 A.M. **PLENARY DISCUSSION – STATE INVESTMENTS IN SKILLS POLICIES**

Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

Advancing a skills equity agenda requires changing the way states invest in education and training, human services, and economic development. In this plenary session, speakers from states with different fiscal environments will discuss state investments in skills policies and the strategies used to make them happen. They will also discuss budget challenges and how they work with partners to address them.

- **Jessica Fraser** Director, Indiana Institute for Working Families
- **Jerry Rubin** President and CEO, Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) Boston
- **Debra Jones** Director of Workforce & Adult Education, California Community College Chancellor's Office

MODERATOR: **Rachel Unruh** National Skills Coalition

10:15 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. **BREAK** VENETIAN BALLROOM FOYER, 4TH FLOOR

10:30 A.M.- 12:00 P.M. **PEER SHARE SESSIONS – EXPANDING ADVOCACY PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILDING COALITIONS**

Woodward BCD, 2nd Floor

Forum participants will have the opportunity to engage in small group discussions with peers from other states on advocacy tactics. Members of emerging coalitions will be matched with those from longstanding coalitions to discuss coalition capacity-building and organizing. Members of more experienced networks and coalitions will be grouped together for a deeper dive into policy, communications, and advocacy strategy.

SESSION LEAD: **Jessie Hogg Leslie** National Skills Coalition

12:00 P.M. – 1:30 P.M. **LUNCH: REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

National Skills Coalition CEO **Andy Van Kleunen** will solicit reflections and thoughts on next steps from participants.

1:30 P.M. – 1:45 P.M. **CLOSING REMARKS**

Venetian Ballroom, 4th Floor

**Alice Pritchard** Connecticut State Colleges and Universities and National Skills Coalition Board Member

2:00 P.M. – 3:00 P.M. **OPTIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

Lobby Bar on 1st Floor

Participants and state teams are invited to stay for one-on-one advice on specific policy and advocacy questions.



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