Focus on Racial Equity in Workforce Strategies

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TODAY, YOU’LL LEARN MORE ABOUT

- Policy solutions to advance racial equity in workforce development, including in:
  - Workforce development plans
  - Technical assistance and guidance for local practice
  - Sector partnerships
  - Supportive services
  - Foundational and digital skill development

- An innovative multi-stakeholder initiative to advance racial equity in a state workforce development system
Jobs that require skills training are the backbone of our economy.

National Skills Coalition fights for a national commitment to inclusive, high-quality skills training so that more people have access to a better life, and more local businesses see sustained growth.
OUR NETWORKS

NATIONAL SKILLS COALITION

National Network  State Network  Business Leaders  Grassroots/Workers
Roadmap for Racial Equity:

https://www.nationalskilscoalition.org/resource/publications/the-roadmap-for-racial-equity/
ETHNIC AND RACIAL DIVERSITY IS A KEY STRENGTH
YET RACIAL DISPARIETIES ARE HOLDING OUR ECONOMY BACK

Educational attainment for the population age 25-64 by race/ethnicity: Minnesota; Year: 2019

- Less than a HS diploma
- HS diploma, no college
- Some college only
- AA degree only
- BA degree or higher

Data source: IPUMS USA | National Equity Atlas
Unemployment Rate by Race (12 mo. moving average)

Source: Minnesota Employment and Economic Development Department Economic Recovery Dashboard
“PUBLIC POLICY DECISIONS HAVE PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN FORMING THESE INEQUITIES, AND THEREFORE, MUST BE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE SOLUTION.”
1 ADOPT RACIAL EQUITY GOALS AND DEVELOP PLANS AND SYSTEMS TO TRACK PROGRESS

Minnesota’s Workforce Development Strategic Plan 2016-2020

Colorado’s Talent Equity Agenda
Dedicated funding to advance racial equity efforts is crucial to ensuring that these efforts are prioritized and not abandoned.
POLICY SOLUTIONS

- Invest in training for frontline workforce development and postsecondary career counseling staff who will be responsible for implementing plans

- Guidance for local workforce development offices/college career counselors on serving immigrants
USE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY
PolicY Solution

Investments and technical assistance to enhance the diversity and inclusion practices of sector partnerships
INVEST IN SUPPORT SERVICES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING PARTICIPANTS
POLICY SOLUTIONS

• Offer Transportation Assistance
• Leverage Federal and State Programs that provide assistance to support training for careers
  • SNAP Employment & Training (SNAP E&T)
  • Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  • Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)
ADVANCE UP SKILLING POLICIES FOR ADULTS WITH FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS GAPS
FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS GAP

Why this issue matters for racial equity?

- Neighborhood underinvestment and K-12 financing
- Secondary school exclusionary discipline
- Inadequate funding for English language classes

Race/ethnicity of adults with low literacy skills in the United States

Source: Country Note: United States, Survey of Adult Skills Results, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
DIGITAL SKILLS: FOUNDATIONAL VS. OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS

Foundational: A baseline skillset that workers need to have regardless of industry

vs.

Occupational: Specific technology-related skills needed for a particular occupation or industry

Courtesy of NorthStar, https://www.digitalliteracyassessment.org/
What does the data say?
DIGITAL SKILL GAPS ARE A WIDESPREAD PROBLEM

Nearly one-third of America’s workers lack digital skills
Most workers with digital skill gaps have a high school education or less

- **No Digital Skills**
  - Below High School: 33%
  - High-School Credential: 47%
  - Certificate from a College or Trade School: 6%
  - Associate's Degree: 4%
  - Bachelor's Degree: 7%
  - Graduate or Professional Degree: 3%

- **Limited Digital Skills**
  - Below High School: 12%
  - High-School Credential: 53%
  - Certificate from a College or Trade School: 12%
  - Associate's Degree: 9%
  - Bachelor's Degree: 9%
  - Graduate or Professional Degree: 5%

WORKERS STRUGGLE TO COVER FOR THEIR SKILL GAP S

Many workers who lack digital literacy have jobs that require substantive computer skills

Among Workers with No Digital Skills
- 38% Moderate or complex computer skills needed for current job
- 62% Straightforward computer skills needed for current job

Among Workers with Limited Digital Skills
- 43% Moderate or complex computer skills needed for current job
- 57% Straightforward computer skills needed for current job
A plurality of workers with digital skill gaps are white

Currently employed US workers ages 16-64. Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills (PIAAC) 2012-M.
Foundational Skills and Digital Equity: Policy Solutions
POLICY SOLUTIONS

- Analyze foundational skills needs and develop a plan to address inequities

- Support innovative connections between community-based and higher education programs
LABS FOR INDUSTRY FUTURES AND TRANSFORMATION (LIFT) NETWORK
POLICY SOLUTIONS

- Increase funding for English language classes and Integrated and Education and Training (IET) programs

- Incorporate digital literacy goals as part of workforce and education investments
CAPITALIZE ON FEDERAL FUNDING TO ADVANCE DIGITAL LITERACY

• Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
  • Digital Literacy an “allowable activity” under Title II adult education programs

• Higher Education Act (HEA)
  • Leverage “Ability to Benefit” (AtB)
Poll: What workforce training and education policies to advance racial equity is your workforce board already acting on?
Poll: What workforce training and education policies to advance racial equity would you like your workforce board to work on in the future?
The California Workforce Development System Worker Equity Initiative is an 18-month research project staffed by the UCLA Labor Center and National Skills Coalition, in partnership with the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency.
While good jobs for workers with a high school diploma or less fell from 15 to 13 million.

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