

# Strengthening Talent Pipelines Using Pathways to Success

May 7, 2026



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- Submit a question at any time via the Q&A window
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# AGENDA

- ECMC Foundation Overview – Paula Kashtan
- Pathways to Success Goals, Structure, Outcomes – Cindy Hill
- Metropolitan Community College – Tammy Green
- College of Southern Nevada – Gladis Barrios
- Toolkit Overview – Cindy Hill
- Q&A

# Speakers



**Gladis Barrios**

Program Manager ABE  
College of Southern Nevada



**Tammy Green**

Executive Director – Statewide  
Initiatives  
Metropolitan Community College



**Tina Gridiron**

Chief Impact and Learning Officer  
Center for Impact and Learning



**Cindy Hill**

Industrial/Organizational  
Psychologist  
ACT



**Paula Kashtan**

Program Officer  
ECMC Foundation

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# Paula Kashtan

Program Officer  
ECMC Foundation

**ACT**<sup>®</sup>



# To improve higher education for career success among underserved populations through evidence-based innovation



Removing barriers to postsecondary completion



Building the capacity of institutions, systems and organizations



Transforming the postsecondary ecosystem



Initiatives



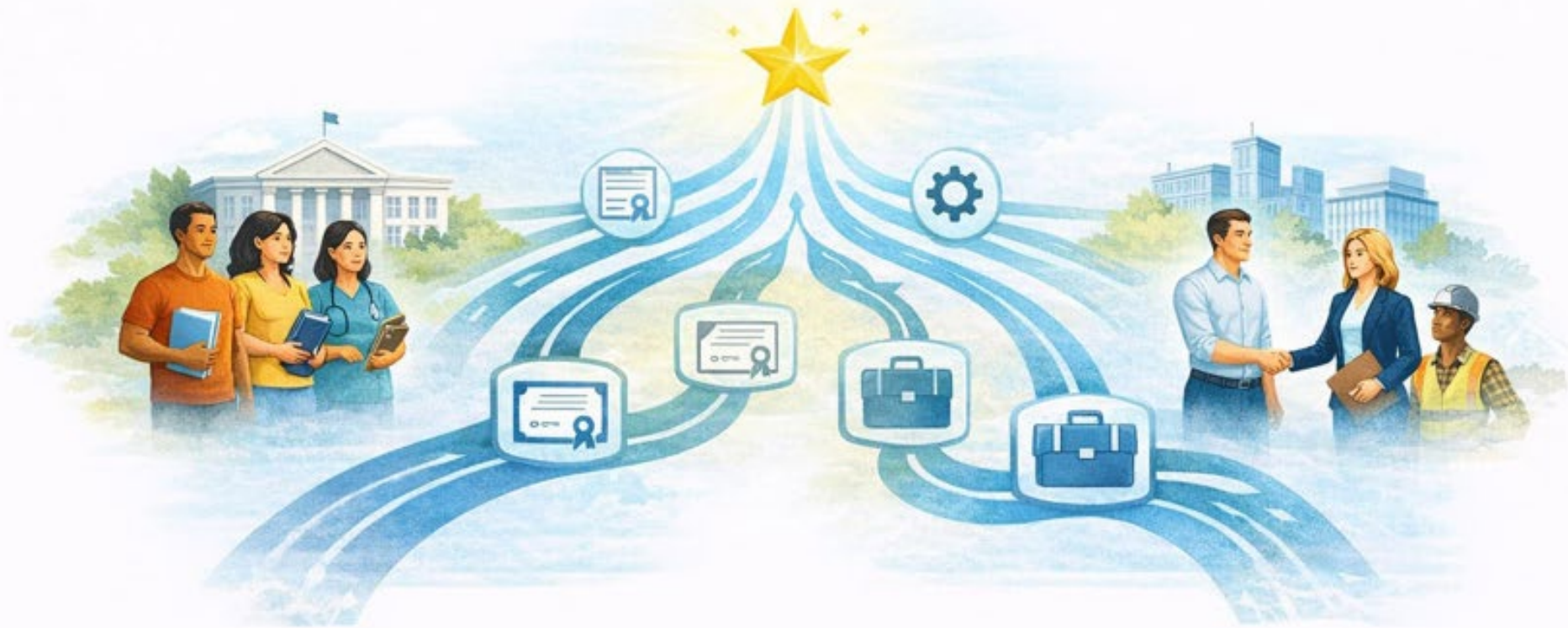
Strategically Responsive



Systemic Change

# Creating Pathways to Success

What happens when credentials, employers, and learners are intentionally aligned



ECMC-Work Ready Communities Pathways to Success Project

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# Cindy Hill

Industrial/Organizational  
Psychologist

ACT

**ACT**<sup>®</sup>



# Pathways to Success: The Project



## A two-year initiative

funded by ECMC Foundation



## Designed to test

a repeatable approach to pathway development



## Implemented across two Work Ready Communities:

College of Southern Nevada (CSN) and Metropolitan Community College Omaha (MCC)

# ECMC-Work Ready Communities Pathways to Success Project



# Exceeded Every Measure of Success



**6,060**

**Students Enrolled**

from **2,000** – expanding access to underserved populations



**34%**

**NCRC Improvement**

from **25%** – measurable growth in foundational workplace skills



**95%**

**Persistence Rate**

from **70%** – pathways supported to keep learners on track



**87%**

**Earned a Credential**

from **70%** – alignment between training and progression



**98%**

**Continued Education**

from **70%** – pathways successfully created



Our pilot exceeded expectations—driving meaningful impact at every stage.

# Ready for Workforce Pell—Right Now

A practical approach that meets key Workforce Pell criteria.



## Short-Term Programs

**150–599**  
hours

Workforce-ready programs built for speed and flexibility.



## Employer-Aligned Skills

**22,000+**  
jobs profiled

Programs co-designed using WorkKeys data.



## Proven Outcomes

**95%** persistence

**87%** credential attainment

Results that exceed Workforce Pell thresholds.

## Implement in Your Community



Scan to learn how WorkKeys supports Workforce Pell implementation.



This model doesn't just meet Workforce Pell requirements— it helps you implement them.

# Data Collection Process

A structured, continuous approach to ensure high-quality, actionable data.



This integrated approach produces reliable data that informs our outcomes and drives continuous improvement.

# What We Did



Structured employer conversations to define readiness



Designed pathways before building programs



Aligned education, workforce, and employer partners



Integrated supports (childcare, transportation, academic support)



Connected training directly to employment outcomes

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# Tammy Green

Executive Director –  
Statewide Initiatives

Metropolitan Community College



METROPOLITAN  
Community College



# The challenge leaders are facing



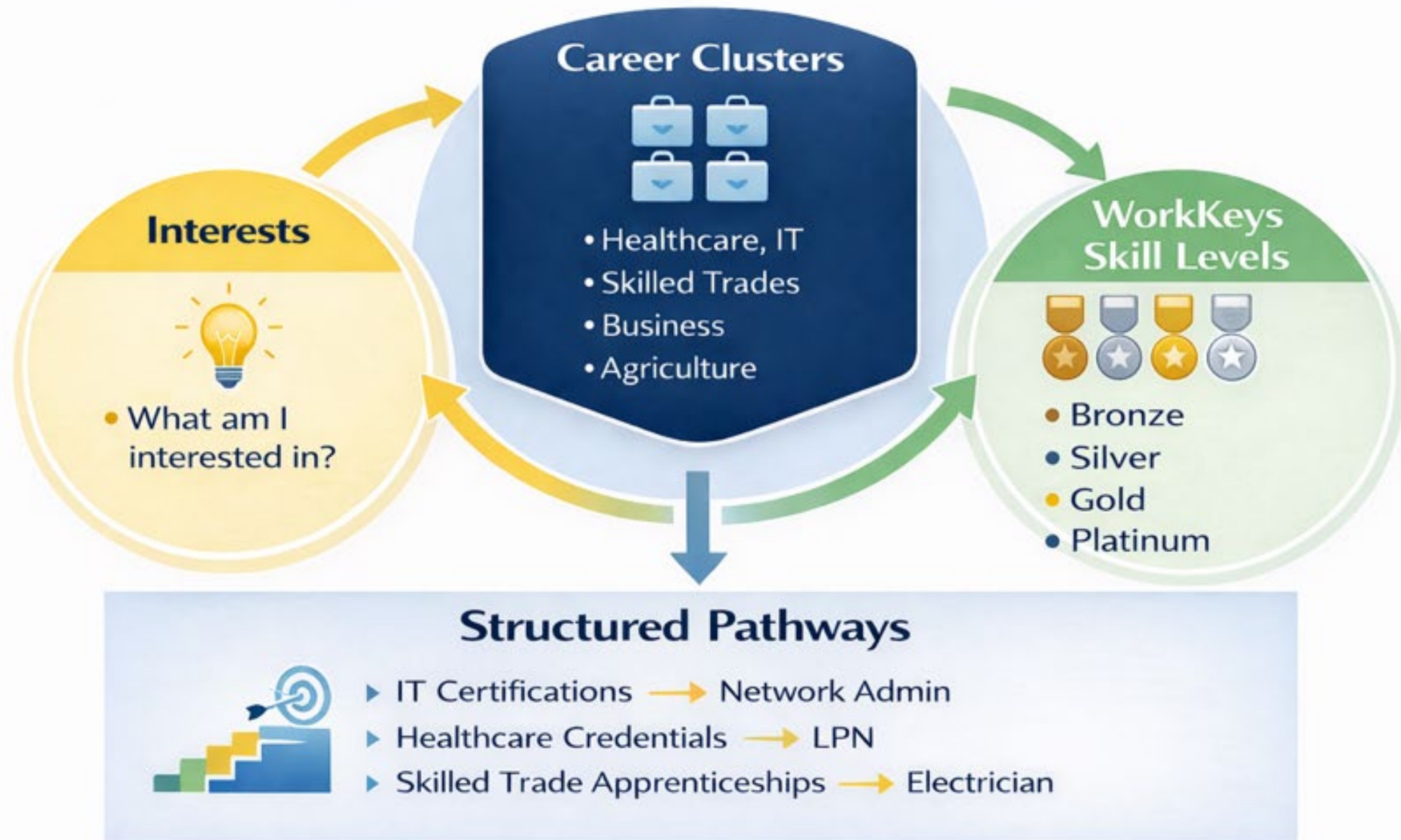
This is a system alignment problem – not a program problem.

# MCC CAREER PATHWAY

Building skills. Earning credentials. Advancing futures.



# Career Cluster Pathways



# Connecting MCC Pathways to Career Clusters

All programs align to the National Career Clusters Framework

## National Career Clusters Framework

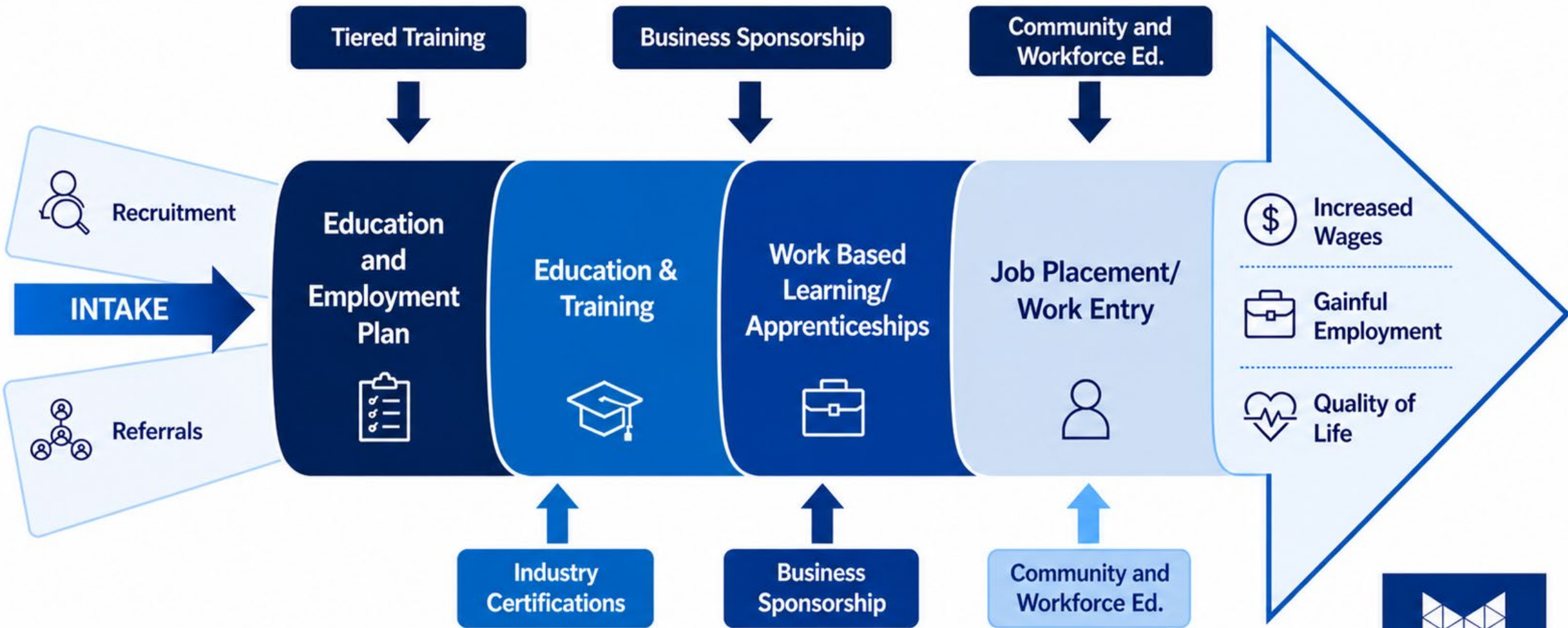


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**Mapped to  
National Career  
Clusters**

## MCC Career Pathways



# The Tool Kit Empowers Students

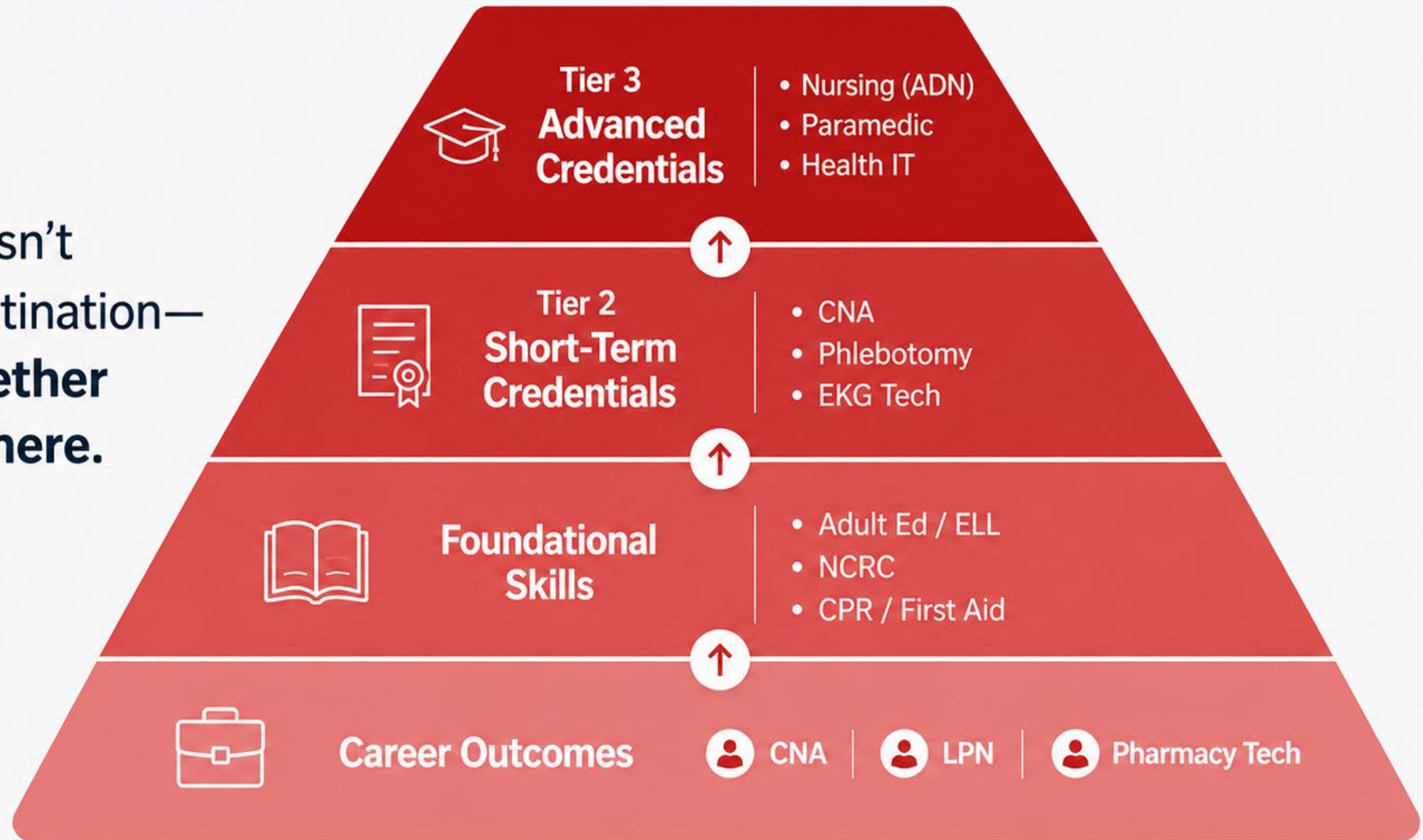


Financial and Other Assistance to Minimize Barriers



# Health Professions Pathway

Alignment doesn't change the destination—it changes **whether learners get there.**



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# Gladis Barrios

Program Manager ABE  
College of Southern Nevada



# CSN: Division of Workforce and Economic Development



## Serves a diverse learner population

Supporting students from all backgrounds with equitable access to training and opportunities.



## High demand in healthcare, manufacturing

Addressing critical workforce needs in key industries driving our regional and national economy.



## Employers need

Job-ready workers, clear skill signals, and faster pipelines to meet business demands.



## Learners need

Speed, clarity, and confidence that training leads to a job and a better future.



Alignment is necessary because effective pathways are designed through **shared goals, employer input** and **integrated supports**.

# Connecting Talent to Employer Needs

College of Southern Nevada

Division of Workforce & Economic Development



Clark County employers need **job-ready talent now**, not years from now.

1

**DWED connects employers and talent by:**



Translating employer needs into skills-based training



Responding quickly to labor market demand



Preparing residents for **immediate** employment

2

**Unlike traditional programs, DWED offers:**



Short-term, accelerated training



Noncredit and hybrid pathways



Programs designed with employer input



Training that can scale quickly to meet hiring surges

3

**Our Impact**



**Stronger employers**



**Job-ready residents**



**A stronger Clark County**



*Bridging the gap between education and employment—**fast, flexible, and focused on results.***



# CSN Healthcare Pathway: What Alignment Looks Like in Practice



## Entry

Clear entry points that are accessible and welcoming.



## Credential

Stackable credentials that build skills and momentum.



## Employer Engagement

Strong employer partnerships that create real job opportunities.



## Supports

Integrated academic, career, and wraparound supports for success.



A learner enters a healthcare pathway, earns first credential, gains employment, and understands how that credential stacks toward **CNA, LPN, or beyond.**

# CSN Healthcare Pathway in Practice

A real-world example of a stackable pathway that builds skills, boosts confidence, and advances careers.



STEP 1



## Dialysis Patient Care Technician (DPCT)

- Short-term training
- Hands-on healthcare skills
- Entry-level job in healthcare
- Earn: CPR, Basic Life Support, Mental Health First Aid



STEP 2



## Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

- Build on your DPCT experience
- Work in hospitals, clinics, and care facilities
- Strong next step in healthcare



STEP 3



## Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

- Expanded nursing responsibilities
- Higher pay
- More career options



From entry-level training to advanced credentials—  
**CSN helps learners grow their careers and strengthen our healthcare workforce.**

# Pathways to Success Toolkit: How It Works

*A practical framework for building  
aligned pathways between  
education and employment.*



# Pathways to Success Toolkit

A practical, **evidence-based** framework that helps communities design and sustain aligned pathways to success.

- ✓ **Captures lessons learned** and best practices
- ✓ **Designed to help communities** build aligned pathways
- ✓ **Bridges education, workforce,** and employer systems



Grounded in research and real-world results from the Pathways to Success pilot

**6,060**  
learners

**95%**  
persistence

**87%**  
credential attainment



## Pathways to Success



**Aligning Shared Goals for Success**



**Leveraging Resources & Funding Opportunities**



**Creating Tailored Education Training & Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs**



**Expanding Community Outreach & Engagement**



**Enhancing Career Pathways with Integrated Support Services**

# Research Brief: Pathways to Success Program Pilot

Funded by ECMC Foundation and implemented through ACT Work Ready Communities®, the pilot was conducted at two sites:



Data collected on enrollment, persistence, credential attainment, continued education, and ACT® WorkKeys® NCRC® scores.



These findings demonstrate that the Work Ready Communities framework is a scalable model that **advances academic progress and career readiness**—and helps programs meet reporting requirements while delivering **meaningful results** for employers and communities.

The pilot met or exceeded all targeted success measures.

## KEY FINDINGS



**6,060**

students enrolled from underserved and other high-priority populations.



**95%**

persisted in the program, a 126% increase from their pre-pilot rates.



**34%**

of participants who retested improved their WorkKeys NCRC level (target: 25%).



**56%**

of participants working on basic skills advanced their educational functioning level.



**87%**

of intermediate- and advanced-level participants earned at least one short-term, stackable credential.



**98%**

of credential earners continued their education at the participating sites.

# Why the Toolkit Exists



## BEFORE:

- Disconnected programs
- No shared definitions



## AFTER:

- Aligned pathways
- Clear progression



Created to make this work  
**repeatable, scalable, and sustainable.**



# What the Toolkit is and is not

## The Toolkit IS

- ✓ Open-access
- ✓ Modular
- ✓ Designed for education + workforce partners
- ✓ Grounded in practice and research



## The Toolkit is NOT

- ✗ A checklist to complete all at once
- ✗ A compliance document
- ✗ A single program model



# How the Toolkit is Organized

Each of the five major sections focuses on a key component of building career-connected pathways.

Each section includes:

**Overview** – What it is and why it matters.

**Tools** – Step-by-step guides, templates and checklists you can adapt.

**Case Studies & Spotlights** – Real-world examples of successful implementation.

**Calls to Action** – Clear next steps to move from planning to measurable impact.

**Additional Resources**



Aligning Shared Goals for Success



Leveraging Resources & Funding Opportunities



Creating Tailored Education Training & Integrated Education and Training (IET) Programs



Expanding Community Outreach & Engagement



Enhancing Career Pathways with Integrated Support Services



# Pathways to Success Toolkit

Build learner-centered pathways that connect education and work.  
Align partners, remove barriers, and track impact across your ecosystem.

[DOWNLOAD THE TOOLKIT \(PDF\)](#)

[EXPLORE THE STRATEGIES](#)

This toolkit is made possible through the generous support of [ECMC Foundation](#) and the valued partnership of [Metropolitan Community College of Nebraska \(MCC\)](#) and the [College of Southern Nevada \(CSN\)](#).

[Learn More About the Toolkit](#)

# A Shared Signal Across the System



## Employers

Easily hire the foundational skills needed for a productive workforce



## Individuals

Know what skills are required by employers — and how to prepare for success



## Educators

Ensure students learn relevant, sought-after workplace skills



## Economic & workforce developers

Use on-demand reporting tool to quantify skill levels regionally



Based on the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), a portable, industry-recognized, evidence-based workforce skill credential.

# Questions & Answers

# Speakers



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