ADDRESSING WORKFORCE GAPS THROUGH ADULT EDUCATION

RESKILLING ADULTS FOR TOMORROW’S WORKFORCE

APRIL 25, 2024
National Adult Learner Trends

- Adult Undergraduate Enrollment (25+) at 4-year Public Universities
- Adult Undergraduate Enrollment (25+) at 4-year Private Colleges/Universities
- Residents with Some College, No Credential

![Graph showing trends in adult learner enrollment and qualifications from 2011 to 2021.](image)


2. Some College, No Credential Data from National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, Some College, No Credential Student Outcomes Annual Progress Report – Academic Year 2020/21. [Link to NSC Research Center website](https://nscresearchcenter.org/some-college-no-credential/)
TAILORING EDUCATION FOR ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS

1. EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
   Adults enter a new learning environment with experience that informs their identity and abilities.

2. MOTIVATIONS
   Answering “Why is this principle important to my life?” is essential for students to understand “how” to apply new knowledge.

3. CHALLENGES
   Working adults need education to be affordable, available (location), approachable, flexible, and readily applicable.

4. ANDRAGOGY VS. PEDAGOGY
   Many adult learners are looking for actual skills rather than hypotheticals.
THE ROLE OF PERSONALIZED LEARNING

1. Competency-Based Education
2. Enrollment Counselors
3. Program Mentors
4. Course Instructors
5. Learner Care Dashboard
6. Personalized OTC Rate
EMBRACING A LEARNER-CENTERED FRAMEWORK

**Honor Me and My Investment**
- Honor My Individuality
- Respect My Experiences and Perspectives
- Respect My Needs
- Respect My Time

**Personalize to My Needs**
- Make it Relevant and Valuable to Me
- Provide Helpful Feedback and Listen to Mine
- Give Me Choices: Be Flexible

**Focus on My Learning**
- Help Me Learn How to Learn
- Provide Opportunities for Deliberate Practice
- Deepen My Learning With Reflection
- Challenge Me in Ways That Support My Growth

**Cultivate My Connections**
- Connect My Journey to My Career Goals
- Foster Inclusive Community
- Facilitate Peer Learning
I was once told that the path up the mountain is not the difficult part, but the pebbles in your shoes that will discourage us from continuing. Micheal Crouch, my mentor, encouraged me by sharing his life journey to getting his degree. It inspired me to keep moving forward. Thanks to the excellent mentorship at WGU, I was able to complete my degree.”

– Jonathan Casanova, B.S. Cybersecurity, 2024
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROVIDE ADULT LEARNER GRANTS
2. CREATE ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS
3. EXPAND ACCESS TO WORKFORCE TRAINING
4. SUPPORT COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION
THANK YOU

HOW ARE YOUR STATE’S ADULT LEARNERS?

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